

Wiltshire Youth Framework 2025

1. Overview and scope

This framework sets out the current local youth offer in Wiltshire and considers how partners work collaboratively to provide educational and recreational leisure-time activities, that support the development and wellbeing of young people aged 13 – 19 years (up to 25 years with special educational needs and disability, SEND) outside of the school environment. It also proposes strategic objectives for future development.

Under Section 507b of the Education Act (1996), all young people aged 13 to 19 years (and up to 25 years for those with SEND) have the right to access youth work activities which are for the improvement of their wellbeing and promote their personal and social development. This framework focuses on the statutory delivery to this duty, evaluates the current practices within the county and provides a clear steer for future improvements. It considers the critical role positive leisure-time activities has in providing engaging opportunities for young people, as well as its pivotal function in delivering early intervention and support. The responsibility for delivery to S507b duty is owned in Wiltshire by the Director of Children's Services (DCS), however, the Communities Directorate take a leading role in its delivery.

The framework considers this type of provision that is delivered by a wide range of partners, alongside more targeted youth support services. It is important to recognise that this work links directly with the partnership Family Help Strategy (2022-2027) and the collective commitment in Wiltshire to its principles. This includes taking a trauma informed approach when working with young people and “for children and families to have the best chance of achieving what they want in life, they need to have their core needs of health, wealth and wellbeing met; and for them to be in balance.” The role and contribution of voluntary and community youth groups and activities are a central component of the Family Help model in Wiltshire: “As well as drawing in existing and new elements delivered by ‘formal’ organisations, our model also integrates those who contribute to and provide ‘Ordinary or Everyday Help’; families, communities and other individuals and networks.

Whilst the framework has a clear focus on holistic family support, this explicitly reaches outside of the traditional model of focus on symptoms. Evidence consistently shows that it is the ‘wider conditions of people’s lives – their homes, financial resources, opportunities for education and employment, access to public services, and the environments in which they live, that exert the greatest impact on health and well-being’.

The comprehensive evidence to support the Wiltshire Youth Framework can be found in appendix A.

2. Aim

The overall aim of the framework is for Wiltshire to have a comprehensive and inclusive local youth offer that enables all young people to engage in positive activities, access support services and enhances their ability to contribute to their communities.

This offer and the associated support helps all young people to successfully navigate the journey from adolescence into young adulthood, giving them access to new opportunities and experiences and providing information and guidance that will support their personal and social development and well-being. It enables young people to access safe places with suitably trained and resourced personnel via facilities such as Family Hubs, Youth Clubs/Centres, leisure centres and other community settings. It raises their aspirations, builds resilience and enables them to make informed decisions that are right for

them as well as enabling them to have meaningful voice and influence regarding the activities and services available to them.

3. Key partners

The framework focuses predominately on the main deliverers and commissioners of youth engagement, provision and support and how they work collaboratively to support young people in Wiltshire. Their role in this delivery is set out as follows:

- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Wiltshire Youth Partnership
- Wiltshire Council
- Services commissioned by WC and the Integrated Care Board
- Wiltshire Police/ Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

The VCS offers a diverse range of support programmes and positive opportunities to young people in the county, that enable them to reach their full potential and overcome challenges and contribute positively to their community. These includes youth development programmes, targeted and open access youth work, detached youth work, mentoring schemes, peer support, sports clubs, uniformed groups, social action, employment support, creative and cultural engagement, youth advocacy, voice and representation.

Since 2020, to respond to a need and an appetite for closer collaboration between local VCS youth organisations in the county, the Wiltshire Community Foundation has been convening the Wiltshire and Swindon Youth Work Network (WSYWN). The WSYWN has created the opportunity for local youth workers to connect with their peers, share good practice and explore opportunities for closer collaboration, reduce duplication and improve partnership working.

The role of the Wiltshire Youth Partnership (WYP)

The WYP brings together VCS organisations and statutory partners involved in delivering and supporting youth work provision in the county, to improve the local youth offer. Established in late 2022, the WYP's aim is to be a positive, collaborative, county-wide partnership which raises the profile of youth work, highlighting the difference local youth organisations make to the young people they support. The partnership has ambitions to increase the capacity of youth work activities across the county, to improve and increase impact and to make a difference to the lives of local young people.

WC has agreed a two-year funding model alongside the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Wiltshire Youth Partnership, hosted by Wiltshire Community Foundation across the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

The role of Wiltshire Council (WC)

WC has a statutory duty under s507b of the Education Act to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, leisure-time activities and facilities for young people aged 13 to 19 and those with learning difficulties or disabilities aged 20 to 24. To achieve this WC oversees the delivery of the community led youth model through its 18 Area Boards and the Engagement and Partnerships Service. This model involves funding VCS organisations to deliver leisure-time activities, the coordination of local youth networks and engagement with young people. WC ensures a comprehensive delivery of educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people via oversight provided through its Communities and Children's Services as well as commissioning the provision of Family Hubs that enable young people to access information, advice and support through a network of community locations and online provision.

