



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY

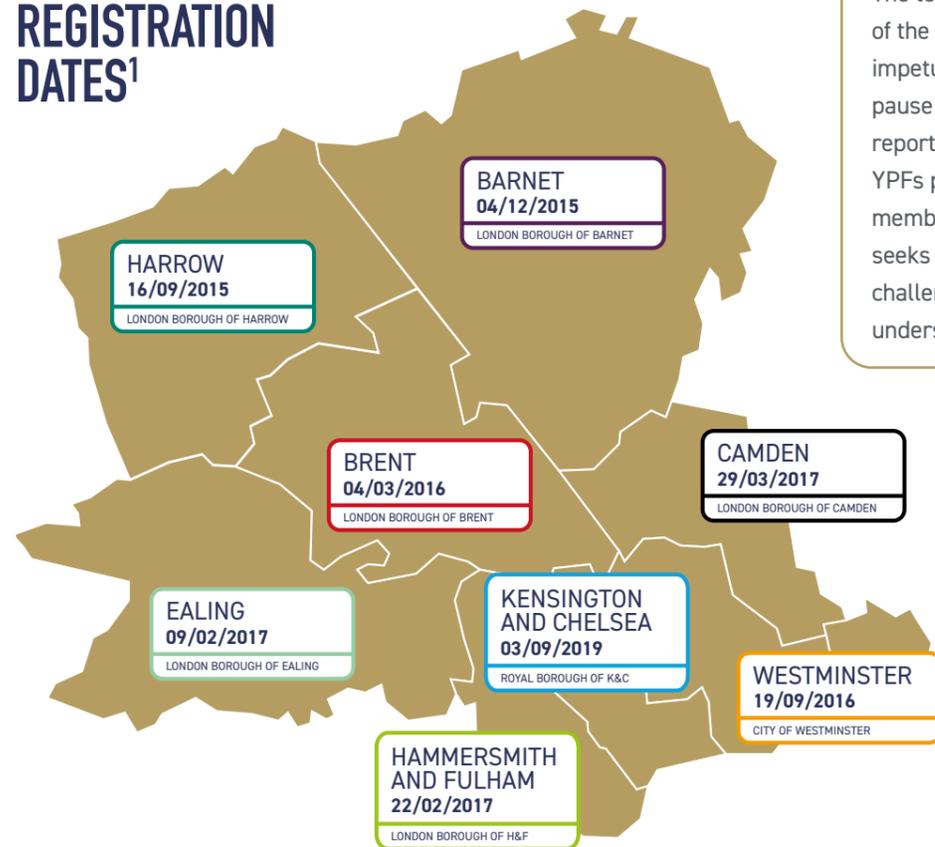
**TEN YEARS ON: CELEBRATING
A DECADE OF THE **YOUNG**
PEOPLE'S FOUNDATIONS**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report presents summary findings from research conducted by John Lyon's Charity and the Charity's external learning partner, Rocket Science, into the eight Young People's Foundations (YPFs) in the Charity's Beneficial Area. The YPFs are place-based infrastructure organisations established by the Charity, which connect the public, private and voluntary sectors to bring about positive change for young people. The YPFs all work within their own unique local context, but are based on the four pillars of funding,

networks, space and access. The first YPFs were created ten years ago in 2015; the model has since outgrown the Beneficial Area and there are now YPFs across the UK. In order to promote the work nationally, John Lyon's Charity established the overarching YPF Trust in 2019. The Trust is designed to be the umbrella organisation for the Young People's Foundations, supporting the existing network to thrive, as well as growing the model across the UK.

CHARITY REGISTRATION DATES¹



The tenth anniversary of the creation of the first YPFs provided the impetus for John Lyon's Charity to pause and assess their impact. This report explores the value that the YPFs provide to the Charity, to their members, and to the Sector, and seeks to learn from the successes and challenges they have faced in order to understand their future role.

The research consisted of a combination of qualitative interviews, surveys, focus groups, and desk research. The Chief Executives (CEOs) of all eight YPFs were interviewed, and each YPF also completed a quantitative survey online. 101 YPF members and 17 non-member organisations took part in an online survey about their experiences, followed by two focus groups to further explore members' views and experiences in more depth. The Charity's own Grants Team was also consulted for its views. Finally, to provide a balance to the YPFs' own assessments of their added value and to better understand the local landscape, five funders and three Directors of Children's Services of local authorities (representing four boroughs) in the Beneficial Area were interviewed for this research.

John Lyon's Charity has been a consistent funder of the YPFs since their inception.

SINCE 2015, £9 MILLION

has been distributed by John Lyon's Charity to the YPFs to support core costs, project costs and grant programmes.



Since 2015 the YPFs have distributed

OVER £17M IN GRANTS

to the local CYP Sector.



The YPFs' **relational approach and support** are highly valued by their members, with

88% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

saying they were 'quite' or 'very' satisfied with the YPFs that they are connected to.



Funding was the most significant resource or type of support offered by the YPFs, with

50% OF THOSE SURVEYED

perceiving it as most important.



47% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

said that their membership helped them **secure funding they were previously unaware of or unable to access.** In the last year, this totalled nearly £900,000.



In the past year, the YPFs delivered

77 NETWORK EVENTS AND 670 ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT SESSIONS

to their members.



In the last year, **Local Authorities provided on average**

38% OF THE YPFs CORE COSTS,

slightly exceeding the Charity's contribution of 35%.



¹ Charity registration date provides a consistent measure of creation, however it should be acknowledged that all the YPFs were active, to varying degrees, prior to these dates. For example, Young Brent Foundation was the original concept whereas Young Barnet Foundation had the first paid member of staff.

FUNDING

- **Diversity of income:** The Charity has provided significant investment into the YPFs since their creation in 2015, through a combination of core cost, project and grant programme funding. The YPFs' ability to fundraise elsewhere is dependent on their local context. Whilst the unrestricted core cost nature of the Charity's support means that they are still dependent on the Charity, this has reduced in recent years.
- **Resource mobilisation:** The YPFs secure and distribute funds (e.g. from local authorities), create funding consortia, and explore corporate partnerships.
- **Funding navigation:** In an increasingly challenging financial climate, the YPFs have opened access to new funding sources, enabling their members to secure funding they would not otherwise receive. They support small youth groups which might otherwise struggle to meet funders' due diligence requirements and provide capacity building support which enables grassroots organisations to become grant ready.
- **Building commitment:** By brokering inclusive partnerships, the YPFs inspire the sharing of goals among diverse stakeholders leading to tangible benefits, including new funding pots, shared use of space, skills, and expertise.

"They've been very good specifically at distributing funds for the Council and then saying to other funders... would you be willing to top that up, or support the work in some way?"

FUNDER

"Being part of the YPF helped to build relationships with the Local Authority that was generative dialogue, not just complaining about lack of funding."

MEMBER ORGANISATION

"They've all attracted more funding for young people's services than would have come without them."

FUNDER

CAPACITY BUILDING

- **Strengthening processes:** The YPFs provide bespoke support to improve member organisations' internal processes (e.g. safeguarding and data protection), enabling them to access funding and strengthen operations.
- **Non-financial support:** The YPFs provide tailored coaching, facilitate partnership working, and help organisations build internal capacity and confidence.
- **Strategic role:** The YPFs are essential and trusted intermediaries who use their knowledge of the local landscape to unlock both financial and in-kind support for the Sector. They support funders with their in-depth knowledge of local organisations.
- **Access to spaces:** One of the YPFs' objectives was to maximise spaces available for local groups to use for activities for children and young people, but this function remains less developed across the YPFs as a whole.

"In my opinion [the YPF] has become the champion of change through supporting local youth organisations and grassroots groups, and as a result the local groups have gained recognition from the local authorities for their effective delivery services."

MEMBER ORGANISATION

"They understand the landscape in [the borough] ... They are very aware of where services are and gaps in provision, helping the Council to see the richness of the [VCS] offer. They have young champions who are instrumental in providing constant feedback."

LOCAL AUTHORITY

LEADERSHIP

- **Understanding local needs:** The YPFs use diverse mechanisms to assess sector needs, including member engagement, youth consultation, stakeholder dialogue, and data analysis. Their local expertise and evidence-based reports were cited as invaluable for other stakeholders.
- **Communication and convening:** The YPFs are viewed as trusted brokers and advocates, linking grassroots organisations with each other and with key partners such as local authorities and businesses. The YPFs act as essential connectors, amplifying youth voice and enabling collaboration.
- **Championing the Sector:** The YPFs are regarded as effective advocates for children and young people in their respective boroughs, in many places having steadily earned the trust of councils and local partners over time despite encountering some early teething problems.
- **Championing infrastructure:** The YPFs still face challenges articulating their value and securing recognition, but their long-term presence and non-delivery roles are seen as essential to the success of local youth-service ecosystems. Stakeholders felt they provide value by being specialised, compared to more generic infrastructure organisations.
- **Enabling systemic change:** Their presence and persistence have helped shift attitudes and bring about meaningful collaboration.

"It's not just us saying, oh well, we think this would be good. The young people have said that this is needed. We have an evidence base that this is required".

FUNDER

"We are the broker across the Sector. [The borough] is now a much better place to work and it feels like our voice is being heard at a strategic level which it wasn't before."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

INTERLINKED RELATIONSHIPS

- **Cross-borough learning:** Relationships between the YPFs are largely informal, based on personal connections. More formal or structured collaboration between the YPFs is currently missing. There is an appetite to improve peer-learning and coordination among the YPFs, but this needs investment in facilitation.
- **Barriers to collaboration:** Different local contexts and approaches can limit coordination. The YPF Trust has the potential to enable shared learning and development, but this is yet to be realised.
- **Model replication:** The flexibility of the model is key to its replication. Success depends on intentionality, local responsiveness, trust-building, and being a 'critical friend'.

"Any of the CEOs could call me up. We work closely with some - not because our boroughs are similar but because we get on really well."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

"The YPF Trust has dipped in and out of knowledge sharing. When we started there was a group to align data collecting. We were not on the same page as others, but we couldn't wait for everyone to catch up, so we started before everyone was aligned. We did a lot of that development ourselves."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Children and Young People's Sector has been a challenging environment for those operating within it, particularly post-pandemic, with increasing demand for services and less funding available to provide those services. This research has demonstrated the unique value that the YPFs bring to the Sector, providing in-depth understanding of the local context and needs, and forming close relationships with local organisations. A stronger sector is a stronger voice, and the YPFs have been key in championing this to other stakeholders such as their local authorities, unlocking new funding avenues for those within their membership.

This review provides the following recommendations for the Charity, stakeholders, the YPF Trust, and the YPFs going forward:

- While John Lyon's Charity should continue funding the YPFs' core costs, allowing them to carry out vital work in the CYP Sector, consideration now needs to be given to the level of this funding as a whole and for each individual YPF. The research has shown differences in local context and impact of each YPF so the Charity will need to be mindful of how it ensures funding is having the greatest possible impact and benefit for children and young people.

- Local Authorities, funders and other local stakeholders should not only continue, but increase, their support to the YPFs, recognising the value they provide as convenors, brokers and local experts. Their role instils confidence in stakeholders to engage with and support the CYP Sector. For this to continue it needs to be adequately supported.
- The YPFs should strengthen their communication around membership and what their role is to ensure all eligible organisations join their network and all stakeholders understand the YPFs' specific remit; not to directly deliver Children and Youth Services, but to facilitate a well-connected, high-quality Sector.
- The YPFs should consider whether their four pillars of funding, networks, space and access remain most appropriate. As highlighted, space has been an area with least development and whilst important, has not been viewed as a priority within this research by either the YPFs or the Sector. Conversely, this report highlights how the YPFs have developed a key role as a broker and as a mediator; this strength should be brought to the fore and potentially incorporated as one of their core functions.
- The YPFs should consider their legacy and succession planning beyond current leaders and wider staff teams. The review revealed how important the YPF leaders are to building relationships and maintaining contacts across the Sector. It is important that the YPFs as organisations are not too dependent on the charisma and contacts of individual characters but have a solid succession plan in place.

Whilst recognising the unique role and local context that each YPF operates in, there are several opportunities which would increase synergy, collaboration, and impact reporting across all eight YPFs, with a key role for the YPF Trust:

- The YPF Trust should co-create a space for YPFs to convene and collaborate more formally. As mentioned in the report, at present collaboration between the YPFs takes place informally and on a personal basis, and while the YPFs are hesitant about formalising this, there is value in extending the current, less formal, collaboration to the wider group. Whatever form this collaboration takes, it should be co-created with the YPFs, and they should be given ownership over how it is used. This should also include a coordination role in applying for longer term funding benefitting all the YPFs.
- The YPF Trust should explore the potential for standardisation across the YPFs with regards to impact measurement and data collection. This has been an ambition of the YPF Trust in the past, and they are best placed to coordinate this. This should involve establishing standardised terminology to ensure that all YPFs record delivery outputs, such as one-to-one capacity building support sessions, and inputs, such as core funding, the same way. It should also involve establishing and collecting key impact data across all the YPFs, such as the amount of additional funding YPF members get as a result of their membership that they would not have had access to otherwise. The lack of clear, shared definitions and standardised data collection methodologies posed a significant challenge for this report. Additionally, standardisation could be explored across other internal YPF systems and policies, such as HR and payroll.
- The role of the Trust going forward should be co-created with input from the CEOs of the longest standing YPFs. The new CEO of the Trust, who was the former CEO of Young Brent Foundation, provides a timely opportunity for a reset in the relationship.
- The YPF Trust and the Charity work together to support the YPFs with tools and resources that help them more coherently capture and articulate the impact of their work in developing partnerships and strengthening their local ecosystems and help them secure additional funding elsewhere.

The Young People's Foundations should feel proud of what they have achieved in the last ten years. It is evident that they are a valued and trusted resource at both a borough level and within the Children and Young People's Sector. They provide a voice to the Sector, to grassroots organisations, but most importantly to young people themselves. The YPFs have improved relationships between local authorities, funders and the local VCS Sector, driving up quality of provision, increasing credibility and improving trust between stakeholders. This report goes some way to evidencing that, but more could be done, and the recommendation to standardise data collection for impact measurement purposes would go some way to enhancing how their value is articulated. This will be of key importance as the YPFs move into their next decade.





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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT JOHN LYON'S CHARITY

John Lyon's Charity ('the Charity') is the leading independent funder for children and young people in North and West London. The Charity awards more than £15 million a year to charities and state-maintained schools that seek to promote the life chances of children and young people through education.

The boroughs which make up its Beneficial Area are Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and the Cities of London and Westminster. To date, it has granted more than £230 million since 1991 to diverse projects, including youth clubs, supplementary schools, emotional wellbeing initiatives, sports schemes, arts programmes and academic bursaries.



ABOUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATIONS

The borough-based Young People's Foundations (YPFs) were established by the Charity in response to the ongoing pressures on the Children and Young People's (CYP) Sector¹. In the face of austerity, funding for the CYP Sector and for infrastructure organisations² had steadily diminished, with a complete withdrawal of the local authority youth service in some boroughs. This meant that, without intervention from the Charity, the local children and youth Sector was at risk of disintegration.

The first YPF was established by John Lyon's Charity in 2015, followed by another seven in the Charity's Beneficial Area between 2015 and 2019. This was only possible thanks to the Charity's dedication to this innovative concept. There are now 24 YPFs across the country, including the original eight across the Charity's Beneficial Area, as well as seven further pending YPFs and many other Local Youth Partnerships, following a YPF-style model. They are all independent registered charities and are not direct delivery organisations, but place-based infrastructure organisations, connecting the public, private and voluntary sectors to bring about positive change for young people. The YPFs are all independent membership organisations open to any group that works with children and young people aged 0-25 in the local area. This creates a vibrant membership consisting of charities, community interest companies, schools, religious organisations, public sector bodies, and local funders, to name a few.

¹ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.
² Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

The YPFs are designed to meet local needs, and therefore each YPF's delivery looks slightly different. When the Charity established the YPF model, four key areas of development were identified as vital to supporting the local Children and Young People's Sector. Individual YPFs work in relation to these areas, prioritising them against the needs of each individual borough. **The four are:**

FUNDING



Making the local CYP and Voluntary Sectors a more viable prospect for external stakeholders to support, and distributing funding pots on behalf of other funders (e.g. John Lyon's Charity's YPF Small Grants Fund, the Department for Education's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)³ funding).

SPACE



Maximising spaces available for local groups to use for activities for children and young people (e.g. via the Venue Bank, a digital platform where available spaces can be marketed and booked with preferential access for YPF members, at discounted rates).

NETWORKS



Building trust and brokering relationships between organisations from different sectors to enhance the children and young people's provision in their local area (e.g. charities, businesses, local authorities).

ACCESS



Compiling information about services in the local area and communicating it to relevant stakeholders (e.g. via forum websites, online engagement, advertising projects and vacancies, publicising events and funding opportunities).

In each of these areas of work, the YPFs seek to add value by focusing on their unique circumstances and strengths.

The YPFs are:

1. CLOSE TO THE GROUND

The YPFs are close enough to communities to understand the needs of local children, young people, their families, and service providers. This understanding, combined with their own and the Charity's strategic connections, enable the YPFs to act decisively and effectively to address local needs.

2. AGILE AND ABLE TO MOVE QUICKLY

They are flexible, making things happen quickly without being tied down by bureaucracy, while still ensuring that strong systems and governance processes are in place.

3. BUILT ON PARTNERSHIPS

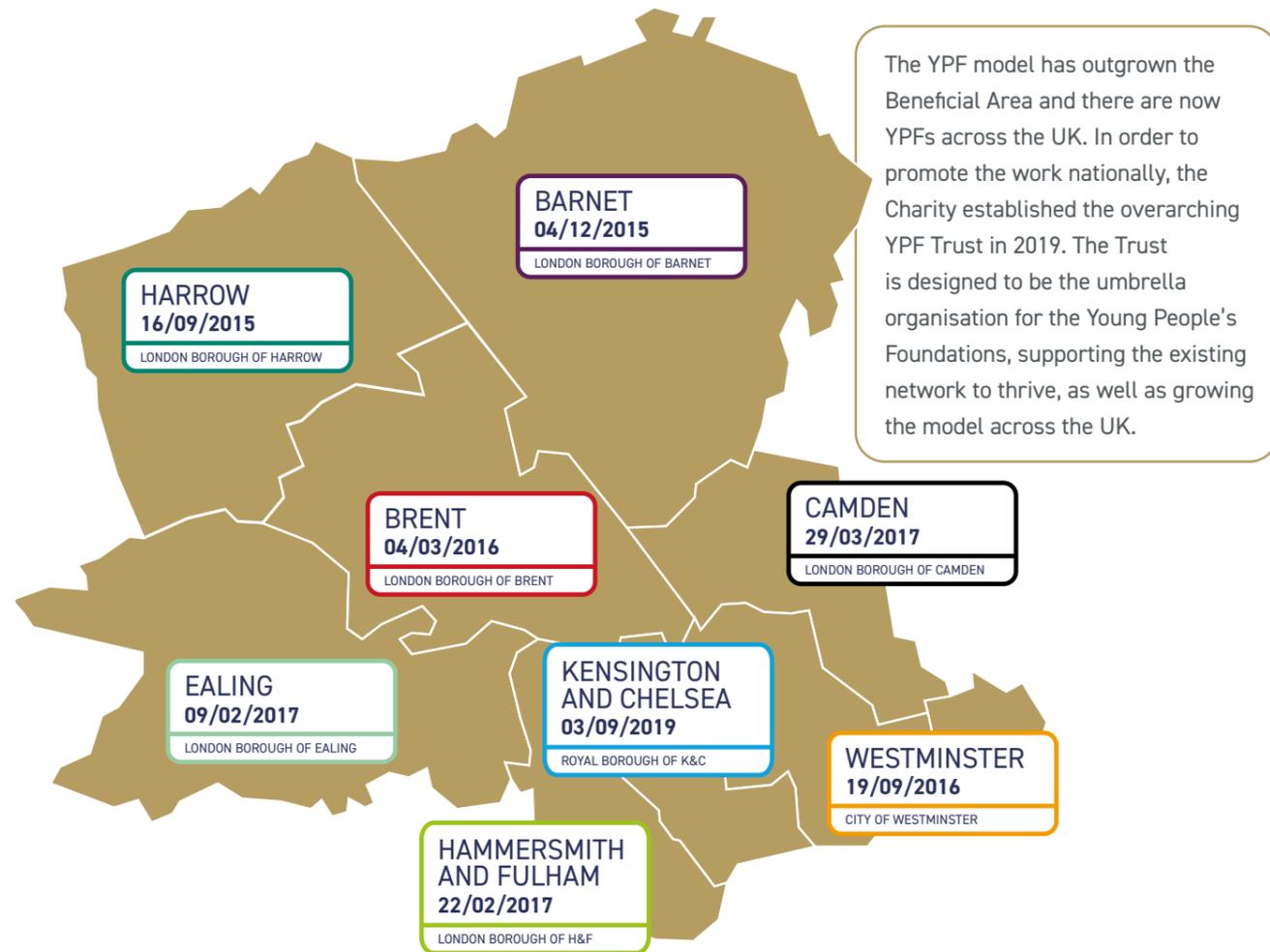
They are founded upon the principle of partnership working across the CYP Sector and beyond, making sure that positive outcomes for children and young people are at the heart of cross-sector collaborations.

4. ABLE TO ATTRACT INVESTMENT

They provide a platform for local investment which will reach the places, people, and activities that need it most. They add value by leveraging further investment and support for local youth-related services from across the statutory, charity, and private sectors.

³ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

CHARITY REGISTRATION DATES⁴



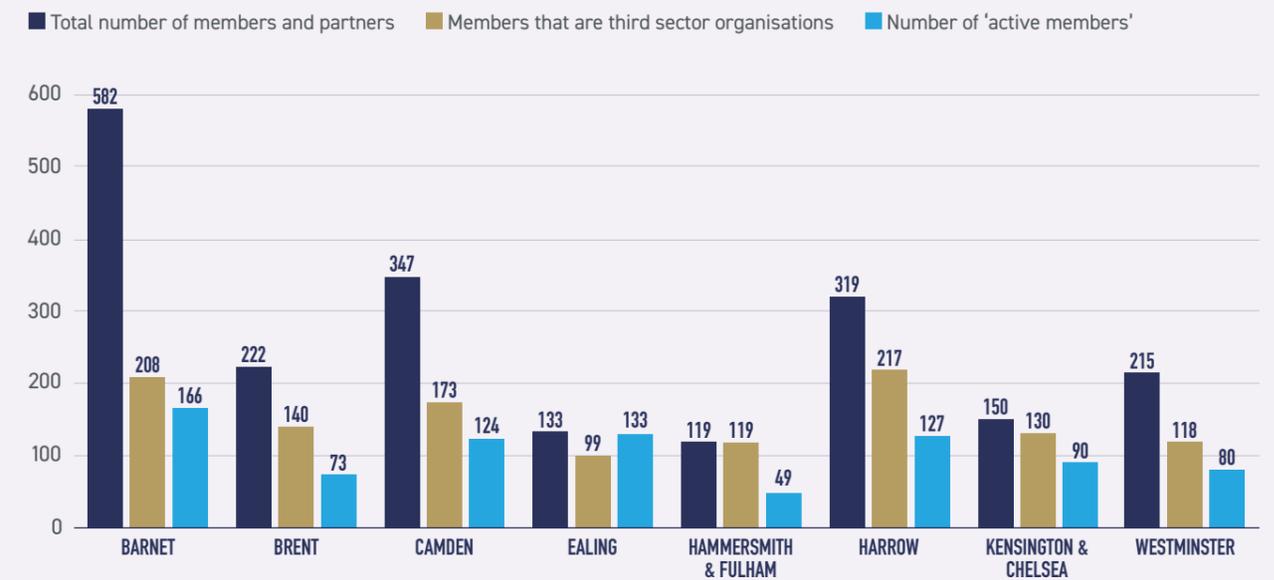
YPF MEMBERSHIP

The number of organisations in each YPF's network varies by borough and has fluctuated over the years. Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show the total numbers of organisations in each Foundation, as well as the different types of organisations per borough. As the figures show, Young Barnet Foundation has the largest total number of members, followed by Young Camden Foundation. Some of the variation in member numbers can be explained by the size of the boroughs (e.g. Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham are smaller boroughs and therefore have fewer members) or the size of the Children

and Young People's Sector in the borough (e.g. Ealing has a smaller voluntary sector than other boroughs). Charities make up the largest group of members for most of the YPFs, apart from Barnet (where businesses make up the largest proportion of members) and Kensington & Chelsea (where an equal proportion of members are charities and community interest companies (CICs)). Given the Charity's limitation in only funding registered charities and state schools, the YPFs' broader membership supports the diversity and vibrancy of each borough in a way in which John Lyon's Charity cannot.

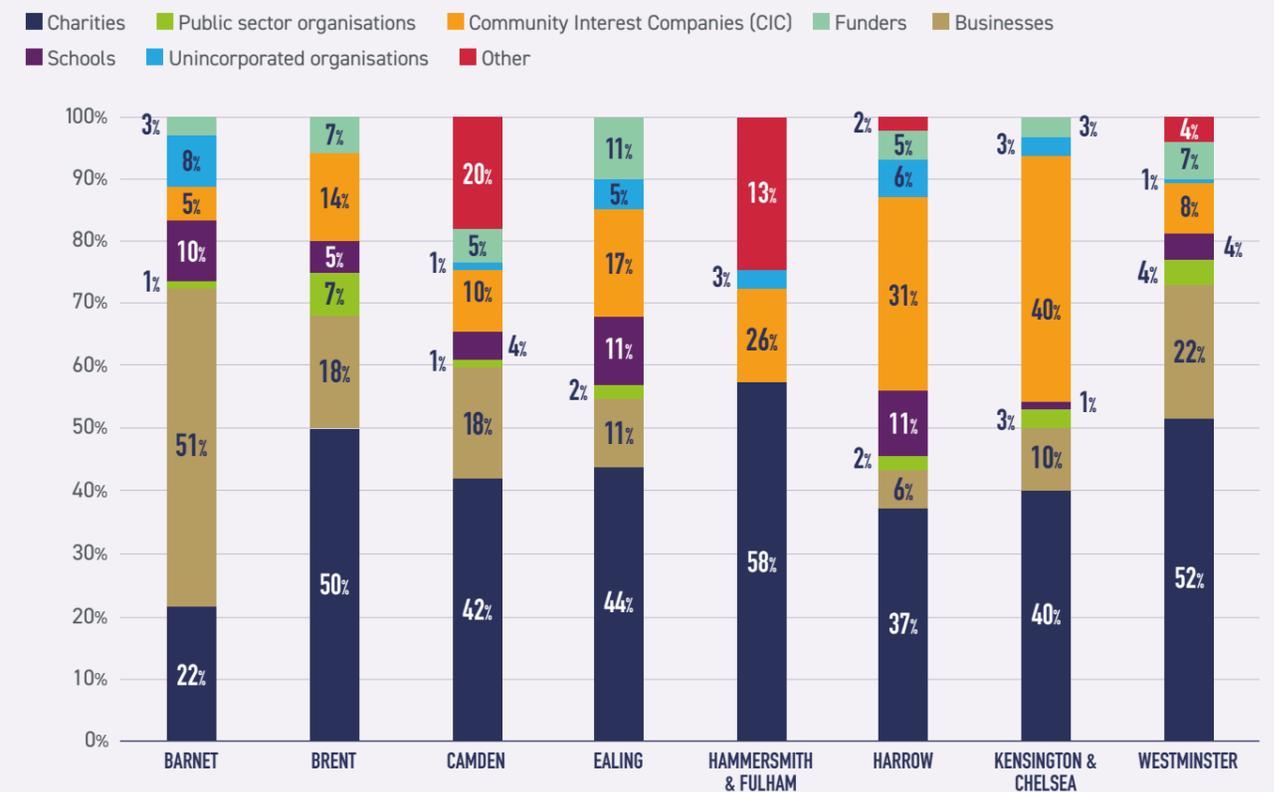
⁴ Charity registration date provides a consistent measure of creation, however it should be acknowledged that all the YPFs were active, to varying degrees, prior to these dates. For example, Young Brent Foundation was the original concept whereas Young Barnet Foundation had the first paid member of staff.

FIGURE 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS IN EACH YPF'S NETWORK IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR



Source: YPF survey. Note: The member data is self-reported by the YPFs. 'Active members' were defined in the survey as members who engage with the YPF's events, training or other support at least once per year.

FIGURE 2. TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS IN EACH YPF'S NETWORK IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR



Source: YPF survey. Note: The member data is self-reported by the YPFs. 'Other' primarily consists of other charitable organisations which are not covered in other categories such as incorporated companies with an asset lock – a legal requirement within a governing document which limits how assets are utilised.

