

# BACK TO OUR BEGINNINGS



*- Our 2025-2030 Strategy*



***ROOTED IN OUR PAST,  
FOCUSED ON OUR FUTURE***

**NH** NEW  
HORIZON  
**YC** YOUTH  
CENTRE

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**The crises of the last few years have given rise to record breaking levels of youth homelessness**, so bad that it reminds us of 1967, the year we were founded. Shocked by what he saw around his offices in the West End, Lord Longford set up London's only day centre for young homeless people and in doing so began our long history of unique provision.

But even then, **we knew services alone wouldn't solve the problem**. That is why so much of our early days also included partnerships and knowledge that we were **stronger together when it came to campaigning**. Much has changed, but in 2025 much remains the same. And as we look to the future, the answer, we realised, lies back in our beginnings.

With rough sleeping at record levels and more young people fleeing violence, there's a pressing need and growing gap for **a specialist emergency response that can support young people in crisis and open up housing for thousands more** young people in need. New Horizon Youth Centre (NHYC) already excels at this support—we will double down on this and become **London's go-to organisation for young people in immediate need**. It's a difficult but vital role that plays to our strengths in engaging young people and responding flexibly to their needs

We are currently both a homeless day centre and youth centre, and whilst both roles remain key to our success, we recognise there are many more youth work centres in London, whereas we are the only youth-specific day centre. **Rather than trying to provide everything ourselves for all young people until they turn 25, we can focus on being excellent at supporting young people to get the safe homes they deserve as quickly as possible, support with life skills and living independently and helping them create a future without needing our support**. Doing so makes our increasingly impossible mission possible again.



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By getting back to our beginnings we will lean on our **unique heritage as the only youth-specific day centre and drop-in for in London** and continue our long and proud history of being here for young people who find themselves homeless in the capital. Doing so means making some tough choices about who we cannot support and so **our focus will shift to those in more immediate need, prioritising them over those we have already housed and more focused at moving people on successfully at this point.**

During our last strategy we redeveloped our confidence as a campaigners and much like the early days at the centre, we will ensure we **use our insights and growing profile to change the systems that push young people through our doors.** To do so we will need to redouble our internal efforts, **ensuring staff have the resources and support they need to get through a challenging five years ahead.**

**We will support every young Londoners in crisis to access safety, support and stability, then transition them onto independence. We will do this by providing:**

***SUCCESSFUL SERVICES***

***PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS***

***CONFIDENT CAMPAIGNING***

***Underpinned by a WELL RUN ORGANISATION***



# How we think about and structure our strategy will be the same, so will how we split our resources to deliver it:



Too many young people cannot get the housing help they need.

So we delivering high quality, trauma-informed **SERVICES** for any young person that needs our support.

We spend **75%** of our resources on this

Because the services that should help can't or won't.

So we work in **PARTNERSHIP** to optimise our offer and maximise our impact.

We split **10%** of our resources across these two areas

Because the government under-invests in young people.

So we **CAMPAIGN**, saying what others won't say and doing what others won't do to ensure that no young person misses out, even the young people we will never meet.

We spend **15%** of our resources on this

This is complex and difficult work to do

So we need to sustain a **WELL-RUN ORGANISATION** that invests in staff and celebrates the diversity that makes us a success.



**Our core purpose remains as a frontline servicer provider, and the experiences of delivering a unique service gives us both unique partnership opportunities and a specialist role to play as a campaigners.**

# The focus of our main 4 priority areas for the next 5 years will be:

## SERVICES

- Developing **new housing pathways** for emergency and long-term accommodation that is appropriate and accessible for the diverse range of young people we work with.
- **Re-designing our week and offer** so that we can better cater for young people's multiple needs.
- Ensuring young people are supported **from crisis, then into housing** and move on to independence.

## PARTNERSHIPS

- Delivering the **London Youth Gateway** across the capital with partners & all boroughs .
- Working with the **VESS alliance of partners and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime** to ensure young people fleeing violence have the housing they need.
- Continuing to **build partnerships with the public and voluntary sector** to enhance our holistic offer.

## CAMPAIGNS

- Continuing our experiences as the 'canary in the coal mine' to **highlight emerging issues**.
- **Youth-led campaign work** focusing on one new ambitious area of change.
- Developing our **understanding of the long-term impact** and benefits of our overall approach.

