



EMPOWHER

What did we learn?

EMPOWHER

Inspiring young women and girls to lead change

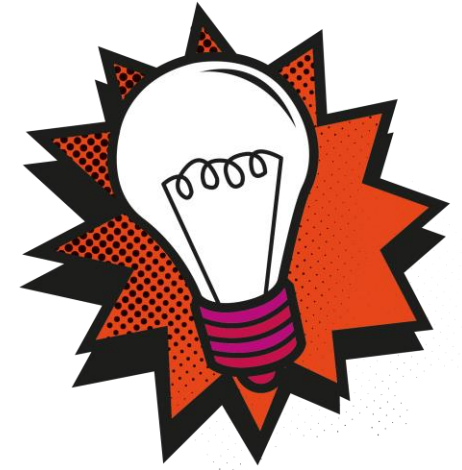


A programme addressing low wellbeing amongst young women and girls through supporting their involvement in inclusive, meaningful social action.



1880
Young women and girls completed

Why did we start EmpowHER?



What did we know?

- Just one in four young women and girls (YW&G) between the ages of seven and 21 described themselves as “very happy” – **down from 41% in 2009 (Girlguiding 2017)**
- Girls were found to have higher depressive symptoms than boys their age and were **twice as likely** to self harm, with the risk increasing for those from lower income households (Children’s Society 2018)
- On average, the emotional difficulties of girls increase by **17% between the ages of 11 and 14** (Headstart 2020 - pre pandemic report)
- **A worsening picture...** For those who already had poor mental health, **80%** said the pandemic had made their mental health worse and **87%** had felt lonely or isolated (Young Minds, 2020)



What else did we know?

- Of 10,000 young people surveyed by NCVO **77%** agreed volunteering had improved their mental health (2019)
- When young people were asked how social action benefits them, the single most common response was improved confidence and self-esteem (**44%**) with this response increasing to **50%** for those in a transitional age range (National Youth Social Action Survey, 2019)

But..

- Whilst **84% of young people** want to help others, only **52%** believe that they can make a positive difference in their communities (RSA, 2018)
- Throughout history we've seen the spark of events and the power of connection in galvanising YW&G to **effect radical change**, indeed EmpowHER marked the centenary of women's suffrage.



What was our response?



Reach and engage unusual suspects

YW&G with low wellbeing who may have been excluded from social action opportunities due to lack of access, skills or confidence.



Social Learning

The emotional and social capabilities we all need throughout life – here developed through themes of rights, resilience, empowerment and meeting relatable role models.



Inclusive and meaningful social action projects.

Youth designed. Youth led. Challenging. Socially impactful. Progressive



Youth leadership

Opportunities to become peer mentors and EmpowHER Ambassadors



Celebrate success!



Celebrate success!



What did EmpowHER feel like?