ABOUT THE REVIEW

2025 marks the 10-year anniversary of the creation of the first Young People's Foundations in Harrow, Barnet and Brent. To mark this milestone, John Lyon's Charity has carried out an extensive review of the eight YPFs in the Charity's Beneficial Area. The purpose of the review has been to understand the value that the YPFs provide (to the Charity, to the YPF members, and to the Sector), to learn from the successes and challenges they have faced, and to understand their future role. Whilst an impetus for creating the YPF model was to underpin an increasingly fragile Children and Young People's Sector, since their establishment the situation has worsened, with continued national and local authority cuts, the pandemic and subsequent inflationary pressures, increasing demand, and a challenging fundraising landscape. Not only does this hamper the ability of the Sector to thrive, but in the context of a significant number of infrastructure organisations closing their doors, understanding the role of the YPFs as they look to the future is vital.

The change of government in 2024 brought new opportunities and challenges for the CYP Sector which the YPFs are well positioned to address. The winding down of the National Citizen Service left a gap in providing infrastructure and capacity to support parts of the CYP Sector, and the initiatives outlined in the new National Youth Strategy, such as the rollout of the Local Youth Transformation Pilots and Better Youth Spaces programme, will benefit from the coordination and engagement of stakeholders who have a deep understanding of the Sector in different local contexts. The recently announced Civil Society Covenant (July 2025) enshrines a set of principles and ways of cross-sector working which the YPFs have helped to put into practice over the last decade.

The CYP Sector has long suffered from the lack of a 'joined-up' approach; the capacity to bring together young people, youth practitioners, local services, employers, and other stakeholders to focus on children and young people's needs. This review examines the YPFs' effectiveness as advocates and agents for strong and distinctive CYP Sectors in different places, as well as their potential to play a key role in delivering the National Youth Strategy at the local and sub-regional level.

It should be noted that this review does not seek to draw comparisons between the eight YPFs, but rather to examine each as a unique organisation and to draw out trends in the impact they have had and the challenges they have faced.



2. METHODOLOGY

This review was carried out by the Charity's Research Evaluation and Learning (REAL) Manager and Rocket Science, an independent learning partner of the Charity. The Chief Executives (CEOs) of all eight YPFs were interviewed by Rocket Science⁵. Each YPF also completed an online survey providing information including their finances, services, and membership, which was analysed by the REAL Manager. YPF members were invited to take part in an online survey to share their views on the YPFs, including the services they have accessed, the perceived benefits of membership, and suggested improvements. Organisations funded by the Charity that are not members of a YPF were also invited to take part in a short survey. Non-member organisations answered questions about why they are not members and what, if anything, could convince them to join. The surveys were completed by 101 member and 17 non-member organisations and analysed by Rocket Science.

The surveys were followed by two focus groups for YPF members, led by Rocket Science, to further explore members' views and experiences in more depth. The Charity's Grants Team was also consulted for its views on what the YPFs do well, how they benefit the Charity's broader grant making, and how they could improve.

Finally, to provide a balance to the YPFs' own assessments of their added value and to better understand the local landscape, Rocket Science and the Charity's REAL Manager interviewed a sample of local authority senior officers and other charitable funders that operate in the Charity's Beneficial Area. Five funders and three local authority Directors of Children's Services, representing four of the Beneficial Area's boroughs, were interviewed for this research. Rocket Science tried to engage the Director of Children's Services in one further borough, but were unsuccessful.

The quantitative data provided by the YPFs, or collected through desk research, was available up to each YPF's most recently completed financial year at the time of data collection (February 2025). All the YPFs reported figures for a 1st April to 31st March financial year, except for Young Barnet Foundation which reported on a 1st January to 31st December financial year.



⁵ Acknowledgements can be found in the appendix.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. FUNDING

3.1.1. Funding for the YPFs

The YPFs are supported by diverse funding streams, though these vary significantly depending on place and context (e.g. the prominence of corporate funding), political factors (e.g. changes in local council leadership), and personal relationships (e.g. with the local authority or a specific fund manager).

As an essential element of the Charity's capacity building agenda, John Lyon's Charity has been a consistent funder of the YPFs since their inception. Since 2015, the Charity has committed a total of £14,215,100 in funding to the YPFs, with £8,905,900 distributed to date. This includes core funding, funding for grant programmes, and project specific funding. Over £6 million has been distributed towards core and project costs, and over £2 million towards small grant programmes. The core funding provided by the Charity is unrestricted and therefore flexible for the YPFs to use as they see fit.

TABLE 2. TOTAL GRANT FUNDING DISTRIBUTED BY JOHN LYON'S CHARITY TO THE YPFs SINCE 2015

	Funding for grant programmes	Funding for projects and core costs	Total funding distributed to the YPFs
BARNET	£275,000	£1,218,000	£1,493,000
BRENT	£445,000	£1,133,000	£1,578,000
CAMDEN	£250,000	£593,000	£843,000
EALING	£425,000	£901,000	£1,326,000
H&F	£275,000	£685,000	£960,000
HARROW	£230,000	£968,000	£1,198,000
K&C	£150,000	£557,900	£707,900
WESTMINSTER	£225,000	£575,000	£800,00
TOTAL	£2,275,000	£6,630,900	£8,905,900

Source: The Charity's internal database.

A particular concern for both the Sector and the YPFs themselves is funding for core costs. A lack of core funding significantly impacts staffing, with multiple YPFs describing how their functions have grown while their team has stayed the same. Much of the YPFs core income is a result of a contribution to core from project funding. Given the unrestricted nature of the core grant from John Lyon's Charity, all the YPFs show a relatively high level of dependency on the Charity's funding, and several YPFs noted when interviewed a finite period of continued operation should their key sources of core funding not re-materialise. This is a real concern due to multiple funders recently changing strategy and shifting their funding priorities. This is not unique to the YPFs, however. The closure of several infrastructure organisations in recent years, largely due to lack of funding, is indicative of the challenge which they face. Nonetheless, the unique local perspective that the YPFs provide ensures that they remain relevant and is their biggest strength.



"No one wants to fund infrastructure. It's not sexy."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

By investing in core costs, the Charity enables the YPFs to innovate, which can bring about countless benefits including improved service delivery for children and young people, increased efficiency, and greater overall impact.

"The core funding that [our YPF] gets from John Lyon's allows us to be innovative, radical. It allows us to take calculated risks."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION



Table 3 below shows the total income received by the YPFs in their most recently completed financial year (as of February 2025), including income towards core costs and towards grant programmes. Whilst the difference in core cost incomes was relatively low, there was a significant range in grant programmes income. Project income also varied significantly, from around £20,000 in Kensington & Chelsea to over £600,000 in Barnet.

TABLE 3. YPF INCOME IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR Source: YPF survey.

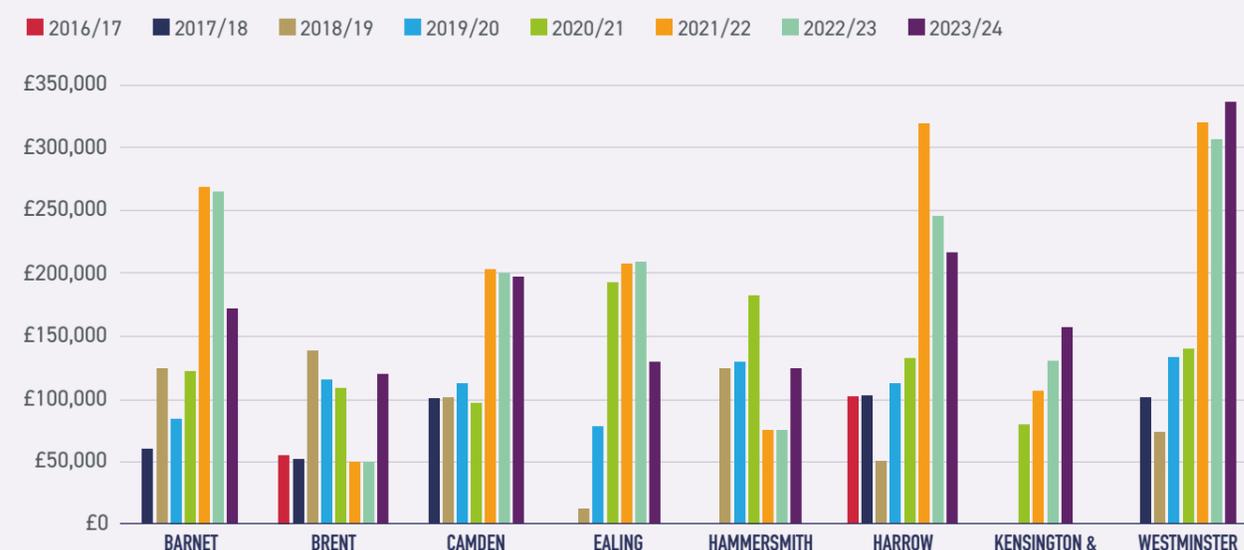
Last FY	Total Income	Core Cost Income	Grant Programmes Income	Project Income
BARNET	£1,349,734	£272,500	£463,082	£614,152
BRENT	£984,751	£220,000	£350,000	£414,751
CAMDEN	£1,467,907	£298,175	£1,104,212	£65,520
EALING	£608,974	£229,808	£125,000	£254,166
H&F	£397,010	£225,000	£135,000	£37,010
HARROW	£1,467,717	£318,028	£1,065,870	£83,819
K&C	£907,138	£257,565	£625,154	£24,419
WESTMINSTER	£2,139,530	£438,140	£1,600,000	£101,390

TABLE 4. YPF INCOME TOWARDS CORE COSTS AND FUNDING GRANTS PROGRAMMES IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR FROM THE CHARITY AND OTHER SOURCES Source: YPF survey.

Last FY	Core Cost Income from the Charity	Core Cost Income from other sources	Grant Programmes Income from the Charity	Grant Programmes Income from other sources
BARNET	£100,000	£172,500	£50,000	£413,082
BRENT	£100,000	£120,000	£125,000	£225,000
CAMDEN	£100,000	£198,175	£75,000	£1,029,212
EALING	£100,000	£129,808	£125,000	£0
H&F	£100,000	£125,000	£50,000	£85,000
HARROW	£100,000	£218,028	£90,000	£975,870
K&C	£100,000	£157,565	£50,000	£575,154
WESTMINSTER	£100,000	£338,140	£50,000	£1,550,000

Total core funding from sources other than John Lyon's Charity varied from £120,000 in Brent to £338,140 in Westminster in the last financial year. Young Westminster Foundation receives a comparatively generous amount of funding from Westminster City Council, and benefits from the prevalence of corporate funding in Westminster, which sets it apart from other boroughs in the Beneficial Area.

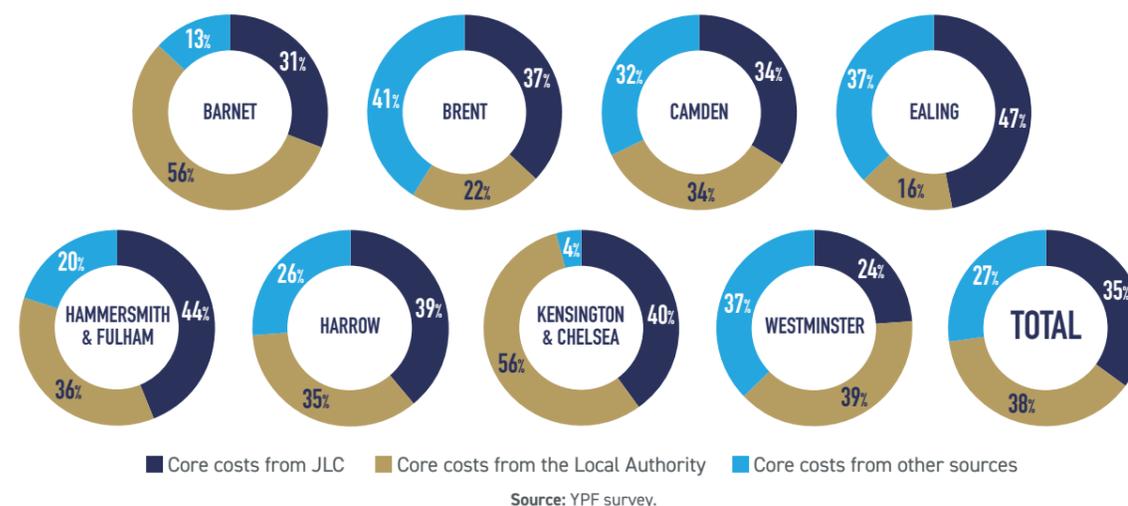
FIGURE 3. CORE FUNDING PER FINANCIAL YEAR FROM SOURCES OTHER THAN THE CHARITY



Source: YPF survey. Note: The core funding data from sources other than the Charity is self-reported by the YPFs. It includes direct core funding and contributions to overheads from project funding, including local authority funding, trusts and foundations, unrestricted funds, project contributions, and business contributions towards core costs only (not project funding) of the organisation.

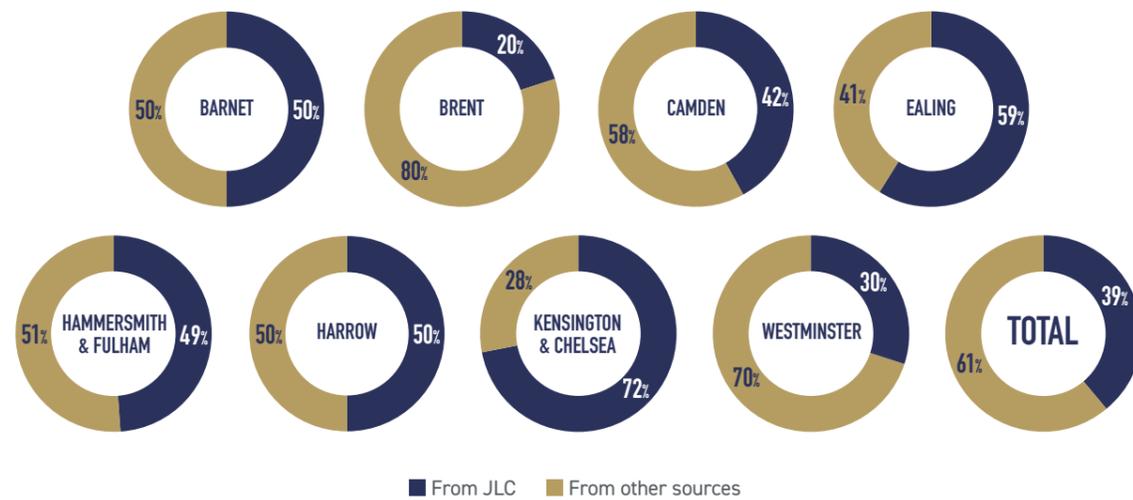
As with all charities, the YPFs have sought to diversify their core income streams and Figure 3 above illustrates the growth in funding for core costs from sources outside of the Charity over the last nine years. In particular, Young Westminster Foundation and Young Harrow Foundation have been very successful in securing other funding. Nonetheless, the YPFs are still heavily dependent on the Charity; as a proportion of total core income, it ranges from slightly under a quarter to nearly half for some YPFs in the last financial year. The Charity remains the largest single funder of the YPFs' core costs in four of the eight boroughs (Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Harrow). All the YPFs receive some core funding from their local authority, whether in the form of direct core funding or contributions to overheads from project funding; in the last financial year this ranged from £35,000 to £181,000. Overall, local authorities combined provided on average 38% of the YPFs' core costs, slightly exceeding the Charity's contribution of 35%.

