

LYP CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

FINAL REPORT
MAY 2024

YPF TRUST

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1. PURPOSE

This report provides an overview of the second phase of the LYP Capacity Building Project led by YPF Trust, which took place from September 2023 to March 2024.

Following the successful delivery of the first pilot phase, work (to April 2024) provided continuity at a local level, increased the reach and scope of partnership work in England and further developed our understanding of the role of place-based partnerships within a complex children and young people's sector.

We are pleased to report that investment from DCMS has enabled significant developments across these areas, and this report demonstrates the impact of the project, the wider value of partnerships and our ambitions for the future of this work.

We now know that investment in partnerships leads to greater investment locally and is critical in meeting our collective ambitions for children and young people. This report therefore outlines that local areas need further investment in infrastructure complemented with greater coordination at national level and use of a consistent framework and local-centred approach.

This report provides a clear and concise overview of our key messages, with the ambition of working with DCMS and partners to further develop and deliver outcomes for children and young people through collaboration.



YPF Trust always works in partnership, locally, regionally and nationally – this project and the development of the report and supporting work are a collective effort and bring together the work of a number of individuals and organisations.

The report has been written by Justin Watson, Suzie Yassin and Imogen Gregg-Auriac at YPF Trust, with support from the following colleagues:

- Bethia McNeil and Tim Leaman – YMCA George Williams College
- John Hitchin and Anna Waldie – Renaisi

In developing this report, we have also engaged with key sector partners, including National Youth Agency, UK Youth, the Network of Regional Youth Work Units and the Local Government Association.



2. BACKGROUND

YPF Trust is a national charity that focussing on collaboration in place for children and young people – we know that working in partnership makes children and young people's lives better.

We support a growing group of local areas as they explore local systems and activities within partnership and development which will meet local need, within a national framework and consistent support and guidance. Across the network, we are engaging with established, emerging and completely new partnerships.

In the last year our network has grown to over 40 local areas across England, supported by YPF Trust and partners through tools, resources, networking, advice, enthusiasm, and challenge.

"[The LYP Capacity Building Project] has meant we have been able to move from being a concept to an actual organisation, which has been commissioned to deliver services locally, it has helped to build confidence at a local level, position us to be the youth organisation's voice and go to organisation, which has embedded us across the area"

- YOUNG BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN FOUNDATION

LYP Project Pilot Areas - Phase 1

- Blackburn with Darwen
- Cornwall
- East Riding
- Medway
- Peterborough
- Southampton
- Stockton
- Sunderland
- Warrington
- Wiltshire

LYP Project Pilot Areas - Phase 2

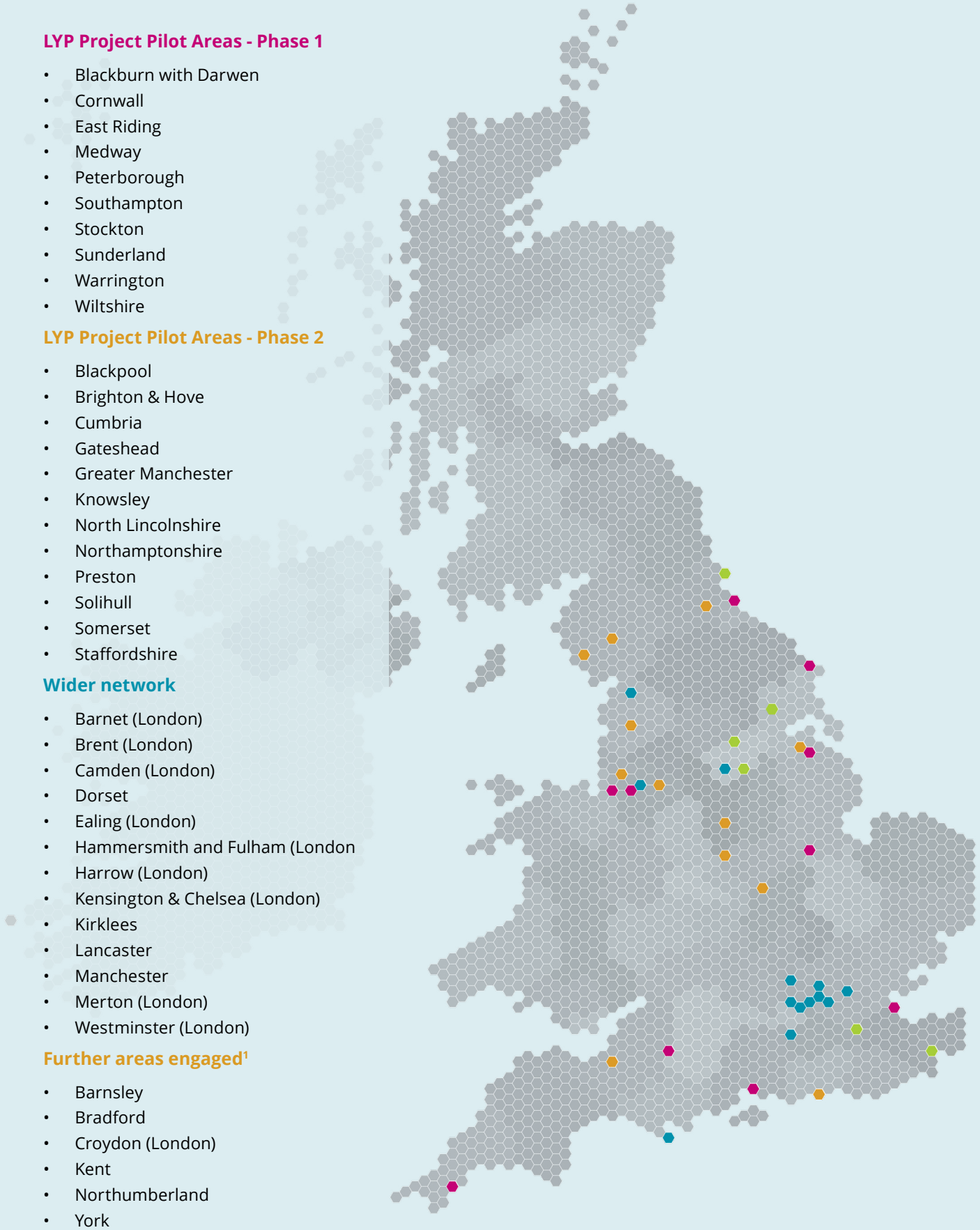
- Blackpool
- Brighton & Hove
- Cumbria
- Gateshead
- Greater Manchester
- Knowsley
- North Lincolnshire
- Northamptonshire
- Preston
- Solihull
- Somerset
- Staffordshire

