

Looking Forward



The Elizabeth
foundation

2025 – 2030 Strategy



Our mission:

- To promote the **early identification of deafness** in babies and young children, and the promotion of **high-quality audiological care and support** for all.
- To further the **education of young deaf children**, children with additional sensory needs, their **families, support networks and wider communities**.
- To **empower deaf children to learn to listen and talk**, enabling them to become competent communicators who can advocate for themselves and face challenges with confidence and resilience.

“The Elizabeth Foundation is like a huge hug ... As soon as we started our journey with you, it was like a weight lifted off our shoulders and suddenly everything became so much easier. You have helped us find our feet, discover our place with the deaf community and become so proud that our fantastic son is deaf.” Parent of a deaf child



Strategic overview

Deafness can profoundly affect a young child's listening skills, language development, communication abilities, and social growth, particularly during the vital first five years of life. For parents, discovering that their child is deaf often brings a wave of challenges and concerns, which can feel especially overwhelming for the 92% who have no prior experience of hearing loss. Adjusting to this new reality requires courage and expert support, as parents navigate unfamiliar territory.

The Elizabeth Foundation offers expert support with a legacy of years of service. The continuity of support, the years of experience, and the children and families who have benefitted from the charity serve as a strong foundation for future growth. Providing expert support to the whole family during these early years is essential, laying a firm foundation for the future. We want to nurture the bond between deaf children and their parents, as well as between The Elizabeth Foundation and all those we serve to achieve best outcomes.

From 2025 to 2030, we will continue our work supporting families with deaf babies and young children during the critical early years, both face-to-face and online. Services will continue to help families by providing them with the information, skills, knowledge and confidence to flourish in society, facing their challenges feeling informed and capable, ready to celebrate success.

We will evolve our practice in response to sector challenges and best practice, the changing needs of our beneficiaries and through efficient, sustainable growth.

We will remain focused on equality, diversity and inclusion, involving service users in our development whilst progressing professional relationships to raise awareness of the needs of deaf children and families and maximising our impact.

This strategy outlines the Foundation's priorities, driven by external feedback and insights from the families we serve.



Strategic Priorities for 2025-2030

We are committed to five priorities over the next five years:

- **Strengthen** our digital transformation for expanded reach.
- **Enhance** impact measurement and transparency for face-to-face and online services.
- **Involve** family and community to inform all our services.
- **Modernise** and build on fundraising and revenue diversification.
- **Streamline** operational efficiency.

Current landscape

The charitable sector is experiencing a demand for greater transparency and accountability. Technology is advancing at a fast pace, both in society as a whole and in hearing technology. Families of deaf children require both practical support and emotional reassurance, underscoring the importance of a holistic approach to our mission. Trends in the sector, such as digital transformation and operational efficiencies, also shape our strategic plan.

"It is impossible to fully describe what you have collectively given our family. You welcomed us with open arms three years ago and immediately became a place of reassurance for our son and for us. It has been absolutely the most unassumingly inclusive place that our son visits; even when we did, you saw no barriers, only possibilities! You taught our son to listen and to learn and to enjoy both. It remains a place of enduring positivity, comfort and ambition. We will be forever grateful." Parent of a deaf child

Strengthen



We will strengthen our digital transformation for expanded reach.

Context and current impact

Our data highlights the significant challenges faced by young children and families, particularly in the areas of speech, language, communication, and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). To address these issues, we developed the Let's Listen and Talk programme in 2017. Let's Listen and Talk is an innovative, personalised online resource designed to support the development of listening and communication skills in young deaf children, empowering their parents and professionals. With over 1,400 global subscribers, Let's Listen and Talk combines structured information, practical activities, guidance on hearing technology, and family stories into a comprehensive and accessible package.

To broaden our impact and meet evolving needs, we propose the following strategic developments for our online programme, Let's Listen and Talk:

- **Training for early years practitioners:**
 - Adapt Let's Listen and Talk into a training course for general use by early years providers, including SENCOs and NVQ courses in early childhood development.
 - Emphasise foundation skills in listening, the precursor to language development.
 - Bridge the gap in current early years training by focusing on the stages of learning to listen as a cornerstone for language acquisition and future learning.
- **Specialised training for professionals working with deaf children:**
 - Enhance Let's Listen and Talk for use by Teachers of the Deaf, Speech and Language Therapists, Cochlear Implant Rehabilitation teams, and other professionals.
 - Provide training modules that build knowledge of early listening, language, and communication development.
 - Support continued professional development, aligning with positive feedback from experienced users globally.

- **Relaunch for parents and families:**
 - Redesign the programme with a focus on fewer words, more videos and enhanced usability.
 - Improve its integration into family support services for face-to-face support, coupled with at-home access for sustained learning.
 - Maintain the programme as a free resource for families, ensuring inclusive access to high-quality guidance.