There are a wide range of leisure-time activity opportunities delivered through the library, culture and leisure services. The Voice and Participation team provides a quality assurance and engagement function for children and their families involved in statutory services. While universal services are sufficient for many young people, a significant minority of teenagers will experience specific challenges during adolescence or will have more entrenched problems, which mean that additional support is required. WC provides targeted support through services such as Youth Justice, as well as commissioning specific targeted services that responds to local needs.

The role of the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

The Police and Crime Plan outlines the Police and Crime Commissioners priorities for the area and how work with partners will be delivered to achieve them. The Making Wiltshire Safer - Wiltshire and Swindon's Police and Crime Plan sets out the direction for policing focus and priorities. The OPCC manages the Youth Voice Commission, encouraging and engaging representation from all youth communities. In addition to this the OPCC commissions detached youth work and activities across Wiltshire, as well as specific provision for young victims of crime.

4. Agreed vision statements

Following a collective review of the Wiltshire local youth offer (found in appendix A), the following vision statements have been agreed. An operational delivery plan with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timeframe) objectives will be developed following the adoption of this framework, that will set out the detail of how each vision statement will be delivered and monitored. This will be completed by April 2025, with the delivery plan jointly owned by Wiltshire Council and local partners. Progress to this delivery plan will be reported back to Children's Select on an annual basis.

Wiltshire Local Youth Offer (vision statement 1)

Vision statement – All young people in Wiltshire have sufficient access to safe, diverse and engaging leisure-time activities and services that supports their personal, social development and well-being.

Rationale – The availability of activities and services in Wiltshire varies significantly depending on a young person's individual circumstance. Barriers to access include, but are not limited to rurality, socioeconomic factors, special educational needs or disabilities and cultural or language barriers. Whilst partners within Wiltshire recognise these challenges and are taking steps to improve the equity of services through initiatives such as outreach, detached and mobile youth provision or cost-free holiday activities, there remains significant barriers and inequality in provision.

This framework highlights the crucial and growing role that VCS organisations play in delivering the local youth offer within Wiltshire, however, there remain considerable funding challenges for many. Direct delivery of youth activities often struggle to cover core costs or operate with financial certainty, due to the short-term nature and respectively small funding streams available. The core funding investment from Wiltshire Council and the OPCC into the Wiltshire Youth Partnership and Wiltshire and Swindon Youth Work Network is a positive step, however, the long-term sustainability of these networks requires collaborative planning.

To deliver safe and diverse leisure-time activities for young people, there needs to be sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff and volunteers. Current challenges regarding the availability of qualified youth workers and local providers of qualifications remain prevalent.

Actions for the delivery plan

- Mapping of the current 'leisure-time' youth provision across Wiltshire and developing collaborative solutions that address gaps. A local youth offer plan.

- Partnership wide, strategic focus to attract national and regional funding investment into local youth provision in Wiltshire, whilst utilising local funding more efficiently and effectively.
- Collaborative efforts to increase and improve training and support available to increase youth work capacity. support the workforce and development? Training, support, increase in youth work capacity in terms of volume and skills of workers

Youth Engagement and Voice (vision statement 2)

Vision statement – Young people are engaged with in an effective, efficient and considerable manner, and their voice helps to shape and influence leisure-time activities and services.

Rationale – There are considerable strengths in Wiltshire in terms of facilitating youth voice and engaging effectively with young people through a range of in person and digital platforms. All partners operating within Wiltshire are keen to ensure that the voice of young people forms an integral part of their strategy and delivery. However, there is potential for greater coordination and collaboration across the system, both in terms of the development of this work and the subsequent intelligence that is gathered.

Actions for the delivery plan

- Increased future planning and coordination of surveys, consultations and youth voice activities and events to avoid duplication.
- Centralised data repository of intelligence from youth voice and engagement activities – will need to ensure GDPR compliance.
- Sharing of best practice youth voice work and inviting one another to contribute to between all partners.

Partnerships and Communication (vision statement 3)

Vision statement – Partners in Wiltshire collaborate and communicate effectively with one another, working with trust and respect for the betterment of young people.

Rationale – There are a range of partners involved in supporting the development of young people and the quality of the collaborative working within Wiltshire will have a significant bearing on the outcomes that young people achieve. There are many success stories in recent years since the COVID pandemic, with partnerships growing in strength, through increased joint initiatives, projects and working groups. However, in some quarters there remains a low level of trust and respect between parties and channels for appropriate communication remain unclear. With resources stretched and at a time of worsening mental health for many young people, the importance of effective collaborative efforts to support early intervention and prevention through leisure-time activities and services has never been more critical.

