



DELIVERING THE
**National
Youth
Strategy**
TOGETHER





Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

National Youth Strategy: DCMS Youth Policy Update

Yorkshire and the Humber 2 Sector Roadshow

24th March 2026



YOUTH MATTERS

Your National
Youth STRATEGY

CONTENTS

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OVERVIEW

The government has launched **Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy**, a 10 year plan created together with young people to boost youth power and support right across government.



Two clear ambitions - by 2035:

- 1) half a million more young people to have access to a trusted adult outside of their home.
- 2) to have halved the participation gap in enriching activities between disadvantaged young people and their peers.

CO-PRODUCTION

Established a **Youth Advisory Group and Expert Advisory Group**. Engaged with close to **1,500 cross-sector experts**. Co-produced policies with young people across the country:

- Youth Survey: over **14,000 responses**
- Express Order: **980 responses**
- Focus groups: over **2000 young people** engaged
- **School assembly** and group session pack: **4000 young people** participated
- **Hacks** took place in Blackpool, Gateshead, Manchester, Ipswich and Bristol.
- Sector focussed deep dives - care experienced, young carers, SEND, arts, sports, culture, criminal justice, young asylum seekers.



YOUTH MATTERS: STATE OF THE NATION

Drawing on all the research evidence, the report identifies the following findings priority areas:

A generation under pressure: Young people report high levels of concern about money, mental health and wellbeing, friendships and social life, education and their future. These are confirmed across both the national survey and wider research.

Lack of local opportunities: A cross-cutting issue is the absence of local, in-person opportunities for socialising, engaging in activities, and forming supportive connections. This undermines young people's wellbeing, sense of belonging, and development.

Feeling unheard and unsafe: Many young people express a lack of voice in decision-making and anxiety about their personal safety, especially in public spaces and online.

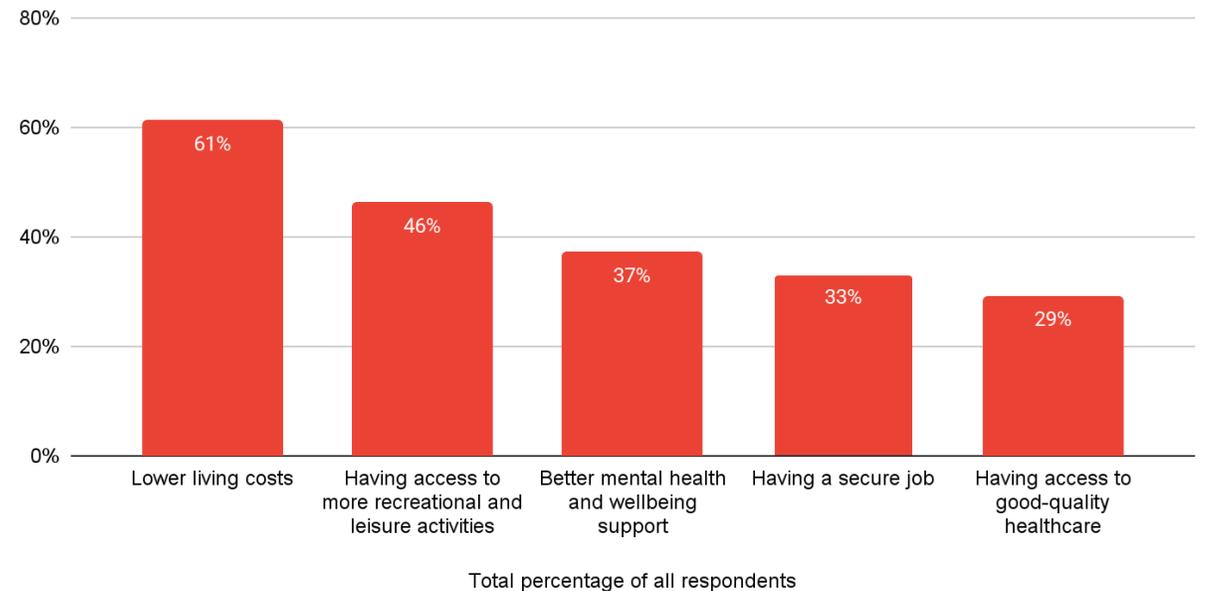
These challenges affect all young people, however some groups such as young people with SEN/D and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, are more highly impacted.



YOUTH MATTERS: STATE OF THE NATION

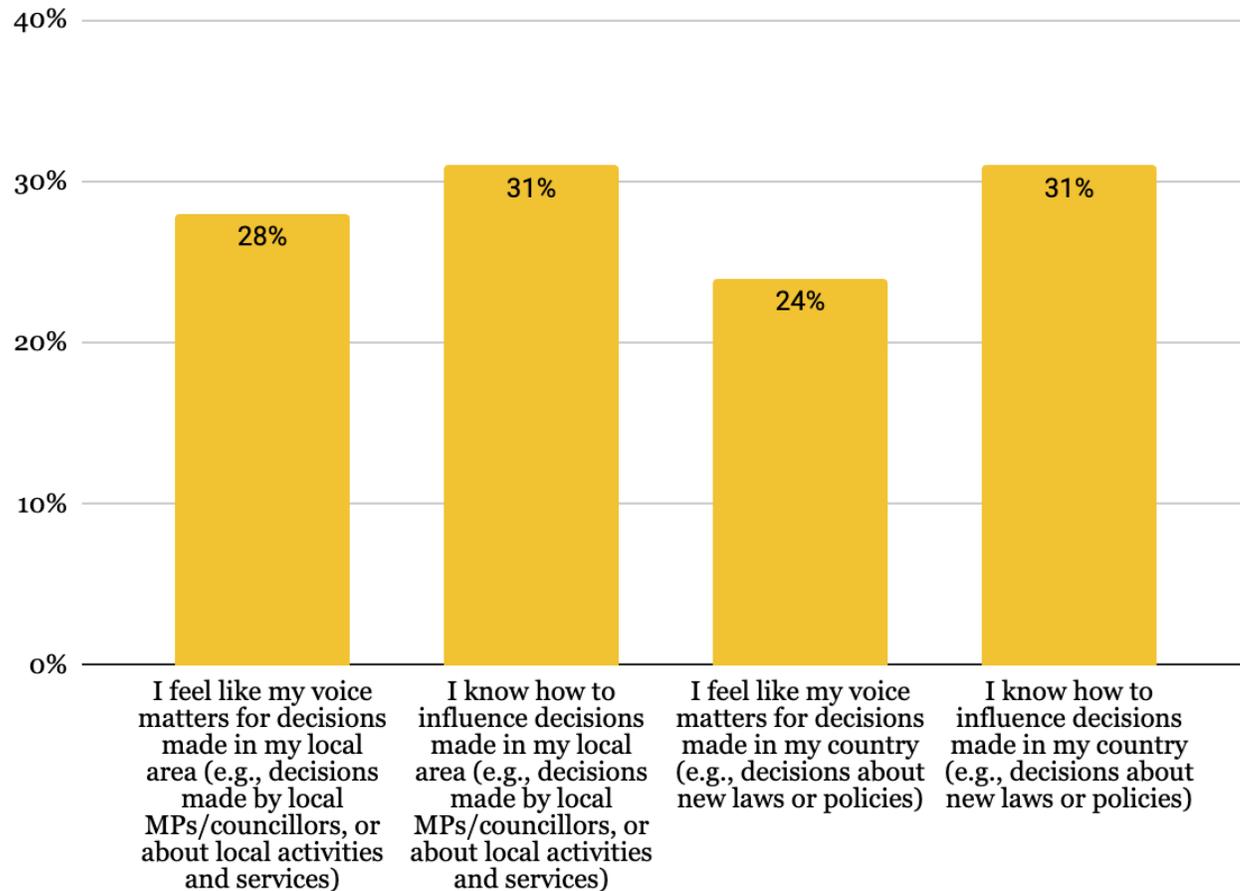
- 76% of young people spend most of their free time on screens
- NEET 16–24 year-olds is approximately 946,000 (12.5%)
- Only one in five young people in England and Wales do not have a trusted adult outside their family.
- 16% of young people report feeling very unsafe or unsafe in their local areas.
- The UK as a whole ranks 21st out of 36 countries for child wellbeing. One in five young people in England (8-25) has a probable mental health disorder.