FIGURE 4. PROPORTION OF FUNDING TOWARDS YPF CORE COSTS FROM THE CHARITY AND FROM OTHER SOURCES IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR



Source: YPF survey.

FIGURE 5. PROPORTION OF TOTAL YPF CORE AND PROJECT INCOME FROM JOHN LYON'S CHARITY AND FROM OTHER SOURCES SINCE 2015/16



Source: Charity Commission and the Charity's internal grants database. Please note that most YPFs were established after 2015/16. This figure covers all core and project income received by each YPF since the year it was established.

When asked to list their five main funders for the next financial year along with the estimated income from each funder, all the YPFs except for Westminster listed the Charity at least in the top three. Westminster expected the Charity to be its fifth largest funder after City of Westminster Council, corporate partners, the NHS Community Solutions Fund, and Propel⁶. Hammersmith & Fulham and Ealing expected the Charity to be their largest funder in the next financial year. Local authorities were expected to be the largest source of funding for many YPFs, with a few also expecting significant funding from the NHS.



⁶ To learn about Propel, refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

3.1.2. Funding the Children and Young People's Sector

The challenging financial climate is well documented and funding for the Children and Young People's Sector was felt to have steadily diminished by both the YPFs and their members, particularly over the last three years, with further reductions expected. When interviewed, some of the YPFs felt that some funders have responded to rising demand in a 'clumsy' way post-Covid, spending down their endowments, drifting from their missions, or becoming increasingly invite-only and exclusionary. They also felt the uncertainty and increased competition resulting from funders temporarily pausing their grant programmes for strategy reviews. As a result of greater competition for funding, several YPFs have seen their members pull back from collaborative working, with many YPFs viewing it as their role to counteract this by encouraging partnerships and discouraging fragmentation in the Sector.

All the YPFs leverage additional funding for members by distributing funding pots on behalf of partners, including local authorities. The YPF CEOs described this positioning as a "funnel" between funders and those smaller, grassroots organisations that stand to benefit the most from strategic funding. Six out of the eight YPFs received funding to distribute as small grants from their Local Authority in the last financial year; Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham were the only two boroughs where the YPF did not report receiving any local authority funding for this purpose.

Both members and funders consulted for this review felt that the YPFs played an influential role in fostering dialogue between members and funders. The YPFs help their members secure external funding, either as individual organisations or as groups via funding consortia, which members reported as 'very useful' and is detailed more in the Capacity Building section 3.2. The YPFs add value to their local sectors by successfully supporting their membership each year with accessing funding and thereby increasing both capacity and provision of local children and young people's services. At present, the scale of this is challenging to reliably quantify, but it is vital that the YPFs effectively demonstrate their impact, and it is recommended that the YPF Trust explores a consistent means to capture this data annually going forward. By

building capacity of organisations and making the local sector more collaborative and better connected, they are also making it a more viable prospect for external stakeholders to support.

External stakeholders shared several examples of their local YPF securing external funding for the Sector. Council officers were in no doubt about the multiplier effect of having a local YPF; London Borough of Brent mentioned that the YPF's ability to attract and distribute funding has brought significant additional resources into the borough which "the Council could not have accessed alone". In some boroughs, such as Barnet, Brent, and Harrow, the level of trust invested by Councils in the YPFs has seen them take up places on the Local Strategic Partnership or equivalent borough-wide governance structures, which invariably have influence on funding allocation. Young Westminster Foundation has been particularly good at securing a variety of sources of private sector funding for youth initiatives in the borough. Other funders discussed how their local YPFs have brought funders together or convinced them to top up existing programmes.

"They've been very good in [borough] specifically at distributing funds for the Council and then saying to other funders... would you be willing to top that up, or support the work in some way?"

FUNDER

"[The YPF] designed the programme and went out to bring funders together... Without [the YPF], I don't think this would have been possible."

FUNDER

Table 5 below details the total value of grant funding distributed in the last financial year by each YPF, and how many local organisations benefited from this funding. These are typically very small, grassroots organisations that would be unable or unlikely to receive support from larger funders. As the data shows, the amount of funding and the number of organisations benefiting varied greatly between the boroughs, explained by the level of local authority funding and the prevalence of corporate investors supporting YPF grant programmes. The significant variation in the number of organisations receiving funding is also partly a result of the size of grants awarded, which is often directed by the original funder, rather than the YPF themselves. Typically, grants awarded by the YPFs are single year and under £10,000, with some being as small as a few hundred pounds. Nonetheless, some funding - particularly that devolved from the local authorities or other public bodies (including the Department for Education's HAF funding⁷) - can be larger, with no set maximum awards.

TABLE 5. VALUE OF GRANT FUNDING DISTRIBUTED BY THE YPFS IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR

Last FY	Total value of grant funding distributed	Number of organisations that received grant funding
BARNET	£463,082	60
BRENT	£320,000	32
CAMDEN	£1,141,665	83
EALING	£120,350	17
H&F	£155,000	30
HARROW	£1,065,870	121
K&C	£625,572	40
WESTMINSTER	£1,600,000	65

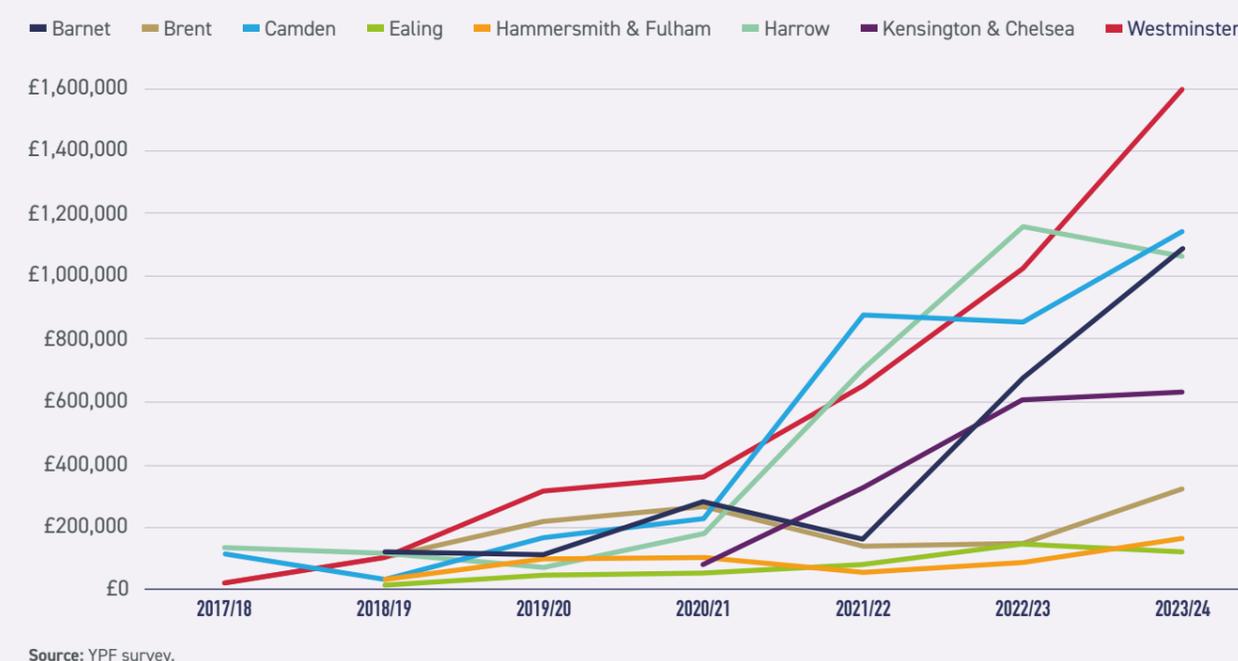
Source: YPF survey. Note: variation from Table 3 relates to differences in grant income received in the year and grants actually paid in the year.

Figure 6 below shows the value of grant funding distributed by the YPFs over the years and how this has evolved. There is huge variation in the amount of funding given out per borough and while some have increased exponentially (Westminster, Camden, Harrow), others have remained relatively stagnant since 2018/19 (Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Brent). In the last financial year, the Charity was the only source of funding towards grants programmes in Ealing, and one of only two sources in Hammersmith & Fulham, reflecting the more limited opportunities for other stakeholder investment. In Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham, both Local Authorities maintain control of funding and commissioning opportunities which could be devolved to external groups to administer (as has been the case in Kensington and Chelsea⁸), and engagement with the business sector has not materialised beyond in-kind support.

The spike in funding shown from 2020/2021 is a combination of additional funding distributed to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, and the introduction of the HAF programme funding in 2021, which is distributed by the local YPF in many boroughs.

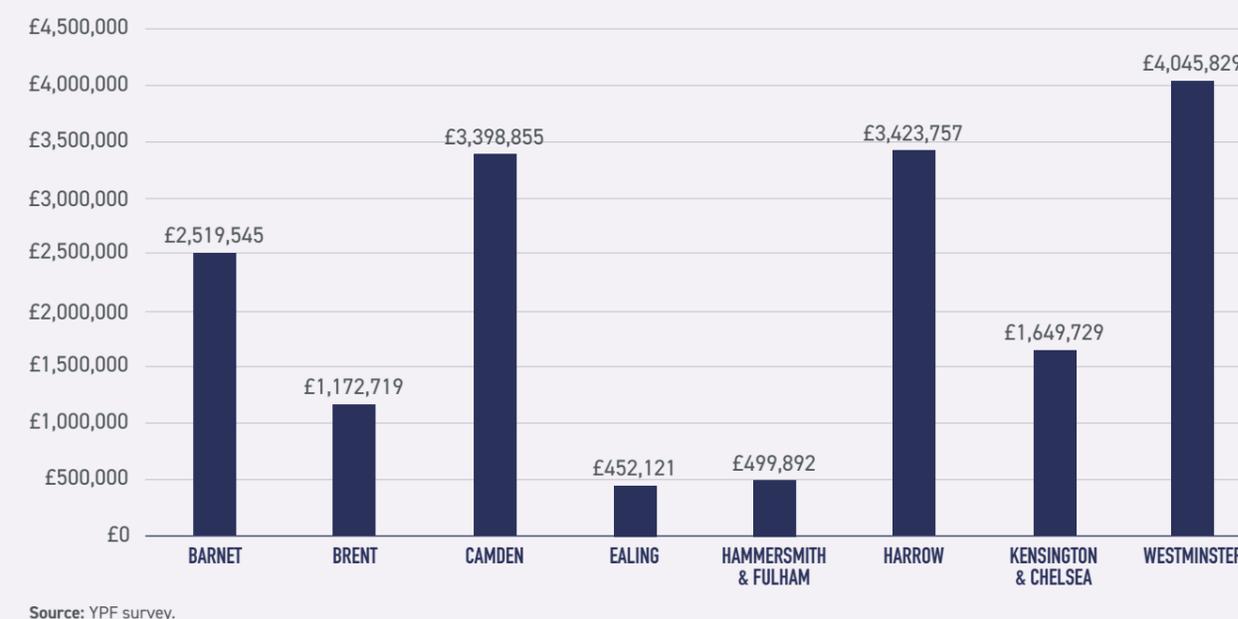
⁷ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.
⁸ To read more, refer to Appendix E.

FIGURE 6. GRANT FUNDING DISTRIBUTED BY THE YPFS PER FINANCIAL YEAR



Since 2017, the eight YPFs have distributed a total of over £17 million in grants to their local CYP Sector, keeping vital grassroots organisations operational. Figure 7 below shows the total grant funding distributed by each YPF since they started their grant funding programmes. As shown in Figure 6, the year in which they started varies. The YPFs in Westminster, Harrow, and Camden have each distributed well over £3 million to their local CYP Sector.

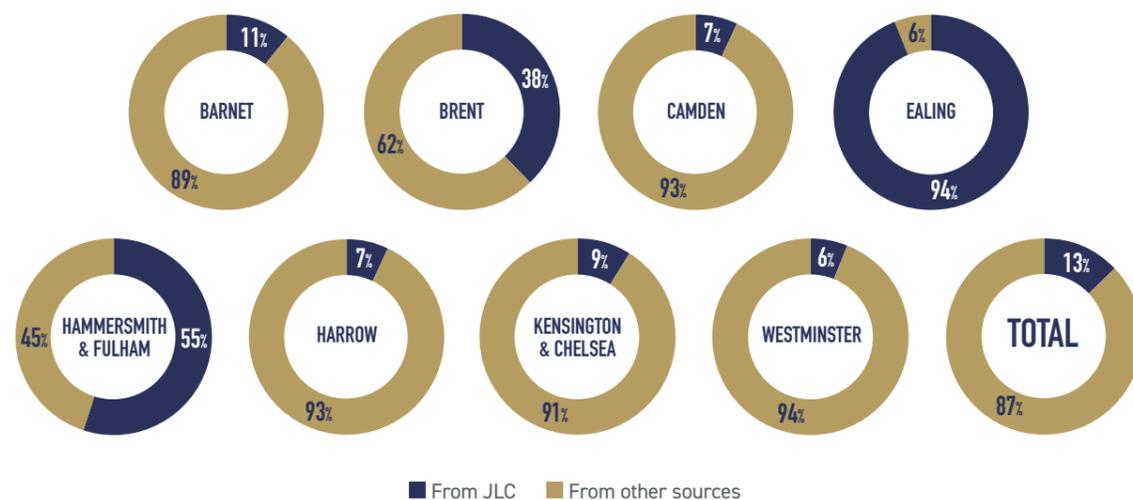
FIGURE 7. TOTAL GRANT FUNDING DISTRIBUTED BY EACH YPF SINCE THE LAUNCH OF THEIR GRANT FUNDING PROGRAMMES



Source: YPF survey.

