

UK YOUTH

**Response to
APPG Inquiry into Youth Work
Consultation**

June 2018



About UK Youth

Founded in 1911, [UK Youth](#) improves social mobility by providing high quality services for young people aged 9 to 25 that are delivered through a network of locally accessible youth organisations across the UK. Together we offer support, advice and training and since our merger with Ambition, we reach an estimated 4 million young people to equip them with vital life skills and help them engage in education, volunteering and employment.

Our vision is for all young people to be empowered to build bright futures, whatever their background or circumstances.

Our reach- we work primarily with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, from a wide range of religious and cultural environments, family settings, academic ability levels and geographic locations across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

During 2016/17:

- We invested £4.8 million in direct delivery to young people in our network and almost 100,000 young people directly benefitted from our programmes.
- 23,000 young people visited our outdoor centre Avon Tyrrell, 30,000 young people took part in a UK Youth programme and over 43,000 received online support from us
- 77% of the young people on our programmes faced at least one personal barrier (these include low income family, not in employment, education or training, young carer)
- 52% of the young people come from the 30% most deprived areas in the UK
- Our programmes consistently deliver high impact to young people who begin our programme reporting low emotional and social capabilities (91% improved their communication skills, 96% improved their receptiveness and 91% improved their resilience)

Our members range from small voluntary led community groups and local infrastructure organisations to larger regional and national charities providing direct support to young people. Members of UK Youth providing local or regional infrastructure report working with over 2,000 youth clubs across England, offering local, on the ground support where it's needed most. Although this is not an exact figure on the number of youth clubs and organisations within the UK Youth membership network, it can be estimated that it is representative of a sizeable proportion of the sector.



Skills programmes

UK Youth work with young people, members and our partners to co-create high quality skills programmes that are delivered through our network of youth organisations. 77 % of young people UK Youth reaches through programmes and membership are classed as disadvantaged.

For example, the Starbucks Youth Action programme (SYA) is an initiative that is delivered in partnership with Starbucks and empowers young people who are under-25 and not in employment or education (NEET) to develop their employability and leadership skills through participation in social action. In 2015/16, the programme awarded 113 grants totalling £177,481 to young people across England, Scotland and Wales. As a result, 93% of Starbucks Youth Action participants become more self-aware, 89% became more receptive, 90% became more motivated, 95% became more confident, 89% became more resilient, 94% became more effective communicators and 94% became more responsible.

Outdoor Learning

We provide educational opportunities for young people through our leading outdoor activity centre Avon Tyrrell, in the New Forest where we deliver a range of activities all year round, dedicated to the continuous development of young people. The historic centre creates adventures that enable young people to build bright futures, leaving with essential life skills as well as incredible memories.

Through outdoor learning, tailored programmes, apprenticeships and traineeships, disability and wellbeing weekends and bursary schemes, Avon Tyrrell recognises and rewards achievements made outside the classroom, providing the opportunity for everyone to experience, learn and develop. Last year over 23,000 young people visited Avon Tyrrell, showcasing our commitment to involving young people in non-formal education.

Introduction

UK Youth welcomes the inquiry supported by cross-party MPs and we are pleased to deliver evidence on the role and impact of youth work on behalf of our members, considering the suitability of youth work and services to meet some of the key challenges and opportunities for young people.

UK Youth are proud to have worked on this consultation submission alongside Step Up to Serve, who coordinate the infamous [#iwill campaign](#) and #iwill Fund, established to bring people together and contribute funding to embed meaningful social action into the lives of young people. We have also included quotes and data collected on the four questions from young people part of our UK Youth Voice National Board, during a workshop in May 2018, and members of UK Youth (clubs and organisations within our network) gathered during our Policy Forum in June 2018. We have also included some key findings from our recent response to the Civil Society Strategy.



We look forward to working alongside the National Youth Agency and the APPG for Youth Affairs throughout the inquiry, with young people presenting at parliamentary hearings, hosting visits and we are eager to see the report of the inquiry at the NYA Youth Work Conference in the autumn.

Civil Society Today, a Youth Sector Perspective

The youth sector across England has been and continues to evolve rapidly. Having experienced more than £737 million of cuts to local and regional services over the last 7 years, statutory provisions have substantially diminished right across the country, and in some areas ceased to exist entirely. This environment has led to high levels of innovation in how to sustain delivery, but also as a consequence there is now a huge variability and inconsistency in how services are being maintained across England's 152 local authorities.

