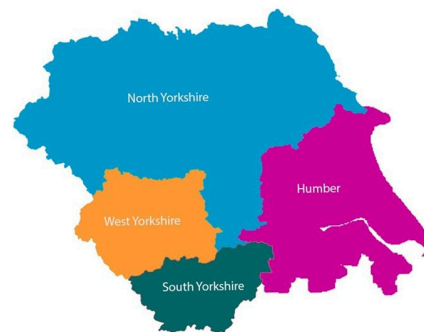


# Investigation into Local Authority Youth Offers across Yorkshire and The Humber

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YWU  
Yorkshire and Humber



Youth Voice



# Report Overview

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As outlined in the 1996 Education Act, section 507b, each Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide their young people access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities, often referred to as a local offer, which is the term we have chosen to use for this report.

A key component of the local youth offer is that these activities must be publicised.

This report investigates the effectiveness with which Local Authorities in Yorkshire and The Humber promote activities for young people.

We find that in most Local Authorities this information is difficult to access. It is often scattered across multiple websites, or only details local authority run activities.

We conclude that the requirement to publicise all activities for young people is not being met effectively in Yorkshire and The Humber.



# Introduction

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Section 507B of the Education Inspection Act 1996 introduced statutory duty on Local Authorities to promote the well-being of persons aged 13-19, and up to 24 for those with SEND. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-youth-provision>

All Local Authorities must provide a 'youth offer' with sufficient educational leisure-time activities, for a young person's personal and social development; in addition to sufficient recreational leisure-time activities and facilities, so far as is reasonably practicable, for improvement of a young person's physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. Each local authority is required to develop a plan which covers all provisions for children and young people and shows how it meets government priorities.



# Introduction contd...

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Local authorities also have a duty to:

- Secure access to sufficient recreational leisure-time activities and facilities activities;
- Ascertain young people's views on positive activities;
- Publicise positive activities

As the main providers or commissioners of youth services, local authorities should take the strategic lead and '**publicise effectively to young people and their families the overall local offer of all services and activities available for young people locally**'. (page 14)

The aim of this research was to investigate whether these three requirements are being met by the local authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region.



# Method

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Initially we chose to focus on the third requirement, which is to effectively publicise all services and activities.

To do this we conducted a desktop research search, using Google, acting as if we were a young person looking for activities in their local area. We posed three questions, with the first most likely to be asked by a young person, the last least likely to be asked, to compare results.

The prompts were:

- “Activities for young people in [insert Local Authority name]”
- “Clubs and youth centres in [insert Local Authority name]”
- “Local offer in [insert Local Authority name]”



We did initially use the search prompt “things to do in [insert Local Authority name]”, however this only yielded results for websites such as Days Out With the Kids and Tripadvisor. We removed this prompt from our search, instead using “Activities for young people in [insert Local Authority name]”.

# Results

The below table summarises the results of our three searches. A red cross indicates relevant information could not be found, amber that limited information was found, and green that information about activities could be found. Further information for each Local Authority can be found in the summary section.

	<u>Barnsley</u>	<u>Bradford</u>	<u>Calderdale</u>	<u>City of York</u>	<u>Doncaster</u>	<u>East Riding</u>	<u>Kingston upon Hull</u>	<u>Kirklees</u>
First search	Many different websites for youth clubs	Only council	Series of links lead to a website that was hard to navigate	Hard to navigate	Hard to navigate	Only physical activities	Youth centres only	X
Second search	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	Youth centres only	AI summary Google list
Third search	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

	<u>Leeds</u>	<u>North East Lincolnshire</u>	<u>North Lincolnshire</u>	<u>North Yorkshire</u>	<u>Rotherham</u>	<u>Sheffield</u>	<u>Wakefield</u>
First search	X Too many websites to be understood	Hard to navigate	Only council	Only Voluntary and Community Service (VCS)	✓	X	Youth Hubs only, but directed users to another website
Second search	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	AI summary Google list	✓	Only council youth clubs AI summary Google list	Same as above with AI summary Google list
Third search	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

# Ranking

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- Top: Rotherham
- Upper Middle: City of York, Doncaster, North East Lincolnshire, Wakefield
- Lower Middle: Bradford, East Riding, Kingston upon Hull, North Lincolnshire, North Yorkshire, Sheffield
- Bottom: Barnsley, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds

Note; we are aware that some areas such as Kirklees, have a Local Youth Partnership site (Kirklees Youth Alliance), but this did not come up in our search and which suggests young people wouldn't find it.

# Summary of Each Local Authority

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## Barnsley

The first question resulted in days out, and lots of individual sites including onside, Barnsley YMCA, and Chilipep. This search also brought up the Barnsley Council Great Childhoods Ambition webpage, which was a statement linked to support and one building, but did not detail what activities are available.