Actions for the delivery plan

- A collaborative Wiltshire Quality Standards outcomes linked to the local youth offer for young people to be developed that replaces the current Wiltshire Council version (section 7 of the appendix 1).
- Increased collaboration and involvement from wider Wiltshire Council services in identifying and delivering the priorities within the Wiltshire Youth Partnership action plan.

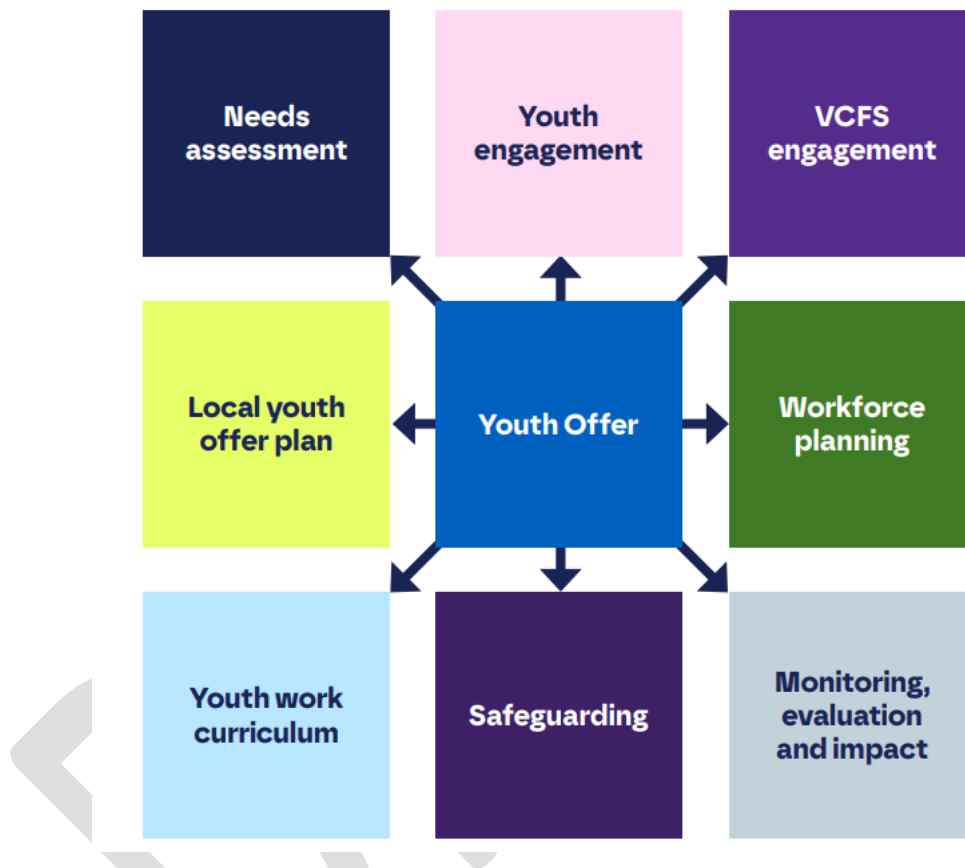
Appendix A

Evidence to support the Wiltshire Youth Framework

The following information has been used to support the development of the Wiltshire Youth Framework.

The document will cover the nine elements of the Local Youth Offer as set out by the National Youth Agency as key to delivering s507b Education Act as issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Figure 1: The nine 'essentials' of a local youth offer



1. Life in Wiltshire for Young People

Wiltshire tends to be perceived as an affluent area and includes many prosperous communities, as a county Wiltshire ranks amongst one of the least deprived areas in England. Wiltshire Council's recent outstanding ratings for OFSTED and Children's Services show Council services are responding well. Many young people will feel well supported and connected in their communities, however, it is also important to recognise that these headlines have the potential to hide the circumstances and challenges some young people experience. The county has pockets of high deprivation, poor accessibility in many rural areas, and despite a strong local voluntary sector providing a range of youth activities, demand is higher than funding and resources allow. Some young people, especially those living in areas of greater deprivation and/ or disadvantage; those experiencing rural isolation and/or poverty with limited access to services, activities and poor local transport; those growing up in families with low incomes; those growing up in transient environments such as military families, traveller communities or young refugees or asylum seeker; those with additional needs; those suffering with poor mental or physical health; those participating in anti-social/risky behaviours, are more likely to find the everyday challenges of being a young person further exacerbated.