As previously mentioned, in addition to core and project funding, John Lyon's Charity also provides funding for the YPFs to distribute through small grants programmes. The YPFs have received between £50,000 (Barnet, Camden, Harrow, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, and Westminster) and £100,000 (Brent and Ealing) per annum for this purpose. However, as demonstrated in Figure 8, the Charity represents a small proportion of the overall funding distributed for most YPFs. The local authority was the main source of grant funding for most boroughs, generally through HAF⁹ programme funding. Other large sources of funding included corporate partners in Westminster (£145,000 received in the last financial year), Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust and Harrow School in Harrow (£100,000 each), and Tides Foundation in Camden (£109,373).

FIGURE 8. PROPORTION OF TOTAL YPF GRANT PROGRAMMES INCOME FROM JOHN LYON'S CHARITY AND FROM OTHER SOURCES SINCE 2017/18



Source: Charity Commission and the Charity's internal grants database. Please note that some YPFs started receiving funding for grant programmes after 2017/18.

A benefit of the YPFs is that they can fund small organisations (many of which are Community Interest Companies (CICs) rather than registered charities) which, while often vital to their communities, would not be able to access funding from John Lyon's Charity or other larger funders. The majority of YPF members are hyperlocal grassroots organisations that would struggle to find equivalent support without the YPFs. Support needs for these small organisations have grown since the pandemic, with many reporting a pattern of redirection in funding where small voluntary and community sector organisations are 'edged out' in favour of larger charities when it comes to securing funding from trusts and foundations. Furthermore, with their focus on a narrow geographical area, the YPFs are able to respond to funding 'cold spots' that may get overlooked by larger funders. The YPFs drive investment into hyperlocal community-driven solutions to emergent needs. For example, Westminster is strategically targeting investment in high areas of youth violence; Hammersmith & Fulham is supporting core costs for members; and Kensington & Chelsea has an equity focus to its grant awards ensuring small organisations can have a greater impact.

"We would not hear about local funding, local opportunities for children and young people or be part of change in the community if we were not members."
MEMBER ORGANISATION

"They've all attracted more funding for young people's services than would have come without them."
FUNDER

Nearly half of all member survey respondents (47%) said that their membership helped them secure funding they were previously unaware of or unable to access. The YPFs' role in these instances has been sharing opportunities, convening funding consortia, and directly connecting organisations to funders. The YPFs' ability to support the Sector in this way, alongside with the significant grant funding it distributes, directly meets the Charity's ambition to champion and encourage funders to invest alongside the Charity.

"The size of most member organisations means they would miss out on funding unless they apply as a consortium."
YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

Through the surveys, members were asked to estimate how much income their YPF membership helped them to secure, **excluding** funding received directly through the YPF. In total, the 34 survey respondents who were able to provide a figure, reported receiving £893,534 over the last financial year; this was as a result of the YPF introducing members directly to new funders, or supporting with bid writing, for example. This is additional funding for grassroots organisations working with children and young people in the Beneficial Area that these organisations may not have received, were it not for their YPF membership. Impressively, one member organisation reported nearly £100,000 of funding secured through their YPF membership in the last financial year, but typically the range of funding secured was between £10,000 and £20,000. Given the priority placed on funding by member organisations, if systematically recorded by the YPFs on an annual basis this could prove to be a compelling indication of the value the YPFs provide to the Sector.

Members identified the value they have found in collaborating with other stakeholders, connecting with funders, and securing funding. Many examples were shared through the research, including the Change Makers programme in Harrow. Young Harrow Foundation and Harrow School's initial fundraising to support local charities ignited a community-wide effort, which resulted in them securing a wider partnership of funders to create

the Harrow Change Makers Fund. Harrow School, Harrow Council, John Lyon's Charity, Orley Farm School, Deo Duce Foundation and local corporate partners contributed over £400,000 in funding to support 38 local charities, reaching over 4,000 children and young people with a range of weekly activities and support. This demonstrates how a funding partnership approach has helped create a more meaningful programme with tangible, measurable reach and impact.

Similarly, the research revealed other examples of the YPFs using funding in order to convene members to tackle identified issues. One such example is the Helping Hands programme in Westminster. Through the programme, Young Westminster Foundation brought local community organisations together to address the impact of serious youth violence in the borough. Working in collaboration with local youth clubs and other partners, the programme creates opportunities for local interventions led by the voices of young people and community members impacted by violence.

3.1.3. The Case for Investment

Members shared through the survey and focus groups that the YPFs are influential in fostering dialogue between funders and members. Some convene funding consortia, which members have found useful for a variety of reasons: some organisations are poor at marketing or 'selling' themselves to funders but in a consortium, the YPF handles this, as well as lending its brand to the small organisations within the consortium. Larger or non-local funders can view some YPF members as too small or too risky to fund individually but the 'bidding vehicle' created by the YPF allows small organisations that would not individually receive funding to do so through the consortium. The YPF then handles coordination of the funding once the bid is successful, removing much of the project management burden. The YPFs' visibility and local contextual knowledge is particularly effective in engaging funders to financially back smaller member organisations.

"Being part of the YPF helped to build relationships with the Local Authority that was generative dialogue, not just complaining about lack of funding."
MEMBER ORGANISATION

⁹ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

The YPFs' local partners, including council officers, cited the YPFs' unique nature as key to investment in the Sector. No other organisation offers the same youth-focused, borough-specific infrastructure. While Councils for Voluntary Services (CVSs)¹⁰ or larger youth-focused intermediaries and membership bodies such as London Youth support the Sector, they lack the granular local knowledge and place-based focus of the YPFs. Without YPFs, partners would struggle to coordinate efforts or would need to build their own networks from scratch. Several stated that this would create extra work for them, and the ultimate beneficiaries, children and young people, would suffer.

"We aren't just infrastructure; the grant giving and consortium stuff, no one is doing that all together under one label. We offer a uniqueness around that. Funders can make their money reach more people. We are a 'quality assurance' marker too for our members."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

However, despite the YPFs impressive track record in distributing significant funding into their boroughs, the YPFs often still have to fight to prove their value, particularly to funders and the local authority largely owing to a lack of understanding on their scope and an element of distrust regarding attribution for success. Yet, the YPFs could powerfully demonstrate their value, both on an individual basis and collectively, if they were to systematically record the funding they help to secure. CEOs described initial tensions with local authorities, before proving their value over time. Perseverance and self-assuredness regarding their mission and public value is a defining trait of all the YPFs in the Charity's Beneficial Area.

"We had to have thick skin to not give up at the start. Council officers wanted you at the table but just to tick a box. The Council has changed beyond recognition. They are now supporting us where they weren't 10 years ago. In 2018, they announced after the current CVS contract ended that they wouldn't fund any further infrastructure, they didn't see the power of it, the value of it. We have changed that."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION



3.2. CAPACITY BUILDING

3.2.1. Capacity Building Support

Beyond financial backing, the YPFs have a unique role in offering bespoke capacity-building support to members. All interviewed CEOs described taking on a coaching role to nurture members directly, or linking them to others who could provide targeted support. Central to the YPFs' ability to build capacity is their closeness to the ground and their extensive knowledge of local actors and context. Being a grassroots organisation means that they can be responsive when it comes to meeting the needs of their members and local communities. The close relationships they hold with their members also means they have an acute understanding of challenges and can be flexible with offering support. The YPFs provide insight as to:

- Which local organisations need capacity building support.
- What local need looks like.
- The expertise, knowledge and skills needed to fill this need.
- The provision available to address the need.

When asked in the survey to select the types of support or services provided to their members over the last financial year, all YPFs reported that they provided funding, network events, support with fundraising, support with partnership development, training, one-to-one support, and connections with new funders. Nearly all also said they provided support with organisational development and access to delivery spaces. Other services provided by most YPFs included support with business planning, support with staff or trustee recruitment, other capacity building support, and marketing services to interested young people and their families. The YPFs were also given the opportunity to specify additional services provided which a few did, mentioning partnerships and introductions with local businesses, connections with local authority departments, listening, and advocacy.

Specific examples include:

- Co-producing events for the Sector (this co-production element was identified by Young Camden Foundation as unique to the YPF offer as opposed to general established sectoral forums).

- Workforce training and development on topics such as safeguarding, youth work, early years qualifications, and first aid (although it should be noted that the YPFs should not and do not replace statutory training).
- Organisational development for members via training, workshops and one-to-one strategic and business planning support (Young Ealing Foundation explained their business support offer by saying, "We operate in the way a consultancy might work but for those who can't afford a consultant." Young Barnet Foundation called this function "the invisible band-aid" for supporting the Sector.)
- Sector networking opportunities, including specialist networks (such as addressing youth violence, mental health, and SEND support) and funding consortia amongst membership.
- Encouraging collaboration across the Sector and coordinating members' resources, knowledge, and skills. This was felt by YPF CEOs to be hugely important for place-based capacity building and systems leadership.
- Sectoral advocacy work to keep momentum towards change (as Young Ealing Foundation explained, "We can't lead on doing all the work, but we can hold others to account.")



¹⁰ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

TABLE 6. NUMBER OF NETWORK EVENTS, INSTANCES OF ONE-TO-ONE CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT, AND TRAINING EVENTS DELIVERED BY EACH YPF OVER THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR

Last FY	Number of network events delivered	Instances of one-to-one capacity building support delivered	Training events delivered or administered
BARNET	12	278	16
BRENT	17	22	7
CAMDEN	10	30	11
EALING	4	95	8
H&F	14	39	7
HARROW	7	51	14
K&C	4	80	8
WESTMINSTER	9	75	10
TOTAL	77	670	81

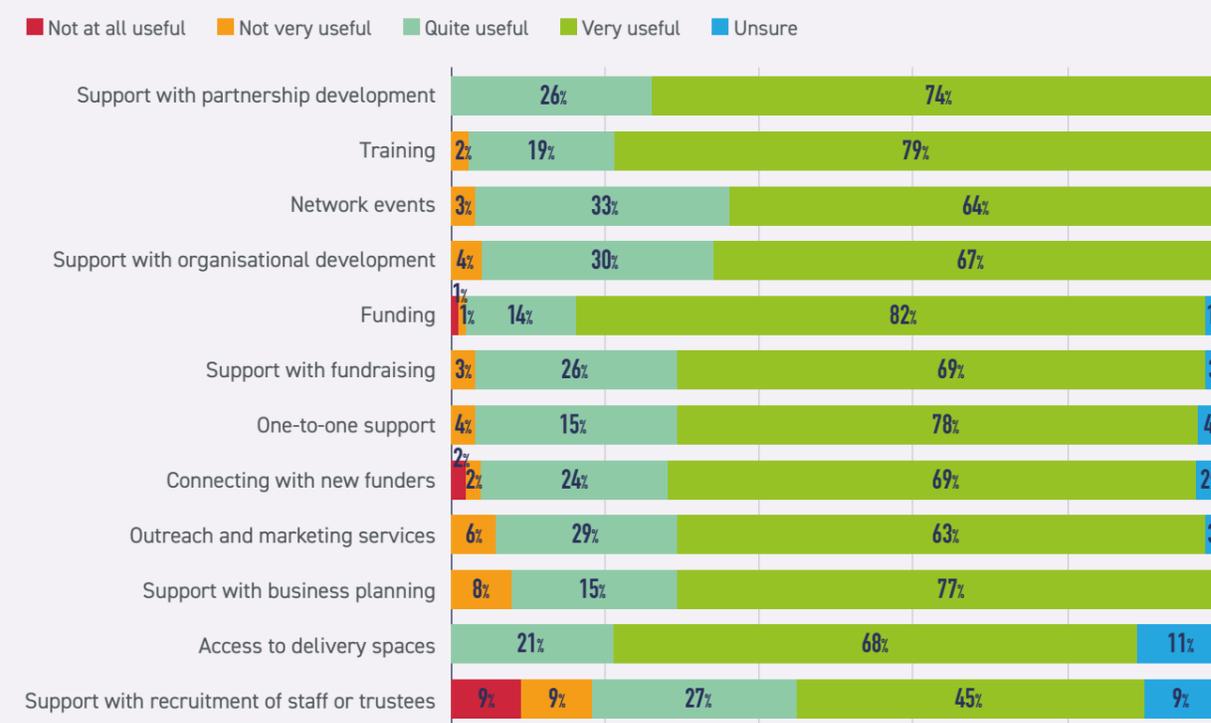
Source: YPF survey. Note: The data is self-reported by the YPFs. There is currently no standardisation around this data, meaning that each YPF may classify, and therefore count, instances of one-to-one capacity building, network events, and training events differently. Members may have accessed more than one instance of one-to-one support so this does not represent unique members.

Both the number of network events and instances of one-to-one capacity building support have increased steadily since the YPFs were founded, interestingly peaking in 2020/21. This is likely due to the prevalence of online meetings and events during the Covid-19 pandemic, which tend to be lower in cost and effort to both organise and attend. Since the pandemic there has been a shift back towards more in-person sessions and events which arguably have greater value to participants when focused on place. The number of network events has varied across the boroughs, with Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster reporting a particularly high total number of network events held since 2017/18 (120 and 107 respectively), compared to 19 events held in Kensington & Chelsea since 2020/21. It should be noted that Kensington & Chelsea is a relatively small borough with an active CVS, and the YPF itself is younger than in other boroughs, contributing towards the lower number of events it held. The number of attendees at these events was not obtained through the survey but would be an area to explore further to understand whether it is a small cohort of repeated organisations accessing YPF support, or whether these events have broad appeal. Given some are specific to certain themes (such as the Supplementary School Networks), it is likely to be a mixture.

The variation in some of the data, in particular the number of one-to-one capacity building support instances, suggests that the YPFs may define and therefore count these differently. For the purposes of measuring and communicating impact, it would be helpful if these definitions and measures were standardised across the YPFs. This is discussed in section 4.3 on Recommendations.

Network events were the most accessed service by members and providing opportunities to network was seen as one of the primary functions of a YPF in the member survey. Training and networking opportunities were highlighted by numerous survey respondents as the reason for their high satisfaction with their local YPF, however the scheduling of these events was an area identified where improvements could be made. When asked about the usefulness of different types of support that members had accessed, support with partnership development had the highest overall rating, with 100% of those surveyed reporting they found this type of support either 'very' or 'quite' useful. Respectively, 98% and 97% of members who had attended training and network events found these to be 'very' or 'quite' useful. Unsurprisingly, funding had the highest proportion of members rating it as 'very useful' (82%). All types of support listed were rated as 'very' or 'quite' useful by the vast majority of those who had accessed the support, although support with recruitment of staff or trustees had the lowest rating at 72%.