## WELL RUN ORGANISATION

- Overhaul our **building, technology and systems** so that staff can work effectively.
- Continue to make New Horizon a **great place to work**, attracting and developing diverse talent.
- Continue to drive forward on our journey towards becoming **an anti-racist organisation**.



# What will our service offer for young people look like?

## Safe Steps (0-1 Months)

### Foundational Support

- Safety through access to the youth-specific day centre
- Basic needs: shower, food, clothes, laundry, warmth, community
- Access to primary healthcare

### Emotional Support

- Direct support from someone they can trust
- Mental health support / trauma informed assessment
- Somewhere safe and youth specific to spend time and figure out next steps

### Practical Support

- Housing referrals
- Support if rough sleeping
- Advice appointments
- Emergency housing / bed space if needed



## Strong Foundations (1-6 Months)

### Foundational Support

- Access to second, specialist assessment to decide next steps and set out housing options

### Emotional Support

- Information and details on how to access and participate in tailored life skills
- Specialist spaces for specific groups (eg. women's and non-binary space)

### Practical Support

- Housing offers
- Support with benefits / immigration status
- Jobs, Education & Training advice and language classes
- Access to banking, CV development



## New Beginnings (6-18 Months)

### Emotional Support

- Partner referrals for needs outside our expertise
- Therapeutic support to prepare for the end of our services

### Practical Support

- Housing offers
- Resettlement
- A positive move on from our services into independence



### Throughout their time with us, young people will be able to access:

- Somewhere safe and youth specific to spend time and figure out next steps
- Translation, culturally informed activities and accessible services
- Trauma informed care

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# What will be different?

We want to stay true to our roots and specialism as the only service provider giving emergency help to young Londoners forced into homelessness, but we want to be more focused and boundaried in how we do that. We can't do everything for everyone, and we need to be clearer about that with young people, our partners and anyone who supports us.

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## In our **SERVICES:**

1. We will more effectively triage when young people first come to us so they know what we can and can't offer.
  2. Move our work to a 3 phase model that more accurately matches the journey most young people go through. As part of this, we will develop our longer-term offer and more actively 'exit' young people from our services when they are housed, stable and ready to become independent.
  3. We will re-design our opening hours and centre offer to better cater to different groups and make sure our staff have capacity to do high-quality work.
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## In our **PARTNERSHIPS:**

1. We will continue to evolve the London Youth Gateway model with a new advice line and care leaver specialist partners.
  2. Begin to deliver our youth justice policy aspirations in line with our Blueprints for Change.
  3. Transitioning young people on to wider community support and expanding our resettlement offer.
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## In our **CAMPAIGNS:**

1. We will continue to escalate emerging issues but our campaign and policy work will take more of a focus on London and the crisis aspects of our work rather than the national facing work we have championed over past 2 years.
  2. Continue to evolve and improve our use of the InForm database to better capture and more routinely use data to make decisions.
  3. Work with young people to develop a new focus for our policy and campaigns work longer term.
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## To deliver a **WELL RUN ORGANISATION:**

1. We will open a second site for staff to work and deliver certain services from and refresh the set up at the main day centre by launching a major new capital appeal.
2. We will modernise our technology and systems to better support staff and service delivery.
3. We will improve our offer for managing and developing our people.

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# How will we know the new strategy has worked?

We want to challenge the story that high numbers are the only measure of success. Working with thousands of young people is not impactful if we can't house or properly support most of them, whereas working with fewer young people overall will be successful if we can actually help them reach their goals. We want to make sure every young person we support sees a meaningful difference in their life and breaks out of the cycle of crisis.

In our new strategy we want to reframe and rebalance. We will still be recording numbers but we want to better capture our unique position as a crisis intervention service. By being the only emergency day centre specifically for young people, we are one of the first on the frontline to notice and raise the alarm about current crises and how they are impacting young people.

We want to make sure we are focusing on outcomes (change that young people experience, such as mental and physical health, housing, confidence and life skills) rather than actions, providing evidence that is accurate, reliable and informative.

## The principles we will need to have for the strategy to be a success are:

- We reflect on and maintain boundaries in our work – we have to get better at saying no
- We embed trauma informed care and thinking through all we do
- We get the balance right between ambition and realism
- We maintain a dynamic approach but are less reactive
- We stay true to our values throughout

## And we know we will have succeeded if:

- More young people can successfully move through our services and get housed, doing so sustainably so fewer young people then come back round again for support
- Our pan-London partnerships are effective and re-commissioned
- Local and national government have youth homelessness firmly in their plans
- Our staff tell us that we are a great place to work



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