
Youth Support Services in Wales

The Value of Youth Work

July 2018



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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Introduction

This report is in response to a request in the Cabinet Secretary's annual remit letter to Estyn for 2017-2018, in which the Welsh Government asked Estyn to undertake a survey of services for young people in Wales.

It also forms part of wider thematic work undertaken jointly by Inspection Wales. Each inspection, audit, and regulatory body in Wales will report on the support being given to young people from different services. Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW) will report on arrangements to support the transition between child and adult services. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) will focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements for children who are looked after and care leavers. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) will examine the Welsh Government's strategic approach to improving the wellbeing of young people aged 16-24 with a view to identifying key lessons for the future.

Estyn inspects services to young people under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and this report focuses on youth support services. In particular, it looks at the contribution that youth work methodology makes to the delivery of youth support services.

The report sets out the quality of youth support services to young people against a background of a variety of legislation and policy priorities. It draws attention to the challenges for managers in organising their services, within a context of competing ideologies around the purpose and models for those services. The report attempts to clarify the definitions for youth work, youth services, and youth support services. It provides examples of good practice in working with young people.

Unless otherwise stated, the quotations throughout the report are from young people who responded anonymously to Estyn's online survey in 2017.

Background

The legislative basis for youth work and, later, youth support services is provided through education legislation, beginning with the Education Act 1944 (Great Britain, 1944). The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (Great Britain, 2000) and Extending Entitlement: support for 11 to 25 year olds in Wales, Directions and Guidance (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) form the basis for the services provided in Wales. Legislation and policy relating to youth work, the youth service, and youth support services is listed in detail in appendix 1.

'Youth support services' are educational services, defined under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and paid for by direct or indirect public funding. They include services provided in partnership with other agencies such as schools and voluntary sector organisations.

'Youth work' is a recognised methodology for working with young people, which is underpinned by National Occupational Standards, regulated professional qualifications, and has a defined ethical base. Youth work builds upon the establishment of good working relationships with young people in which their needs are put first, irrespective of whether the contacts with young people are voluntary or mandatory. The definition of young people is those aged between the ages of 11 to 25 years.

The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-2018 states the following: *"Youth work provision is offered through youth services. Youth work is an intrinsic element of youth support services, which seek to ensure that all 11 to 25-year-olds, have the services, support and experiences they need to achieve their potential. In Wales, the youth service is a universal entitlement, open to all young people. Through the Learning and Skills Act 2000, section 123, Welsh Ministers have directed local authorities to provide, secure the provision of, or participate in, the provision of youth support services"* (Welsh Government, 2014a, p.4).

In 2016, the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Committee of the National Assembly for Wales commissioned an inquiry into youth work. The inquiry report 'What type of youth service does Wales want?' (National Assembly for Wales, 2016) found weaknesses in the Welsh Government's strategic approach, including unrealistic expectations and limited engagement with stakeholders. The inquiry raised concerns about the funding and the impact of reduced resources on youth provision across Wales, and how this might affect particular groups of young people, including Welsh speakers. The Committee's report made 10 recommendations for improvement around engagement, mapping youth provision across Wales, funding and reviewing the national strategy for youth work.

In March 2018, the Minister for the Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning published a written statement 'Youth Work in Wales: Moving forward together' (Welsh Government, 2018e), which renewed the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring that every young person is supported to overcome barriers to reaching their full potential. The Minister acknowledged the importance of high quality youth work delivered through the medium of Welsh and English to support this aim.

A youth work reference group meets regularly to support the development of a new strategic direction for youth work, and Welsh Government officials are currently establishing an interim youth work board, which will develop and oversee youth work policy.

Main findings

- 1 All young people have a right to high quality support through youth work. They need access to activities outside of formal education, in safe environments that open them up to new opportunities, help them make relationships, build friendships, and learn new skills. From time to time, they will also need support that helps them to understand their life choices and make important decisions. In Wales, professional youth workers traditionally provide this support.
- 2 The most vulnerable and marginalised young people additionally face multiple difficulties, including poverty, domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, learning difficulties, substance abuse, mental health issues, and homelessness. Helping these young people remains a major moral challenge for society. The support for these young people that is most successful in the long-term is engagement with well-trained youth workers who take time to build a relationship of trust with them. They then can foster these young people's personal development, build their confidence and resilience, and develop their social skills, so that they are more likely to make better life decisions and in due course re-engage with learning programmes. Such support needs to be flexible and non-judgmental.
- 3 There are many varied and effective youth support services available to young people in Wales underpinned by a wide range of legislation and policy, derived from the UK Government, the Welsh Government, and the European Commission. However, these services are not available to all young people. There is no overall strategy for the planning, provision or funding of services, and policy makers and providers do not have one clear, shared vision for the delivery of services, or how youth work contributes to young people's personal development and their role in the community and wider society.
- 4 The type of youth support services being delivered in Wales has changed since the publication of the Extending Entitlement directions and guidance (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002). For a variety of reasons, there has been a decline in the availability of traditional open-access youth provision, and of community-based and street-based work. In some cases, third-sector charities have replaced local authorities in providing this type of provision. There has been a corresponding increase in targeted, referral-based, 'corrective' intervention work with young people. This increase has led to a fragmentation of services, with young people being referred to several different intervention services. Many young people who would benefit from services no longer have open-access to support.
- 5 Open-access youth provision is attended voluntarily by young people, and usually provided on a neighbourhood basis. These services were previously based on the self-determined needs of young people. Many of the services now provided are focused on individuals or groups to address specific needs identified by others to meet national policy agendas, rather than on the self-identified needs of young people themselves. The majority of these services are aimed at the under-18 age group. This targeted work is most effective where youth work practice is the dominant model used by professionals.

- 6 While it is sensible for scarce resources to be used to support the most vulnerable, the policy of more 'targeted' interventions has had the unintended consequence of many of the most vulnerable young people being unable to access the support they need, because they are often not engaged with the services that can refer them.
- 7 The core principles of Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) are still relevant. However, since Extending Entitlement, the large number of new policy developments have not taken enough account of the entitlements and rights of all young people to access services. The wide diversity of priorities introduced by these policy developments has weakened the ability of local authorities and other providers of youth support services, including the voluntary sector, to plan and deliver services effectively and in collaboration. Presently, there is no integrated model for planning services that builds on the provision within the sector as whole. Recent legislation affecting local authorities has led to the dissipation of formal partnerships for the delivery of youth support services.
- 8 Cuts in resources have also impacted on local authorities' abilities to plan and prioritise youth support services. Local authorities take different approaches to the planning and delivery of services, but the core principle of Extending Entitlement, which is that planning should focus on the specific needs of young people and that young people should help determine those needs, is no longer the basis for much of the provision. Ensuring a focus on young people's needs is made more difficult where funding is tightly bound to hard outcomes, such as recognised qualifications. These fixed outcomes make it difficult for youth workers who work with the most vulnerable young people, who need significant personal support before they can begin learning programmes. Even so, in most areas, youth workers in the local authority youth service and voluntary sector settings have shown resilience and the ability to adapt, and apply the core principles of youth work in a variety of settings.
- 9 The wide range of youth support services available to young people is often developed on a reactive basis, and local planning does not ensure that there is equality of access either to open-access or targeted services. This particularly affects young people living close to local authority borders, where inter-authority planning is weak. There is also a lack of parity of provision of services across the full age range of 11 to 25.
- 10 The voluntary sector plays a vital role in providing all types of youth support services, but is not sufficiently included by local government in planning processes. There is good and often excellent informal partnership working at local levels, but provision is often developed in an *ad hoc* way, based on available funds and established links. There are now fewer local authority open-access centres where traditional youth work takes place. The voluntary sector now carries out much of this work.
- 11 National and local mechanisms for consulting with young people are in place, but it is unclear how well this work contributes to the planning and evaluation of services, that affect young people.
- 12 There is a lack of clarity among service providers and policy makers about the terminology used when discussing services to support young people. The term 'youth work' is often confused with 'work with young people'. This leads to conflicting

ideologies and priorities, which does not help to support policy development. For example, youth work refers to a professional methodology for working with young people. It is based on a clear set of values and underpinned by the voluntary nature of the relationship between the young person and the youth worker, but this is often confused with the settings in which it is delivered. It is also confused with general work with young people even when there is no supportive or educational aspect.

- 13 Youth work is a professional, skilled way of working that makes an important contribution to developing young people as individuals and in supporting the development of their social skills. Youth work in schools is now more established, better understood, and increasingly valued by 'formal education' providers. Access to a youth worker often plays a key role in supporting young people with multiple barriers to learning. Young people value the services, but access to a youth worker is often targeted and therefore not always available to all young people. There is not as much youth work taking place in further education colleges and work-based learning providers.
- 14 The important contribution of planning for the development of the youth work profession, and the importance of appropriate qualification and in-service training of youth workers, is not included in the current national strategy for youth work in Wales.
- 15 There is no effective strategy to ensure that Welsh and English languages are treated equally in the delivery of youth support services. Open-access provision in Welsh is usually provided by the voluntary sector, but there are few Welsh or bilingual services, and especially a lack of specialist support services through the medium of Welsh.
- 16 How youth support services are held to account for the work they do is unclear. The primary accountability is to those providing grant funding. The introduction of the Quality Mark for youth work has brought positive and supportive aspects to the quality assurance of local authority and voluntary sector youth services and a few youth support services. However, it is unclear how young people's rights enshrined in Extending Entitlement are delivered and the impact of the services on young people is not well evaluated.

