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STATE OF *PLAY*

LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING OF YOUTH SERVICES IN 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2026

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YMCA believes in fairness and opportunity. There are essential building blocks for a full and rewarding life: a safe home; acceptance; guidance; friendship; physical and mental health; academic support; employment skills; and access to real opportunities. Many young people have never known these things; other people have lost one or more as they grew up, but we all need them. All of us. At YMCA, we provide these critical foundations for a fresh, strong start for young people and a better quality of life in the community.

YMCA is the oldest charitable provider of youth services in England and Wales. Across the two countries, we provide a safe space for 51,000 young people through our extensive youth services offering. We run 237 youth clubs every week, as well as targeted and detached youth work to 12,000 young people on their terms, adapting to their needs and interests.

About **Vestey Holdings**

Vestey Holdings is a fourth-generation family business comprising 16 businesses operating predominantly in the food industry. Their core activity remains rooted in providing quality, affordable food globally.

They endeavour to inspire young people to achieve their potential and are committed to raising awareness of the challenges confronting young individuals. It is, therefore, with immense pride, that they are sponsoring YMCA England & Wales' Youth Services Spending Research and Report for the third year. Through this sponsorship, they aim to ensure governments and institutions receive the necessary facts and insights to make well-informed decisions that will positively impact youth services.

Summary

01

Local authority expenditure on services for young people in England totalled £419m in 2024-25. This is a reduction of 10% from the previous year, the biggest annual decline in eight years.

02

This is a 76% real-terms decline since 2010-11, representing a loss of £1.3bn.

03

Local authority spending in Wales on services for young people was £47.1m – a 29% decline since 2010-11.

04

Spend per 5- to 17-year old on youth services was £46.32 in England, and £97.42 in Wales.

05

In Wales, the number of full-time equivalent youth workers increased 2% year-on-year to 815, while numbers stayed the same in England at 1686.

06

The number of local authority-run youth centres fell 12% year-on-year in England, and the total number of youth centres rose 3% in Wales.

07

One-in-twelve (8%) of local authorities in England reported not having any youth centres in their area.

08

More local authorities in England reported conducting needs assessments on services for young people's wellbeing in the last four years, up from 58% in 2023-24 to 68% in 2024-25.

09

However, a third (32%) of local authorities that had conducted a needs assessment did not know the amount of youth centres run by other organisations in their area.

10

Five-in-six (83%) local authorities in England consulted young people on youth provision in the last four years.

Introduction

For the last six years, YMCA has charted the decline of local authority expenditure on youth services since 2010. During that period, little has changed except the gradual chipping away of funding across England and Wales.

This year's report comes at an inflection point for the future of youth services in both countries. In December 2025, the Minister for Culture, Media and Sport announced the Government's National Youth Strategy for England – something YMCA had repeatedly called for in every annual iteration of this report. Its State of the Nation report, drawing insights from more than 14,000 young people, found that they wanted more spaces to spend time with friends, trusted adults, opportunities for skills, mental health support, and for their voices to be heard.¹ These are all things that youth services give, but as our previous work has shown, have been continually underfunded.

The Government's National Youth Strategy pledges that to create this future for young people, decisions must be made within their community, and that it will “rebuild the role, capability, and leadership of local authorities in the youth sector and take a place-based approach to funding to empower local communities in delivering their local youth offers”.² Given that more than £1bn in local authority funding of youth services has been lost in the last 15 years, the re-commitment to the role of local authorities in youth provision targeted to the need of each area is encouraging to see.

Of the £500m of funding attached however, there is only £60m in revenue funding designated for the delivery of youth services, with funding available from April 2026. The commitment to young people is apparent, but time will tell as to how well this new strategy will allow local authorities to reallocate more funding to the young people in their area.

If adhered to, it will be some years until this new direction and investment become visible in local authorities' reported expenditure – in 2026-27 figures at the earliest. The Government's commitment to young people is long overdue and laudable, but spend on youth services in the meantime may still look and be troublingly low.

¹ Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Youth Matters: State of the Nation*, 10 December 2025

² Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy*, 10 December 2025

The figures in this year's report reflect the 2024-25 financial year, most of which was under the new Labour government, but before it undertook a change in its approach to young people's needs. The backdrop of the recently-announced youth strategy may make these numbers seem underwhelming in terms of spend, but instead may serve as a line in the sand from which funding can be reestablished.

