

# Sands' 2017/2020 Strategy







Philomena Milloy with her  
grandparents

## Contents

Our vision, mission and values	<b>3</b>
Our commitments	<b>4</b>
Our four objectives to realise this vision	
1. To reduce the number of babies dying before, during and shortly after birth	<b>6</b>
2. To ensure the right care and support is available at the right time after the death of a baby	<b>8</b>
3. To grow as one strong, sustainable and effective organisation	<b>10</b>
4. To raise awareness of the issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death	<b>12</b>



## Our vision for the future

Sands' vision is for a world where fewer babies die and when a baby dies anyone affected by the death receives the best care and support for as long as they need. Parents and families who have experienced baby death remain at the core of everything

## Our mission

We work to reduce the number of babies dying and to improve care and support for anyone affected by the death of a baby.

## Sands' purpose is

- ▶ to support anyone affected by the death of a baby
- ▶ work in partnership with healthcare professionals to ensure that bereaved parents and families receive the best possible care
- ▶ to promote improvements in practice and fund research to help reduce the number of babies dying

Everything we do – the services we run, the public health messages we promote, the way we raise money – is focused around these three aims.

## Our values

We are compassionate, collaborative and evidence based.



## Our commitments for 2020

- ▶ To reduce the number of babies dying by at least 20%
- ▶ To have a bereavement lead in every trust or health board and at least one bereavement suite in every hospital
- ▶ To implement a National Bereavement Care Pathway to make sure that every parent receives equally excellent bereavement care
- ▶ To ensure a high-quality review of care is carried out, in partnership with parents, after every baby's death
- ▶ To raise awareness of the issues surrounding stillbirth and neonatal death and to reduce the taboo associated with these deaths
- ▶ To ensure every bereaved parent receives a free memory box





**Our four objectives to realise this vision**



# To reduce the number of babies dying before, during and shortly after birth

Many of these tragedies are potentially avoidable; research and a thorough review of every death will help us understand better how to avoid them, but then this understanding must be put into practice. At Sands we work to ensure that healthcare professionals, parents and the public understand what makes a difference.

## Increase understanding of why babies die through research and review of care

### We will do this by:

- ▶ Advancing research that will increase our understanding of why babies die and develop new evidence-based interventions that help healthcare professionals save lives
- ▶ Supporting initiatives such as the Perinatal Mortality Review Tool to ensure a robust review is carried out after each baby's death
- ▶ Ensuring the parent voice is at the heart of research and identifying improvements to maternity and neonatal care
- ▶ Using our Research Fund to work with world-leading research teams to save lives

## Identify and implement actions that are needed to reduce the number of babies dying

### We will do this by:

- ▶ Identifying key policy changes that are needed and working to make these happen
- ▶ Promoting healthy pregnancy and safer antenatal, labour and neonatal care
- ▶ Being involved in national initiatives to prevent deaths in all four UK countries

## Obtain widespread commitment, from national to individual level, to reducing the number of babies dying

### We will do this by:

- ▶ Working with MPs and policy makers to change national policy in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- ▶ Supporting our 100 local volunteer Groups to help engage parents on an individual level in villages, towns and cities across the UK
- ▶ Using our high profile Ambassadors to spread the word that we can take action to help save babies' lives
- ▶ Collaborating with Royal Colleges and other key influencers to help build authority and the evidence base for our policy messages
- ▶ Ensuring the views of bereaved parents are heard and understood





## To ensure the right care and support is available at the right time after the death of a baby

The care and support that is available after the death of a baby can make a significant difference to the emotional and physical wellbeing of parents. Many parents and families tell us that it was the support that they received that made the biggest difference to their ability to cope with both the initial devastation, but then also in the longer term. It is absolutely vital that all parents are able to access the support that they need, in the form that they need and when they need it.

### Ensure that excellent, evidence-based bereavement care is offered to all parents and families

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing a National Bereavement Care Pathway in collaboration with others that outlines excellent practice and reduces variation in care
- ▶ Ensuring all health and social care professionals have access to accredited bereavement care training

### The support that Sands offers is evidence-based, comprehensive and available when needed

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Offering a range of support services that are evidence-based and easy to access, including the free telephone helpline, online forum, printed and website materials
- ▶ Accurately reflecting the needs of families in our resources, whether it is six weeks or 30 years after their bereavement
- ▶ Ensuring Sands' befrienders offer excellent and evidence-based bereavement support

### The right care and support is available to all those who need it; so all ethnicities, ages, disabilities and demographic groups are welcomed and supported

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing bereavement support services that specifically meet the needs of different ethnicities, ages, disabilities and demographic groups
- ▶ Working across the UK to ensure culturally appropriate bereavement care is offered
- ▶ Offering support in a range of formats to reach all communities

### The right care, support and environment is offered by all healthcare professionals, trusts and health boards

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Continue working with trusts and health boards to ensure they provide a bereavement room or suite
- ▶ Promoting and developing the role of a bereavement midwife
- ▶ Ensuring bereaved parents and families have access to appropriate counselling if needed





## To grow as one strong, sustainable and effective organisation

In order to make a real difference, Sands needs to grow in such a way that keeps bereaved parents and families at the heart of what we do, and which encourages the whole organisation to work, think and act together as one. Using innovation, collaboration and holistic thinking, we will focus on continually improving what we do and how we do it – developing our approach as a learning organisation to become as effective as possible.