Recommendations

Local authorities should:

- R1 Consult meaningfully with young people, so that they can influence the planning for and evaluation of the services available to them at a local level
- R2 Provide safe spaces for young people in local areas so that they have access to services, and activities, which support their development as individuals, and as members of their local community
- R3 Make sure that strategic plans have clear priorities informed by local intelligence for services that support young people
- R4 Make sure that local authority departments and other bodies work in partnership to provide services for young people, which address their needs

Providers should:

- R5 Make sure that their services enable young people to identify for themselves their interests, goals, and needs
- R6 Work in partnership at a local and regional level to improve access to the range of services for young people
- R7 Make sure that professional youth work standards and principles are used by workers in all youth support service projects

The Welsh Government should:

- R8 Provide the policy basis through which youth work, as a way of working with young people, becomes embedded in all services
- R9 Clarify the use of the terminology 'youth work', 'youth service,' and 'youth support services' in Wales in order to provide a universally understood language for policy development and delivery
- R10 Establish ways of holding local authorities and their partners to account for the quality, range and types of youth support services they provide in their area
- R11 Include the qualification, training and ongoing development of youth workers in the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales

The place of youth work in youth support services

'I wouldn't be here today without the support of all the different services for young people'

Current perspectives

- 17 Through the Welsh Assembly's adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its statutory guidance Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002), all young people in Wales are entitled to have access to youth support services. These services provide activities and opportunities for young people; they challenge and support them, introduce them to new experiences in a safe environment, and help them to make relationships, build friendships and learn new skills.
- 18 The most vulnerable and marginalised young people in Wales additionally face multiple difficulties, including poverty, isolation, domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, learning difficulties, substance abuse, mental health issues, and homelessness. Helping these young people is an ethical imperative for a just and caring society. Also, from time to time, all young people, whatever their social circumstances, need support that enables them to understand their choices and make important life decisions. This support, in Wales, is traditionally provided through professional youth workers.
- 19 There are many varied and effective youth support services available to young people in Wales underpinned by a wide range of legislation and policy. The legislative basis for youth work and later, youth support services, is found in education legislation, beginning with the Education Act 1944 (Great Britain, 1944). The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (Great Britain, 2000) and Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) form the basis for the services provided in Wales. However, these services are not available in all areas or to all young people who need them.
- 20 The definition for youth support services in the Learning and Skills Act (Great Britain, 2000) is intentionally broad, and inclusive, and therefore covers, for example, neighbourhood based open-access youth provision, youth clubs, outreach work, street based provision, outdoor adventure activities, arts and cultural projects, and international exchanges. It also includes more focused youth projects such as youth work in schools, advice guidance and counselling, and referral-based intervention projects such as homelessness support, employment support, programmes to improve access to education and training, youth work in hospitals, and youth work in youth justice settings. All of these services are provided by a workforce dedicated to supporting young people to the best of their ability.

- 21 An important feature of these services is their support for the process of personal and social education, through which young people develop social and emotional capabilities, including determination, self-control, confidence, persistence, and self-motivation. These capabilities are important for their own right and for their significance in achieving other outcomes such as educational achievement and sustainable and rewarding employment. In other words, through these youth support services, youth workers and other professionals work with young people to achieve personal change in their lives, which itself can lead to change in their circumstances. For a minority of young people, these services can act as vital support and be life changing.

Case study 1: Effective work with young people with often chaotic lives by Llamau housing charity

Llamau is a well-established housing charity, receiving Welsh Government funding. It specialises in working with very vulnerable and often challenging young people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. These young people often face challenges such as substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental health issues, and learning difficulties.

The 'Learning 4 Life' pre-vocational training programme offers young people who have previously not succeeded in education the opportunity to engage with training and activities that will equip them for adult life. Llamau workers use youth work techniques to identify young people's multiple barriers to learning. The full extent of these barriers has often not been recognised by other professionals. Interventions are more effective because workers take time to get to know young people well so that all their needs can be addressed. Interventions are flexible and focused on the individual young person, which gives targeted support for the range of issues and situations that each young person finds themselves in.

Young people are introduced to core skills such as literacy, numeracy and other skills and, where suitable, these lead to Agored Cymru qualifications to equip them to progress to mainstream education or to work. Extended volunteering opportunities or arrangements with local employers give young people confidence through work experiences that would not normally be open to them.

The charity also uses its expertise in housing matters to support young people who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The charity is accountable to the Welsh Government for formal targets and the stories of individual young people are testament to the effectiveness of the work. Young people are consulted regularly about the usefulness of the provision, the impact of the programmes and their own experiences of the support provided by Llamau.

- 22 Youth support service managers, local authority officers, voluntary sector, and third sector providers continue to work to secure vitally important services in a difficult economic climate, and amid conflicting priorities. However, young people's

opportunities to use these services are not equitable, as the range of services, together with their spread, is reducing due to pressures on funding and competing policy priorities. The planning for the range, location, and accessibility of services is not co-ordinated well enough.

What is youth work?

'I go to my youth project every night. I play football, rounders, tennis, touch rugby, learn to cook, first aid, Xbox, darts and pool. We go on trips and residential away from the project and have lots of fun. I wish youth was open longer. Staff at the youth are always helpful and listen to us.'

- 23 Youth work is a skilled way of working, which helps young people learn about themselves, others and society through informal and non-formal educational activities. It is based on a clear set of values and underpinned by the voluntary nature of the relationship between the young person and the youth worker.
- 24 Skilled youth workers use a person-centred approach to get to know a young person's needs and provide activities and experiences, which help them to grow and develop. This approach has a two-fold benefit. It supports young people with their aspirations, their personal issues and barriers and widens horizons, whilst also playing an important role in supporting the Welsh Government's commitment to help people reach their potential. In this way, youth work, as a model for working with young people, contributes to a variety of Welsh Government strategies which:
- reduce poverty and inequality
 - increase levels of educational attainment
 - increase the number of young people in education, employment, and training
 - improve young people's economic and social wellbeing
 - address health and other inequalities
 - increase young people's participation in society
- 25 Youth work traditionally took place in open-access youth centres, youth projects or through outreach and detached street work, provided by both the voluntary sector and local authorities. Most local authorities still fund at least one 'youth centre' but buildings are often shared with other agencies. The work within these centres now often includes more 'specialist' provision targeted at needs of different groups. Traditional youth clubs still serve a valuable need in many areas of Wales. It is this provision of an environment that encourages young people to engage in face-to-face contact with others, to mix socially with other young people with whom they might not otherwise meet, and to take up physical activities that will improve their lives and contribute to mental and physical fitness and social cohesion. However, the activities that take place in youth clubs may need to change to serve better the needs of more IT-focused generations. Youth work now takes place in a wide range of projects and settings in addition to traditional work in youth clubs.

'My youth club is only open once a week which isn't enough and we sometimes need to speak to the staff more often than we can.'

What are youth support services?

- 26 The underlying rationale for the types of youth support services promoted and supported in Wales has changed since the Learning and Skills Act (Great Britain, 2000) and Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002). Despite the legislative emphasis on young people's individual rights and participation, and the inclusive definition of youth support services, increasingly the direction of policy and funding rules has changed from services that are based on the self-determined needs of young people to interventions that are decided by others. This change in focus tends to favour models of service provision, which are more about shorter, sharper-focused interventions. This promotes an emphasis on externally perceived shortcomings about individual young people, their life chances, life choices, and skill sets. Many youth workers struggle to align these newer models with that of professional youth work, which focuses more on helping young people identify their own needs and aspirations.
- 27 There is a movement away from the traditional youth service activities, which were predominantly community-based, drop-in and open-access. This is increasingly replaced by targeted provision, which takes place within a wide variety of settings, including formal education, and often in the most difficult circumstances and with young people with the most complex and challenging needs. This work is often focused on individuals who are then placed in 'artificial' groups, such as young people who find it difficult to thrive in traditional formal education settings.
- 28 There are a few examples of provision targeted at specific groups or communities that is successful in addressing the needs of these groups and supporting community cohesion. These services are generally provided by the voluntary sector or third sector, often in collaboration with local authorities. The funding for these services is usually provided through partnerships with a local authority, the Welsh Government, or charitable organisations.

Case study 2: Ethnic Minority and Youth Support Team (EYST) project

This voluntary project was set up in Swansea in 2005 by a group of ethnic minority young people to support black and minority ethnic young people to reach their full potential. The work has now expanded to Cardiff, Newport, Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire, Powys, and Wrexham. Funded by multiple funding streams workers now also support, refugees, and asylum seekers. The projects works in partnership with other agencies to provide support for:

- families
- education
- employment
- health
- community safety'
- 'Prevent' work

Refugee support for newly arrived families includes specific support for children to integrate into school and the community.

Staff and volunteers work on a variety of projects such as a Children in Need project called 'Belonging' to counter negative stereotypes and promote community cohesion. This project provides an open-access youth club for three nights a week. Another project 'Young, migrant and Welsh', funded by the Heritage Lottery, explores different stories of migration for young people who now see themselves as Welsh. In Cardiff, the project plans to increase work with young females to meet their need for information and skills to combat grooming.

All staff provide a written weekly report on the work done, which reviews targets and impact, and there are weekly team meetings to discuss the work. The project is planning to introduce opportunities for young people to achieve qualifications for the work they do.

EYST meets Welsh Government directives on local authority development of strategic equality plans and Welsh Government refugee policy but the method of working with young people follows the principles of Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002).