The youth sector has responded to current challenges with innovation and collaboration, and hundreds of charities and social enterprises providing countless hours of year-round support for young people of all ages, including those with the most complex and challenging needs.

Multiple youth service models now exist, including commissioned and tendered services, voluntary sector led provisions, Community Interest Companies, Mutuals, Social Enterprises and cross-borough collaborations.

Please see some examples, from across the country of the variety of new youth service models include:

- [Knowsley Youth Mutual](#)
- [EPIC](#) – an employee led Community Interest Company in Kensington & Chelsea
- Wholesale commissioned services in Greenwich, [Young Greenwich](#), led by Charlton Athletic Community Trust
- [Space PSM](#), Devon – staff led mutual
- [Youth Connexions Hertfordshire](#) – County Council led youth service
- [Brighton & Hove Youth Collective](#) – LA funded collective of voluntary sector organisations
- [Young People Foundations](#) established in Brent, Barnet, Harrow and other London boroughs
- [EXPECT Youth](#)
- [Coventry Youth Partnership](#) – a new not-for-profit network

These are just some of the innovative models being developed in local areas in order to continue to meet the needs of young people. While new infrastructures and support models have emerged, in nearly all cases, services are being delivered with a significantly reduced budget when compared to before 2010. It must be acknowledged that innovations driven by cost-saving are not always in the best interests of young people. Front line services are often preserved over administrative services, which can cause strain to front line staff to cope with levels of demand. At local authority level, the most deprived areas have seen the greatest cuts, in particular areas around early help and intervention, despite reports that an increased emphasis on early help and early intervention is the best response to financial pressures.

Analysis of local authority spending on young people in England between 2014/15 and expenditure calculations for 2017/187 reveal there has been a:

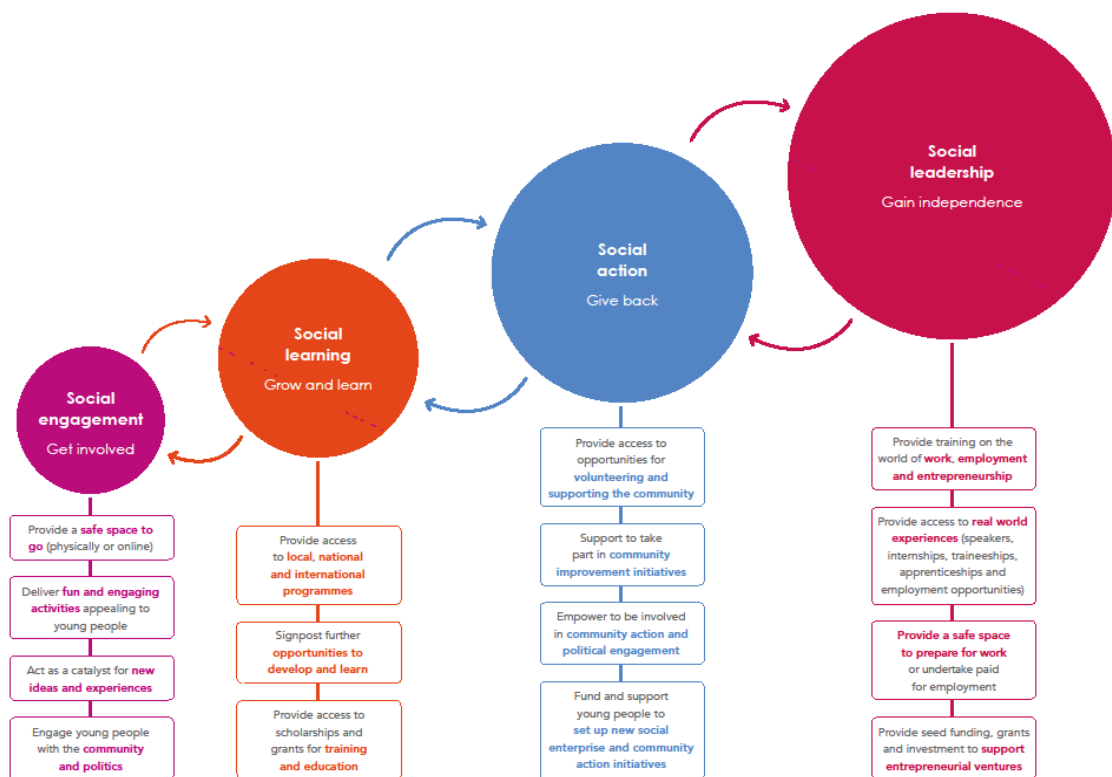
- >> 34% reduction in gross spending
- >> 41% reduction in universal spending
- >> 26% reduction in targeted spending

The youth sector is still currently under-invested and whilst this information shows that there are some innovative and more sustainable models emerging, more is needed to support organisations to ready themselves for this including grants, other investment forms and capacity building.