Wider network

- Barnet (London)
- Brent (London)
- Camden (London)
- Dorset
- Ealing (London)
- Hammersmith and Fulham (London
- Harrow (London)
- Kensington & Chelsea (London)
- Kirklees
- Lancaster
- Manchester
- Merton (London)
- Westminster (London)

Further areas engaged[1]

- Barnsley
- Bradford
- Croydon (London)
- Kent
- Northumberland
- York



[1] *We have a further pipeline of interested areas and local partners, and connections via the regions*

3. PROJECT SUMMARY



"The LYP Capacity Building Project has been a game changer and force multiplier for Blackpool"

- BLACKPOOL YOUTH PROVISION PARTNERSHIP

The LYP Capacity Building Project (Phase 2) is an extension of the work initiated in 2022/23 to support the development of place-based partnership work within the youth sector in England.

Phase 1 of the project:

1. Developed a range of **tools, guidance and resources** to enable formal partnerships locally.
2. Enabled local areas to fully engage with and take advantage of regional and national support available through formal **connections to regional and national bodies**.
3. Established the first '**Framework for Partnership**', a resource which seeks to provide guidance to organisations and groups looking to explore partnership working, as well as established partnerships.
4. Provided a **business case supporting LYPs** at a local, regional and national level.
5. Connected new local partnerships to a **growing network** of place-based partnerships.
6. **Connected LYPs into wider investments** in children and young people across government, trusts and foundations.

In May 2023, YPF Trust proposed a series of recommendations (to DCMS and partners):

1. Implement a national programme of support to partnerships across the country.
2. Establish a consistent approach to partnership in the youth sector which supports local needs and ambitions whilst providing clarity and consistency for supporters and partners.
3. Align partnership development with a core offer for young people and organisations, including National Youth Guarantee and national infrastructure and guidance (e.g. curriculum, data, impact).
4. Provide direct, tailored support for local areas to understand, navigate and influence the opportunities available to them, alongside shaping their local strategies and plans.
5. Invest directly into local partnerships through a broad network of local, regional and national funders so that this, in turn, creates the mechanisms for income generation and effective marshalling of resources.

The second phase of this project aims to provide ongoing local support while also developing national and regional initiatives to foster and support local partnerships.



Our priorities for Phase 2 were to:

1. Embed local youth partnerships (LYPs) into national policy and practice in the youth sector, including national and local guidance and resources, including via a standardised outcomes framework for LYPs.
2. Embed support for LYPs into national and regional infrastructure systems and programmes, ensuring full alignment of local capacity building and development with the work of national partners and the Network of Regional Youth Work Units.
3. Explore sustainable approaches to partnership support and development including explicitly via Regional Youth Work Units and city-region level initiatives (e.g. Youth Alliance Greater Manchester).
4. Continue direct support for emerging LYPs (including those engaged in the pilot)
5. Engage and directly support a further 6-10 areas, providing support and resources in the development of LYPs in those areas.
6. Secure ongoing support for, and investment in, LYPs at local, regional and national levels, building on the established business case and supporting research (e.g. Empowering Local)



Phase 2 of this project has been delivered in partnership by YPF Trust, working closely with local areas and our regional and national partners:

- YMCA George Williams College
- The Network of Regional Youth Work Units
- National Youth Agency
- Local Government Association
- UK Youth
- Young Manchester
- John Lyon's Charity
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation

"There was large consensus in Southampton that we needed to work better collaboratively to get better outcomes for our CYP, but without the support and resources from YPF and the pilot I do not believe we would have been able to make it happen."

– YOUNG SOUTHAMPTON

4. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through engagement with over 40 local areas and a range of regional and national partners, we have identified consistent themes across the project, and the wider work of YPF Trust.

This report, and our plans for the coming period (2024/25), are informed by the following:

THE SCALE OF APPETITE, NEED AND DEMAND

We have seen a substantial increase in interest in local partnership work, especially from local authorities and the VCSE sector seeking advice and support on developing work in their local area.

There is a clear need for support and investment, focused locally whilst ensuring that the most effective and appropriate regional and national systems are in place to enable local areas to thrive.



"The YPF Trust have been instrumental in the development of the Cornwall Youth Work Collective. Support from the enthusiastic and extremely skilled team has enabled us to clarify our vision and align it with deliverable outcomes to create a collective that will make a real difference to youth work organisations and young people in Cornwall.

