



STRATEGY

2017 - 2021

Prosperity | Resilience | Health | Equality | Community Cohesion
Culture and Language | Global Responsibility



Youth Cymru Long Term Strategy Foreword

Wales' unique Well-being of Future Generations Act commits Welsh Government and public bodies in Wales to working towards our seven Well-being Goals, and to consider at all times the long term impact of their actions. While the Act does not formally bind Third Sector organisations in the same way they will have a vital role to play.

I am therefore delighted that Youth Cymru' Board of Trustees has chosen to structure the charity's long term strategy setting out how Youth Cymru will play its part in contributing towards the well-being goals.

Youth work supports young people in so many ways across Wales, providing opportunities for informal learning, building young people's resilience and supporting their participation in decision-making. Youth work clearly has a critical role to play when it comes to the well-being of future generations; improving the lives of people here in Wales, today and for every tomorrow to come.

I look forward to supporting Youth Cymru as the charity continues to support youth work across Wales, enabling young people to play their part in building the Wales we want.

Sophie Howe
Future Generations Commissioner



Who We Are

Youth Cymru is a national voluntary organisation with over eighty years' experience supporting young people and youth workers in Wales. We are a membership organisation, working through a network of local and regional organisations that work with young people.

Our Purpose

To support young people to develop and grow to full maturity as individuals and as members of society, fulfilling their potential and improving their lives.

Our Vision

Young people in Wales are confident and strong, empowered to fulfil their potential and to contribute to building the Wales we want.

Our Values

We believe that young people are citizens and rights holders. All our work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in line with the Rights of Children and Young Person's Measure (Wales) 2011.

We believe that youth work changes lives.

We are committed to equality and inclusion; we challenge prejudice and discrimination.

We believe that youth work has a vital role to play in building the Wales we want. We shape our work to contribute to the seven Well-being Goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Who Are We For?

We are for all young people in Wales, and for all those organisations, volunteers and professional staff, who support them.

How?

We work through a network of local and regional organisations that support young people throughout Wales. These are primarily statutory and voluntary youth work organisations, but include other organisations supporting young people, such as training providers, youth offending services and alternative curriculum provisions. Many of our member organisations are based in Wales' poorest communities as defined by the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation.

We work in partnership with our members and with others supporting young people in Wales. We work through the British - Irish Strategic Youth Partnership with our partners Youth Scotland, Youth Work Ireland, Youth Action Northern Ireland and UK Youth to improve the lives of young people across Britain and Ireland, and learn from youth work experiences across Europe through our membership of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs. Our work is shaped by what young people tell us about what they want and need.

The Context

These are uncertain and challenging times. We do not yet know what the impact of the decision for the UK to leave the European Union will be on the lives of young people in Wales. We do know that the decision has left many young people concerned and confused. Financially, youth work and other services for young people have been squeezed in recent years, and this is unlikely to change in the short term. Now more than ever, we need a strong network of youth work organisations to support young people and enable them to take part in the decisions which will affect their futures. That network will need strong support and leadership. In the coming years Youth Cymru will continue to grow our capacity to provide that leadership and support.

In 2015 our National Assembly passed the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, placing duties on all public bodies in Wales to consider when making decisions not only the immediate impact but also the long term effects, and to plan to contribute in all they do to the seven Well-being Goals set out in the Act:



A Prosperous Wales



A Resilient Wales



A Healthier Wales



A More Equal Wales



A Wales of Cohesive
Communities



A Wales of Vibrant
Culture and
Thriving Welsh Language



A Globally
Responsible Wales

We know that youth work can contribute to all these goals, and we further know that none of these goals is deliverable unless young people are engaged.

Our Ambition

It is our ambition to lead youth work in Wales in contributing towards delivering the Seven Well-being Goals and demonstrating how good quality youth work experiences enable young people to play a full part in contributing to their delivery.