The second search question, AI summary provided a list of youth clubs and their links. Beyond this list, the same websites above were available.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. It is evident that there are many youth clubs in Barnsley, and that Base71 is going to provide a variety of activities, however having no central website makes it difficult for young people to navigate. Additionally no information about recreational activities such as sports or craft groups was found.

## Bradford

The first question, once past trip advisor, brought up a Bradford What's On webpage but it wasn't clear that this listed youth activities. Once opened it listed only local authority activities, Family Hubs and Health Clinics, you had to scroll down to find youth clubs. There is a search facility, where you can look by distance and age, however the ages children 12-16 and young people 16-24, are 12 places apart either side of pregnancy, mental health services and a range of disabilities. The search page has a map, but no activities actually appear on here.

The second question did create a google map, with individual links to different youth centres including VCS and faith groups.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. The Bradford What's On page found in the initial search is a good foundation, however improvements could be made. For example, making it clear that this website can be used to search for youth activities by having the age categories together, rather than separated; having a functional map that pinpoints the location of activities, and including those run by the VCS.

## Calderdale

The first question brought up a link to a document, “Things to do for Children and Young People” with link to activities mentioned, but most were for young people with SEND. This document links to a site called YoYo which states that it is the “one stop shop’ for young people aged 11 to 19. Once you scroll down, activities are grouped into the following categories: Music, Go Watch, Sports and Exercise, and Culture. There is no section here that includes youth clubs or other youth groups. Within the Go Watch category there is a link to another page on the Calderdale Council website, from which you have to click a link to another website to begin searching the clubs and societies. The search categories in this website are confusing and do not work efficiently. For example there is a category specifically for Young People’s activities however this only brings up three clubs whereas a search for all categories using the 5-17 age filter results in 56 clubs. Positively, clubs can apply to be added to this list meaning it contains both council and VCS activities.

The second question did create a google map, with individual links to different youth centres including VCS and faith groups. There was also a link to a council run website listing Youth Groups, both LA and VCS.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, information about some educational and recreational activities was available, however it was difficult to find and use. Young people are not likely to follow as many links as required above to find information.

## City of York

Once past the AI list of things to do, the first website that appears is the City of York Youth activities and groups. This website appears above those such as Tripadvisor and Mumbler which makes it much easier for young people to find. This is not the case for many Local Authorities. Once on the website, scrolling down provides you with links to two websites, Shine and Yor-Zone. However, both of these links take you to the same place, the homepage for the Raise York website. When you scroll down there is a box for young people, that then lists a wide range of support on offer including drugs, relationships and housing, but no activities. There is a menu option for activities in the toolbar at the top of the Raise York website, which requires another click to the activities search page. Here there are many categories to search by, including age, cost and type all providing information about activities ranging from swimming classes to hockey or chess clubs. However, you can only apply one filter at a time, making it challenging to find activities that you are interested in or that meet your needs.

The second question again brought up the City of York Youth activities and groups page as well as a google map with links to relevant activities and community centres including VCS and Faith groups.

## [City of York contd...](#)

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, there is a website detailing a variety of council and VCS educational and recreational activities. Having all the activities in a single website that appears ahead of the tourist information makes it easy for the young people living in York to access. Improvements could be made to the search tool here to allow multiple filters. The Yor-Zone and Shine websites mentioned on the City of York Youth Activities and groups page could not be found, so perhaps this needs updating to describe Raise York instead.

## Doncaster

The top result to the first search question was a link to Doncaster Clubs, Activities and Events for Children, Young People and Families. This website does contain information about the two council-run youth hubs, however there is no information on this page specifically about activities for young people. You have to scroll down to the bottom of the page, past information on family hubs and ideas for family days out, to find a section titled 'Activities Near You' with a link to clubs and groups. You can then carry out a search for Clubs, Hobbies and Interests by area or all of Doncaster. The search by area does not always work efficiently, appearing to have very strict cut offs between nearby areas making it difficult to find activities. Searching the whole of Doncaster makes activities easier to find, but does only show a couple per page, rather than all at once on the map. The second question, brought up Council Youth Hubs and a google map, with individual links to different youth centres including VCS and faith groups

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall the Doncaster Clubs, Activities and Events for Children, Young People and Families webpage is good, it was the first search result and contains information about a range of activity types in a single place, making it easy to access the information. Having a map makes it easy to see exactly where activities happen, albeit with a couple of adjustments needed. Being able to filter activities by type would be beneficial as currently you must scroll through several pages to find one you might be interested in.

## East Riding

The first search prompt lists the East Riding Council's Activities for Young People webpage as the first result. The website is clear and easy to use, providing information on four council-run youth sport programmes, including contact details and how to join. Below these is a link to sports clubs run by volunteers and community groups. Users can filter clubs by the sport but not age, which means not all results are open to young people. While the address of each club is provided, there are no further contact details, making it difficult for young people to actually attend. This website has no information about non-sport activities such as youth centres or open access provisions. No further websites containing this information were found using this search prompt.

