



# IMPACT REPORT

2021-2022



# INTRODUCTION



**AMINA  
MESHNUNI**

London Youth  
Young Advisor

As we place the last pieces of our 2022 stories on the board, we realise that we weren't completing a puzzle, we were making a collage.

The post-pandemic life has settled itself as the 'new normal' and made young Londoners shift from 'bright future' discussions and aspirations to the routine that a 'will I make it?' mentality creates. With rising living costs, decreasing access to opportunities and limited funds going to Youth Clubs and young people, I wonder: Will I make it?

As my CV exceeds its two-page limit, I have organisations like London Youth to thank and attribute a lot of my future success to. I was given the opportunity to work on HeadStart Action and reflect on a journey of youth clubs, youth workers and young people. I was interviewed by the BBC, about my journey with London Youth in honour of Duke of Edinburgh's life. I advocated for green spaces and wellbeing while working on the Mental Health Alphabet Project. I was invited to the Houses of Parliament to talk about the project for the Politics School led by Virendra Sharma MP.

My 4-year journey as a London Youth's Young Ambassador has been a witness to my development as a young leader. Youth clubs and youth workers give us multi-career role models, grassroots coaches, level playing fields, platforms for discussions, marathons to run and cheering for us throughout - an inspiring voice that needs to be heard, because so many young people will be silent if they do not hear it.

Homes that we have created along the way, like London Youth, amplify our voices, and teach us how to translate what we have learnt into action. I am thankful, fulfilled, motivated and most importantly, hopeful that London Youth, youth workers, and youth clubs will continue to build a new generation of young leaders. We will certainly make it!



**ROSEMARY  
WATT-WYNESS**

CEO

It is impossible to round off this incredibly productive, impactful year without acknowledging the challenges faced by young Londoners from underserved communities. There is an escalating mental health crisis among the UK's young people, which half a million of them identified as their single biggest concern in a recent survey. They also reported they consider mental and physical health as, quite rightly, inextricable. Now a cost of living crisis is further exacerbating poor mental health, jeopardising physical health, and widening inequalities. Young people have never needed us more. 'Us' meaning support, meaning safe spaces, meaning trusted adults: meaning youth work.

In this light, almost 600 member organisations are doing literally life-saving work, and I take this opportunity to thank and celebrate every professional, youth worker, volunteer, and staff member whose daily efforts make this work happen. We exist to support you. That's why we're so proud that as of this year, 159 of our members hold a London Youth Quality Mark, and that 226 members accessed a London Youth programme or visited our outdoor residential centres this year.

Hindleap Warren and Woodrow High House have indeed had an exciting year, in no small part thanks to the Jack Petchey Foundation which allowed us to host free residential at our two centres for around 800 young Londoners across 21 boroughs. This year we also operated 15 programmes and delivered several events involving over 200 members. Whether the focus is on sport, youth action, employability, mental health or art, our activities help young people do better physically and emotionally, and help them gain skills, knowledge and networks, inspiring them to make a positive contribution to their community.

I'd like to thank the brilliant team at London Youth across all three sites, our Board of Trustees and Chair Stephen Moss, and our Youth Board, one of the key driving forces behind what we do.

Our work to become an anti-racist organisation continued this year. We're still learning, and we will never stop learning, and I really want to thank everyone who has used their position and experience to help us be and do better every day. This work will remain at the forefront of our agenda.

We are also continuing to use data in our monitoring, evaluation and learning practice to improve the way we work and to be accountable to you - our members and supporters. We're proud to present the ways we deliver opportunities, drive impact and demand change for the youth sector and for young people in this report.



# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

From 2021-2022 we worked with over

**587** member youth organisations who've supported more than **601,000** young Londoners.

We've been supporting members for

**135 YEARS**

Each week, over

**113,500**

young people attended activities run by our members.

**28,100** young people from

**226 MEMBERS**

took part in our programmes and outdoor centres activities.

**133**

training sessions were delivered to over

**1,000**

youth professionals.

