

**connecting  
leading  
enriching**



**STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-30**



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**boys & girls clubs:** connecting | leading | enriching

Over the previous 5 years, BGC has faced massive challenges, from policy changes, transitions at senior management to shortages of funding. We have embraced these challenges, continued to strengthen the charity and deliver high quality support services across Northern Ireland. Our commitment is to build a better society for all, and we will invest in the development of children, young people and youth work infrastructure to achieve this.

The following strategic plan is our roadmap and will guide the development of our operational plans and charitable priorities. In 2030, we will have achieved these objectives below and will celebrate 90 years of service, a milestone that very few charities reach. I want to thank staff, volunteers, members and sponsors for their input in the formation of this ambitious strategy and looking forward to reviewing progress and celebrating success together.

## Chair Forward



Donal  
Kennedy

## CEO Forward



Michial  
Dudley

As we embark on our 2025-2030 strategic plan, it is important to reflect on the success of our previous strategy to see how far we have come. Our charity has been in existence since 1940, overcoming unprecedented adversity to provide vital services. Throughout these periods, we have always had a carefully designed blueprint to provide direction and navigate through difficult times. This strategy is no different.

Since October 2024, we have held ongoing consultations with young people, volunteers, youth workers, board members, staff and sponsors. Throughout the engagements, we asked them to critically reflect on where we are in the context of youth services across NI, identify our value proposition, explore upcoming challenges/opportunities, examine key themes impacting our service users and explore innovative methods to deliver quality services. Our research highlights that significant challenges and changes across the youth sector are imminent, and we must prepare for these accordingly. We aim to approach this difficult period with tenacity, adopting a strengths-based approach and maximising opportunities to enrich services.

These consultations have provided the foundation of our 2025-2030 strategic plan. While this document will guide us, we understand that our sector is unpredictable, and the needs of service users can be reactionary and complex. We will continue to evolve due to everchanging need and external influences.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the process of developing this plan, it really was a collective effort. I look forward to working in partnership with all members as we move towards 2030 and take Boys & Girls Clubs into an exciting new chapter.

# Background

**Boys & Girls Clubs (NI) was founded in 1940 as an independent, voluntary association of six local youth clubs. Today, we have transformed into a regional voluntary youth organisation (RVYO), a registered charity and limited company with a membership of over 140 local youth organisations.**

This membership is diverse and includes part-time & full-time youth clubs, community organisations, schools, and sports clubs. Throughout our history, we have remained cross-community with a focus on bringing communities together. At any given period, the organisation operates youth projects and activities financed by, or supported through, a range of public and private sponsors.

We have an active presence in both rural and urban areas across Northern Ireland, with our head office stationed in Belfast. This ensures we are supporting children, young people, and youth organisations, irrespective of geographical location, status, or belief.

**With an 85-year track record of effectively supporting the youth sector, we have positively influenced thousands of lives and have contributed to establishing and maintaining a strong youth work infrastructure across Northern Ireland.**



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*“Since 1940, Boys & Girls Clubs have a long and rich history of delivering quality services for all. They have continued to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of local youth organisations, youth workers and give young people some unforgettable memories. Without their presence in the sector, a lot of local clubs would not be here today, and young people would not have a safe and warm place to learn and develop”.*



David has been involved with Boys & Girls Clubs for over 65 years, witnessing some key milestones and helping the charity navigate through significant societal change. David started out as a volunteer, spearheading some of our international youth programmes before serving the Board of Trustees with distinction in various roles, most notably as treasurer in 2022. His amazing work was recognised, and he was awarded an MBE for services to young people in 1997. David continues to advocate on behalf of children, young people and the voluntary sector and is still actively involved in Boys & Girls Clubs.



