

End Homelessness for Good. The Depaul Way.

You are obliged to help, without any discrimination, all sorts of persons: men, women, children and in general, every poor person who needs you

St Vincent de Paul

1. Introduction

There is great and increasing need for provision of services and support to families and individuals who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or experiencing the effects of being homeless in the UK.

All forms of homeless in the UK have been increasing. While the UK Government is committed to ending UK homelessness, especially rough sleeping, there is no Government initiative confirmed (and funded) that is far reaching enough to address the root causes of homelessness or the impoverished welfare and social care structures that provide little by way of a safety net for people.

**Every day, we set out to end homelessness in the UK.
Our Mission is to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.**

The social and economic implications of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt for years to come and will enhance inequalities. High levels of unemployment, record numbers of people accessing Universal Credit and the great strain being placed on households and family relationships is likely to result in a spike in the number of people across the country experiencing homelessness. Hence, we expect to continue to see a significant rise in homelessness, in all its forms over, the next decade.

Homelessness is a complex, evolving problem. Tackling it requires dynamic and innovative solutions that respond to individual needs as opposed to providing blanket solutions.

Homelessness is a complex issue and the faces of homelessness change constantly. The overall response in the UK, however, does not adequately reflect this.

Traditionally, homelessness has been resolved through a housing solution, i.e. social housing, supported housing, private rented sector housing and Housing First. However, many people need more than a roof over their heads. They need support and opportunities to live the best life they can. This can be achieved through a holistic suite of support offers: individual, therapeutic approaches, education and employment support, and health and wellbeing provision. The responses need to take into account what an individual can reasonably afford to live independently, and, most importantly, what support they need to maintain and develop themselves “from within”.

Traditional forms of addressing homelessness, such as the provision of Housing Related Support services based on bed spaces and support hours, does not support the best outcomes for individuals – indeed, it rarely measures real outcomes. The value of many contracts have been drastically reduced, with corresponding loss of quality of provision and, therefore, loss of opportunity to individuals.

Central to an effective response are housing and support innovation and prevention programmes that constantly address the problems of individual groups who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, i.e. they solve homelessness one person at a time, through approaches that meet the needs of defined groups. Those solutions (and their continuous refinement) need to be based on evidence rooted in practice not theory alone, i.e. understanding the causal relationship between inputs and outcomes. There is currently a great deal of information and data collected on individuals in some parts of the system, and little collected in others. Evaluation of the data is generally weak, making it difficult to evidence impact. The collection and evaluation of relevant data is therefore crucial to design and develop effective responses.

Organisations that develop and implement those solutions need to be able to deal with this inherent complexity and the continuous evolution; and with all the “labels” (Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET), No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), Looked After Child (LAC), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans or Queer (LGBTQ), etc.), as well as conditionalities (e.g. substance use, offending behaviour, gangs, serious youth violence, domestic abuse) that come with that. People who become homeless have needs based on these attributes and factors, which organisations committed to ending homelessness must be equipped to identify and address.

We are brave and innovative and we don't give up.
We continually evaluate our actions and question the data to ensure we are providing the right solutions.

Homelessness is not a national but a global challenge that requires action at local, national and international levels if it is to be tackled sustainably.

During the past decade, the number of people affected by homelessness has been steadily increasing. The United Nations Human Settlements Program estimates that 1.1 billion people live in inadequate housing, and the best data available suggests that more than 100 million people have no housing at all. An estimated 150 million people are street homeless. Homelessness is an issue that affects people across the world in a variety of ways and it means different things in different cultures. Though classifications vary across countries, homelessness happens because people cannot access the housing and support they need. This can be the result of economic and socio-structural factors, like shortage of affordable housing, extreme poverty, and discrimination; it can occur when systems of care and support fail; and it can occur in response to individual or relational factors, such as relationship violence or personal trauma. The immediate cause is often a health crisis, unexpected lack of employment, or abrupt housing loss. Socio-structural factors make certain people especially vulnerable, and gaps in the social safety net and homelessness services systems can extend homelessness or make it more difficult to remain housed.

While Depaul UK's focus lies with ending homelessness in the UK, it embraces the concept that being part of an international homelessness organisation (the only one in the UK) means playing a role in the international effort of tackling homelessness worldwide.