Our two thriving outdoor education centres provided almost

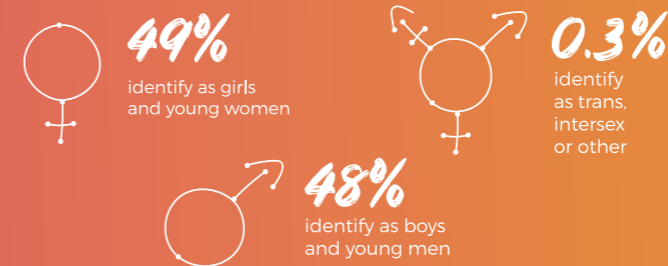
**15,000**

young people with the opportunity to experience the outdoors.

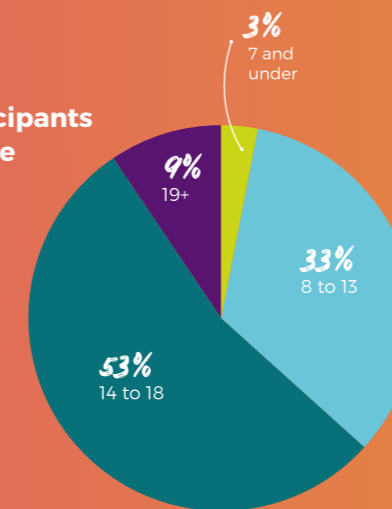
**15**

programmes were run across areas such as employability, mental health, social action, and sports.

## Our programme participants



## Participants by age



**11%**

of young people on our programmes have a mental and/or physical disability.

**70%**

of young people on our programmes are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

**150**

members achieved a Quality Mark qualification and **290** members are working towards one.

**London Youth**  
QUALITY MARK

**224**

youth sector organisations attended at least one of our network sessions.

# TOGETHER, WE'VE MADE LONDON BRIGHTER FOR MORE THAN 601,000 YOUNG PEOPLE

## WORKING ACROSS THE WHOLE OF LONDON

Our community and youth organisation members are active in every single London borough. We bring them together to share knowledge and experience, to voice their perspective on London's youth sector, and to discover new ways of working - providing high quality youth work.

## SMALL ORGANISATIONS WITH A BIG IMPACT

We work with many of the capital's smallest, grassroots organisations - half of our members' income is less than £250,000. They provide critical support to young Londoners, right where they live. In the midst of a tough year, our members have helped young people to reconnect with each other and their community, and feel proud and passionate about their part of London.



## BUILDING RESILIENCE

We support members to provide young people with opportunities they may not otherwise have. We've helped them to increase what they offer, diversify it and improve its quality. But like last year, this we also did everything we could for them to keep the lights on.

## ONGOING PANDEMIC RECOVERY

During the pandemic, we were as flexible and adaptive as our members had to be. We enabled them to connect in different ways and provide a range of support through our diverse offer. A year on, we're still supporting community youth organisations to deal with the consequences of the pandemic, like the growing mental health crisis faced by young people.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

With financial challenges faced by youth organisations having been hugely exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, we spoke out about the vital support needed in our sector. We listened to youth practitioners' concerns and used our platform to amplify their voices.





# DELIVERING OPPORTUNITIES

We work with our members to give young people inspiring opportunities through employability, sport, arts, and youth social action programmes and visits to our outdoor centres.

During 2021-22, we ran **15** programmes with **226** members, in which **13,336** young people took part, and our outdoor centres were visited by **14,770** young people.

## SPORT

We want every young Londoner to have opportunities to get active in their community.

