

MARYHILL INTEGRATION NETWORK

STRATEGIC PLAN

2020-2023

Foreword.....	1
Our Vision, Mission and Core Values.....	2
Who We Are.....	3
Where We Are Today.....	5
Our Strategy 2020-2023.....	6
Our Future	10



FOREWORD

Recent years have proved to be significant in terms of growth and consolidation for MIN. This has allowed us the time and space to reflect on where we are, and also where we'd like to be. Our new strategy sets out the ambitious next stage in our development, as we continue to reach out further to those who need our services the most, whilst at the same time maintaining our reputation as one of the organisations at the heart of Scotland's extended welcome to those seeking sanctuary and the opportunity to build a new life in Glasgow. As set out in the following pages, we have taken this time to better define and refine our areas of work, as well as developing an updated Vision, Mission, and set of Core Values to guide all future projects and partnerships. Overall, we aim to continue to develop innovative projects which achieve lasting positive changes in the communities we serve, by harnessing the unique voices and experiences of all involved in MIN. Since 2001, we have worked to support the integration of New Scots into our communities and we pride ourselves on sharing experience and expertise, assisting and supporting other organisations working in the same field. Reflecting on our recent growth has given us a clearer view of where we sit as part of the wider landscape of third sector organisations in Scotland. Our role is all about *connections* – specifically the social connections between people, organisations and communities – as the key to rebuilding lives and developing a supportive society in which prejudice and fear are replaced by belonging and acceptance.

MIN Staff Team and Board



In Glasgow, the name Maryhill Integration Network is a keyword in the vocabulary of compassion, and action; it denotes a place where home is made again. Making a home that is safe and which opens out into the world with generosity is always an art. There is no model or technique or data set which can provide an all-encompassing formula, rather it is something which is improvised, tested and changed as each new person comes into the space. MIN represents a local miracle of care and community by doing what is needed for a new home to be made. At MIN there is a wool cupboard, full of balls of wool, wool unravelled from discarded jumpers; nothing matches; nothing comes wrapped in pristine bags; but from these stray strands, warmth and beauty are made again. This, for me, is a tangible metaphor for what MIN represents. And there is a MIN – not identical, but made of what is improvisable locally – in every city I have visited worldwide – everywhere where people seek refuge, refuges are made out of the barest resources so that a home, however temporary, might be granted. MIN is both a universal sign of humanity in hospitality and a distinctive sign of what is possible, under the vision of leaders with lived experience, against all the odds.

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Professor of Languages and Intercultural Studies
Ambassador: Scottish Refugee Council



OUR VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES

VISION

MIN's Vision is for an **inclusive** society where everyone is treated with **dignity** and **respect**, and can live supported and connected lives.

MISSION

MIN's Mission is to develop a unique and **creative** environment in which communities can come together to share experiences and demonstrate the value of cultural **diversity** in Scotland.

CORE VALUES

1. WELCOME

We encourage everyone to feel safe, forge friendships and make social and supportive connections across the community, helping to rebuild lives and create a neutral, welcoming place for all.

2. RESPECT

We believe in universal human rights and treat everyone on an individual basis, and with dignity; we strive for “acceptance without judgement” [service user quote].

3. EQUALITY

We understand the negative impact of inequality and social exclusion in our society, and aim to reduce barriers to equality and make Scotland a fairer place.

4. INCLUSION

We support participation in the development of our services with the aim to reflect the diversity of all involved.

5. EMPOWERMENT

We promote awareness of rights and entitlements, supporting ambitions to live autonomously, providing access to advice, support, personal development opportunities and a collective voice within the community.

6. CREATIVITY

We celebrate the use of arts and culture as a means of expression, challenging stereotypes and negative media coverage, in order to create authentic narratives which value contributions made by all in our community.

WHO WE ARE

MARYHILL INTEGRATION NETWORK (MIN) was established to bring **asylum seekers**, **refugees**, migrants and the settled inhabitants of **Glasgow** together.