Some young people in Wiltshire face a range of challenges linked to socio-economic and educational inequalities, and local and national evidence shows increasing concerns about levels of poor mental health and wellbeing. While Wiltshire's overall rate of deprivation affecting children is lower than the national average, neighbourhoods in some of our towns experience significantly higher deprivation rates. Around 1 in 5 children live in poverty across the county (Source: [Child Poverty Statistics 2023 - End Child Poverty](#)), with notable variation in different areas. These realities create a difficult environment for many children and young people to thrive.

Transport links and isolation are key factors in the lives of rural young people and if not tackled have a negative impact on their emotional health and wellbeing. The cost of fuel has a greater impact in rural communities where cars are not a luxury but a necessity to access employment and often further education. For many communities a lack of local services and facilities means that families who historically may have driven their children to access positive activities are having to make tough choices on their vehicle use and often leisure opportunities are having to be forgone. Barriers to housing is an additional consideration for young people and young families in rural communities.

Educational attainment and opportunities are issues, particularly for disadvantaged young people. There is a strong link between low participation in higher education and persistent youth unemployment. Furthermore, rising numbers of children eligible for Free School Meals and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) exacerbate these disparities. SEND numbers have increased markedly in recent years both nationally and locally. In Wiltshire the numbers of children identified as SEND increased by over 2,000 between 2015 and 2021. Emotionally based school non-attendance also appears to be on the rise, potentially reflecting the growing challenges and poor emotional wellbeing experienced by many young people.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are critical concerns. According to national data, one in five children and young people now have a probable mental health disorder. Locally, the Wiltshire Emotionally Wellbeing Survey (2024) found a substantial increase in stress related to school work since 2017 - affecting over three in five secondary and post-16 students, and sleep disruption due to worry continues to be a concern for over a third of young people, having increased since 2021. For all students, just under half reported that accessing support for emotional wellbeing and mental health at their school/setting was "Quite easy/very easy" with some variation across the ages and on the needs of young people. Identifying with multiple priority groups (of which there were 9 to select from – e.g. ethnic minority, SEND, free school meals, parent/carer in the armed forces) was seen to have an impact on how easy it is perceived to access support, with a higher proportion of those identifying with more priority finding support difficult to access.

Safety and access to services also emerge as key priorities. Youth engagement by the OPCC's Youth Commissioners highlighted serious issues such as knife crime, gang violence, hate crime, and the need for improved relationships with the police. Accessibility remains a challenge, particularly for minority communities, SEND individuals, young carers, and care-experienced young people. This feedback points to a need for co-ordinated, inclusive, youth-oriented activities and services that address these disparities while amplifying the voices and experiences of young people in the region.

The local youth offer goes some way to support young people, particularly those most in need. Young people are able to engage in local positive activities and gain additional support with the knowledge that there is somewhere to go or a youth worker to turn to when they need it. Youth work is increasingly being recognised as 'initial mental health support for young people' so is well placed to support young people to feel connected, supported, so they can develop skills and resilience, engage positively in structured activities and increase their confidence and self-worth, enabling them to be better placed to engage in education, seek training or employment.

2. Youth Engagement and Voice

Engaging with young people and actively listening to their voice is fundamental to ensuring that needs, perspectives and aspirations are reflected in the services and activities that affect them. Additionally, youth engagement fosters ownership and belonging, empowering young people to become active in shaping their communities.

Community led youth model

WC oversees the delivery of the community led youth model, using the 18 [Area Boards](#) as a vehicle to secure positive activities for young people. The Area Boards have access to delegated resources and funding for youth activities in order to develop a responsive and locally driven positive activities offer for young people. The Area Board is responsible for working with local partners, residents and young people to oversee local youth forums, the local needs assessment and undertake direct engagements with young people. Further detail on the local youth model can be found in appendix B.

VCS Youth Engagement

VCS youth organisations and their activities respond to local young people. Youth voice is integral to positive youth work and youth organisations recognise young people are experts on their own lived experience. Young people shape the activities delivered by local groups and clubs as well as undertaking voice work to understand their experiences, needs and aspirations.

Involving young people in decisions that affect them is crucial and fosters ownership and belonging. The VCS through its youth voice work ensures:

- **Relevance:** Delivery that truly address young people's needs.
- **Engagement:** Empowered young people who actively participate.
- **Impact:** Innovative solutions and positive change in Wiltshire.

It is recognised that further mapping of existing VCS youth engagement and voice work is required to better understand the width, breadth, strengths and challenges. This will also enable better collaboration and intelligence sharing into the future, will support the reduction of duplication and increasing the impact of voice work.

Wiltshire Youth Partnership

Involving young people in the next phases of development of the Youth Partnership is a key priority and will help shape the ambitions and activities of the partnership alongside the wider Local Youth Offer in the county. There is aspiration to work with local youth organisations initially to collate existing youth voice intelligence and identify needs, priorities and aspirations and then further explore and test these through future co-production with young people.