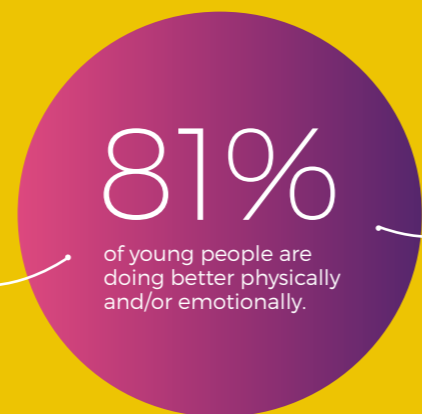
We've been supporting the youth sector to work flexibly with young people to improve their physical and mental health. This allowed young people to get active and discover new opportunities both virtually and in-person, participating on their own terms in a fun way.



## OUTDOOR CENTRES

Many young Londoners have limited opportunities to leave the city for a day trip, or overnight stay. Getting into the countryside can have a profoundly positive effect on their personal and social development. At our two outdoor learning centres young people learn and have fun, developing lifelong skills and confidence.

Our centres reopened their doors last year following lockdown and have been hosting day visits and residentials for schools and youth groups, as well as delivering off site sessions. In 2020-21, we supported **11,090** young people visit days at the centres, and in 2021-22, this rose to **42,477**



## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE FUN

*OUR PROGRAMMES ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW AND HAVE FUN...*

*...SO THEY ALWAYS FEEL ABLE TO TAKE PART AND ENJOY THEIR TIME WITH FRIENDS.*

## YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION

We are passionate about young people taking action on issues that are important to them, shaping decision making across London. Our social action programmes help youth workers guide young people to have the skills to make a difference in their communities.

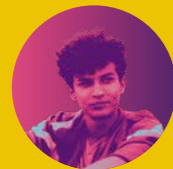
In 2021-22, **609** young people from **43** members took part in our youth action programmes. We took a creative and fun approach, and young people worked on a cookbook project, and a live-streamed performance exploring what it's like to be a refugee or asylum seeker in the UK. We also continued to support members to embed their youth involvement approach.



"I have been doing more exercise and have seen an increase in my confidence, social skills, happiness, coaching skills (I volunteer now as well) and general sports skills."  
- **Michaela, young person**



# DELIVERING OPPORTUNITIES



"It's helped me remain positive during Covid and keep engaged with something I love. It has been very good for my mental health. There is always a great sense of community, no matter who you are, where you're from, your age, what you look like, you are accepted, included and made to feel like you do matter."

- Luke, young person

95%

of young people had a positive experience taking part in our programmes.



"I always felt I couldn't fit in with the fancy people that have millions of pounds and important jobs... But by talking to them, it really helped me realise that there's not really much of a barrier and some of those people are actually coming from the same place I come from."

- Samira, young person



"I'm now trying to get certified for implementing performance systems and excel. The community is really nice - it's a good environment, and I think a lot of other courses like this haven't really implemented a friendly community with learning. It plays to each other. It gives you a reason to come, and it's not a chore. You have fun."

- Lewis, young person

## BRINGING YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

*WE WANT OUR WORK, AND THE YOUTH ORGANISATIONS WE SUPPORT, TO INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION IN THEIR LOCAL AREA...*

*...SO THEY FEEL PART OF THEIR COMMUNITY AND CAN TACKLE THE ISSUES THEY CARE ABOUT.*

## KEEPING YOUNG LONDONERS CONNECTED

*FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC, YOUNG PEOPLE STILL REPORT HIGH LEVELS OF ISOLATION, AND THEY SOMETIMES LACK EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL SKILLS... OUR PROGRAMMES HELP ALLEVIATE THIS SO YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO BUILD BETTER CONNECTION WITH PEERS.*

## ARTS

Taking part in creative activities and spending time with friends are crucial to help young people re-engage with trusted adults and refocus following disrupted education and heightened anxiety.

In 2021-22, **243** young people from **72** members took part in our arts programme. This gave them a safe outlet to explore and express themselves and develop a lifelong passion for the arts. We also supported member organisations to build their capacity to deliver high-quality, sustainable arts activities for young people.





# DRIVING IMPACT

Youth organisations play a critical role in communities across London. We help our members to further their impressive work by building skills and resilience, and making sure their voices are heard. We've also supported our members through grants, the Employee Assistance Programme, leadership development programmes and direct support.