What is the role of youth work in addressing the needs and opportunities for young people?

What does a good local youth offer look like?

This is a complex and somewhat subjective question that will inevitably change from region to region dependent on the needs of young people, but whatever the local needs and priorities every young person has the right to a basic fundamental offer that enables them to get involved, learn and ultimately gain independence. At UK Youth, we refer to this as the [UK Youth Social Development Journey](#).



The start of a young person's journey begins with providing informal, safe spaces to go, with trusted caring adults around them, positive peer networks and a range of enrichment opportunities, which may include sport, music, art and many more positive activities. This is 'Social Engagement' on our model and if young people don't have access to this, their ability to progress onto other opportunities that enable them to learn or give back is greatly impacted. For a lot of young people, their local youth service is their only safe space and enables them to confide in a trusted adult. With the continued cuts to open access, universal youth provision, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and those facing multiple challenges are finding it harder to engage in social action and leadership roles.



Young people should have the opportunity to take part in informal and non-formal activities that support them to develop emotional and social capabilities, such as resilience, confidence, self-efficacy and team work and a range of life skills that may include financial management, digital literacy and communication skills- *'social learning'*.

When asked at our recent Policy & Strategy Forum in June 2018, youth sector professionals believe the role of youth work is extremely valuable in a young person's Social Development Journey. Youth work supports young people, gives young people a voice, offers a safe space for them to freely express themselves, and taps into their passions. By attending and participating in youth clubs and organisations, young people have a trusted adult, who does not judge them and keeps them safe. According to Wakefield Youth Work Team, a member of UK Youth, these trusted adults are crucial in the lives of young people in order to listen, guide, keep safe, and empower them to be confident in being independent.

"Youth workers help people and make sure you are alright. It is good to have an adult to talk to who doesn't judge me" – A young member of Wakefield Youth Council

Once a young person is able to better manage their personal and individual challenges, are more engaged and have developed essential skills and capabilities then they are best able to make the most of *'social action'* opportunities which will enable them to;

- Test new skills
- Engage in democracy and decision making
- Take on responsibilities
- Feel involved in their local communities
- Fail in a safe way, and because they have developed resilience and have a supportive network around them, they will be better placed to learn from their failures and apply that learning

To reach all young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, it is important to embed social action in young people's formal and non-formal educational journey from primary to further/higher education, apprenticeships and early employment. Youth social action reinforces the benefits of social learning e.g. building resilience, confidence and key skills such as team working and community engagement.

UK Youth is a partner of the #iwill campaign, which was launched in 2013 with cross-party support with the vision of making social action a part of life for all young people aged 10 to 20. Today there are over 800 organisations and institutions, across multiple sectors and across the UK that are committed to increasing youth participation in meaningful social action.

Step up to Serve define *'youth social action'* as practical action in service of others to create positive change. This can involve activities such as campaigning, fundraising and

volunteering, all of which enable young people to develop their own wellbeing, networks and skills whilst helping others and making a positive difference to their community. This is the double benefit – and what makes quality youth social action transformative

Their [six quality principles](#) of youth social action are:

1. **Embedded** – accessible to all and well integrated into existing pathways to become a habit for life
2. **Reflective** – recognising contributions as well as valuing critical reflection and learning
3. **Challenging** – stretching and ambitious as well as enjoyable and enabling
4. Youth-led – led, owned and shaped by young people's needs, ideas and decision making
5. **Socially impactful** – have a clear intended benefit to the community, cause or social problem
6. **Progressive** – sustained and providing links to other activities and opportunities

Evidence from the [Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues](#) shows the importance of starting social action from a young age to create a habit of participation.