Voice and Participation Service

Voice & Participation Services sits within Families and Children's Services and provides a quality assurance and engagement function for children and their families involved in statutory services. This service is separate from operational social work provision and is focused on advocacy, support and challenge to ensure effective provision to children and their families. This enables independent scrutiny and collaboration through restorative challenge and support and independent voice.

Voice & Participation colleagues are responsible for providing independent voice to our children in care and children in need of protection, including their families. Alongside employed advocates and voice

workers the Service supports children and their families by utilizing volunteers, ambassadors and sessional workers to support a variety of activities. These include:

- Supporting and leading Children In Care Council
- Facilitating Youth Council & Youth Democracy
- Managing Mind of My Own & co-ordinating Bright Spots Annual Survey
- Family Voice & Family Advisory Board
- Youth Voice Workers and SEND Voice
- Volunteering & Mentoring – Appropriate Adults, Independent Visitors, Mentors
- Voice Ambassadors – Sessional Workers with lived experience
- Advocacy Provision
- Young Carers Voice & Advocacy
- Youth Justice Service Voice & Panel Members

School wellbeing survey

Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Surveys have been conducted through schools and colleges across Wiltshire for over 40 years. The relatively large number of respondents to recent surveys provides confidence that the findings are broadly representative of young people in Wiltshire. The purpose of the surveys is to gain a better understanding of the experience of school-aged children and young people across Wiltshire both inside and outside school in relation to, for example, healthy lifestyles, risky behaviours like smoking and drinking, and emotional wellbeing. The survey generates data for participating schools to inform their planning and Wiltshire wide reports to shared widely to inform strategic and operational decision making among key partners including local authority, education, health, police and the voluntary sector.

PCC Youth Commission

The OPCC supports the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan by managing The Youth Voice Commission. This involves the creation, facilitation and successful delivery of Youth Independent Advisory Groups (YIAGs), encouraging and engaging representation from all youth communities across Wiltshire, with a focus on 11–25-year-olds.

The Wiltshire and Swindon Youth Commission/ Independent Advisory Group enables young people to influence decisions about policing and crime prevention in Wiltshire. This is achieved by enabling the PCC and force to support young people, including those from underserved or more marginalised groups, to have an active voice and for their views to be listened to and acted on. This learning is used to influence PCC priorities, the Child Centred Policing Strategy and policing practices with the information then shared with partners for their input on the matters discussed.

3. Local Youth Offer

VCS Sector Offer

The main leisure-time youth activity and service provision is provided by a diverse range of VCS organisations, that support young people's personal, social and educational development. Services are often tailored to meet the specific needs of diverse communities, providing opportunities and resources that empower young people. The VCS offer flexible, community-driven approaches to youth engagement by working closely with local communities to ensure activities and services are tailored to the specific needs of young people.

This delivery plays a critical role in preventing young people from needing targeted support, either through the provision of positive (potentially diversionary) activities and also as a signposting service to that additional support when needed. Universal services identify those who are vulnerable or at risk and can enable them to access more opportunities or the appropriate support before reaching crisis point.

However, youth provision in Wiltshire is not consistent across the county, with many VCS organisations facing a challenging operating environment. There are ongoing issues with long-term funding, recruitment, staff training, communication and partnership working with statutory organisations. Additionally, Wiltshire is a challenging county to work within due to its scale, rurality and accessibility. Despite this, VCS organisations in Wiltshire provide a vast array of youth activities to support young people.

Youth Clubs and Youth Cafes

The VCS offer youth clubs, cafes and drop in activity spaces for young people to socialise in a safe and supportive environment, offering them a sense of belonging. Club activities and support from club leaders allow young people to develop skills and build confidence and resilience for the future.

Due to the rural nature of Wiltshire, a number of mobile youth providers additionally deliver services directly to young people through well-equipped vans and buses. Vehicles are stocked with a variety of activities and games, as well as educational materials, sports equipment and often have Wi-Fi and charging points. This provides accessible, flexible support and a safe youth space in remote parts of the county. Many VCS organisations also provide transport to and from activities for young people, who would otherwise struggle to access provision, due to rural isolation or other individual circumstances that reduce accessibility.

Detached and Outreach Youth Programmes

Many VCS organisations provide detached youth work, to engage with young people in their own environments, such as streets or parks as opposed to structured settings. This is predominately delivered in the bigger towns and the city within Wiltshire and often focuses on areas where high volumes of young people congregate. This valuable work builds trust and respect with young people who may have disengaged from traditional services. Detached youth work provides guidance and advice to the young people in a youth focused and non-judgemental way, covering topics such as safety, substance misuse, bullying, education, mental health and employment. In a similar vein, outreach youth work takes place in many parts of the county, where young people will be engaged with by youth workers in their communities and encouraged to access the local settings and local provision that is available to them.