Which of the following things, if any, would most improve your day-to-day life?
/ Which of these things would make your life better?



Yorkshire and The Humber: service and belonging

Percentage of those who agree with the following statements



YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER: YOUNG PEOPLE'S INFLUENCE & VOICE



KNOWING HOW TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS (AGREEMENT)



LOCAL AREA



In Yorkshire and the Humber, the same percentage of young people agree that they know how to influence decisions in their local area as in their country (31% each). This is a minority.



COUNTRY

31% EACH
(A MINORITY)

FEELING VOICES MATTER (LOCAL DECISIONS)



LOCAL AREA

28% AGREE
(EVEN LOWER)

When it comes to feeling like their voices matter for decisions made in their local area, an even lower percentage agrees (28%)

FEELING VOICES MATTER (COUNTRY DECISIONS) & CONCRETE NUMBERS



COUNTRY

24% AGREE
(EVEN FEWER)

And for feeling like their voice matters for decisions made in their country, even fewer agree (24%) - this corresponds to 345 people out of the weighted total of 1415 in Yorkshire and the Humber



345 PEOPLE
(CORRESPONDS TO 24%)

Yorkshire and The Humber: service and belonging

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER: TOP LOCAL ACCESS PRIORITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

MOST FREQUENTLY CHOSEN OPTION (TOP 1): 11%



In Yorkshire and the Humber, when asked what they'd most like to have access to in their local area, (as a top 1) the most frequently chosen option was affordable public transport. 11% chose this as their top 1.

SHARED SECOND PLACE (A CLOSE SECOND): 10% EACH



GREEN SPACES (10%)
In a shared second place was 'green spaces'



SPORT AND EXERCISE (10%)
'sport and exercise'



SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACES (10%)
and 'safe and accessible public spaces' (10% chose each of these, so they're a close second)

THIRD MOST POPULAR CHOICE: 9%



COMMUNITY EVENTS (9%)
The third most popular choice was 'community events', 9% chose this.

LEAST POPULAR CHOICES



PLACES WITH RAMPS AND LIFTS



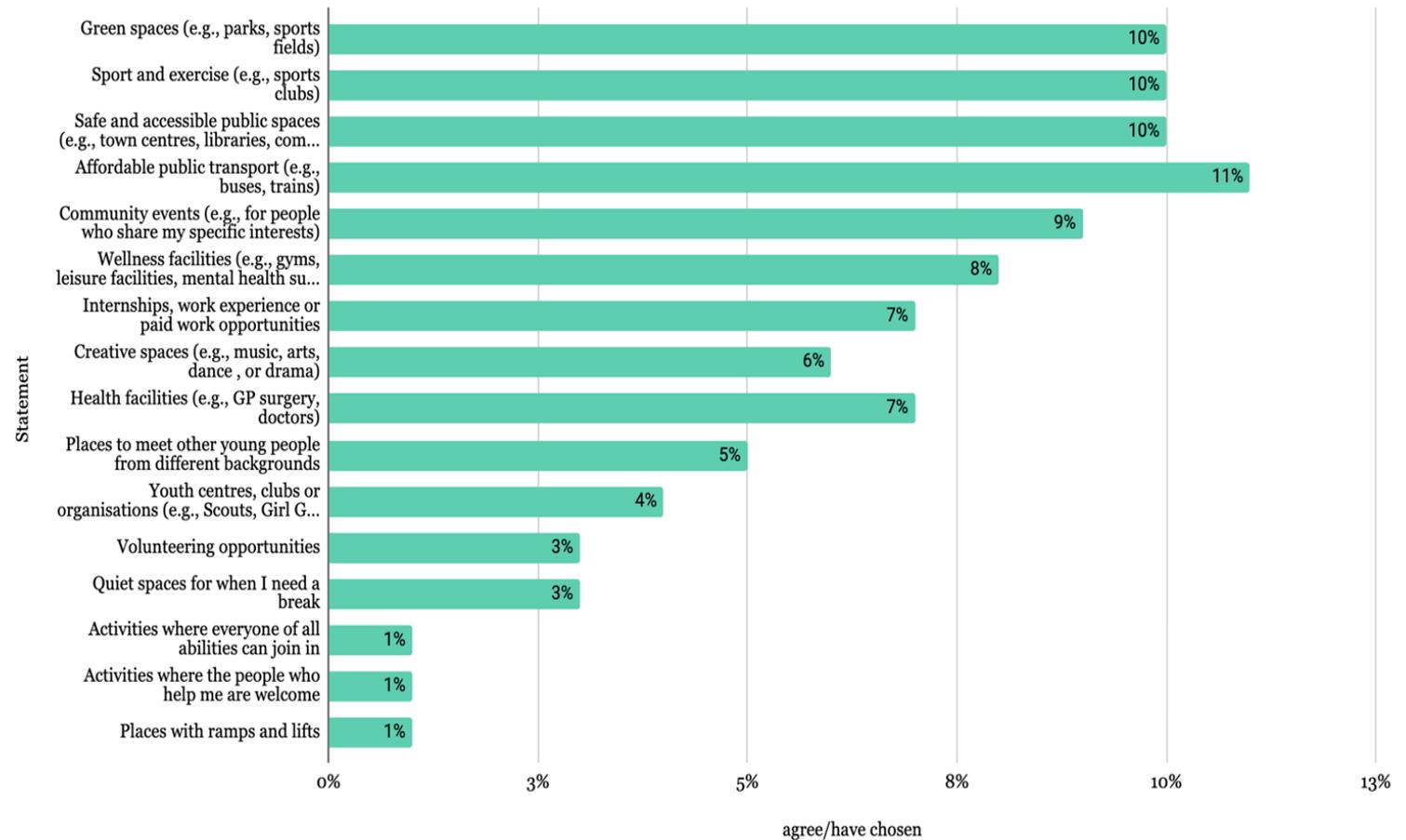
ACTIVITIES WHERE PEOPLE WHO HELP ME ARE WELCOME