Since **2001**, we have been developing projects which support **positive social change** by investing in **communities** and providing a welcoming - and much-needed - **safe** and **inclusive** space with opportunities for collaboration and connection, where difference is not only welcomed, but also celebrated.

HOW WE STRUCTURE OUR WORK

Our main services include a carefully designed, and **user-led**, weekly programme of **activities** which runs alongside regular advice clinics, **learning** opportunities, **community** events and **outreach** partnership projects coordinated across the city. Our work is structured around four themes:

1. HUMAN RIGHTS & CITIZENSHIP

2. WELLBEING & SAFETY

3. ARTS & CULTURE

4. DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

We work with a variety of different partner agencies and organisations from local, city-wide and national levels.

WHO WE WORK WITH

Those seeking **asylum** and with **refugee status** are the majority of our service users and volunteers. However, as our services are open to all in the community in need of **connection** and social support, we also welcome many other members of the community (including: international students, EU Migrants, and those identifying as the settled or 'host' population) to join our projects and activities.

Currently, MIN works with people from

45

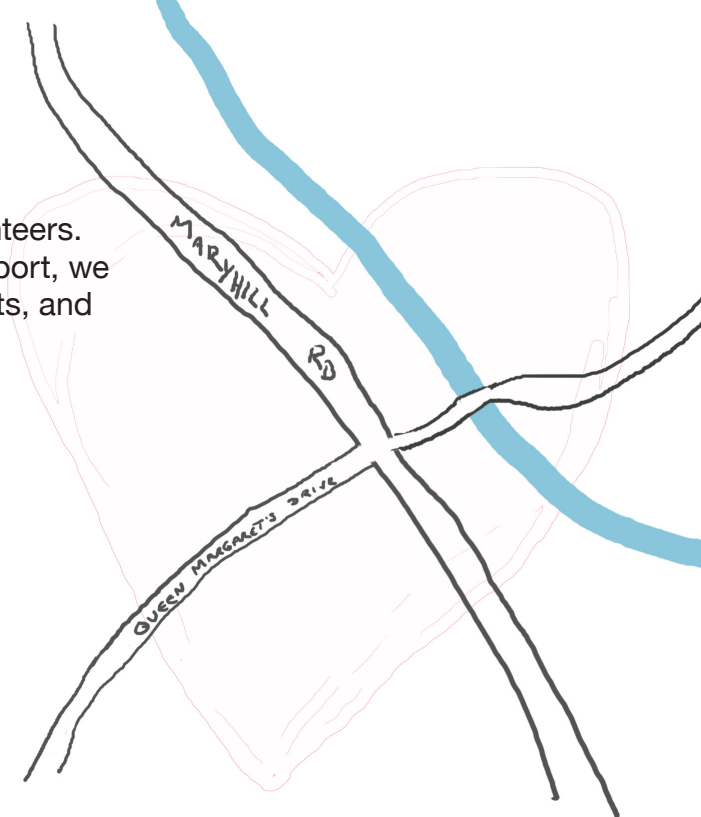
different nationalities and ethnicities.

speaking at least

20

different languages.

The majority are **African**, **Middle Eastern** and from **Central/Eastern European** countries, as well as a number of people from **South East Asia** and **South America**.



