

POWERING THE GRASSROOTS

Strategy 2023-2026



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A word from our CEO and Chair

We're proud to present our new organisational strategy, seeing us through to 2026. This next phase is critical for London Youth, for our members, and for young Londoners. Our current shared reality means words like 'permacrisis' are coined to describe how our context seems to be lurching from challenge to challenge; from fragile mental health to skyrocketing cost of living. Crises are experienced most intensely by those with least material resource. And this is true for many young Londoners, especially those from low-income families. At the same time, the youth workers who are in the best position to support them often lack the necessary resources to do so.

London Youth exists to support the capital's youth sector to improve the lives of young people. We were founded 1887 and today our mission feels as urgent as ever. This urgency, as well as our passion, knowledge, and our members' expertise, have all fueled the strategy you're about to delve into.

If you're reading this, we guarantee there's a way you can support us. We hope you feel as excited as we do to shape our objectives into a new reality for young Londoners.



Pauline Daniyan
CEO



Stephen Moss
Chair of Trustees

Who are we?

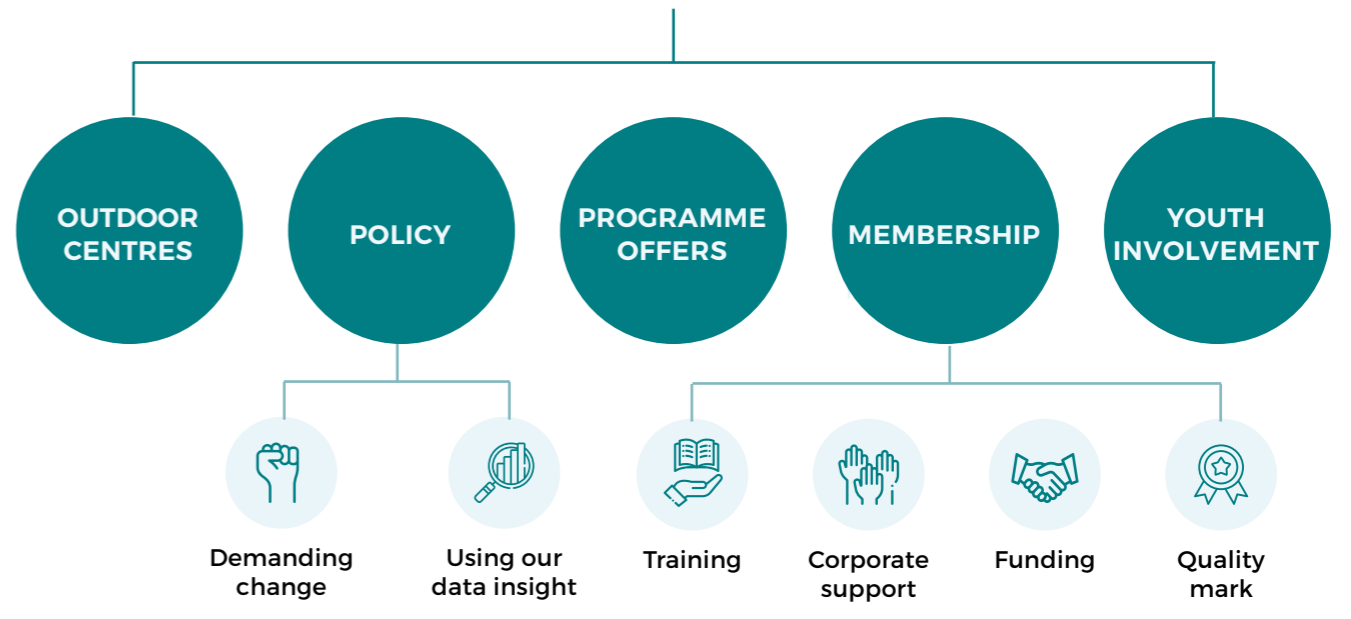
We are London Youth

We're a charity on a mission to support the capital's youth sector to improve the lives of young people. We do this with and through our members – a network of 600 youth organisations – and at our two outdoor residential centres, Hindleap Warren and Woodrow High House.

Throughout our 135-year history, community youth organisations have provided a constant lifeline and a vital safe space outside the family and formal education, where young people can develop confidence, resilience and skills. Young people need opportunities outside school to have fun with their friends, to make a positive change in their communities and to shape the city they live in.

We look to work with all young people, focusing particularly on those who wouldn't otherwise have access to the kind of opportunities we offer.

Supporting London's Youth Sector



Mission

To support young people and youth organisations to become the best they can be.

Vision

For all young Londoners to grow up healthy, able to express themselves, navigate a fulfilling career and make a positive contribution in their communities.