ACTIVITIES WHERE EVERYONE OF ALL ABILITIES CAN JOIN

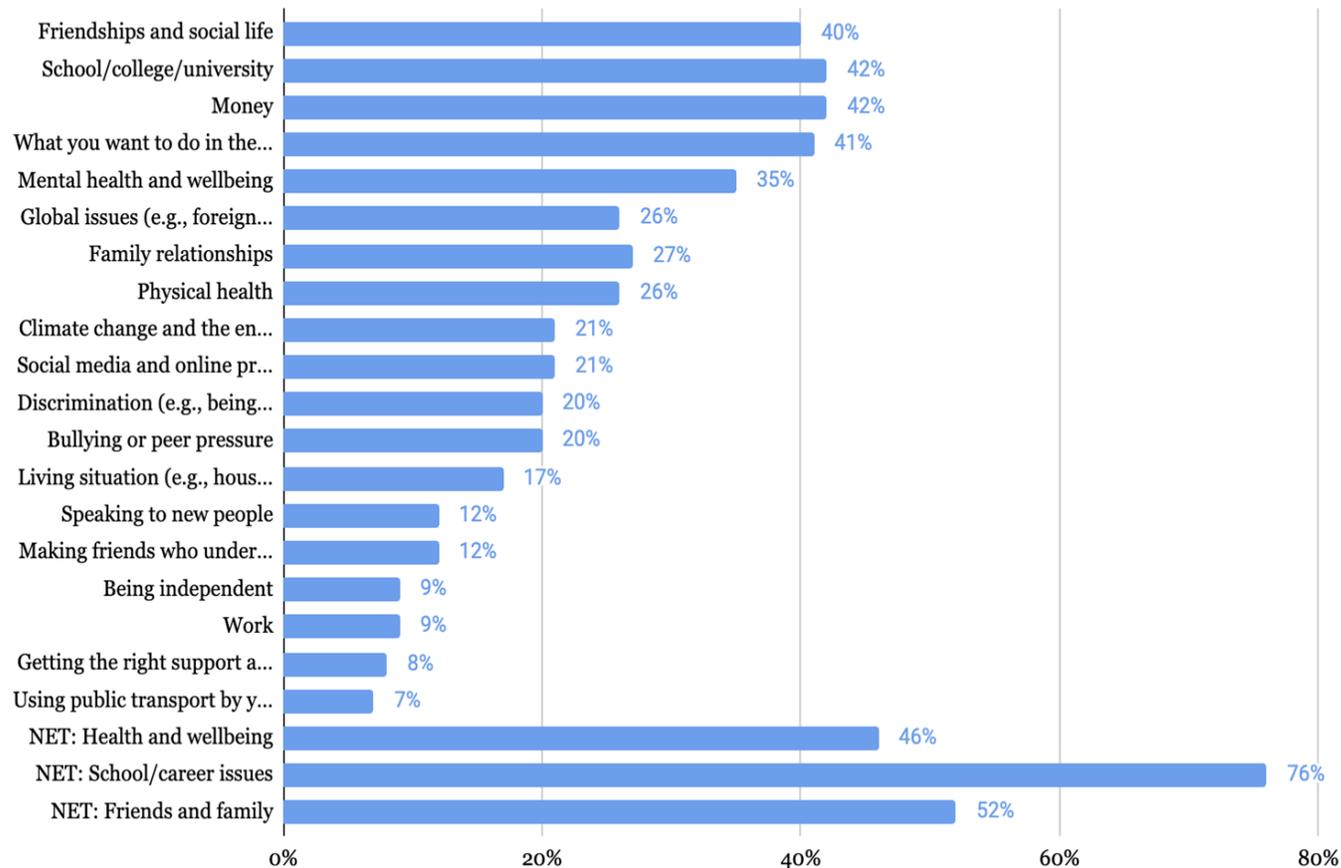
The least popular choices were 'places with ramps and lifts', 'activities where people who help me are welcome' and 'activities where everyone of all abilities can join'.

Which of the following would you most like to have more access to in your local area? (top 1)



Yorkshire and The Humber: current life and immediate needs

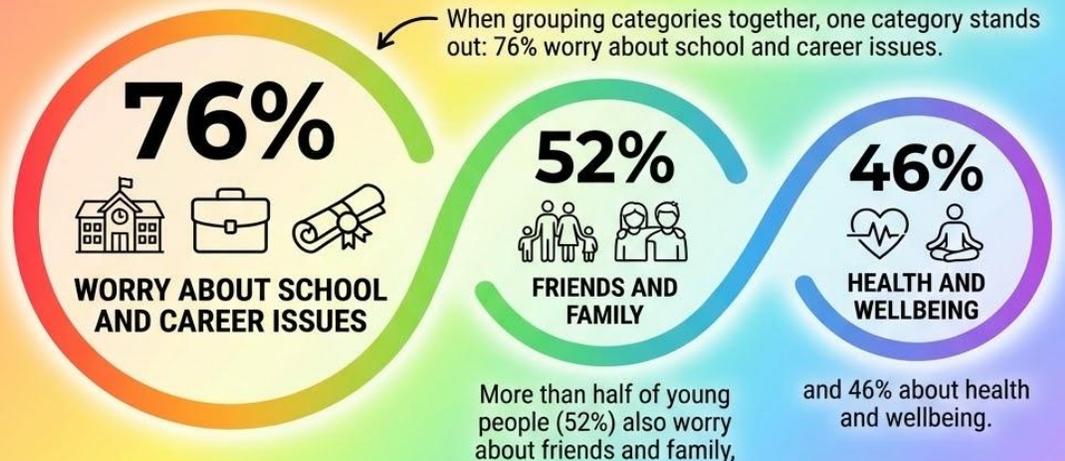
Which of the following issues, if any, do you worry about in your day-to-day life?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORRIES IN THE REGION



When it comes to issues that young people in the region worry about the most, a few options had between 40-42% of young people choosing them. These options are: school/university/college (42%), money (42%), what they want to do in the future (41%) and friendship and social life (40%).



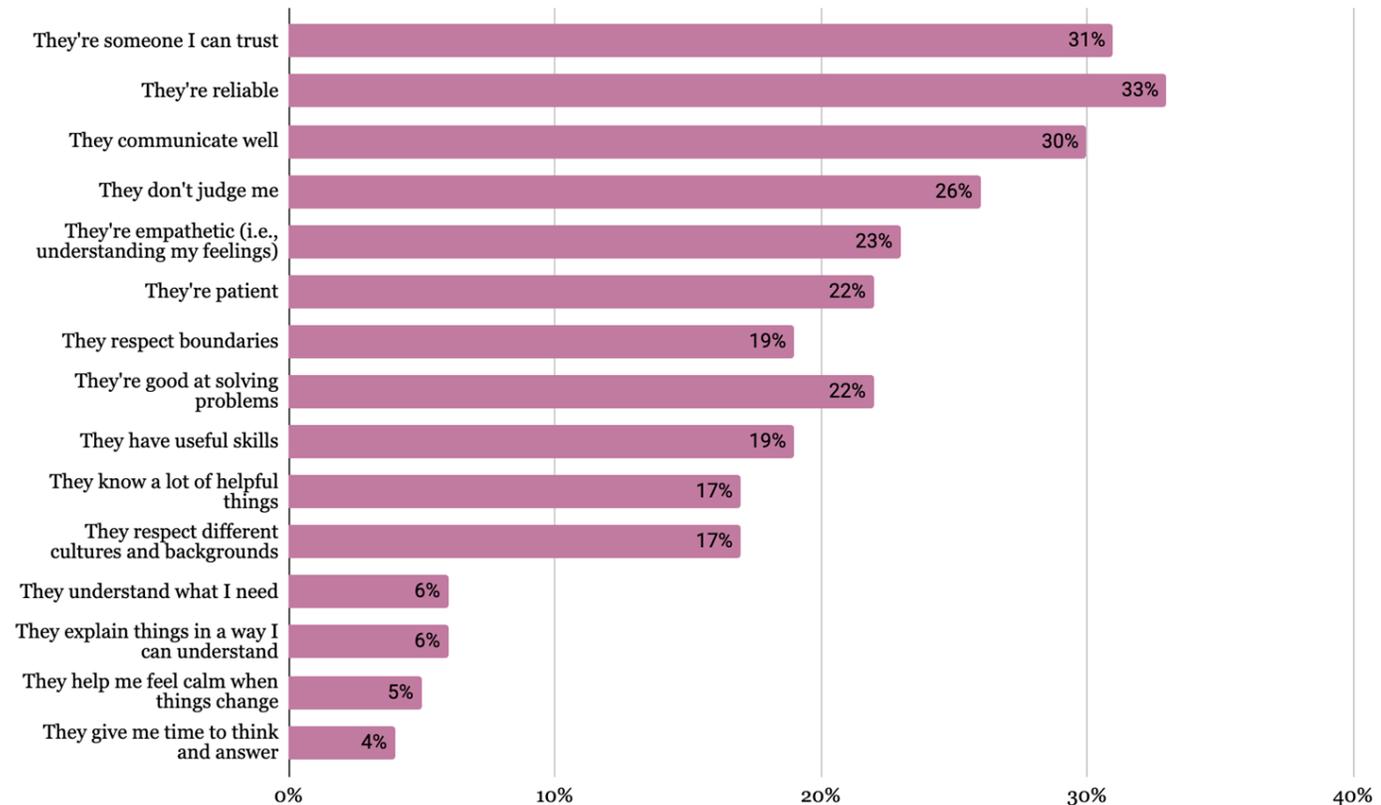
Options such as using public transport by yourself, getting the right support at work/in education, as well as work and being independent didn't have as many people choosing them as a worry.

