

Strategic Plan



2017 - 2022

Foreword

I am pleased to see that Stand Alone has grown from strength to strength in the four years since the idea of a charity for estranged people was suggested. The need for our work has become clearer and the demand for our support and expertise has greatened.

Our evidence-based approach and research activity has led to the production of three key reports around family estrangement, all examining the experiences and profile of people in the UK who are living without contact or support from family or a key family member.

Our success in engaging the press and raising awareness has influenced our face-to-face support services. We have brought together hundreds of people in facilitated support groups to meet others and discuss their experiences, many of whom had seen or heard about us on the radio, TV or in a newspaper. Our support group services have expanded from London to Sheffield and Newcastle, and we started to deliver our support groups within the criminal justice system in HMP Northumberland.

As we further solidify our reputation as thought leaders in this field, and as policy makers have started to use our work to better include estranged people in their strategies, we are moving towards fulfilling our mission. It is a mission to create a society that is more realistic around the nature of family relationships, and consequently is more understanding of the difficult outcomes people experience and the choices people make.

This new strategic plan has seen the Trustees and the operational team ponder many fundamental questions about Stand Alone, and its mission and vision, and where our focus should be set for the next five years.

In such a young organisation, we felt the need to balance ambition with caution and play to our strengths. However, we also wanted to apply our learning, and the growing understanding that those who live without family capital, be it emotional, material or financial, may face barriers and disadvantages throughout their lives.

Stand Alone is still a young charity, and we would not have been able to grow at such pace without the support of our partners, funders and volunteers. Over this financial period, it has been a privilege to work collaboratively with a number of academics, counsellors, journalists, designers, businesses and other charities and organisations. It has become clear to all of us that there people who feel our mission is an important one, who are willing to get behind our key messages and work with us.

We can only hope that by continuing to build this combination of evidence and enthusiasm, we will fuel our momentum, influence and subsequently our impact for the years to come.

Becca Bland
Chief Executive and Founder

Our vision and mission statements...

We want to build a society where individuals who are estranged from family members feel accepted and understood, and have the freedom to live without experiencing judgement, stigma or disadvantage.

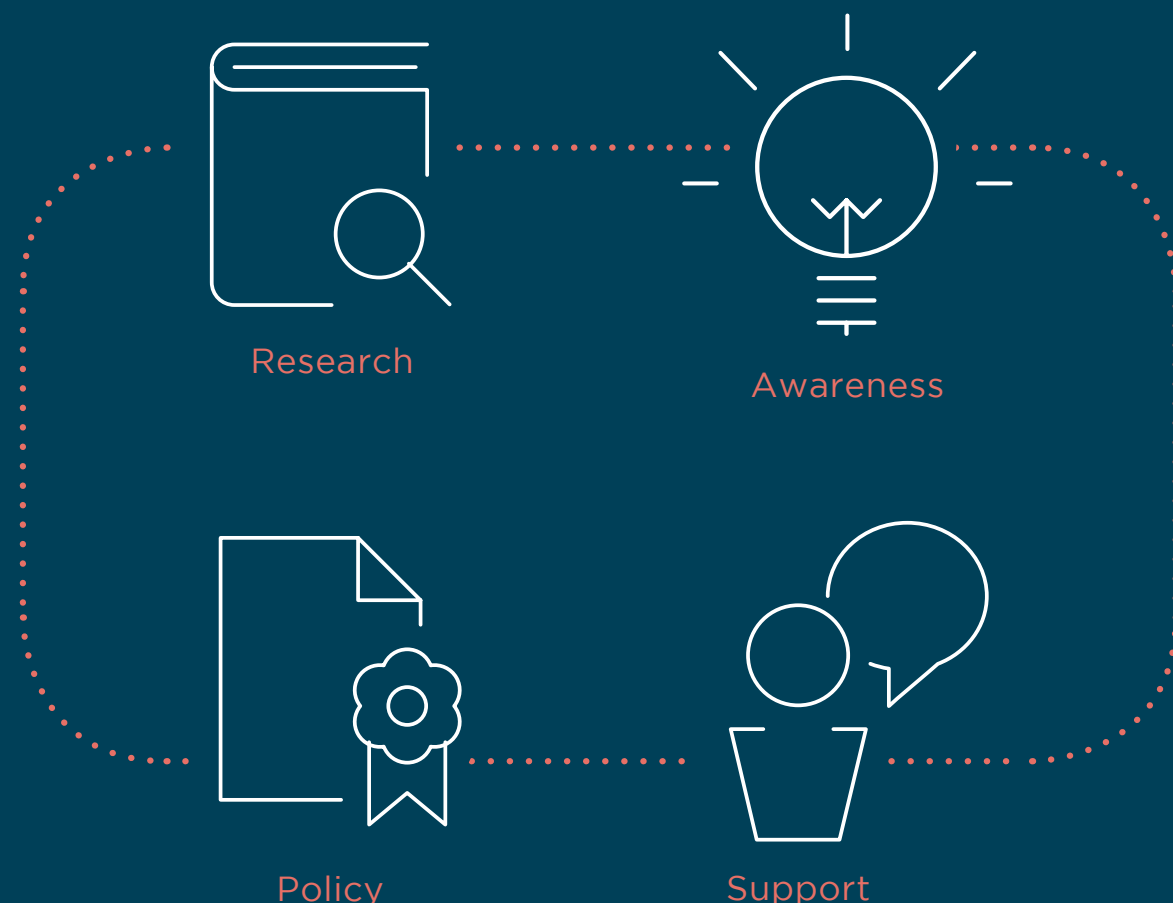
We will increase knowledge and awareness of family estrangement, and influence change for individuals and society by:



Problems faced by UK beneficiaries that we want to solve

- People experiencing estrangement of all ages can face material and social disadvantage due to their lack of family connections.
- Policy and guidelines can define estrangement by communicative contact and not by emotional quality of the estrangement.
- People experiencing estrangement experience policies which have an underlying expectation and assumption of family cohesion, nuclear family support or social service awareness of their difficulties.
- People experiencing estrangement can face social isolation, loneliness and are vulnerable to associated mental health difficulties.
- People experiencing estrangement can meet professionals who do not understand or who judge family estrangement.
- People experiencing estrangement often read media articles about dysfunctional family which have an inherent bias towards reconciliation which do not take the individual's situation into consideration.

As a board we feel passionate about growing each area of the charity.



There was an acknowledgement that the areas all link.

Mission

UK long-term 5 year goals

“We will create and promote research about family estrangement”

- Partner with or be involved with funded (ESRC, JRF) long term project(s) around family capital as a measure for disadvantage.
- Published academic papers around our research.
- An academic conference bringing experts together in this field.



Research

“We will build greater awareness about family estrangement”

- Training key professionals across a number of sectors including FE, HE and Counselling.
- A documentary.
- A publication around the issue of estrangement.
- ‘Family Capital’ as term will become better known.
- We will continue to publicise the stories and experiences of our beneficiaries across national media platforms.
- TED X talk around our research.



Awareness

“We will influence and collaborating with policy makers and professionals”

- Policy makers in government will take into account assumptions about family cohesion and support.
- Family Capital will be understood as measure of disadvantage and a lack of family capital will be recognised as a trigger for additional support.



Policy

“We will deliver support to individuals who are affected by family estrangement or disownment”

- Where realistic, in England, each beneficiary lives no more than two hours away from a Stand Alone support group or workshop, with the longer term goal of no more than one hour.
- Each beneficiary is able to access online support modules.



Support

Where we are now

UK long-term 5 year goals

Mission

Possible metrics in 5 years

- 4 research projects with Student Finance England, Ipsos MORI, University of Cambridge, Sheffield Institute for Education.

- Partner with or be involved with funded (ESRC, JRF) long term project(s) around family capital as a measure for disadvantage.
- Published academic papers around our research.
- A conference bringing experts in this field together.
- TEDX talk around our research.

“We will create and promote research about family estrangement”

- 1 longer term research project (to partner with or be involved with) 4 academic papers published in top journals.
- 1 large international conference.



Research

- 18 pieces of press and media around family estrangement, our research and our organisation. 11 of these in national press.
- 12 new beneficiaries have been nationally published as case studies – named and pictured.
- 1 training session carried out for 56 HE professionals.

- Training key professionals.
- A documentary.
- A publication around the issue of estrangement.
- ‘Family Capital’ as term will become better known.

“We will build greater awareness about family estrangement”

- 450 professionals that encounter family issues will be trained.
- An audience of 10 million to be reached with press and media work.



Awareness

- 2 major changes in processes, guidance and policy in the HE sector from Student Finance England and The Office of Fair Access. Resulting from the publication of our Cambridge and Student Finance research and face to face influencing awareness raising.

- Policy makers in government & beyond to risk assess outcomes taking into account assumptions about family cohesion and support.
- For family capital to be understood as a measure of disadvantage.

“We will influence and collaborating with policy makers and professionals”

- MPs across political parties supporting the idea of family capital as a measure of disadvantage.
- 65 VCs will amend policies to take into account students with lack of family capital.
- 1 reformed ‘Family Test’.



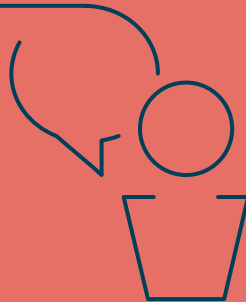
Policy

- Provision of face to face support groups in 3 areas: London, Newcastle and Sheffield.
- 15 Universities offering specific financial and accommodation support for estranged students.
- 4 information and advice guides on our website. A strong central message: the website and presence of the charity alone are a source of relief and support.

- Each beneficiary lives no more than two hours away from a face-to-face support group or workshop, with a long term goal of no more than one hour.
- Each beneficiary is able to access online support modules.

“We will deliver support to individuals who are affected by family estrangement or disownment”

- 500 people will access a support group, workshop, digital support course in each new area.
- 5 new areas, and a new digital support course.



Support



www.standalone.org.uk



For further information please contact:
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