Inclusivity and accessibility

Through our online services, we deliver comprehensive, joined-up care for diverse populations, including those with complex and additional needs. This inclusive approach ensures that families can overcome financial and geographical barriers to access exceptional services.

Alignment with government goals

Our ambitions align with government priorities around early years language and literacy by:

- Addressing skills shortages among early years practitioners.
- Empowering families to play an active role in their child's listening, language and communication development.
- Strengthening the support available to both families and professionals through accessible, innovative resources.

Call to action

We invite collaboration and support to expand Let's Listen and Talk's reach and impact, ensuring the next generation has the tools and resources to thrive in their communication development.



Enhance



We will enhance impact measurement and transparency for face-to-face and online services.

Using measurable data to demonstrate progress is important for several reasons:

- **Accountability and transparency:** Clear, quantifiable data provide evidence that resources are being effectively used to achieve meaningful outcomes. This builds trust with supporters, donors, and stakeholders by showing the real-world impact of our work.
- **Informed decision-making:** Data allow our team to identify what works best and where improvements are needed. This helps refine and tailor programmes to better meet the needs of deaf children and their families.
- **Demonstrating value:** Measurable progress showcases the value of our programmes and justifies their importance to funders and policymakers. It can also bolster advocacy efforts to secure additional support.
- **Motivation and validation:** For families and professionals involved, seeing measurable results can validate their efforts and inspire further engagement.
- **Continuous improvement:** Feedback loops created by data collection encourage improvement of services, ensuring they stay relevant and effective over time.

To demonstrate how we help deaf children to achieve critical milestones and demonstrate added-value, we propose the following strategic actions:

- **Track progress:** Enhance our data-driven framework to track children's/parents' progress, improving both our outcomes and the information we are able to share with our supporters and donors.
- **Share information:** Share regular impact reports, testimonials, and case studies, showcasing how our approach has positively changed lives.
- **Invite feedback:** Create feedback loops with families, ensuring that their experiences guide and help refine our programmes.

Involve



We will involve family and community to inform all our services.

Supporting families is central to the work of the charity. The Elizabeth Foundation recognises that families are the most important educators of their deaf children.

The Elizabeth Foundation sees its role as providing timely support and specialist expertise in a wide variety of ways so that families can better develop their child's language and communication skills and feel confident advocating on their behalf.

In order to involve families to ensure they feel fully supported on their journey, we will:

- **Involve alumni:** Develop a mentorship network where alumni families offer guidance to new families, creating a strong community.
- **Work with partners:** Partner with local organisations to provide wraparound services for our families, from diagnosis, to counselling, communication and educational support.
- **Listen to our beneficiaries:** Use surveys and focus groups to gather family and community feedback, ensuring their insights shape our services.

“Words just aren't good enough to tell you how thankful we are for all of the team at The Elizabeth Foundation. You gave us hope and strength when we were confused and utterly lost. You have transformed our lives and taught us all how to embrace our journey. We will never forget our warm welcome into The Elizabeth Foundation family. Thank-you from the bottom of our hearts.” Parent of a deaf child



Modernise

"I just wanted to drop you a line to thank you and all the team for making me feel so welcome yesterday. It was wonderful to meet you all in person, and to be able to sit in on some of the classes and see the team in action. It always makes such a difference to see a project first hand, and it was a real joy to have just a small glimpse into the difference that you are making in the lives of deaf children and their families." Grant funder

We will modernise and build on fundraising and revenue diversification.

To modernise and build on our funding model to maintain and improve a diverse revenue stream, our strategy is to:

- **Extend our reach:** Improve digital fundraising and Ambassador programme to broaden our reach and engage younger audiences.
- **Engage corporate sponsors:** Establish partnerships with corporate sponsors, aligning them with specific programmes for deaf children.
- **Secure our future:** Expand our legacy giving program, inviting supporters to secure our mission's future through planned gifts.
- **Build long-term relationships:** Manage relationships with our donors effectively to enhance long-term relationships, never forgetting the difference that they make.

Importance of diversification in fundraising

Diversifying revenue streams ensures stability, resilience, and long-term success through:

- **Reduced risk and enhanced stability:** Relying on a single source of funding, such as grants or major donors, exposes charities to significant financial risk if those sources diminish. Diversification spreads this risk and creates a more robust financial foundation.
- **Adaptation to changing environments:** Diversification helps charities remain resilient in the face of economic downturns, policy changes, or shifts in donor behaviour.
- **Increased opportunities:** Different types of fundraising efforts tap into new donor demographics, expanding reach and potential funding pools.
- **Innovation and growth:** Diversified revenue streams encourage innovation by allowing charities to experiment with new programs and approaches without over-reliance on a single funding source.
- **Enhanced credibility:** A diverse funding base signals a charity's stability and professionalism, increasing donor confidence and appeal to funders.