The key challenges faced by young Londoners



Wellbeing

- Almost **4 out of 5** feel lonely at times
- **1 in 10** feel lonely all the time
- High and escalating levels of anxiety and depression
- Highest levels of childhood obesity in UK



Poverty

- London has the highest rates of childhood poverty in the UK affecting **37%** of all young Londoners and **50%** of Black young Londoners
- Nearly **half** the UK's young people of colour live in London and face structural inequality
- **Violence** continues to affect young Londoners and is highly linked to poverty



Jobs

- Unemployment rates are **highest** in London
- Young Black Londoners are **twice** as likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts
- Those with a disability, who are neurodiverse or a care leaver are likely to face additional **challenges**

Why youth work is transformational

For many young people, their local youth club or youth group isn't just a place to have fun, it's something they need - a place to be heard, feel safe and explore who they are. Here, they develop the confidence, skills and resilience they need to be at their best.

Somewhere to go

- Vital safe space outside school
- A place to have fun and make friends
- Confidence, skills and resilience

Something to do

- New opportunities
- Make positive change
- Shape the city they live in

Someone to trust

- Support
- Encouragement
- Inspiration
- Positive challenge

Why our work is urgently needed

Covid, cuts and the cost of living crisis have had a huge impact on many of the youth organisations that are doing this vital work. With this context, and with schools and services struggling, disadvantaged young people are being hit the hardest, and we need to make sure this doesn't get worse.

Together, we'll make sure young Londoners get the opportunities they need

We're proud to support London's youth sector, and we trust and value their judgement. We're here to help them take their essential work even further, enabling them to reach even more young Londoners who need support. We're going to fight for a fairer playing field for the youth sector and shout about the vital role it plays.

How we'll do it



OUR 2023-26 STRATEGIC GOALS



Create vital opportunities for 25,000 young Londoners who have the greatest need



Develop youth organisations and lead the sector into a sustainable future



Inspire young Londoners with outdoor learning and trips away from home



Secure our financial sustainability; galvanising a network of supporters



Be a forward-thinking, inclusive organisation, where people feel motivated, heard and valued



Create vital opportunities for 25,000 young Londoners with the greatest need

“Getting active has helped me think about the benefits and joy I was missing out on, the true potential I had that I didn’t see.”

Young person



Focus our programmes intentionally to tackle structural inequality

We'll prioritise support for young people of colour and young people from low-income backgrounds by making sure they have access to our programmes.

Adopt data-driven learning to increase effectiveness

We will analyse and understand our data so we can improve our programme effectiveness. We want to share that impact data with our members and build a 'pause and reflect' period into our delivery cycle so we can really spend time on our learning, making sure they have access to our programmes.

Increase leadership roles for young people within London Youth and our members

We'll support young people to lead on and contribute to specific themes and work areas at London Youth, develop their own projects and campaigns and have access to high-profile speaking engagements. We'll expand on leadership opportunities through our programmes, and deliver Youth Involvement Train the Trainer courses to our members and the broader sector.

“She is a changed person since working with London Youth on their Board. Her confidence has grown and she’s willing to get involved in all sorts of things she’d never dream of before.”

Youth Board member’s father

Deliver impactful programmes with and through youth organisations

We'll deliver programmes driven by the needs and interests of young people and members, while also addressing barriers to participation, including cost of living, accessibility and funding.

Be adaptive and creative based on need

We'll establish open communication channels to understand emerging needs, integrate a robust innovation process into our working practices, co-design programmes with young people and members, and pilot digital opportunities.



Develop youth organisations and lead the sector into a sustainable future

“London Youth have been a huge support to our organisation over the years. Through training, networks, funding and quality assurance, their staff are understanding, dedicated, and always happy to help, such a valuable resource.”

London Youth member



Lead the sector with credibility and integrity

We want to sustain and support our membership of over 600 youth organisations - engaging with members, responding to their needs, working with under-represented groups, and adapting to social, political, technological and economic changes that impact the sector.

Provide our members with an exceptional service

We'll tailor our offer to members, ensuring our services are accessible and high quality, and that practitioners have the opportunity to connect and learn from each other through our networks, communities of practice and digital platforms.

Use our insight and learning to strengthen the sector

We'll focus on delivering strategic programmes that enhance the broader youth sector's capacity, implementing place-based work that evidences the impact that youth work can have, and piloting strategic initiatives that address sector-wide challenges.

“A life changing partner.”

Youth Board member

“When I think training, I think London Youth.”

Youth worker

Create policy change by collaborating with key partners

We'll advocate for the youth sector as a national asset by promoting inclusivity, pushing for policy changes that ensure a sustainable future, and making sure there's greater engagement with young people and our members in policy-making.

Democratise our unique data asset

We'll create a unique voluntary youth sector data hub in London, which feeds annual overviews, regular insight reports and an accessible sector dashboard. Our aim is to share data for our collective progress.

Amplify the voice of the youth sector

We'll elevate the profile of youth work by showcasing the sector's impact, building the London Youth brand and social media presence, hosting annual awards, driving innovative fundraising and actively involving our youth board and network in our communications.



