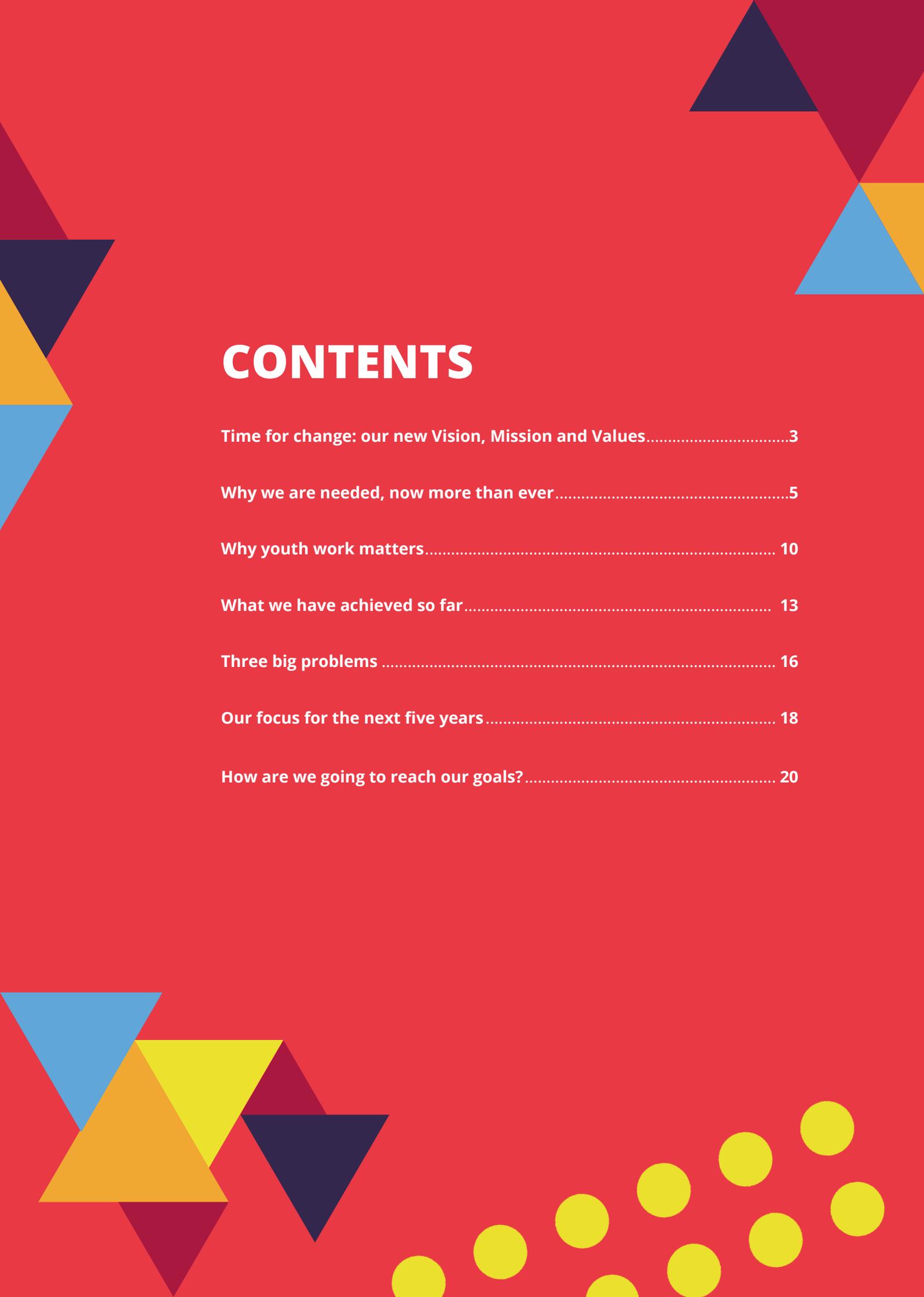




THE POWER OF
YOUTH
WORK

STRATEGY 2023-2028





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Oxfordshire Youth is passionate about creating a future for and with young people that gives them the best possible chance of realising their potential. We are all a force for positive change – every member of our staff team, all the young people engaging with our services, our partner organisations and everybody that trains with us.

In our 75th anniversary year, we are proud to announce the launch of Oxfordshire Youth's Vision, Mission and Values. These organisational touchstones were co-created by young people, frontline employees, office staff, senior managers and trustees. They highlight the common threads interweaving the broad tapestry that is Oxfordshire Youth's work and reflect the dedication and calibre of our amazing staff team and its aspirations for the young people of Oxfordshire.