Finally, every community needs to build opportunities for young people to be supported as they transition into 'Social Leadership' and towards independence. In practice that means that all young people will:

- Be supported to access Further Education, High Education and training
- Develop their employability skills and networks in order to find and keep a job they value
- Become involved in long term volunteering, and be genuinely interested in their community
- Understand how they can make a difference and positive change in their local community

The benefit of this model is that it acknowledges that young people need a supportive infrastructure around them as they progress towards adulthood but doesn't impose any pre-determined outcomes or objectives.

Young people need to be at the heart of every community and there should be a recognition that they are the future generation who will be leading the country. A 'good' youth offer should enable young people to access a range of opportunities through access to subsidised national travel. It requires a collaborative approach between service providers, businesses and young people themselves that has local ownership and investment.

Social Action

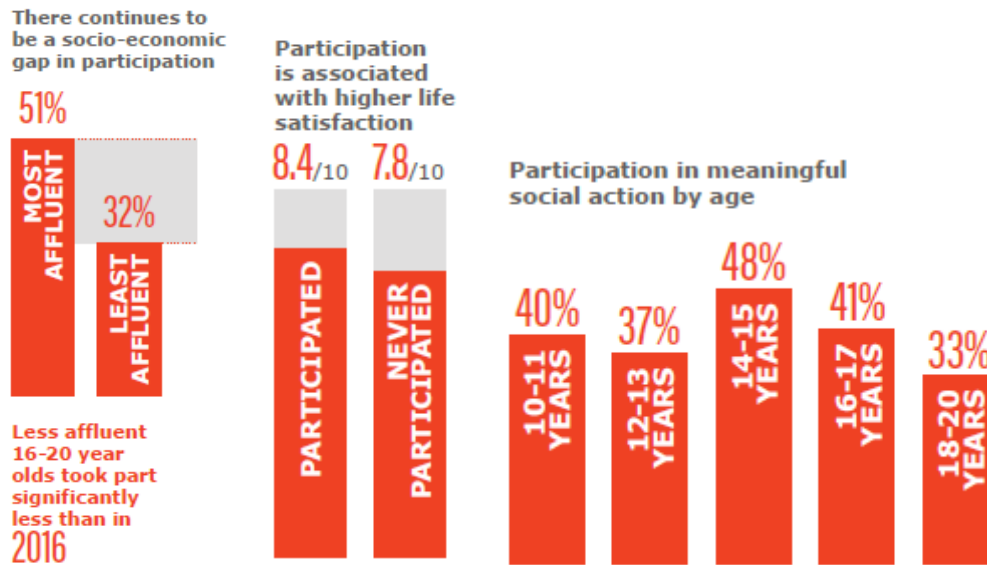
Young people and youth workers from across the UK Youth network have said that young people may choose to get involved in social action initially because of a number of reasons: they may be bored due to lack of things to do in their area, they might want to challenge stereotypes in the media, society and also socialise and meet new people. Employability and skills such as communication, organisation and team work were mentioned as a reason to take part but they were much lower down the list and only young people who understood the benefits to taking part in social action recognised that this might help them in developing these skills.

From the [National Youth Social Action Survey](#), carried out annually since 2014, we find **the majority of young people (nearly 60%) take part in some form of social action, yet only around 40% recognise the benefits to themselves and others and take part regularly throughout the year.**

This is a missed opportunity – and highlights not all young people are introduced to experiences that incorporate the quality principles of youth social action that are likely to lead to a double benefit and stimulate a life-long habit of service.

[This matters](#) because participating in meaningful social action through youth work brings a wealth of benefits, addressing the needs and opportunities of young people in their communities. According to the feedback from UK Youth Voice members, the role of youth work is to provide key skills, to act as support networks for important issues, to raise awareness of opportunities, to aid in personal development, to lend support, to enhance young people and their voices, to motivate and mentor and to guide in prevention of health and wellbeing issues.