National Well-being Goal 1

A Prosperous Wales



Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth work helps young people to develop skills which are valued by employers, helps them gain access to new opportunities, supports them to grow their aspirations and improve their personal resilience, and supports them to develop skills to help them manage their finances effectively and plan for the future. Below we set out how we will contribute to delivering the first national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Be empowered to prosper, accessing a range of experiences that will broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations.
- » Develop skills valued by employers, such as teamwork, entrepreneurship leadership, budgeting and planning.
- » Become more resilient and aspirational; valuing and appreciating their own skills and abilities.
- » Overcome barriers that may have impeded them being successful in formal education.
- » Challenge prejudice and discrimination that may be getting in the way of them accessing opportunities.
- » Access internships, apprenticeships and other opportunities that they would not otherwise be able to apply for.
- » Develop skills in effectively managing their finances and share those skills with others.
- » Have their learning and the skills they have gained through youth work accredited with awards that are recognised by employers and formal education providers.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with partners, programmes that enable young people to develop employability skills in a fun and engaging way.
- » Ensure that all our programmes are inclusive and support and encourage particularly those young people who have not had positive experiences of formal education.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that are designed to challenge prejudice and discrimination, and we will challenge prejudice and discrimination in all aspects of our work.
- » Offer support and training to enable those working with young people to effectively tackle exclusion and enable young people to develop employability skills.
- » Develop and seek funding for programmes to enable young people to develop strong financial capability skills and to share those skills with others.
- » Work with partner youth organisations, employers, formal education institutions and Welsh Government to promote a better understanding of the accreditation of informal learning.



National Well-being Goal 2

A Resilient Wales



Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth work enables young people to develop their personal resilience and contribute to the resilience of their communities. It can support them to develop a stronger understanding of our natural environment and to take action to protect and enhance it. Effective youth work needs resilient organisations to support it. Below we set out how we will contribute to the delivery of the second national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Develop a stronger understanding of the natural environment, our dependence on it and the challenges facing us in protecting and enhancing it.
- » Take action to address some of those challenges, though volunteering and campaigning.
- » Become more personally resilient.
- » Participate in social action promoting community cohesion, contributing to the development of more resilient communities.
- » Develop safe and sustainable travel habits including walking, cycling and using public transport.

in Wales, enabling those organisations to effectively engage young people in their work

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with partners, projects and programmes that enable young people to participate in social action promoting community cohesion.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with partners, projects and programmes that enable young people to develop safe and sustainable travel habits.
- » Ensure that all our projects and programmes are structured to support young people to develop their personal resilience.
- » Regularly review our own internal policies and working practices to minimise our impact on the natural environment.
- » Ensure that Youth Cymru is a sustainable, resilient organisation, ensuring good governance and financial sustainability.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with partners, programmes to enable young people to develop a strong understanding of the natural environment, share that understanding with others and take action to protect the environment.
- » Develop strong partnerships with organisations charged with protecting and enhancing the natural environment



National Well-being Goal 3

A Healthier Wales

Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth work supports young people in strengthening their self-esteem and personal resilience, helping support their individual well-being. It can support them to make healthier choices, in terms of, for example, diet, exercise and personal relationships. It can enable them to campaign for the health services they and their communities need. Youth work enables young people to have fun - improving their mental health. Below we set out how we will help deliver the third national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Improve their self-esteem and personal resilience.
- » Feel supported at times of distress when their emotional health may feel fragile.
- » Make healthier choices.
- » Support their peers in making healthier choices.
- » Challenge prejudice and discrimination when it gets in the way of them, their peers or their communities accessing the health support they need.
- » Campaign for the health services they, their peers or their communities need.
- » Be sure that the youth services they access are safe.

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes to support young people at times of distress when their mental health may feel fragile.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people to challenge discrimination and prejudice, including discrimination and prejudice that may affect access to health support.
- » Through all our projects and programmes ensure that young people are enabled to affect decisions that affect them and their communities, including decisions relating to health.
- » Ensure that all our projects and programmes are delivered in a way that reflects best health and safety and safeguarding practice.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Ensure that all our projects and programmes are delivered in a way that supports young people to improve their self-esteem and resilience.
- » Ensure that staff delivering our projects and programmes are appropriately trained so that they can support young people to improve their self-esteem and resilience.

- » Support our member organisations, though the provision of advice and training, in enabling them to ensure that all their activities reflect best health and safety and safeguarding practice.
- » Ensure that our internal policies and procedures enable us to operate as an organisation in a way that promotes the health and well-being of our staff, our volunteers, young people and all of those with whom we work.