- 29 Often this provision is targeted at the most vulnerable and hardest to reach young people. Without these services, many young people would not be supported or have access to information, guidance, care or safe places to attend, where they can engage with youth workers.

Case study 3: Safer Wales – Street Life Project

This provider, funded by Children in Need, works with approximately 130 young sex workers over the age of 18 in Cardiff and is developing work in Swansea. All the young people worked with in the project have been known to social services in the past. The work is based on a youth work approach where needs and issues are developed with the young people, tailored to the individual's needs and personal circumstances. The workers build trust and empower the young people to achieve their personal goals. Many of these goals are small steps, but these enable the young people to build up to outcomes that are more significant.

The project also works closely with Cardiff's youth mentoring team to identify and support younger women aged 12 to 16 who are at risk of involvement or who are already involved in sex work. The team engage with these young women and then refer them on to more specific support, which is appropriate to their needs.

The project meets funders' criteria by offering access to Agored Cymru accredited training on healthy relationships, healthy living, and sexual health.

The project also works in Eastwood Park women's prison in Gloucester where roughly 50% of the women are Welsh.

An evaluation of current provision

A vision for and understanding of youth work

- 30 Too frequently, workers, managers, and policy makers confuse youth work as a methodology with youth work as a setting. This is not helpful and leads to confusion and conflict within the sector. For example, it is generally assumed that youth clubs are youth work, irrespective of the age of the young people present, or whether the staff engage with young people using the youth work methodology. Also, work with children aged under 11 years is often referred to inappropriately as youth work.
- 31 With the introduction of more targeted services based on a specific policy agenda, some academics, and professionals dispute that 'youth work' cannot take place if the relationship with the young person is not purely voluntary. It is argued that youth work is dependent on the young person 'choosing' to make contact with the worker and never 'required' to do so. However, it is the skills of the youth worker that support the young person in their choice to engage, and help them to make vital lifestyle choices, irrespective of the setting. For example, young people undertaking risky activities such as experimenting with harmful substances despite the health risks may not readily wish to change their behaviour. Presenting young people with talks and theoretical models rarely has a lasting impact. It is through the relationship of trust built up with a youth worker that young people are more likely to begin to acknowledge the impact of their behaviours, and begin to identify for themselves how they wish to move forward.
- 32 There is a common perception that, with the change in service provision and focus, the use of youth work as a methodology has declined, and is generally replaced by something with a more 'corrective' agenda. There is some truth in this. However, all youth support services visited for this survey demonstrate that the core principles of youth work remain firmly in place and inform the approaches taken by professionals when working with individuals or groups of young people. Youth work is still flourishing in a variety of different settings due mainly to the work and dedication of youth workers. Where youth work is the dominant model within a youth support service, those services are more relevant to young people, better able to identify the wider range of factors impacting on the young person, and better able to help young people achieve the goals they are encouraged to set for themselves.

A decline in range of youth support services

'Not enough people are aware of youth services – they aren't well advertised.'

- 33 Across Wales, there is a wide range of youth support services available to young people but many young people either do not know about them or cannot gain access to them. Many services provide effective targeted support to vulnerable young people who need it. However, the spread, location, and accessibility of these services are not co-ordinated well enough to ensure all young people have equal

access. Further, there is a lack of parity of service provision across the full age range of 11 to 25. Young people in rural areas where transport links are poor are particularly affected by this.

- 34 There has been a marked decline in open-access, community-based and street work provision where the relationship with a young person is on a purely voluntary basis. The benefits of these services for the young people who made use of them, and for the communities in which they live, are not being replaced. Many argue that the old-fashioned youth club with its recreational focus is not a good use of public resources. However, youth clubs are important settings where youth work can flourish. Youth clubs provide a range of learning opportunities for young people ranging from inter personal skills, planning and evaluation skills, sports arts and cultural skills, as well as the skills required to live independently. Youth clubs are often a melting pot for social cohesion where young people are introduced to new experiences and learn to understand people from other areas and cultures in a safe, controlled environment. Through shared activities, youth workers get to know young people well and through positive relationships help to address both personal and community issues. These settings and learning opportunities are now at risk and increasingly rare.
- 35 There is also a reduction in the focus on open-ended work with young people where youth workers work alongside young people, supporting and challenging them as they develop their own emotional resilience, judgement and decision making skills.
- 36 On the other hand, many local authorities also demonstrate innovative approaches to meeting the needs of some very vulnerable young people. For example, in response to difficulties faced by looked after children in securing employment, a few local authorities have built into their contractual arrangements with preferred suppliers, requirements for the provision of apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for these young people.
- 37 Currently, the majority of youth support services focus predominantly on addressing the needs of those aged under 18. Services to address the needs of those aged between 18 and 25 are fewer and less easily accessible. However, there are notable examples of pioneering and effective work with the 18 to 25 age group such as the 'Grassroots' project in Cardiff.

Case study 4: Grassroots project: targeted support for young people in Cardiff city centre

Based in the centre of Cardiff, this long-running project receives funding from Cardiff Council. It is also a registered charity. This gives the project the flexibility to seek additional funding and to meet wider agendas as well as fulfilling the policy requirements of the local authority. The project is one of a few in Wales that works with older young people.

The project is a combination of a drop-in facility with a high-quality music and digital arts studio and a venue for targeted support through both voluntary and mandatory relationships. The building offers a safe and nurturing space for young people who are reluctant to visit 'official' buildings

to seek support. Through integrated planning with Cardiff youth service, and partnership with a variety of agencies, very vulnerable young people can access a variety of services including:

- post-16 mentor / personal adviser with a formal caseload
- careers advice, support into work-based learning and further education
- job club
- social service interventions
- family support services
- mental health assessments
- support with community based punishments.

The project works in partnership with the outreach street team, @Street Wise Project, and the child sexual exploitation team who refer young people to the facilities. Workers are non-judgemental, skilled in dealing with conflict, violence and drug trafficking. They promote tolerance of different cultures and offer LGBTQIA support.

The project works with homeless and young rough sleepers in the city. It enables these young people to have a base where they can receive post or meet professionals. One talented young homeless woman runs a small greetings card company with the support of the project.

The centre is open one night for targeted support group for young people with Asperger syndrome who find friendship and support outside school. This has a positive impact on the young people's social behaviour and broadens their horizons.

The project leader is a Welsh speaker and there is good Welsh language capacity. The project also supports speakers of other languages, for example Romanian young men. The centre offers face-to-face work with young people in very challenging circumstances based on kindness and acceptance. Workers write to young people who have ended up in custody and support young parents through legal hearings affecting custody of their children.

Much of the work in the centre is now target driven and outcome focused to meet funding requirements. Management information systems are used to record, assessments, interventions and resolutions to provide important data to help target services.

Examples of interventions that change lives are illustrated by individual stories on their website.

The local authority youth service

- 38 As a consequence of policy changes, which impact on services for young people, local authority youth services have adapted how and what they provide. This means that there is no longer a consistent model for a youth service across local authorities in Wales.
- 39 Youth workers who work with young people on a mandated one-to-one basis report that they would value safe, young people friendly settings where they could either take young people in order to work with them or to refer them to where supportive work could be extended in their leisure time. Given the constraints on funding, it is unlikely that public providers will develop new open-access centres for young people in the near future. However, there has been a significant rise in commercial spaces where young people gather for activities such as bowling, trampolining and other leisure activities. Imaginative alliances between the public and private sector can open up opportunities for youth workers to engage with a wider range of young people and offer support, advice and guidance and referral to other agencies.
- 40 One good example of a more traditional youth centre is in Abertillery. This centre is managed by the youth service and has high quality facilities and a mix of open-access traditional youth work and targeted work. However, here as in many areas of Wales, it is often difficult for young people, especially those who are vulnerable or from disadvantaged backgrounds, to travel to centres.

The voluntary sector and third sector

- 41 The voluntary sector is picking up some of the deficit of open-access provision. In addition, there has been a growth in parent-led work with young people, and community enterprise or community-led projects to meet neighbourhood needs. There is a risk, however, that these 'stand-alone' clubs and activities are potentially unregulated, may use largely untrained volunteers, have limited youth work taking place and are only available to specific groups of young people.
- 42 The voluntary sector plays an invaluable and essential role in delivering youth support services. Key voluntary sector organisations such as the Urdd, Young Farmers, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, and the Prince's Trust provide important activities that develop young people's self-reliance and widen their experiences. Voluntary groups also provide innovative, targeted services for young people. For example, the Cwmbran Young People's centre provides a combination of open-access drop in youth clubs and entrepreneurial work that helps young people to develop their business skills, as well as preparation for work courses for young people who have found it hard to acquire employment.
- 43 The voluntary sector is also widely engaged in providing services that were previously managed by the local authority and led by employed youth workers. These services often include open-access youth clubs in local community settings such as church halls, and are run by parents and volunteers. The voluntary sector also provides services through joint working, partnership-based projects, and specialist commissioned work.

- 44 Voluntary organisations are less likely be invited to take an effective place around the strategic management table by local authorities. This means that planners do not ensure the voluntary sector is enabled to make an effective contribution to planning services. Local authorities tend to see their partnership work with the voluntary sector more positively than the voluntary sector bodies see it. Many voluntary sector youth support services consider that their contribution to local services and planning is generally restricted to commissioned activity, and that they have limited opportunities to be involved in strategic level discussions. They argue that the agenda has focused too much on local authority responsibilities, such as the needs of education and social services departments, and that the voluntary sector's work is seen as only valuable as far as it is able to contribute to this agenda.