Yorkshire and The Humber: current life and immediate needs



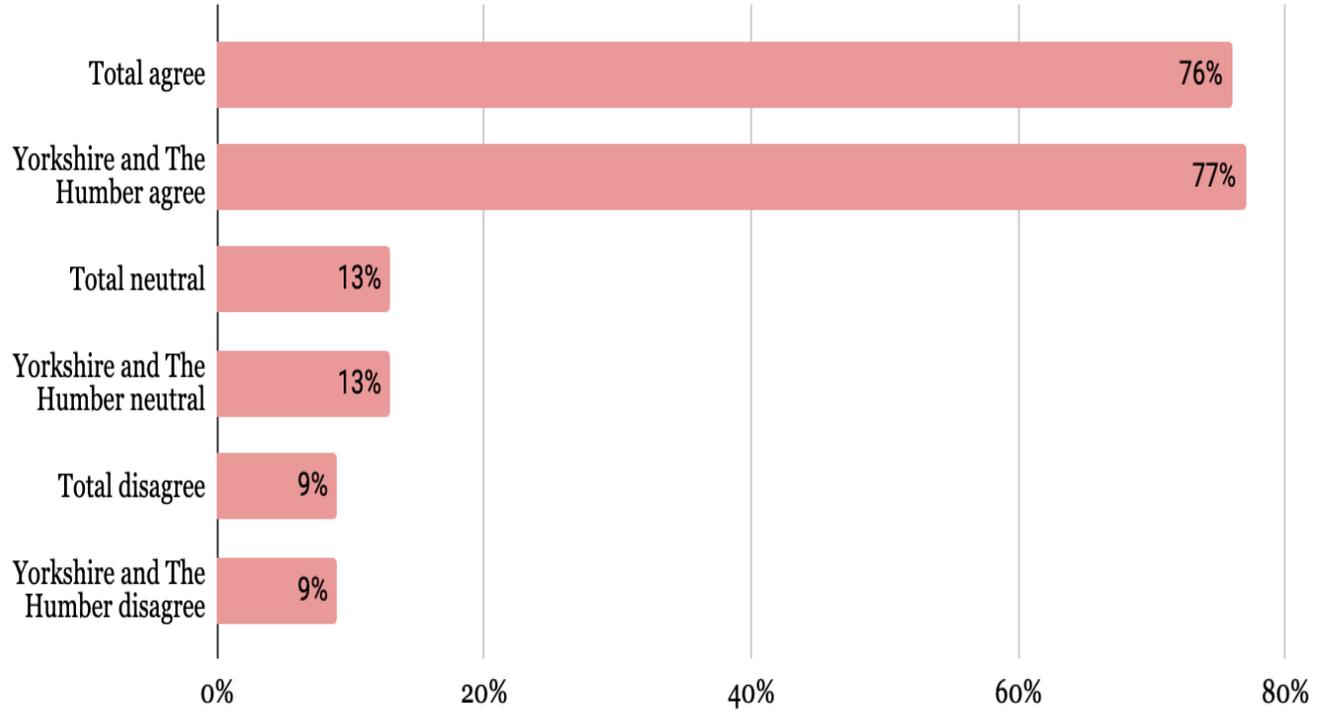
When asked about the top 3 qualities in a trusted adult, more people chose 'they're reliable' more than any other option (33% chose this). That 'they're someone I can trust' also got a high score – 31%. 'they communicate well' was the third most chosen option (30% chose this). As you can see, several other options were frequently chosen, such as empathy, patience, being good at solving problems and so on. The least likely option to be chosen was 'they give me time to think and answer'.

Which of the following qualities and skills are most important to you in a trusted adult? (Top 3)



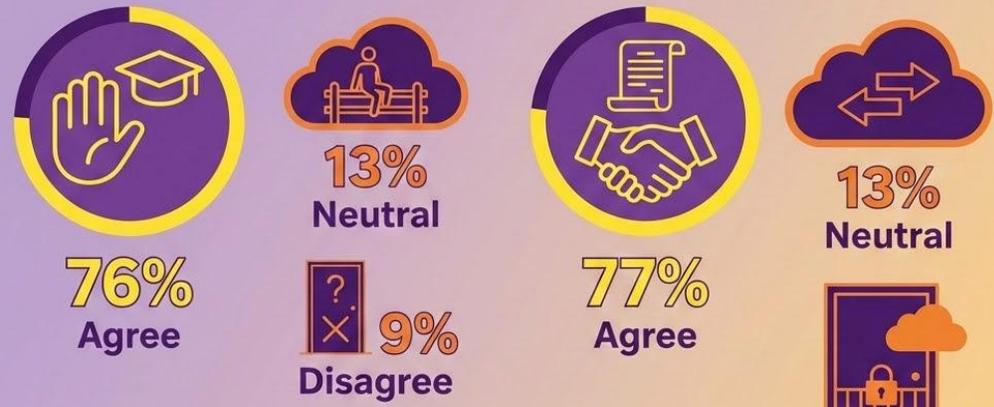
Yorkshire and The Humber: career aspirations and shaping future change

If I needed/wanted it, I could get help and advice about my education and career



ENGLAND (Total)

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER



When young people in England were asked about if they **agree with the statement 'if I needed / wanted it, I could get help and advice about my education and career'**, a majority agreed (76%). In Yorkshire and the Humber, 77% agree with this statement (marginally more).

In terms of those who answered that **they're neutral to the statement**, the same percentage is observed in both England and Yorkshire and the Humber (13%). For those that **disagree**, the same percentage in England as in Yorkshire and the Humber is observed (9%).

Yorkshire and The Humber: career aspirations and shaping future change

YOUNG PEOPLE IN YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER: IMPROVING DAY-TO-DAY LIVES



Lower living costs
(62% chose this option, which is 17 percentage points higher than the second most frequently chosen option)

Having access to more recreational and leisure activities
(45% chose this)

Better mental health and wellbeing support
(37% chose this)

As you can see in the graph, many options had between 23%-37% choosing them.



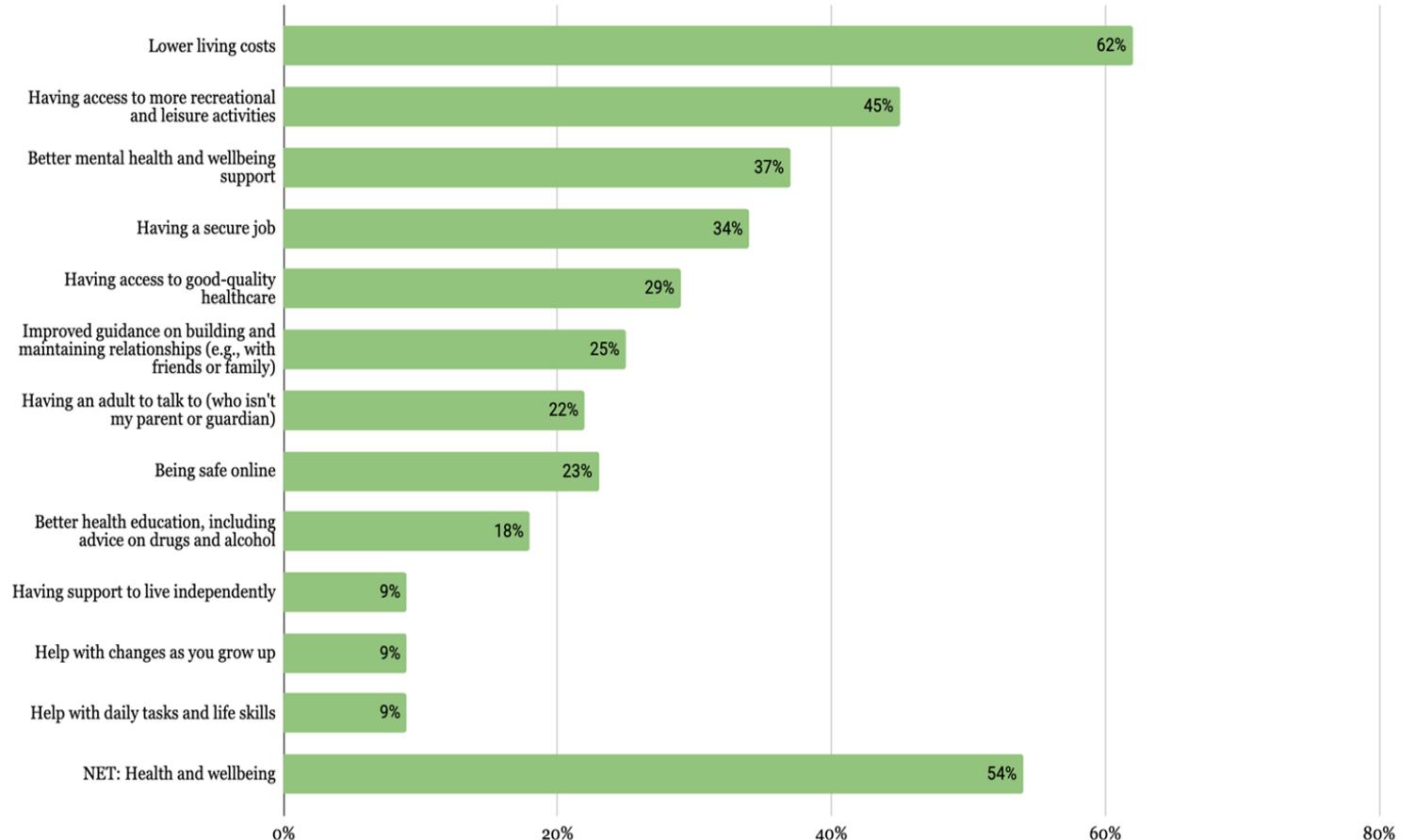
The least frequently chosen options were:



54%

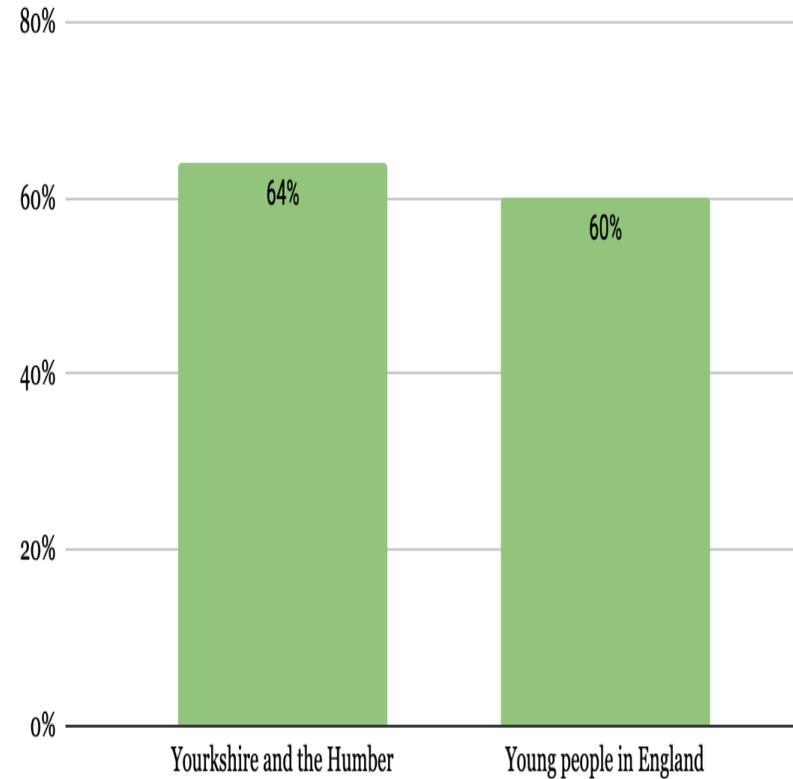
it is worth noting that when answer options relating to 'health and wellbeing' were grouped, this ends up having more than half of young people saying this would improve their day-to-day lives (54%)

Which of the following things, if any, would most improve your day-to-day life? / Which of these things would make your life better?



Yorkshire and The Humber: highest 'agree statement'

SEND respondents agreeing to: If I needed/wanted it, I could get support for my mental health



Yorkshire and the Humber: Young People's Best 'Agree' Statements (SEND Respondents)

In terms of where young people in Yorkshire and the Humber did the best out of all regions ('agreeing' to statements), there are two questions they do **better** on. This goes for the SEND respondents in comparison to SEND respondents in England as a whole

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



64% of SEND respondents in the region agreed that they **can get support for their mental health**

BETTER THAN IN ANY OTHER REGION.

ONLINE SAFETY KNOWLEDGE



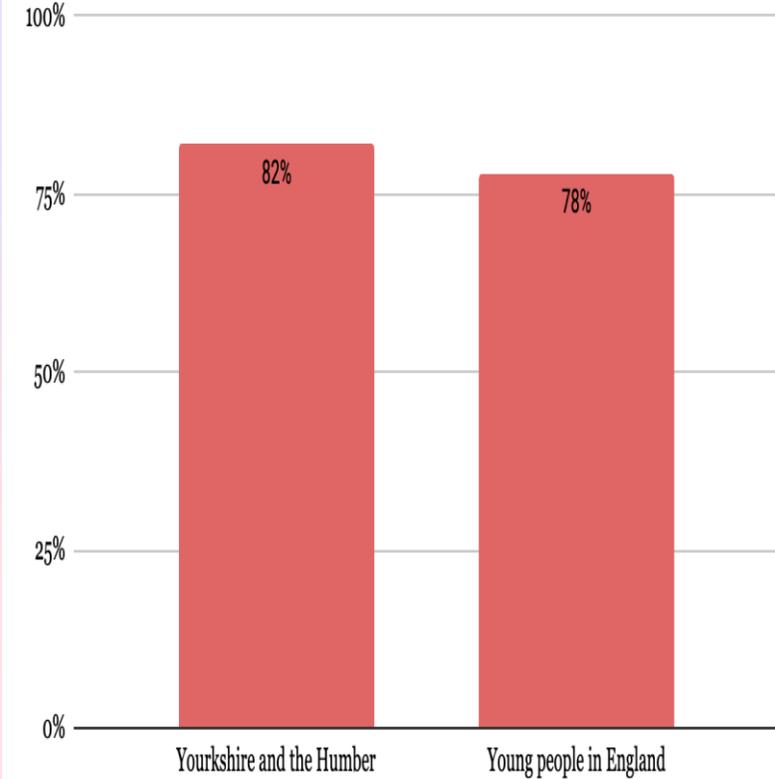
82% of SEND respondents in the region agreed that they **know enough to stay safe online.**

HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER REGION.