### Structure Sands to enable effective and strategic working and to support growth and development

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing a holistic approach to working across the whole organisation
- ▶ Creating teams able to work together to achieve strategic objectives
- ▶ Ensuring our information systems meet all our needs

### Ensure a sustainable financial base with diverse income streams

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Introducing a new financial model that supports the work of everyone in Sands
- ▶ Developing individual fundraising opportunities such as legacies, regular giving and in memoriam giving
- ▶ Evolving corporate fundraising opportunities including major donors and trusts

### Build trust and a culture that embraces working as one organisation

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing and truly embedding values that express the heart of Sands
- ▶ Sharing a sense of real motivation, purpose and mission
- ▶ Expanding innovative and responsive communications across the whole of Sands

### Create, maintain and develop opportunities for collaboration

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Actively seeking opportunities for collaboration with other organisations
- ▶ Developing Baby Loss Awareness Week in collaboration with all baby loss charities

### Build good governance

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Ensuring Sands is structured in a way that enables it to meet both its vision and its core aims
- ▶ Maintaining high standards to ensure public trust and confidence







## To raise awareness of the issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death

When their baby dies, the profound grief that parents feel is often compounded by disbelief – ‘we didn’t know this could happen’. Parents describe feeling isolated and alone, with friends and family uncertain how to reach out and offer much needed support.

In addition, lack of awareness of the issues means that the key actions that parents can take to reduce the risk of stillbirth and neonatal death are often not known.

By raising awareness of the issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death we can not only break the taboo and lift the isolation felt by so many, but also raise awareness of safer pregnancy messages.

### Campaign on issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing a significant and far reaching campaign to raise awareness of key issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death
- ▶ Working to ensure that the public knows about the magnitude of the problem of baby loss in the UK

### Raise national awareness and reduce stigma through clear public messaging through a variety of channels

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Developing a straight talking Safer Pregnancy Website
- ▶ Using Sands Awareness Month to bring on board more stakeholders and influencers
- ▶ Ensuring both our traditional and social media reach continues to grow to engage wide and diverse audiences
- ▶ Using national and regional media to get people talking about baby loss to break down the stigma

### Enlist the support of key influencers to make issues accessible and relevant

#### We will do this by:

- ▶ Identifying and working with people or media opportunities that provide a means of reaching and influencing a wide and diverse audience
- ▶ Continuing to work with the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Baby Loss to ensure stillbirth and neonatal death is on the policy agenda nationally



## Vision

A world where fewer babies die and when a baby does die, anyone affected receives the best possible care and support for as long as it's needed

## Mission

We work to reduce the number of babies dying and to improve care and support for anyone affected by the death of a baby

## Core aims

1. To support anyone affected by the death of a baby
2. To work to improve bereavement care
3. To promote research and prevention strategies to reduce the loss of babies' lives

### Strategic objective 1

To reduce the number of babies dying before, during and shortly after birth

### Strategic objective 2

To ensure the right care and support is available at the right time after the death of a baby

### Strategic objective 3

To grow as one strong, sustainable and effective organisation

### Strategic objective 4

To raise awareness of the issues relating to stillbirth and neonatal death

## Values

We will be compassionate, collaborative and evidence-based  
We commit to working as one organisation; learning from experience and striving for continual improvement through innovation  
We will be open and honest; working with respect and integrity, showing empathy, and being inclusive in everything we do





Bliss Veitch placing petals by her brother Jam's rose



## Who we are

Sands was founded in 1978 by a group of parents whose babies had died, and parents and families remain at the core of everything we do.

We are made up of staff and volunteers. The Sands Helpline works together with our local volunteer Groups and befrienders to ensure that anyone affected by the death of a baby has access to compassionate, experienced support.

Our Improving Bereavement Care team works with health and social care professionals to provide training and resources to support them in delivering the very best bereavement care for parents.

Thanks to the hard work of our supporters we are able to fund crucial, high-quality research to understand why babies die and find new interventions to prevent more deaths. Our Research and Prevention team work at national level on quality-improvement initiatives to make maternity and neonatal care safer.

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