Sadia's EmpowHER Journey

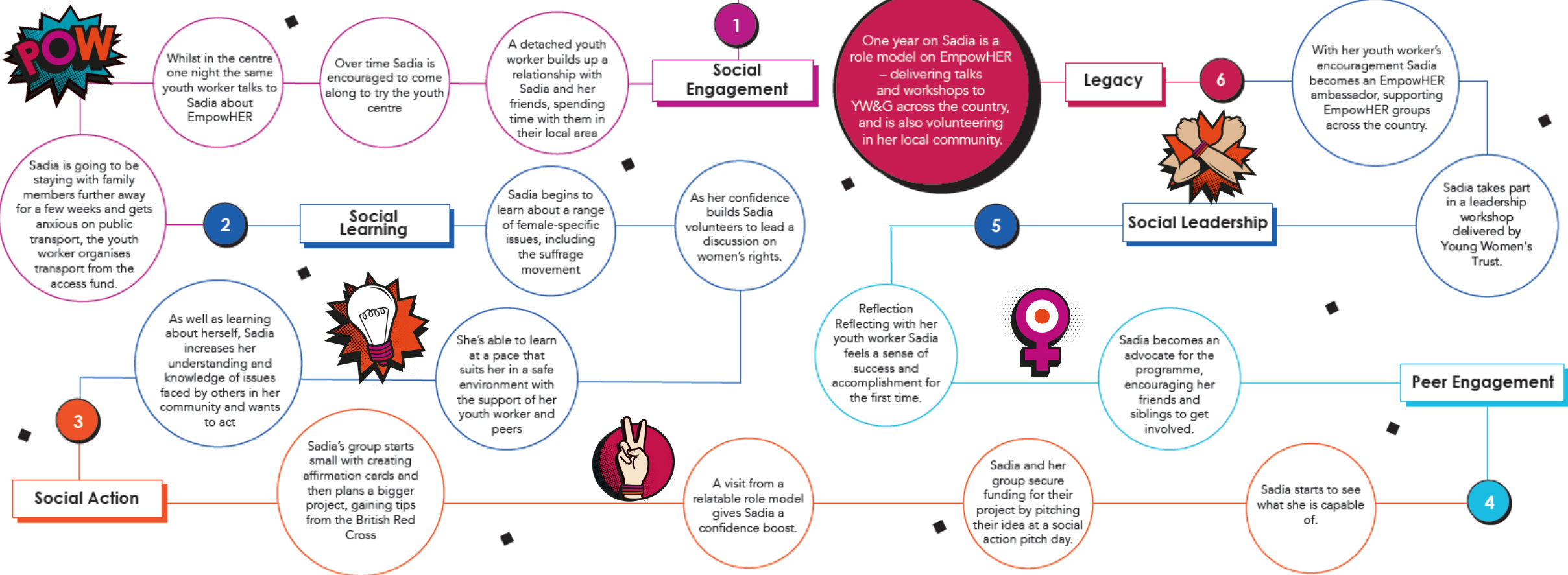


Sadia lives in one of the most deprived areas in the UK.

Sadia has a difficult home life and faces a range of personal barriers to progression

Sadia has never taken part in social action

EMPOWHER



Who did we bring together?

Local knowledge and reach



UK Youth's Movement of over 7,000 organisations



Youth workers with deep roots into the community

Expert national partners



British Red Cross – unique social action opportunities and insights



Young Women's Trust - expertise on female empowerment

Funding



Funded by Spirit of 2012 and the #iwill Fund. The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Culture, Media & Sport have invested £25 million seed funding to create the #iwill Fund

Co-Design



EmpowHER was designed, and developed, together with young people and youth workers – listening, learning and changing throughout the programme

So, what happened?



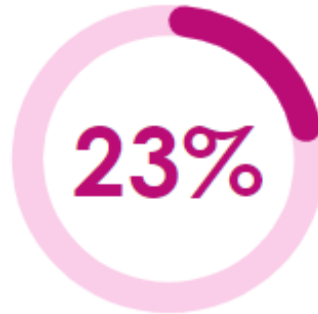
Who did EmpowHER reach?



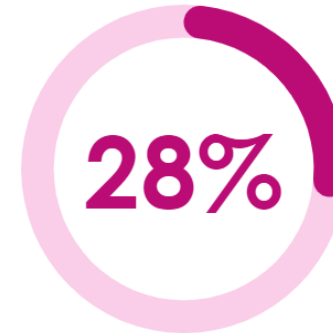
of YW&G had 1 or more personal barriers



of YW&G had a disability



of YW&G were from the UK's top cold spots for social mobility



of YW&G were from racialised communities



completion rate

*Disability includes poor mental health, Emotional Behavioural and Social Difficulties and Special educational needs and disabilities and physical disability

So, what happened?

What did the YW&G achieve for their communities?

240+
Social action
projects

£8,879
raised

20,009
people in
communities reached



“I learnt the importance of getting involved in the community and that if you’re passionate about something, the impact you can have on other people is huge. I’ve never had the opportunity to do something for my community and EmpowHER gave me that”

Social Action Spotlight



Integrate

Inspired by their own social learning the one group at Integrate focused their social action on supporting young women and girls in their school; leading a day of PSHE sessions for year 7 students, covering period poverty, mental health, social media usage and body image. The group gave students mental health badges to help destigmatise mental health in their school as well as care packages. The group also started a mentoring programme – each pairing with one student - to help the young people build healthy coping mechanisms.



“ It makes you excited, like you’re making a change and the world will one day be better because you’re doing something about it”

Youth Leadership

Fay's story



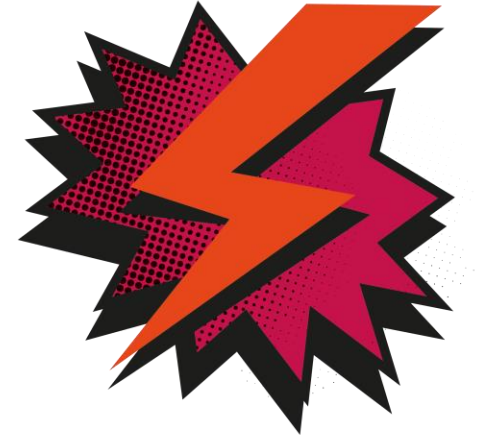
Through EmpowHER, Fay discovered a passion for empowering and motivating young women, girls and non-binary young people to speak out about issues affecting them. Finishing EmpowHER confident and inspired, Fay decided to volunteer as a peer mentor for the next cohort at her youth club, Preston Impact, supporting the group to get as much out of EmpowHER as she had.