Meanwhile in Wales, policies and strategies for young people are several steps ahead. A Youth Work Strategy was introduced in 2019, with an Interim Youth Work Board established to develop recommendations for a sustainable model for youth work, and subsequently a Youth Work Strategy Implementation Board in 2022. The former recommended an independent review into funding and expenditure on youth work services in Wales, which was since undertaken by the latter board in 2024. This found that the youth work sector experienced an overall reduction in funding over the prior three years, with unstable funding sources, and an over-reliance on external funding in the maintained youth work sector leading to a movement away from universal youth work offerings. In the voluntary sector, a lack of available core funding is stretching capacity through grant applications and inability to build a sustainable structure.

In April 2026, the Welsh Government will introduce a statutory framework for youth work, which will place a statutory duty on local authorities to ensure the provision of youth work, alongside five-year strategic plans.³ The draft version released for consultation in October 2024 set out a youth work entitlement for young people, and requires a partnership approach with voluntary organisations, statutory partners, and youth workers to be qualified. This is encouraging, but without further core funding for youth work organisations to establish sustainable operational models, this direction at local authority level for strategic plans and youth work offers may prove difficult to enact.

As both countries undergo significant transformations in the approach and value of youth work, this report seeks to serve as what we hope is a baseline for funding moving forwards. Ambitions for revived and strengthened youth services can only be done with the injection of funding that has been stripped back over the last 13 years.

³ Welsh Government, *Written Statement: A national body and statutory framework for youth work*, 1 December 2025

Methodology

This is the fifth report in which YMCA has charted the changes in local authority expenditure on youth services since 2010-11. To make previous years' expenditures comparable with the most recent, historic spending is adjusted for inflation using the Treasury's gross domestic product deflators.⁴

In this report, data was taken from the Office for National Statistics' estimates of the population for England and Wales from mid-2010 to mid-2024. Local authority population counts of 5- to 17-year-olds were compared against local authority spend on youth services to generate a per-head figure.⁵

England

Local authorities have a statutory duty to report expenditure on education and services for children and young people to the Department for Education: this is done through annual Section 251 outturn statements. Line 3.5 of Section 251 guidance covers "Services for young people", split into universal and targeted services, which are used as the basis of this research.⁶

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

When analysing reported expenditure for the 2021-22 financial year, several local authorities had significant increases in spending on services for young people. We issued Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to these councils to understand the increase, and many had included the Government grant for its Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) within the budget line for youth services. This Department for Education funding was launched in 2021

to support disadvantaged children on free school meals within term time with access to sporting activities and food during school holidays.

All local authorities received a share of this £205m funding depending on the amount of qualifying children in their area, but only a few included it in their reported spend on youth services. To ensure that spending on youth services is held equal, we again issued FOI requests to all councils in England to ascertain where this funding filed. If it was included in the budget lines for services for young people (3.5.1-3.5.3) in their Section 251 outturn statement, the amount spent was subtracted from their gross expenditure as reported to the Department for Education. At the time of publishing, we had responses from 132 local authorities (87%).

⁴ HM Treasury, [GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP October 2024 \(Autumn Budget 2024\)](#), 31 October 2024

⁵ Office for National Statistics, [Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2023](#), 15 July 2024

⁶ Department for Education, [LA and school expenditure – Financial year 2024-25](#), 11 December 2025

Many local authorities filed this grant expenditure in their Section 251 outturn statement under “Family support” (23%) or as a specific or miscellaneous grant (16%). A fifth (20%) excluded the grant from their Section 251 outturn statement entirely.

A quarter (25%) of local authorities that responded to the FOI request filed the grant under “Services for young people”. As all local authorities received this grant and only a small proportion included it as part of their services for young people expenditure, we have removed the declared HAF expenditure from these local authorities’ reported spend to hold all spend on youth services as equal.



Wales

Welsh local authorities provide more in-depth data to the Welsh Government in terms of expenditure and income, and accordingly these figures were analysed to garner what extra expenditure afforded.⁷ Powys did not report its data for 2018-19 and so the figure from 2017-18 was used, and then adjusted using an average of the percentage change for all declared local authorities between 2017-18 and 2018-19. This equated to a 2% reduction on the 2017-18 figure.