Streamline



We will streamline our operational efficiency.

Operational efficiencies enable a charity to do more with less, build trust, and sustain its efforts over time. By ensuring resources are used effectively and efficiently, the organisation can focus on its ultimate goal: creating a meaningful and lasting impact in the communities it serves.

As a charity, we want to control costs to maximise resources for direct services. To do this, we will:

- **Adopt cloud-based management systems** where savings are available.
- **Collaborate with similar charities and external organisations** to share opportunities, resources and knowledge, reducing administrative costs whilst widening reach..
- **Implement sustainable operational practices** to reduce costs, reinforcing our commitment to responsible resource management.
- **Manage any surplus funds** to achieve the best return available at low risk in an increasingly uncertain economic environment.
- **Implement measures to minimize the risk** of any costly interruptions to the charity's work due to safety or security breaches, whether on or offline.

"We cannot thank you all enough for the support you have given our son over the past three years. We know that he is leaving for school totally ready, with excellent listening and communication skills. Your patience, expert knowledge and encouragement have been invaluable to him and us, and we have watched his confidence flourish as a result. You are all amazing!"

Parents of a deaf child

Looking forward

Our strategy is deeply informed by the feedback of the families we serve. Their experiences reflect the life-changing impact of our work and highlight areas for future growth.

The following story illustrates the journey of one child, Ella (pictured below), whose time with us exemplifies the transformative impact of The Elizabeth Foundation's support. Stories like Ella's demonstrate the profound impact that early intervention and specialized support can have on deaf children and their families. Her journey from struggling with cochlear implants to thriving in preschool reflects the core values and mission of The Elizabeth Foundation.

Conclusion

The Elizabeth Foundation's 2025-2030 strategy reflects our commitment to providing life-changing support for deaf children and their families in the years ahead. **Guided by our families' experiences and stories like Ella's which continue to inspire us, we will innovate, evolve, and grow to ensure that every child in our care has the tools they need to thrive.** This is our mission, and together with our families, supporters, and partners, we will continue to make a lasting difference.



Ella's story

"Ella was born in 2019, and after failing the new-born hearing screening, we were told she was profoundly deaf. Luckily, we were immediately allocated a fantastic Teacher of the Deaf who told us about The Elizabeth Foundation. I was initially hesitant to drive down from London to Portsmouth every week, but after a phone chat with Julie I needed to go and see what it was all about.

"We never looked back from our first session when Ella was seven weeks old. She got very little from her hearing aids but loved the baby group. She began to develop early listening skills despite probably not being able to hear anything. Lying on the big drum, feeling the vibrations, and sensing the wind chimes were some of Ella's favourite things to do. Thursdays swiftly became the highlight of our week.

"During her first year, we went through the cochlear implant assessment. The scans revealed Ella had incomplete cochleae and thin hearing nerves. No one could tell us if implantation would be possible, let alone the outcome. The view was that she would probably only have access to environmental sound and would rely on lip reading and sign at best. Thanks, however, to an incredibly talented surgeon, just after her first birthday Ella received partial bilateral implants.

"To start with, Ella hated her cochlear implants, pulled them off constantly, and refused to wear them. Julie and Emma reassured us that one day it would click into place and she would want to wear them. A tip from Julie to get audiology to adjust a setting was the turning point. Ella started to accept them more, and we saw daily increases in her understanding.

"Ella moved up to Nicki's toddler class where sitting and listening was a challenge – to say the least! However, Nicki and Lily's unwavering patience meant Ella could learn in her own style, even if it was under the table. Slowly, as her understanding improved, so did her behaviour and ability to listen. We started to hear babble and a few incomprehensible words.

"Before we knew it, Ella was ready to move up to Rachel's preschool class for two days a week, which is where her language finally took off. She adores going to 'Rachel's house', sits and listens to every word, and loves to tell both Rachel and the other children what to do!

"It is entirely thanks to the support she has received from The Elizabeth Foundation that Ella has defied the odds to have the listening and speaking skills she has today. Her life and ours have been transformed. We will all be sad when the day comes for Ella to leave to go to mainstream school, but she has been given the best start to her education that we could ask for." Ella's parents



The Elizabeth Foundation

Helping deaf children learn to listen and talk since 1981

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Registered charity number 293835

Incorporating The Beethoven Fund for Deaf Children

"A huge thank-you for making a difference in our family's lives. You supported us from the very beginning. I remember, even now, the day we got the diagnosis and you were there for us to ensure that our daughter would have all the support she needs and that we as a family would have all the support that we would need. We will be forever grateful." Parents of a deaf child