Youth work in formal education settings

'Everyone can visit for emotional support or advice. They give careers advice too sometimes and they are mostly available to provide a listening ear for the students who need to be heard.'

- 45 The Welsh Government's strategy for youth work in Wales 2014-2018 (Welsh Government, 2014) included objectives about improving the quality and volume of youth work that takes place in schools and colleges. However, the focus on developing the provision of support services in formal education settings, based on youth work approaches, has been predominantly in schools. There is more limited work in further education colleges and work-based learning settings.
- 46 Most local authorities now have some form of school-based youth work intervention services. These services vary widely from one to one support in school including educational intervention and catch up and the delivery of personal and social education lessons to behavioural support, mentoring, and counselling. Youth workers often work with young people to give them the support to avoid exclusion, while on fixed-term exclusions or with young people in pupil referral units (PRUs) or those excluded from PRUs with the aim for reintegration into the education system. Many of the young people in these circumstances have significant multiple barriers to education, challenging behaviour and troubled family backgrounds. The staff involved in the delivery of this work vary across local authority models from professionally qualified youth workers to social workers, volunteers, and voluntary sector staff. In one high school, until recently youth workers regularly attended and provided support to pupils. However, since this support was scaled back, there has been a marked decline in pupil attendance and behaviour. The local authority is now looking into this and considering how to revise its provision for youth work in schools.
- 47 The impact of youth work approaches in formal education is mixed. Whether these programmes actually deliver 'youth work' as opposed to 'work with young people' depends upon several factors, not least the experience and qualifications of the workers, and also on how well the school understands and supports the youth work model. Where youth work principles and practice inform these services, schools, youth workers and young people report that this work is highly valued, improves young people's self-esteem, and helps young people identify and achieve their goals. Where this works well, youth work plays an invaluable part in supporting young

people who often have few options left to them, often helping them to remain at least in touch with formal education and out of the youth justice system. However, too often the youth work opportunities provided are restricted to intervention services.

- 48 When discussing youth work in schools, young people identified that they are concerned that the youth work provided in schools is targeted and not universal. They feel that they do not have enough open-access to engage with school-based youth workers, and that only young people referred generally have access to specific interventions.
- 49 Caerphilly's learning pathways project is typical of many projects in secondary schools in Wales. This project has been set up to support pupils who need access to alternative approaches to the curriculum. Teachers and youth workers work well together, to provide more bespoke opportunities for pupils who need this. They achieve this through changes to how things are taught and by the inclusion of more relevant content to the curriculum. This way of working has helped teaching staff across the school to incorporate some of the methodology from the project into their own mainstream teaching.
- 50 In Ceredigion, a secondary school employs a youth worker precisely because they are not a teacher, and therefore in a different professional role when working with pupils who need support. The school's pastoral teachers are constrained by timetable commitments, whereas the youth worker is freer to work with young people, as they need it. The male youth worker is better able to offer bespoke work, such as working with male pupils who lack strong male role models. Predominantly, pupils are from Years 9 and 10. Their engagement is voluntary. Work done is during the school working day, but not during core lessons. Most sessions are one-to-one or smaller group work if based around a social skills session or behaviour management.
- 51 There is less youth work taking place in further education colleges, although colleges are increasingly providing counselling and access to mental health services to meet a growing need. Work in post-16 education is usually linked into the youth engagement policy drivers. This is intervention work to meet employment agendas and, although it supports young people's training and addresses immediate barriers to learning, it is often not strictly youth work. This work is valuable and effective and there are a few innovative projects developing which bridge the gap between school and college for young people who struggle within traditional education. One example is Cardiff and the Vale College, where there is close co-operation with the local authority youth service to develop programmes for young people who would not otherwise access college provision.
- 52 Within the work based learning sector, a few providers are making good use of youth work principles to engage effectively with young people who find it difficult to participate in the world of work. For example, work-based learning providers such as Llamau housing charity, the Cwmbran Centre for Young People, the YMCA, Itec Training Solutions and Acorn Training all make use of youth work approaches. They provide sessions where young people are able to engage effectively with trained and qualified youth work staff, who are able to provide generic counselling, advice and guidance work, and bespoke packages of support to address housing issues, health and lifestyle issues and homelessness, as well as work that develops social skills through recreational activities.

‘There is a youth worker available in school but I do not meet the criteria. There is a youth club near to where I live but my mam does not allow me to go because the trouble makers go there.’

The use of the Welsh language within youth support services

- 53 Despite legal requirements for both Welsh and English to be treated equally in the provision of public services in Wales, there is no effective strategy to make this happen in youth support services. Most local authorities use their corporate Welsh medium policy and strategy to underpin what they expect from service providers in developing opportunities for young people to use their Welsh language skills. However, youth support service provision is generally subsumed into the generic Welsh in education strategic plan, which focuses primarily on formal education provision rather than informal and non-formal educational provision. As a result, young people’s Welsh language needs outside of formal education are not well evidenced, prioritised, or quality assured against a strategic plan. An important opportunity to develop the Welsh language skills of learners and normalise the use of the language across communities is missed.
- 54 All local authority youth services state their commitment to the provision of Welsh medium services to young people. However, what this actually means varies across Wales. In some instances, this means bilingual specialist provision at the point of delivery and, in other instances, access to Welsh speaking youth support staff on request. For most local authorities this also means monolingual Welsh-medium provision where the focus is generally on the use of the Welsh language by staff and young people who take part in the provision.
- 55 Welsh-medium youth support services are generally divided into two types. One type relates to services with a remit to develop Welsh cultural activities, and provided through the medium of Welsh. These are generally in the form of youth groups, clubs, and activities. These activities are well understood and catered for. The other type relates to youth support services designed to support young people’s needs or help them to address barriers to education and employment, which should be routinely bilingual. These services are less well thought through or supported by proactive planning and often not readily available through the medium of Welsh.
- 56 Most local authorities have commissioned voluntary sector organisations such as the Young Farmers, the Urdd, and Menter Iaith to take the lead on delivering Welsh-medium leisure and cultural provision. Although these services are generally of a high quality and highly valued by the young people who take part in them, they tend to appeal only to specific groups of young people and in specific geographical areas. Several years ago, some local authorities tried to move away from specialist Welsh provision and were attempting to introduce a more bilingual element to their youth clubs and youth support services. Funding restraints and the need to fulfil the requirements of Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 (National Assembly for Wales, 2011a) have led to a return to ‘outsourcing’ Welsh medium services to specialist providers. Other voluntary sector organisations (unless they have a specific role to do this) are less likely to provide services through the medium of Welsh.

- 57 All local authorities employ some Welsh-speaking staff. In some instances, the role of these staff is to both help develop Welsh-medium provision and respond to requests for Welsh language services. In other instances, the strategy is to strengthen generic staff teams through the inclusion of Welsh speaking staff.
- 58 Responses to Estyn's survey of youth support services (see appendix 3) showed that only 26% of respondents have been offered youth support services through the medium of Welsh (or a different language), if needed. Roughly, 42.5% reported that they did not need services in a different language.
- 59 Most providers report that young people generally do not ask for support services through the medium of Welsh. This statement however may mask institutional barriers, which make it difficult for young people to assert their wish for Welsh-medium services. There is a lack of support services such as counselling, help with mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse and behaviour management through the medium of Welsh, although this inevitably varies across predominantly Welsh and non-Welsh speaking areas within the country. However, when a young person is in trouble and in need of an immediate service, he or she is less likely to ask for a Welsh-speaking worker when they are aware that there may be none readily available and that there are long waiting lists for specialised support through the medium of Welsh. Whereas, in open-access and Welsh culture focused services, young people may make good use of their Welsh language skills. However, there remains much work to be done to develop strategic thinking around promoting and embedding Welsh-medium provision.
- 60 The 'splitting off' of Welsh-medium youth support services from mainstream to specific Welsh speaking groups for young people helps providers to meet the policy agenda to increase the use of the Welsh language, but it does not necessarily increase the amount of Welsh language or bilingual provision or result in parity of esteem between the two languages. It is an example of the polarisation of services, moving the focus for Welsh-medium away from open-access provision that could enhance social cohesion and specialist-targeted services for minority or vulnerable groups such as for LGBTQIA or minority ethnic young people, young offenders, disabled young people or those living in poverty. There are only a few important youth support services provided through the medium of Welsh or are available bilingually. For example, the national information and advocacy service, Meic, administered by Promo Cymru, is the helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. This is a listening service with information, useful advice, and support. This universal service has an attractive and accessible website, which is available through the medium of Welsh. However, many Welsh speaking young people live in the more rural areas where internet access is not always accessible or reliable.