Organisations that are agile, commit to continuous improvement and innovation, demonstrate high level of integrity and effectiveness throughout their entire practice “inside out” are best placed to contribute to ending homelessness.

At Depaul UK, we accept the complexity that leads to homelessness and the continuous evolution of the challenge. We also acknowledge that an organisation that wants to do this job well cannot separate how it works with clients (“how we run services and programmes”) from the way it manages resources and engages staff, partners and stakeholders (“the way we run the organisation”).

To ensure the above, we have identified two building blocks to our strategy that we uncompromisingly commit to:

1. A sound organisational culture and identity, demonstrated towards clients, staff and partners alike, that is based on strong, lived values, and that commits to excellence in what we do and a built-in agility to respond effectively to the complexity and dynamic nature of homelessness. This is what we call ***The Depaul Way*** (WHO WE ARE)
2. A set of crosscutting, interlinked themes which shape and direct everything we do at Depaul UK. These themes reflect what we consider essential, overarching concepts that allow us to remain relevant and sound as an organisation “inside out”. These crosscutting themes are ***Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; Mental Health & Wellbeing; Social Value; and Sustainability*** (HOW WE DO IT)

These building blocks are paired with:

1. A holistic, evidence-based **approach to our services and programmes** (WHAT WE DO)
2. A set of tangible **organisational objectives** across our core functional areas (HOW WE FOCUS ACTIVITY); and
3. A series of **milestones and linked performance measures** to ensure that all we do is geared towards increasing our organisational impact (HOW WE MONITOR PROGRESS)

We believe that this approach puts Depaul UK in the best possible position to enable **the change we want to see as the organisation that we want to be** – for and with our clients, our staff, our key partners and stakeholders, the communities we engage with and the wider society.

2. WHO WE ARE: The Depaul Way

The service of the poor should be preferred to everything else

St Vincent de Paul

Who is Depaul?

Depaul was founded in 1989 at the instigation of Cardinal Basil Hume and the late Princess Diana formally opened its first hostel in 1990.

Depaul UK has worked for over 30 years to support people facing homelessness. We are a homelessness organisation with specialism in supporting young people.

Depaul UK's Vision, Mission and Values remain unchanged for more than 30 years and are as valid as ever.

Depaul works in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul who devoted his life to helping the poor, sick and needy throughout the 17th century. Vincent reached out to anyone in need, valuing each and every person. He was committed to serving the poor well, constantly pushing boundaries to innovate and improve, despite scarce resources. He initiated powerful partnerships to help the poor, building bridges between people in need and people who were privileged, whilst at times taking great risks. In doing so, he inspired others to do more and to make sure that everyone has a chance to live life dignified, safe and well.

Depaul has grown into an international family of charities with a focus on helping people in crisis. Depaul UK is a part of this family. What started as a response to the growing number of homeless people on the streets of London has now grown into a global response tackling homelessness worldwide. The Depaul Group now works in the UK, Ireland, France, Slovakia, Ukraine, Croatia and the USA.

The Depaul family is driven by shared mission, vision and values.

Depaul's Vision

Our Vision is a society in which everyone, across the world, has a place to call home and a stake in their community

Depaul UK Manifesto

We are Depaul.

We offer shelter to the most in need.
And most at risk.

We give those who are down a step-up.

We work with people in crisis, often taking on the most challenging cases.

We don't just talk, we listen. We work side by side with young people, and we trust them, so they can trust us.

We use actions, not just words, and are not bound by convention.

We make the most of the resources we have to reach out to more people, in more places, in more ways.

Every day, we do everything we can to help end homelessness.

And to change the lives of those affected by it.

We will never give in. Or give up. We will always give hope.

We will create a world where everyone has a sense of home, and homelessness has no place.

Depaul's Mission

Our Mission is to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.

Depaul's Values

Our values guide our approach to delivering our mission and are considered in all our actions:

We celebrate the potential in people: We work collaboratively in a way that empowers people; treat service users with respect; consult and listen; and we invest in our staff and volunteers.

We put words into action: We do what we say we will do. We are committed to innovation and to finding new ways to tackle the problems we encounter. We take risks in working with marginalised groups and people with challenging behaviour.