The team have provided extensive support and expertise - from the initial development of our theory of change, to enabling us to meet with colleagues from other areas who are further down the journey than us - YPF Trust has facilitated discussions rooted in the fundamental values which permeate their, and our, work. We absolutely would not be where we are in our journey without their support."

- CORNWALL YOUTH WORK COLLECTIVE

THE NEED FOR ALIGNMENT AND COORDINATION AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS THAT WORKS LOCALLY

Our work with Renaisi, and ongoing engagement with local areas, continues to highlight the gap between national infrastructure (across the sector and public bodies, not just the core youth work organisations) and local areas.

Phase 2 of our work with Renaisi introduces a typology to better understand youth infrastructure in a specific place. This typology provides opportunities for shared language and greater alignment in infrastructure support and development, as well as for collaborative work around funding.

We hear consistently from local areas that they struggle to navigate the range of national opportunities available to them, and that the system needs to consider how local areas are empowered and resourced to understand local need and deliver a plan which meets that need, supported by national partners rather than shaped by them.

We also see huge differences in the level of resources in regional infrastructure, and thus the regional offer to local partnerships varies from place to place and is missing the consistent connections and infrastructure that would help manage and mobilise resources between national organisations and local settings.

Investing in local youth partnerships presents a significant opportunity to align work already happening, across VCSE and public sector, and provide fertile ground for further coordination at a local level.

We are seeing promising signs of how national funders and national government initiatives can support place-based approaches which connect across areas, and we are keen to see this work increase in both breadth and depth.

Example:

Cheetham Hill in North Manchester has received £1million investment over five years through the Youth Endowment Fund's place-based approached grant, the Neighbourhood Fund. Because this investment is managed through Young Manchester, in their role as infrastructure and partnership broker, it has been able to prioritise grassroots support and provide a platform and catalyst for change.

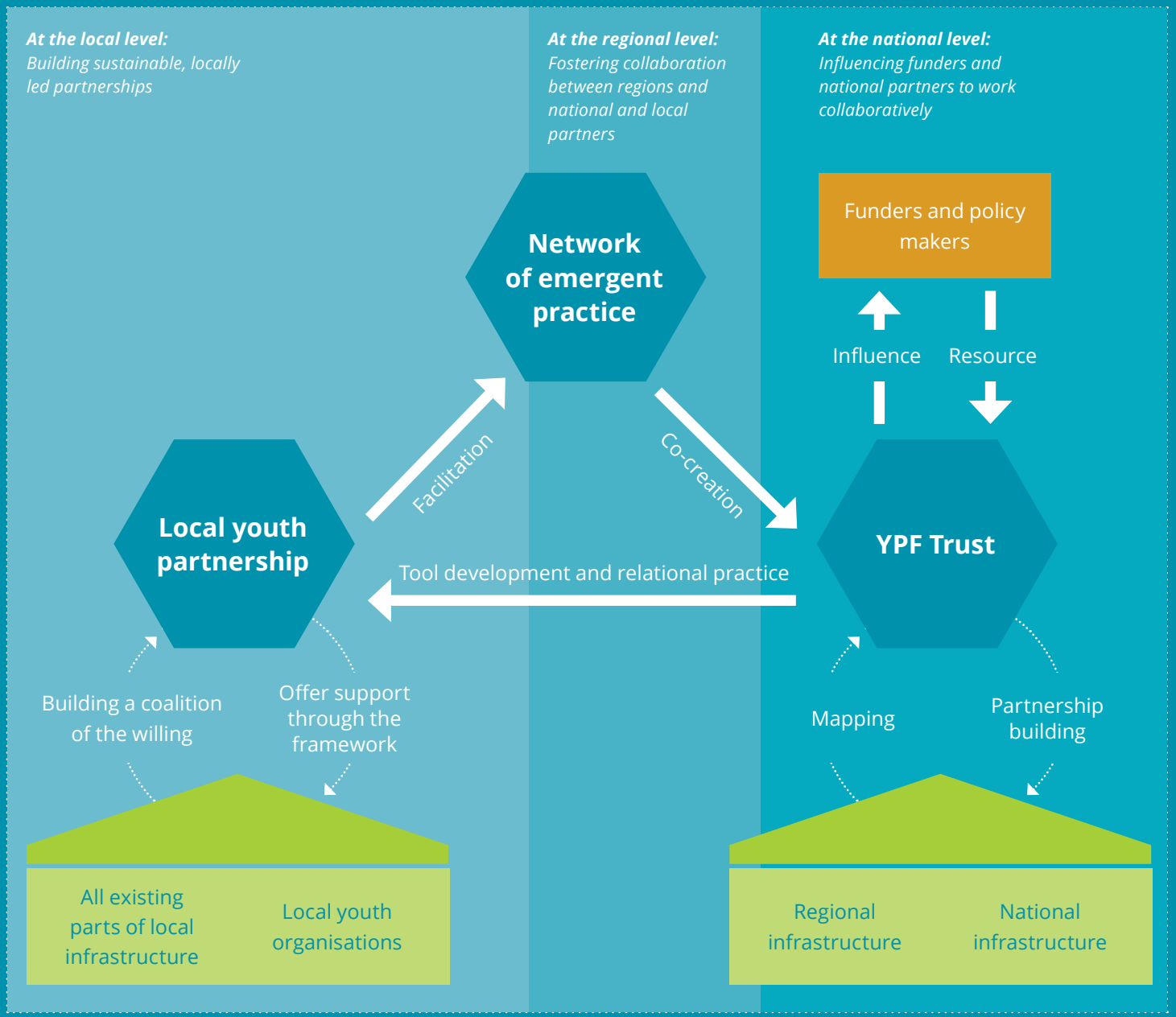


THE VALUE OF WORKING ACROSS LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL

Through the development of our work with DCMS, we have further clarified our role within a complex system, and sought to added value at local, regional and national levels:

- **Local** – Supporting sustainable, locally-led partnerships
- **Regional** – Fostering collaboration between regions and national and local partners
- **National** – Influencing national partners and funders to work collaboratively and invest in local

At each level, we've been intentional in our approach and added value to existing and emerging work – seeking to build on local collaboration activity, developing regional infrastructure and national initiatives.



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE APPROACH

From our work to date, we are clear that the approach taken alongside our partners, has been critical to the success we've seen so far, and this is reflected in the feedback we receive from local areas.

Through working across local, regional and national spaces, YPF Trust is able to provide a range of support, resources and opportunities which work together to enable local areas to develop and thrive.

Alongside a set of practical tools (e.g. tool kits, guides) and opportunities (e.g. events, training, peer support), we've heard loud and clear from local areas that how they are engaged and supported by national and regional organisations is key.

"One aspect that has been really welcomed is that YPF Trust are clearly there to help and support our unique local partnership journey, and we are not required to conform to a set model that is imposed on us. This empowers local networks to do what works for them and their partners in their local environment"

- STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY YOUTH SERVICES



"Being part of the pilot has provided the local Youth Sector with support which has brought neutrality, skills, knowledge, experience and networking which in turn has attracted interest and investment in setting up a local youth partnership."

- WARRINGTON PARTNERSHIP

Our approach is grounded in a set of core principles:

- **Adding value** – we add value to existing and emerging ideas and plans, being a useful and positive partner
- **Flexibility** – we adapt to meet local need and ambitions, not roll out a model or impose our ideas
- **Generosity** – we share our ideas, our learning (including where it's gone wrong) and our resources
- **Openness and collaboration** – we position ourselves as collaborators and partners, recognising the different expertise of those we work with
- **Strengths-based** – we work with the assets and resources available, building on local strengths
- **Independence** – we are not invested locally, nor funded by any local actors, and seek to provide neutral and independent guidance and support in the interest of children and young people and the sector that supports them

"YPF Trust has a huge amount of credibility with organisations due to their knowledge, and relational approach to the work"

- BLACKPOOL YOUTH PROVISION PARTNERSHIP



THE IMPORTANCE OF FRAMEWORKS NOT MODELS

In the landscape of local youth partnerships, it is essential to recognise that each area must tailor its approach to suit its unique circumstances. However, this localised approach sometimes leads to the perception at a national level that work on partnerships—and more broadly, local initiatives—is fragmented and lacks cohesion. This perception can undermine the perceived effectiveness and efficiency of local efforts, potentially impacting national understanding, engagement, and subsequently, investment and support.

To address these concerns, consistency in how we describe and discuss partnership work is crucial. A common language and standardised approach can greatly enhance the clarity and effectiveness of these partnerships, leading to better engagement and support. In response to this need, the YPF Trust, in collaboration with YMCA George Williams College, has developed a second iteration of the Partnership Framework. This framework is designed not only to support the development of local youth partnerships but also to provide a structured way to discuss and evaluate these efforts systematically.

THE NEED FOR THE FRAMEWORK

The framework is instrumental in supporting the development of local youth partnerships by providing a structured model that outlines essential practices and benchmarks for success. It serves as a critical tool for guidance, self-assessment, planning, and evaluation. Designed specifically for use by local youth partnerships and Young People's Foundations, the framework helps these organisations navigate the complexities of effective partnership building.

From its inception between September 2022 and March 2023, the framework has undergone rigorous development, including a focused literature review and consultation with local practitioners. These efforts have identified key 'markers' of effective partnership, which were refined based on feedback from emerging LYPs and a comprehensive analysis of successful local partnerships.

The Partnership Framework aims to provide a blueprint that fosters consistency and coherence in how partnerships are formed and maintained. By aligning local efforts with nationally recognised practices, it helps mitigate the risks of fragmentation. More importantly, it enhances the capacity of local partnerships to attract national attention, engagement, and investment, by demonstrating their effectiveness and strategic alignment with broader goals.

"Recognising that every local area is unique, this framework is an invaluable resource for all locally-led youth partnerships. We are stronger together by focussing on what's important for each locality to focus on right now, protecting the future of services for young people."

- TIM LEAMAN, YMCA GEORGE WILLIAMS COLLEGE

Through its use, local youth partnerships are equipped to evaluate their current state, envision their desired future, and strategically plan their journey towards achieving these goals. The framework's iterative design means it is continually refined to reflect the evolving needs and insights of local partnerships, ensuring it remains relevant and effective in promoting high-quality, impactful collaboration.

The framework for partnership is not merely a model but a dynamic tool that adapts to the unique challenges and opportunities of local youth partnerships, guiding them towards greater coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability in their efforts to support children and young people in their communities.

We are keen to see this framework adopted by government bodies, sector stakeholders, and funding organisations, as we believe it will establish a solid foundation for consistency and clarity in local partnership work going forward.

CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION ACROSS AREAS

Across our work with local areas, we consistently receive consistently positive feedback about the value and impact of peer support and spaces to connect to others.