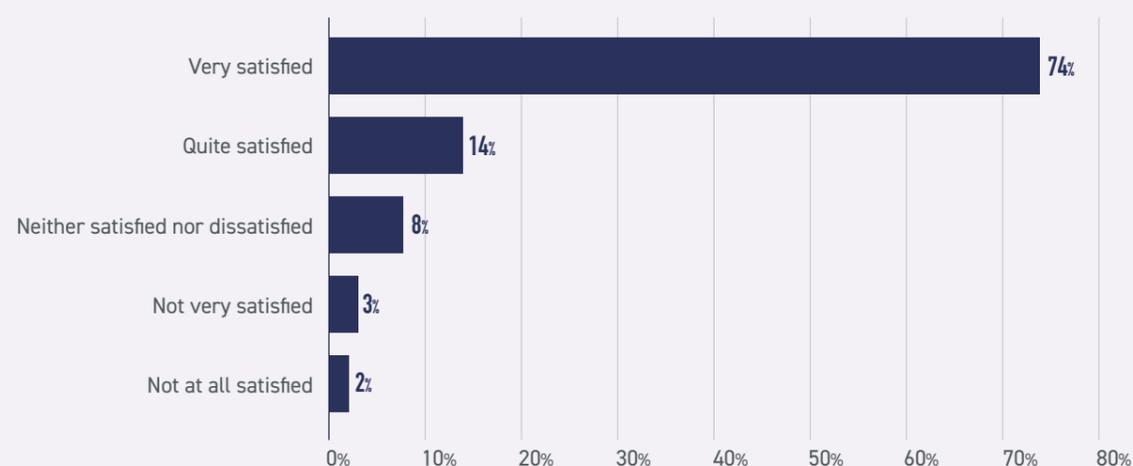
FIGURE 9. HOW USEFUL YPF MEMBERS FOUND EACH TYPE OF SUPPORT ACCESSED



Source: YPF member survey. How useful did you find each type of support accessed? Base: All members (101). Please note: Percentages not adding up to 100% in some places is due to rounding.

The YPFs' relational approach and support are highly valued by their members, with 88% of survey respondents saying they were 'quite' or 'very' satisfied with the YPFs that they are connected to. Some of the reasons given for this high level of satisfaction included consistent high quality and accessible support, a proactive, responsive and hard-working team, an excellent training offer, events, and networking opportunities. Levels of satisfaction were high for all of the YPFs (above 75%), and the reasons for satisfaction were similar across the board.

FIGURE 10. MEMBER SATISFACTION WITH THE YPFS



Source: YPF member survey. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being 'not at all satisfied' and 5 being 'very satisfied', how satisfied are you with [name of YPF]? Base: All members (101).

“[The YPF] has been the most supportive, helpful and knowledgeable umbrella organisation we’ve ever worked with. They supported us so much while we were getting up and running and they definitely contributed significantly to our success and growth.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“[The YPF] are organised and efficient, and take the time to understand the needs of the community before curating various channels of support that are fit-for-purpose.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“From the [YPF] staff to the fellow service users is a spirit of togetherness and help that isn’t always there in such a competitive environment.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“They work really hard and leverage more resources than I imagined they would and provide a really strong networking and support role.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“A lot of funders and support organisations are far from us. You lose the personal connection. But the YPFs are very responsive: They consult us, they lead on consortium bids. They know us well. They represent a long-term partnership; without them we would be very lonely.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“[The YPF] have changed the way youth service and services for children and young people are delivered in our borough by connecting groups, forming partnerships and bringing more resources to the area.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

As a member of the Charity’s Grants Team put it, “one of the opportunities that is often the first to be lost at times of, particularly economic, hardship is partnership working and networks – that ability to look beyond yourselves as an individual charity and link with others. YPFs have helped charities to develop Theories of Change, access training and fundraising advice, supported on recruitment, offered space and ‘check-ins’ on organisations in a way that the Grants Team would never have had the capacity to do on its own.” This clearly demonstrates that the YPFs are meeting the Charity’s aspirations to be a capacity building provider for the Sector, in a way that exceeds what might be expected or even possible as a funder.

3.2.2. Access to Space

One of the objectives of a YPF is to maximise the spaces available for local groups to use for activities for children and young people. While delivery spaces had not been accessed by very many members who completed the survey (19 out of 101), 89% of those who had accessed spaces found this support ‘very’ or ‘quite’ useful. The number of delivery spaces accessed by members in the last financial year as reported by the YPFs themselves ranged from none in Barnet to 27 in Harrow, reflecting the competing priorities within each YPF as well as the space readily available.

The YPFs did provide examples of ‘saved’ youth spaces in their boroughs. The Young Ealing Foundation was able to successfully lobby to save the Young Adults Centre in Southall¹¹, one of only three youth clubs in the whole borough, from closure. Young Kensington & Chelsea successfully advocated for the Local Authority to not impose increased rent and utility costs on Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)¹² tenants, which affected around 50 local youth organisations, including supplementary schools and youth clubs. Young Westminster Foundation secured significant funding for their members to enhance their delivery spaces, including securing £56,000 from a partner for a member to create a specialised sensory classroom for work with young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They additionally collaborate with partners to identify potential spaces for members to use for service delivery and facilitate the necessary introductions, as do other YPFs.

¹¹ Refer to Appendix E for the full case study.
¹² Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

One example of the YPFs role in maximising space is The Venue Bank, a one stop shop ‘Airbnb’ type digital platform, where spaces could be marketed and booked with preferential access for YPF members, at discounted rates. YPFs manage the Venue Bank in their area, approving venues to be listed. Given space is one of the four pillars of a YPF’s mission, the Venue Bank was seen as a key method in achieving this aim. However, it has proven to be difficult to establish, with the technology behind it challenging to develop and the impact of the pandemic affecting its roll-out. It was re-launched in Harrow in December 2024, boasting 27 spaces for local organisations to hire at a discounted rate and the remaining YPFs are now rolling this out across their boroughs. This is an extremely positive milestone as this project has been in development for many years.

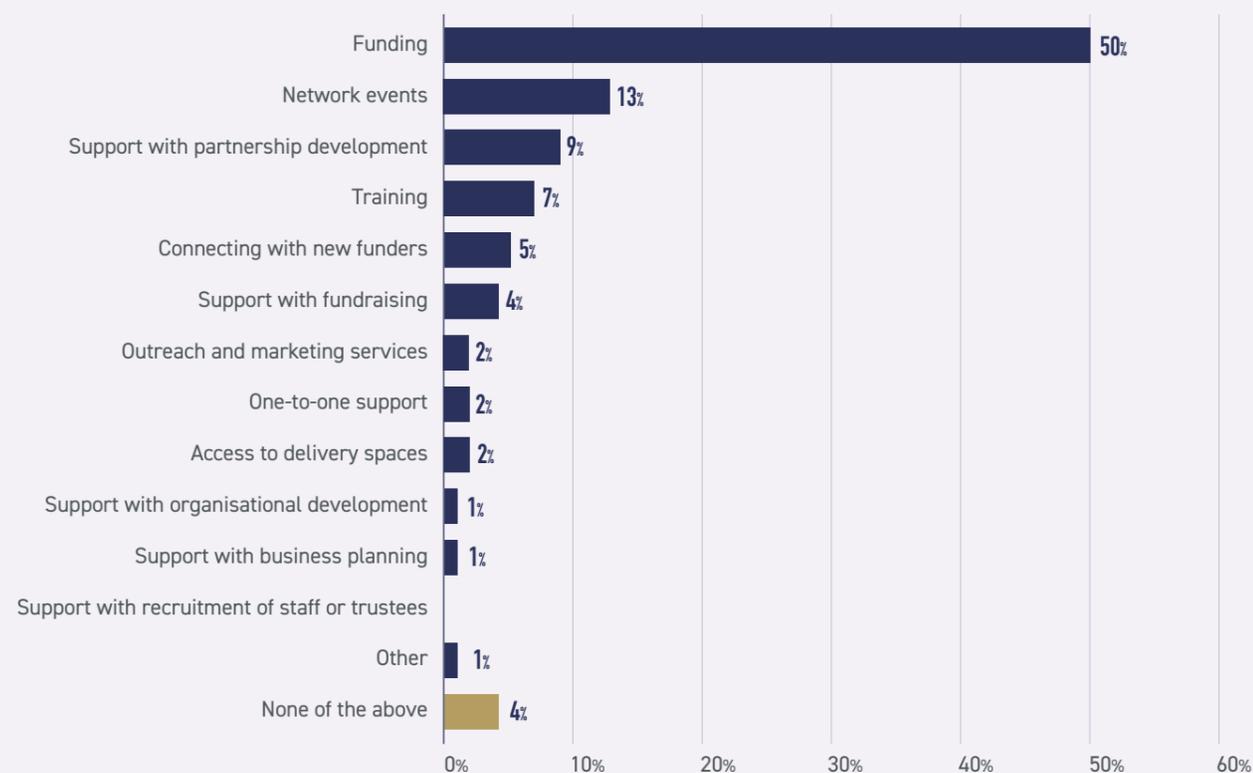
Of the four pillars, access to space is the one which is arguably least developed; and whilst undoubtedly important, when faced with multiple other priorities space is not high on the agenda for the YPFs nor its membership. The YPFs should continue to champion the importance of space but whether this should continue to be a key pillar remains to be seen.

3.2.3. Member Perception

The YPFs are well placed to use their relationships with members and stakeholders to deliver value which goes beyond capacity building. The interviews with YPF CEOs, and the survey and focus groups with members, revealed that the YPFs play an important role in encouraging and supporting organisations to widen their focus on delivery to explore opportunities for collaboration and mutual support. Being a trusted partner, enables honest reflection from members on their needs and better targeting support to influence improvement.

The member survey revealed that funding was the most significant resource or type of support offered by the YPFs, with 50% of those surveyed perceiving it as most important, as shown in Figure 11. Funding was also the second most frequently accessed form of support just after network events (with 77% and 78% of members respectively reporting they had accessed these types of support), as shown in Figure 12. These results from members are hardly surprising given the current fundraising climate and challenges which face many organisations, however, the YPFs themselves described funding as a lesser benefit than providing one-to-one capacity building and convening support which was also the most accessed aspect of the YPF offer.

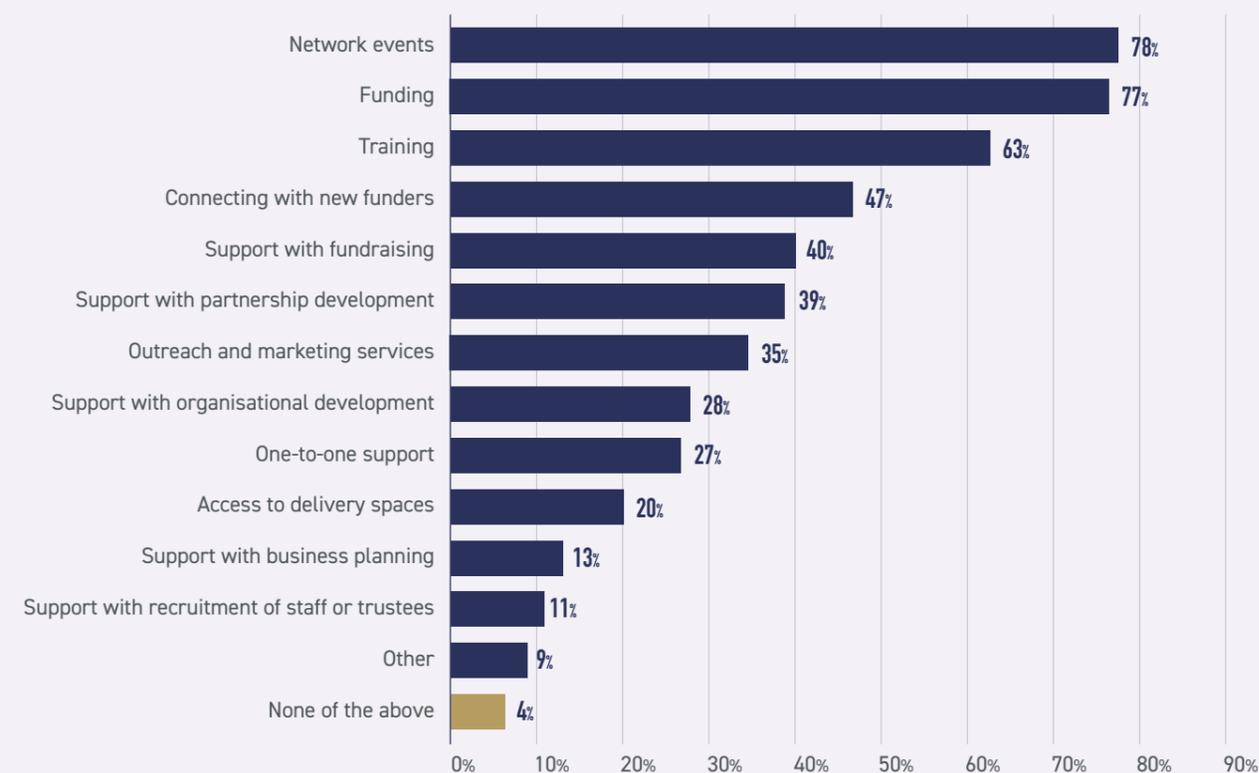
FIGURE 11. PROPORTION OF MEMBERS WHO PERCEIVED EACH TYPE OF SUPPORT AS MOST SIGNIFICANT TO THEIR ORGANISATION



Source: YPF member survey. Which of these resources has been most significant to your organisation? Base: All members (101).

When asked what, if any, other types of support members would like to access from the YPFs, most reported that they were happy with the current offer or could not think of anything else they needed. Those who had suggestions most frequently suggested more help connecting and building partnerships with organisations such as local businesses and schools; more funding opportunities, in particular support with corporate sponsorships; fundraising support; and training around policies and procedures.

FIGURE 12. PROPORTION OF MEMBERS WHO HAVE ACCESSED DIFFERENT SUPPORT OPTIONS



Source: YPF member survey. Which types of support have you accessed through your YPF(s)? Please select all that apply. Base: All members (101).

When asked where they would go for support if YPFs did not exist, many members said there were no suitable alternatives. Some referenced that similar organisations do not hold the same knowledge of young people or the local area as the YPF does. Others indicated that without their YPF, it would be impossible for them to keep delivering their services.

"[If the YPF did not exist] we would cancel our service."

MEMBER ORGANISATION

There were mixed opinions among members on the local CVS as an alternative. The CVSs in Brent, Camden and Harrow were cited as possible alternatives by members, although lacking the YPFs' specialist knowledge on young people, while perceptions of other CVSs were varied.

"There is nothing else like this - it is incredible that these organisations exist."