National Well-being Goal 4

A More Equal Wales

Youth Cymru's Contribution

Youth work as a practice has a long tradition of challenging prejudice and discrimination and enabling others, especially young people, to do so. Many young people face prejudice and discrimination themselves and it is also true that young people, particularly those under pressure, may be vulnerable to messages encouraging prejudice and discrimination. Below we set out how, in line with the Equality Act 2010, we will help deliver the fourth national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Understand their rights as citizens and their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- » Understand and respect the rights of others.
- » Recognise prejudice and discrimination directed at them and feel empowered to challenge it.
- » Recognise prejudice and discrimination directed at others and feel empowered to challenge it.
- » Campaign against institutionalised prejudice and discrimination.
- » Feel supported to fulfil their own potential, no matter what their circumstances.

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people in the general population to develop a better understanding of their own rights and the rights of others and to promote those rights.
- » Through all our projects and programmes, ensure that young people are enabled to affect decisions that affect them and their communities.
- » Ensure that all our projects and programmes are delivered in a way that reflects best equality and inclusion practice.
- » Ensure that all staff delivering our projects and programmes are appropriately trained and supported to enable them to work in ways consistent with the best equality and inclusion practice.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people with protected characteristics to come together to develop individual resilience and to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

- » Support our member organisations, for example through training and policy advice, to enable them to work in ways that reflects best equality and inclusion practice.
- » Ensure that our internal policies and procedures enable us to operate as an organisation in a way that promotes best equality and inclusion practice.



National Well-being Goal 5

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth work supports young people in developing an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizen. It enables young people to influence decisions that affect them and their communities. It provides opportunities for young people to take part in social action, improving their own lives and the lives of others. Youth work approaches can also play a part in diverting young people away from anti-social behaviour and offending and in improving relationships between the generations. Young people are all too often stigmatised, seen as somehow a 'problem' to be 'solved'. Below we set out how we will help deliver the fifth national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- » Understand how decisions that affect them and their communities are made and how to influence them.
- » Campaign on issues they identify, helping create attractive, viable and safe communities.
- » Lead, develop and take part in social action projects, including projects bringing older and young people together and projects that promote intercultural understanding.
- » Understand and take action to challenge prejudice and discrimination against others.
- » Have fun; accessing positive leisure and social activities, in their own communities and beyond.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people to understand how decisions are made, locally, nationally, across the UK and beyond and how to influence these decisions.
- » Campaign, alone and with others, to counter negative perceptions of young people and promote an understanding of young people as assets not liabilities to their communities.
- » Campaign with others, to encourage young people to register to vote, to use their votes, and for the voting age to be reduced to 16.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that provide opportunities for young people to take part in social action, including action that brings young people together with older people in communities.
- » Support our member organisations, including through providing training and advice, to contribute to the maintenance of a thriving network of local youth organisations across Wales, providing social and leisure opportunities for young people.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people to develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- » Alone and with others, provide opportunities for young people to get together and have fun, within their own communities and beyond.



National Well-being Goal 6

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and a Thriving Welsh Language

Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth work provides young people with opportunities to take part in a wide range of cultural activities; helping them improve their self-esteem and resilience, and enabling them to develop skills valued by employers. Youth work can help young people develop an understanding of their heritage, and of how others have contributed to the heritage of Wales. Cultural participation can bring together young people from a wide range of backgrounds and provide insights into the lives of others, challenging preconceptions and raising aspiration.

Effective youth work has a vital role in ensuring that the Welsh language thrives, providing opportunities for young people to use their language skills outside the classroom, for learners and second language speakers to mix with and learn from fluent speakers, and perhaps most importantly to have fun in Welsh! Below we set out how we will help deliver the sixth national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Have opportunities to take part in a wide range of cultural activities in their own communities and beyond.
- » Participate in planning and delivering cultural activities, in their own communities and nationally.
- » Have access to and enjoy 'elite' cultural activities and venues that they might not otherwise enjoy.
- » Understand more about their own heritage and the heritages of others.
- » Gain access to employment opportunities in the creative and digital sectors.
- » Take part in a wide range of youth work opportunities through the medium of Welsh, and have their learning through those opportunities accredited through Welsh.

to enable young people to plan and participate in a wide range of cultural activities.