We take a wider role in civil society: We work in partnership with government, local authorities, the private sector, churches and other voluntary agencies to achieve the best outcomes for our service users. We are open and accountable to our staff, volunteers, service users, and funders. We influence structural change in society and with a global perspective. We strive for best practice and using our resources effectively.

We believe in rights and responsibilities: We uphold and safeguard people's rights; and recognise responsibilities – we apply this equally to the organisation, service users, staff, and volunteers.

What is the Depaul Way?

The Depaul Way reflects our organisational culture and identity and sits at the heart of our strategy. It is a firm commitment to how we do things at Depaul UK and why.

Building on our successful practice model “*Endeavour*”, the Depaul Way sets clear expectations for how we deliver our mission for the people who need our support. It defines how people behave and work together. It determines how we speak about ourselves. It motivates the best people to work and partner with Depaul and has a direct impact on performance and, more importantly, our clients' and our employees' wellbeing. Strongly rooted in our Vincentian Values, we uncompromisingly put the people we work with and for at the heart of what we do. We communicate this to anyone who engages with Depaul UK, be it supporters, partners and/or key stakeholders and authorities, including the Government.

The Depaul Way is reflected in three strategic lenses: Our core values, excellence, and agility.

In order to further implement the Depaul Way, we will specifically:

- **Enhance our Vincentian Values:** Depaul is a values-based organisation with a 400-year history. The commitment to our values and their roots is already strong but we will make it even stronger through further embedding them *and* making them more visible in everything we do
- **Commit to Excellence:** Our commitment to excellence will ensure that *all* Depaul services, programmes and functions deliver according to what we define “Depaul quality”, because we know that it is ultimately the quality, not the quantity of, the support we offer that will make the real difference for our beneficiaries. This will be reflected in and implemented through our organisation wide Quality Management Strategy
- **Ensure Agility:** This strategy will likely mostly be executed in times of crisis. Depaul UK was formed in a crisis and has always embraced the need to take risks and to be agile to support those that need us most. Organisational agility is, therefore, an essential principle throughout Depaul to ensure that we respond, adapt, stay innovative and continuously improve

3. HOW WE DO IT: Our Cross-cutting Themes

Doing good is not everything; we have to do it well

St Vincent de Paul

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At Depaul UK we believe that unless we commit to ensuring Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as a core principle in our organisation, we will not be able to go beyond the mere compliance with relevant legislation and we will miss out on the benefits that EDI can bring to how we deliver our mission.

We therefore commit to not only recognising our responsibilities in respect of the protected groups specified in the Equality Act 2010 but we aim to prioritise giving the same set of opportunities to clients, staff and volunteers, regardless of their race, age, gender, sexuality, disability, culture or anything else that might be discriminated against.

We work towards ensuring that anyone we engage with finds an environment at Depaul UK where they can apply their whole self, where diversity of thought, background and experience is celebrated, and where every person is included and accepted. We will ensure that our clients, staff and volunteers have a voice, and are empowered to speak up to help us improve the organisation and the services and programmes we offer. We are not afraid to embrace change, have difficult conversations or acknowledge areas for improvement as we work together to continuously embed EDI at Depaul. We will not tolerate (and, as appropriate, will formally report) behaviours, language and conduct that is not in line with our EDI policies and procedures.

In this strategy, we will specifically:

- Report transparently our diversity statistics and set aspirational long-term targets to ensure equality of opportunity for all and proportional diverse staffing at all levels of our organisation
- Ensure that the services we deliver are inclusive, fair, appropriate and relevant to reflect the communities we serve and meet our clients' individual needs
- Aim to recruit more people with "lived experience" and ensure that the experience of our clients improves the decisions about the way the organisation develops and delivers the services they receive and the standards to which we maintain these
- Expand our EDI programme of inducting, training and learning for all staff, volunteers and trustees
- Review and continuously improve our recruitment, selection, employment, pay equality, internal promotion and management practices

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Depaul UK acknowledges that Mental Health & Wellbeing is essential for our clients, staff and volunteers to be happy and to function, and that "being well" requires us as an organisation to create the environment, including the physical and emotional spaces, to remain well or to become and remain well. We believe that the mental health and wellbeing of our clients, volunteers and staff is fundamental to the success and sustainability of our work. Hence, we regard supporting people to maintain or achieve positive mental health and wellbeing part of our overall mission.

