

EMPOWER YOUTH ZONES

2025-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

SOMEWHERE **SAFE** TO GO
SOMETHING **POSITIVE** TO DO
SOMEONE **TRUSTED** TO TALK TO

EMPOWER
MANCHESTER • SALFORD
THE HOME OF:

HIDE
OUT

An **OnSide** Youth Zone



An **OnSide** Youth Zone



INTRO FROM CEO

Empower is an award-winning youth work charity that was established in 2018 as part of the national Onside Network of Youth Zones. Since September 2020, it has operated the inspirational **HideOut Youth Zone**, based in East Manchester, and we are excited to be developing our second Youth Zone set to open in the heart of **Salford** from summer 2025.

To date, Empower has supported over **8500** children and young people aged 8-19 and up to 25 for those with additional needs. We navigated the opening of HideOut Youth Zone in an unprecedented period of challenge, in the peak of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Since this time, we have continued to grow our reach, impact and outcomes for young people by providing them with somewhere safe to go, something positive to do and someone trusted to talk to, 7 days a week, all year round.

Our Youth Zones are based in the **top 10 % most deprived** neighbourhoods in the UK (as per IMD) with both Manchester and Salford facing significantly disproportionate levels of child poverty (**Manchester – 47% & Salford 43%**) when compared to the national average (29%). In some of the areas surrounding our Youth Zones, **it's as high as 70%**. This puts our members at a significant disadvantage when it comes to their future aspirations, equal opportunities and overall health, happiness and safety.

The global economic crisis and relying heavily on private and public sector donations puts charities at an ever-increasing risk. However, Empower has strong foundations from which we can build on, both in terms of delivery but also due to the funding secured for the next 3 years, which will allow us to be ambitious both as a provider of services for children and young people, but also as an employer.

As a charity that supports young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in two of the most deprived communities in the UK, we also want to make sure we are looking after our staff and volunteers and not only attract the best talent, but to also retain and develop the talent we already have.





We continue to be committed to celebrate the success and impact of the amazing work we deliver to ensure all stakeholders know the importance of the services we provide. Most importantly, we want to create the opportunity for young people themselves to celebrate and promote their achievements, talents and aspirations and have the opportunity to influence decisions that affect them and their peers within the Youth Zones and across our communities.

Our charity is improving and changing the lives of thousands of families across Manchester and I have no doubt **we will do exactly the same in Salford** from summer 2025. We will double our impact, reach more young people across Greater Manchester and develop more opportunities for business, public services, communities and young people themselves to come together.

By the end of 2025/26, we will have a workforce of **over 140 employees** and **over 50 regular active volunteers**. We will be one of, if not the biggest, employer of Youth Workers in Greater Manchester and we have big ambitions to use that standing as leverage to influence further education intuitions across Manchester and Salford to bring back the professional development pathways for youth work training locally. We are committed to ensuring there is a long term sustainable pathway for youth work underpinned by professional ethics and values and delivered by qualified and experienced staff and volunteers

Our growth and impact realised so far is far beyond what we had anticipated when we opened HideOut only 4 years ago. We have only been able to achieve what we have to date, and our future ambitions confidently, because of all the incredible support and commitment our donors, supporters, staff, volunteers and partners have provided and continue to provide.

Thank you.

ADAM FARRICKER - CHIEF EXECUTIVE

WHO WE ARE

OUR VISION

Children and young people are inspired to lead healthy, happy, safe and successful lives.

OUR MISSION

To provide children and young people with somewhere safe to go, something positive to do and someone trusted to talk to.

OUR VALUES



YOUNG PEOPLE FIRST

Young people are at the heart of everything we do; inspiring and challenging us to deliver services that exceed their needs and challenge them to be the best they can be.



AMBITIOUS

We are passionate and driven in taking on new challenges, embracing new ideas, and exceeding our ambitions for young people, the Youth Zone and our local communities.



EXCELLENCE

We encourage ourselves and each other to be the best we can be through continuous learning and improvement, with a focus on finding solutions.



COLLABORATIVE

We will create and nurture strong, creative partnerships, working together to achieve better results and outcomes for young people.



RESPECT

We act with honesty and integrity, celebrating diversity across the whole organisation and caring about each other, our young people and the Youth Zone environment.



WHAT WE OFFER

Empower Youth Zones provides children and young people aged 8-19 (up to 25 for those with additional needs) with somewhere safe to go, something positive to do and someone trusted to talk to. We offer over 35 hours of open access universal youth services, over 7 days a week, all year round.

In its simplest terms, the offer can be broken down into 3 key areas of youth work delivery:

Junior Offer – Children and young people aged 8-12 years old. Our Junior provision is facilitated on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on a Saturday during the day.

Level Up Offer - A new transitions session on a Monday evening which started in 2025, aimed at young people aged 11-14 years old.

Seniors Offer – Children and young people aged 13-19 years old. Our Senior provision operates on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

Inclusion Offer – Children and young people aged 8-25 years old, for those with additional needs. Our Inclusion provision runs throughout all core provision as part of our core Junior and Senior sessions. However, we also facilitate a 'closed' session just for children and young people with additional needs on Sundays during the day.