Youth centres and youth workers

As part of Freedom of Information requests sent to local authorities in England on HAF, we asked councils to detail how many youth centres they ran, as well as the full-time equivalent number of youth workers employed from the financial years 2016-17 onwards. This was then combined with existing

Freedom of Information data compiled by public service union Unison in 2019 in research on youth services cuts.⁸ Unison had shared its raw data with YMCA to continue its research.

In cases where we did not receive an FOI response from a local authority who provided figures to an FOI request for 2023-24, the previous year’s figure stated for FTE youth workers and youth centres were carried over.

In Wales, this data is reported annually to the Welsh Government alongside a range of figures on youth work.^{9,10}

Youth services definition

For the purposes of this research, ‘youth services’ broadly encapsulates two types of service: ‘open-access’ (or ‘universal’) services, including a range of leisure, cultural, sporting and enrichment activities often based around youth centres;

and more targeted provision for vulnerable young people, including teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, and drug and alcohol misuse services. Local authorities have a duty to “secure services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19, and those with learning difficulties to age 24, to improve their wellbeing”.¹¹



⁷ StatsWales, *Youth Service: Income and Expenditure*, 29 October 2025

⁸ Unison, *Youth services at breaking point*, April 2019

⁹ StatsWales, *Youth Service: Projects and attendance by Local Authority and Type of Provision*, 29 October 2025

¹⁰ StatsWales, *Youth Service: Workforce Hours by Local Authority and Workforce Type*, 29 October 2025

¹¹ Department for Education, *Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People’s Well-being*, June 2012

Local authority expenditure

England

Local authority expenditure on services for young people in England totalled £456m in 2024-25. Adjusting for inflation, this represents a 7% decline in spending from 2023-24 (£491.8m).

For the last several years, however, YMCA has investigated these numbers further to ensure reporting is equal across all local authorities. In the 2021-22 local authority expenditure figures, an increase in spending was revealed to be due to inclusion of the Government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funding in a minority of councils' Section 251 Outturn statements, filed under the "services for young people" budget lines. As all local authorities received HAF funding, and the majority did not include this as part of their reported youth services expenditure, we removed the amount spent from the total amount reported in this budget line to ensure consistency within the overall spending on youth services across the country.

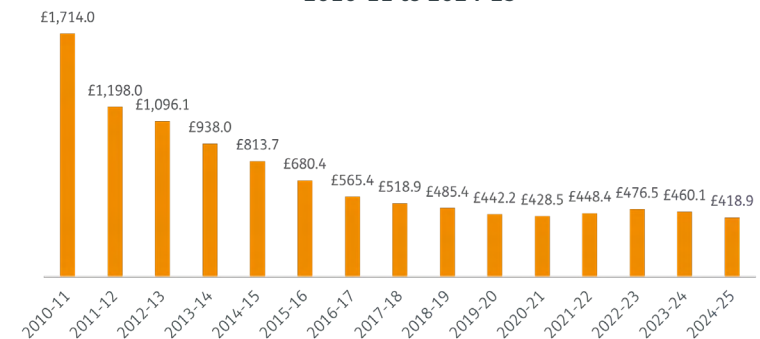
The HAF programme is still operational, and so YMCA continues to send Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to all local authorities ascertaining where HAF spending was allocated in their Section 251 outturn statements submitted to the Department for Education. In 2024-25, 25% of responding local authorities included HAF funding within their reported spend on either universal or targeted services for young people. This is a slight increase from 22% of local authorities doing so in 2023-24. The amount spent on HAF was removed from their total figure spent on this budget line.

Accordingly, the spend on services for young people measured equally across local authorities totalled £419m in 2024-25. This is a 10% year-on-year reduction – the biggest annual decline since 2016-17. The increased number of local authorities including HAF in their youth services expenditure contributes to this, accounting for £11m (27% of expenditure difference), which has been excluded from the figures.

