



venturetrust

Our strategic framework 2019-2024

# See potential



Self-Worth

# Our ambition

To challenge inequality. At Venture Trust we want everyone to succeed and to continue to do so throughout their lives. At any stage in life, people can struggle, and it becomes about surviving not thriving. We support those struggling with many and complex issues, outside mainstream support and unemployed, or who may have never been in employment. This hinders their life chances and future potential. Our approach is preventative and long-term. We focus on an individual's strengths, equipping them with essential life-skills and building confidence. Together, we can tackle a cycle of harm and inequality which leaves some people in the margins of society.

We will become the 'go to' organisation for intensive person-centred personal development and therapeutic support delivered in communities, greenspaces and the Scottish wilderness to help people who need more support to realise their potential. By being evidence-led, we will advocate for better policy and practice that recognises and delivers greater equity and opportunity for those who need it most.

We commit to increase the number of people achieving their goals year on year.



## Our vision

Everyone, irrespective of their past, can achieve their potential for a healthy, happy and fulfilling life. By 2024, we aspire that more people, ready for change, build the foundations to thrive and succeed for the long term.

## Our mission

To help people to realise their potential by providing life-changing personal development.

By offering intensive learning and development in communities, greenspaces and the Scottish wilderness, we support people to gain life skills, stability and confidence. Our work aims to end cycles of disadvantage and adversity for individuals, their families and in communities.

## Our values

Our values underpin everything we do.

### Courage

We remain brave when things are tough

### Care

We will attend to people and place

### Curiosity

We are thoughtful

### Collaboration

We work together for greater impact



Supporting  
people to  
gain life skills,  
stability and  
confidence

# It's all about change

Where someone grew up, their family background or previous negative and damaging experiences - do not have to define them. We can put this right. Everyone deserves compassion, access to opportunity and justice. By sharing experiences coupled with evidence of what works, we can make the case for change. We can tackle disadvantage and inequality that is restricting people's life chances. Our strategic framework sets out to support people most in need. We believe in wider change in our society and greater equity of support and opportunity for those who need it most. Our future wellbeing and prosperity require us to offer solutions for the long term.

## Wellbeing, relationships and belonging

We aspire for everyone to enjoy better mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. With support, tackling social isolation, the underlying causes of alcohol or drug misuse or the stress of living in poor quality housing, is possible. The people we support show positive self-confidence, improved relationships and stability.

Everybody relies on public services. We believe individuals should be able to access support and advice when they need it from specialist providers in local authorities, the NHS and charities to overcome barriers.