WHY OUR WORK IS IMPORTANT

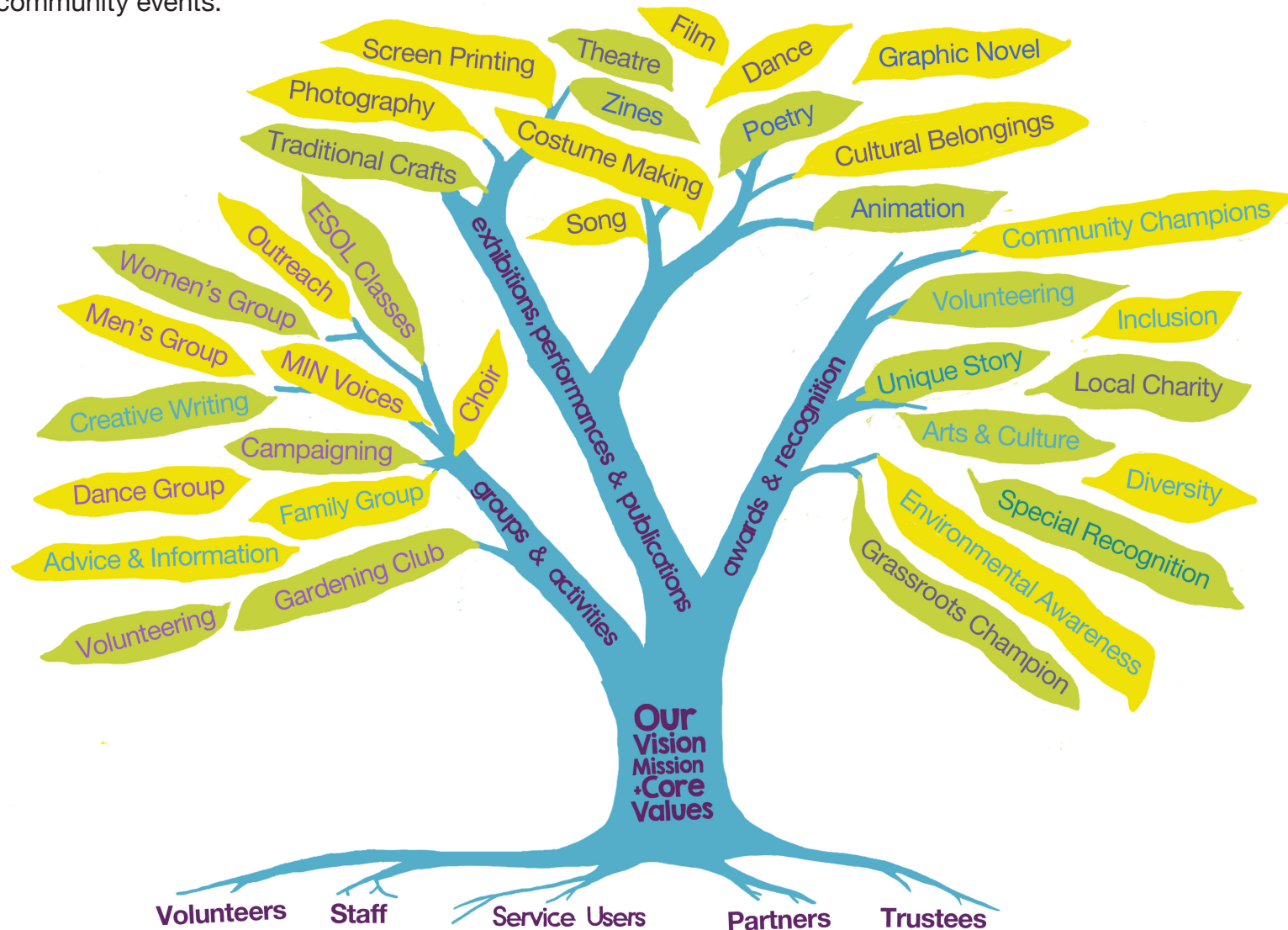
In delivering services within one of the most deprived areas in Scotland, it is important that the work we produce meets the direct needs of the local **community**, supporting them to become **resilient**, connected, and able to create and maintain positive changes in their own lives and within the life of their community. Intervention at an early stage offers the key to preventing future social issues such as racism, discrimination and hate crime. By working across the whole community, MIN is in a strong place to support successful and sustainable measures that will lead to a more fair and **equal** future for all.