There are over 20 activities provided each session ranging from, arts, music, drama, fashion design and dance, through to gym, boxing, climbing, health and wellbeing, enterprise and outdoor education, just to name a few.



STRATEGIC GOAL ONE

YOUNG PEOPLE

GOAL 1	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	WHY?
<p>YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>Grow our offer to evidence increased impact and outcomes for children and young people across Greater Manchester.</p>	<p>WE WILL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open our second Youth Zone in the heart of Salford from July 2025, 7 days per week • Increase the range of accredited outcomes on offer • Create a Young Members Trustee position rotating each year • Embed monitoring and evaluation in every day practice to provide clear evidence of impact with young people able to articulate these outcomes • Develop an integrated partnership approach with other youth providers in Salford • Develop our outdoor education, residential, outreach and social action offer • Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded in all our delivery and decision-making processes • Continue to offer at least 35 hours of provision across 7 days all year round • Establish a Trustee Delivery sub-committee to meet 3x per year. 	<p>Because young people across Manchester and Salford are disproportionately affected by child poverty rates when compared to their peers nationally.</p> <p>Because young people deserve to have a say, be heard, and have an opportunity to influence decisions that affect them and their peers.</p> <p>Because we know young people develop personally and socially when given opportunities and challenges outside of their local environments.</p> <p>So that we can provide children and young people with somewhere safe to go something positive to do and someone trusted to talk to, 7 days a week, whenever schools are closed. Helping to tackle isolation and loneliness.</p>

STRATEGIC GOAL TWO

OUR PEOPLE

GOAL 2	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	WHY?
<p>OUR PEOPLE</p> <p>Invest in the development and wellbeing of staff and volunteers to ensure they have the skills and capacity to support the charity effectively.</p>	<p>WE WILL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit a full-time Director of People in addition to a Staff and Volunteer Training Manager • Ensure team and individual learning and development plans in place, with training needs being delivered (particularly for youth work, management & supervision, planning & project management, budget & finance, E, D & I) • Become an accredited 'Member' of the GM Good Employment Charity (Currently 'Supporter') • Continue to attract and recruit employees and volunteers from diverse backgrounds that reflect the local community and promote equal opportunities • Introduce new apprenticeship programs across Comms and Marketing, Youth Work, Facilities and Admin to enable us to grow • Review existing Employee Benefits and explore a more flexible approach to reflect the diversity and characteristics of our workforce. 	<p>Because we want our staff and volunteers to be equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to provide the best possible offer and support to the children and young people we support.</p> <p>Because our current staff and volunteers have asked for more CPD and formal training opportunities.</p> <p>Because as we grow to open our second Youth Zone in Salford, the diversity and characteristics of the communities and the young people we support increases, so we need to ensure our workforce reflects this local diversity.</p> <p>Because external recruitment to key roles has proven difficult in recent months and there is an opportunity to create a development pathway and grow our own by offering entry-level apprenticeships across the organisation.</p>

STRATEGIC GOAL THREE

REPUTATION

GOAL 3	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	WHY?
<p>REPUTATION</p> <p>Grow Empower's Brand as one of the leading youth work charities in GM whilst retaining HideOut and SYZ's local ownership.</p>	<p>WE WILL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish youth-led communications and marketing which celebrates young people's successes and achievements • Create partner-focused comms which clearly shows how we can work together and enhance each other's impact • Develop our funder-focused comms which builds Empower's brand and emphasises that supporters are part of something great, achieve a great return / impact • Build on existing relationships with our media partners including the BBC and Granada to proactively develop a PR/Media storytelling culture plan annually • Work with the Universities in Manchester and Salford to conduct research related to our impact and outcomes for children and young people. 	<p>Because we want to give young People a platform where they can celebrate and promote their achievements, successes and the positive contribution they make to society. We want to challenge to negative stereotypes related to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Because we have so may incredible patrons, supporters andpartners from across private public and voluntary sectors that add huge social value and equity to through their work with us take Manchester and Salford better places to live, work and do business.</p> <p>To ensure we are externally verifying the impact of our work with children and young people and reflecting on areas of strengths and identifying areas of improvement that inform our organisational decisions but also local and regional decisions affecting children and young people.</p>

STRATEGIC GOAL FOUR

SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL 4	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	WHY?
<p>SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>Achieve longer term financial security which allows us to be ambitious and plan confidently into the future.</p>	<p>WE WILL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 3-year fundraising and income strategy • Secure ongoing Local Authority funding of at least £500k p.a. for beyond 2026 • Develop diversified private sector income profile through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - growth of unrestricted corporate and sub-£25k income - maintaining current FP level income - grow trust & grant income for targeted projects • Grow the income realised via regular Facility Hire • Explore opportunities for commissioning and contracting work via Public Sector Partner i.e. Public Health • Continue to review commercial and investment opportunities and performance including digital currency. 	<p>To ensure we are confident that we can continue to support all children and young people and across HideOut and Salford Youth Zones at the minimum current level of provision and services.</p>

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