## Safer communities - prevention, reducing reoffending, rehabilitation

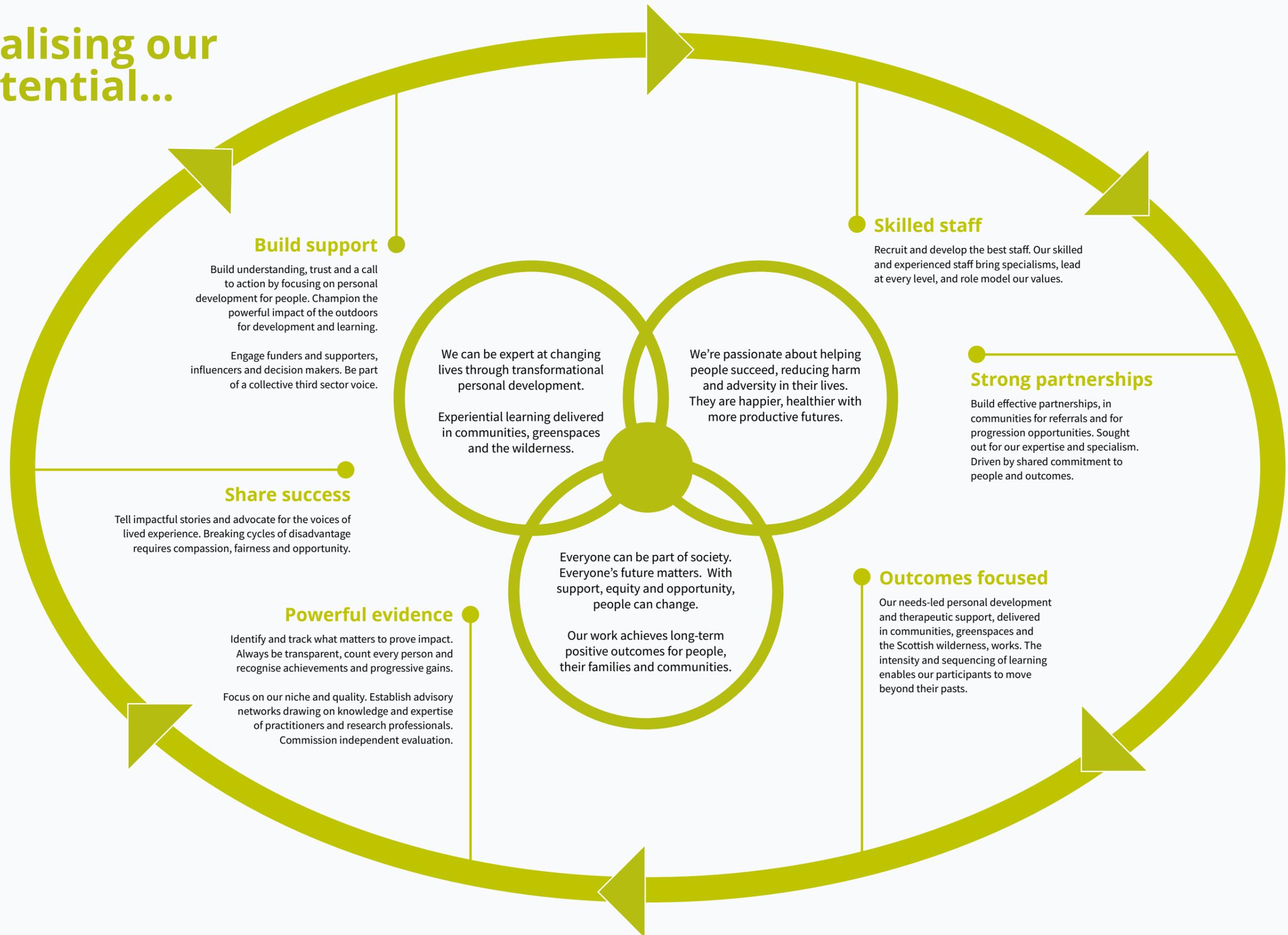
All the evidence suggests that community-based interventions are a better option than short-term prison sentences for many individuals in the criminal justice system. We believe there should be a far greater emphasis on prevention and rehabilitation alongside unpaid work and other measures of support in community sentences. Investing in reliable and effective community support and a collaborative public and third sector approach will help people get their lives back on track and away from potential involvement in crime.

## Jobs and prosperity - employability, employment, alleviating poverty

Our priority is that employers see the potential in people for their organisation. Working together we will create opportunities for individuals to experience work and be ready to contribute and learn. We can reduce stigma for individuals with previous convictions.

We believe support for employability skills, finding work and employment should reflect the foundations some people need to build. This takes time and is vital for sustained positive progressions and to build a decent standard of living.

# Realising our potential...



## Build support

Build understanding, trust and a call to action by focusing on personal development for people. Champion the powerful impact of the outdoors for development and learning.

Engage funders and supporters, influencers and decision makers. Be part of a collective third sector voice.

## Skilled staff

Recruit and develop the best staff. Our skilled and experienced staff bring specialisms, lead at every level, and role model our values.

## Strong partnerships

Build effective partnerships, in communities for referrals and for progression opportunities. Sought out for our expertise and specialism. Driven by shared commitment to people and outcomes.

## Share success

Tell impactful stories and advocate for the voices of lived experience. Breaking cycles of disadvantage requires compassion, fairness and opportunity.

## Outcomes focused

Our needs-led personal development and therapeutic support, delivered in communities, greenspaces and the Scottish wilderness, works. The intensity and sequencing of learning enables our participants to move beyond their pasts.

## Powerful evidence

Identify and track what matters to prove impact. Always be transparent, count every person and recognise achievements and progressive gains.

Focus on our niche and quality. Establish advisory networks drawing on knowledge and expertise of practitioners and research professionals. Commission independent evaluation.



