

# Strategic Plan 2024-2028

An end to Youth  
Homelessness in  
Northern Ireland

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YOUR GOALS  
HIGH  
STOP  
YOU  
there...

**MACS**

SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

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# ABOUT MACS

MACS, the leading specialist youth homelessness charity in Northern Ireland, has been making a significant impact for over 30 years. As a dynamic and innovative organisation, we are driven by strong core values that guide everything we do. Our latest strategy, developed in collaboration with our Board, staff, young people and stakeholders, embodies our commitment to ending youth homelessness. We are excited about the difference we can make and remain agile in our approach to creating meaningful change.





# WHAT WE DO



## SUPPORTED HOUSING SERVICE "Move In to Move On" (Established 1990)

MACS Supported Housing Services play a vital role in supporting young people 16-21yrs leaving care and homeless young people, as they transition towards independent living. By offering individualised support tailored to each young person's unique needs, the service aims to foster interdependence and empower individuals in managing their own tenancies. The Supported Housing Service is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where young people can grow, learn, and prepare for their future.

### Overview of Supported Housing Locations:

**Belfast** : 18 self-contained flats.

**Downpatrick** : 8 self-contained flats.

**Newry** : 7 self-contained flats.

**Lisburn** : 9 self-contained flats.







## **WELLBEING SERVICE - MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT** **"DARE TO DREAM" (ESTABLISHED 2000)**

The Wellbeing Service supports children and young people aged 16-25 in the South Eastern Trust areas through various initiatives. Through personalised one-to-one support, mentoring, and group work, our service strives to create a nurturing environment where young people facing mental health challenges can thrive. Our goal is to empower them to pursue their dreams and aspirations while helping them build strong, supportive networks that can sustain them on their journey.

Volunteers play a crucial role in this service, engaging with young people whilst offering guidance and inspiration. Additionally, the program promotes social connections amongst young people, which is essential for building resilience and enhancing overall mental health. The Wellbeing Service empowers young people, helping them to navigate challenges and develop a sense of community and belonging.



**FLOATING SUPPORT**  
BUILDING FUTURES TOGETHER

## **FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE** **"BUILDING FUTURES TOGETHER" (ESTABLISHED 2003)**

MACS Floating Support Service is dedicated to supporting young people aged 16-25 across four key areas: Belfast, Lisburn, Newry, and Downpatrick. Our service is voluntary, flexible, and person-centred, focusing on addressing homelessness or the risk of homelessness. Through a holistic approach, we empower young people to establish and maintain independent living within their communities. Each young person receives a tailored support plan that caters to their unique needs. Currently, we support 127 young people in Greater Belfast, 79 in Downpatrick, 72 in Lisburn, and 25 in Newry and surrounding areas at any given time.

Additionally, the Belfast team has expanded to include a Prison Resettlement Team, which supports 20 young people who have navigated the criminal justice system and require support addressing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Furthermore, our Shared Tenancy Project, developed in partnership with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, supports 40 young people across the region, promoting shared living arrangements and fostering community connections. Through these initiatives, MACS Floating Support Service aims to provide sustainable solutions and support systems for young people, helping them to transition successfully into independent living and prevent the risk of homelessness.



## **PARTICIPATION SERVICE** **"LED BY YOU" (ESTABLISHED 2016)**

Led by You is an empowering service designed to amplify the voices of young people with lived experience. By actively involving them in decision-making processes, it creates a platform for their insights and perspectives to shape the work of MACS. Young People engage in forums and locality-based subgroups, ensuring that their concerns and ideas are heard at multiple levels in the organisation and the community. In addition, young people have the chance to participate in fundraising events and volunteering opportunities, allowing them to contribute meaningfully to the community while developing their own skills and confidence. This approach not only fosters personal growth among young people but also enriches MACS's services by incorporating their unique viewpoints and experiences. Through the Led By You Service, MACS demonstrates a commitment to collaboration and inclusivity, ensuring that young people are listened to and are able to influence decisions about their lives.



# OUR VISION:

An end to Youth Homelessness in Northern Ireland



## TOGETHERNESS

All members of society are connected. What affects one of us affects us all. We share a responsibility to end youth homelessness in Northern Ireland.

MACS exists to support and empower children and young people to leave homelessness behind and build positive futures. We cannot do this alone.

MACS exists to support and empower children and young people to prevent and address homelessness.

We develop innovative partnerships and constructive, cohesive relationships internally and across all sectors of society, uniting people to create better outcomes for children and young people, bring a positive impact in the community and to realise our vision.

Together, we can end youth homelessness in Northern Ireland.

## DIGNITY

We hold our young people in high regard, we are non-judgmental and treat everyone with dignity and respect. We value diversity, challenge discrimination and create inclusive safe spaces for all.