WHERE WE WORK

Our services predominantly take place via our base in the North West of **Glasgow**, however, we welcome participation from anyone wishing to access our services, no matter where they live in Glasgow. We also extend the scope of our work through **outreach** projects and partnerships across the city, as well as participating in performances and conferences nationally. In recent times, our growing online reach has connected us even further on an **international** scale, with students, researchers and audiences who share similar experiences and values.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Since 2001, MIN has grown from being a charity with just one member of staff coordinating 3 weekly drop-in projects, to becoming a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a team of **7 staff** and **60 volunteers**, including **10 trustees** on our board. Our weekly programme offers **8 social groups**, **4 lifelong learning opportunities** and **2 advice and support surgeries**. We work with over **40 partners over the course of a year** and reach, on average, between **500-600 direct beneficiaries** through our groups, outreach projects and community events.



OUR NEW STRATEGY

outlines how we will move forward over the next three years, building on our strong reputation within the community, capitalising on partnerships, and as always, listening to the diverse voices of those we work with. Preparation for the development of our plan was informed initially by a stakeholder survey involving service users, volunteers, partners, referral agencies, funders and independent supporters, as well as separate consultations with staff and trustees. The structure of our plan is based around the four themes which MIN works across, each theme has its own strategic goal, objectives, and also outcome and indicators which will enable us to monitor our progress.

THEME 1: HUMAN RIGHTS AND CITIZENSHIP

STRATEGIC GOAL: Provide advice, support and advocacy for asylum seekers and refugees, and promote empowerment through confidence building, learning, skills development, and voluntary opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

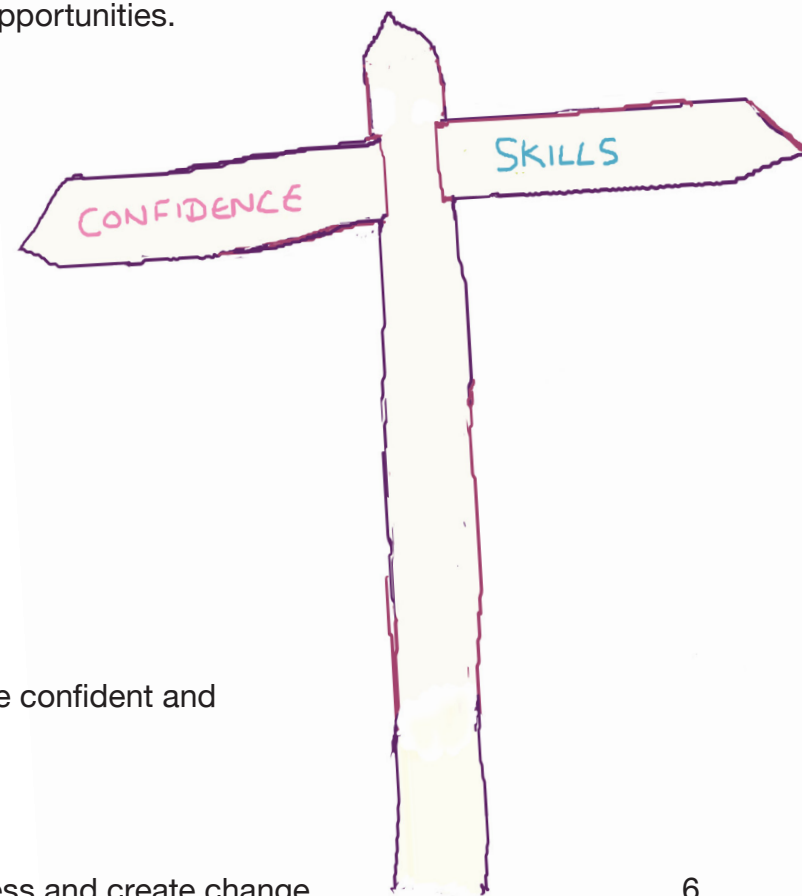
- Create an environment in which asylum seekers and refugees feel safe, supported and are able to access advice and information
- Build capacity by sharing up-to-date information on changes to policy and law
- Support the provision of regular ESOL and conversation classes
- Sustain opportunities for volunteering in the community, in particular, with asylum seekers and refugees
- Offer sign-posting to training opportunities enabling volunteers to move on towards further education, training and employment
- Facilitate learning, development, training and networking opportunities, as well as the sharing of skills, knowledge and expertise.