The cause of the rest of the decline in expenditure cannot be determined from the figures themselves – indeed, 45% of local authorities increased funding for youth services over the last year. Among the 81 local authorities who reduced spending, the average drop in expenditure was -33%, and median of -15%. Many local authorities' budgets have tightened considerably in recent years, and more councils have applied for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from central Government – a mechanism that allows councils in severe financial difficulties to meet its obligations and avoid insolvency. In 2022-23 five councils were provided with this, rising to eight in 2023-24 and 11 in 2024-25.^{12,13,14} Many local authorities' budgets have been stretched with increased spending on adult social care, housing, children's services and special educational needs (SEND)¹⁵ provision – the latter two within the same education budget as youth services, and are statutory services that councils must provide. As a discretionary service, it may be the case that funding for youth services has been put towards the running of these required services that are in high demand. With 30 councils receiving EFS in 2025-26, the future of spending on non-statutory youth services may be tightened further.¹⁶

Compared to 2010-11, local authorities' expenditure on youth services has fallen in real-terms by three quarters (76%). This is a loss of £1.3bn over the last 14 years.

Total real-term spend by Local Authorities on youth services in England and year-on-year decline in expenditure (£m), 2010-11 to 2024-25



- 12 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Exceptional Financial Support for local authorities for 2022-23](#), 13 March 2025
- 13 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Exceptional Financial Support for local authorities for 2023-24](#), 13 March 2025
- 14 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Exceptional Financial Support for local authorities for 2024-25](#), 20 March 2025
- 15 Local Government Association, [Council emergency bailout deals risk becoming "normalised" as budget overspends continue to rise, LGA warns](#), 17 October 2025
- 16 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [Exceptional Financial Support for local authorities for 2025-26](#), 17 December 2025

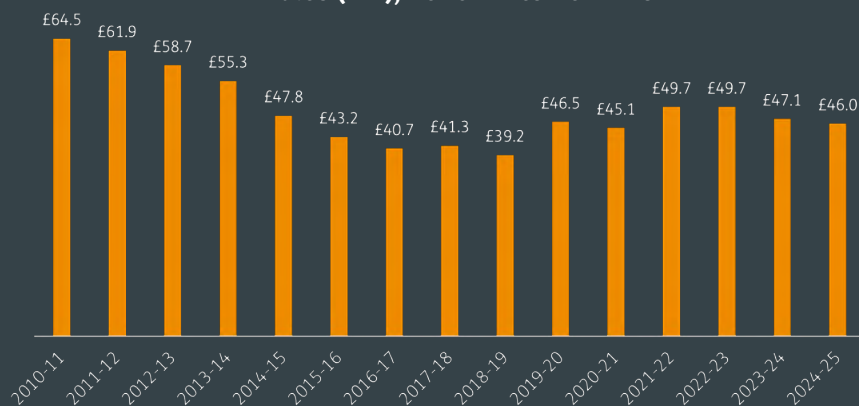
Wales

In Wales, local authority expenditure fell slightly in real terms over the last year to £46m in 2024-25, down 2% from 2023-24 (£47.1m). Adjusted for inflation, expenditure has fallen 29% in Wales since 2010-11.

Without adjusting for inflation, expenditure rose by 1% year-on-year in monetary terms, and rose by 3% from 2010-11 – portraying a healthier funding history than has actually occurred. While the raw numbers may look similar between 2010-11 and 2024-25, the spending power of the same amount of money has significantly depleted over this time. In 2021-22, the government allocated an additional £2.5m in funding to youth services to support young people through austerity and post-pandemic recovery, but this boost has tailed off more recently.

Local authority cuts to services for young people in Wales have been less severe over the last 13 years than in England, mainly due to the devolved government's fiscal response to the 2008-9 global financial crisis. Whilst Wales has also taken a rights-based approach for children to access youth work, and has been ahead of England in development of a Youth Work Strategy, funding has not matched in the years since pandemic recovery interventions.

