

Sheffield City Council Youth Services Strategy

2022-2025

*Safe, creative, ambitious Community Youth Services
where all young people in Sheffield can thrive*



Forewords

Cllr Terry Fox, Leader of Sheffield City Council

“I am increasingly impressed by our Sheffield Young Residents, every time I meet young people I see talent, warm hearts, and joy. Our young Sheffielders are incredibly spirited, and they have stories to tell!

This, Sheffield Community Youth Services strategy is the city councils first in over two decades, it is symbolic in its time - we are saying, very clearly, we are listening to all of our young residents throughout our city, we hear the valuable contributions made and we see you.

In this strategy we have set out clear ambitions for partnerships, safe working practice, development of excellent practice and amplifying our young residents’ democratic expressions. We want to make sure that we have clear support networks for all young people.

We want Sheffield as a city to be ambitious for its young residents. We want to know all our young people have opportunities and can achieve. We want to make sure all our young residents know that they can be kept safe in their communities and that they are seen for their positive and active contributions.

Essential to this will be all services, organisations, communities, and young people working together to lead and guide what happens next. Asking ourselves the questions, are we feedback ready? Are we contemporary? Do we know what young people actually want?

We have set ourselves the task, the challenge and we have the ambition for all Young Sheffielders to make it work in the right way for them.”

Muneerah, Sheffield Youth Cabinet Elected Member Northeast Local Area Committee

“Sheffield, as a city and a community, has a responsibility to ensure we, young residents, have access to support when they need it. Community based Youth Services must be available and widespread. This development of community youth work provision means young people can have access to adults we can trust and activities that are relevant, helping us to understand and grasp important life skills such as employment, managing our mental health, social skills and having our voices heard. In this youth strategy, it is essential we hear from young people of all backgrounds to see what needs to be improved and where; this strategy commits to a Biennial Youth Survey so young people are always part of the decisions and we check in every two years.

One of the key areas of my election manifesto was looking to reduce knife crime and antisocial behaviour. Young residents are open about their fears on our streets. Sheffield Youth Cabinet are pleased to see that there are going to be more community based youth activities, accessible to all, throughout the city, especially providing our most vulnerable peers with a safe space indoors and safe adults to talk to.

This strategy gives us an opportunity for young residents to engage and generate solutions, informally, around key topics that need to be discussed, without this we risk young residents in Sheffield being on the edges of our Sheffield society, unheard when making decisions and only seen when considered a problem. Young Sheffielders contribute a great deal to their communities, this is our chance to stand out positively in our communities and city.”

Youth Services in Sheffield

Background

Sheffield is England's fourth-largest city with a population of over 569,000 and an economy worth over £11.3 billion with a rich history of industry, enterprise and technological innovation.

At the very core of Sheffield's future development, success and long-term prosperity are its young people. Sheffield is ambitious for its young people and our aim is to be one of the best cities for young people to live by 2025, and young people will be at the heart of this ambition.

In Sheffield, it is estimated that there are 132,000 young people aged between 10 and 24¹. This is over 22% of the city's population.

Disinvestment nationally in youth services has seen the decline in the youth work profession to the extent that, currently, no further education college or university in Sheffield provides a youth work qualification or training facility.

When Youth Services was brought back in house, affordability limited provision to just 49 sessions for the city which does not provide citywide coverage or adequate staffing numbers and the youth facilities, in most cases, are not fit for a modern youth offer.

Engagement with young people has been patchy and there is a need to develop the pathways to engage with young people and to give them voice and influence over the services they want.

This strategy demonstrates our intention to invest in, and improve the youth service and to broaden our partnership with organisations across the city.

The future of Youth Services

Sheffield is committed to providing an outstanding youth offer outside formal education, ensuring there are trusted adults, mentors and/or youth workers to provide consistent professional guidance, advice and support to enable access to a wide range of leisure, educational, cultural experiences and activities.

It will connect support across a wide range of provision based on the needs of young people i.e., school/college and training, employment support and advice, safeguarding, youth justice, education, family support, and health, including mental health.

It focuses resources on the specific needs of young people (age 10 - 24) supporting their journey into successful young adulthood and the rest of their lives.

Provision will be embedded in communities so that it is responsive to, and driven by, local needs and the diversity of our city and co-produced with young people themselves.

Young people will be defined by their contributions, aspirations, and talents rather than being defined by problems or deficits.

Our city-wide approach will be developed through partnerships with key stakeholders including young people themselves, internal services, Voluntary, Community and Faith sector and statutory partners and delivered using a mixed model through a combination of SCC youth workers and investing in VCF and other partner led activities for young people at a local level.

Most importantly, young Sheffielders will be at the heart of everything we do ensuring their voices are heard and influential, and that their needs are met through multi agency and strength-based approaches.