We recognise that good mental health is as important as good physical health and that, on average, one in four people will experience poor mental health at some point in their lifetime. We also understand that the majority of people who experience mental health difficulties are able to successfully manage their symptoms, especially if they receive early support.

In this strategy, we will specifically:

- Aim to develop creative and innovative initiatives that contribute to positive mental health outcomes and personal wellbeing in every aspect of our work
- Promote positive mental health coping strategies and the overall wellbeing of clients, volunteers and staff through various practices, and learning opportunities that ultimately empower people to take control of their own mental health and wellbeing
- Ensure that Depaul UK services provide a timely response when clients experience difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing

Social Value

At Depaul UK we define Social Value as the additional benefit our organisation provides to not only itself, but also to the wider society and the economy. It focuses on how we can secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits through the work we do. Improving social, environmental and economic wellbeing and resilience supports Depaul UK's strategic priorities, including the prevention and relief of homelessness.

In line with this and, more importantly, in accordance with our organisational value to take a wider role in society, we will deliver relevant and measurable social, economic and environmental benefits for local people and communities through all our services and activities.

In this strategy we will specifically:

- Engage the wider community (including local suppliers) in the delivery of our services, through recruitment practices, volunteering, apprenticeships, procurement practices and training opportunities
- Encourage our staff to build the capacity of community-based organisations by volunteering their time and sharing their knowledge
- Reduce environmental impact
- Partner when that adds to our impact
- Help access for small business and, specifically, for businesses owned by under-represented groups

Sustainability

In order for Depaul UK to deliver its Mission in line with our core values today and in the future, we must commit to operating a sustainable business. At Depaul, this means that we focus on how we can continuously strengthen our capability to sustain our long-term commitments, i.e. our ability to deliver our Mission in line with our Vision and Values, while specifically considering our environmental impact. For us, operating a sustainable business stretches across the entire organisation. This is reflected in four key areas:

1. **Strategic Sustainability.** One of our most important considerations is to have a realistic vision and goals for Depaul, since “spreading ourselves too thinly” or “trying to do far too much” will likely mean that we do not have enough resources, including not enough money to do what we have set out to achieve. If our goals are not realistic, then many other activities in the organisation will not be realistic as well.

2. **Programme and Service Sustainability.** We work towards high-quality Services and Programmes in line with a solid Theory of Change. We do this not only to meet the commitments to our clients, donors and partners but specifically to ensure that we create sustainable outcomes for our clients. This assumes that we are clear about what we are good at (and do well), what we need to improve on and where Depaul needs to push boundaries to create innovation.
3. **Personnel Sustainability.** Without Depaul's staff and volunteers, we cannot deliver our Mission. If our staff and volunteers do not fully understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from Depaul, are not properly resourced to "do their jobs" and are not supported through adequate structures and processes that enable them to perform effectively and reliably, then we cannot deliver our Mission.
4. **Environmental Sustainability.** Environmental sustainability is one of the most important and urgent issues facing society. Organisations like Depaul UK, with hundreds of clients, staff and volunteers and many buildings in operation across the country, have a significant part to play in reducing carbon emissions and waste. Depaul UK takes this duty seriously and is committed to making more efficient use of resources, sourcing sustainable goods and services, reducing travel and taking a lifecycle costing approach to procuring efficient equipment.
5. **Financial Sustainability.** Financial sustainability of many non-profit organisations including Depaul UK is increasingly compromised. Growing pressure on government funding across all sectors and a stark competition within the charitable sector to meet a variety of traditional and emerging needs within society are key reasons for this. Volatility of funding and the inherent risks of the uncertain, complex and ambiguous external environment require managing the tension between financial sustainability and programmatic sustainability, and between the short and the long term.