## PURPOSE

We are practical, with a 'hands on' and a 'can do' attitude. Everything we do is done with integrity. In our pursuit of excellence, we are open and accountable for our actions. We are trustworthy and do what we can to support young people in their journey away from homelessness.





## OUR MISSION:

Together we will empower young people on their journey to find a safe place to call home and build brighter futures.

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## OUR VALUES:

Everything we do as an organisation is underpinned by our core values. We live these values in the way we interact with colleagues, children and young people and all external stakeholders.

### RESILIENCE

Inspired by the resilience of our young people, we are determined, and we stick with each other. We build on our strengths; learn and grow from experience; adapt and innovate in an evolving environment.

### EMPOWERMENT

We encourage, equip and empower young people to transform their lives and find a safe place to call home.

### COMPASSION

We are caring and compassionate. We empathise, support, and encourage young people because we believe in their potential.





# TRANSFORMATION

**Aim 1: Innovate and transform service delivery for young people**

As we adapt to an increasingly digital world, we are committed to embracing technology responsibly. By developing innovative approaches to our work, we aim to enhance the delivery of services to our children and young people, strengthen our governance, and elevate the profile of MACS.

- 1.1** Improve efficiency in project management
- 1.2** Undertake an end-to-end digital transformation programme
- 1.3** Develop our website and social media presence

## GOALS

- 1a** Develop a new case management system
- 1b** Introduce a cloud-based system utilising Microsoft 365
- 1c** Invest in Digital Marketing and increase presence on social media as the leading specialist youth homeless charity in Northern Ireland





# CAPACITY

## Aim 2: Building capacity to support more young people

We understand that in order to deliver robust stewardship in the provision of services for children and young people we must ensure that all our systems and processes are exemplary. We are focused on financial sustainability and the capacity to deliver our services.

- 2.1** Deliver a high standard of governance and accountability in our organisation
- 2.2** Increase our accreditations and awards
- 2.3** Increase public and stakeholder knowledge of our organisation
- 2.4** Improve communication across the organisation
- 2.5** Develop partnerships and new funding opportunities

### GOALS

- 2a** Annual internal audit plan delivered overseen by Committees and Board of Directors
- 2b** Obtain four new awards of recognition and excellence
- 2c** MACS is instantly recognisable as the leading specialist youth homeless charity in Northern Ireland
- 2e** All staff benefit from effective communication across the organisation and together improve the lives of young people
- 2f** Continue our positive working relationships with Supporting People, NIHE, HSCT's, PHA, Every Youth, The Royal Foundation's Homewards, LLamau (Cardiff), and The Children's Society. Develop two new partnerships.





# SUSTAINABILITY

## Aim 3: Providing Sustainable and Reliable Services for young people

We know that positive and trusting relationships are core in the delivery of services to young people and we cannot provide that without a skilled and passionate team. We are committed to investing in our staff and making MACS an amazing organisation to work for.

- 3.1** Implement a recruitment and retention strategy
- 3.2** Support and develop our highly skilled and motivated staff team
- 3.3** Implement an income generation strategy

### GOALS

- 3a** MACS is recognised as an employer of choice
- 3b** All staff have accredited qualifications for their role and opportunities for specialisms.
- 3c** Increase staff salaries





# POSITIVE OUTCOMES

## **Aim 4: Driving advocacy, collaboration and participation to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people**

We are driven to create opportunities which have a positive impact on the children and young people we support. Working together we can make a lasting difference and strive for an end to youth homelessness in Northern Ireland.

- 4.1** Develop existing and new housing options for homeless young people and young people leaving care
- 4.2** Grow our focus on prevention of homelessness for young people
- 4.3** Implement Housing First for Youth Model
- 4.4** Develop services for young people seeking asylum and Unaccompanied and Separated Children
- 4.5** Develop a collaborative and specialist approach toward therapeutic interventions.
- 4.6** Actively raise the voice of young people with lived experience
- 4.7** Increase the population of young people in service creation and development

### **GOALS**

- 4a** Expansion of Shared Tenancy, Prison Resettlement, Floating Support and new housing options for homeless young people, aged 18-25
- 4b** Work in partnership with Llamau to deliver the UPSTREAM model of homeless prevention in Northern Ireland and deliver a resilience programme in school with The Children's Society in partnership with A Million and Me funding from Children in Need
- 4c** Deliver Housing First for Youth model with A Million and Me funding, from Children in Need
- 4d** Pilot an HMO model of shared tenancy for young people seeking asylum
- 4e** Introduce multidisciplinary skills in teams and implement a trauma informed practice / psychologically informed environment model in all services
- 4f** Young peoples lived experience is shared with key decision makers
- 4g** Young People's recommendations shape our service delivery



# MACS

SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Any Questions?

**Contact us now!**



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