



Strategic Plan 2025-2028





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RETIRING CHAIR REFLECTION

As I step down from my role at Lighthouse, four years as chair and three as Board Member, I am filled with a mix of emotions – gratitude, pride, and a deep sense of accomplishment. It has been an honor and a privilege to first be asked to be a member and then Chair and be able to work with this incredible organisation which has grown significantly under our collective efforts.

My period as Chair has experienced situations like no other nor anything any of us could ever have foreseen. The impact of the pandemic will stay with us for quite some time and has led to an unprecedented demand for mental health services. The issues around funding which challenge many charities today, have increased the importance for innovation and adaptability working collaboratively and diversification of funding streams in order for us to prosper. Northern Ireland already has significant mental ill health issues linked to social and economic inequalities, the trauma of the Troubles and high rates of childhood adversities including those suffered by victims of institutional abuse.

I want to thank our Board and our dedicated team and all our supporters for their tireless work and unwavering commitment. My tenure has seen the appointment of the Executive Director to whom I am extremely grateful. To the Team, some of whom have also had their own challenges throughout the pandemic and since, I have the greatest of admiration. Together we have achieved remarkable milestones including expansion across the whole of Belfast, achieving BACP Accreditation, the delivery of exemplary best practice annual conferences and the visibility of our organisation to name but a few. We have twenty-three staff today compared to eight when I took over as Chair.

Thank you again for the privilege of serving as Chair. I wish the organisation all the best in its future endeavours.



Anne Dorbie
Chair, Lighthouse

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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We are immensely proud of what we have achieved in our strategy 2022-2025. This three-year strategy 2025-2028 builds on the strong foundations and achievements of our previous strategy. It has been developed through listening to our community, staff, Board, colleagues and commissioners. We have worked together, reviewing our achievements in relation to the ambitions set in our previous strategy, what we understand about the context and environment we are working in today and have sought to align to regional and local strategies.

In terms of our services, we became a BACP Approved Centre in 2023 which demonstrates we offer an accountable, ethical, professional and responsive service to clients, staff, volunteers and stakeholders. We have examined and transformed all aspects of our services and increased our workforce from eight in 2021 to 23 today which allows us to maintain an effective and timely services. Lighthouse engaged in a quantitative and qualitative service evaluation with the Psychology Department of QUB in late 2023 contacting 80 clients, six months after receiving service. Headline findings from the evaluation included 92% of those who had been supported had reported positive benefits, 79% reported that the support had made an ongoing difference in their lives, 88% reported that they would recommend the services to others and 100% reported that they were happy with the response times to enter the services.

In addition, we delivered two exemplary regional free conferences and achieved the Diversity Mark which demonstrates our commitment to creating an inclusive & diverse workplace where all clients and staff can feel valued, safe and respected. We achieved Gold Status PHA Take 5 accreditation. Take 5 provides tailored supports and audits staff current wellbeing activities, identifies gaps and creates an action plan to inspire and support employees to practice the Take 5 daily. Also, we achieved the Belfast Promise Gold Status which brings organisations together to work towards making Belfast a better city involving providing good jobs whilst also supporting a sustainable local economy and building a healthier city for everyone.

Moving forward we will build on our previous ambitions and are confident that we are directing our passion, energy and resources exactly where we need to.

I would like to thank Sharon O'Connor who once again supported us through the strategic planning process. I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to each and every staff member at Lighthouse for your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment over the last three years. Your collective passion, expertise and generosity have been instrumental in driving meaningful change and making a profound impact in the lives of countless individuals and communities. Additionally, I would like to thank our Board for supporting and guiding us all the way.

Finally, to funders and supporters, we would like to say a huge thank you. Your support has been instrumental in helping us achieve our mission.



Paul Finnegan,
Executive Director, Lighthouse

WHO ARE WE?

Lighthouse Ireland was established in 2003 and plays a crucial role in the prevention of suicide across Belfast and beyond.

1. VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

The following vision, mission, and values are crucial in providing provide the direction, focus and purpose of the organisation.

Vision

This is where we aspire to be and what we aim to achieve.

To be recognised as a beacon of hope, saving lives and creating a brighter future.

Mission

This sets out why we exist and our purpose.

Lighthouse promotes positive mental health and prevents suicide.

Values

Our values are our sources of guidance and what we stand for.

INCLUSION Accessible to all	EMPATHY Person-centred
EXCELLENCE Developing our people to excel	EVIDENCE INFORMED Guided by Lived Experience
COLLABORATIVE Make meaningful impact	INNOVATIVE Think big
EMPATHY Emotional connection	

2. STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

We have evaluated the effectiveness of our previous strategic plan (2022-2025) and renewed and reformed these six strategic ambitions that will assist us to get where we want and need to be over the next three years. The following are our six ambitions and associated activities.

AMBITION 1:

To continue to provide and develop our mental health support services.

Our primary ambition continues to be the provision of accessible services for individuals in need of mental health support and to work to reduce the stigma attached to mental health issues. Support for those in distress or crisis, those needing information and a listening ear for those affected by suicide. We will do this by continually measuring the impact of our services, listening to those who use our services and adapting and refining our services:

To achieve this ambition, we will;	
a)	Break down barriers to make our services diverse and inclusive.
b)	Work to reduce the stigma attached to mental health through education and training services.
c)	Use lived experience significantly to enhance the design, delivery, and evaluation of our services.
d)	Ensure a safe, effective, and positive experience for all those who encounter our services.
e)	Offer services across the Island of Ireland by 2028 and increase the numbers of people we support continuously in each of the three years.