MEASURING PROGRESS

We'll know we're making a difference because asylum seekers and refugees will feel more confident and empowered to speak out for change.

Our service users will be:

- able to raise issues in various ways, one to one, in groups, or in public
- aware of their rights and entitlements
- capable of sharing their lived experience, as a way to provide evidence, raise awareness and create change.



THEME 2: WELLBEING AND SAFETY

STRATEGIC GOAL: Take measures to combat racism and discrimination regarding race, religion, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation in order to promote feelings of safety and belonging.

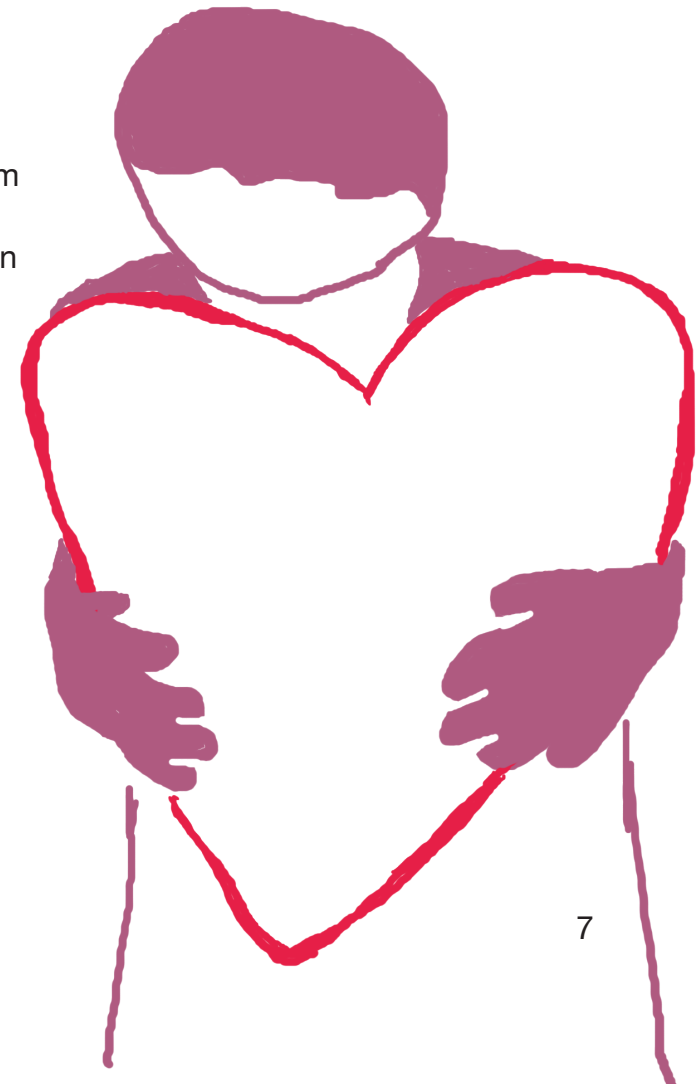
OBJECTIVES

- Provide a safe, neutral space for the victims of hate crimes to be able to report incidents.
- Pay attention to the pre-migration trauma and poor mental wellbeing associated within the asylum process, when developing projects and activities
- Build capacity and confidence in staff, volunteers and service users to address recovery from poor mental wellbeing
- Encourage wellbeing through the provision of regular access to activities and opportunities in the local outdoor environment
- Maintain and develop strong community partnerships offering referrals and signposting to appropriate agencies to promote better community wellbeing
- Raise awareness on the impact of multiple discriminations, and provide tailored spaces and activities for service users affected by them.