Inspire young Londoners with outdoor learning and trips away from home

“I’ve never been out of London before and to see so much trees and green land was amazing to me, it was really beautiful. I was a different person at Hindleap cause no one cared about my clothes or trainers, they just cared if I was holding a rope tight enough so they don’t fall, or if me and my friend were going to stack more crates than them. I wish I could stay at Hindleap all the time.”

Young person

Gold-standard outdoor learning

We’ll provide gold-standard outdoor learning for 5,000+ young Londoners every year by maintaining our AHOEC Gold Badge at Hindleap, attaining the AHOEC Gold Badge at Woodrow, achieving Net Promoter Scores of over 40 from group leaders, and investing in training and facilities.

Tackling inequality

We’ll make sure young people of colour and those from low-income backgrounds have better access to outdoor experiences. We want to provide opportunities to more than 5,000 young Londoners by securing support for fully funded residential. We will offer pre-residential training for youth workers who are new to residentials and innovate our residential programme to ensure it has the flexibility needed to support all our member youth groups effectively.

Lead the way in making the outdoor sector more racially diverse

We’ll be a leading voice in the sector to highlight the need and share practice about making the sector more racially diverse. We’ll work on this ourselves by creating a training entrance pathway for instructor roles, establishing work experience opportunities for young Londoners and collaborating with youth employability projects in London.

Trips away for all young Londoners

We believe that all young Londoners should have the benefit of a trip away by Year 7. We will advocate for this and work to have even more young people come to the centres.

A long-term vision

We will set the long-term vision for each of our centres and invest in both sites, so we can provide more young people with high quality outdoor learning and residential experiences, which help them to connect with nature and develop important life skills.

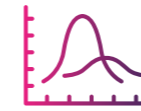


Enabling goals



Be a forward-thinking, inclusive organisation, where people feel motivated, heard and valued

- Attract and retain great team members
- Create a representative, cohesive community
- Embed youth involvement throughout our activities
- Nurture the capabilities needed for us to achieve our goals
- Focus our development offer on race equity, our team's aspirations and leadership at all levels
- Place wellbeing at the heart of our team's experience
- Scope a volunteer and internship programme



Secure financial sustainability

- Breakeven by 2026 and reserves within policy
- Grow unrestricted and core income
- Increase centres' utilisation
- Focus on net contribution and minimum 10% core cost recovery
- Raise £5m a year by 2026
- Deliver a capital fundraising appeal (dependent on the outcome of feasibility in 2023)
- Secure more fully funded residentials
- Ensure we are making best use of all our assets



Be an anti-racist charity

- Plan our development and the equalities impacts of our delivery intentionally
- Ensure that staff development and progression opportunities are equally distributed
- Work with our membership on our shared journey to race justice
- Ensure everyone is aware of and understands how they contribute to us becoming an anti-racist organisation
- Deliver the next phase of our Race Equality Action Plan



Measurement and outcomes

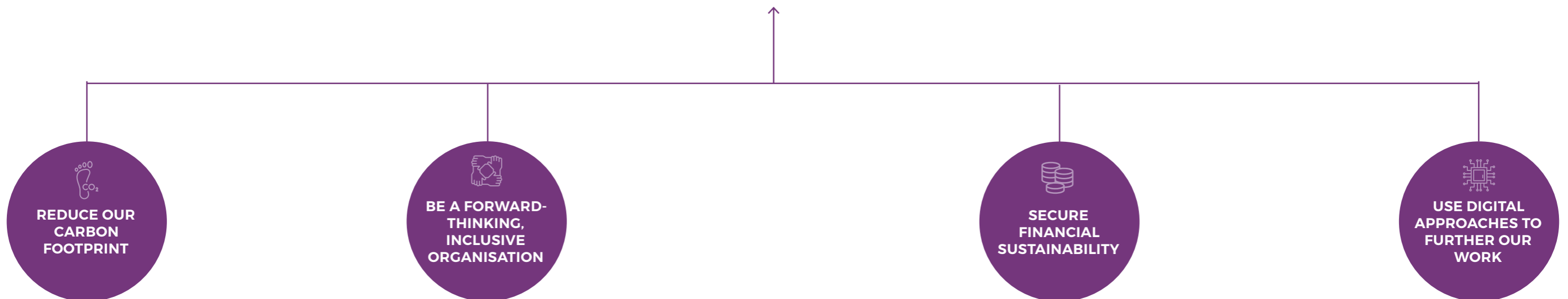
We are also developing an organisational measurement framework which includes tools, targets and indicators. It will help us to understand what works, cascade the strategic objectives to day-to-day operations, inform decision-making, and evidence our impact. We will be robust in our data collection, reflective in generating insights, bold in using them to improve our practice, and we'll include our audiences throughout.



Create vital opportunities for 25,000 young Londoners who have the greatest need.

Develop youth organisations and lead the sector into a sustainable future.

Inspire young Londoners with outdoor learning and trips away from home.



THANK YOU!



Thank you to all our members, funders and supporters. We couldn't do what we do without people like you.