MEMBER ORGANISATION

Other stakeholders echoed the views of members. They did not feel that there were suitable alternatives to the YPFs. While the CVS was mentioned, interviewees agreed that they do not provide the same depth of understanding around young people and young people's services. One funder explained how, without the YPF, their work would be less strategic and less impactful. The lack of coordination and convening support would mean that they would need to liaise with a lot more organisations individually, creating extra work. Finally, they would miss the overarching understanding of the 'big picture'.

“I don’t think there are [alternatives to the YPF]. I’ve thought about that. I genuinely don’t think there are. If [the YPF] didn’t exist, we would be doing that work ourselves as best we could. So, it would be getting in touch with, let’s say, [an organisation] and looking at what they were offering locally for young people and having that conversation. Which is fine. But as I say, that’s not necessarily strategic ... I would worry our work could be less impactful because of it.”

FUNDER

The YPFs also maintain close relationships with youth organisations, often visiting them and gathering feedback directly from service users. This also provides an opportunity for the YPFs to involve other local stakeholders; one funder described a visit they attended with a YPF and how they were impressed by how thorough and clear the YPF was in its due diligence. The funder also attended some YPF young people’s panels which they felt were inclusive, with the young people themselves keen to assert their own views. The funder felt that the YPF clearly considered issues through a very ‘child focused’ lens, including whether organisations are providing necessary services and meeting the right needs.

In the interviews, four of the YPFs reported that they carry out regular consultation with young people, including through peer research and large-scale needs analyses, and emphasised the importance of this. Peer research was identified as a critical tool for understanding what local young people think and need. They have engaged varying numbers of young people, with Young Harrow Foundation consulting close to 7,000 young people across the borough in their most recent How Are You (HAY) Harrow survey in 2023. Some YPFs, including Hammersmith & Fulham, have also developed schemes to train young people as grant assessors, providing valuable insight on what young people feel is important, and giving them power to decide where money is spent.

“We are consistently trying to find ways to hear directly from young people, we want to lobby for change.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

The interviews with external stakeholders indicated that the YPFs are seen as the ‘go-to’ organisations for insight into youth services in their respective boroughs. All external stakeholders highlighted the YPFs’ depth of understanding of local needs and issues affecting young people. They cited the leadership role of YPFs in producing evidence-based local reports that uniquely draw on the lived experiences of young residents, such as ‘This is Harrow’ in Harrow, the Youth Voice Survey run by Young Champions in Barnet, or ‘Our City, Our Future’ in Westminster. These were highly

regarded for being both authoritative and accessible, and for giving a platform for young people’s voices. Funders viewed the evidence generated by the YPFs as vital for their understanding and their ability to target the most pertinent issues but suggested that the YPFs could potentially go even further by highlighting what is unique about each borough’s issues.

“It’s not just us saying, oh well, we think this would be good. The young people have said that this is needed. We have an evidence base that this is required”.

FUNDER

“They have a bird’s eye view of the many organisations working within the Sector and can therefore help reduce duplication of service provision.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

3.3.2. Communicating with the System

The role of the YPFs can be broadly broken down into two key activities: convening and advocating. These activities both leverage existing strategic groupings (such as local authorities) and build and convene new partnerships and spaces. In interviews, all the YPFs described how they were using these opportunities and spaces to be a voice for the Sector. YPF CEOs sit on boards, attend meetings and work closely with partners from the local council, health and housing sectors, and local businesses to understand more about how the Sector could be better supported and conversely understand where the Sector can also add value. They also directly link grassroots organisations with local authority decision makers, and link stakeholders with each other, using their connections to advocate for the Sector.



“They advocate for better resources, funding, and policies that directly benefit the Youth Sector, ensuring that the needs of our community are recognised and addressed.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“We are the broker across the Sector. [The borough] is now a much better place to work and it feels like our voice is being heard at a strategic level which it wasn’t before.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

The YPFs’ expertise around place and the Children and Young People’s Sector was seen as their clear contextual value, by the YPFs themselves, their members, and other stakeholders. Stakeholder interviews highlighted how important it is for funders to be able to rely on the local expertise of the YPFs. In addition to the YPF reports, funders often consult the YPFs for intelligence on organisations before making decisions. The credibility and insight of the YPFs’ staff teams help funders identify new grantees, with some in frequent contact with the local YPF to consult about potential grantees. The YPFs’ neutral, knowledgeable and trusted intermediary role reassures funders and enables effective collaboration.

“They really have got their finger on the pulse of what is going on in youth organisations across the borough... looking at them with that more expert eye, is just really fantastic.”

FUNDER

“I do think that they all know their area really well... that would be the first organisation I’d go to and say, tell me what’s what in your borough.”

FUNDER

3.3. LEADERSHIP

3.3.1. Understanding the Sector

The review revealed four main mechanisms used by the YPFs to understand the needs of their local Sector - member engagement, young people engagement, stakeholder engagement, and data and evidence reviews. Each of the YPFs undertake these to varying degrees. All carry out some level of consultation with their members to understand local need and opportunities, including through regular surveys and data gathering during membership renewal. In most boroughs, this includes a survey at regular intervals (e.g. annual) as well as frequent, deliberative touchpoints. These methods are critical to the YPFs’ (and by extension the Charity’s) understanding of what is going on locally, but also a means to gather feedback on their own performance. Not all the YPFs achieve success with regular, voluntary surveys, but one found that they were able to boost data collection when they pivoted to gathering data during membership renewal.

“Since our birth, we’ve always sent out a survey that allows people to be ruthless around where they think our value lies.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

The YPFs' knowledge of their local area and its young people is of great importance to strategic partnerships and communication with other stakeholders. These strategic partnerships have delivered tangible outcomes, such as Young Harrow Foundation's CEO sitting on the SEND Partnership Board which has led the development of the Council's Special Educational Needs strategy, published in 2024. Another example is Young Ealing Foundation's takeover of Greenford Library in 2024, when the Council lacked the resources to change it into a community asset. The YPF stepped in to save the library, providing the necessary catalyst and energy to co-create a new resource for young people to be able to use the building in a variety of ways, including as a youth club. However, the YPFs expressed that while developing partnerships is critical, the value is often difficult to evidence and articulate when seeking buy-in or funding.

"We're getting people talking. Some of the work is simple and some is quite nuanced... it's hard to evidence the benefit of our partnerships."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

The research found that the YPFs communicate needs, opportunities and best practices across various stakeholders in a myriad of ways, including:

- Holding relationships with a large number of actors, identifying possible cross-sectoral partnerships and facilitating connections.
- Magnifying the needs of small grassroots charities for council strategies.
- Brokering partnerships amongst the VCS, reducing duplication and strengthening collaboration.
- Linking high-level decision-makers with grassroots leaders.
- Conducting needs analyses which are used as evidence of youth voice across the local area.
- Collating local offer through online coordination (forum websites, online engagement, advertising projects and vacancies, publicising events and funding opportunities).

An example of this is the collaborative 'Our City' webpage of Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

- Coordinating networking events bringing members together.

"They seem to know extremely well what's going on, and they're fantastic at communicating that."

FUNDER

As already highlighted, relationships between the YPFs and their local councils varied at the time of interviewing. Some YPF CEOs described teething problems including an initial or even ongoing antagonism, including local authority scepticism around the VCS, perceptions that the YPFs were threatening council work, a desire to brand the YPFs as part of the council's offer, and lack of engagement, among other things. Some have sought to build trust but felt that they have remained unsuccessful. Others felt that over time, this relationship has improved. Some YPFs have been able to nurture close partnerships with their local authorities: feeding into strategy, advising on workstreams related to children and young people, and chairing forums or taskforces. The YPFs felt that they act as a bridge between the council and the local CYP Sector, championing young voices in these spaces where young people themselves are often not represented directly, and this view was echoed by their members and funders. This has had clear benefits for the local voluntary sector and young people themselves, evidenced by the increase in investment seen in many boroughs where the local authorities had previously reduced, or altogether stopped funding youth services. This role meets one of the key strategic aspirations behind the creation of the YPFs; a locally rooted, credible organisation advocating for the Sector and subsequently influencing local authorities' policymaking.

In interviews with funders, one described how their local YPF's work was initially interpreted as criticism of the Local Authority. A City Within a City, Young Westminster Foundation's first needs analysis (2017), was not well received by the Council because of the perceived criticism of the Local Authority and its services. It took considerable

work to win them around, to the point where the Council is now a key partner and supporter of the Foundation. This example illustrates the importance of a YPF having strong leadership, open lines of communication with its local council, and the need to be independent enough, when supported by evidence, to speak truth to power and, if necessary, occasionally "bite the hand that feeds you."

"The YPF has acted as a bridge between the Council and a fragmented Voluntary and Community Sector, helping to coordinate and stabilise youth provision."

LOCAL AUTHORITY

"They help us see the strength in the Voluntary and Community Sector, making sure the voluntary sector has a seat around the table in those strategic spaces."

LOCAL AUTHORITY

When asked about the primary function of the YPFs, member organisations cited their ability to link the Sector to the system alongside providing access to funding. Members referenced the same key themes as the YPFs: giving young people a voice, linking strategic bodies to grassroots delivery organisations, and fostering connection and collaboration. Among other things, they described the primary function of a YPF as acting as "the bridge between the youth service and the council", and "foster[ing] connection and collaboration between organisations doing similar or complementary work".

The YPFs' knowledge of their borough is also invaluable for John Lyon's Charity and its grant making, as mentioned by all members of the Grants Team who took part in this review. Several staff felt that they could contact any of the YPFs for local insights of what is going on with a particular organisation or local authority. In the context of the Charity's Home-School-Community (HSC) programme¹³ and particularly the Collaboration Fund, all the YPFs helped with the development of their local Collaborations by identifying organisations and sharing local insights and

intelligence. Without the existence of the YPFs to support the development of the Collaborations, the ability of the Charity to undertake such an ambitious endeavour would have been significantly curtailed. Some YPFs facilitated workshops with partners to develop their projects and objectives and others have remained close to the Collaborations in their boroughs and helped with trouble shooting issues along the way. This is just one example of the support the YPFs have provided for the Charity.

A significant part of the YPFs' work is around convening their members. This includes providing networking opportunities, ranging from large events and conferences to 'breakfast clubs' for charity leaders. The YPFs cited occasions where they have introduced organisations to each other, and those organisations now support each other with specialist knowledge. Member focus groups and surveys also indicated that, in some ways, the YPFs act as a pressure release valve for the Sector, providing support for charities and chief executives who are really struggling or on the edge of burnout. A story was shared through the YPF interviews of a particular charity leader who, at the start of each day, sits on the edge of their bed and thinks, 'can I keep doing this for another day'. A support structure such as that provided by the YPFs is vital to keeping these organisations and their staff going.

3.3.3. Influence

As an infrastructure body, the YPFs work across those delivering in the Children and Young People's Sector. This distinction from the working scope of their members, along with an emphasis on big picture coordination, was highlighted by CEOs as fundamental for generating strategic alignment across the provision. Also given their separation from members, some YPFs have had significant influence over improving the quality control of organisations, thereby improving local provision. Young Harrow Foundation provides a good example of this, encapsulating the value of infrastructure organisations. When it was established in 2015, the borough had no active Council for Voluntary Services, and the Local Authority was cutting infrastructure spending. The YPF found that many delivery organisations were failing to secure funding due to poor safeguarding policies. Young Harrow Foundation was able to work with these organisations individually to

¹³ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

improve their safeguarding processes, ultimately improving services for young people. Organisations with stronger internal policies and procedures are also a more attractive prospect for funders to support, including the Charity.

“We met youth groups who didn’t have safeguarding policies, there were so many red flags. We had to start at the beginning with each group ... The Sector is stronger and more connected now.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

The CEOs of the YPFs are incredibly visible locally. This visibility of CEOs was noted in both member focus groups and in interviews with other stakeholders as influential in raising wider awareness and advocating for youth voice. Funders spoke about how the character of the YPF CEO and the wider team is important in how they are perceived and for building relationships, with an emphasis on individuals building and maintaining close relationships with other individuals. However, as much as this is a strength, there is also a risk that an organisation’s success hinges on personalities and the potential impact should an individual leave. Succession planning and relationship sharing across the team should therefore be at the forefront of all YPF CEO’s agendas.

“The young people of [the borough] benefit considerably by having an active, energetic team leading the way. Issues are addressed, that would very likely go unspoken. There is a huge need for young people to be heard, our YPF gives them that essential platform.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“They are very personable, they’re very relationship driven... they back up what they say.”

FUNDER

“They are such a small team, but they are everywhere, they are out and about, they use their networks well, they build relationships well. It’s a reciprocal thing – we have a collaborative relationship. They are so present and want to be engaged.”

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Another aspect of generating commitment is through the YPFs brokering trust and compromise across stakeholders. The CEO interviews revealed that they often find themselves alleviating pressures and disagreements between individual community leaders, funding officers, and council staff, playing a vital relationship management role. The YPF CEOs viewed listening and understanding various stakeholder perspectives as a key component of their jobs, enabling them to nurture respect and collaboration rather than animosity.

This role was recognised amongst stakeholders, almost all member organisations who completed the survey said the YPFs have effectively played the role of a convenor or a champion for the borough that they represent and the local CYP Sector. In this strategic role, the YPFs have positioned themselves to be conduits for collaboration and funding, which is greatly valued by their members. Members mentioned that the YPFs effectively connect organisations with each other, provide links to other actors such as the local council, and amplify the voices of children and young people. They take the time to understand the needs of the community and then advocate on behalf of that community.

“I think the characters that make up [the YPF] are incredible advocates and champions for the Youth Sector within [the borough]. I’m in the WhatsApp group and it is quite obvious that they act as a conduit to bring opportunities to the Sector and with that the relationships that have developed across the borough with a variety of different organisations.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“In my opinion [the YPF] has become the *champion of change* through supporting local youth organisation and grassroots groups, and as a result the local groups have gained recognition from the local authorities for their effective delivery services.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“They have made a massive difference, I can see that for small startups especially, to have somewhere to go for advice, sign posting to launch services, as well as a supportive forum. They provide *effective opportunities for young people to have a voice about what they want to see happen.*”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

The research identified that the specific focus of place and children and young people, and the distinctive way in which YPFs build partnerships – bringing together key stakeholders from various areas, sectors and specialisms – is key to their ability to generate commitment. Over time the development of these relationships has generated trust between the YPFs and those in the public and private sectors. For some YPFs this work has seen local authorities open new funding pots, and in others local businesses have provided space or expertise to support local youth organisations.