Planning for youth support services

A lack of strategic direction

- 61 Although the underpinning philosophy of Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002), which is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child's entitlement agenda, is still relevant and its core principles widely accepted, the guidance on how youth services should be delivered is now out of date. It no longer reflects clearly enough young people's needs, or the Welsh Government's current policy directions, the range of youth support service work being delivered, or the roles of the various providers. The guidance is no longer used widely by the variety of youth support service providers for setting strategic direction or for developing the co-ordinated management of services.
- 62 The introduction of the children's agenda to what was initially a youth work agenda, lowering the age from 11 to new born, and the introduction of children and young people's partnerships, was designed to provide seamless delivery of services. However, this resulted in dissipated policy and deflected services and funding away from the needs of teenagers and young adults. Efforts were inevitably focused on specific groups often in the younger age group and more in need of urgent and specialist interventions. Despite attempts by those delivering services at local level, children and young people's partnerships, often hampered by competing interests, ceased to be effective, and in most cases were gradually disbanded. However, in many areas, alliances built during the operation of the partnerships still support effectively the delivery of youth support services.
- 63 Local authorities and other youth support service providers report that the lack of coherent national policy makes it difficult for providers and local authorities in particular to reflect Welsh Government priorities in their strategic planning and operational delivery. There is no integrated model that unifies the broad range of services or makes sure that there are sufficient and appropriate youth support services in Wales. As a result, planning is often disjointed, vague and nationally unaccountable and does not provide a navigable route for young people through the services available.
- 64 Recent changes in legislation have led to changes in service planning and governance structures at local authority level. The freeing up of partnership planning for local authorities has resulted in the development of more 'ad hoc' partnership arrangements. It is unclear how service providers fit in with each other, or with the Welsh Government's education, employment and anti-poverty programmes, and how well planning enables the needs of children and young people to be met.
- 65 However, youth support services, and local authority youth services in particular, are good at making things work even when policy direction appears unclear or contradictory. It is this ability to 'shape-shift' to meet changing policies and priorities that has enabled many youth work projects to survive, preserving a way of working with young people enshrined in Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002). In spite of this resilience, there is a general lack of

understanding of the positive power and impact of the youth work model among policy makers and well-intended youth policies are often pushed to the bottom of the pile when resources are scarce.

Local planning

‘There isn’t that much about now, the youth club I used to go to has closed and some youth clubs can be too snobby.’

- 66 Young people are not assured of access to the comprehensive offer to them set out in the government’s ‘Wales Charter for Youth Work’ (Welsh Government, 2016). Local planning for youth support services is not based on the range of opportunities this charter seeks. There is little if any evidence that local authorities are using this charter to inform their service planning or evaluation. The poor use of the charter is a missed opportunity for both local authorities and the Welsh Government in their development of youth support services and embedding youth work within these services as the key model for delivering high quality provision.
- 67 Previously, young people’s partnerships set a promising precedent for effective co-operation and partnership working to deliver a variety of services to support young people through the transition from teenage years to adulthood and to help them play an active role in their communities and wider society. These partnerships made a genuine attempt to take into account the needs of all young people aged 11 to 25 and to meet these needs where they could. More recently, planning processes do not do enough to make youth support services easily available to young people. Despite the policy emphasis on targeting vulnerable young people, services are often not accessible to those young people who are particularly vulnerable disadvantaged or marginalised, many of whom do not know where to find support.
- 68 The infrastructure to provide meaningful activities, which support positive activities for young people, varies greatly across Wales. Generally, when these services are provided through co-operation with services such as community policing, housing and leisure work with young people, they are more effective.
- 69 A core feature of Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002), which required the local co-ordination of services against identified need, is not in place. It appears that many services are developed through a reactive process, rather than as a planned and strategic roll out of provision. In particular there is little formalised planning to take into account young people’s need for joined up services, where young people live close to local authority boundaries, and use services across these. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (National Assembly for Wales, 2015) provides a useful context through which local authorities and their Public Service Board (PSB) partners are beginning to re-identify key priorities for young people.
- 70 Current local authority planning generally follows a common model, with the PSBs providing a top-level single plan, leading to a corporate improvement plan. The priorities identified in the improvement plan form the template for performance management of service areas. These priorities then impact on budget setting.

Service improvement plans are linked to corporate cross cutting themes as well as to direct lines of provision. Frequently however, these plans do not have a young person centred focus. It is often not clear what status is given to the inclusion of youth support services in this structure or how these services are valued and subsequently funded.

- 71 Most local authorities under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (National Assembly for Wales, 2015) are making increasing use of board structures to drive forward cross cutting initiatives, and to provide an internal accountability structure. These initiatives focus frequently around themes, some of which may be targeted at specific groups of citizens, or at neighbourhood level populations. The identification of young people's needs and local authority youth service provision are generally bundled up within these cross cutting initiatives. However, as a consequence, young people as a specific group with their own particular set of needs are potentially lost within this wider and more generic planning.
- 72 Since the demise of the children and young people's partnerships, many local authorities are developing multi-disciplinary teams of professionals to deliver a range of more integrated services at local level. This has the potential for closer working between professionals and clearer pathways for young people to a wider range of services. There is an increasing crossover between professional support staff in local authority services focused on supporting young people. Where the range of services for young people is widened across professional boundaries through co-operative work between local authority and voluntary youth services with schools, and social services provision, this crossover raises both benefits and risks. For example, the risk is that the use of other professional models and methodologies can divert flexible educational youth services into more tightly targeted preventative work with young people. However, it is within this type of work that the youth work model can make a valuable contribution to young people. For example, Swansea youth service has managed to introduce youth work methodologies in the targeted services it provides in partnership with the local voluntary sector and with social services. As a consequence, those partners are increasingly adopting youth work methodologies.
- 73 In Pembrokeshire, an integrated team of professionals are jointly responsible for youth service and youth justice services. These structured approaches to joint working help to identify a wider range of factors that affect a young person's life, and make effective links for the young person between the various bodies offering support.
- 74 The links into local structures for managing working with families and with young people's parents can also be helpful but deflects away from the interpretation of youth work as centred entirely on working with the young person. There is a risk that work with the wider family takes resources away from working with the young person and loses focus on the individual.

Case study 5: Wrexham refocuses its youth support services

Wrexham local authority has just completed the re-shaping of its youth provision, retaining a wide range of both targeted and open-access delivery.

The council had already mapped the range of provision in the area; considering demographic data, talking to young people and discussing the reshaping of broader youth support services.

The council is developing a youth support services network group to consolidate the good partnership working that is taking place, including with local community groups, town and community councils, health and wellbeing services and work-based learning. The council will keep oversight of any commissioning arrangements.

The range of youth service delivery includes the Inspire hospital youth work team. The local authority is developing opportunities for older young people, including working with the adult learning partnership to share its resources.

One community council has agreed to fund four nights of youth work in its locality including a mix of building-based, outreach and street work and special projects.

Local youth workers link with the local authority restorative justice team within the youth justice service to manage emerging issues in communities.

The council is developing its own sets of measures to record the impact of provision and plans to roll out the Quality Mark for youth work across the network of services.

There is now a perception across the community that the youth service is much more agile and able to respond to the needs of both young people and the community.

Funding and resources

- 75 Youth support services are defined under education legislation, and the local authority youth service is funded from education spending through the revenue support grant. However when youth services are located elsewhere in a local authority's structure many directors of education struggle to apply an appropriate corporate oversight. This is because of pressing demands from other important education services.
- 76 Most local authorities and other youth support service providers report that uncertainties about funding limit their flexibility to prioritise work in their locality. It is difficult to judge the degree to which this arises from the current range of Welsh Government guidance, or whether this reflects a lack of confidence among managers in local authority and voluntary sector youth support services. However, the local assessments and strategic plans currently being produced by local authorities and their strategic partners in response to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (National Assembly for Wales, 2015) provide a rich ground for this to be addressed. Providers argue that there should be greater flexibility for them to direct resources to local issues and priorities, as long as this remains consistent with the higher principles behind the national policy or strategy and that the financial resources can be justified.

- 77 All local authorities work in partnership with the voluntary sector in the provision of either joint work or commissioned work. Partnership working is generally made up of key stakeholders for services to the 0-25 age group. Where overarching partnership boards have been retained, the membership can be wide ranging and include partners such as the voluntary sector, the police, higher education and further education providers. However, as a consequence of the removal of the requirement for children and young people's partnerships, arrangements for co-operation are inconsistent across Wales.
- 78 The Welsh Government's Families First programme strongly supports local authority youth service project work, through shared working and funding. However, this has an impact on the age spread of the services provided with local authority youth services, often diverting time and staff resources from youth work into work with children aged under 11.
- 79 Many funding streams, such as grants from the Welsh Government and the National Lottery, have performance targets and spending criteria, which focus on tightly defined targets including qualifications and employment outcomes. This means that those youth support services working with the very vulnerable young people face additional difficulties in both securing funds and accounting for how they have used them. This is because frequently these most vulnerable young people need a lot of support work in order to help them move into a place where they are ready to engage in learning or employment. However, that support work is rarely covered in the spending criteria, which focus on outcomes and education targets.
- 80 A substantial number of youth support service projects are financed with European Union funding. It is unclear how these projects will be continued when the funding runs out in 2020.

Consultation and participation: young people's role in planning services

- 81 Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) stipulates that young people should be consulted about issues that affect them. Young people's rights to be consulted and have a say in the youth support services provided are generally well understood and respected by providers.
- 82 During the late 1990s and the first decade of the 21st Century, local authorities placed a strong emphasis on the development of local youth forums. These forums were used to consult with young people locally on a variety of issues such as local leisure and sport services, transport issues, open spaces and safety for young people, and to inform planning. Although many local forums remain, and a few local authorities champion the youth forum movement, the emphasis on forum activity has declined.
- 83 The strategy for the Welsh Government's engagement with children and young people is unclear. The Welsh Government ceased funding Funky Dragon, which was the Youth Assembly for Wales, in 2014. It is now consulting on plans to establish a new youth parliament. Over the last few years, the Welsh Government has run a series of consultation events called 'The Real Conversation' where young people are encouraged to give their views. However, these events are not exclusive to the 11 to 25 age group and it is unclear how their views are taken into account.

