



Handcrafted Director for Young People

Candidate Pack
February 2026



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Introduction



Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in Handcrafted and the role of Director for Young People. We are passionate about providing better homes, support and opportunities for some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people across the North East. We have a particular focus on children and young people, and I am delighted that you are considering this key leadership role.

We are at an exciting stage right now. Our housing and support for children in care, care leavers and separated migrant young people has grown rapidly over recent years. We have built a strong reputation across the North East, for meeting a real need but there is still so much more to do. We are expanding provision in Durham, Gateshead and Sunderland, with plans to extend further into Tees Valley and Northumberland.

You will be part of a community of staff who want to be part of growing something meaningful, with clear mission and values, rooted in our Christian ethos. We believe in the inherent value of each individual and we want to give more young people the chance to turn their lives around.

The growth of this relational and mission driven work needs to be matched by strong, experienced leadership. You will be a key member of our Senior Leadership Team, shaping culture and strategy for the next phase of growth.

We are looking for a leader who can also combine strategic clarity with operational focus.

Confident in carrying regulatory responsibility, strengthening systems, developing managers and representing the organisation externally. You will act as the Ofsted Registered Service Manager, holding statutory accountability for compliance and quality across our Supported Accommodation provision for 16- and 17-year-olds.

Our model also addresses the cliff-edge in support at transition points such as turning 18, combining independent living with sustained relational support through to 25 and beyond. Embedding and strengthening this approach as we expand will be a central priority.

This role reports directly to me because of its importance to our future. The decisions made in this post will shape the quality and reach of our young people's services across the North East. If you have the experience and conviction to lead at this level, I would love to hear from you.

With warmest regards,

Dan Northover
Chief Executive Officer
Handcrafted

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About us



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About Us

About Handcrafted

We started our first workshop in January 2012. A few people from a local church had been getting to know homeless people in Durham. We were struck that people were being written off due to their situation, yet they clearly had skills, ambitions, and something to offer.

Since then, Handcrafted has been providing housing, support, training and opportunities to empower the most vulnerable people in society to do the hard day-to-day work of turning their lives around.

We have developed a sustainable hub model to deliver our person-centred, holistic approach. And have scaled it across the North-East, first in Durham then to Chester-Le-Street, Gateshead and, recently, Sunderland.

Our hubs are based in areas of high deprivation to provide a welcoming community and holistic support. We ensure our hubs are flexible, able to adapt to their area's specific needs by working alongside local councils, community groups and organisations.

In 2023, we began our specialist young person's provision for 16-25s. They work across all of our areas supporting and housing young asylum-seekers and refugees, and care leavers with complex needs.

Organisational structure

We are a registered Supported Accommodation provider for 16- and 17-year-olds (Categories 1 and 2), offering both single-occupancy and shared housing depending on need. Our accommodation is dispersed across local communities and is designed to feel safe, stable and homely.

Our young people's services operate across the [Engage](#) team working with separated migrant young people, and the [Hummingbird](#) team working with children in care and care leavers.

The Director for Young People provides strategic leadership across these services, ensuring regulatory compliance, safeguarding oversight, staff development and service growth.

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About Us



Engage

We work with separated migrant young people to support them in transitioning to adult life in the UK, feeling fully supported, equipped, and confident of their independent and sustainable capability to flourish. We are currently working with 50 young people with plans to increase to over 100.

We foster a supportive community of friends across nationalities through weekly gathered activities, such as football, cricket, and dinners. These regular events create a positive shared space for socialising, getting active, and having fun! During the week, we also support young people seeking asylum with cultural and religious access to halal shops, churches, and mosques. At times of celebration, we all come together to join in the festivities, often with lots of food!

Housing is a key element of our support for young people seeking asylum. We welcome each person into a place they can call home, encouraging them to decorate their rooms to their own tastes and explore their local area. These houses, shared with a few other young people, offer comfort and stability throughout what can be a challenging period of asylum claims and settling into the UK. This housing and support mitigates against isolation and empowers young people to take steps towards living independently.