Jodie Lloyd-Jones
Chief Executive Officer



VISION

A future in which every young person has the skills, support and connections to thrive.

MISSION

Through the power of youth work we transform young people's lives, unite communities and tackle inequality of opportunity.

VALUES

- 1 We listen and respond to the wisdom of young people
- 2 We commit to anti-oppressive practice
- 3 We champion wellbeing
- 4 We prioritise reflection, learning and growth
- 5 We act with integrity and courage
- 6 We make space for innovation and fun!

Our values apply to Oxfordshire Youth as an organisation and to the ways in which we work with colleagues, the sector, partners and young people. Realising our vision depends on youth work practice and on our dedicated approach to partnership working.

Alongside young people, we commit to significantly enhancing the quality, visibility, diversity, influence and impact of our youth participation and youth voice activity across Oxfordshire. We commit to amplifying the voice of marginalised young people in local and national decision-making.

WHY WE ARE NEEDED, NOW MORE THAN EVER

Oxfordshire boasts a fast growing and diverse population. The total population in 2021 (725,300) was 11% higher than in 2011, compared to a national increase across England of 6.6%. In 2021, almost one-in-three people living in Oxfordshire¹ were 25 years old or younger. There were an estimated 146,700 children and young people under 18 years old, and 77,900 18-25-year-olds.

The interests and needs of these young people are complex and diverse. Young people in Oxfordshire need youth work more than ever if we are to ensure that everyone has access to the skills, support and connections they need to thrive.



1. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>



POVERTY AND INEQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

In 2022, 18,200 children and young people in Oxfordshire (aged 0-19 years) were living in low-income families. An estimated 22,900 households were living in fuel poverty; with two-thirds of households classified as 'fuel poor' living in rural areas of the county. Whilst Oxfordshire as a whole ranks within the 10% least deprived places in England², the county contains 17 areas that rank within the 20% most deprived nationally. These areas of multiple deprivations are mostly located within ten wards in three urban areas: Abingdon, Banbury and Oxford. The cost of living crisis in 2022-23 exacerbated an already serious situation for many families with children.

Oxfordshire is also the most rural county in South East England, with young people in rural areas facing specific challenges. They are amongst the most affected by reduced access and face social exclusion, especially in areas where public transport provision is limited.

Income has a direct impact on children's physical and mental health outcomes, as well as future economic outcomes and opportunity. Children and young people living in poverty are 72% more likely than other children to be diagnosed with a long term illness, and research has demonstrated a causal link between child abuse and neglect and the economic circumstances of families. Children living in poverty are more likely than their peers to have low birth weight and poor physical health, and they are at greater risk of obesity, and some chronic conditions.

2. Index of Multiple Deprivation Dashboard, Oxfordshire Insight, 2021

MENTAL HEALTH

Nationally, there was an 80% increase in the number of 15-19-year-olds referred to mental health services over the period 2011-12 to 2016-17 and numbers continue to rise post pandemic. In 2017 one in nine children and young people aged five to 16 had a probable mental health disorder; in 2021 this had increased to one in six. In 2021, one in five young people aged 20 to 22 had a probable mental health disorder. In the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire NHS area, the number of people in contact with NHS children and young people's mental health services alone increased from 4,400 in 2016 to 6,800 in 2021.

This increase in mental health disorders amongst young people is felt across all economic strata. However, NHS data indicates that children and young people under the age of 19 are significantly more likely to have emotional and anxiety disorders if their parents are in receipt of means-tested benefits. A national study in October 2022 found that more than one in four parents said their child's mental health had worsened since the onset of the cost of living crisis, and one in five parents have struggled to provide enough food.³

3. Barnardo's 2022

CHILDREN IN CARE

The number of children in care in Oxfordshire has risen by 85% between 2013 and 2020 compared to a national increase of 18%, and Oxfordshire is struggling to provide adequate care for children and young people within the care system.⁴ The proportion of children entering care due to abuse or neglect in the county increased from 46% to 62% over the same period, and there has been a 60% increase in MASH referrals since the Covid pandemic.⁴ Nationally, 16% of children are found a placement more than 20 miles from their home; in Oxfordshire the proportion is 37%.⁵

The demands placed on care services in the county foreshadow increased demands for supported accommodation for young people aged 18-25. Young people leaving care at 18, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children, are highly vulnerable to homelessness and criminal exploitation. In 2021, 23% of the 792 children in care in Oxfordshire were young people 16-17 years, and 11% had a disability, whilst 10-15 year olds have consistently made up the greatest proportion of children and young people in care. Increasing numbers of children in need and the complexity of those needs, especially amongst older children, are compounded by challenges to recruiting and retaining staff on standard rates of pay given the very high cost of living in the county.