Total real-term spend by Local Authorities on youth services in Wales (£m), 2010-11 to 2024-25



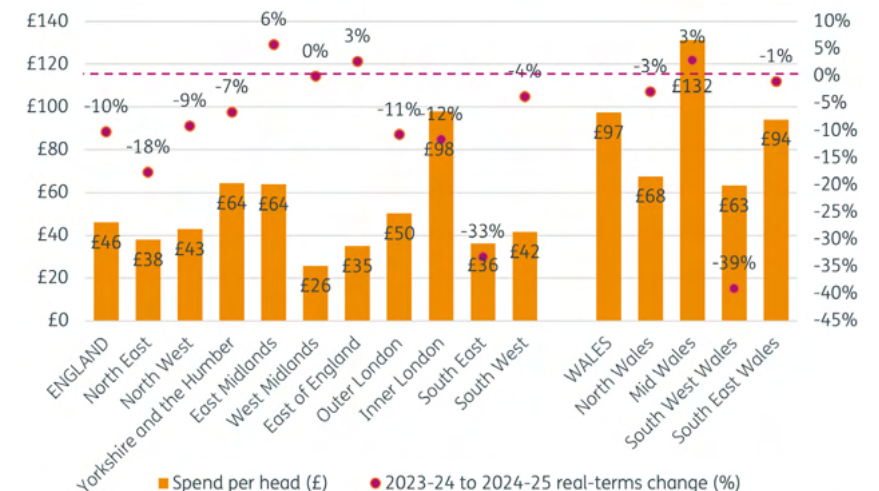
Spend per head

As each local authority's spending is relative to the number of people who live there, expenditure is better compared per capita. In England in 2024-25, local authorities spent £46.32 per child aged 5 to 17 on youth services – a 10% reduction year-on-year. Spend per head in Wales has historically been and remains to be far higher than in England. Across the country, £97.42 was spent on services for young people per 5- to 17-year-old, falling 3% from 2023-24.

The amount spent per young person varies significantly between local authorities, nevertheless there are regional differences. For example, spend per head is lowest in the West Midlands (£25.74), with the next lowest spending £10 more: East of England (£35.02), the South East (£36.18) and the North East (37.84). Inner London was the outlier in England with spend of £100.88 per head. This is because of the hefty spend per head of several boroughs – City of London (£321.02), Camden (£309.27) and Hackney (£138.07). Expenditure in the South East fell 33% year-on-year. This is because of considerable reductions in Hampshire (-82%), Windsor and Maidenhead (-78%) and Kent (-70%).

In Welsh regions, the spend per head in Mid Wales (£131.51) was double that of South West Wales (£63.35). In the case of the former, Mid Wales is comprised of two local authorities, Powys and Ceredigion, which both had high spends per head. For South West Wales, Swansea's spend per head fell 74% year-on-year to £21.89, lowering the average across the region. This is due to Swansea previously including funding for their Early Help Hub Provision in youth services expenditure, but in 2024-25 removed this as it delivered youth support but not youth work.¹⁷

Spend per 5-17 year-old in region in 2024-25 and year-on-year change in expenditure



¹⁷ Welsh Government, *Youth work: April 2024 to March 2025*, 29 October 2025

Youth Workers

Another element of the Freedom of Information requests sent to English councils was the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of youth workers employed by local authorities. Historical data is taken from previous FOI requests sent by union Unite up to 2015-16. In Wales, this data is collected by the Welsh Government and is publicly available.

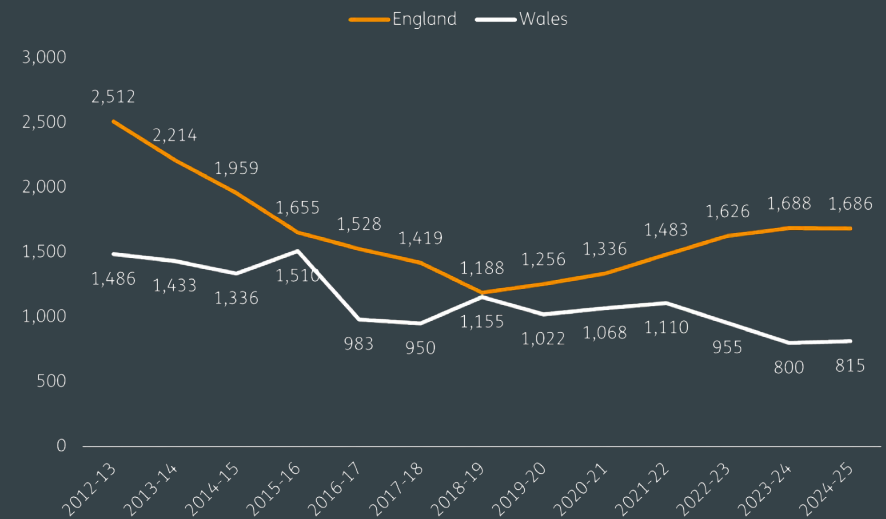
The number of FTE youth workers employed by councils in England has been steadily increasing over the last several years and continued to do so in 2024-25. Local authorities reported employing 1,686 youth workers, broadly unchanged from the year prior. This stagnation comes off the back of gradual increases over the last several years. It is also important to note that this followed substantial losses in youth workers employed by local authorities between 2012-13 and 2018-19, where the number was halved across the country. Since the start of this timeframe, 780 youth workers have been lost. England's new National Youth Strategy proposes to support more trusted adults to engage with young people, doing so by placing youth workers providing targeted support in new Young Futures Hubs, and investing in strengthening the workforce. It is unclear as to how much of this training will be accessible to local authority youth workers, and if local authorities will employ youth workers in Young Futures Hubs, and accordingly if this will drive an increase in local authority-employed youth workers.