- 84 In 2005, the Welsh Government introduced a statutory requirement for all maintained schools in Wales to establish a school council to consult with pupils. The schools Council (Wales) Regulations (National Assembly for Wales, 2005) was followed by the Pupil Participation Project in 2010. Estyn has reported on pupil participation in schools in a report Pupil Participation: a best practice guide (Estyn, 2016).
- 85 Both local authority managers and voluntary sector providers now include young people in the development of services in a variety of different ways. The consultation models used and the level of contributions and breadth of consultation vary widely, ranging from formal representative models to social media based models.
- 86 Generally, managers and elected members are more likely to draw assurance that they are consulting well from the fact of having events or processes in place, rather than taking an evaluative approach on their impact. Professional youth work staff are more demanding, and are more likely to seek out ways to ensure ongoing dialogue with young people either individually or in groups, and to provide feedback on the outcomes of the views they have shared.
- 87 However, there is no overall strategic plan to give young people equality of access to consultation mechanisms in order to have their views heard, and the quality and impact of the processes to capture these views are not well measured.

Planning the training of youth workers

- 88 Professionals who deliver youth support services need a variety of skills that will enable them to deal with young people's personal issues and national concerns. Examples include identifying human trafficking and addressing radicalisation through the Prevent agenda (Great Britain, 2011), as well as supporting young people through other important issues such as health and lifestyle choices, accessing education and employment, and securing housing. Youth workers operate in environments that range from the controlled institution of a school, to the rough living on city streets, to isolated rural areas. The role of the youth worker besides providing open-access facilities now includes teaching citizenship, personal and social education and literacy and numeracy in schools, and working at street level with young people who have severe mental health issues, are homeless or are sex workers.
- 89 Wales has a long-standing model for youth work training known as the 'Coherent Route for the training of youth workers'. Currently, aspects of youth worker training across the range of qualifications in the 'Coherent Route' do not reflect well enough the roles of the modern youth worker. The training does not fully equip youth workers to meet the challenges of supporting young people with complex needs in twenty first century society and prepare them for the wide variety of settings where youth work takes place. However, youth work training does emphasise the core values and principles that form the basis for working in youth work settings. Workers report that it is these core values that sustain them in difficult, challenging, and sometimes upsetting circumstances.
- 90 A minority of trainee youth workers struggle to secure appropriate work placements through their universities that will give them the experiences they need to carry out

their role. One example of a relevant placement is the University of South Wales partnership with the voluntary sector in Newport, where youth work students are able to experience real street work with those in the sex industry. The needs of youth workers for high quality ongoing training and development, and the needs of the youth work training sector, were not reflected in the most recent national youth work strategy for Wales. It is unclear whether these needs will be addressed in the new strategy.

- 91 The requirement for degree level training and the registration of youth workers with the Education Workforce Council has led to a noticeable improvement in the quality of the management and delivery of youth work since the last young people's partnership inspections in 2012. The youth workers observed and interviewed for this report demonstrate a high quality work with young people and are dedicated, pragmatic, and practical. They are self-reflective about their performance and fully aware of the societal influences and the policy and financial constraints to delivery.

Quality assurance and accountability

- 92 The arrangements for the quality assurance of youth support services vary considerably. There is too little clarity about how youth support services are held to account for the work they do. The primary focus of accountability is predominantly to those providing funding and often based on head counts rather than outcomes.
- 93 Since Extending Entitlement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002), there has been no real clarity from the Welsh Government about what it wishes to achieve from its policies, strategy and funding. It is also unclear what role those who deliver at local level have in deciding how priorities will be met and measured. The youth related Welsh Government policies developed with an 'entitlement' agenda in the early 2000s and policies that are more recent are all measured differently. It is difficult to map across these the expected outcomes for young people. These policy differences also reduce intelligence about the impact of services on individuals or groups of young people and hinder the development of effective and common impact or outcome measures.
- 94 There is a lack of meaningful communication and direct accountability between the Welsh Government and youth support services providers for the work they do and the outcomes they achieve (both for and with young people), and the impact of these services on young people. Despite long consultation with youth support service providers there has been no effective nationally agreed measures for this provision, with no in-depth analysis of their impact and output.
- 95 There is a debate about measuring the impact of youth work. This includes the long held argument that the impact of youth work can only be measured years after it has taken place when young people mature and realise the effect of the support and experiences they were given when younger. Professionals have yet to find an effective way to measure the impact of government policies or to hold providers accountable for funding whilst also judging the effectiveness of interventions on the young people themselves.
- 96 The Welsh Government's annual audit of local authority youth services does not capture well enough the range of services and types of provision now delivered in a local area, through a local authority youth service and its partners. The audit is not effective in holding providers and local authorities to account for all the work they do, as it does not capture the range of youth support services work of which a local authority youth service is one part. The criteria used for data capture in the audit is not defined tightly enough to ensure valid comparison between local authorities, how they are resourced, and what they say they provide. The audit's focus excludes forms of youth work, which fall outside the traditional local authority youth service such as work in relation to housing young people, work delivered through youth offending teams and other diversionary work, and school-based projects.
- 97 Outside of the revenue settlement grant and other smaller government grants for youth work activities, most youth support services (both provided by the statutory and

voluntary sector) are funded by European Union (EU) grants or charitable funding such as from Children in Need and the National Lottery. All projects report to the particular criteria of the grant even if the funding only supports part of the work with young people. Where funding requires proof of qualifications, this can be difficult when working with young people with multiple barriers to learning, especially in the earlier stages of engagement. This is particularly the case when demonstration of higher levels of skills is required to account for funding. Providers argue that there should be greater flexibility for them to direct resources to local issues and priorities, as long as this remains consistent with the higher principles behind the national policy or strategy. However, providers at local level often find innovative ways to meet funding requirements.

- 98 In order to retain some level of community-based provision, many local authorities have funded third sector organisations to provide this type of work and including Welsh medium provision. It remains unclear whether local authority arrangements behind this form of contracted provision are subject to rigorous quality assurance and strategic planning processes.
- 99 The Welsh Government's Quality Mark uses self-assessment and peer-review to drive improvement. A minority of local authorities have used the Quality Mark for youth work as the basis for self-evaluation and planning. However, the number is steadily increasing. Where a local authority has undertaken this Quality Mark, they are better able to evidence the impact and quality of the services they provide. The number of voluntary bodies participating in the system is growing. The youth support services network wishes to roll out the use of the Quality Mark across providers. However, whilst the process supports good self-evaluation, it does not lead to robust external accountability.
- 100 The degree to which youth support services deliver young people's rights or the opportunities available to young people to exercise their rights to participation is generally not measured actively enough by services, managers, or strategic planners.

Appendix 1: The history, thinking, and legislation behind the current delivery of youth support services in Wales

Rationale for working with young people

Society has been concerned about young people, their challenge to, and impact on the wider community and how their needs might be addressed for millennia. Documented concerns about the behaviour and social education of young people can be traced back to Greek and Roman times. There has long been a tension between regarding young people as a problem to be contained and recognising their rights as individuals.

The need to invest in young people as the building blocks of society runs in tandem with the development of education policy in the United Kingdom. Following the introduction of mass education in the nineteenth century, youth services or activities to educate and extend young people's development outside of formal education have generally been a matter for education legislation. In the twentieth century, the Thompson Committee recommended the provision of 'social education as universal service to all young people'. (Department for Education and Science, 1982)

In 1992 the National Youth Agency stated that youth work should be: 'educational, participative, empowering, informal, responsive and based on secure relationships and should provide information, advice and counselling to young people between the ages of 11 to 25, with those in 13 to 19 age group being the priority' (National Youth Agency, 1992).

The Wales Youth Agency used these principles to pioneer the first Welsh national curriculum for youth work (Wales Youth Work Partnership, 1990), accompanied by guidance on standards for delivery in 2002. The Wales Youth Agency was subsumed into the Welsh Government in 2006.

The Youth Work National Occupational Standards (2012) identified that the key purpose of youth work is to:

'Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social, and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential'. (P.4).

Legislation and policy relating to youth support services

Youth work and its varied means of delivery, youth support services and the youth service remained as education policy matters under devolved government in Wales. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (Great Britain, 2000) forms the current legislative basis for the provision of youth support services. In preparation for this act, the Welsh Government had already consulted about services to support young people and published draft directions and guidance in 2001.

This guidance subsequently became *Extending Entitlement*, published in 2002, which set out the principles, policy, and guidance for providing youth support services (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002). This policy includes 10 universal entitlements for young people based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The guidance requires youth support services for young people aged 11 to 25 to be delivered by a variety of agencies, including the voluntary sector, through young people's partnerships (YPPs). Partnerships were roughly based on local authority geographical areas. Policy and legislation in Wales generally define young people as aged between 11 and 25, with an emphasis for the youth service on ages 14-19.

In 2002, the Welsh Assembly Government developed its seven core aims as the foundations for securing the implementation of policies for children and young people aged 0-25. The *Framework for Partnership* widened the initial policy for young people's services to be delivered through young people's partnerships and introduced children and young people's partnerships (CYPPs) covering ages 0-25 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2000).

In 2004, the Welsh Assembly Government decided that, whenever it developed policies for children and young people, it would do so with the aim of achieving for them the rights, which are set out in the UNCRC. The *Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011* (National Assembly for Wales, 2011b) requires Welsh Government ministers to consider children and young people's rights when considering legislation and policy. The *Children's Rights Scheme 2014* (Welsh Government, 2014b) further strengthened this approach by setting out the arrangements for Welsh Ministers to comply with the measure.