*“My main memories are being fortunate enough to be part of such a dedicated and supporting team and to have met such wonderful people. Over the years the staff have strived hard to develop the Boys and Girls Club of NI into a thriving and developing cross community organisation. It has been an honour to have served on the committee with them all. It is now my honour to be your President, and I hope in some way I have over the years provided them with encouragement and support along the way. I wish them the very best for the future”.*

**Our President - David McMullen MBE**

## Our vision

**A fair, vibrant and inclusive society which values and champions the participation of all young people.**

**Boys & Girls Clubs is a membership driven youth work charity that is committed to building a strong youth service where young people can aspire, evolve and thrive.**

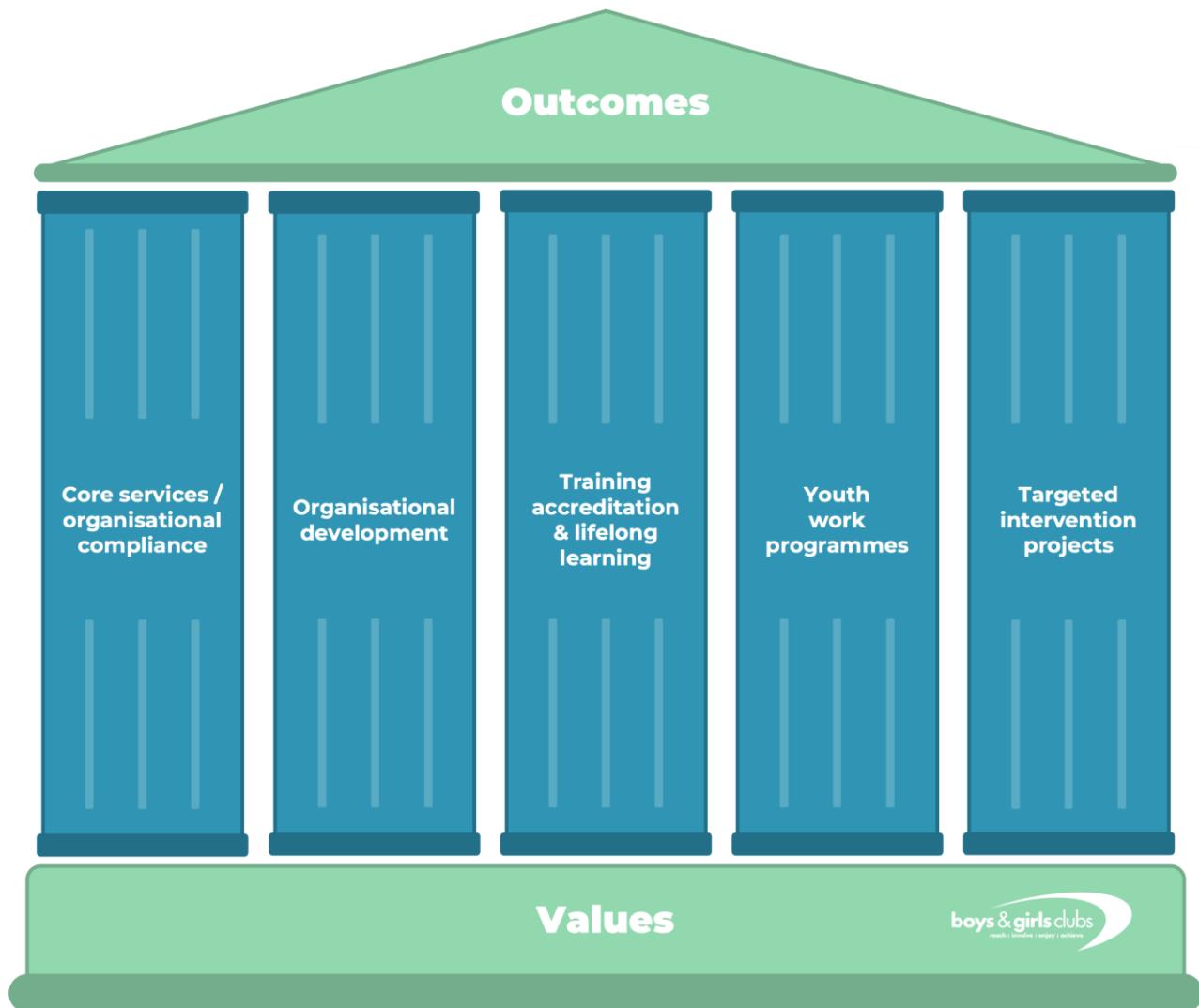
## Our mission



# What we do

We work in partnership with local membership organisations to provide wraparound support through membership services, compliance and guidance, intervention projects, accredited training, networking opportunities, policy guidance, governance support, and an extensive programme of youth activities.

## Five Pillars of Our Service



Each year, our professional staff team works directly with 3,000 children, young people, volunteers and youth workers. In addition, we indirectly support a wider network of 20,000 children & young people from across Northern Ireland.

**This holistic approach to support creates rich and sustainable outcomes for both young people and those working on their behalf.**

# Strategic priorities & key objectives



## Strategic priorities

The following strategic aims will determine our work priorities and operational plan for 2025 – 2030:

1. Ensure financial sustainability of the charity.
2. Provide comprehensive health & wellbeing services and support for both young people and youth work staff.
3. Create, initiate and deliver learning opportunities for young people, volunteers and youth workers through non-formal education & accredited training programmes.
4. Build positive community relations by bringing membership organisations from different backgrounds together to participate in integrated activities.
5. Build and strengthen the capacity of membership organisations through strong leadership, mentorship and representation.