Youth work is successful in its goal to be encouraging and supportive to a diverse variety of young people, this replicated with a diverse variety of youth workers, to support as many young people as possible to build bright futures. Although there has been some progress, there are still many challenges in current youth service provision. Cuts to government funding has negatively affected young people and communities, and the programs that are provided are quite often targeted towards 15-17 year olds instead of early intervention with young people, who are the majority in youth services. With the services it can provide and restricted targets and outcomes, not everyone can be involved as everyone has different needs with a limited amount of resources. Youth work is increasingly hard to get people involved in due to the lack of funding, limited awareness of 21st century youth issues and only a small number of volunteers, but investment in good quality youth work and in particular social action can make a significant difference to the character, spirit, and life skills of young peop



There is also evidence to suggest that taking part in youth social action improves educational attainment:

For example, a trial by Children’s University focused on pupils in Years 5 and 6 (aged 9–11) who took part in at least 30 hours of activities such as after-school clubs and visits to universities, museums and libraries. This included a target of fifteen hours of social action such as volunteering in the community. The trial found positive impacts on Key Stage 2 maths and reading equivalent to about 2 months’ additional progress. Small improvements were also seen for a range of non-cognitive outcomes, such as teamwork and social responsibility. Pupils were also more likely to select professional occupations as their future aspiration, and to report higher levels of communication, empathy, self-confidence, resilience, and happiness after the intervention (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/childrens-university/>)

Taking part in high quality social action, including volunteering, increases economic opportunity and supports social mobility in numerous ways. There is a large evidence base which shows that the essential life skills that young people need for future employment can be gained by taking part in quality youth social action.

For instance, CIPD (the professional body for HR and people development) released data in 2015 which showed that 67% of employers reported that entry level candidates who have voluntary experience demonstrate more employability skills including teamwork, communication and community understanding (CIPD and YouGov (2015). *Learning to Work Survey*).

Also, a report by the Cabinet Office and Behavioural Insights Team in 2015 showed that “young people who take part in youth social action initiatives develop some of the most



critical skills for employment and adulthood in the process” (Cabinet Office (2015). *Youth Social Action Fund evaluation*)

There is evidence that social action improves employability (Drechsler, P (2016). *Step up to Serve’s Employer Guide*) and US research demonstrates that social action can lead to higher wages and increased job satisfaction on a longitudinal basis (Gallup (2017). *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible are jobs to computerisation*). It is clear that from an employer’s perspective, youth social action builds attributes in young people that they want and need.

Young people themselves also see the benefit for their essential life skills by taking part in social action. Those who have participated feel more capable and confident about their futures – 7 in 10 young people who have taken part in meaningful social action (i.e. where young people recognise a benefit to themselves and others – the double benefit – and have taken part regularly or in a one-off activity that lasted longer than one day) are more confident in their ability to get a job and have an impact on the world around them (IPSOS MORI (2017). *National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation – Two years on*).

There is some evidence that social action also improves employability by expanding social and professional networks, which is particularly important for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Re:action and De Montfort University found that 66% of young people with experience of volunteering in national or international settings, and 44% of young people volunteering in neighbourhood projects, felt that their education and employability had benefited from meeting new people in the process (British Chamber of Commerce (2014). *Workforce Survey*).

Whilst we recognise the great benefits of social action and volunteering, it is important that we acknowledge for some young people there are barriers to taking part. When we asked young people and youth workers, the main reasons for not taking part were lack of opportunities, or lack of awareness of opportunities. Access can be very difficult for so many young people, especially from marginalised groups or from rural areas. Unless the primary needs of a young person are met, for example, food, housing, a good support network and education, many young people struggle to take part as it’s not a priority for them or they lack the confidence and skills to put themselves forward.

From our own impact data and research we know that last year 77% of the young people UK Youth supported were disadvantaged, with 52% living in the 30% most deprived areas of the UK. Alongside using IMD and the Social Mobility index we also identify barriers that act as a risk factor for young people receiving or making the most of opportunities in life. The most common personal barriers faced by young people were from being from a low-income family, being NEET, having special educational needs, being a young carer or experiencing mental health challenges.

Are the key issues and challenges faced by young people being addressed by current youth service provisions?

Youth Voice

The key issues and challenges being addressed by current youth service provisions vary in topic and severity from place to place.

UK Youth empowers socially excluded young people from across the UK with the skills they need to be able to access opportunities, share their views and influence their own lives and the world around them. Through the UK Youth Voice National Board, we have recruited 28 passionate young people from diverse backgrounds who would otherwise not engage in formal structures. This personal development programme aims to enable them to have the opportunity to share their views on a local, regional and national level, increase their aspirations and connections, and progress to further social leadership roles.