4. National Youth Agency, 2021, "Between the Lines"

5. Oxfordshire County Council, Dec 2021, Commissioning Strategy for Children We Care For Placements 2020-2025

HOMELESSNESS

In 2022 there were an estimated 1,883 homeless households across Oxfordshire.⁶ The situation has been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, and is adversely affecting children and young people living in households already struggling with high levels of deprivation.

Most homeless adults are aged between 30 and 50, but the proportion of homeless young people has increased in recent years.⁷ Oxford city is one of the most unaffordable places to live in the UK, with average house prices 16 times the average annual local income.⁸ In 2022, a two bedroom property in the lowest 25% of rents across Oxfordshire cost 58% more than the national average. Young people aged 16-25 face more insecure employment and discrimination in the housing and labour markets than other age groups, in spite of legislation intended to provide them with more intervention and support to prevent homelessness.

6. JSNA, 2022

7. Oxfordshire County Council, 2019, A health needs assessment of the adult street homeless population in Oxfordshire

8. OCF Oxfordshire Uncovered

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

One in three Oxfordshire school children has a first language other than English (in west Oxfordshire this falls to 6%⁹) and 14.1% of pupils attending state schools in Oxfordshire¹⁰ have a statutory plan of Special Educational Needs (SEN) compared to a national average of 12.3%.

The attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged pupils in the UK is wider now than it was pre pandemic. Low qualifications lead to low pay and unskilled work which reinforces poverty. These impacts are felt over generations – by the time they are 40, the earnings of children born into the poorest third of families are 50% below those born into the richest third. The gap between children from low income families and their affluent peers persists even when controlling for educational outcomes and other background characteristics.

Unemployment across Oxfordshire among 16-24-year-olds was at 3% in 2022, lower than the national average for England (5.8%).¹¹ Rates of unemployment have declined after peaking in 2020 and 2021, but have not yet returned to levels seen pre-pandemic. The percentage of Oxfordshire's care leavers in employment, education or training was below the national average, while the county as a whole boasts levels of employment well above national and regional levels. Young workers from deprived areas of the county are entering the labour force at a disadvantage entirely beyond their control.

9. https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireSchoolCensusDashboard/Dashboard?embed=y;display_count=no&:showVizHome=no#4

10. https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/send-research/local-area-send-report?mod-area=E10000025&mod-group=AllCountiesInCountry_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