Regardless, given that a number of local authorities ceased providing youth services over the last several years, outsourced provision to non-profit organisations or only employ youth workers as part of early integrated Early Help offers or youth engagement workers, this continued growth in employment (and done with reduced budgets) is a trend that we hope continues.

In Wales, several years of decline in local authority FTE youth worker numbers has ended with a 2% annual increase to 814.51. Since 2012-13 however, this represents a 45% decline in local authority-employed FTE youth workers.

While the increase in FTE youth workers last year in Wales is good to see, the professionalisation of youth work in Wales may potentially lead to a decline next year. Regulations were amended in May 2023 that removed the recognition of level 2 youth support qualifications, requiring youth workers qualifying to this level to achieve level 3 before May 2025.¹⁸

FTE youth workers employed by local authorities in England and Wales, 2012-13 to 2024-25



¹⁸ Education Workforce Council, [Registration information for employers: youth work](#) (accessed 16 January 2025)

Youth centres

Local authorities in England were also asked the number of youth centres they had in 2024-25, with data from 2015-16 and prior collected by Unite. As per youth worker numbers, Welsh Government collects and publishes this data annually.

In England, the number of local authority-run youth centres fell from 429 to 379 in the last financial year, a 12% decrease. There were several local authorities that reported either near or total closure of their youth centres that contributed to this: Bournemouth reported 14 in 2023-24 to 1 in 2024-25, Gloucestershire and Bristol both went from six to none, and Greenwich from four to none. Sheffield lost 21 youth centres, and Hertfordshire lost six.

Importantly, the loss of local authority-run youth centres does not necessarily mean the wholesale loss of the youth centre. As with youth workers, these services may be contracted out to other organisations. Nor is it representative of the entire landscape of youth centres: many across the country will have only ever been run by charities or the voluntary sector.