Targeted supported

The VCS provide targeted support to young people to help vulnerable or marginalised young people facing specific challenges. These include mental health issues, SEND, being at risk of, or currently not in education, employment or training (NEET), victims of crime, young carers, homelessness, poverty discrimination or at the risk of victimisation or offending. Services are often tailored to address individual needs, such as mentoring, counselling and skill building programmes. Targeted services support groups such as young carers, young victims of crime, care leavers, LGBTQ+ young people and those with disabilities. The community driven approach empowers young people to achieve their potential, often responding to otherwise unmet needs.

Educational, Skills and Volunteering Development

Many VCS providers offer vocational training, non-formal learning and employability guidance to build career skills like CV writing and interview preparation. Additionally, youth providers often offer homework clubs, literacy programmes and support workshops.

Peer mentoring is another initiative often employed by VCS youth organisations, to place a young person with another similar aged young person who can help them to identify solutions to problems and build resilience. VCS organisations encourage young people to engage in their community & take part in & lead on social action, including elements such as youth leadership, environmental clean-ups, fundraising campaigns, or participating in advocacy initiatives on issues like climate change or social justice.

Health, Wellbeing and Cultural Initiatives

Physical and mental health activities are offered by VCS organisations that supports the wellbeing of young people. These include sports programmes, fitness activities, and wellness workshops and help to build resilience for young people. Creative initiatives such as drama, dance, and photography give young people a platform for self-expression and cultural exploration. These programs celebrate diversity and heritage, fostering a sense of identity and belonging.

The Role of Volunteer-Led Youth Groups

Recent evidence highlights the critical role that local volunteer-led youth groups play in supporting young people, particularly in rural areas like Wiltshire. These groups often operate as the backbone of youth provision, offering safe spaces for young people to engage, learn, and socialise. Despite their importance, the contribution of volunteer-led youth groups is frequently overlooked and undervalued. Research from the National Youth Agency (NYA) shows that 70% of youth work in the UK is delivered by volunteers, yet the infrastructure to support these groups remains limited.

In Wiltshire, this vital work is further challenged by the minimal resources to provide training, safeguarding support, and advocacy. Without adequate funding and recognition, these groups face risks of volunteer burnout and closure, leaving significant gaps in youth provision.

Funding/ financial sustainability

Analysis, using 360Giving, the national database of UK Grant Making, shows that a significant proportion of funding to support local VCS youth organisations and their activities comes from charitable grant making organisations and the Lottery distributing organisations. Whilst this data is not complete, it illustrates the relative scale of investment in youth work from non-statutory sources. Over the last 4 years, over £3.2M has been invested in youth activities in Wiltshire, through over 250 grants. A significant proportion (£1.8M) of this funding came from The National Lottery Community Fund, primarily large grants to larger organisations. £1.4M; including c.£1M (c.200 grants) from Wiltshire Community Foundation; was from other charitable grant-making organisations.

In addition, through the Area Board framework, Wiltshire Council has invested £1.257M into community led projects over the past four years. This funding has supported 505 projects for young people aged 13-19 or up to 25 years old with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The funding is prioritised to projects that support educational or recreational leisure-time activity including arts, sports, leisure and informal education and community based, which helps young people achieve healthy and safe lifestyle outcomes. Wiltshire Council also provides support funding to the Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum, which works across the county to bring organisations together who provide services to children and families.

Wiltshire based organisations work incredibly hard to generate methods that enable sustainability and enhancement of their local youth offer. Many organisations recruit and retain substantial volunteer hours, develop their own diverse fundraising activities, generate traded income opportunities, access central Government grants and compete for commissioned services.

WC has agreed a two-year funding model alongside the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Wiltshire Youth Partnership, hosted by Wiltshire Community Foundation across the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

Targeted Youth Offer

While universal services are sufficient for many young people, a significant minority of teenagers will experience more entrenched problems, such as homelessness, substance misuse, youth crime, teenage parenthood or encounter problems leading to entry into care. Whenever appropriate, targeted youth support should help these young people to settle back into and thrive in universal settings as soon as possible, avoiding a spiralling of need. Targeted youth support aims to ensure that the needs of vulnerable teenagers are identified early and met by agencies working together effectively – in ways that are shaped by the views and experiences of young people themselves.

The Young People's Service is an integrated service area which includes specialist exploitation social workers (the Emerald team), the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and an edge of care offer (the Stronger Families team). This combination of complimentary teams is key to developing our response to the contextual safeguarding and contributing to a targeted youth offer.