11. Oxfordshire Insight

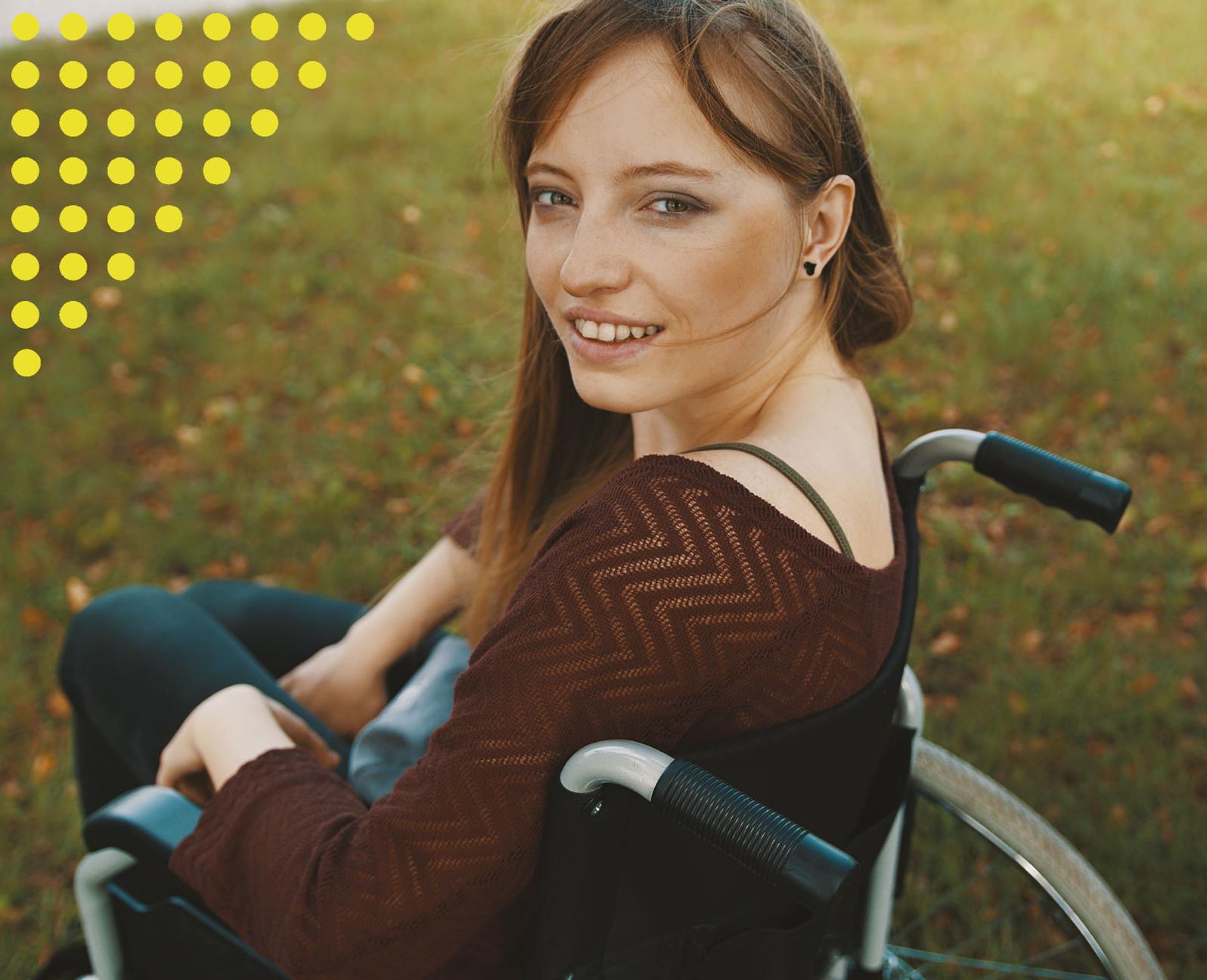
YOUNG CARERS

The Oxfordshire Community Foundation reports that in 2017, there were nearly 2,300 identified young carers and an estimated 12,000 unidentified young carers between the ages of 8 and 24 across Oxfordshire.

Among these young carers, a prevalence of children came from an economically deprived family (46%) or an ethnic minority background (16%).

“Young people need continuity of service. They have been so messed around by the pandemic and their needs have changed greatly in this time, with many struggling to engage with activities or socialise. There is a much higher level of apathy. Delivering youth-led work is harder because young people don't even know what is possible and have a lot less confidence in their abilities and outside agencies to put things in place.”

Respondent, Oxfordshire Youth sector survey



YOUTH WORK IS MORE VITAL THAN EVER

Inequity in Oxfordshire spans rural, economic and social deprivation.

Young people living in rural communities experience a lack of local services and limited transport options, creating barriers to accessing existing provision.

We believe that youth work is for all. We also recognise that young people face many barriers depending on intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class, family dynamics, economic status, location, neurodiversity and disability, amongst other factors. Young carers need access to support that takes into account constraints on their time and resources. Young people with protected characteristics (care leavers, LGBTQIA+, minority groups) need access to services targeting their specific needs, as well as broader open access youth services. We will not stop until every young person has the skills, support and connections they need to thrive. This means that we will target some of our work to provide more equitable opportunities for young people.

WHY YOUTH WORK MATTERS

Young people possess a freedom of imagination and a desire to challenge the status quo. When offered the space and opportunity to receive support and gain skills, they flourish. Young people operate in a world where they have little power to influence the way things are. At school, the focus is on the curriculum and educational achievement, but education is more than this. Young people are diverse. They have diverse learning styles, individual lived experience and huge amounts of untapped potential that may not be recognised in a formal setting.

Youth work is based on dialogue and relationship building. Through group work and relationship building over sustained periods of contact, youth work seeks to enhance the best in every young person in a unique way.

Youth work has traditionally been a partnership with young people. From their origins, voluntary youth organisations have stressed their role in equipping young people to take on responsibility and develop leadership skills. Youth work places young people at the centre of the practice, and youth workers aim to empower young people to overcome the challenges, disadvantages or obstacles that stand in the way of achieving their maximum potential.



There has been an increase in understanding of the risk that school exclusions in the UK pose, and an increase in mental health challenges. It is clear that formal education alone cannot meet the diverse needs of many young people. Through youth work, the youth sector offers informal and non-formal learning in safe learning environments. Through experiential learning, young people can gain essential life skills, build on individual strengths, and explore difficult topics to overcome challenges. The youth sector is a dynamic, flexible and collaborative space. Youth work can take place in schools, on the street, or at the youth club or project, wherever young people are.

A recent survey into the impact of youth work on young people showed that for **two-thirds of respondents, youth work had made a considerable difference to their lives**. The benefits included increased confidence, learning new skills, making decisions for themselves, and feeling more confident about asking for help and information. It also helped them understand people who are different from themselves and it improved their prospects of securing employment.¹²

At the Door Revisited, a longitudinal study by Bob Holman,¹³ showed that **people still reported positive effects 20 years after their involvement in youth work**, from moving away from crime and anti-social behaviours to sharing values and practices with others.