80%

of members thought our offer is relevant to their needs.

From 2021 - 2022, our membership consisted of **587** organisations collectively employing around **18,000** staff. Throughout the year we ran **133** training sessions to **1,000** youth professionals. We delivered **9** network sessions and supported over **290** members on their Quality Mark journey.



“

“The whole support and funding opportunities have been beneficial. We will look forward to continuing working with London Youth.”

- Aml, youth worker

## MAKING YOUTH ORGANISATIONS MORE SUSTAINABLE

*WE HELP YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO KEEP THEIR DOORS OPEN...*

*...SO YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A SAFE LOCAL SPACE FOR THEM TO GO TO, WHERE THEY CAN LEARN AND GROW.*

65%

of our members say we helped improve the quality of their services.



”

“Without your funding, our sports service for children with learning disabilities would have come to an end. We were interviewed by London Youth last week and received a wonderful write up of our service, which is amazing PR and can be used in funding applications going forward.”

- Alan, youth worker

72%

of members took advantage of at least one aspect of our offer.

## CREATING OUTSTANDING YOUTH SERVICES

*WE SUPPORT YOUTH WORKERS TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO THINK DIFFERENTLY AND CHALLENGE THEMSELVES...*

*...SO THEY CAN TRY OUT NEW EXPERIENCES, FEEL BRAVER ABOUT STEPPING OUTSIDE OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE, AND UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS, PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS.*



”

“Doing the Bronze Quality Mark was very useful in bringing our policies, procedures and practices into date and forcing us to adequately express what we do and how we do it!”

- Ashleigh, youth worker

## BUILDING A YOUTH SECTOR FOR THE FUTURE

*WE WANT TO SEE THE YOUTH SECTOR CHALLENGE ITSELF, AND WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO REACH THEIR GOALS BY WORKING TOWARDS OUR QUALITY MARKS...*

*...SO ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS RUN SAFELY AND TO A HIGH STANDARD, WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHARE IDEAS AND FEEDBACK ABOUT THEIR SERVICES.*



# DEMANDING CHANGE FOR YOUNG LONDONERS

Throughout 2021-22 we continued to advocate for long-term sustainable funding, backed by a robust strategy to support and maintain London's youth sector. For 135 years, London Youth has brought together the voices of the capital's youth sector to speak as one. In 2021-22 we continued to advocate for long-term sustainable funding, backed by a robust strategy, to support London's youth sector.

Our Youth Board offers young people a way to develop their confidence, public speaking skills and address the issues that matter to them. In 2021-22 the second year of our Coming of Age programme also provided training to help them become campaigners of the future. We do this so that youth workers and young people can inform decision-making at both local and national level.



"Strength in numbers, in the face of exceptionally difficult operating environments it's helpful to feel part of something and that we aren't alone."  
- Omar, youth worker

85%

of young people reported they'd increased participation in their community following our programmes.

## AMPLIFYING YOUNG VOICES

WE GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE PLATFORMS WHERE THEY CAN SPEAK OUT...

...SO THAT THEIR NEEDS AND IDEAS ARE SHARED WITH DECISION MAKERS IN LONDON AND THEY CAN INSPIRE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE TO DO THE SAME.



## REPRESENTING LONDON'S YOUTH WORKERS

LONDON YOUTH UNITES THE VOICES OF YOUTH WORKERS...

...SO THEY CAN SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE YOUTH SECTOR, AND CHALLENGE DECISION MAKERS TO MAKE CHANGES THAT SUPPORT THE YOUTH SECTOR AND YOUNG PEOPLE.