6. Give children and young people a voice by co-creating a comprehensive curriculum of sports and arts-based education programmes to spark passion and instil life-long habits.
7. Foster an environment for connectivity and collaboration; creating conditions where members can find mutual support, exchange views and network.
8. Raise awareness and stimulate interest in youth work among the public by highlighting the personal and social growth of those involved in youth services.
9. Pro-actively support the further development of rural youth work and ensure that regardless of location, youth services are accessible for all and held on par with urban youth work.



## Quotes from our strategic planning day and qualitative data collection:

*“Across all the strategic priorities, the three core themes that Boys & Girls Clubs are known for should remain constant; health & wellbeing, good relations & membership support”*

**Jacqui – John Paul Youth Club**

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*“Boys & Girls Clubs have positioned themselves as specialists in bridging the link between youth work and health & wellbeing. This should be a key theme”*

**Sarah Meehan – Upper Andersonstown Community Forum**

*“As we struggle in the sector with recruitment and retention of staff at local level, we need BGC to help us develop the new generation of youth workers”*

**Dympna – Omagh Boys & Girls Clubs**

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*“We’re an award-winning organisation when it comes to health & wellbeing. It should be front and centre to what we do and a priority moving forward”*

**Aine – Youth Council member**

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*“It is amazing to work with people with such passion for supporting children and young people. I believe that the organisation can offer communities much more value by establishing a local presence. From my work with Radius and as a funder, I see a huge gap I believe Boys & Girls Clubs can explore further”*

**Sharon – Radius Housing**

*“It is evident there is a strong drive and passion from everyone across the organisation, your track record speaks for itself, and I have no doubt you will be marking off these strategic objectives as complete in 2030”*

**Derek K – Strategic investment Board**

# Key objectives

By 2030, Boys & Girls Clubs will:

- 1 Have an income model that has a variety of sponsors and generates a financial base of £500k per annum.
- 2 Source new offices that are integrated into a community and will enable the charity to have a frontline presence and stronger community connections across NI.
- 3 Establish corporate business sponsors that are passionate about making a difference in the lives of the next generation.
- 4 Build a social enterprise or CIC that leverages internal capabilities and enables the charity to generate independent revenue streams.
- 5 Develop and support our National Youth Committee to co-design intervention projects and programmes around the theme of health & wellbeing.
- 6 Expand the charity into areas where there are gaps in provision and explore the possibilities of international connections (especially expanding services to the ROI).
- 7 Conduct research to investigate the relationship between sport, physical activity and youth work, focusing specifically on its value and impact.
- 8 Develop and identify curriculum resources that can be used to raise youth work standards and knowledge around quality assurance, impact measurement and health & wellbeing to ensure we are capturing all outcomes and demonstrating the real value of youth work.
- 9 Continue to champion safeguarding among local organisations through our Access NI checks, accredited safeguarding support and checklist for effective safeguarding documents.
- 10 Establish local BGC hubs in areas where there is a gap in provision or organisations are struggling to keep services open.
- 11 Have an annual co-designed curriculum of sports and arts-based educational programmes, impacting approximately 3000 annual participants.
- 12 Upskill 2000 young people and volunteers with accreditations that hold currency and are transferrable to careers they are interested in.
- 13 Raise standards and enrich practice through delivery of Leadership & Management qualifications through the Chartered Management Institute. This will provide CPD for youth workers and contribute to a strong voluntary sector infrastructure across Northern Ireland.
- 14 Expand and increase our membership to 200 local youth organisations.
- 15 Provide wraparound support for local organisations regarding compliance and continue to use collective bargaining power to reduce costs for members.
- 16 Continue to promote good governance and support best practice across membership organisations.
- 17 Create and implement a tailored practitioner-centred framework to support the development of key competences to aid professional practice.
- 18 Strengthen our relationship with rural youth work providers by establishing a forum to further enrich rural youth work practice and employ a member of staff to champion this.

# Strategy implementation

Boys & Girls Clubs will ensure that the necessary resources, systems and structures are in place to successfully implement the strategy by doing the following:

## **Put strong governance and structures in place for accountability:**

Boys & Girls Clubs NI is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and is a registered charity (NIC102731) and a company limited by guarantee (NI615277).

BGC is managed by 12 trustees, 8 of which must comprise of representatives from our regional membership and four places are reserved for co-opted members (professionals appointed due to expertise and experience). In essence, the charity is owned by the membership we serve.

**1**

To achieve the strategic objectives, we will use our trustee sub-group, GRAFT committee (governance, risk, audit, finance & technology) to review the progress of the strategy. This group will provide quarterly updates to the Board of Trustees to ensure that accountability measures are implemented. The Quality Assurance Forum will also be involved in the process, their function is monitoring and evaluating services on a quarterly basis and creating a two-way channel of feedback across members, board representatives and staff. The CEO will work across both sub-groups to review progress and ensure the successful implementation of the strategic plan.

**2**

## **Have the right people, in the right places (personnel):**

We currently have a growing team of 27 professional staff members working across various departments in the organisation and a dedicated team of volunteers. To cover the vast geographical spread and maximise our impact, we appoint area workers to ensure that we have a presence in communities across NI. A key aspect to the success of this plan is investing in our internal staff, ensuring that they are the best equipped practitioners to support, nurture and enrich youth work delivery.

To ensure that we can carry out the objectives listed above, we will devise detailed workplans with specific strategic objectives allocated to the appropriate staff members based on skills, experience and expertise. These will be monitored over the duration of the strategy in line with our supervision and appraisal procedures. The appendix provides an illustration of our organisational chart, demonstrating clear lines of communication, support in place and specialised staff in roles to reflect priorities above.

## Invest in resources:

To successfully achieve the objectives, we must have the appropriate resources needed. To sustain the personnel and expense, we must secure a base of £500k each year. This will allow us to have the necessary personnel in place, training opportunities, and business expertise whilst adhering to financial prudence.

3

## Communicate progress:

All stakeholders will be kept informed of progress against strategic priorities. We will achieve this by developing a communications plan, discussing progress at our members forum and providing an overview to all members at our AGM.

4

## Organisational Chart/Structure:

As stated above in personnel, we have designed a structure that is departmentalised against strategic objectives to ensure there is a clear mechanism of accountability, this is detailed in our operational plan.

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**boys & girls clubs**  
reach : involve : enjoy : achieve

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