Along with its statutory social work functions relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable adolescents, the Emerald team has an interface with missing services, early help, youth crime and the wider partnership agenda relating to child exploitation with the service being at the vanguard of developments in this area including our innovative risk outside of the home (ROTH) framework.

Safer Young People's meetings provide multi-agency oversight of young people, families and contexts associated with extra-familial risk. These partnership meetings bring together professionals and agencies to ensure all appropriate intervention or support in relation to young people, contexts, or locations, is being undertaken and there is a cohesive multi-agency response to understanding context and therefore reducing concerns risks. The meetings are also intended to ensure sufficient management oversight on individual and group interventions, and monitor the effectiveness of interventions, support, outcomes, and impact. These mapping meetings are managed by the Contextual Safeguarding Practice Lead and are attended by multi agency partners including Education, Police, Health and voluntary sector agencies.

The Youth Justice Service is supported and delivered by a partnership made up of Wiltshire Council along with Police, Probation, the OPCC, Health agencies, and groups including the voluntary sector. These organisations come together in partnership with the Youth Justice board to support the service in its work with vulnerable children at risk of offending.

Preventative and diversionary work, using a pre-emptive and minimal intervention approach aims to promote a childhood removed from the justice system and criminogenic stigma is a central tenant of a child first youth justice service which is well embedded across the partnership.

Our prevention offer to families and children is currently funded under the Turnaround project. Turnaround is part of the Government's investment in youth justice services to intervene earlier and prevent children from entering the criminal justice system. The project has a referral pathway and triage process with the Integrated Front door (IFD) and Police early intervention team.

The Young People's Service contributes to a number of partnerships plans and strategies including:

- Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership Plan, especially in relation to anti-social behaviour
- Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership in relation to safeguarding and child exploitation.
- PCC Wiltshire and Swindon's Police and Crime Plan

Key activity of the Children in Care Council (CiCC)

The Voice and Participation Service aims to support and develop the CiCC by building trust, meaningful relationships, and confidence among participants whilst actively engaging them in improving services and enhancing their overall well-being. The CiCC gives young people the chance to have their voice heard about the services that affect them. The CiCC's activities include working with those who provide their services, such as social care and the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Members are encouraged to participate in activities in collaboration with council leisure facilities, community partners, and charities. Experiences are aimed to provide opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and fostering positive and meaningful relationships. Once these skills and relationships have been made this gives the participants confidence to take part in voice and co-production initiatives.

CiCC members actively contributed to improving services by participating in young person interview panels for senior leader positions, ASYE Social Workers, and applicant foster carers. CiCC Members have the chance to meet with Senior Management including Directors and Heads of Service, this occurs quarterly at our thematic 'meet your leaders' sessions. The CiCC Committee produces podcasts to amplify children in care's voices.

Family Hubs

Family Hubs are offered across a host of community venues within Wiltshire, providing support and guidance to all families and young people aged 0 to 19, as well as up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities. Family hubs offer:

- One to one support in the home.
- Parenting advice and groups led by staff and volunteer parents/carers.
- Advice around early learning and help to access services.
- Support from community based 'navigators' who can help with everything from finding sources of support, through to accessing education and returning to work.
- Our digital family hub also offers support to families 24 hours a day.

Leisure and Culture

Wiltshire Council provides a range of leisure time activity opportunities for young people through its leisure, culture and communities services.

- The Holiday Activity and Food Programme provides school children on benefits related Free School Meals access to enriching activities, nutritious meals and healthy eating information during the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays.
- Street Games is a provision of weekly estate-based sport and physical activity opportunities to inactive young people aged 10-25 within Wiltshire communities with high levels of deprivation.
- Ability Sports provides targeted weekly activities and events designed to engage and increase activity amongst young people with a disability.
- The Young Gallery showcases work by young people as part of the Annual Schools Exhibition and provides workshops and learning opportunities based around its historic art collection.

- The gallery additionally hosts photography workshops, ad-hoc free art workshops, offers volunteer opportunities for those over 18 and self-guided trails for younger audiences.
- The Summer Reading Challenge programme encourages children to keep reading and stop the decline in skills over the long holiday.
- Libraries operate as community spokes for the Family Hub programme. Providing access to information for those without the internet to the All Together website and space for local navigators & health visitors to engage with those most in need of support.
- 20 Leisure Centres across the County offer activities to young people through the 16 swimming pools and 18 gyms. Swimming, junior gym, and group exercise classes.
- The Aqualetes swimming lesson programme is available from parent and baby through to competitive swimmers and lifeguards of the future.
- Trampoline and Gymnastics sessions are provided at multiple sites.
- The services offer work experience, apprenticeship and employment opportunities for young people.
- Tailored volunteering and projects for neurodivergent young people e.g. Nationally recognised DigiCreative.
- Home educated & Gypsy Roma, Traveller and Boater young people activities and resources e.g. Rooted in History.
- Holiday activities are provided at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre
- National Heritage Lottery Fund projects for young people
- Explore Wiltshire App provides a wealth of family trails and hunts.