MEASURING PROGRESS

We'll know we're making a difference because asylum seekers and refugees will have better access to networks and services which support improved wellbeing. Our service users will:

- share information with others on linked opportunities and organisations
- understand what constitutes hate crime
- know how to report crimes via third party reporting.



THEME 3: ARTS AND CULTURE

STRATEGIC GOAL: Create a welcoming and culturally sensitive environment as a basis to strengthen social bonds across the community through which to develop innovative projects and activities.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide opportunities for community participation and active citizenship
- Place service users' views and ideas at the heart of project development and implementation
- Explore possibilities for pioneering performances, exhibitions and publications
- Develop partnerships with cultural venues and arts organisations to ensure accessibility and engagement
- Coordinate events to share and celebrate the collective creative talents of all in our society
- Support the dissemination of alternative and authentic narratives for asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow.

MEASURING PROGRESS

We'll know we're making a difference because asylum seekers and refugees will feel more socially connected within the community and able to participate fully in the cultural and artistic life of the city. Our service users will:

- have a variety of social connections across different community and language groups
- play a part in creating a welcoming and supportive environment at MIN
- be encouraged to express themselves in creative and non-verbal ways
- feel able to access cultural venues and galleries as part of a group or independently.



THEME 4: DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

STRATEGIC GOAL: Be a forward-looking organization that develops opportunities for volunteers, staff and partners to uphold our values and work towards our vision and mission.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that service users' needs are placed at the heart of organisational planning
- Maintain a safe and inclusive environment with strong emphasis on equal opportunities, and tackling systemic inequality
- Actively take an anti-racist approach in our policies, operations and activities and challenge negative attitudes
- Engage with academic and non-academic researchers to influence knowledge and expertise about asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland
- Ensure effective participation in relevant policy making processes from local to national levels with third and public sector organisations
- Develop and strengthen our internal procedures and governance structures, ensuring accountability and transparency
- Focus on staff development through opportunities for training and skills development
- Ensure human resources policies are in place to maintain a diverse, safe and positive workplace
- Diversify funding sources and maintain robust financial management systems
- Regularly monitor and evaluate our work to evidence its impact and to effectively target our resources towards our strategic objectives.



MEASURING PROGRESS

We'll know we're making a difference because MIN will continue to be a recognised and well-respected organisation where staff and volunteers are valued and motivated. We will: foster an environment of trust and reliability with all our partners; our service users will demonstrate feelings of ownership and agency within MIN; our staff team and board will have representation of those with lived experience of seeking refuge; and staff and volunteers will be encouraged to be creative in their roles and work to the best of their abilities.

OUR FUTURE

In **2023**, we will continue to have a **varied** and **well-attended** programme of activities with **diverse** engagement and even more **opportunities** for individuals to influence the decision making in our organisation.

We will have created **bespoke** roles for service users and volunteers to meaningfully **impact** the way we design our activities, events and outreach projects.

MIN will also be one of the key organisations in **Glasgow** to welcome people seeking **sanctuary**, providing the right **tools** and a suitable platform for people to raise their voices and concerns. We will set a precedent in terms of empowering our service users and engaging with partners to create **progressive** policy change from the ground up.

We will be at the **heart** of a **flourishing** and **vibrant** community where **creativity** is encouraged and celebrated.

Our staff team will have grown further and we will support **innovative** roles and methods of working which suits the **modern** landscape of the third sector.

We will work **collaboratively** with others within and across sectors to bring about the best possible outcomes for our service users who will continue to value the role that MIN has, and will, play in their lives as a constant and **reliable** source of support and information, providing the first steps onto a pathway to a fairer future for all in our growing **community**.



Maryhill Integration Network is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Charity number SC037300

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