Our vision is to offer safe, creative, ambitious Community Youth Services where all young people in Sheffield can thrive

Our vision will ensure Young Sheffielders can achieve their goals and ambitions and benefit from the future economic prosperity of the city.

They will contribute to, and benefit from, supportive and dynamic neighbourhoods with access to a wide range of youth, leisure, cultural and recreational opportunities.

Their voice and citizenship will continue to be at the heart of everything we do as a city, recognising that our young Sheffielders are the future of the city economically, socially, and culturally.

Our vision supports and aligns with the commitments of the One Year Plan, supporting young people in Sheffield to develop and flourish

We will invest into Youth Services in Sheffield, working with Local Area Committees and young people to identify locally tailored opportunities.

We will increase Community Youth sessions from one to three sessions per ward per week

Our Youth Strategy for the city will be a live strategy, co-produced with young people, which will continuously evolve to reflect new learning and practice.

We will develop an annual activity plan that will detail what services we will deliver and when and how we will deliver them. Our strategy and progress against the annual activity plan will be monitored by the Youth Partnership.

The Youth Partnership will include a minimum of 25% of young people as members and will hold our services to account to ensure we are delivering the right services in the right way for the young people in the city.

We will work with schools, further education and youth services to ensure that young people have post-16 educational, employment and training opportunities.

In 2025:

- Young people will have access to safe, ambitious and creative youth provisions where they live
- Young people will have access to safe, professional and contemporary specialist intervention services that are 'in touch' with their needs.
- Young people will feel connected, and their communities will have knowledge to notice and the confidence to report harm early
- Young people in Sheffield will be employment ready, aspiring to achieve what 'THEY' think is right for their interests and themselves.

Who are Community Youth Services?

Community Youth Services is made up of a number of youth engagement services that seek to support young people where they are at. This means that, unlike other services, we work with the young person first and apply their self-agency as our starting point. Young people lead the support they receive and determine their own objectives to help them to achieve their goals.

Fundamentally, we are community based. We offer youth provisions which are delivered directly in communities. Youth voice is a core value in our work to make sure we are delivering services to young people that are relevant to their needs.

Universal Community Youth Services:

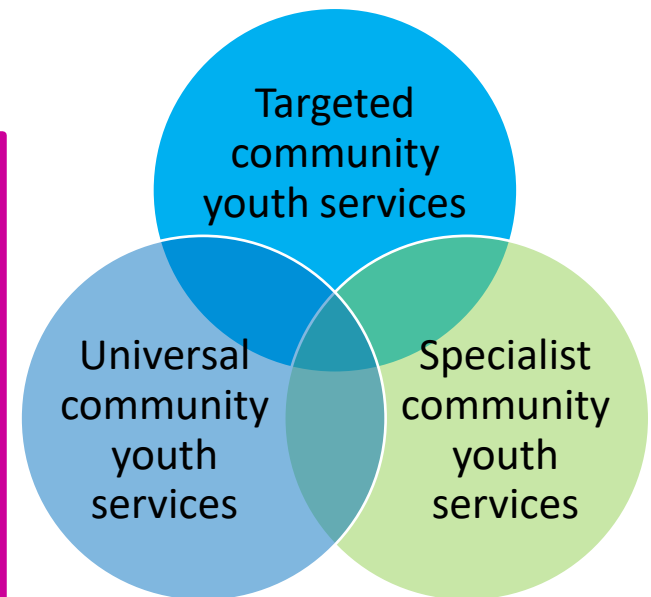
Mostly, this work consists of youth work provisions such as Youth Clubs, Detached Youth Work, Groupwork and Partnership e.g. football. This work does not require any referral, young people can access this in their communities if they wish.

Targeted Community Youth Services:

Most of this work is referral based or has a statutory requirement such as Information, Advice and Guidance support who also offer Careers advice. Our Community Youth Teams offer a multi-disciplinary support program to young people acknowledging signs of support before the need to consider specialist engagement.

Specialist Community Youth Services:

This work focuses on high need and statutory requirements such as young people who go missing from home, who have been or are involved in Sexual Exploitation or being harmed by similar contextual risks in their communities. This work also forms the Child Sexual Exploitation work for the Amber Service



Youth Voice - what young people want



Our Strategic Goals

- Sheffields shape services
- Thriving and resilient young Sheffields
- Ambitious, relevant and connected leadership
- Understanding trends, delivering quality, evidencing impact
- Confident, skilled and contemporary workforce

Sheffielders **shape services**

Youth Services in Sheffield are committed to the authentic engagement of all age Sheffielders in the design and delivery of our services. Young Sheffielders and their communities, recognising this isn't always locality, leading the way for design and development will be essential to make sure we are effectively responding to the needs of young people in communities.

To consistently and authentically engage all stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of Community Youth Services.

To enhance the knowledge and skills of communities to recognise the earliest signs of harmful behaviour and exploitation of young people.