Last year, members of UK Youth Voice produced their [UK Youth Voice Manifesto](#), engaging young people from across our network and calling on the Government to address 5 key policy calls:

1. Make youth services a priority public service

For many young people, their youth club is their only safe space. We believe youth services underpin many other essential services for young people and enable all young people to build bright futures. Every young person in every region, city, town and village of the United Kingdom should have access to a minimum standard of youth services, enabling them access to mental health services, citizenship education, social mixing and training.

2. Enable every young person to take an active role in democracy

Young people deserve a say in their future. Reduce the age of democratic participation in every election and enable automatic voter registration from the age of 16 to value the positive contribution from young people to society. To enable young people to be at the heart of decision making in central and national government, we recommend a dedicated youth policy department and national youth policy board

3. Provide accessible, high quality education for all young people

Education should not be based on social background. All young people should have access to the same free, high quality education that follows a non-biased political curriculum focused on life skills to tackle the skills shortage and promote active citizenship.

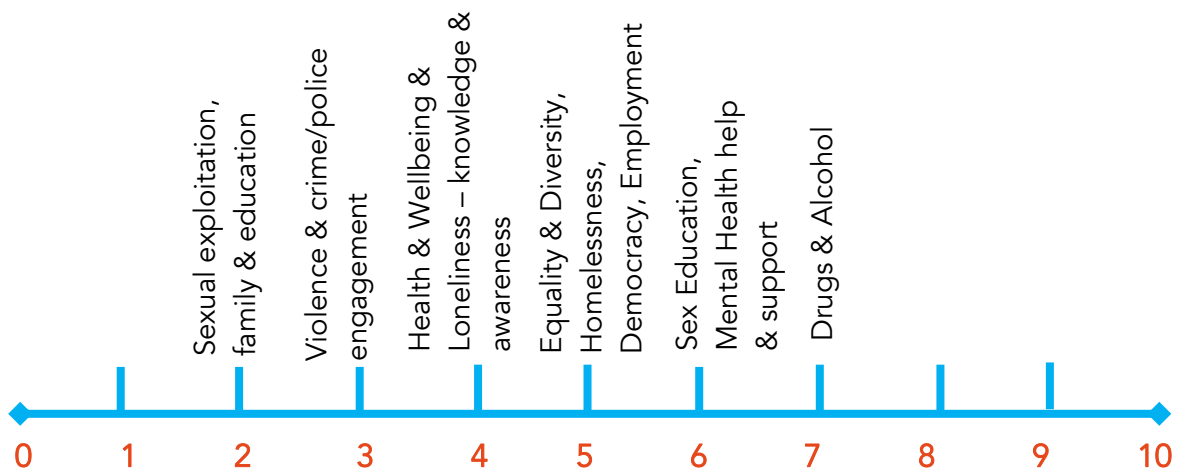
4. End discrimination, prejudice and hate crime towards young people

Pledge to support an end to all discrimination surrounding protected characteristics including gender, ethnicity, age, religious belief or non-belief, sexual orientation, class, size, disability or other status.

5. Enable future generations to live in a clean, safe and sustainable environment

The environment should not be negatively impacted by the UK exiting the European Union. The UK should at least maintain standards equal to EU regulations and create an Environmental Protection Act to pledge our commitment to the global fight against climate change.

At our last UK Youth Voice meeting, they were asked whether the key issues and challenges faced by young people were being addressed by current youth service provisions. They chose to rank the main issues and topics they addressed on a scale from 1-10 whereby 1 are the least addressed and 10 are the most addressed topics.



UK Youth Voice members concluded that the least addressed topics were violence & crime, family, sexual exploitation, police engagement and education. With education, there needs to be an increase in disability awareness with sign language training and more funding for sports. Funding is a real issue when it comes to what can be addressed with a small amount of resources. UK Youth Voice believed topics such as equality and diversity, homelessness, democracy and health & wellbeing were averagely addressed throughout youth provision, where they had access to it. The most frequently addressed topics in youth services are drugs and alcohol, sex education and mental health. Mental health seems to be a spilt issue with a ranking of 6 in early intervention, help, and support, but it was given a 4 in awareness and knowledge.

A member of UK Youth Voice from Young Gloucestershire said “We found that there was a huge range for mental health, sadly only differing because of where we lived. This

made us consider where the divides in our society lay. They could be in location, age, and similar things that allow your voice to be heard, depending on who's listening."