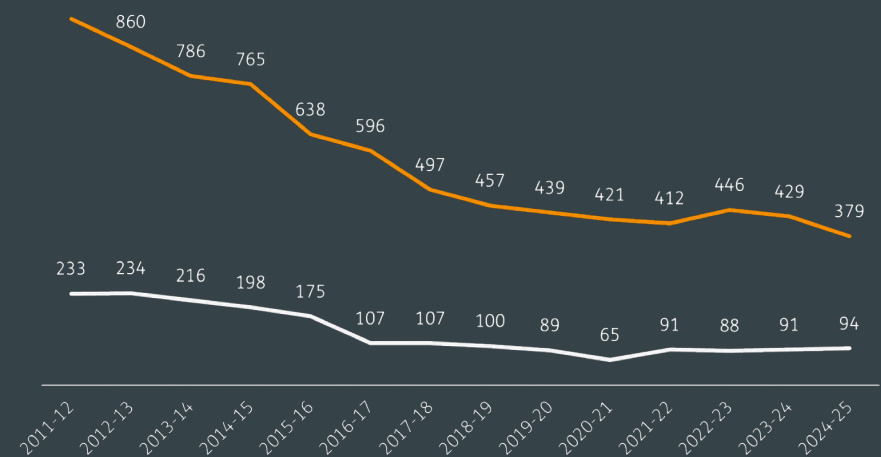


YMCA has asked local authorities to account for these where possible, by asking in FOI requests the amount of youth centres in their area that are run by other organisations. More were reported this year: 432, compared to 295 in 2023-24. Fewer responding local authorities did not know or hold this information (34%) compared to 2023-24 (43%), indicating a broader awareness among local authorities of provision in their area. Nevertheless, the fact that a third of local authorities cannot quantify the amount of youth centres within their geography indicates that they need to do more to understand what youth provision exists, especially to determining what local need is as per the National Youth Strategy.

Encouragingly, fewer local authorities reported having no youth centres in their area, from 16% in 2023-24 to 8% of responding councils in 2024-25. This is a significant decline, but still worrying that young people have no dedicated spaces in one of every eight local authorities in England.

Counts for youth centres in Wales include those run by both local authorities alone, or in partnership with other statutory or voluntary bodies. Last year, there were 94 recorded, up from 91 in 2023-24. There was not much movement across local authorities, although youth centres in Swansea rose from five to nine, and Newport gained one. The only loss of youth centres was in Denbighshire, which fell from seven to five.

Local authority youth centre numbers in England and Wales, 2011-12 to 2024-25



Needs assessments

England's Department of Culture, Media and Sport introduced Statutory guidance in September 2023 on local authorities' provision of services to improve young people's wellbeing. This stated that "local authorities must determine what activities and associated facilities should be available to young people in their area", and "should start by establishing what the needs of the young people in their area are, both in terms of activities and facilities, through a needs assessment".¹⁹ As guidance, this is not a mandatory requirement, but instead a voluntary means of determining what provision exists in a local authority's area, and where funding of services could be the most beneficial for the young people living within it.

Following the introduction of this guidance, we have asked local authorities in Freedom of Information requests if they have conducted a needs assessment on services for young people in the last four years, and the method by which these were conducted. In 2024-25, 68% of responding local authorities had conducted a needs assessment, an increase from 58% in 2023-24.

More than three-in-five (62%) local authorities that conducted needs assessments did so by hearing young people's views. Of those that had, more than half (54%) involved some form of data analysis, such as on existing youth provision, or from external partners on areas such as youth justice, education, health or social care. A similar amount (52%) had conversations with partners or took views of providers of youth services. A third (33%) included joint strategic needs assessments (JSNAs) as part of their needs assessment, which typically cover the broad scope of health, wellbeing and social care needs of communities. Similarly, the needs assessments of 13% were in relation to public health, and 6% were as part of local authorities' early intervention strategies

Almost a quarter (24%) of local authorities reported taking external guidance on how to conduct a needs assessment, using the National Youth Agency (NYA)'s statutory duty toolkit. This provides a roadmap for local authorities to assess young people's needs and develop the underpinnings of a strong local youth work offer.

Methods used in local authority needs assessment of youth provision



Only one-in-six (17%) included mapping of provision as part of their needs assessment – that is, quantifying what youth services are operational, and where these are being held. One-in-ten (9%) conducted audits on existing provision, and a similar amount performed benchmarking of provision against other local authorities (10%).

Local authorities' methods for needs assessments are wide-ranging at this point, with some as part of a local youth strategy, and others more adjacent to public health and social care, rather than the facilities available to young people. For example, amongst the local authorities that had conducted a needs assessment, a third (32%) did not know how many youth centres run by other organisations (such as charities or the third sector) operated within their area.

Several local authorities who had not conducted a needs assessment stated that they were waiting for the Government's National Youth Strategy before engaging in a needs assessment or designing their own local youth strategies. Given the release of the National Youth Strategy in December, it is likely that the number of local authorities conducting needs assessment will increase in the coming years, and will be worthwhile to monitor how methods used to do so evolve accordingly.