"I didn't really know much about it [campaigning] at the beginning, but I liked the idea of, you know making a difference. Because people our age, it's very common to feel that we haven't got our voices heard. So, the idea to break through, force them to listen. It's quite appealing."  
- Stefanie, young person



"Before, I'm going to be honest, I didn't talk to anyone. When I first joined the Youth Board I was so quiet. But then, over the next couple of months of doing different things and mingling with different people, I've suddenly become this big confident girl who can talk to anyone."  
- Sidney, young person

## TAKING ACTION FOR LONDON

WE MAKE SURE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A SAY IN LONDON YOUTH'S WORK...

...SO THEY CAN SHARE IDEAS ABOUT WHAT'S OFFERED TO OUR MEMBERS AND INFLUENCE THE WORK WE DO.

### OUR YOUTH BOARD

We've been consulting young people through our youth board since

2007

Members said we were

very good

at advocating on behalf of the sector.



# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health and wellbeing is a priority that cuts across all of London Youth's work - whether that's equipping young people and youth workers with the tools to improve their mental health and resilience, or making sure they know how to get help when they need it. In 2021-22, informed by member-led focus groups and by our Youth Board, we responded to a call for evidence on a cross-government 10 year plan for mental health and wellbeing for England.

## OUR GOOD FOR GIRLS PROGRAMME

Our wellbeing programme Good for Girls enabled **30** youth organisations to support, encourage and empower **620** girls and young women through sport, art and other wellbeing activities. Young people delivered social action projects such as self-care packages, community meals, and LGBTQ+ rights awareness campaigns. These activities were accompanied by talking circles, to facilitate discussions around mental health and wellbeing.

**97%** of participating organisations agree they have improved their wellbeing offer to all young people. In addition, **5** participating organisations co-created an online wellbeing toolkit, made for youth workers by youth workers.

## OUR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING NETWORK

Through our network, youth workers formed strong relationships and shared valuable knowledge and experiences of issues affecting young people.



## JACK PETCHEY ADVENTURES

In 2021-22 we provided around **800** young Londoners across **27** boroughs with an outdoor adventure, thanks to funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation. **87%** of participants felt that being in nature had made a positive difference to their wellbeing.



## CREATING SAFE SPACES

WE HELP YOUTH ORGANISATIONS TO CREATE SAFE SPACES WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN OPEN UP...

...SO THEY KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR HELP AND DON'T FEEL AFRAID TO SHARE FEELINGS.



"As lockdown restrictions have eased, it has been great to bring young people together again, within our youth club setting, to have discussions around their mental health and wellbeing."

- **Gina, youth worker**



"Before I used to get into fights regularly, but coming to youth club, I've got access to a mentor, and they have helped me calm down/supported me with coping mechanisms and now I know how to deal with situations differently."

- **Ryan, young person**



After taking part in our programmes

# 82%

of young people said their mental health and wellbeing improved.



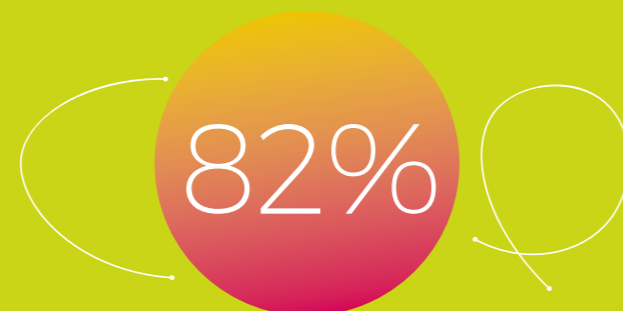
# OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD

We know young people feel comfortable at youth organisations – that’s why it’s often where they turn to for advice and guidance. We support youth workers to handle conflict, to be role models for the young people they work with, and to be able to offer them inspiring opportunities to find positive career paths and improve their employment prospects.

Young people often face multiple and complex employment barriers, such as long-term unemployment or racial discrimination. We make sure they have the skills and confidence to face what lies ahead, to access work experience, and progress with their education.

Our new Digital Talent programme guides members to provide wrap-around support to young people, focused on the digital and technology sector. This includes personal and professional skills development, inspiration and career-focused workshops, mentoring and traineeships at a range of partnering employers.