In 2013, the Welsh Government produced the *Youth Engagement and Progression Framework*, which requires a more targeted approach to services to young people (Welsh Government, 2013a). The guidance aims to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) by providing support for young people in danger of disengagement and to strengthen their employability skills.

In 2014, the Welsh Government published a *Programme for Children and Young People*, which amalgamates legislation and policies to support children and young people within its main *Programme for Government* (Welsh Government, 2015a).

In 2015 the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act* (National Assembly for Wales, 2015) effectively ended CYPPs by subsuming them into Local Service Boards. These boards in turn became statutory Public Service Boards (PSBs) and local partnerships for delivering youth support services began to disappear.

The *National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-2018* produced by the Welsh Government reaffirms a commitment to youth work (Welsh Government, 2014a). It states that:

'Youth work provision is offered through youth services. Youth work is an intrinsic element of youth support services, which seek to ensure that all 11 to 25-year-olds, have the services, support and experiences they need to achieve their potential. In Wales, the youth service is a universal entitlement, open to all young people.'

Through the Learning and Skills Act 2000, section 123(1), Welsh Ministers have directed local authorities to provide, secure the provision of, or participate in, the provision of youth support services' (Welsh Government, 2014, p.5).

In 2015 the Welsh Government introduced a Quality Mark for youth work (Welsh Government, 2015b), and the 2016 Charter for youth work sets out that young people can expect good access to services through both the Welsh and the English language (Welsh Government, 2016).

Wider legislation and policy

National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-18 (Welsh Government, 2014a) is aimed at organisations providing statutory and voluntary youth services for young people aged 11 to 25. The strategy reflects European agendas for the integration of young people into society and their equality of access to education and the labour market. The strategy states that the actions of the Welsh Government and its partners should support six strategic outcomes:

- Youth work provision is accessible to all young people in Wales and acts as an effective preventative service, supporting young people's engagement and progression in education and training in preparation for employment and wider adult life
- Open-access provision is used effectively to engage and signpost young people requiring more targeted support
- Youth work provision interacts effectively with formal education providers to support positive outcomes for young people and support a sustained reduction in the numbers of young people not in education, training or employment
- Statutory and voluntary youth work provision is aligned and presented to young people in a coherent offer
- Youth work provision strategically contributes to the Welsh Language Strategy and creates opportunities for the use of Welsh in social settings
- Youth work provision evidence how it supports cross-governmental priorities (including UNCRC, education, health and wellbeing, tackling poverty)

The Strategy sets out six strategic goals:

- Introduce a National Outcomes Framework for youth work, providing a sound basis for accountability, benchmarking and results
- Raise the quality of youth work provision offered to young people across Wales
- Increase the proportion of professionally qualified youth workers
- Establish a forum to advise Ministers on the implementation of the strategy, progress strategic debates on delivery and review evidence on the impact and reach of youth work provision nationally
- Increase opportunities for young people to achieve a nationally recognised accreditation to support their development and employability
- Increase numbers of young people accessing non-formal and informal education work

The Wales Charter for Youth Work (Welsh Government, 2016) sets out what young people can expect from youth services across Wales. In its *Developing Youth Work in Wales* document, the Welsh Government states that all young people will be entitled to easy access through the medium of English or Welsh to:

- safe, warm, well-equipped meeting places providing opportunities for sustained relationships, exciting leisure-time activities in arts and sport, and new experiences which widen their horizons
- opportunities to take part in outdoor adventure and in residential and international experiences
- opportunities to participate in decision-making via informal and formal structures for youth engagement locally and nationally (e.g. young mayors, youth councils, and Senedd): such arrangements to have clear references to participation standards; to be based on UNCRC principles; and seek to engage young people in shaping and scrutinising the services which affect them
- information, guidance and support on matters which concern them, including employment, housing and mental wellbeing; the service can be accessed both through digital media and via trusted and trained adults
- encouragement to learn more about their own culture and the cultures of other people
- co-ordinated provision by youth workers in all secondary schools and colleges, extending the ‘pupil offer’ and thus enriching the formal curriculum and supporting personal and social development
- opportunities to be civic activists e.g. by volunteering
- recognition and / or accreditation for their achievements in personal and social development both in schools and colleges and in the community

The Welsh Government’s **Child Poverty Strategy** (Welsh Government, 2015c) reinforces the Welsh Government’s goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

Communities First (Welsh Government, 2017a): a £31m per annum grant funded programme launched in 2001. The programme provides funding for Lead Delivery Bodies to support people of all ages in deprived communities through three strategic objectives: prosperous communities, learning communities, and healthier communities. Communities First was relaunched in 2012 to give it a sharper focus on helping people into work. The programme is due to end by March 2018.

Families First (Welsh Government, 2017b): aims to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families by focusing on intervention, prevention and providing support for whole families rather than individuals through local multi-agency working.

Supporting People: the Welsh Government provides £124.4m for the Supporting People programme (Welsh Government, 2017c) each year. The programme provides housing related support to vulnerable people and supports more than 57,000 people each year.

Learning Pathways Policy 2010: (National Assembly for Wales, 2004) is aimed at transforming learning for 14 to 19-year-olds by focusing on the needs of individual learners and introduces Learning Coaches to support young people in their learning.

The Welsh Government's Policy statement on higher education (Welsh Government, 2013) sets out the Welsh Government's vision for higher education until 2020. Priorities include innovation and economic growth; enhancing employability; developing international connections; promoting student mobility; widening access to higher education; joining up post-16 education; improving student experience; developing new models of delivery; and delivering in partnership with students.

Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015) In March 2014 Professor Graham Donaldson conducted a fundamental review of curriculum and assessment arrangements from foundation phase to key stage 4. His report sets a radical agenda for the reform of the school curriculum. The Donaldson report's recommendations for the improvement in how children in Welsh schools are taught and assessed, includes experiential learning models similar to those, which underpin youth work.

Education in Wales: Our national mission 2017-2021 (Welsh Government, 2017d) This action plan focuses on raising standards for all, reducing the attainment gap, and delivering an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence.

Funding

The Welsh Government funds youth work and youth support services through the **Revenue Support Grant** to Local authorities. These funds are not hypothecated to youth support services and is often spent on other services that may or may not directly benefit young people. The Welsh Government provides additional grants for youth work:

- **Youth Work Strategy Support Grant (ends March 2018)** Money to local authorities to support open-access provision.
- **National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant.** Voluntary organisations compete for this funding.
- **Grant funding to support Council for Wales, Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS)**

Communities First Funding. A major contributor to the funding of many youth support service projects, and this ends in 2018. Although a few projects have secured limited funding beyond 2020, many projects are now at serious risk.

The total income for youth work in Wales in 2016-2017 was £31.3 million. This income has decreased notably over recent years. The majority of this funding is spent on staff.

The Children, Young People, and Education Committee Inquiry 2016 expressed concern about the decline in funding for youth work and a review of funding is now underway. In response, the Cabinet Secretary for Education has committed to a review of youth service funding.

Recent funding cuts have resulted in a decline in the numbers of youth work staff and youth work managers working in local authorities in Wales. Between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the numbers of delivery staff fell by 19% (full time equivalent).

Appendix 2: Demographic data for young people

The total population of Wales is currently 3.1 million and is expected to increase by 5% in 2039 to 3.3 million (Welsh Government, 2015d; Welsh Government, 2018a).

Table 1: Population and population projections of young people in Wales

Age Range	Population 2016 (%)	Population 2016	Population projection 2039	2039 Projected % change
11-25	18%	568,000	569,000	No change
11-18	9%	274,000	295,000	plus 7%
19-25	9%	294,000	275,000	minus 7%

Sources: Welsh Government, 2015d & Welsh Government, 2018a

11 to 25-year-olds make up around 18% of the population of Wales, with 9% from the 11-18 age bracket and 9% from the 19-25 age bracket. The percentage of 11 to 18-year-olds is set to rise, with a projected 7% increase by 2039.

Table 2: Number of learners in Wales, 2017

Cohort	Age range	Number of young people
Learners in school	All school age	467,000
	11-15	158,000
	16 and over	26,000
Learners in further education	16-24	64,000
Learners in work-based learning	16-24	28,000
Not in education, employment, or training	16-18	9,000 (9%)
	19-24	35,000 (14%)

All figures rounded to the nearest thousand

Sources: Welsh Government, 2017e, 2018b, 2018c, & 2018d

- In 2017, there were almost 6,000 looked after children in Wales (Welsh Government, 2017f)

- There are 88,000 11 to 25-year-olds accessing local authority youth provision in Wales; 16% of all 11 to 25-year-olds (Welsh Government, 2017g)
- Around 105,000 school-aged children have additional learning needs (23%) (Welsh Government, 2017h)
- Over 63,000 school-aged children are fluent in Welsh (16%) (Welsh Government, 2017i)
- In March 2017, 25,700 young people under 18 were sentenced in the criminal courts in England and Wales, 2,200 fewer than when compared to the previous year (Youth Justice Board, 2018)

Appendix 3: Survey of Youth support services for young people

Estyn conducted an online survey of young people about the services they receive. The development of this survey was supported and promoted by Children in Wales through focus groups. The survey contained a mixture of single answer and open questions and was open between January and June 2017.

A total of 230 young people responded from across Wales. Just over 50% of the respondents were aged between 15 and 19 and 23% were aged between 20 and 25. Over 61% of respondents were female and 38% male. Two hundred and ten of the respondents identified their ethnic group as white and 10% were Welsh speakers. Over 70% are in education or training and 17% are in employment or volunteering. Only 12% considered themselves to have a disability and 18% identified as having special educational needs.