We help each young person to develop their confidence and competence in English. This can involve helping them to enrol in an English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) course and encouraging consistent positive engagement with college. We also offer additional ESOL gathered classes for those who are not in college or desire extra support, providing an alternative learning environment that is consciously trauma-informed. For those with Leave to Remain, we promote appropriate employment opportunities and further studies, led by each young person's own aspirations.

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About Us

Hummingbird

At Handcrafted, we are committed to supporting young people as they transition from care to independent living. In response to gaps in provision for 16- and 17-year-olds transitioning from care, we have developed the Hummingbird model.

Hummingbird Homes consist of a cluster of 5 to 7 independent properties located within walking distance of a dedicated Support House. This model provides independent living within close proximity to staff, structured daily contact and welfare checks, community-based activities and skills development, 24/7 on-call support, and a seamless pathway into adult provision.

We then continue to house up to 20 care leavers who have already turned 18 in their own, independent Handcrafted properties, providing the foundation for them to flourish in a safe and supportive environment. Our approach includes regular welfare checks, gathered activities, and consistent guidance to empower young people to take their next steps, whatever they may be. We believe that this is a crucial place to invest time and put compassion at the heart of working with some of the most vulnerable young people to ensure that they are drawn into community and have a place to call home.

By combining stable housing, emotional support, and practical experiences, we help to guide young people in building brighter futures and moving forward with confidence. The model combines independence with relational stability, enabling young people to grow in confidence while remaining supported.

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About Us



Our Approach

Our work is underpinned by four core values:

- **Creativity** – everyone can make something to be proud of
- **Empathy** – we walk through challenges shoulder to shoulder
- **Empowerment** – everyone can learn to take back control
- **Community** – we accept people as they are and support one another

We operate a person-centred, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach. Support is tailored to individual need, combining key working sessions, practical life-skills development, community activities and multi-agency coordination. Safeguarding is embedded across all services, supported by regular staff training and clear reporting structures.

Christian Ethos

Our Christian ethos shapes how we lead and how we treat those we support. At the same time, All the work of this charity is freely available to everyone, regardless of their beliefs or any other differences. Our approach is founded on the following beliefs:

- We believe that everyone is created with value and purpose, and everyone can create things with value and purpose.
- We want to share a radical vision of people turning their lives around and starting to contribute to society.
- We believe that every person has a role to play and there is value in our difference. We have found that we live better when we work together.
- We want to reach out to people with an empathetic and compassionate approach, like Jesus did. We believe Jesus came down to our level, lived a life like ours and took on our struggles and pain.
- We are unconditionally loved and so we love other unconditionally.
- We believe that we have been shown unlimited compassion and forgiveness. We therefore seek to give everybody the opportunity to have a fresh start.

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Role description



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Job description



Role details

Role title	Director for Young People
Salary	£51,100
Location	Based from one of hubs in Gateshead or Durham with travel to other hubs and properties
Hours	37.5 hours per week (flexible and part-time working patterns available)
Reports to:	CEO
Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays• Pension contributions• Training and development



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Job description



Roles and responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Service Development

- Provide strategic leadership for all young people's work, ensuring alignment with Handcrafted's mission and organisational priorities.
- Shape the direction, structure, and development of services supporting young people, including separated migrant young people and other vulnerable groups.
- Lead the design and implementation of new initiatives and service models that respond to emerging needs, local trends, and gaps in provision.
- Contribute to organisational planning and cross-team collaboration to strengthen outcomes for young people.
- Ensure the service vision is values-driven, relational, trauma-informed, and reflective of young people's voices.

Operational Delivery, Service Performance & Practice Leadership

- Oversee the day-to-day delivery of supported accommodation and developmental programmes within the Engage Team, ensuring consistent, relational, and high-quality support for young people.
- Ensure operational systems, staffing patterns, and case management structures meet the needs of young people and contractual requirements.
- Monitor service performance through data, feedback, and outcomes, implementing improvements where needed.
- Provide leadership on practice standards, reflective practice, and the relational ethos that underpins Handcrafted's approach.
- Address operational challenges proactively and ensure coordination across support, accommodation, and community-based work.