Closely linked to this is our ability to **generate income, both from voluntary sources and through commissioned contracts**. The voluntary fundraising landscape continues to evolve, following significant changes in recent years and now amplified with the Covid pandemic. Diversification of income streams and a focus on the needs and expectations of target audiences paired with solid, long-term pipelines while maintaining an agile approach to stewarding donors is key to the success of not-for-profit fundraising programmes. A "one-size-fits-all" and "blanket" approach to engaging existing and potential donors is not only ineffective anymore but is also very expensive. Concerning our contracted income, Local Authority commissioning has been under pressure for 10 years, and commissioners are looking for the maximum quality in service delivery for the money they spend. By rolling up smaller contracts into larger multi-disciplinary contracts, they reduce their contracting and management costs and those of delivery agencies.

In this strategy, we will specifically:

- Develop a holistic Theory of Change that guides our programmes and services
- Develop and roll out our organisational Quality Management Strategy to ensure "Depaul Quality" in every aspect of what we do
- Implement our People Strategy which will be firmly rooted in our Values and adequate and accessible policies and procedures
- Put in place our overarching Finance Strategy to increase the resilience and sustainability of our business model

- Create a flexible Voluntary Fundraising Strategy that aids the development of a sustainable income for Depaul UK, while also driving engagement of our clients, staff, volunteers, partners and the wider public
- Further our approach to business development to grow our commissioned income
- Encourage all staff, clients and volunteers to adopt sustainable ways of working and living and to make sustainable transport choices
- Reduce our environmental impact through sustainable procurement, recycling schemes, and the efficient management of energy, water, and waste

4. WHAT WE DO: Our Services and Programmes

All must be done with gentleness of heart and humility, as we consider the interests of those with whom we are working rather than our own

St Louise de Marillac

Depaul UK is a homelessness charity with specialist capacity, skill and experience in youth homelessness. While always considering the challenges young people face, we acknowledge the complex, ever-changing nature of homelessness in the UK, including the growing needs of the many vulnerable groups in our society that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. We use our specialist skill and experience to continuously improve our approach to our services and programmes so that we can reach as many people in need of our support as possible.

Working alongside and with people affected by the causes and consequences of homelessness we will:

Prevent homelessness. Prevention as part of a holistic approach to ending homelessness is key. We will do this through influencing policy and public opinion, educating young people, strengthening family relationships and providing advice, guidance and shelter in times of crisis.

Increase resilience. Strengthening the resilience of people who are experiencing homelessness is essential. We will do this through providing accommodation and support that is trauma-informed, strengths-based and rooted in promoting mental health and wellbeing.

Energise societal responses. Engaging the wider society in addressing homelessness is crucial. We will do this through supporting campaigns, encouraging volunteering and seeking strategic partnering to increase our impact and improve life chances for those we support.

Stimulate aspirations. Creating ambition and confidence in our beneficiaries is essential. We do this specifically through the provision of employment, training and education programmes and opportunities that enable the people we work with to confidently take their place in society.

By working across these areas, Depaul UK will be able to evoke change that diverts people from pathways that lead to homelessness towards positive pathways that lead to a stable home, good relationships and financial security.

We have learned that for some people traumatic challenges from the past cause lasting damage. Non-judgmental and expert care can repair that damage and enable people to rebuild their lives. We therefore continue to recognise the impact of poor mental health, trauma, neglect and abuse on the lives of those we work with, and we are working increasingly with healthcare providers and therapeutic experts to ensure

Every person we help has a unique situation and a unique set of needs.

Our focus is on the individual, not the masses. Every solution is personalised. This is what makes us the best at what we do.

our responses to self-harm, substance use, poor mental wellbeing and high-risk personal behaviours are effective and appropriate.

Depaul UK is an expert in measuring the outcomes and impact of the work we do with our clients so that we can improve the design and the effectiveness of the services and responses we provide and make good strategic choices about where we want Depaul UK to be offering services. Through investing in and emphasising this part of our work, we will engage with funders, commissioners and decision makers with authority based on evidence, not conjecture or anecdote.

We will review and evaluate how our approach is working. From our research, evaluation and experience, we will draw lessons for policy makers and commissioners, and where appropriate advocate for change. We will also create a range of ways for our clients' experiences and voices to be heard by the leaders and trustees of Depaul as well as those who make decisions in local and national government.