AMBITION 2:

We will work in partnership to increase our impact.

We will explore and develop new collaborations with like-minded partners to expand the reach of our services in the next three years.

To achieve this ambition, we will;

a)	Overcome barriers and collaborate strategically with organisations in the suicide awareness/prevention/mental health space who can help us reach more people in need of our services fostering partnerships, co-ownership, and innovation.
b)	Share learning with organisations to improve our work and services, pooling and leveraging resources and expertise and creating long-term relationships.
c)	Develop and increase our media platform to increase our key messaging on suicide prevention and the visibility of Lighthouse with potential partners.
d)	Have formed at least one strategic partnership/collaboration by 2028.

AMBITION 3:

We will increase our income generation.

We will develop a comprehensive income generation strategy with partners, stakeholders and our people. We will ensure our financial viability by establishing sustainable sources of revenue alongside cost effective services. We aim to increase our revenue by 25% over the three years of this plan. We will achieve this by developing new services and growing our existing provision.

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To achieve this ambition, we will;

a)	Develop a comprehensive, three-year income generation strategy with ambitious but realistic targets to help our organisation become financially sustainable.
b)	Continue to develop an organisational structure that ensures effectiveness alongside sustainability.
c)	Ensure that all staff and volunteers are fully invested in all income generation activities.
d)	Create a full diary of fundraising events each year to maximise the revenue raised through personal contributions.
e)	Expand our central database of donors and potential supporters.
f)	Increase income generation through the learning academy to £100K+ by Year 3.
g)	Increase income generation revenue each year by 25% up to 2028.

AMBITION 4:

We will attract, develop, and retain brilliant staff and volunteers.

The Lighthouse team of staff and volunteers have worked hard to achieve our previous strategic aims, they are our greatest asset. We will invest in and support our staff to excel in their work, enhancing their skills as individuals and collectively through appropriate training and support. We will prioritise the wellbeing of our staff further developing our culture of a happy, safe and supportive organisation to work and volunteer for.

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To achieve this ambition, we will;	
a)	Provide opportunities for staff to come together including team meetings, workshops, and social opportunities.
b)	Regularly communicate with staff to understand their needs and maintain engagement through a robust performance management process, including regular supervision.
c)	Invest in continuous learning and development programmes aligned with staff developmental goals.
d)	Develop a leadership approach, championing a culture and behaviours which are positive and fair, with a focus on wellbeing and opportunities for all.
e)	Create a positive workplace by emphasising staff well-being, psychological safety, and inclusiveness.
f)	Garner valuable insights into staff satisfaction and needs through annual staff surveys.
g)	Continually enhance our reputation as a wonderful place to work.
h)	Develop a volunteering strategy and recruit, induct, train, and support new volunteers.
i)	By 2028, we will have acquired and integrated framework into staff management, including leadership, learning and development and performance management.

AMBITION 5:

We will grow our sphere of influence.

Influence is so important as it helps enhance our reputation as a leading organisation in the field of suicide prevention. We will seek to influence government policy in support of those we serve, telling the story of those in distress and how they are best helped.

To achieve this ambition, we will;

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| a) | Leverage influence and opportunities through a range of influential networks including BPLIG, RPLIG, BCRPSG, Belfast Community of Interest, Belfast Shadow Area Integrated Partnership Board, NI Bereavement Forum, Families Voices Forum, North Belfast Health Forum, and others which allow us to participate in conversations that impact on our work. |
| b) | Ensure lived experience is at the heart of all that we do. |
| c) | Increase our expertise and organisational intelligence. |
| d) | Encourage and prepare the public with the knowledge and confidence to respond to strangers, friends, and family when they need help and where necessary they can guide them to the right support services. |
| e) | Map current and increase the visibility of the work that we do. |
| f) | Deliver regional conferences and other events. |
| g) | Ensure that suicide prevention is the business of everyone. |
| h) | Build formal links with educational institutions to produce academic research. |
| i) | By 2028, be the voice for suicide prevention in Northern Ireland and beyond. |

AMBITION 6:

We will be well governed and demonstrate our impact.

Good governance is critical to our success. We will strive to follow good corporate governance practices to ensure that we balance stability and strong oversight, with dynamic decision-making processes that support responsive ways of working.

We will develop tried and tested processes, policies, and guidelines to address pertinent issues, such as rules and principles for day-to-day operations. These will help ensure compliance with laws and regulations, reflect the culture of our organisation, and provide guidance for decision-making, risk analysis and streamline internal processes.

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To achieve this ambition, we will;

a)	Review and renew annually our BACP, Diversity Mark, Take 5 and Belfast Promise accreditations.
b)	Review existing and introduce and validate new policies for all elements of the organisation.
c)	Source and introduce an effective methodology to measure the impact of the organisation internally and externally.
d)	Ensure our board has the appropriate environment, a diverse mix of skills, experience, and independence to ensure there is robust but effective challenge and stewardship of the organisation's purpose and strategy.
e)	Ensure Board members have access to adequate training and performance reviews.

Lighthouse

Beacon of hope

Lighthouse
187 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GF

Web: Lighthousecharity.com
Contact: Info@Lighthousecharity.com

X @Lighthouse_Ire