

THE BIG PICTURE

A Youth Work Strategy for East Belfast.

2022-27



FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

This document underlines the determination to involve young people in East Belfast with youth services that are relevant, understand their needs and are committed to working alongside them. The planned actions and measurements have been identified from ongoing work with young people across East Belfast and East Belfast Youth Practitioners Forum.

These young people have been born post the Good Friday Agreement and are making meaning and giving voice to their lives during times characterised by Brexit and Pandemic issues. I welcome the clarity and passion expressed in the document. It signals that youth work in East Belfast will continue to be collaborative and aspirational.

HUGH CAMPBELL
SENIOR LECTURER, ULSTER UNIVERSITY
CHAIR, EASTSIDE LEARNING.

“
THIS VISION – IT’S ENCOURAGING, SUPPORTS YOUNG PEOPLE AND SHOWS PEOPLE CARE ABOUT OUR NEEDS.”



“
IT’S ABOUT HAVING SOMEONE TO BELIEVE IN US, ENCOURAGING US TO BELIEVE IN OURSELVES.”



VISION

A greater East Belfast that **values all young people** through youth work.



MISSION

To develop a youth work strategy that will **support and empower young people** to flourish within their community of East Belfast. To be responsive to the needs of young people by providing opportunities that will enable them to enhance their future selves.



VALUES

- **Responsive**
- **Sharing of knowledge/skills** (partnership/ collaborative working)
- **Supportive**
- **Relational**
- **Inclusive**
- **Respectful**



AIMS

1

Support young people to have positive self-esteem, identity and belonging.



2

Young people actively involved in influencing and developing policy.



We will:

- Encourage young people to express themselves and explore their identity
- Promote equality by providing an inclusive environment for young people
- Support young people’s mental health and wellbeing through creating a safe space.

Measurement

- Capture and celebrate young people for who they are through events
- Provide relevant training opportunities for youth workers and young people.

We will:

- Listen to young people, valuing their voices and support them to take action
- Develop, improve, and empower young people in their understanding of political structures
- Support access to policy makers and decision takers by removing barriers and creating meaningful channels of communication.

Measurement

- Regular youth led events to use their voice and have their voice heard
- Connect young people with policy makers and decision takers
- Establish platforms to support young people to lobby and advocate.

3

Inter-sectoral collaboration and co-operation when working with young people.



4

Young people taking opportunities to reach their potential.



We will:

- Have an active and influential East Belfast Youth Practitioner’s Forum for youth workers
- Prevent duplication through meaningful collaborative and partnership opportunities
- Seek, share and support opportunities for East Belfast.

Measurement

- The effectiveness of collaborative programmes will be measured through sharing practice
- Sharing information, funding opportunities and effective models of working through online eBulletin
- Raise awareness of East Belfast youth worker tool kit.

We will:

- Provide participative structures and build capacity for volunteering
- Provide opportunities that are relevant, accessible and encourage young people to take ownership
- Signpost and support young people into employment, education, training and beyond
- Advocate for flexible and needs led programmes.

Measurement

- Access to relevant training opportunities for young people
- Showcase young people’s creativity, talents, and skills
- Sharing young people’s successes.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Ballybeen Peer Education Project
- Oasis Caring in Action (Team Programme)
- YouthAction Northern Ireland (Bloomfield Young Men’s Group)
- East Belfast Alternatives (START Programme)
- East Belfast Area Project (YVA Group)
- Dreamscheme Northern Ireland
- Youth Initiatives

YOUTH WORKERS

- East Belfast Youth Work Strategy Working Group:
- East Belfast Community Development Agency
 - Belfast City Council, Dee Street Community Centre
 - Ballybeen Womens Centre-Peer Education Project
 - East Belfast Alternatives
 - East Belfast Area Project
 - Youth Initiatives
- East Belfast Youth Practitioner’s Forum Members



“
VALUING YOUNG PEOPLE’S VOICE AND GIVING US A PLACE AT THE TABLE.”



Design: shesaid.design