These figures demonstrate that the majority of the people who responded will not be included in many of the types of targeted youth support services described in this report. It is very encouraging that the young people who responded were receiving a variety of support with issues such as feelings, worries, and mental health, self-esteem, relationships, sexual health and emotional support.

Over 43% of the subset of young people who have received youth support services have received volunteering opportunities and nearly 40% citizenship, decision-making or opportunities to express their views. Given the funding cuts to general activity-based youth support services, it is interesting that 56% had attended youth clubs, 38% taken part in outdoor activities and 42% are involved in drama and music activities. Despite considerable effort and resources directed towards the employment agenda, only 27% have had help with employability skills. Several written responses identified this as an area in which they would like to receive more support.

The majority of young people found the services they received were good or excellent (53% excellent), and 74% would recommend services to other young people. Only 14% reported that it is difficult to access support near to where they live.

A majority of respondents felt that they had been meaningfully consulted about services. Over half of the respondents attending school or college have the benefit of youth workers based in their institution. Young people describe a wide range of support services provided by these workers.

In response to the question about what services young people would like to be available, the answers were generally related to wanting more of or better access to the services that are available. However, there were requests for more mental health services, sexual health services such as the C-Card, help with transport, financial, and jobs advice, access to gym and sports facilities, and more youth clubs open for longer hours.

Of the small number of young people who responded as not having accessed any form of youth support service (28), 71% said that they did not know what support was available to them. Whilst 52% knew where to access youth clubs and 50% volunteering activities, 70% did not know how to get help with employability skills, 78% were unaware of opportunities to be involved in citizenship and decision-making or activities that allowed them to express their views, and 85% did not know how to get help with debt or money worries. Worryingly, 89% did not know how to get help with self-esteem issues, 82% with relationships, and 70% with substance and alcohol misuse. Of this group, 75% had never been asked their opinion about the range of services available to them and only 7% had been asked their opinion about services.

Although this is only a small snapshot of the experiences and views of young people in Wales, the responses support the issues discussed in this report.

Evidence base

The findings and recommendations in this report draw on:

- desk-based research into a variety of policies and legislation
- meetings with local authority chief executives, corporate officers, education officers, youth work managers and frontline youth work staff
- meetings with CWVYS, and members of the WLGA Principal Officer's group
- meeting with an higher education provider of youth work training
- visits to a wide variety of youth support services provision across Wales from the local authority sector, voluntary sector, schools, further education colleges and work-based learning providers
- conversations with young people taking part in the activities visited
- questionnaire results from 230 respondents to an online young people's survey conducted between January and July 2017

Estyn visited and interviewed the following bodies:

Local authorities:

- Merthyr Tydfil youth service; Blaenau Gwent youth service; Monmouthshire youth service
- Swansea local authority senior education managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Ceredigion local authority Chief Executive, Director of Education, senior education managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Powys local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Rhondda Cynon Taf local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Conwy local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, youth service managers; Wrexham local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Cardiff local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision; Caerphilly local authority Chief Executive, senior managers, and youth service managers; Pembrokeshire youth offending service managers, youth service managers, youth workers and various provision

Organisations

- WLGA; CWVYS; Principal Youth Officers Group; Cardiff and the Vale College; Pembrokeshire College

Youth support services

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Extending Entitlement Survey group; Wrexham Information Shop; Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST); Itec Training Solutions learning

centre Cardiff; Cwmbran Centre for Young People; YMCA Cardiff; YMCA Swansea; Llamau; GISDA; Abertillery Youth Centre; Positive Futures Group – Llanhilleth Industrial Workshop; Grassroots City Centre Youth Project; Fernhill Youth Project; Pupil Inclusion Project; Gabalfa Youth Centre; Cardiff Youth Mentors (pre 16 intervention and prevention); Full Circle Education CIC; Wales Young Farmers Clubs; Viva! Project; Urdd Gobaith Cymric rural Welsh arts; The Attic Youth Centre; University of South Wales, Youth Work Training Team; youth service work in Pembrokeshire FE College; youth service work in Sir Thomas Picton School; youth service work in Ysgol Maesydderwen; ABFABB – A Brighter Future Altogether, Benefiting Bridgend who work with LGBTQ young people; Safer Wales, and their work with victims of domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse, exploitation and hate crime

Glossary

C-card	A Public Health Wales approved scheme where young people aged less than 25 years can access free, confidential sexual health advice and free condoms from the Condom-Card (C-Card) Schemes across Wales. These schemes operate mainly from youth centres and voluntary organisations. See also www.friskywales.org
CWVYS	Council for Wales, Voluntary Youth Services funded by the Welsh Government to represent and support voluntary youth organisations at a national level
CYPPs	Children and Young People's partnerships. These partnerships were set up in 2002 based on the legislation in the Learning and Skills act 2000 and the directions and guidance in Extending Entitlement 2002. They effectively ended in 2015 when they were subsumed into the Wellbeing and Future generations (Wales) act 2015.
Children in Wales	Children in Wales is the national umbrella body for organisations and individuals who work with children, young people, and their families in Wales.
Formal, informal and non-formal education	<p>These terms, widely used in youth work policy and practice, arise from moves in UNESCO toward lifelong learning in the late 1960s and early 1970s.</p> <p>Formal education: the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through to university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.</p> <p>Informal education: the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment – from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media.</p> <p>Non-formal education: any organised educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.</p> <p>The distinction made is largely about setting and its impact on pedagogy and outcomes.</p>

Formal education is linked with schools and training institutions; non-formal with community groups and other organisations; and informal covers what is left, e.g. interactions with friends, family and work colleagues.

These definitions do not imply hard and fast categories, as there will be some overlap (and confusion) between the informal and the non-formal.

LGBTQIA	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex, asexual
MEIC	A bilingual information, advice and support service and website for young people in Wales
National Youth Agency	Set up in 1964, the agency supports and champions youth work in England.
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
Open-access provision	Youth provision that is open to all young people to attend voluntarily
Promo Cymru	A charitable body that works towards building positive change through meaningful conversations and digital technology
Public Service Boards (PSBs)	The purpose of Public Services Boards (PSBs) is to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being in its area by strengthening joint working across all public services in Wales.
Quality Mark	Developed by the Welsh Government: A set of indicators and quality standards that organisations can use to self-assess the quality and impact of their work with young people and develop plans for improvement.
The Real Conversation	These events, run by the Welsh Government, bring together young people, business leaders and other stakeholders to discuss specific issues.
The Third Sector	The part of an economy or society comprising non-governmental and non-profit-making organisations or associations, including charities, voluntary and community groups, and cooperatives
UNCRC and children's rights	In 1991, the UK Government adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). The UNCRC defines a child as a person under 18. The UN defines 'youth' and 'young people' as people between the ages of 15 and 24 but acknowledges that member states have different definitions.

Wales youth Agency	Funded by the Welsh Government, the agency supported both the voluntary and maintained sectors of the youth service to develop and improve the quality of youth work practice in Wales. It was subsumed into the Welsh Government in 2006.
Welsh in education strategic plan for local authorities in wales WESP	The school Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires all local authorities to prepare a plan detailing how it will contribute to achieving the outcomes and targets set out in the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy.
Young Wales	The website of the new children and young people's voice project in Wales
Youth	In Wales defined as young people between the ages of 11 to 25
Youth services	Youth services are generally defined as services, which support the personal and social development of young people through informal and non-formal education provision. Local authorities are the primary provider, although the voluntary sector has been providing these services for much longer. Local authorities have broadly provided two types of service: The first can be defined as 'open-access' (or 'universal') services, which include a range of leisure, cultural, sporting, and enrichment activities often based around youth centres, and generally provided in partnership with local communities. The second is more targeted provision for vulnerable young people, including neighbourhood and street work outreach teams, youth advice and guidance services, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services, sexual health services and homelessness support. Local authority youth service provision is overseen by local authority officers, but service delivery may also be contracted out to local voluntary or community groups and, occasionally, private contractors. This local authority provision is often referred to as 'the Youth Service'.
Youth support services	Under section 123 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the National Assembly may direct local authorities to provide, secure the provision of or participate in the provision of youth support services. "Youth support services" means "services which in the opinion of the Assembly will encourage, enable or assist young persons (directly or indirectly) – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to participate effectively in education and training, (b) to take advantage of opportunities for employment, or (c) to participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities".

Directions may require local authorities and others involved in the provision of youth support services to have regard to guidance issued by the National Assembly.

A Direction entitled the Youth Support Services Directions (Wales) 2002 has been given to all the local authorities in Wales.

A wide range of organisations provides youth support services. These include local authority provision, local voluntary sector providers, and national voluntary / third sector providers.

Youth work

Youth work is a way of working with young people that is educative, expressive, participative, and empowering.

It is a recognised methodology, which is underpinned by National Occupational Standards, regulated professional qualifications, and a defined ethical base. The 2016 National Occupational Standards for Youth Work state that:

“The key focus of youth work is to enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society, and to reach their full potential.”

Youth work is marked by key characteristics such as

- the voluntary engagement with young people in the work/ service provided
- work that is focused upon either the individual young person or groups of young people, and their needs, and that starts from where the young people 'is/are at'
- subject from 2017 to regulation by the Education Workforce Council (EWC) Wales

Young people's Partnerships (YPPs)

Young People's Partnerships; the forerunner to CYPPs (see above)

Numbers – quantities and proportions

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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