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes that enable young people to develop better understanding of their own heritage and the heritage of others.
- » Ensure that all projects and programmes delivered in Wales are able to be provided in Welsh and English, and that our partners, including corporate partners, understand the relevance and importance of this.
- » Develop partnerships with 'elite' cultural organisations, enabling young people to access opportunities and experiences outside their previous experience.
- » Support our members in providing a wide range of youth work opportunities and accrediting learning through those opportunities through the medium of Welsh, for example through training and providing materials.
- » Ensure that our own policies and practices enable us to enhance our Welsh medium delivery and enable us to operate as a truly bilingual organisation.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes

National Well-being Goal 7

A Globally Responsible Wales

Youth Cymru's Contribution

Effective youth works helps young people to develop an ethical understanding of the world they live in, the challenges faced by others across the world, and what they can do to help them address those challenges. It can promote international exchange visits enabling young people to experience different cultures directly, and it can promote international volunteering. Shared learning by youth work professionals across national boundaries shares best practice and promotes understanding. Below we set out how we will help deliver the seventh national Well-being Goal.

Outcomes:

Young people will:

- » Better understand how what happens in Wales affects people in other places across the globe.
- » Identify action they can take in Wales to help improve the lives of others in other countries, and take that action.
- » Visit other countries and welcome young people from other countries to their communities, develop understanding and work towards common goals.
- » Access international volunteering opportunities.

strengthen and deepen understanding and positive relationships between young people throughout Britain and Ireland through our Five Nations Strategic Partnership.

- » Strengthen our existing partnerships with organisations working on global citizenship issues in Wales, and build new ones.
- » Support young people engaged in our projects and programmes to access international volunteering.
- » Enable staff in our member organisations to benefit from learning about good international youth work practice through our membership of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs.

Activities:

Youth Cymru will:

- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes to enable young people to develop as well-informed global citizens.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes to enable young people to take action, including campaigning and social action, to address global issues locally.
- » Develop and seek funding for, alone or with others, projects and programmes to

- » Seek to ensure, through our own internal policies and procedures, that we minimise our negative global impact as an organisation.



Making it happen

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act sets out five ways of working to deliver the Well-being Goals; long-term, integration, involvement, collaboration and prevention. This approach fits well with how Youth Cymru works and we will ensure that these five ways of working continue to underpin all we do.

Long - term

Youth Cymru has been supporting young people and youth work in Wales for over eighty years. Many of our partnerships go back decades. We will draw on this long experience to continue to support our member organisations, but also to innovate. We will work to ensure our own long term sustainability as an organisation.

We know that effective good quality youth work has a long term positive effect on young people's lives and on communities. We also know that this impact can be hard to measure and demonstrate. We will continue to work with others, gathering information and undertaking and contributing to research, to develop effective tools to enable organisations to demonstrate how their work is contributing, long-term, to the seven Well-being Goals.

Integration

Our projects and programmes are integrated across the organisation, with many of them contributing to the delivery of more than one Well-being Goal. We always design our projects and programmes to integrate effectively with and enhance our member organisations' existing activities. We will ensure we continue to take this integrated approach in all that we do.

Involvement

Young people are involved in decision making at all levels of Youth Cymru. Our Youth Leadership Panel, Llais Ifanc, nominates member to our Board of Trustees. Young people are involved in the design and development of all our projects and programmes, ensuring they reflect the diverse needs of young people across Wales. We will continue to work to strengthen the voices of young people, across Youth Cymru and beyond. Our member organisations are and will continue to be involved in the design and delivery of all our projects and programmes.

Collaboration

Collaboration is key to everything we do. We collaborate with statutory and voluntary youth work organisations, and other organisations working with young people, across Wales to develop and deliver our projects and programmes, and we collaborate with funders – government, voluntary and corporate – to resource them.

We collaborate with other national youth work organisations in Wales to raise the profile of youth work and highlight its capacity to deliver on a range of agendas to decision makers. We collaborate with our Five Nations Strategic Partners across Britain and Ireland to challenge inequalities and inspire young people, enabling them to challenge decision makers on issues that matter to them. We collaborate with partner organisations across Europe to share good practice and influence decision making at a European level through the European Confederation of Youth Clubs.



Prevention

Effective youth work can play a key part in the preventive agenda, protecting individual young people from problems in their future lives and contributing to more cohesive communities. Young people often tell us that their youth club 'kept them out of trouble' – a clear benefit to them and their communities. They see their youth workers as being 'on their side' helping them navigate the tricky territory of growing up, sometimes when other adults fail to do so. Youth

work interventions can help divert young people out of the criminal justice system, and away from unhealthy behaviours.

We will continue to work to ensure that all young people in all communities in Wales can access and benefit from opportunities that have these positive effects and we will continue to work with others to help demonstrate their long term effectiveness.