Fay wasn't finished there, in the next cohort she became an EmpowHER Ambassador, providing encouragement to EmpowHER participants across the country! Fay has now helped groups prepare for social action pitch days, supported partners with campaigns on wellbeing and women's rights, been an EmpowHER role model, a pitch day judge, given a keynote speech at a national EmpowHER celebration event and SO MUCH MORE!

With her exceptional skills and drive for change Fay has now successfully secured an internship with the British Red Cross, where she will be supporting an exciting new EmpowHER Climate Change pilot. We can't wait to see what Fay's future holds.



Impact on the young women and girls?



WELLBEING

53% of YW&G reported increased levels of happiness

55% reported increased levels of life satisfaction

57% increased sense that things in their life are worthwhile

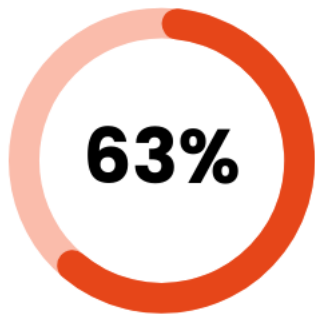
“The most amazing thing that I’ve seen through EmpowHER is that the young women don’t realise the significance of sisterhood, until they’re in it, and then by the end they do! And the love they have for each other at the end is phenomenal!”

*Change in all 3 ONS wellbeing indicators found to be statistically significant, measured using t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means ($p < 0.05$). Outcome data was only available for cohorts 1, 2 and 4, because a pre/post was not conducted during cohort 3, due to disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Impact on the young women and girls?