Other research¹⁴ suggests that youth provision has positive outcomes related to developing skills and competencies (including a range of social, emotional and intellectual capabilities), strengthening networks and social capital, and challenging behaviour perceived as risky. These outcomes support young people in the transition to adulthood, and in the longer term are linked to the social building blocks of health such as good education, employment and housing.



WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?

Youth work is a distinct educational process adapted across a variety of settings to support a young person's personal, social and educational development:

- ▶ to explore their values, beliefs, ideas and issues;
- ▶ to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society;
- ▶ to acquire and/or facilitate the learning of a set of practical or technical skills/competencies that enable them to realise their full potential.

NATIONAL YOUTH AGENCY, THE NATIONAL BODY FOR YOUTH WORK IN ENGLAND

12. *The Benefits of Youth Work* report: Layout 1 (cywu.org.uk) Kids

13. *At the Door Revisited*, Bob Holman, Russell House Publishing, 2000

14. How Youth Provision Supports Young People in Building Assets for a Healthy Life

OUR COUNTY

Oxfordshire has a youth sector¹⁵ of considerable size and diversity, working to deliver positive outcomes for young people. The voluntary sector has been the sole provider of youth work in the county for over 15 years. There is a small youth service under Youth Ambition within Oxford City Council, and last year a Targeted Youth Support Service was established within Oxfordshire County Council.

A diverse offering of out of school time engagement opportunities are available throughout the county, including cultural enrichment, sport, social action, general recreation and alternative education, delivered by correspondingly diverse stakeholders.¹⁶

Positive outcomes for young people as a result of youth work interventions and services include: employability, lessening of deprivation, improved mental health, access to positive activities, safeguarding and lowering the risk of homelessness, crime and exploitation. In 2016, it was estimated that £14m was spent through the youth sector providing activities outside of school, with more than 50,000 opportunities for engagement on offer across the county. Such activities are delivered by a very diverse group of stakeholders,

An *Assessment of Youth Services* in Oxfordshire in 2020 found the quality of services on offer to be of a high standard but patchy in geographical distribution and inadequate to meet demand.¹⁷ Lack of funding, particularly unrestricted funding for core costs, continues to be a major barrier faced by organisations across the sector. The number offering open provision was impacted by COVID-19, and further barriers to expanding the offer include a lack of early intervention, a lack of awareness of what services are available, as well as a lack of diversity and inclusive approaches to ensure youth work offerings are relevant and attractive to young people across the county. A significant challenge for the sector has been training and recruitment in order to ensure a steady supply of qualified and experienced workers, able to staff and support the growth of the sector across the county. Skilled staff with street knowledge who can engage with young people through detached youth work approaches outside of any formal setting are highly valued by both adults and young people. The lack of a career progression pathway for youth workers is seen as a significant problem for the sector as a whole.

The move towards a more targeted approach to youth work in the county has led to a change in the way that youth work is perceived. A focus on one-to-one solutions is associated with reduced availability of a more traditional open offer. This has led to a reduction in contact with trusted adults, positive role models and safe spaces for a wider population of young people, and increasing vulnerability to exploitation. Recognising the importance of ensuring that the offer stays relevant and is engaging, it is essential to build the voice of young people into everything that is created to support them.



15. Oxfordshire Youth defines 'youth sector' as the voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people aged 8-25

16. *Increasing Impact in the Oxfordshire Youth Sector*, Youth Partnership Board, 2016

17. Oxfordshire Youth, 2020

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE YOUTH SECTOR IN OXFORDSHIRE

41 youth clubs

have been set up with the support of **Oxfordshire Youth** over the past 10 years, offering youth work activities for young people across Oxfordshire.



1000+

staff and volunteers from the youth sector have been **trained each year** in areas such as youth work, mental health, youth participation and voice, first aid, safeguarding and much more.



98% of staff and volunteers

trained by Oxfordshire Youth each year report that they **feel better equipped to support young people.**

96%

have reported that they **feel supported as part of a peer-to-peer network.**



4000+

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

for the youth sector have been administered by Oxfordshire Youth over the last five years.



400+

professionals

from voluntary and statutory youth services, schools and the public sector **attend our annual Youth in Mind conference.**



OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON YOUNG LIVES



Youth organisation network

Through our network of over 150 youth organisations, we have collectively reached an average of 26,000 young people annually.

Supported accommodation

More than 220 young people have been provided with supported accommodation since October 2020.