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Job description



Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding, Quality, Compliance & Ofsted Leadership

- Act as the Ofsted Registered Service Manager, holding responsibility for ensuring the service meets all relevant Ofsted regulations, inspection standards, and statutory guidance.
- Maintain oversight of safeguarding across the Engage team, ensuring robust risk assessments, incident management, and welfare planning.
- Lead on regulatory compliance for supported accommodation, ensuring that all policies, practices, and reporting meet Ofsted and local authority expectations.
- Promote a culture of safety, trust, and trauma-informed practice throughout the Engage Team.
- Oversee quality assurance processes, audits, supervision records, and continuous service improvement.

Staff Leadership, Partnerships, Contract Management & Representation

- Lead and support staff through supervision, coaching, training, and professional development, ensuring they are equipped to deliver high-quality, trauma-informed support.
- Build a strong team culture grounded in compassion, accountability, professional boundaries, and reflective practice.
- Manage relationships with local authorities, funders, health providers, community partners, and safeguarding agencies.
- Ensure all contractual commitments are met, including reporting, data submission, and stakeholder communication.
- Represent Handcrafted in external meetings, networks, regulatory discussions, and multi-agency forums, advocating for young people's needs and strengthening collaborative practice.

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Person specification



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Person specification



Skills and knowledge

Essential

- Strong strategic leadership skills with the ability to shape vision, drive improvement, and lead organisational development within young people's services.
- In-depth understanding of safeguarding, risk management, and trauma-informed practice, with senior responsibility experience.
- Knowledge of Ofsted regulations for Supported Accommodation and the responsibilities of a Registered Service Manager.
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to manage complex workloads, prioritise effectively, and maintain oversight across multiple projects and teams.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to engage young people, staff, and external partners
- Ability to interpret data, monitor performance, and use evidence to drive service improvement.

Desirable

- Ability to identify and create business opportunities from inception to implementation.
- Can rapidly connect and create a rapport with people who have suffered disadvantage or social exclusion.
- Ability to develop partnership and communications strategy.

Experience

Essential

- Significant experience working with vulnerable young people, including those in supported accommodation,
- Proven experience of leading teams, supervising staff, and developing professional practice.
- Experience in managing safeguarding concerns, coordinating multi-agency responses, and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Experience in operational leadership within social care, education, youth work, or supported housing.

Desirable

- Experience supporting individuals with complex needs.
- Project management experience in a business development or communications setting.

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Person specification



Ethos and values

Essential

- A strong personal commitment to the Christian ethos of Handcrafted, and to working out that ethos through prayer, practical action and ways of working
- Able to work sensitively with those of different cultures and faiths with a commitment to Equal Opportunities
- Commitment to upholding a good culture of safeguarding.

Additional

Essential

- Completion of an enhanced DBS check prior to employment, with no concerns that would make the applicant unsuitable for working with vulnerable young people.
- Full UK driving licence and access to a vehicle.
- Willingness and capability to act as the Ofsted Registered Service Manager and fulfil the associated legal responsibilities.

Desirable

- Ability to work flexibly, including occasional evenings or weekends, to meet service demands.

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How to apply



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How to apply



Handcrafted is working exclusively with Charisma Charity Recruitment.

Applications should be submitted through the [Charisma website](#), and include:

- A comprehensive CV
- A supporting statement, explaining how you believe you match the requirements of the role and describing any potential conflicts of interest.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact:

Sandra Smith, Associate Director of Charisma Charity Recruitment on 01962 813300 or email info@charismarecruitment.co.uk

We welcome and encourage expressions of interest from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status or other category protected by law.

Closing date: 24 March 2026

Charisma vetting interviews must be completed by 31 March 2026 prior to shortlisting.

Interviews with Handcrafted: TBC



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