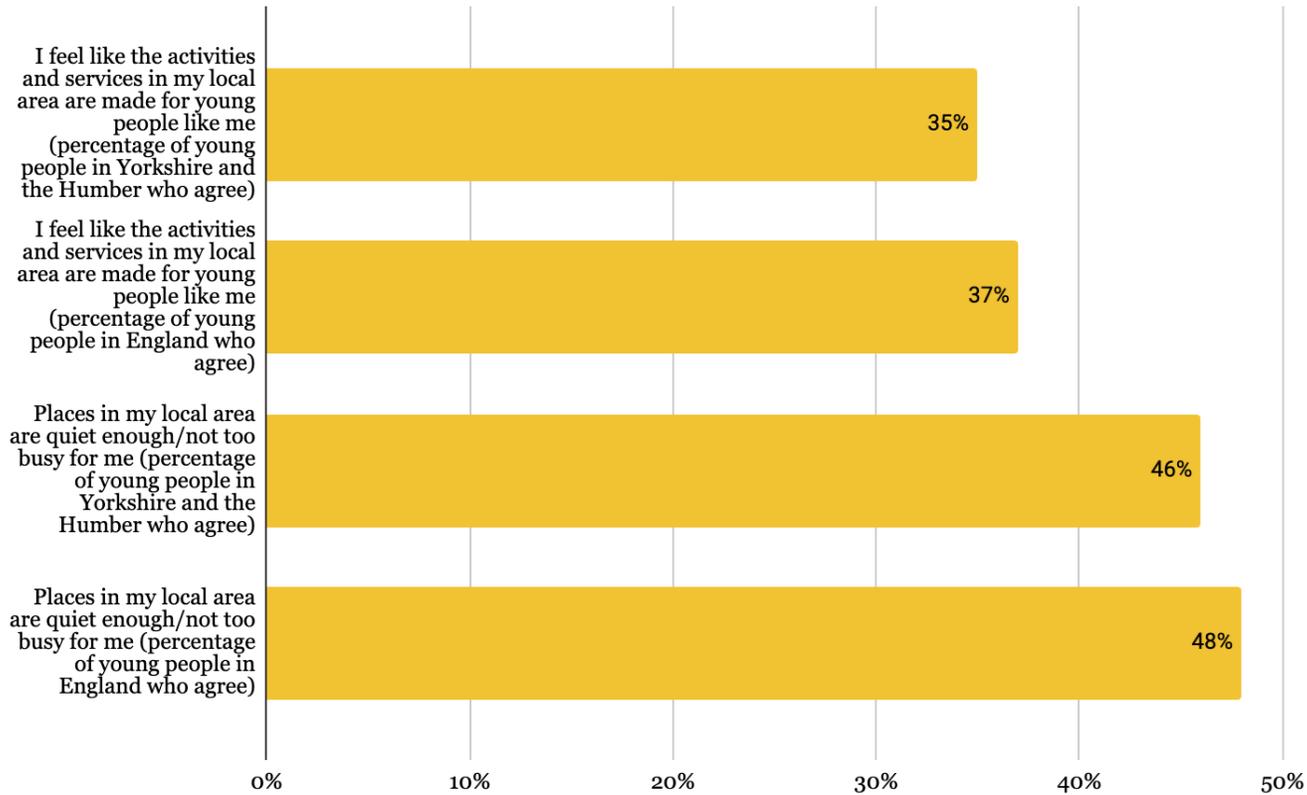
It is however worth noting that **just because a person is confident in their ability** to do something (for example, staying safe), **it doesn't automatically translate to actual ability to stay safe.**

SEND respondents agreeing to: I know enough to stay safe online



Yorkshire and The Humber: lowest 'agree' statements

vs The young people in Yorkshire and The Humber did have the shared lowest 'agree' percentage on 2 questions



Yorkshire and the Humber

Young People's Local Area Perspectives (Agree Statements)

In comparison to some other regions, Yorkshire and the Humber do slightly better on 'agree' statements. However, for two statements they had the shared lowest 'agree' percentage as one or more regions.



Slightly Better (Some)



Shared Lowest (Two)

Statement 1: Activities & Services



In Yorkshire and the Humber, **35%** agree they feel like activities and services in their local area are made for young people like them, whilst the total percentage of young people in England who agree is a bit higher (**37%**)



37%

Statement 2: Quiet & Not Busy Places



In Yorkshire and the Humber, **46%** agree that places in their local area are quiet enough/not too busy for them, whilst the total percentage of young people in England who agree is a bit higher (**48%**)



48%

THE VISION

Every young person – no matter where they're from – should have a safe place to go, someone who cares for them and a community they feel a part of.

The strategy will deliver on four key outcomes:

- Young people feel **safe, online and offline**
- Young people feel **connected** to people their own age and in their wider community
- Young people build **skills** and have **opportunities** at school, work and in free time
- Young people have better **physical and mental health** and **wellbeing**

IMPORTANT SHIFTS BEING MADE

We know that change needs to start with us. So we're making three big shifts in the way government will work:

- **From national to local:** We will use funding to empower local communities and increase place-based decision-making. We will work with local authorities and VCSE to build and strengthen their local offer for young people.
- **From fragmented to collaborative:** Helping to ensure services - from mental health support, to careers advisors and schools, councils and youth clubs - talk to each other and work together to help young people thrive
- **From excluded to empowered:** Giving young people the power to shape new policies and the tools to shape their community



CHAPTER 1: PEOPLE WHO CARE

Action 1: Trusted Adults

More adults around young people to talk to, from trusted adults in schools, clubs and communities, as well as more support for families.

Action 2: Supporting and improving the workforce

Investing in and providing training for the individuals and organisations who guide and support young people. More apprenticeships and pathways into youth work.

This is backed by **£15 million** for youth workers, volunteers and other trusted adults to better support young people and **£5 million** to support the youth sector infrastructure. .

Action 3: Friends and relationships

Making sure young people have more opportunities to connect with others, build friendships at school, in communities and providing support to address loneliness. Delivering a safer internet.

CHAPTER 2: PLACES TO GO AND THINGS TO DO

Action 4: Richer lives

More high-quality, inclusive activities in and out of school, from cultural programmes to outdoor adventures and information.

Backed by over **£60 million** on a Richer Young Lives Fund, **£22.5 million** on the Enrichment Expansion Programme, and **£132.5 million** from Dormant Assets.

Action 5: Good work

Providing better careers advice, more work experience, opportunities to learn new skills and more support in schools to help every student thrive.

Including **£820 million** through DWP's Youth Guarantee.

Action 6: Keeping young people safe

Providing support for young people to stay safe, with restored policing in your neighbourhood.

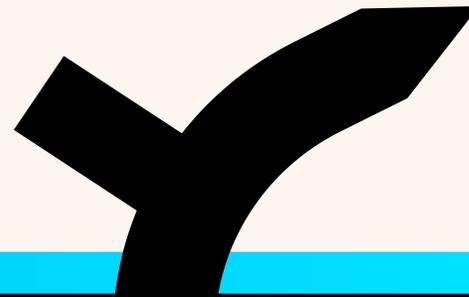
Action 7: Places to go

Providing more welcoming spaces, including time to be in nature. Making transport more accessible to help young people reach these spaces.

£350 million to refurbish or build up to 250 youth facilities and **£70 million** to support 50 Young Futures Hubs.

Action 8: Health and wellbeing

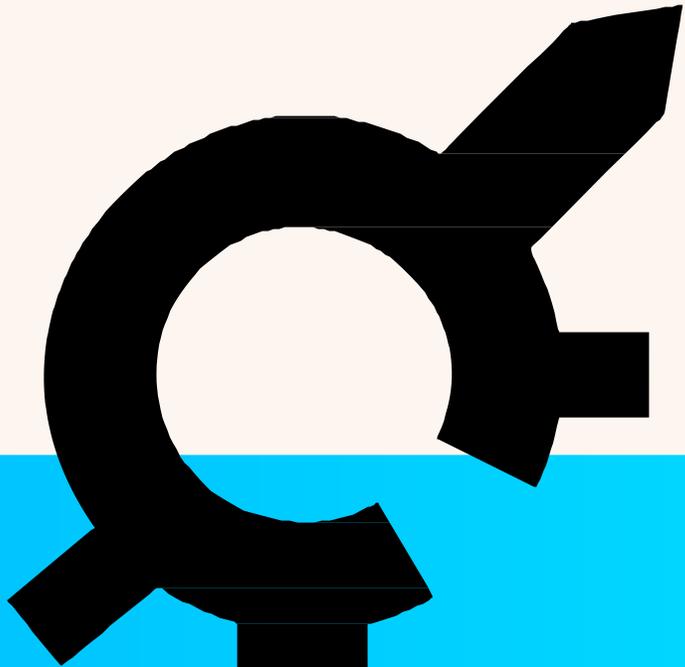
Making sure wellbeing support is part of everyday life through more chances to get active, wellbeing support teams in schools and colleges, and targeted support for those who need it.



CHAPTER 3: SEEN AND HEARD

Action 9: Delivering with young people

Putting young people in the driving seat of their own lives and empowering them to shape the solutions and decisions that impact them.