To consult with Young Sheffielders to regularly understand their lived experiences and self-determined needs for intervention and universal support.

To carry out a biennial survey of Young Sheffielders informing key design in all areas of SCC

City wide and collaborative Youth Role Models programs supporting citizen and peer led responses to the needs of Young Sheffielders

Joined up youth voice platforms through the further development of the Youth Partnership, empowering young people to have a say about matters most important and relevant to them.

We will:

- Develop an Annual Activity Plan in April each year to detail what services we will deliver and when and how we will deliver them
- Embed provision in communities so that it is responsive to and driven by local needs and the diversity of our city, and co-produced with young people themselves
- Allocate a **named Youth Worker** to each Local Area Committee by end June 2022.
- Allocate a **budget for each Local Area Committee** for community led design and partnership development in April each year.
- Hold **quarterly Youth Partnership meetings** that will hold us to account
- Hold an **annual city-wide Youth Partnership conference**
- Model service delivery **based on best practice** and the needs of young people and the communities in which they live

Thriving and resilient young Sheffielders

Exciting, contemporary, and holistic services contribute to thriving and resilient young people. Community Youth Services will offer a program of ambitious service and support to young people in Sheffield that enables them to achieve to their full potential. Our work will support all young people needing any developmental community-based support from universal engagement to specialist provisions.

Young Sheffielders will have access to a thriving and innovative program of universal community-based activities of informal education.

A vibrant service offer will ensure safe mobility for young people between communities encouraging positive relationships based on common creative interests and social action.

Young Sheffielders will have consistent access to highly trained and committed specialist workers to enable support from trusted adults for those that need additional intervention and support.

Young Sheffielders will determine their own life goals and through tailored support will be enabled to widely aspire for safe opportunities with high-quality information, advice and guidance.

Community Youth Services will continue to strive for proportionate engagement from underrepresented groups ensuring high quality, well-informed, and inclusive and accessible provisions.

All young Sheffielders will be empowered and, where needed, supported to celebrate their chosen identities and beliefs

We will:

- Increase the number of Community Youth sessions from one to a minimum of three in each ward per week.
- Invest in youth facilities across the city to make them safe, secure and with the right equipment to meet young Sheffielders' expectations of modern, contemporary, welcoming spaces.
- Commission specialist **speech and language** services and **SAYIT LGBTQIA+** work.
- Invest in **digital inclusivity** and support digital access to youth engagement including 'open access digital provision' e.g. safe gaming networks, podcasting and online youth clubs for those where circumstances do not allow real time engagement.
- Providing funding to **grow provision through partnerships with VCF** locally.
- **Increase access to activities** for young people - local activity, city activity (leisure, cultural etc), residential activities and trips.
- Ensure young people have consistent **access to trusted adults** or mentors and/or youth workers to provide professional guidance, advice and support

Ambitious, relevant, and connected leadership

We recognise there is a significant need for positive collaboration, innovation and trend setting for youth services in Sheffield. To achieve this, we must ensure that we work proactively and inclusively with all stakeholders, being bold and dynamic together to recognise local strengths in communities to keep young people safe. Enabling young people, through their own advocacy, to aspire to achieve their own chosen potential.

To ensure a proactive presence in strategic decision making; adopting a solution focused and collaborative work model.

To develop a clear communications strategy to consider the wider community messaging and stakeholder engagement to ensure all are well informed and engaged in the earliest of help and its progress.

To ensure a clear and coherent strategic understanding of the challenges and strengths in Sheffield communities, working with; Young People,

key stakeholders, and Local Area Committees to design and co-deliver responses that add value to the universal program.

To further develop, with key decision makers, stakeholders and elected members, the city-wide Youth Partnership to respond to the self-identified needs and lived experiences of Young Sheffielders.

To, as requested by young people, lead as "good leaders" – leading by example and with young people. To act on our commitments and if unable to, feedback why this cannot be achieved.

We will:

- Identify and invest in collaborative partnership co-delivery with stakeholders and partners
- Develop a city-wide approach through partnerships with key stakeholders including young people themselves, VCF partners and statutory partners such as the NHS and the Police.
- Deliver a mixed model through a combination of SCC youth workers and **investing in VCF led activities** for young people at a local level.
- **Authentically listen to, and clearly communicate** with, Young People, partners, and Local Area Committees to identify the challenges and strengths of communities throughout the city.

Understanding trends, delivering quality, evidencing **impact**

Understanding the lived experience of young people in their communities is essential to delivering relevant and high-quality services. We cannot take for granted the modern world young people now engage with, we need to be relevant to young people in order to effect positive influence and change. To achieve this we must be relevant, engage with young people, understanding and mapping trends and supporting young people to recognise what they have achieved.

Ensuring high quality, relevant and contemporary provisions that can demonstrate significant impact on the quality of life for Young Sheffielders to live in their communities safely.