With support from DCMS, we have established national spaces (through face-to-face and online conferences and events) and explored 'regional networks of local partnerships' alongside Regional Youth Work Units.

These spaces are critical, providing opportunities for local areas to share learning and practice, explore shared opportunities and challenges and importantly feel part of something bigger.

"Being part of a wider and similar-but-different initiative is encouraging, thought-provoking and inspiring."

– YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES BOARD SOLIHULL

"The partnership has been able to feel it was not alone in its aspirations or challenges, the shared learning and support from across the capacity building pilot allowed the YPP to grow, reframe and change course from the experience of others on their journeys. The benefits included collective funding bids, joint and shared plans and projects and enabling the YPP to articulate the 'Blackpool Model' of youth work and youth provision. None of this would exist without the time and space for people to come together, articulate views and agree on a shared strategy moving forward."

- BLACKPOOL YOUTH PROVISION PARTNERSHIP

"Being part of YPF Trust has also provided a very real sense of connection and belonging, which we as a team have not really experienced for a number of years, since the loss of NCVYS."

- STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY YOUTH SERVICES

"The event in York [national event for local area leads] gave me a real sense of belonging to a movement for better outcomes for children and young people - it gave me a sense of what is possible when people work together and support each other; a feeling that together we are stronger. The stories of others' were both reassuring and inspirational, but also brought some of my own challenges into sharper focus (as well as exploring some solutions!)"

- YOUNG NORTHANTS

EARLY INVESTMENT UNLOCKS GREATER SUPPORT

We have to be clear that investment in children and young people's organisations, and in partnership work specifically, is critically important.

However, we are now seeing that modest support in local partnerships is leading to greater investment, both locally and nationally. Through support from YPF Trust, and great work at a local level, a number of local areas are turning seed funding of £5,000-£10,000 into core funding of £50,000 to £100,000 to establish a partnership, and a number of more developed areas are using that core funding to leverage further income.

A number of areas have now secured additional core funding (e.g. Sunderland, Cornwall, Somerset, Northamptonshire, Stockton) or are in discussions with local public sector partners and funders about investment in the partnership itself.

It is not just about leveraging more – but using money wisely. A number of local partnerships are now delivering or exploring co-commissioning models with the public sector, to ensure that young people and communities are shaping local investment, and that limited resources work as hard as possible for communities and for funders.

"We have 3 consortium groups delivering a fund for youth social action projects across the city as a result of Young Southampton controlling the funding and monitoring it. Previously this would have been put out by the LA and would have been a competitive fund that organisations would have applied for individually.

It has already created partnerships between members when applying for new funds and has started some really positive work in connecting opportunities we currently have in the city and some that are coming."

- YOUNG SOUTHAMPTON



RECOMMENDATIONS

Our key reflections above have led us to propose the following recommendations for next steps with the LYP Capacity Building Project:



Recommendation 1: Continue to invest directly and build support for the work developed by the LYP Capacity Building Project - responding to the appetite for increased partnership work in areas.



Recommendation 2: Initiate a coordinated effort to secure investment at local, regional, and national levels to meet local needs, focusing on investing in local partnerships at modest levels to leverage additional funding.



Recommendation 3: Instigate a drive to align local, regional and priorities and strategies across public, voluntary and private sector through the establishment of a national infrastructure strategy for England.



Recommendation 4: Foster engagement and buy-in across the sector and within government structures to establish a national framework for partnership. This framework should support shared outcomes and objectives that respect local autonomy while providing national clarity and consistency.



Recommendation 5: Implement a cross-sector delivery project in five local areas, supported by a collective approach from national funders and anchor institutions committed to investing in those areas.



5. HOW WE SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS TO THRIVE

A COHERENT APPROACH TO SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

In conversations and discussions at a national level we hear concerns about what is happening in the children and young people's sector at a local level – these concerns include the perceived lack of consistency in practice, complexity of approaches taken and the inability of national organisations to understand and navigate what is happening locally to meet national needs and priorities.

Our strong view is that we need to flip this approach on its head – we should be thinking about place-based solutions which promote and privilege local areas, empower and resource them to drive local agendas and meet local needs, and enable them to shape national opportunities and resources for their benefit.

Through the work of local youth partnerships, we are now seeing the benefits of focusing on place-based practice.

"Being part of the pilot programme has been invaluable to the development of the Youth Provision Partnership (YPP) in Blackpool, enabling greater collectivism, connectivity and mutualism to develop to support young people via youth work and youth provision. The pilot has enabled the YPP to progress vastly quicker as a co-operative group with shared vision and values through the active support of the YPF acting as a external consultant, critical friend, 'challenger', listener and enabler. It has been an accelerator for our development. We want Blackpool to be a place where young people are able to be actively involved in their lives, their communities and in a place they're happy and proud to call their home."

- BLACKPOOL YOUTH PROVISION PARTNERSHIP

Through the work undertaken during this project, we believe that there is a way to ensure that we meet the needs of local areas and ensure effective engagement at a national level.

There are three key areas which need to be addressed:

1. **Clear and consistent understanding** of what quality local partnerships are at a national level, which provide clarity and coherence whilst support local autonomy *(see Partnership Framework)*
2. **A collective approach at a national level** to local area support, with coordinated engagement and funding from the broad range of national and regional infrastructure organisations, delivery organisations and funders
3. **Funding which supports local need and ambitions,** whilst working within a consistent national framework and seeking to encourage and promote collaboration not creating competition *(see funding section below)*

We believe that YPF Trust has a vital role in all three areas, and our work to date has demonstrated the value of the work we do and the investment from DCMS to date.