Leadership and life skills

Last year over 1,300 young people gained leadership and life skills through our direct work with them, this was an increase from 300 young people in 2020.

Self-confidence

An increase in self-confidence has been one of the most consistent outcomes reported by young people attending our programmes.

Young Leaders Programme

100% of participants in our Young Leaders Programme report feeling confident in motivating others and in their teamwork skills.

92% felt confident about decision-making and communicating with others.

Transitions Through Leadership Programme

In just two years, our Transitions Through Leadership Programme has supported more than 1,300 young people with their transition from primary to secondary school.

Youth Awards

Over 200 young people were nominated for a Youth Award, and over 2,000 people attended our last two Youth Awards events to celebrate young people's achievements.

Mental Health Ambassadors Programme

Over 80% of participants in our Mental Health Ambassadors Programme reported an increase in their capacity to manage their own mental health.

"Being able to work alongside eight other ambassadors over the past 11 months has been a real highlight. I love the group and the way we work – I think it's perfect. I've tried to work in the past but my anxiety has got in the way, so volunteering is a good stepping stone for me. The project has helped me get out of my safe zone and I have learnt so much from the other Mental Health Ambassadors."

Callum, Mental Health Ambassador, 2021

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON SYSTEM CHANGE



In 2020, we secured the contract for delivering a **Young People's Supported Accommodation service** in Oxfordshire. The move-on rate – the number of young people successfully moving into independent housing – increased from 17% under the previous arrangements to 38% under Oxfordshire Youth, within two years of us taking on the service with our housing partner, Response.



In 2022, we were awarded **three year funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation** to deliver on our commitment to an innovative approach to youth participation and youth voice in Oxfordshire.



Our annual **Youth in Mind conference** is the only space in Oxfordshire where education, the public sector and the voluntary sector come together to challenge the status quo around children's and young people's mental health.

An investment in the youth sector is in turn an investment in young people.



"Youth in Mind was a triumph: meticulous planning and timing, great variation, pace and content, really stimulating and the best networking opportunity for the third sector that I have seen in 10 years as Lord Lieutenant."

Tim Stevenson OBE, Former Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire

THREE BIG PROBLEMS

In order to have the greatest impact on the lives of the young people we serve and to help us decide where to focus our energies over the next five years, we have been working hard to understand where our strengths lie and which main problems we should seek to address. In our aim to be more data driven, we have been meticulous in carrying out desktop research and understanding secondary data across the UK and in Oxfordshire, and we have carried out our own research and consultation with young people and the youth sector in Oxfordshire.

PROBLEM

1

Young people do not have equitable access to:

- ▶ safe spaces
- ▶ trusted adults
- ▶ opportunities to successfully transition into adulthood
- ▶ resources that support social and economic wellbeing.

Without anyone or anywhere to go to with problems or issues, things escalate and worsen. High quality youth work can address many needs.

PROBLEM

2

Services are struggling to provide the support that young people need to thrive due to:

- ▶ too much emphasis on silo working
- ▶ lack of investment into prevention work
- ▶ insufficient resource across sectors to embed trauma-informed approaches
- ▶ lack of resources for system change
- ▶ structural oppression not being sufficiently addressed.

The impact of inequalities in Oxfordshire on young people's life chances is unjust. We know that collaboration and strategic partnerships facilitate early intervention and prevention, and power positive change.



PROBLEM

3

Many young people are disengaged and do not feel heard

- ▶ Young people feel isolated.
- ▶ Not enough value is placed on the contribution they make to society.
- ▶ Young people do not have access to provision of skills for work and life that meet their individual and diverse needs.
- ▶ Young people are not in positions of power or able to influence change in their own lives and their communities.

This is particularly acute for those growing up in areas of economic deprivation and rural isolation and experiencing the adverse effects of discrimination.

Oxfordshire Youth has over 75 years of experience and expertise in youth work. We are committed to learning and growing and we understand that we need to be nimble and adaptable to a changing society and the changing needs of young people. We are experts in youth work, in youth participation, and in listening and responding to the youth sector in Oxfordshire and acting in partnership with them. Hence our mission: Through the power of youth work, we transform lives, unite communities and tackle inequality of opportunity.

We flourish in meaningful partnerships, as we know we cannot achieve all this alone. Our partnerships with the youth sector, with values-led businesses and with public sector organisations are where our work comes alive. We love bringing people together and we are good at it too. Our strategy is about how we harness our experience and our expertise to make the greatest impact.

OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

PROBLEMS

1 Young people do not have equitable access to safe spaces, resources, and support from trusted adults

STRATEGIC GOALS

YOUTH WORK

Young people are accessing high quality youth work and youth work practices that meets their needs

2 Services are struggling to provide the support young people need to thrive

SYSTEM CHANGE

Outcomes for young people are improved through meaningful cross-sector partnerships

3 Many young people are disengaged and do not feel heard

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Young people are actively engaged with their communities

Through the power of youth work, we transform young people's lives, unite communities, and tackle inequality of opportunity

PROGRAMME GOALS

- 1** Qualified and knowledgeable youth sector, trained in youth work and youth work practices
- 2** Youth work available in a range of settings for at-risk and under-represented communities, meeting diverse needs
- 3** Access to resources and safe spaces improving reach of youth work among communities across Oxfordshire
- 4** Youth work recognised as a vital contributor to young people's personal and social development
- 5** Increased diversity of opportunity for young people as a result of cross-sector partnerships
- 6** Changes in systems and practices across public and voluntary sectors
- 7** Enhanced opportunities for young people to lead in their communities and to be recognised for their contribution to society
- 8** Young people are building meaningful connections and improving their wellbeing
- 9** Young people have opportunities to develop skills to engage in education, employment and training

HOW ARE WE GOING TO REACH OUR GOALS?

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Young people are benefiting from access to high quality youth work and youth work practices

PROGRAMME GOAL 1

Qualified and knowledgeable youth sector, trained in youth work and youth work practices

- 1 Train and develop** volunteers and youth workers in Oxfordshire.
- 2 Review and launch a new offer of tiered support** to youth organisations.
- 3 Improve the retention of youth workers** through cross-sector wellbeing support.
- 4 Work together with young people in the development and innovation of youth work practices and services**, to keep youth work responsive to the needs and interests of young people.
- 5 Role model best practice youth work** through the roll out of the youth competencies framework.
- 6 Review and improve communication platforms** for the youth sector in Oxfordshire, including Sector Insider.
- 7 Secure Youth Work Apprenticeships** working in Oxfordshire Youth.

PROGRAMME GOAL 2

Youth work available in a range of settings for at-risk and under-represented communities, meeting diverse needs

- 1 Integrate youth work** into the delivery of supported accommodation for young people at risk of homelessness.
- 2 Provide targeted youth work support** to typically at-risk and under-served young people.



- 3 **Deliver tailored support for organisations** working with at-risk and under-served communities, including children in care, care leavers, young caregivers, young people living with a disability, black and ethnically diverse young people and LGBTQIA+, or those located in rural and economically deprived locations.
- 4 **Assess diverse needs and barriers to youth work** caused by inequalities among different communities and among young people in Oxfordshire, and disseminate a youth work and diversity report among key partners.
- 5 **Review OY's existing training and workshops** to incorporate EDI practices and principles.

PROGRAMME GOAL 3

Access to resources and spaces improving the reach of youth work among communities across Oxfordshire

- 1 **Establish Centres for Youth Innovation** in Oxford and Banbury and potentially beyond.
- 2 **Publish and distribute the Oxfordshire Youth in Mind Guide biennially.**
- 3 **Support fundraising** for the sector.
- 4 **Offer a strengthened back office function** to sector partners in Oxfordshire.
- 5 **Administer youth work accreditations and qualifications** for the sector.
- 6 **Develop and integrate 'digital' into youth work practice and programmes.**

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Outcomes for young people improved through strategic and cross-sector partnerships

PROGRAMME GOAL 4

Youth work recognised as a vital contributor to young people's personal and social development

- 1 Maintain and strengthen partnerships** with cross-sector partners.
- 2 Disseminate annual Impact and Power of Youth Work reports**, showcasing the work and impact of Oxfordshire Youth and its partners.
- 3 Increase the attendance and participation of key leaders** from the sector in our events (Youth in Mind, Youth Awards, Youth Work conference) raising the profile of youth work and young people.
- 4 Create and initiate a long-term campaign** about the power of youth work as prevention, including a plan for educating press, government, corporates and key leaders in the community.
- 5 Develop and implement a new social media strategy** that showcases the reach and impact of the youth sector.
- 6 Deliver annual celebration of Youth Work** during National Youth Work Week – Monday 6th to Sunday 12th November 2023.

PROGRAMME GOAL 5

Increased diversity of opportunities for young people as a result of cross-sector partnerships

- 1 Cultivate partnerships with local and national businesses** to promote opportunities for young people. Galvanise business support for Oxfordshire Youth and youth work in the county.
- 2 Initiate annual events and opportunities** for educators and youth workers to understand each other's practices.
- 3 Integrate youth work practices into professional development** in related sectors such as teacher training.
- 4 Increase opportunities to lead, present, meet and facilitate small events** across the voluntary, private and public sectors to raise the profile of youth work.