¹⁹ Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Statutory guidance for local authorities on services to improve young people's well-being* 27 September 2023

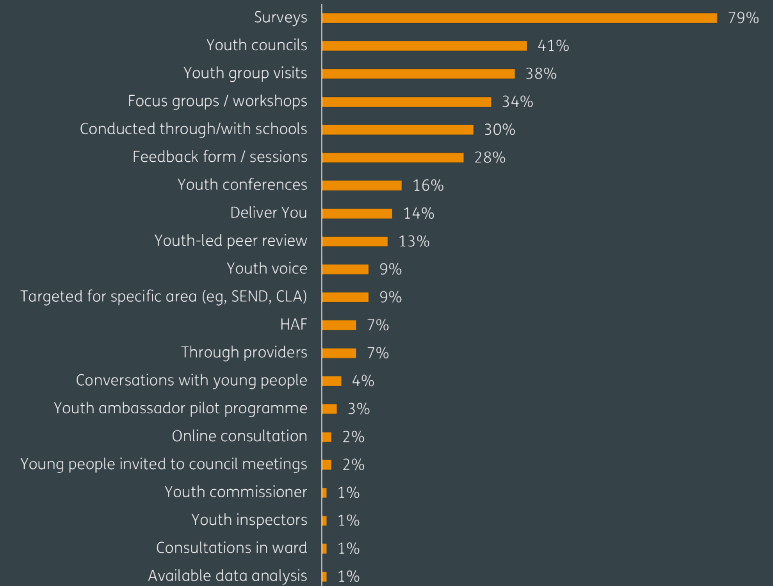
Youth Voice

The Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to “consult, and take into account the views of young people in their area on: current provision; the need for additional activities and facilities; access to those activities and facilities” for leisure-time facilities. Doing so can ensure local authorities are providing the services that young people themselves want, and how they are delivered.

Of the local authorities that responded to a Freedom of Information request, five out of six (85%) had consulted young people on youth provision in the last four years, similar to the amount in 2023-24 (84%).



Methods used in local authority implementing youth voice in service provision



The method most frequently used by three-quarters of local authorities was surveys (79%), followed by youth councils (41%) and visits to youth groups (38%). Around three-in-ten held focus groups or workshops (34%) or gathered the views of young people through schools (30%).

Around one-in-seven local authorities (14%) included taking part in and promoting the Department for Culture, Media and Sport’s Deliver You campaign, a survey gathering young people’s views and experiences that informed its National Youth Strategy.

Actions within the National Youth Strategy may drive more engagement with young people around the services local authorities provide. Although the details are not yet finalised, DCMS has stated that it will introduce expectations that local areas in receipt of youth funding should be able to demonstrate partnership working with young people and their involvement and support of decision-making, and that tools, guidance and funding for local authorities to improve services in ways that are guided by young people’s views will be provided.²⁰

²⁰ Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy*, 10 December 2025

Conclusion

At a governmental level, recognition of the importance of youth services is at its highest in decades in both England and Wales. Strategies and policies are being enacted with the goal of ushering in provision that reaches more young people, strengthens the workforce and responds to the needs of the young people it supports.

In England in particular, this direction is in no small part as a result of years of underfunding of this vital resource. While £500m of funding has been allocated to different aspects of broadening youth provision over the rest of this parliament, this is less than half of what has been lost from funding over the last 14 years.

The £350m allocated to the building and development of youth spaces will create more spaces where young people can have relationships with trusted adults and thrive outside of school – but without sustainable funding for the youth workers and programmes that adapt to the needs of the young people they support, the desired goal of these spaces may be limited. Given the substantial cut of 10% to youth services in England in the last year alone, these are lofty goals from a depleted base that cannot risk being cut further.



Full guidance and pathways are set to be released in the coming months in both countries, and with it hopefully indications of how funding will be distributed, and to whom. It may be the case that much of the funding goes directly to youth organisations, which means the figures tracked annually in this report may not be so greatly impacted. But with the onus on local authorities in England especially to rebuild capacity for place-based decision-making, this must come with increased financial allocations. Accordingly, as the actuality of these strategies and guidance are released, the £502m expenditure in England and Wales must be the nadir to build from. A line in the sand must be drawn on the dilapidation of youth services expenditure, with no more opportune a moment to restore funding.

[ymca.org.uk](https://www.ymca.org.uk)



Get in touch

For any questions or support, please get in touch via email at policy@ymca.org.uk or by calling **020 7186 9500**.

Everyone

should have a fair chance to discover who they are and what they can become.



Here for young people
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YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

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