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# Strategic aims and priorities

We support people to build foundations to succeed for life. We will deliver our vision by:

**Meeting the need** - reaching people in need sooner and more effectively by being responsive and visible in targeted communities. We will partner and collaborate with organisations invested in solutions and change. Over the lifetime of this strategic framework, we will enhance our support and delivery to achieve better outcomes.

**Advocating for change** - influencing and building support. We will continue to listen to the people we support and empower them to have a voice and to share their experiences - because their opinions matter and will help shape change. We will also contribute to research, establish advisory expert groups and commission independent evaluation to evidence the impact of our work and prioritise a preventative approach. By investing in more advocacy and sharing experience and evidence there will be ultimately fewer people struggling in the future.

**Working sustainably** - reflecting our values and beliefs. By attracting and developing the best staff team, how we deploy resources and care for the environment determines our long-term impact. We will seek to innovate and improve our work. By balancing the risks and benefits of our activities we can plan and manage our future successfully.

Delivering impact requires us to attract support and secure resources but also to spend it on delivering what works. We plan to grow both our voluntary income and commissioned work by developing partnerships and being innovative and entrepreneurial.

# Our approach

Our programme is voluntary, where an individual chooses change and feels ready for a programme of learning and development. We use experiential learning with cognitive and therapeutic developmental techniques to build skills and unlock confidence. This offers support and challenge, so individuals make sustained progress towards their goals. This can take time; we help people build the right foundations and protective factors to succeed for the rest of their lives.

Our intensive personal development and the powerful catalyst of the outdoors helps people gain greater understanding with confidence in themselves and how they connect with others and the wider world leading to lasting positive change. Importantly individuals are more able to overcome setbacks and navigate 'systems', such as accessing benefits, securing and sustaining a suitable home. We focus development on three aspects of life and society because everyone, irrespective of their past, can achieve their potential for a healthy, happy and fulfilling life:

**Wellbeing** - So that people have the confidence to develop positive relationships and address social isolation and loneliness. With support, individuals can find stability and be self-reliant. They can prioritise their health, specifically their mental wellbeing and tackle alcohol or substance misuse.

**Prevention and rehabilitation** - Reducing the harm of crime by supporting people at risk of offending. We will champion prevention and rehabilitation by supporting individuals to tackle complex circumstances and patterns of behaviour.

**Skills to be ready for work and future learning** - We will continue to equip people to be 'job ready', able to access mainstream support, open to further learning and more able to sustain employment to earn a decent standard of living. So they can move beyond 'getting by' or struggling in poverty.

# Meeting the need

In 2016-17, we supported people, of whom:



WITH A HISTORY OF ALCOHOL ABUSE



WITH OFFENDING BACKGROUNDS



HAD EXPERIENCED MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES



AT LEAST **35%** WITH A HISTORY OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE



APPROX.  
**12%**  
PREVIOUSLY ENROLLED IN ARMED FORCES/VETERAN



EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS



AT LEAST  
**10%**  
WITH CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

In Scotland, there are:



PREVENTION



**1,954**  
individuals diverted from prosecution in 2016-17

OFFENDING



Three-quarters (76 per cent) of total Orders commencing in 2015-16 included an element of unpaid work or other activity

UK research shows:

MENTAL HEALTH



WELLBEING



Lonely people more likely to suffer from dementia, heart disease and depression

Loneliness is likely to increase your risk of death by  
**29%**

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# About us

Since 1983, Venture Trust has led the way on intensive personal development for people, at any stage in their life, struggling with many and complex issues. We support people in their local community and with learning and development amongst nature. The outdoors offers inherent challenge for individuals to reflect on beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. With time and space away from influences at home, individuals can unlock skills and learn new, more positive, ways of approaching situations.

Our outreach and development staff are experts in building trusted professional relationships, balancing risk and reward in the outdoors and in nuancing delivery of developmental approaches to support, inspire and challenge individuals to be open to change and move forward.

We ask our staff team to be curious, skilled and committed to our values. We believe in people's rights, equity and opportunity. Everyone is motivated to help people succeed and realise their potential.

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# Be the change

By committing to change we can succeed together. We cannot do this on our own. Your support will make all the difference in helping us reach people in need and creating a future with hope, aspiration and far greater resilience for the future.

## venturetrust

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