PROGRAMME GOAL 6

Changes in systems and practices across public and voluntary sectors resulting in better long-term outcomes for young people

- 1 Identify and address key systems and practices** requiring change in our core areas of youth voice, mental health, homelessness prevention, sector support and education, employment and training.
- 2 Promote the role of youth work** in supported accommodation and the prevention of homelessness, building relationships across public and voluntary sectors and establishing a leading role.
- 3 Create a new youth network for the sector led by youth voice**, with young people and adults engaged and influencing change.
- 4 Continue to strengthen C&YP's Forum** and co-create a sector strategy for children and young people in Oxfordshire to strengthen the voice of the voluntary and community youth sector.
- 5 Advocate for the vital role that the not-for-profit sector plays** in tackling the mental health crisis affecting children and young people.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Young people actively engaged with their communities

PROGRAMME GOAL 7

Enhanced opportunities for young people to lead in their communities and to be recognised for their contribution to society

- 1 Support the Youth Voice Network** to develop skills, confidence and self-esteem.
- 2 Support young people to share their views** in different contexts and through different platforms on key topics affecting them.
- 3 Host biennial, youth-led events** that display and celebrate the contributions and talents of young people across the county.
- 4 Host biennial, youth-led events** connecting young people with statutory, voluntary and business leaders in their communities to build local as well as county level connections and communication channels.
- 5 Celebrate young people monthly through OY's media channels** and create spaces to demonstrate their contribution.



PROGRAMME GOAL 8

Young people are building meaningful connections and improving their wellbeing

- 1 Enhance, develop and deliver issues-based workshops** for young people about challenges they are facing that:
 - a. develop resilience, empathy, and kindness
 - b. consider the significance of wellbeing
 - c. introduce coping methods to help with loneliness and anxiety
 - d. increase self-awareness and empower participants to contribute to their own wellbeing
 - e. consider the needs and experiences of others.
- 2 Weave fun, positive activities** throughout all direct delivery with young people, promoting awareness of what activities are available in their area and keeping them well.
- 3 Build resources** and access to online programming for young people.
- 4 Source funding** for young people in our targeted programmes to access therapeutic support.

PROGRAMME GOAL 9

Young people have opportunities to gain skills for education, employment and training

- 1 Develop new programmes** that focus on enhancing life skills (e.g. financial literacy, digital literacy).
- 2 Strengthen OY's existing programmes** (leadership, teamwork, employability, independent living) with accreditations (A.Q.A., I.L.M.), an E.D.I. lens, a digital lens and a youth work lens.
- 3 Develop partnerships** across the county to increase targeted support for young people who are not in education, employment or training.
- 4 Increase resources and training** linked to businesses and entrepreneurship for young people through the centres for youth innovation.

We have one more strategic goal. This is about Oxfordshire Youth being equipped long-term to realise its mission...



STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Oxfordshire Youth is a sustainable, innovative and inclusive organisation.

PROGRAMME GOAL 10

To develop a culture of inclusion, innovation, and continuous learning

- 1 Invest in continued professional development** to promote career development pathways and maintain staff retention.
- 2 Continue to embed OY values** throughout OY's work.
- 3 OY's youth work** competency framework and training to be embedded and evaluated.
- 4 Implement the OY Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy** consistently across all programmes, and increase decision-making informed by data and impact, as well as through the views of young people and the sector.
- 5 Promote a culture of wellbeing** and strengthen OY's anti-oppressive practice through training and effective intervention.
- 6 Source funding** to bring in additional resource to enhance OY's E.D.I. work each year.

PROGRAMME GOAL 11

To build a financially stable Oxfordshire Youth for the future with plans for further investment and growth

- 1 Design and implement a new three-to-five year income generation strategy.**
- 2 Ensure sustainable growth** through an increase in forecast income of secure funds over multiple years.
- 3 Continue to strengthen OY's financial management.**
- 4 Agree on a strategy to increase assets** within the organisation through property ownership.
- 5 Continue to strengthen the business partner model** between finance and fundraising.
- 6 Grow the reserves** further each year.

FINALLY...

A decade of devastating cuts for the public and voluntary sectors has turned back the clock on much of the progress made in improving the lives of children and young people in the UK.

At Oxfordshire Youth, we are committed to delivering on our promise to support young people in the face of the impact of these cuts, the impact of the pandemic on a generation of young lives, and the impact of the economic crisis that is deepening social divides.

We see a different way forward. And that is through the expansion and growth of a movement powered by youth work, bringing together the energy and agency of young people and the systems and organisations that work with them, to ensure that no young person is left behind.

Our vision is a future in which every young person has the skills, support and connections to thrive.







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