



Baobab Centre: Strategy

Vision

A society where young people seeking asylum in the UK who have experienced human rights abuses as children are welcomed and supported to move forward in their development and thrive.

Purpose

1. Baobab's therapeutic community supports young people to rebuild their lives and integrate into the wider community.
2. Baobab actively fights for justice by advocating for, and with, individual young asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, as well as on a population-wide level.

How

1. Our holistic support meets the challenges young people face from both their internal and external worlds. Baobab's model includes psychotherapy, developmental and practical support, and membership of a community where they can build meaningful relationships and work towards self-care and independence.
2. We work together with people from a wide range of agencies and networks, as well as members of the public, to share our understanding about the reality of the experiences of young asylum seekers and the impact of these experiences on their wellbeing.

Values

For the young people in our community Baobab is:

- A home, a place to breathe, no matter who you are or where you come from.
- A team of people who fight for your rights, who speak truth to power, who are tenacious and hopeful.
- A community that cares for you, your mental health and your wider wellbeing.
- Somewhere that is yours, where you feel listened to and able to make decisions about your future.

Anticipated External Context

- Continued hostility to refugees and asylum seekers
- Repercussions of the Nationality and Borders Act
- Recession, inflation and increase in cost of living in the UK affecting young people, staff, Baobab's operations and potentially our funders
- Increasing importance of climate action

Our strategy up to 2028 is to focus on making a difference as set out by our two priority outcomes underpinned by continuing to build our organisational resilience so that we can sustain our impact.

By March 2028 Baobab's work will have delivered our priority outcomes:

Priority Outcomes: Our Community and Advocacy

1. **Young people: Increased the number of young people we support to between 80-90 attending weekly and have a greater proportion of referrals from organisations working with newly arrived young people.**
 - a) Receive greater numbers of referrals from organisations working with young people who are newly arrived in the UK and have developed strong relationships with those partner organisations.



- b) Have a clearly articulated model including a publicly shared version which is accessible to non-clinicians. This will include our belief that the threshold for the number of young people in the community is 90.
 - c) Continue to follow our model of rehabilitation and justice through holistic and interwoven psychotherapeutic, casework, practical and community support for the young people in our community.
- 2. Young People: Established decision-making roles at Baobab for young people from the community.**
- a) Have an active and established mentor group, made up of members of Baobab's community, who have a decision-making role within Baobab, including being on recruitment panels, co-chairing community meetings, attending events and providing feedback.
 - b) Establish paid and voluntary opportunities for young people from our community who would like to develop or learn particular skills at Baobab and with partner NGOs.
- 3. Advocacy: Baobab will routinely share our expertise and our community members' (anonymised) experiences with other professionals and with the public with the objective of improving the experience for all young asylum seekers and refugees in the UK.**
- a) Establish Baobab's role within the sector as: holding specialist knowledge and experience on the mental health and developmental impact of loss and trauma and unplanned change on young asylum seekers and refugees; and being a source of voices and of young people who wish to speak out about these experiences.
 - b) Have strong relationships with peer organisations to amplify both the voices of those in our community and our organisational knowledge and expertise.
 - c) In particular, Baobab will have increased our research and documentation capacity, connecting the complexities of individual stories/experiences to the issues with UK policy and practice.

Our Enabling Outcomes: Building Organisational Resilience

- 4. Leadership and Governance: Built resilience within the governance and leadership.**
- a) Have a strong, engaged and diverse board which has both enthusiasm and experience in governance and includes key posts/expertise: Chair, HR, Clinical, Treasurer, Social work, Advocacy and Human Rights.
 - b) Have a Director who is a practicing psychotherapist holding a small caseload at Baobab and who is passionate about Baobab's core purpose and values, as set out above.
- 5. People, Structure and Processes: a strong and experienced staff team supported by robust clinical and operational processes.**
- a) People strategy: Baobab will have invested in recruitment contributing to a strong and stable staff team supported by committed volunteers. This team will be backed up by supportive processes including but not limited to: staff joining procedures, a clear pay grade structure, training opportunities and wellbeing support.
 - b) Operational processes, this includes, but is not limited to, new or improved: website, database, IT security, confidentiality procedures, and environmental policies.

- c) Clinical Processes, this includes but is not limited to new or improved: young people joining and leaving processes, clinical assessments, referral processes, database for record keeping, filing /naming structure, organisation of paper files and retention plan.

6. Representation and Opportunities: Increased the percentage of staff, volunteers and trustees who come from refugee backgrounds and can bring lived experience to our team.

- a) Across the teams have a greater number of staff, volunteers and trustees with similar lived experiences to the young people we support.

7. Resources: we will develop our income proportionately to provide financial security in order to sustain our work supporting a unique community and plan ahead with confidence.

- a) We will have increased our portfolio of multi-year unrestricted grants and have resilient, ongoing relationships with these funders. This will enable us to fulfil our planned work, provide the confidence to plan ahead and give greater certainty to our role as a stable source of support to the young people in our community.
- b) We will have strengthened our relationship with small and individual donors in order to diversify our income streams and give us greater flexibility to respond to needs as they emerge.
- c) Building: We will have explored in depth the pressures on the current building and the cost and implications of moving. This work will only begin in year 3 of this plan (i.e. 2026), however Baobab will be ready to respond to opportunities if they arise, including partnerships with other organisations.