Similar to most areas, the second search prompt generated a list of youth clubs run by VCS and faith groups and located them on google maps.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, it is easy to identify sports clubs run by both East Riding Council and VCS, but no information was found for other types of activities. Adding these to the Activities for Young People page alongside the sports clubs would make it easy to find. An interactive map and contact details for each club would also improve access to activities.

## Kingston upon Hull

The first and second question produced the same link to the youth centres page of the Hull City Council Family Hub website , although in the first search prompt this appeared below Mumbler, Days Out with the Kids and the East Riding Council's Adult Social Care groups and activities websites. The site features an interactive map that displays both local authority, VCS and faith youth centres, making it easy to locate the closest one. Details of the larger centres are given, including who specific groups they support and how. Links to most, but not all, of the youth centres on the map are provided. Some of these links are to a Facebook page, restricting the people who are able to access the information. Most young people do not use Facebook, and there is a minimum age to set up an account meaning many young people are unable to access this information. The only other relevant website found using the first two prompts was The Warren.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall the Family Hub website was easy to use and the interactive map is a good addition, but it does only provide information about youth centres. Adding information about other activities, including sport and creative groups, to this website and removing the need to use Facebook would make accessing activities easier for young people.

## Kirklees

The first prompts, brought up a range of websites, including Kirklees Council and Kirklees Schools Out. We were unable to find a single website detailing activities open to all young people. The Council website detailed events happening at libraries, mostly for under 5's and the Kirklees Schools Out gave information about summer activities available for young people on free school meals.

The second question did create a google map, with individual links to different youth centres including VCS and faith groups. It also brought up a website detailing youth clubs specifically for young people with SEND.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. No websites were found detailing activities open to all young people, which implies the third requirement, promoting activities is not being met.

It is important to note here that we are aware Kirklees has a Local Youth Partnership website called Kirklees Youth Alliance which details a range of activities, however this did not appear in any of our searches, suggesting that young people would not find it.

## Leeds

The first search prompt results in multiple websites listing activities, such as Breeze Leeds, We Are Child Friendly Leeds, SEND Local Offer includes information tailored to specific needs. Breeze Leeds encourages users to buy a £5 pass to get discounts on a range of activities and days out. If you focus on the 'Things to Do' tab there is an activity search area where you can filter by venue, distance, activity type and age range. This doesn't specifically list activities for young people, instead appears more focused on venues and companies. The We are Child Friendly Leeds webpage from this search lists youth groups recommended by people on Facebook. The list appears to be ordered randomly, with no indication of where the groups are located. This makes it difficult to find local activities of interest. It is not comprehensive but does appear to have a range of activities available, including sport groups, creative groups and groups for young people with SEND. The third webpage that results from this search is the Sports and Fun Activities page of the Leeds SEND Local Offer website. This page has an alphabetised list of educational and recreational activities run by council, VCS and faith groups. You can also search for specific activities. Whilst there is no interactive map making it hard to see where activities are located, there are contact details and website links for all activities listed

The second search brought up the same results as well as a google map which pinpointed youth clubs and community centres.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families.

## Leeds contd....

Overall, having this many websites makes finding information about activities inaccessible. The information is too scattered and confusing. Currently, websites have limited filtering options, no map, and do not show when they were last updated, making it challenging for young people to find and access activities.

## North East Lincolnshire

The first search brought up the North East Lincolnshire Council webpage 'Activities for 0-19'. You then follow the link to the Family Information Director to find activities. To search you must select a category from the drop-down list. There are many options which are overwhelming. The youth activities category only shows youth clubs rather than all activities for young people. Additionally, you can't filter by age, distance or postcode and there is no map. This means you have to choose a category of interest and manually search through each result to see if it is open to young people and where it is located. This is time consuming and inefficient. However, it does appear to be comprehensive, containing both council, VCS and faith group run educational and recreational activities. The second search brought up the same webpage and a google map with links to local youth clubs.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, North East Lincolnshire appears to offer and promote a range of activities; however, limited access to information makes it more challenging for young people to discover what is available.

## North Lincolnshire

The first search prompt results in the 'Activities for children, young people and families' page of the North Lincolnshire Council website, which provides information on 2 youth centres in addition to a selection of other leisure activities run by the council. There is a link to the Positive Activities: Believe in Youth page, however this is on Facebook so requires an account to open. Consequently young people under the age of 13 cannot access this information. Furthermore, Facebook is not often used by young people so they are unlikely to see information stored here. A website containing this information would be more accessible. There is also a link to the Positive Activities North Lincs website, however this appears to be inactive as it contains no information.