In 2021-22, **561** young people from **28** members took part in our employability programme and **177** young people took part in our one-off events.



of young people across our programmes have gained skills, knowledge and networks to identify career and other goals and work towards them.



“It has improved my listening and communication skills. My ability and efficiency to get a task done has improved dramatically, and I now feel more confident in a workplace environment!”

- **Damon, young person**

## ACCESSING OPPORTUNITIES

*OUR PROGRAMMES GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO GO ON WORK EXPERIENCE...*

*...SO THEY KNOW THEY HAVE OPTIONS AND CAN WORK TOWARDS THEIR FUTURE.*

We make sure youth workers and their organisations feel confident playing their part in preventing violence in our communities. Together with our partners, we’ve delivered specialist training and run an empowering Rise Up leadership programme.

# Rise Up

**88%** of participants said that Rise Up fully or partially met their expectations.

**87%** of managers noticed increased confidence in their youth workers taking part in Rise Up.



“I understand so much more about violence and conflict now, I really am able to take a child-centred approach. I see conflict as a means of communication.”

- **Nykeem, youth worker**



“I am able to challenge the things I do not believe to be correct – I will try to influence change.”

- **Sam, youth worker**



98%

of participants would recommend Rise Up.

## GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

*WE SUPPORT YOUTH WORKERS TO HANDLE CONFLICT...*

*... SO THEY CAN HELP YOUNG PEOPLE RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND UNDERSTAND THEY DON'T NEED TO LASH OUT.*



# YOUTH WORK & SPORT

We know that sport and physical activity are a source of hope for young Londoners.

By combining the power of youth work and sport, and working with grassroots community organisations across the city, we tackle the inequalities faced by young people. This improves their physical and mental wellbeing, and gives them the skills and experiences they need, now and for their future success.



“London Youth’s sports programme impact extends beyond just the here and now. It gives us as youth workers the tools and connections to make the long term changes the most vulnerable young people in our community need before it’s too late.”  
- **Claudia, youth worker**

Our Getting Active programme reduced inactivity from

42%  
to 9%

3,528

young people participated in programmes. **82%** are from Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities.



## A SECTOR WIDE APPROACH

*WE FIND AND CREATE HIGH-QUALITY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES THAT ENABLE YOUTH WORKERS TO HOLISTICALLY SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE...*

*...SO THAT LONDON HAS MORE RESILIENT AND SKILLED YOUTH WORKERS AND YOUTH ORGANISATIONS.*

## HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT

*WE MAKE SURE YOUNG LONDONERS HAVE THE TOOLS TO OFFER WELLBEING SUPPORT TO THEIR PEERS...*

*...SO THEY'RE INSPIRED TO VOLUNTEER AND CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.*

After our Sport for Development programme,

76%

of participants reported an increase in self-esteem.



“Without this funding, we wouldn’t be able to offer a physical activity session, which is crucial for our young carers who are often unable to leave their homes regularly.”  
- **Jac, youth worker**

138

young leaders and youth workers trained in mental health first aid, event management and sport coaching.



“They were healthier, their attitude towards sport has changed, they’re more positive about it and want to do more.”  
- **Meg, youth worker**



“I have found myself; I have found a connection; I have found a home.”  
**Yasir, young person**

## BELONGING IN SPORT

*WE BRING TOGETHER ORGANISATIONS THAT HAVE EXPERT EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE LEAST ADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES...*

*...TO BRING OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT TO THOSE LEAST LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN OR ACCESS SPORT.*



# THANK YOU

At London Youth, we want to say a huge thank you to all of our members, young ambassadors and advisors, funders and supporters, and to our team, for working to build the resilience of London's youth organisations in the face of immense challenges. We couldn't have done it without you!

The Federation Of London Youth Clubs Charity  
Registration: 303324

Company Registration: 258577

[londonyouth.org](http://londonyouth.org)

The information contained in this document is based on monitoring and evaluation data from 2021-22

Printed: February 2023