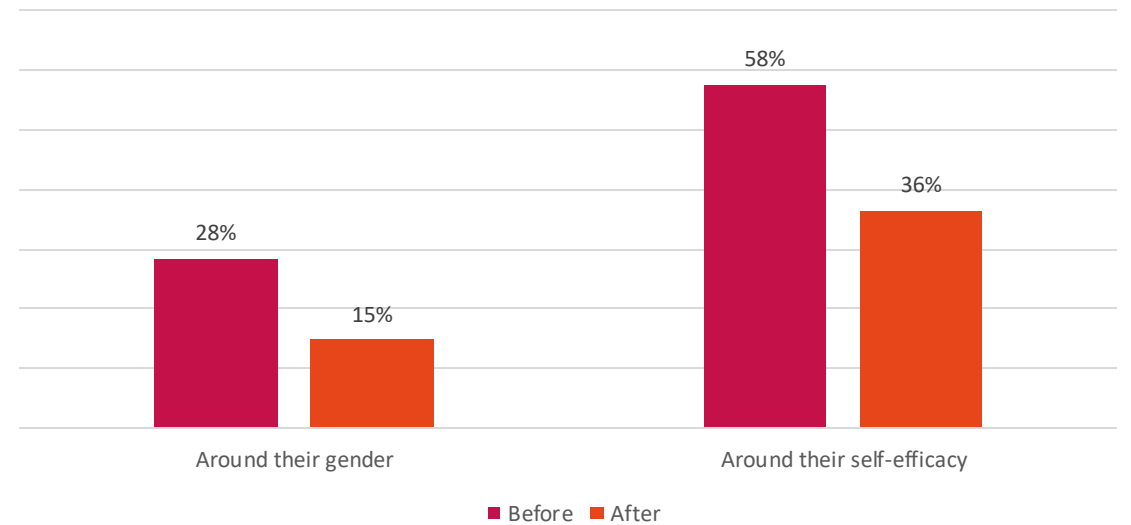
CONFIDENCE



of YW&G reported an increase in confidence

REDUCING LIMITING PERCEPTIONS

Percentage of YW&G reporting limiting perceptions before and after EmpowHER

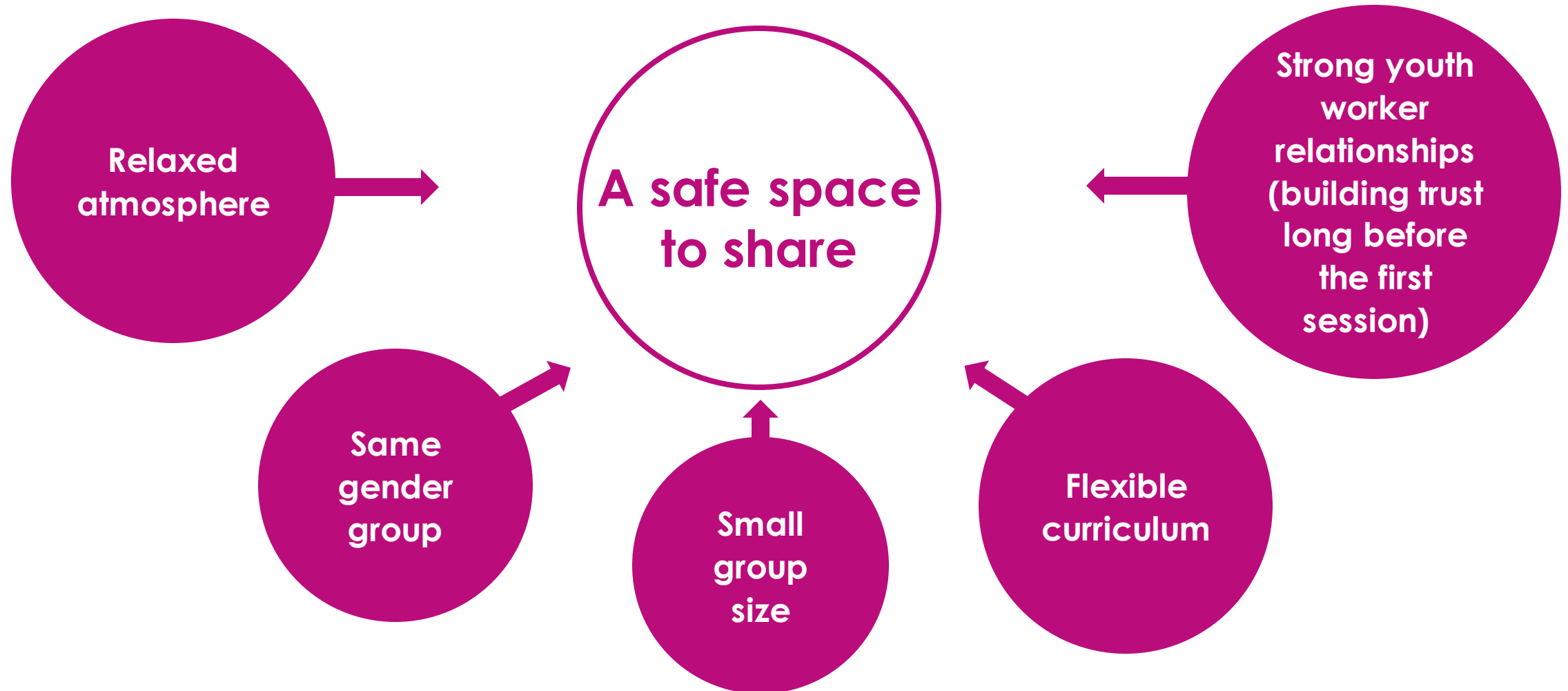


* "limiting perceptions" means a candidate scored themselves between 0-6 out of 10 for the metric.

Enablers: what made EmpowHER work?



What enabled the increase in wellbeing?



Enablers: what made EmpowHER work?



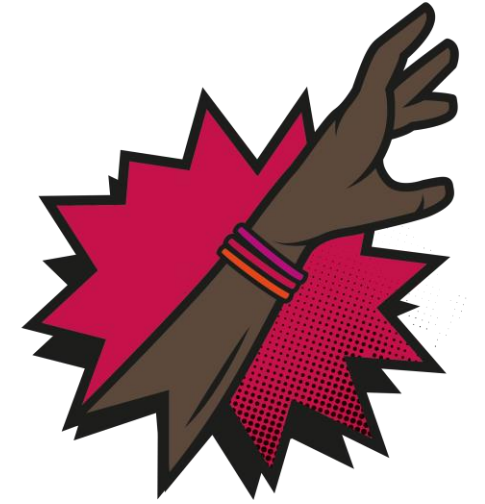
What enabled the YW&G to challenge and change limiting perceptions?