5. HOW WE FOCUS ACTIVITY: Our Strategic Objectives

Charity must never look to the past, but always to the future, because the number of its past works is still very small and the present and future miseries that it must alleviate are infinite

Frédéric Ozanam

Our Sole Purpose: The Best Services and Programmes for Clients

In order for Depaul UK to remain a vibrant, growing and effective organisation of choice for the people we serve, employees, donors and commissioners, the organisation must provide an offer of Housing and Support Services and Programme and Prevention activities that is effective, relevant, affordable, accessible and impactful.

Objective 1: Harnessing the experience of our clients to make Depaul UK better

Depaul UK services will be governed, developed and delivered based upon a co-production relationship with our clients that underpins every aspect of what we do. We will do this because our services will be better by design. We will achieve an excellent client experience leading to better outcomes, and our organisational voice will have greater integrity and credibility.

Our history inspires our vision for tomorrow.
A society in which everyone has a place to call home and a stake in their community

Objective 2: Develop intelligent and innovative responses to homelessness and the causes of homelessness through targeted prevention and support programmes

Depaul UK will be the leading homelessness charity in the country, known for our high quality services, our powerful client voice and being a responsive and innovative, solution-focused partner. We will be acknowledged as the leading experts in youth homelessness through our further development of data-driven, outcomes-based services, coupled with a strong policy voice. We will continue to develop strong prevention, accommodation and support offers that are not driven by money or publicity. Our bespoke, not blanket, solutions are underpinned by our Vincentian values to help people, especially those who have the weakest safety net and are often the most excluded in our society. We will support academic research into youth homelessness to develop strong persuasive policy lines to influence government policy.

Objective 3: Secure commissioned services and create new business opportunities that present effective solutions to homelessness

Depaul UK will be increasing the scope and breadth of its operations through securing more commissioned contracts and fostering new business ventures that result in effective services and programmes to help improve the lives of people's affected by homelessness. We will do this based on harnessing our unique experience and culture as an international organisation, coupled with a commitment to demonstrable quality in service provision and value for money. Through maximising the opportunities available from commissioned services and social investment in its various guises, we seek to achieve meaningful outcomes for more beneficiaries and grow the sustainability of the business base of the charity.

Funding our mission: Voluntary Fundraising

Depaul UK has a holistic approach to addressing and preventing homelessness which means that we cannot merely provide services that are funded by commissioned contracts – it requires a healthy funding balance that allows us to manage dependencies and mitigate risks. Hence, in addition to securing income through our business development activity, raising voluntary funds to deliver our strategy is a priority for us. Our voluntary fundraising activity is closely linked to what we do and what is needed to increase the impact for our clients – whether it is funding specialist prevention and programme activity that commissioned services will not pay for, or raising funds that allow us to strengthen and improve our organisation to become the most effective and efficient it can be. Our fundraising activity will be informed by our service and programmes expertise and will be guided by an agile 'test and learn' approach that is based on (audience) insight and net income.

Objective 1: Deliver long term net income growth

Depaul UK will deliver a step change in Depaul UK's net income sustainability and growth. By diversifying our income streams across mass and relationship fundraising, we will ensure that we see less reliance on a handful of donors. The team will focus on net income, ensuring that all activities not only make net income in the short term, but also build long-term growth. High value income streams will be built out through investment in skilled staff and strong relationship management techniques and we will focus our public fundraising investment on building strong donor pools, ensuring we always hold and act on donor insight.

Objective 2: Drive diversification of our portfolio

Depaul UK will develop new income streams, products and activities in order to deliver sustainable growth, a diversified fundraising portfolio and an expanded supporter base. We will develop and embed a programme of innovation across Depaul UK's fundraising and communications to ensure we are taking risks, harness the opportunities open to us and maximise our potential. We will introduce and embed the use of digital techniques across our fundraising programme.

Objective 3: Deliver communications to the key audiences which engage the public to take action

Depaul UK's Fundraising and Communications teams will develop a campaign approach to mass communications, so that Depaul has one clear voice. All communications are viewed as an opportunity to engage future hosts, donors, volunteers, etc.

Objective 4: Ensure effective supporter engagement and data management which is focused on the journey and the destination

Depaul UK will commit to delivering authentic supporter experiences that engage our supporters and reflect the values of Depaul UK. We will develop an integrated approach to fundraising and communications to maximise the lifetime value of our supporters by creating these supporter journeys and we will continuously develop an understanding of our supporters' expectations and use this insight to remain relevant and inspire support.