National leadership and coordination is now required to take local youth partnerships to the next level.

PRE-CONDITIONS FOR PARTNERSHIP WORKING / READINESS

There are a number of critical factors impacting the effective delivery of partnership work at a local level, as outlined by our work with YMCA George Williams College to establish a national framework.

During Phase 2 of this pilot project, the significance of 'readiness' has been at the forefront of our thinking, as we seek to grand the reach and scale of local youth partnerships, the national network and the work of YPF Trust itself.

With funding precarious and often highly competitive, we risk setting local areas up to fail if they are not well positioned to start the partnership journey – a fragmented start to the process can lead to further challenges, and undermine shared ambitions or needs locally.

We are also mindful of our role, and that of all external stakeholders seeking to support a local area. Resources are finite, and as a national partner we are guests in a local area – we will be led by local needs and ambitions, and support and guide rather than unduly influence what happens locally.

With this in mind, we have established a set of pre-conditions for partnership development. We recommend that these are in place before significant work is undertaken by national partners (including YPF Trust):

1. Strategic permission/ positioning

There needs to be broad strategic 'permission' to embark on a journey of developing a partnership.

This could come from the local authority but doesn't need to - it could come from a CVS that wants to expand its reach, or from a collection of strong voluntary sector leaders in opposition to the former.

Without this, however, national partners and / or self-appointed local partners lack credibility and buy-in, and progress will be messy and may fail completely. We are not imposing work on a local area, it must be driven locally and supported by outside stakeholders – that requires permission.

2. Enough trust in the system

Trust is at the heart of all partnership work – and it is the most difficult barrier to overcome, especially as it takes time and investment and doesn't always reflect the demands of investors or funders (who want to see action and tangible change).

We don't start with trust – it is earned and built over time – however, there needs to be just enough trust around that people will engage and commit to making something happen e.g. come to a meeting, or be open to exploring something where the immediate win for them is not obvious.

Our approach builds trust and works best when it is building on the sparks of trust already in place. *(Example Knowsley, Manchester)*

3. Capacity

The work of YPF Trust, and specifically funding from DCMS, has provided the capacity for local areas to engage in partnership development, from starting their journey through to enhancing existing work.

At the very beginning, this capacity is critical and is often very basic – maintaining partner lists, organising meetings, capturing actions. If this isn't in place then nothing happens, and momentum (and trust) is lost.

"We've been propelled forwards. Hard to put a timeline on it, but we're likely a year or so ahead of where we might otherwise be."

- PARTNERSHIP LEAD, BRIGHTON AND HOVE



6. EMBEDDING PARTNERSHIP IN A SYSTEM WHICH WORKS



Local youth partnerships are, when they work best, broad-based collaborations which connect across areas, bridging the gaps between providers, services and ultimately children and young people themselves.

They cannot be isolated bodies, and must seek to align to and coordinate with a range of wider services and activities, locally, regionally and nationally.

Our learning in the past 6 months has identified some key areas where we feel this can be improved, and we have developed a number of briefings to support work at a local level, and inform our collective approach at a national level.

This includes:

- National to Local (with Renaisi, and supported by NYA, UK Youth, YMCA GSC, Units) – second phase of research on connecting national infrastructure to local areas.
- Role of regional – briefing on how we feel regional infrastructure can support local, with a focus on partnerships.
- LA guidance – briefing on LAs and partnerships, connecting to statutory guidance and the role of cross-sector partnerships within local areas.

NATIONAL TO LOCAL

Following initial work (2023/24) exploring the connections between national infrastructure and local partnerships and delivery, Renaisi have worked with UK Youth, NYA, YMCA George Williams College and the Network of Regional Youth Work Units to establish a typology for better understanding youth infrastructure in specific places.

The work seeks to:

- Increase our understanding of local infrastructure, from local and national perspectives
- Explore the implications for national infrastructure, and how we can better align support and services to meet local needs
- Explore implications for funders and opportunities to align a consistent typology with investment. The starting point for this study was that not enough is known about the various ways infrastructure is set up in different local areas, which makes it hard for national and regional bodies, funders, and policymakers to work well with them.

The work's outcome is a typology for local areas to understand where their infrastructure is currently at, situate that within their own improvement, and help others know how to support different areas well.

There are four broad categories within the typology, and it argues that some local infrastructure conditions are more likely to lead to positive outcomes for local organisations, children, and young people. The categories are:

- Structured
- Hidden
- Emergent
- Chaotic

More work is needed to test and explore the journeys local areas might go on to improve their infrastructure, but the typology gives funders, national organisations, and the government a clearer starting point to support local areas. It argues that while there are four broad typologies of local infrastructure conditions for local youth organisations, there are more desirable conditions to aim for, and those are more likely to have better outcomes for local organisations and young people.

We are currently exploring a further phase of this work and would welcome the opportunity to continue its development with DCMS support.

The full briefing is included as a separate appendix to this report.



ROLE OF REGIONAL

Following initial work (2023-24) exploring the importance of regional infrastructure in the youth sector, the YPF Trust has reviewed the current role that regional infrastructure specifically plays in supporting local youth partnerships and what would be possible with an increase in investment.

The full briefing is included as a separate appendix to this report.