Young people have the right to be involved in decisions that affect them directly and in order for them to practise this, they should have the opportunity to learn about democratic processes so that they have the knowledge to know how they can make change in their local communities, and then have the confidence to be able to put this into practice. Whilst there are a number of programmes and projects that are working with young people to get their voices heard, current research shows that young people continue to feel disengaged in decision making as a whole. More needs to be done to involve young people in policy making in a meaningful way and where young people are already involved, decision makers should make sure that they feedback to young people on the outcome of their involvement to ensure they keep engaged and take ownership of their involvement.

Youth workers and organisations from across our Membership agreed that where there is a well funded service, able to respond to the needs to young people, that youth work helps to address the current needs of young people, but there is a huge disparity because these provisions are not always available in the right areas nor doing the right work. There was a strong mention of the "postcode lottery" that enables some areas to be better or more targeted support compared to others with nothing. There is also a strong sense that many of the current issues facing young people, such as housing, unemployment, education and poverty are structural issues and whilst youth work can go some way in providing support and empowerment to young people, it requires much bigger collaboration across a range of sectors to challenge and change these issues.

Youth work requires skilled, experienced youth workers to be addressing the needs of young people. There needs to be an increased awareness and development in work readiness and mental health. With the proper resources, youth work can provide young people with the tools to be prepared for adult life, which are skills that are not addressed in the education system's curriculum. There is a large margin for improvement in evaluating and discovering links that can be created with schools as well as measuring the impact of uniformed groups in different areas. Finally, youth workers require sufficient training that keeps pace with changing world for young people, that is not currently being addressed by current providers.

Are there sufficient youth workers to support youth services and other delivery models for good quality youth work?

When asked the above question, UK Youth Voice felt the youth workers in their youth clubs and organisations were fantastic, supportive and fit for purpose, but there is major room for improvement and advancement. These youth workers are well trained, qualified individuals who care, understand, and open-mindedly work with young people

in a judgement-free manner.

Digital resources enable youth workers to develop information to be spread across a wide area. However, digital resources are by no means as effective as open-access, purpose-built youth centres with targeted delivery of training to young people.

The lack of government funding creates competitive environments in the youth sector. This combined with the need for resources to run programs and organisations, the need for defining and advertising roles, and the need for youth workers who can relate to young people shows the improvement necessary to further support the development of youth work. With the high level of young people who need to access high quality youth provision, there just simply aren't enough qualified and well paid youth workers to staff the roles. Recent figures by NYA show that there are now only 39 validated higher education youth work courses on offer in the UK across just 28 different universities and colleges. [NYA Course Database 2018]

"Our State of the Membership 2018 report found that the workforces of youth organisations within our network are predominately volunteer-led, with two volunteers for every full-time staff member. Whilst the energy and enthusiasm of volunteers is widely welcomed, it must be recognised that the youth sector has transitioned from a largely statutory provision to a largely voluntary sector-led service. This means the training, processes and oversight that was in place to ensure the safety and protection of young people has diminished." Kayleigh Wainwright, Head of Membership & Policy, UK Youth

Many youth workers are voluntary, unpaid and not qualified, often parents of some of the young people in the group. This not only risks safeguarding issues but also the level and quality of the youth provision that is delivered. There should a CPD route for all youth workers, whether they are volunteers or full time managers.

Youth workers responded to this question at our recent Policy Forum in June 2018 regarding the areas of improvement in youth work. There is a great need for creativity, innovation, and sustainability as well as broadening the scope of these courses; currently youth work is struggling to recruit and train workers due to lack of awareness and knowledge of opportunities and employment routes, along with the prevalent issues of funding and prospects for newly qualified workers.

Currently, there are not enough high quality, qualified youth workers to meet the growing demand of young people. UK Youth's member, Wakefield Youth Work Team addressed this, "the number of young people facing difficulties and hardships due to not having the right support and guidance has increased massively in our area." This problem combined with the lack of awareness and training demonstrates a need for improvement.

The workforce across our membership network is predominantly volunteer led, with two volunteers for every full time staff member. When workforce is looked at against size of organisation, it's clear that those with a higher turnover have a higher amount of full time staff than those with a smaller turnover; an average of 44% of the workforce as full time staff in a large member organisation compared to just 2% in a small member organisation. This puts additional pressure on smaller organisations in ensuring their volunteer workforce have the correct training, skills, support and policies in place to better support the young people they work with. [UK Youth State of the Membership Report 2018]

What are the training and workforce development needs to secure and sustain youth work?