Our greatest asset: People

In order for Depaul UK to achieve the best outcomes for the people we serve, we will need to continue to attract, develop, retain and engage skilled, high-performing professionals who are happy in their work, and use a values-driven approach to deliver the best outcomes for our clients. At Depaul, we believe that our people **are** the difference. Employees and volunteers who feel valued care more, and those who care more will provide better experience and outcomes for our clients.

Objective 1: The best workforce in the sector

Depaul UK will continue to invest in the staff who deliver our Mission. We will ensure that our clients are supported by stable teams of skilled, engaged, committed, values-driven people who are confident in what they do and feel safe and happy in their workplace. By developing confident, skilled managers, we minimise the organisation's employee relations risks, reduce turnover and increase engagement. By investing strategically in Learning and Development initiatives we future proof the organisation – ensuring our teams are ready for change when it comes. Through building resilience in our people, we will strengthen the organisation, and its impact.

Objective 2: Keep our people safe, happy and well

Our policies, processes and practices will, at all times, consider the health and safety and wellbeing of our staff, volunteers and clients. We will be delivering flexible people management solutions that are in line with our values, specifically consider our commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Social Value and Sustainability. We achieve this by offering our staff secure contracts and working conditions and development opportunities that respond to their needs. We work in Psychologically Informed Environments, and apply reflective practice to our work. Our employees understand the impact of trauma and use Wellbeing Action Plans to manage their own mental health and stress triggers.

Objective 3: Allow staff to focus on what matters

Depaul UK will continue to improve our cost-effective, time efficient people practice that supports organisational sustainability. Our people practice will consider the various “pulls” on the time of our staff and managers, and the need for cost-effective operation. By maximising recruitment performance, we save cost, minimise the impact of vacancies on performance and team wellbeing and support managers to strengthen their teams by bringing in the right skills and attributes. Our employees will have clear performance measures, clear objectives and the systems and tools they need to measure and evidence good performance. This will ensure we deliver the best outcomes to our clients. We will recognise and reward this good performance with professional development opportunities linked to clear career paths.

Objective 4: Engage impactful volunteers in our mission

Depaul UK's Volunteer and Mentor program will deliver demonstrable impact to the volunteers we engage and the clients and staff teams they support. Our volunteering audience will be strategically targeted to support our social value commitments, and the specific needs of our clients. Our volunteers and mentors will be well trained, well supported and committed to Depaul UK's Values and Mission.

Our Backbone: Financial Sustainability and Organisational Efficiency

Our Finance Strategy will ensure that our resources meet the needs of the present without compromising the future. Depaul UK's entire organisation is entirely geared towards delivering the greatest impact for our clients.

Objective 1: A solid finance strategy

Our strategic financial approach will protect our ability to deliver our Mission through tight stewardship over Depaul UK's financial resources to ensure that funding is available for managed strategic growth without over-commitment. We will do this through sophisticated, risk-based reserves planning, income and expenditure forecasting, locally owned, rolling budgets and a commitment to Value for Money. It will be supported by an effective and agile Risk Management Framework and tactical employment of business development strategies such as property development and merger and acquisitions opportunities.

Objective 2: Business systems and processes fit for purpose

Our business systems, processes, and policies and procedures will support effortless communication, collaboration, administration, data collection, regulatory compliance and quality management, creating an environment where people are supported to be self-enabled and self-sufficient, working productively and efficiently.

This will help us to create environments which discourage directorate silos and regional disconnects, encouraging people to solve difficult problems jointly, share knowledge and good stories, and actively look for new or different people to collaborate with.

The right IT solutions will enable our work in this area, and individuals will receive training on how to use them effectively. Technology will be consistent across users, who will understand the requirements to work securely, and are supported by clear policies and tools that support the secure working agenda.

Objective 3: Reporting which enables performance to be evaluated on Mission impact, reach and financial cost

We recognise that our success will be determined by our ability to manage the delicate balance between the reach, impact and cost of our activities. We will create monitoring and reporting systems which measure all three simultaneously and map how they work together for optimal financial sustainability, efficiency and impact creation. We will have a clear framework for performance evaluation which guides us to make the right decisions, yet allows us to remain agile to the challenges and opportunities that we face.