Ensure ambitious, confident, and clear 'inspection readiness' informed by young people's lived experiences and youth proofed by them

Demonstrate vigilance to the changing trends of young people and spot early signs of concern and monitor this.

Demonstrate the value of Information, Advice and Guidance with retrospective case studies and feedback from those who have left the service.

Proactively seek external funding opportunities and partnerships to test new ideas and develop new practice and thinking to benefit Young Sheffielders in their communities.

Evidence universal impact and demonstrate the contribution that a universal youth service makes on wider community cohesion.

We will:

- Develop and invest in provision that is based on the National Youth Agency (NYA) National Youth Work Curriculum.
- Aspire to the NYA Quality Mark, built on the National Occupational Standards for youth work, to explore ways to develop and provide youth work to the highest possible standard.
- Engage in **external and peer review** of our services to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our communities.
- Seek out **additional external funding**, including Central Government funding to implement the 'National Youth Guarantee' that ensures every young person will have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home and opportunities to volunteer.
- Proactively **monitor service delivery** performance standards through a range of measures to ensure the service is always 'inspection ready'.

Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce

In Sheffield youth services and youth support must be 'in touch' with the emerging themes young people present. We must be strong in identifying responses that enable and empower young people as early as we can, and we have a duty of care to support the wellbeing and needs of our staff both emotionally and to achieve their own career progression goals.

Wellbeing

Promote wellbeing activities and wellbeing offers e.g. mindfulness, free swim and alternative meeting arrangements such as walking lunch and screen free time.

Active implementation of national good practice for staff such as no consecutive evening work patterns (4 in 5 approach) with balanced Time off.

Training

Provide comprehensive professional training and development programs for staff and volunteers

Postgraduate opportunities – apprenticeships.

Responsive Training - CSE, Trauma, AMBIT.

Development

Provide regular supervision, appraisal and team meetings and access to non-managerial supervision and SCC coaching offers

Encourage and identify champions for thematic areas to actively encourage innovation

Support attendance at national conferences to learn from best practice

Vision and Reflection

Hold an annual Sheffield Youth Partnership conference

Practice Weeks and inspection readiness work

Data and evidence-based learning

We will:

- Invest in a comprehensive, cross-service training and development programme for SCC staff and voluntary sector youth workers to ensure there is a nationally recognised standard for all youth work across the city, modernise practice delivery and build sustainable capacity across the youth sector
- Invest in ongoing **Continuing Professional Development** for our staff
- Develop our staff to have the **skills and confidence** to deliver effective and innovative youth work.
- Identify **best practice** across the youth sector including bringing in national and international experts in Youth Work.
- Implement '**practice weeks**' to road-test new and innovative delivery.

Measuring Success

The success of the strategy will be measured against the National Youth Agency Quality Mark criteria². A range of specific measures will be identified for each indicator in the Annual Activity Plan.

Standards	Indicators	Strategic Goal
Young People's Personal Social Development and Learning	Young people engage in programmes and activities	Thriving and resilient young Sheffielders
	Young people participate in programmes that support their personal and social development	Thriving and resilient young Sheffielders
	Young people are actively involved in planning youth work activities and decision making	Sheffielders shape services
	Young people understand and appreciate diversity	Thriving and resilient young Sheffielders
Quality of Youth Work Practice	Youth workers initiate, build and maintain purposeful relationships with young people and establish boundaries	Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce
	Youth workers know the needs of young people and plan appropriate work with them	Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce
	Youth workers deliver effective programmes and sessions with young people	Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce
	Workers reflect on, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their work with young people	Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce
Leadership & Management	The organisation has a clear and compelling vision, strategy and plan for its work with young people	Ambitious, relevant, and connected leadership
	The organisation has effective processes for quality assurance and performance management which involve young people	Understanding trends, delivering quality, evidencing impact
	The organisation knows the effectiveness of its work and the impact on young people	Understanding trends, delivering quality, evidencing impact
	The organisation enables staff to be effective through continuing professional development.	Confident, skilled, and contemporary workforce

Next Steps

Implement actions from the Strategy:

Develop the Annual Activity Plan

Work with our staff and partners to develop the Annual Activity plan and a range of performance measures to monitor our performance on our strategic goals in line with the NYA Quality Mark framework.

Feedback on our work

Launch our first biennial survey of Young Sheffields informing key design in all areas of Sheffield City Council and feedback the results to partners, stakeholders and the Youth Partnership.

Provide performance data to the Youth Partnership so we can demonstrate our achievements against the Strategy and Annual Activity Plan.

Maintain engagement

Involve young people, the Youth Partnership, Local Area Committees and stakeholders across the city so everyone knows about this strategy and can tell us how we are doing to offer *'Safe, creative, ambitious Community Youth Services where all young people in Sheffield can thrive'*.