Action 10: Holding us to account

We have clear plans across our 10 action areas for the next decade and will make sure young people can hold us to account through:

Regular opportunities for young people to help shape programmes and policies and seeing updates online to track what we're doing.

Inviting young people to annual national hearings on our delivery.

Inviting young people to shape a report outlining progress on our delivery and impact.

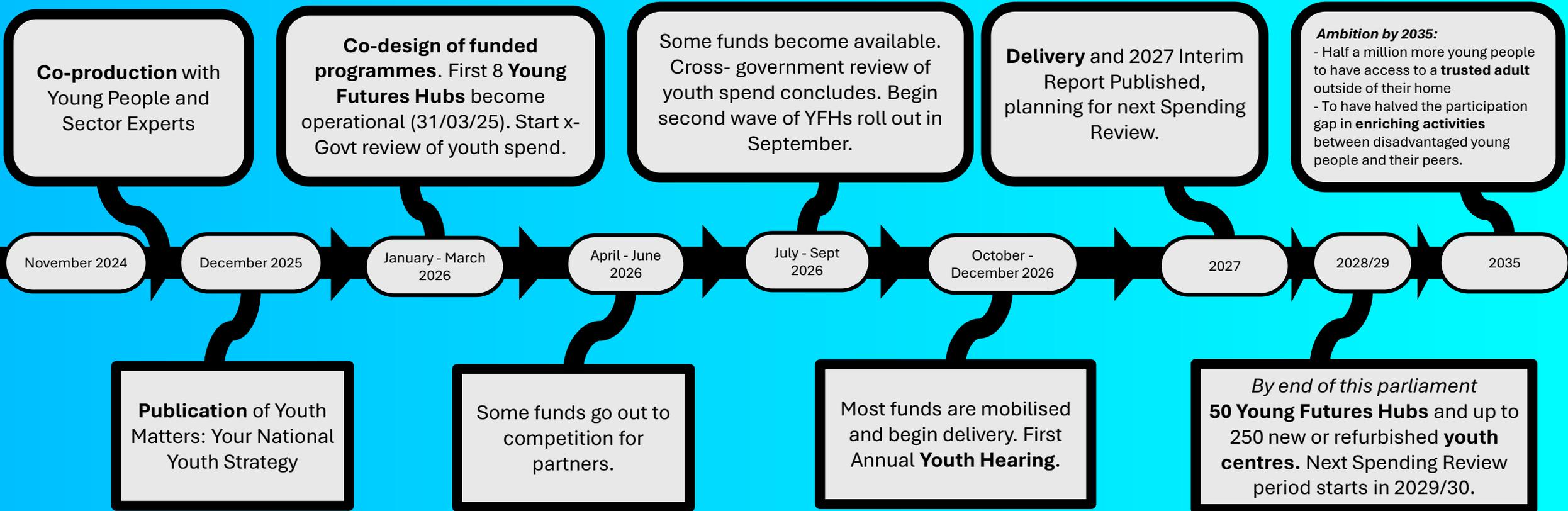
DCMS FUNDED FIRST STEPS

The Strategy is for the next decade and we are therefore not able to confirm funding amounts for its duration. However, the Strategy does include a number of funded first steps for the next few years, including:

- **£350 million** to refurbish or build up to 250 youth facilities through our Better Youth Spaces programme.
- **Over £60 million** on a new Richer Young Lives Fund to improve access to enriching activities and youth work.
- **£22.5 million** to create brilliant enrichment offers in up to 400 schools
- **£15 million** for youth workers, volunteers and other trusted adults.
- **£5 million** to improve the youth infrastructure at the local and regional level
- **£70 million** to rebuild and improve local youth services and establish a network of 50 Young Futures Hubs.

The majority of the funding underpinning the first steps of the Strategy will be available from 2026/27. We will be designing the funding and programmes in more detail over the next few months and will share more information in due course.

Roadmap for DCMS deliverables



DELIVERING CHANGE TOGETHER

The launch of this strategy is just the beginning. We want it to spark a conversation that lasts, where young people help to shape their future, not just watch it unfold.

Join us on the journey to help deliver this strategy by:

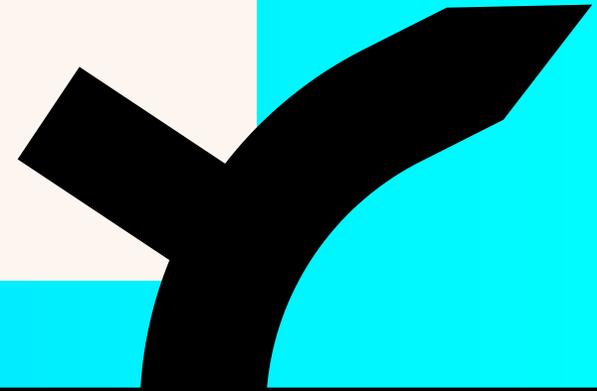
- using the [toolkit](#) to run sessions and send us feedback.
- signing up to our [regional events for young people](#) and [the sector](#).
- Sign up to our next [webinar](#)
- signing up to the DCMS Youth team [newsletter](#) to be kept updated.



FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy](#) (collection page)
- [Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy](#) (summary version)
- [Youth Matters: State of the Nation](#) (collection page)
- [Youth Matters: State of the Nation](#) (summary version)
- [The Big Ambition Analysis for the National Youth Strategy](#)
- [National Youth Strategy Research Project](#) (summary version)
- [National Youth Strategy Press Release](#)
- [Youth Matters Toolkit](#) (to support sharing with young people)

We are planning a range of stakeholder engagements over the next couple of months (including webinars and roadshows) - **sign up to our [Newsletter](#) to hear more!**



Key resources

People Who Care

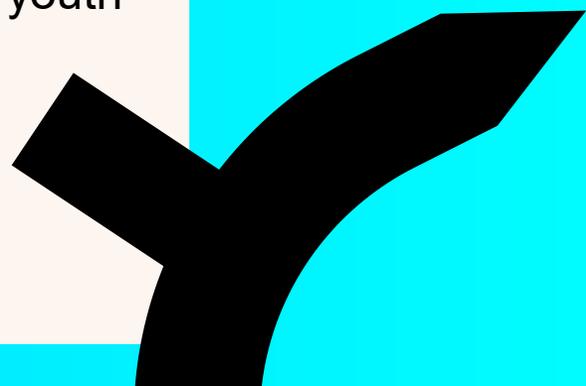
- [Youth work curriculum](#): a flexible framework which allows youth workers to identify how their interventions and activities can be used to support the personal, social and political development of young people

Places to Go and Things to Do

- [Local Authorities Statutory Duty](#): Local Authorities have a duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient provision of educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people in their area.
- [Local Outcomes Framework](#): This includes a youth metric around participation in youth services in the last 12 months (including sports, music, art or youth clubs)

Seen and Heard

- [Youth voice guidance](#): The guidance provides a step by step introduction to reasons, methods and approaches for engaging young people in policymaking.



SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES AND HASHTAGS

Hashtags

#NationalYouthStrategy #YouthMatters

X

@DCMS

Facebook

Department for Culture, Media and Sport / dcmsgovuk

Instagram

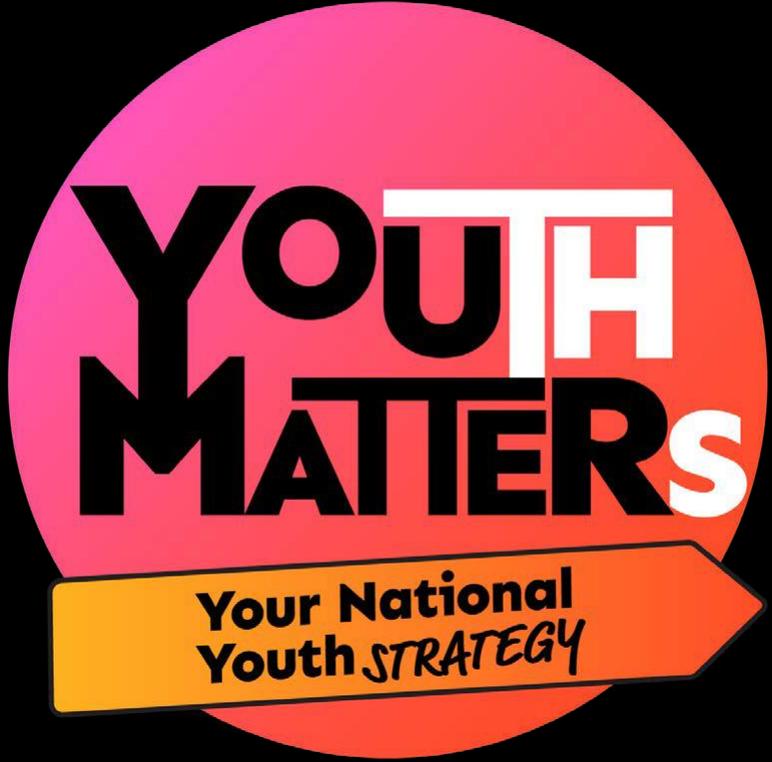
@dcmsgovuk

LinkedIn

Department for Culture, Media and Sport / dcmsgovuk

TikTok

@ukgov



Youth Work Unit Yorkshire and the Humber CIO

YWU YH is

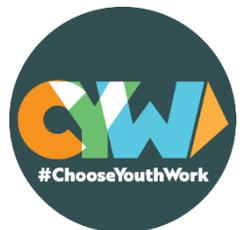
- The representative network lead and support for quality work with young people in the Yorkshire and Humber region.
- The regional hub for the National Youth Work Infrastructure Network*



YWU YH has for over 30 years worked with a wide range of public and voluntary sector youth workers and related professionals, agencies and policy makers.

YWU YH continues to operate as the infrastructure catalyst, conduit and support for the development and delivery of high-quality development opportunities for young people across the region.

- Supporting and advocating for high quality work with young people
- Supporting strategic networks and infrastructure
- Building capacity for training & workforce development
- Facilitating youth voice & linking local to national youth engagement
- Facilitating stakeholder collaboration and the development of common language and outcomes / metrics.

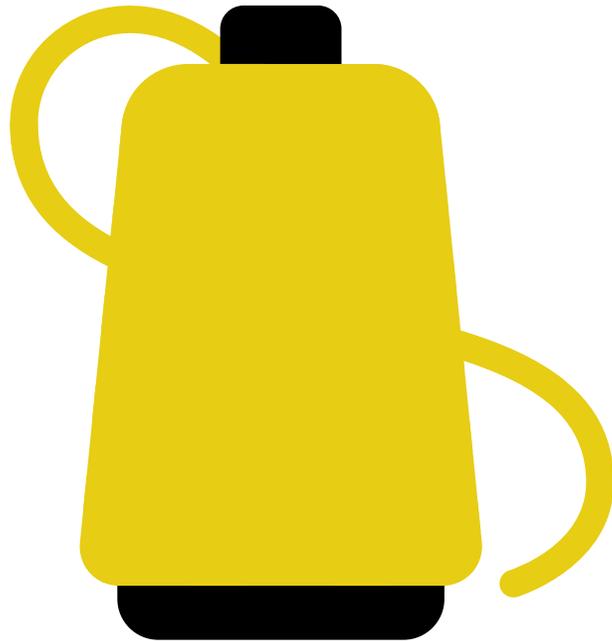


* Network of Regional Youth Work Units

Youth Work



Thread



- Legislative changes and policy reform
- Youth strategy
- Young futures programmes - prevention partnerships,
- Family hubs / youth hubs
- Local Transformation Pilot

Mapping of Government funding/policy responsibilities across departments for issues affecting young people

Department for Education

- Early years& families
- Children's social care
- Alternative provision
- Curriculum including relationships, sex, and health education and personal, social, health safeguarding in schools and post-16 settings
- counter extremism and integration in schools and post-16 settings
- school food including free school meals
- children and young people's mental health, online safety and preventing bullying in schools
- policy to protect against serious violence
- reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training
- widening participation

Department for Work and Pensions

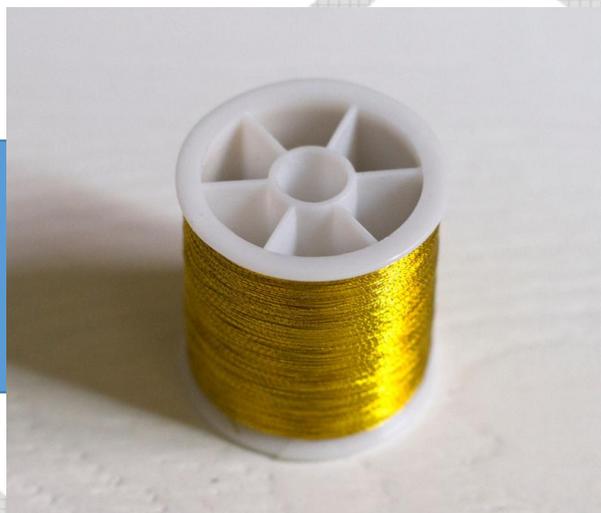
- Youth unemployment (link to Education & Skills theme)
- Youth Obligation Support programme
- Support for disadvantaged groups in Universal Credit
- Parental conflict

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

- Cross cutting responsibility for Levelling Up
- Equalities
- Supporting Families programme
- Integrated Communities
- Social exclusion and loneliness
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Department for Health & Social Care

- Young people's mental and physical health
- Bereavement
- Vulnerable Groups
- Adult Social Care
- Levelling up health outcomes
- Young carers?
- Public health and social prescribing
- CAMHS?



Home Office

- Cutting crime
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Drugs and County lines
- Counter terrorism & Prevent
- Hooliganism
- Extremism 7
- Online safety
- Emerging child criminal and/or sexual abuse and exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Early youth intervention to prevent crime
- anti-social behaviour
- Asylum seeking children
- Gangs?
- Youth Endowment Fund?

Ministry of Justice

- Cross-cutting criminal justice issues
- Youth justice
- Policing
- Violence Reduction Units

Department for Digital, Media, Culture & Sport

- Active Citizenship and National Citizenship Service
- Civil society and Youth service funding
- Online safety (also under Home Office)
- Gambling
- Sport

Cabinet Office

- Tackling inequality and access to provision

Youth Guarantee

YIF

A framework for addressing practical barriers to integration of VCSE organizations in integrated care systems

Health

Erasmus+

- social proscribing
- partnering

Freedom from violence and abuse: a cross-government strategy 2025

Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children

Youth Endowment Fund

SEND and alternative provision change programme

Government's work on tackling loneliness

Giving every child the best start in life 2025

Statutory guidance for local authorities on services to improve young people's well-being 2023

Online Safety Act 2025

Holiday activities and food programme 2023

Youth Guarantee 2025

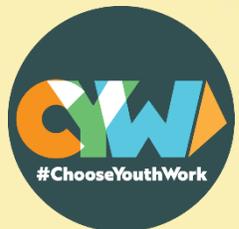
Formal Education

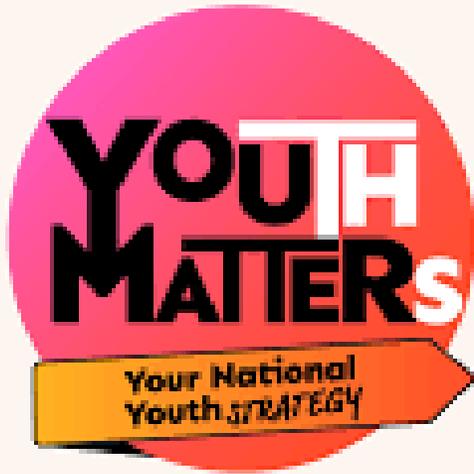
- Enrichment activities .
- Mental Health

Mental health and behaviour in schools 2018 -

Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England 2025

National Youth Strategy – Youth Matters 2025





Weaving the Threads together