Objective 4: Quality Matters (a great deal)

At Depaul UK we deliver better, for less, because everybody participates in improving processes, services and the culture in which they work. Effective business planning, cost reduction, process improvement, people involvement and supply chain development will be key components of our Quality Management Strategy. Our approach to Quality positively affects the morale of our workforce.

Our International reach and impact: Homelessness is a global challenge

Depaul UK is the only international homelessness organisation in the UK. Together with the international members of the Depaul family, we will work towards ending homelessness worldwide.

Objective 1: Strengthen our Vincentian Action

Depaul UK will strengthen our shared Values across the Depaul Group to deliver our Mission with a clear reference and commitment to our Vincentian roots and their practical application in "how we do things at Depaul and why". We will further the shared Vision and Mission of the Vincentian Family through the work of the Famvin Homeless Alliance e.g. joint activities such as The 13 Houses Campaign.

Objective 2: Making a noise – globally

Depaul UK will support global advocacy, campaigns, awareness raising and research work through the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH).

Objective 3: A stronger Depaul Family

Depaul UK will raise more funds to deliver our Mission and respective strategic plans through harnessing our international set-up for national fundraising strategies, including strengthening our approach to joint funding bids. We will collectively strengthen the Depaul family as a whole through exploring support across subsidiaries. We will ensure continuous learning and improvement through effectively sharing evidence, best practice and innovation with our international members. This will include inter-group mentoring and staff exchanges.

6. HOW WE MONITOR PROGRESS: Tracking our performance

We recognise that our strategy sets a destination at a point in time, that this destination is not fixed, and that our resources and capabilities will change over the duration of the strategic plan. We are aware that our ability and desire to respond to the constantly emerging and often pressing needs of our clients has the potential to detract us from the proactive, sometimes longer-term activities which will deliver on our strategic objectives and ultimately increase the impact for our beneficiaries.

To ensure we remain agile in a constantly changing environment and that we can effectively manage the tensions between the reactive and the proactive, we will develop an overarching monitoring framework and relevant performance monitoring strategies and processes which:

- Are sophisticated, yet simple in application, so that they are accessible to all staff
- Are outcomes driven, so that we focus on the work that makes the biggest difference
- Are ambitious yet realistic, so that our staff are motivated to deliver at the highest level
- Are consistent with our cross-cutting themes as stated in the strategy
- Consider the most appropriate balance between financial performance, impact for clients, growth and effectiveness
- Are embedded in a culture where we trust the evidence, seek out opportunities for improvement and give ourselves permission to change direction
- Provide a “line of sight” between the overarching strategy and activities of individuals and teams
- Support cross-direction collaboration and knowledge sharing.

We will monitor progress against eight critical success factors (CSFs), reflecting what we consider ‘non-negotiables’ to deliver our strategy.

1. Positive, evidenced impact on lives of beneficiaries, shaped and informed by clients’ voice and data insight
2. Motivated, skilled, engaged workforce, driven by our Vincentian values
3. Excellent leadership and management
4. Strong profile and reputation
5. Maximised performance: Voluntary fundraising
6. Maximised performance: Commissioned/contracted services
7. Improved, well managed financial position
8. Resilient, sustainable and agile business model

Progress towards our strategic aims will be measured by performance against a number of linked, SMART key performance outcomes, which will be used to develop and prioritise business activity. This is detailed in our rolling Business Plan that accompanies the strategy.

Responsibilities

The **Council of Trustees** will review organisational performance at their quarterly meetings where they will seek explanations from the **Executive Team** to enable them to be confident that the charity is effective in achieving its charitable purposes and agreed outcomes.

The **Executive Team and Leadership Team** will constantly monitor performance at an organisational and functional level respectively. They will take swift and appropriate action in response to the data to ensure that outcomes are met. They will also establish a shared belief amongst staff in the importance of overall performance improvement and shared understanding of the organisation's performance monitoring tools and processes.

The **Leadership Team and Managers** will ensure that individuals understand their contribution to the delivery of the charity's strategic objectives and that the performance management process is implemented within their areas of responsibility.