UK Youth Voice believe there is a fair amount of training and workforce development that is necessary to secure and sustain youth work. Children and young people workforce training, a health and social care certificate and training in safeguarding children and young people are imperative to the work of a youth worker.

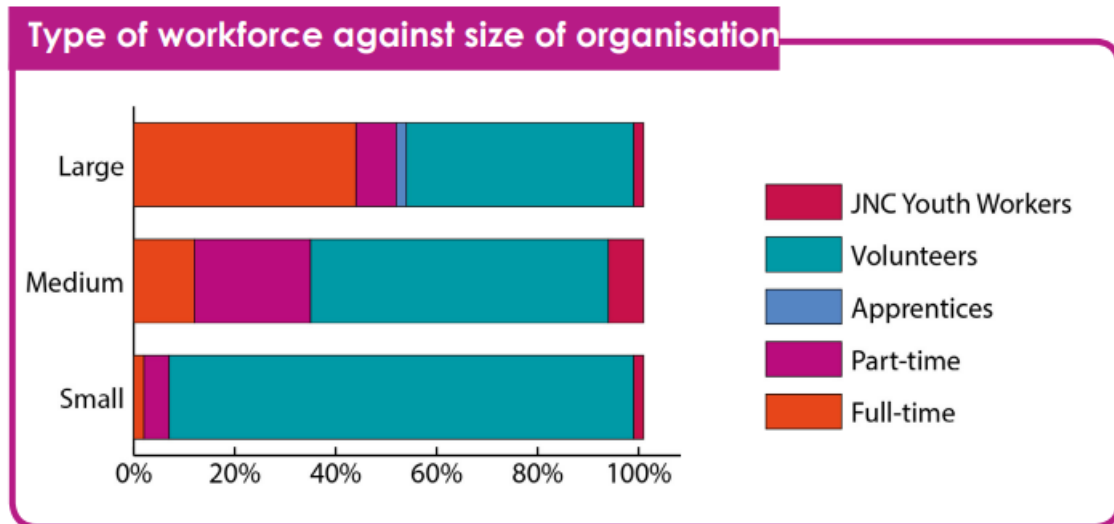
To ensure adequate services for all young people, youth workers should be trained in British sign language and equality and diversity awareness. Youth workers should always be enhanced DBS checked, something that is often missed in smaller organisations with limited funding and irregular voluntary staffing patterns. Many organisations simply cannot afford to employ full time paid qualified youth workers with all of this training and workforce development, which leaves so many organisations left to rely on volunteers.

There are over 16,000 individuals within UK Youth's direct membership's workforce. Volunteers greatly outnumber paid staff - for every paid staff member, there are two volunteers. This tallies with research from Unison which notes that around 1,660 youth work jobs were lost between 2014 and 2016, following the loss of almost 2,000 posts between 2012 and 2014. The majority of the losses were part-time workers¹¹.

Infrastructure organisations, delivering services at scale across local or regional networks, have the greatest reliance on volunteers, making up nearly 90% of their workforce. Organisations delivering services directly to young people from a single locality, such as a youth club, have the highest proportion of JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) qualified youth and community workers, yet they are also very reliant on volunteers. As expected, larger organisations, turning over more than £500K, have the greatest number of full-time staff, likely to be employed in management functions such as finance, HR and strategy.

Whilst the energy and enthusiasm of volunteers is widely welcomed, it must be recognised that as the youth sector has transitioned from a largely statutory provision to

a largely voluntary sector led service, the training, processes and oversight that was in place to ensure the safety and protection of beneficiaries has diminished. [UK Youth State of the Membership Report 2018]



It must also be recognised that there are skills and experience needed to support young people in a youth work setting, and this should be fully resourced. There is a great need for training and development of youth workers. As well as the need to provide a professional route for those who want it, we need to recognise the high number of volunteers who provide much needed and valued input into the youth sector workforce. The challenge is to look at how we make sure they are safe, well supported and have the basic knowledge they need to best support young people.

In order to do this effectively, there needs to be investment in training to acquire the proper materials to do so. Hence enabling the youth sector to continue to further develop quality standards “for the 21st century, beyond JNC” to ensure that there are safe spaces with trusted adults for young people to engage in the activities offered at youth clubs and organisations.