The second search brought up the same results and a google map with links to youth clubs,

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, North Lincolnshire offers activities for young people aged 0–19; however, the scattered information makes it challenging to find what is available. There is no central website that consolidates all activities, with data scattered across various pages and links. Young people need to be able to search for activities that suit their age or interests.

## North Yorkshire

The first and second prompt questions brought up the North Yorkshire Youth (NYY) website listing all the youth clubs they support, with timings and a central contact point. However there is no map showing locations, which would be beneficial as North Yorkshire is a large area.

The second search also generated a google map with links to other youth provisions run by the council, VCS and faith groups.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, it is clear that council run youth clubs are being promoted, but no information could be found about other educational or recreational activities. This suggests that only educational leisure-time activities are being promoted. As with many Local Authorities, having one central website with all activities would make activities more accessible.

## Rotherham

The first and second prompt brought up the council website's Family Activities Directory, containing information about educational and recreational activities. Activities were split into categories including creative, sport, youth clubs, and SEND, with an additional option to search for specific activities. There was contact information for all activities. Overall the website is quite interactive, however it could be enhanced by adding a map to show where activities are, and by adding the option to search by age. Additionally, it appears the information is located in the 'nurseries and childcare' section of the website which is unlikely to be the place young people would look for activities.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, Rotherham is one of the better Local Authorities at promoting their Youth Offer. The website was easy to find, had an interactive search tool and contained both educational and recreational activities. However there are still ways it could be improved.

## Sheffield

The initial prompt brought up the Chilypep website, but no further information about educational or recreational activities.

The second search found the youth clubs section of the Sheffield Directory website which lists council run youth clubs with one central point of contact. Once on this website, going back to the main directory and using this search area is very interactive. It brings together different youth activities delivered by the council and other organisations. There are filters for activity type, age range and transport access as well as a map. This area would be beneficial, but was not discovered when using our prompt. Perhaps this could be linked or signposted within the youth clubs section, or promoted directly.

The search did generate a google map and links to other groups such as chilpep, Double 6 and Sheffield Futures.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, we did eventually find an interactive website where you could search for educational and recreational activities, however this was part of the general directory search page so was hard to navigate. Promoting this more widely, or having something similar specifically for young people's activities would be beneficial.

## Wakefield

The first and second search found a website containing information about the three Wakefield Families Together youth hubs and the activities which take place there. The website included a map making it easy to see how close the huts are to where the young person lives. In small writing on this website there was a link to a second website promoting both educational and recreational activities for all ages. This website allowed you to search for activities by postcode and activity type, however there were no filters for age or distance. No map showing the location of activities, which is strange when searching by postcode is an option. It would be beneficial to have this second website promoted more widely as it wasn't found during our initial search.

In addition to the above websites, the second search also highlighted youth clubs and The Youth Association on a google map.

The third search question brought up activities for SEND young people and their families. Overall, it does appear that Wakefield promote both educational and recreational activities, however the website containing this information is hard to find.

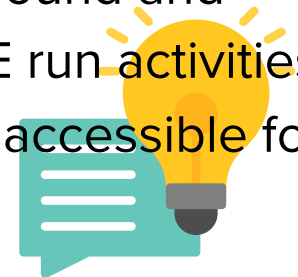
# Recommendations

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Whilst some areas are better at promoting activities than others, it is clear that all local authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region can improve the way they publicise positive activities for young people.

An example of where this is done well can be found from London Youth. They recently undertook a project with Research Consultant Kelly Bradshaw-Walsh and the charity Superhighways to map the voluntary and community youth work sector in London (project [article here](#)). This created a database of over 1800 organisations providing activities to young people across a range of themes, including culture, social action and sport. All of these organisations have been added to an interactive map, allowing young people to search, find and locate activities they are interested in (available [here](#)). The project is still ongoing, with statutory youth clubs and uniformed groups yet to be added.

The key takeaway from this example is that all educational and recreational leisure-time activities will be available on a single interactive website that can be easily found and navigated by young people. This includes both local authority run and VCSE run activities. A website similar to this for each local authority would make activities more accessible for young people across the Yorkshire and Humber region.



# Conclusions and Next Steps

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This project investigated the publicity of educational and recreational leisure-time activities across Yorkshire and the Humber. It reveals large variation in the quality of information available for young people to access.

Many Local Authorities do not have a central website containing both statutory and volunteer/community run, educational and recreational leisure-time activities. This information is often split across several websites or from our searches, sometimes missing entirely.

Each Local Authority can take inspiration from the London Youth project and how they are publicising the activities available.

This project only investigated whether Local Authorities across Yorkshire and the Humber were publicising activities available to young people. The next stage of this project will be to research whether Local Authorities are meeting other requirements of the 'youth offer', including:

- Ask each authority for evidence of their Needs Assessment
- Speak to young people about whether they think the activities available are sufficient