- ✓ Long term programme – it takes time!
- ✓ Social learning - exploring topics of women's rights and stereotyping
- ✓ “I can do this” experiences – accessible social action opportunities
- ✓ A safe space to share and challenge limiting perceptions

What supported YW&G to identify and lead change?

- ✓ Being part of something bigger
- ✓ Exposure to relatable role models “people like me can lead”
- ✓ Opportunities – to lead, to speak, to achieve

Enablers: what made EmpowHER work?



What was driving improvements in social cohesion?

- ✓ **Learning** - deepening community understanding through social learning
- ✓ **Meeting new people** – spending time with peers, role models and members of the community
- ✓ **Social action** – opportunities to engage with community (works both ways!)

What are the enablers to creating long-term, youth-led social action habits?

- ✓ **Spark something** – deliver sessions that enable YW&G to identify causes they feel passionate about
- ✓ **Dare to be different** - encourage non-mainstream social action
- ✓ **Build belief** - increase confidence through challenging limiting perceptions
- ✓ **Get going** - instill positive feelings through quick, accessible social action early on
- ✓ **Time to develop** - build a social action skillset, get more ambitious!
- ✓ **So what's next? Harness the enthusiasm and connect to social action in your local area**



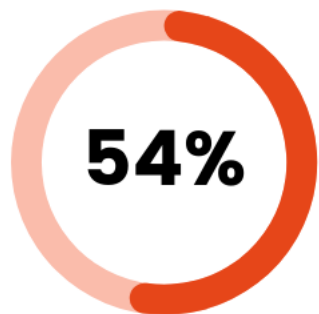
CONFIDENT, INSPIRED, HAPPIER YW&G READY TO LEAD CHANGE



79%

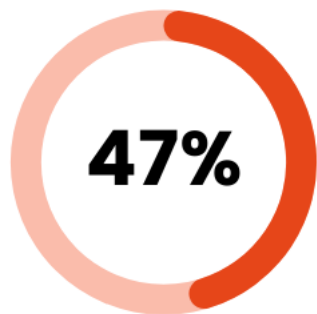
of YW&G reported that they were “quite likely or very likely” to take part in volunteering in the next 12 months.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



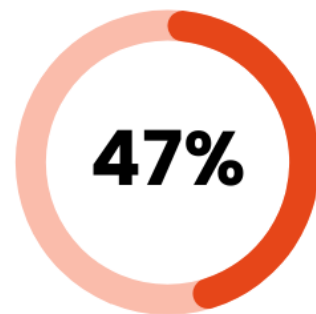
54%

YW&G feel a greater sense of trust in their local community



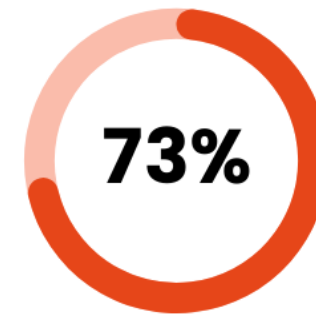
47%

YW&G feel they are more ‘often meeting’ people that are different to themselves



47%

YW&G feel more accepted by people they spend their time with



73%

of youth workers expressed that the programme improved links with local organisations

*Change in all 3 social cohesion indicators found to be statistically significant, measured using t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means (p<0.05).

Sector Legacy



Programme resource and knowledge now available to the sector through the digital EmpowHER Toolkit



Youth organisation's utilising EmpowHER evidence and profile to draw down funding through demonstrating the programme's power to local networks and funders.



And this is just the start!



2022-23 will see UK Youth, in partnership with Spirit of 2012 and over 50 youth organisations, test bold approaches to embedding local social action that lasts.

Programmatic enablers

How do you fund change that lasts?



- ✓ **An open honest funder/fundee relationship** – a willingness to do things differently
- ✓ **Multi-year funding**
- ✓ **Pauses to embed learning**
- ✓ **Fund thinking and learning time** – not just delivery
- ✓ **Talk about the end from the beginning and think about the tiny things that build sustainability**
- ✓ **Give space to build the evidence of the intervention**



“Keep at it. Things might go wrong along the way but you have the power to change the world”

- Macie, 16 EmpowHER Ambassador



Thank You

Created by

EMPOWERHER | **UK YOUTH**

In partnership with

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Delivered by:



UK YOUTH

UK Youth London Office, Kings Building,
16 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HQ

Avon Tyrrell Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore,
Christchurch BH23 8EE

Website: www.ukyouth.org

Telephone: 0203 1373 810

Company Number: 05402004

UK Youth Registered Charity Number: 1110590