LA GUIDANCE

The YPF Trust has, in this phase of work, explored both the role that local youth partnerships play in helping local authorities to fulfil their duties, (inclusive of the Statutory Duty under Section 507B of the Education Act) and in turn shares insight into the different ways in which local authorities can support partnerships.



"With the DCMS LYP Capacity Building and YPF Trust involvement we are in a position to answer our statutory duty 'collectively' through the YPP thus creating a locally rooted response that enables us to be aspirational and ambitious in our view of what we in our stated vision - we want Blackpool to be a place where young people are able to be actively involved in their lives, their communities and in a place they're happy and proud to call their home."

- BLACKPOOL YOUTH PROVISION PARTNERSHIP

The full briefing is included as a separate appendix to this report. With DCMS support we can roll this guidance out and provide associated support and tools.

7. INVESTING IN PARTNERSHIPS



Key to the development of this work, at scale, is significant and coordinated investment.

Much can be achieved without it, but only with the right resources in place will local areas really thrive.

We are conscious of the complexities of local funding (across public sector, trusts and foundations and corporates), and the competing demands often put forward locally, regionally and nationally.

We have seen, however, that investment in partnership work at a local level leverages further investment and support.

With the right support in place, we believe that every local area can be delivering the financial returns we are seeking in established partnerships like Westminster, Brent and Harrow – where for every one pound invested in the partnership a further four pound is investment in the community. In Westminster, that means £1.6m going to grass roots community and youth organisations.

We are seeing this happen in other areas too, beyond the relative security of North and West London (where core funding is provided by John Lyon's Charity).

- In Sunderland, Sunderland All Together Consortium have secured £500,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund to deliver youth provision across the area via their membership over the next three years, with further support from two family trusts totalling £1m over the same period.
- In Cumbria, Cumbria Youth Alliance has secured substantial funding from various sources. They have secured a five-year grant from the Lottery, over £200,000 from the Youth Futures Foundation, and £2 million in total commitment from a benefactor. They chair the Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Reference Group, which distributes £200,000 annually for youth funding in Cumbria. In addition, they provide £30,000 per year in small grants to their network of delivery organisations.
- In Stockton, Youth United Stockton Alliance has secured £276,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund to support the delivery of a five-year Youth Offer Strategy across the area, including a focus on quality provision, income generation and workforce development.

"To put it bluntly, without the support of YPF Trust, we would never have got so quickly to a point of having a high-level strategic plan that has been endorsed by all key stakeholders and has enabled us to secure funding for the next two-years and fund infrastructure support for the sector. Without the DCMS LYP Capacity Building pilot and the continued support of YPF Trust and Youth Focus North East, we would definitely not be in the position we are in today"

– YOUTH UNITED STOCKTON ALLIANCE



Three detailed case studies on local investment in partnerships are included as an appendix to this report.

We are seeing a renewed commitment (and often investment) in partnerships from local authorities and the wider public sector – this includes new and emerging partnerships in places like Blackpool, North Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire and developing partnerships in Stockton, Cornwall and Warrington.

Where this investment is secured, we are seeking substantial work to transform youth provision in a local area. National Lottery funding in Somerset is setting the standard for collective approaches to tackling a broad range of challenges in the youth sector:

"[Through the work of the partnership, we have] 45 new workers trained into youth work to level 3 this financial year.

We are now:

- working across sectors to map/ increase provision locally and then looking at how best to communicate this.
- working locally in villages in partnership with VCSFE colleagues and parish/town councils, and local funders to develop/coordinate and fund youth work provision.
- extending the understanding of youth work wider than a small group of ex-LA youth service members (14 in sept 23) to over 21 in March 24, and have just a contract to train ASB/Ranger teams to increase their understanding of youth work to effect change and improve their touchpoints with young people on the street."

- SOMERSET YOUTH WORK ALLIANCE

In Staffordshire, investment in children and young people-focused infrastructure provides a range of high quality services and support, as well as meeting the needs of public sector partners and funders.

"We are a recognised strategic partner of the local authority and other public bodies in creating a environment locally in which children/young people can thrive.

We provide evidence to support the Local Authorities Statutory Duties around sufficiency and youth voice.

We support the local sector to engage with agendas such as Early Help, Family Hubs, Holiday Activities and Food Programme, Supporting Families, Care Leavers Offer, SEND offer, Turnaround (Youth Justice), Violence Reduction, ASB, Alternative Education, etc.

We host the Staffordshire PSHE Education Service, bridging the gap between formal and informal education sectors locally.

We have a range of youth engagement and voice programmes including UK Youth Parliament, local elected youth council, young community researchers programme with Staffs University, annual international camp(s) with German War Graves Commission, etc.

We facilitated the creation of a local co-production promise with commitments to make life better for everyone, particularly those who need to access support of whatever kind. We will continue to hold local partners to account for these promises, and will seek to support workforce development and monitoring and evaluation of the impact made."

- STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY YOUTH SERVICES

In more developing partnerships, there is a clarity on what partnership work will achieve, and the difference it can make.

"[Further development of the partnership will lead to]:

- Closer working and collaboration between youth organisations
- Improved profile of youth work
- Improved case for support resulting in increased funding for youth work
- Ultimately, higher quality youth work, reaching more young people, resulting in increased well-being and outcomes for local young people"

- WILTSHIRE YOUTH PARTNERSHIP



SUCCESS FACTORS

Our three case studies (see appendix) and wider work across the network has highlighted three factors which have been critical to securing income locally.