SEND Youth Offer

The Local Offer ([Wiltshire Local Offer - Local Offer](#)) includes all information available for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability. The Local Offer facilitates information regarding services, advice and support as well as leisure time activities.

The Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) coordinates a comprehensive database of social clubs, sports groups, crafts and music activities open to children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability ([Signposting - Leisure & breaks - WPCC \(wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk\)](#)). This includes the Wiltshire Short Breaks scheme that enables eligible children and young people (6-18 years old) who have special educational needs or disabilities additional support to access activities and leisure opportunities. A short break is when a child or young person who has special educational needs and/or disabilities spends supported time apart from their main carer. It provides children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities and leisure opportunities, form friendships, become more independent and enjoy themselves.

Short breaks:

- Take place outside of school hours during the day, evening, overnight, weekends or school holidays and can last from a few hours to full days or overnight.
- Are designed to improve and promote better outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families. Regular consultation and feedback with children and young people, parents and carers help to guide the development and commissioning of short break activities.
- Help parent carers continue to provide the care their child needs by having a break from caring responsibilities.

4. Communication

Communication with young people, families and communities

The All Together digital platform, hosted by Wessex Community Action, acts as the site for storing and sharing information related to the Family Help Offer, including positive activities and support for young people. The platform holds information on a range of community activities, volunteering opportunities and support services available for the entire population, thus enabling young people, families and organisations to utilise one platform regardless of their enquiry. Partners are collaborating to ensure that this platform is built upon as the main communication resource for the Local Youth Offer in Wiltshire.

Communication between partners

There are multiple networks and working groups where partners come together to communicate with one another and where diverse representation is achieved. These include:

- Wiltshire Youth Partnership
- Wiltshire and Swindon Youth Work Network
- FACT
- Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum

5. Workforce planning, training and development

Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership

In the context of the FACT Family Help Strategy, all partners will be able to access a training offer which will include the core elements of the Family Help practice framework (Five to Thrive, Trauma Informed Practice, Understanding Adolescent Development, Emotion Coaching, Motivational Interviewing) as well as more specialist inputs for identified organisations and staff roles. Such specialist inputs will include working with challenging behaviour and one-to-one and group work approaches to parenting support. The offer will also include elements related to the wider context of social mobility, including accessing benefits, financial advice and employment related support.

Role of Wiltshire Youth Partnership/ Youth Action Wiltshire

Future aspirations of the Wiltshire Youth Partnership, include the Youth Capacity Building, Training and Support fund. This has the potential to support development of a comprehensive training offer wider than the current provision, this would respond to the challenges experienced by voluntary youth clubs and groups who struggle to find experienced youth leaders and volunteers. There is also aspiration to increase skills and access to training, increase reach and enable the expansion of youth provision in the county and grow the number and skills of youth workers.

Within the aspirations of the Wiltshire Youth Partnership, is expansion of support to existing groups and support of new ones, some of this support to currently provided by Youth Action Wiltshire, though with limited capacity due to current limited funding.

6. Safeguarding

Wiltshire SVPP brings together those who lead Wiltshire's services to safeguard children, young people and adults. The new arrangements are based on the fact that children, young people and adults live in families and local communities that can be both sources of support and safety or of danger and risk and aims to bring more closely together the work of the Safeguarding Adult Board, the Community Safety

Partnership (CSP) and work to ensure the effectiveness of the systems to support and protect children and young people.

Across the system in Wiltshire there is awareness and agreement that the following needs to be in place for each individual/ organisation:

1. Safer recruitment processes, including DBS checks; induction and supervision
2. Identified designated lead(s) for child protection with appropriate relevant training
3. Single central record of staff and volunteers
4. Safeguarding policy, allegations management processes and code of conduct policy
5. Child protection and Safeguarding training at the level appropriate to posts and roles

7. Monitoring and evaluation

A quality assurance framework is in place within the Community Led Youth Model and has been developed to promote and facilitate efficient and effective youth activities provision for young people.

There are six Quality Standards achieving outcomes for young people:

- Standard 1: Positive activities reflect young people's needs and interests
- Standard 2: Young people are aware of the positive activities available to them
- Standard 3: Young people are helped to achieve positive outcomes through positive activities.
The design, development, delivery and review of positive activities:
- Standard 4: The positive activities offer is planned, developed, delivered and evaluated collaboratively
- Standard 5: Positive activities are inclusive and promote and provide equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity and challenge stereotypes
- Standard 6: Positive activities are safe