They are:

Clarity of strategic focus: Successful partnerships maintain a steadfast commitment to their core mission, avoiding mission drift driven by funding availability. They anchor their strategies in rigorous needs analyses and youth consultations, leveraging these insights to guide their approach and gain credibility with funders. Strategic relationships with local councils remain vital, prompting partnerships to deliberate on the desired nature of these connections and take proactive steps to cultivate them.

Generous leadership and trust-based relationships: Effective leaders invest time and effort in fostering open, trusting collaborations within their partnerships. Their advocacy efforts and values-driven approach position them as champions for their members and young people. While replicating individual leadership styles may be challenging, partnerships can prioritise funding bids that allocate resources for strategic leadership. Highlighting leaders' roles as 'systems leaders' in narratives underscores their pivotal contribution to the organisation's mission and income generation.

Deep knowledge of the community: Partnerships yield authoritative insights into their communities, facilitating targeted outreach and engagement efforts. They prioritise relationship-building and maintain proximity to the front lines of youth work to avoid becoming perceived as bureaucratic entities. Demonstrating authenticity as conduits to the youth sector and implementing strategies to expand outreach to new organisations are paramount for partnerships seeking sustained impact.

WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY COST?

There are two critical phases to investment in local youth partnerships:

1. **Seed funding** – funding of between £5,000 and £10,000 to enable exploration and local engagement (e.g. through events)
2. **Development funding** – funding of between £50,000 and £100,000 to fully establish a partnership, including a core delivery team and resources for engagement, events and training

When an area gets to core funding of £50,000 then we know that, with the right support, this can be leveraged to secure further investment including match funding with local and national funders.

At scale, this reflects the work undertaken in Manchester or Cumbria, where national funders support local agendas and contribute to local pots, increasing investment locally and the direct reach to grass roots organisations.

"The potential to improve practice / provision for children and young people in Northants is absolutely huge. Young Northants will offer a point of focus for VCSE partners and providers across the County. Levels of provision / quality of provision are not good & Young Northants will be instrumental in strengthening the local Youth Offer and building capacity in the region. We have the potential to galvanise the sector in a principled and values driven way."

- YOUNG NORTHANTS

INVESTING IN AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT LOCAL

Alongside greater coordination of support at regional and national levels, we do want to see greater investment.

Our work in the next year will seek to make the case for this investment, which will:

- Secure and sustain current support to local areas, ensuring they can progress from an emerging partnership to being fully established
- Increase the reach of support, growing the number, quality and resources of local partnerships
- Increase the consistency and quality of support at regional levels across England
- Increase our learning and impact, and ensure this is effectively shared and embedded within the sector
- Increase connections between local, regional and national partners across VCSE, public and private sectors

To make this happen, we are calling for direct investment in YPF Trust, and the Network of Regional Youth Work Units, informed by our recent paper on 'the role of regional' (see above).

We know that with the right investment, local youth partnerships will be at the heart of delivering for our children and young people.



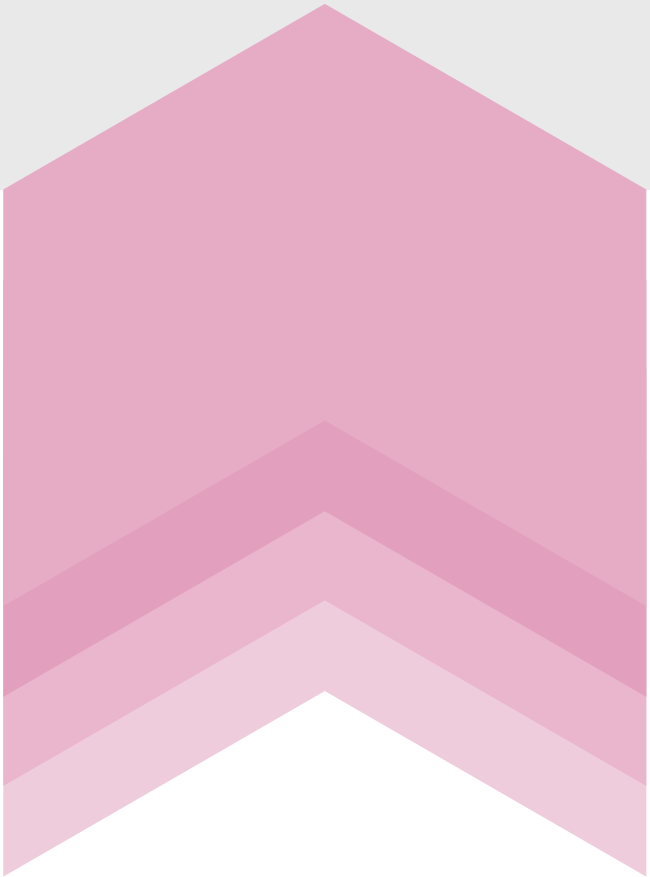
8. APPENDICES

A series of supporting documents are included as separate appendices to this report:

1. A Framework for Partnerships
2. Full Report – LA Guidance
3. Full Report – Local to National (Phase 2)
4. Full Report – Role of Regional
5. Funding Case Studies – Harrow, Sunderland and Cumbria
6. Area Summaries
7. Compliance Report – Objectives and Finances

GET IN TOUCH

If you are interested in young people, places and partnerships, then we would love to hear from you - we are keen to collaborate locally, regionally and nationally to find the best ways to support young people.



YPF TRUST

You can contact us in the following ways:

Check out our website https://ypftrust.org.uk/

Email us info@ypftrust.org.uk

Write to us
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