The stakeholder interviews confirmed that the YPFs are seen as key partners locally. Their main value is their knowledge and contacts – they know what is going on in their borough at any given time, what services are available and where the gaps are. They know their members well and can advise funders who lack the same granular, local level of detail. The interviews provided several examples of the YPFs bringing partners together, including the case of Harrow School Farm. In July 2025, a space that was unused for many years was repurposed as a place for learning and community connection as a result of a partnership between Harrow School’s Shaftesbury Enterprise, Young Harrow Foundation, and a group of local

charities and schools. Over two days, 240 local students took part in a range of outdoor activities. Harrow School described this as an exciting opportunity to deepen their commitment to partnership working and to collaborating with local organisations, that would not have been possible without Young Harrow Foundation.

“As a convenor, the YPF successfully brings together organisations, fostering collaboration and partnerships that strengthen our collective impact. Their efforts help us share best practices, access funding opportunities, and deliver more effective programs for young people.”

As a champion, the YPF uses its platform to *amplify the voices* of children, young people, and the organisations that support them. They *advocate for better resources, funding, and policies* that directly benefit the Youth Sector, ensuring that the needs of our community are recognised and addressed.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

The YPFs are effective convenors of local networks, funders, and community groups, and funder fairs were mentioned as a good example of this in stakeholder interviews. These provide platforms for information-sharing, matchmaking, and networking between funders and children and youth organisations, most notably opportunities to introduce potential grantees to funders who lack the capacity to do this directly. The YPFs’ work on CYP Sector development and capacity building was cited in stakeholder interviews as supplementing or filling gaps left by more generic VCS infrastructure organisations. However, despite their reputation and track record, the YPFs still need to remind council officers and members of their role and remit as an enabler rather than a provider of services, as the interviews revealed that some confusion persists around this in places. The YPFs must remain steadfast on this distinction to ensure they avoid mission creep and the risk of becoming competitors to the members they seek to serve.

“They understand the landscape in [the borough] ... They are very aware of where services are and gaps in provision, helping the Council to see the richness of the [VCS] offer. They have young champions who are instrumental in providing constant feedback.”

LOCAL AUTHORITY

“If you’re interested in this organisation, you might want to think about this particular titbit’ ... That sort of intel has been really, really useful.”

FUNDER

“The YPFs did certainly help us to support more individual organisations... we could sort of verify them without having to do all the checks.”

FUNDER

In return for their investment, the Charity receives hyperlocal knowledge and influence, and the ability to reach grassroots organisations working to benefit children and young people in the Beneficial Area. The YPFs generally felt that they have a healthy relationship with the Charity. At the heart of this was:

- The Charity’s role as a ‘sounding board’. Several YPFs mentioned finding informal conversations with the Charity helpful or clarifying, and feeling like a partner to the Charity.
- The Charity’s ability to take a flexible approach to work and understanding the need to sometimes provide leeway.
- The fact that the Charity covers core costs, which allows the YPFs to focus on their main areas of work.

“The Charity has been a massive strength to us. They let us shift and be flexible with the changing context. We’ve never felt boxed in.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

There were two challenges the YPFs flagged regarding their relationship with the Charity:

- Funding has not increased with inflation, which means the YPFs are trying to maintain the same delivery with less money. The funding landscape, and securing other sources of income, remains challenging.

“Funding has not increased with inflation. The Sector is feeling the pinch.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

- The power imbalance between funder and grantee and the sometimes ‘transactional’ feeling to the relationship was discussed, with several YPFs feeling they could not say no to additional requests or work asked of them.

“Sometimes it has felt like an unequal relationship.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

Neither of these issues are unique to the Young People’s Foundations and echo long-term challenges that the Charity grapples with across its funding. Whilst the Charity is committed to the YPFs, it also seeks to minimise over-reliance of any grantee on the Charity for long-term sustainability. The pressures on the Charity’s available funds, which have not grown in recent years, means it is unable to keep pace with inflation, particularly when the YPF grants are already the largest the Charity awards. The Charity is also acutely aware of the power imbalance often felt between grantee and funder. The YPFs do hold a unique position within the Charity’s portfolio and their role as a local infrastructure organisation does mean they have day-to-day contact with the Grants Team in a way rarely experienced by other grantees. However, the Charity should remain mindful of where the YPFs fulfil their remit as its ‘funder plus’ offer and where the Charity is expecting them to go beyond their normal provision.

3.4.2. The YPF ‘Family’

Collaboration and Learning

In interviews the YPF CEOs described opportunities to learn from each other’s challenges and successes, and a positive working relationship amongst themselves. However, this learning and collaboration is almost entirely informal, one-to-one, and based on personal friendships. Collaboration includes seeking out support and advice on a case-by-case basis, brainstorming around topics such as HR, policy stances, cost-of-living payment increases, and sharing funder reporting schedules.

“Any of the CEOs could call me up. We work closely with some - not because our boroughs are similar but because we get on really well.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

The YPFs have on occasion pitched for funding together but have had limited success, reasons for which are not entirely clear and may warrant further exploration. The most notable example of the YPFs working together in a more formal way is the current joint work of five YPFs through Propel¹⁵ and a soon to be launched quad-borough project focused on reducing youth violence. However,

several YPFs mentioned that collaboration between the YPFs could benefit from ‘fine-tuning’ and more project management oversight.

“We’ve put a couple of funding bids in before to try and link the YPFs up but didn’t get it. We all thought the Trust might do that. No one coordinates us as YPFs... to bring us together takes time.”

YOUNG PEOPLE’S FOUNDATION

During interviews, all CEOs mentioned the existence and role of the YPF Trust. They felt the Trust was established to act as a connector between YPFs, but that this role has largely been unfulfilled. Some felt that the Trust has instead had a diminishing role over the last few years, and that it might provide more benefit for new YPFs set up outside of London than for established organisations. City Bridge Foundation previously brought the YPFs together for CEO coffee chats, though these have now ceased. Again, it was generally felt that convened spaces are more useful for new YPFs than for established foundations, as each CEO and place takes a unique approach to operations. However, as highlighted above, informal collaboration between YPFs, often on operational topics, demonstrates a potential role for the YPF Trust to coordinate a more formal approach and provide opportunities for shared services. The variations between the YPFs’ offers are informed by local context, and these differences can act as barriers to collaboration. This raises the question of what role the Trust should or could play in the future. The recent appointment of former Young Brent Foundation CEO as new CEO of the YPF Trust may provide a good opportunity for a reset in this relationship.

The member survey and focus groups revealed that members feel that the YPFs tend to focus on local place and issues rather than the wider picture. This is in many ways the purpose of the YPFs and their local focus and expertise are a huge strength. It was however noted that this can promote siloed working. Some members noted that cross-pollination between the YPFs could help those members working across multiple boroughs. Interviews with other stakeholders also showed that there is growing

¹⁴ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

¹⁵ Refer to the Glossary in Section 5.

interest in more cross-borough collaboration and working, for example, sub-regionally across boroughs like Brent, Camden and Westminster, recognising that young people's lives do not conform to borough boundaries.

One gap noted by the YPF CEOs, and subsequently confirmed through the creation of this report, was around data sharing, which could be better coordinated across the foundations:

“The YPF Trust has dipped in and out of knowledge sharing. When we started there was a group to align data collecting. We were not on the same page as others, but we couldn't wait for everyone to catch up, so we started before everyone was aligned. We did a lot of that development ourselves.”

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

Improvements in the uniformity and consistency of data collection, and subsequent gathering of this data, would go some way to helping the YPFs collectively articulate their value and place within the infrastructure sector. Given this Sector has already seen a significant retraction, demonstrating the need and impact such organisations have on the broader VCS landscape will be of key importance in the future.

Replicating the YPF Model

Since the first YPFs were established ten years ago, the model has spread across the country. There are now a total of 24 YPFs in locations ranging from large cities like London and Manchester to disparately populated areas such as Medway and Wiltshire, with another seven YPFs pending. The YPF Trust is also working with numerous other areas to build capacity through the Local Youth Partnership (LYP) project. When asked how the YPF model might be replicated, the CEOs shared the following core principles:

- **Practising intentionality and flexibility.** Several YPFs highlighted the 'test and learn' nature of their organisations, and the model's adaptability to local context and need. The CEOs noted the importance of taking time to understand the local landscape before designing the YPF offer accordingly. As a place-based

model, YPFs reflect their local contexts, so they need to build trust with local actors and invest time in getting to know the needs on the ground, and respond accordingly. A piece of advice given by several interviewed CEOs to any new YPF CEO: take the time to truly learn about your place before immediately building your offer.

- **Nurturing trust and collaboration.** The YPFs sit within a multi-faceted sector and should embrace their role as a connector. CEOs need to strategically form open and transparent relationships, earning trust across members, stakeholders and policymakers.
- **Acting as a critical friend.** The YPFs should not be afraid to define their boundaries when pressured to step outside of what is relevant for their members. They can also be an invaluable critical friend for their members and other partners. The CEOs praised the importance of diplomacy skills in regard to partnership working and noted a skills gap in the Sector around negotiation and the ability to challenge within tense environments.

“As a YPF, you have to collaborate but also challenge as well. The longer you are in the role, you can challenge in a way that is not seen as aggressive.”

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION

However, there was also caution expressed by some stakeholders about the expansion of the model, noting the challenging financial environment for the Sector, the sustained core funding required to support YPFs, and the unique context of each local authority which means that the YPF model may not be suited.



4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. SUPPORTING THE SECTOR

The Children and Young People's Sector has been a challenging environment for those operating within it, particularly post-pandemic, with increasing demand for services and less funding available to provide those services. As organisational and individual capacity is stretched, organisations have had to focus largely on delivery outputs linked to their funding.

A stronger sector creates a stronger voice, and this research has demonstrated the unique value that the YPFs bring to the Sector, providing in-depth understanding of the local context and needs, and forming close relationships with local organisations. This allows them to advocate for their members. They also act as a pressure-release valve for the Sector, providing the space, skills, and knowledge to help organisations improve their internal processes and systems, which can get neglected in favour of focus on delivery. This work supports the Sector in ways that is often difficult to see or to measure – by making organisations feel more connected to each other; by upskilling but also giving overstretched staff space to breathe; and by making the Sector overall work more smoothly and efficiently. The YPFs support collaboration among members, creating healthier ecosystems. A stronger sector and stronger organisations in turn provide a higher quality of services to children and young people, as evidenced by examples such as the safeguarding work undertaken by Young Harrow Foundation. The YPFs are also effective at championing the value of partnership working. They help to amplify the voice and capacity of small, often volunteer-led youth organisations, enabling them to

access funding and deliver services at the grass roots and in diverse communities. Finally, the YPFs are well-placed to understand and consult youth voice in their local area. Leveraging their local connections and understanding could enable those with funding to access the perspective of the next generation.

As shown through this research, the YPFs also provide many tangible and measurable benefits. These include unlocking new funding avenues for their members, both through convening funding consortia and through their own grant programmes for smaller organisations, which are often not eligible to receive grants from larger funders; organising training and networking events; coordinating delivery spaces; and carrying out needs analysis of children and young people in their local area. The continuing casualty list of local and sectoral infrastructure organisations has left many organisations valuing the YPFs now more than ever.

However, the YPFs' own place in the system is also uncertain, given the current funding environment. The YPFs are one of the few remaining examples of localised infrastructure bodies in London; there is a case to be made around investing in the YPFs in order to keep the unique model afloat. It should be remembered that at ten years old (at most), the YPFs are a relatively recent addition to the CYP Sector in London and still making their mark. Such dependence on the Charity for funding is therefore not unexpected, but the value they have provided in playing a role which previously was often undertaken by the Local Authority should not be underestimated.

Whilst those close to the YPFs see their value, the interviews highlighted that the YPFs can struggle to articulate to external audiences the impact of their own work in adding strategic value locally, which has impacted their ability to secure additional funding. The YPFs in-depth knowledge of their local Sector is a resource that some stakeholders would do well to fund and gain access to, but they need to better collate, demonstrate and articulate the impact they have on the Sector in order to secure long-term investment for themselves and their members.

“If they weren’t there, young people would feel it. They would feel the absence.”

FUNDER

“There isn’t any other single organisation that could be as focused and achieve as much as the YPFs.”

FUNDER



4.2. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The value of collaboration amongst members and stakeholders is clear in this report and similarly, there is something to be said about the value of collaboration and even some standardisation between and across the YPFs. While each YPF’s offer is informed by local context, standardising certain elements such as safeguarding guidelines and metrics for data collection would provide benefit to their members, the YPFs themselves and other funders; particularly when articulating their value. Similarly, the YPFs all manage devolved funding, including from John Lyon’s Charity, but vary in how effectively they administer this. This is an area where there is an opportunity to introduce similar processes and approaches whilst still remaining loyal to their local context. The Charity has in the past provided feedback and support to the YPFs across several topics and will continue to do so.

When asked what they want more of from the YPFs, many members said they would like to see more of the same, including more funding (particularly longer-term funding), and more opportunities for partnerships and capacity building, rather than new types of provision. Members were particularly interested in stronger connections with corporates and schools. More opportunities to build partnerships with other members and system-related stakeholders were cited as important for accessing resources, knowledge, and funding. Some members wanted more of an online presence from their YPF, including more updates and events posted on social media. As briefly highlighted in Section 3.2, some members flagged issues with attending training sessions and events due to scheduling, and hoped for more notice of sessions and more opportunities available in school holidays and outside standard working hours.

“Perhaps a bit more deliberate matchmaking or suggesting opportunities for joint funding bids.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

“Ongoing support with partnership development, particularly with schools.”

MEMBER ORGANISATION

The non-member survey revealed that local organisations were generally not members of their YPF for one of two reasons:

1. They were unaware of the YPF, or
2. They were unsure whether they qualified as a member.

The latter was especially the case for organisations whose offer was broader than just children and young people. When asked what could encourage them to join, organisations most commonly wanted more information, including about what membership involves and any relevant costs and benefits. The YPFs should consider strengthening their communication around membership to ensure that all eligible organisations join their network.

In feedback from funders, it was noted that there is variation in the YPFs in terms of ease of engagement, largely as a result of the changing and varied staff teams and therefore more could be done to develop multiple links between funders and staff teams across the YPFs.

Feedback from the Grants Team at John Lyon’s Charity also suggested that all YPFs should incorporate youth voice research and needs analysis into their work. Having all YPFs collecting the same data around the needs and challenges faced by young people would provide a fantastic source of information that the Charity and other stakeholders could use to both better understand the Beneficial Area, and to influence other actors in an evidence-led manner.

4.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

With these findings in mind, this review provides five recommendations for the Charity, the YPF Trust, and the YPFs going forward:

- While John Lyon’s Charity should continue funding the YPFs’ core costs, allowing them to carry out vital work in the CYP Sector, consideration now needs to be given to the level of this funding as a whole and for each individual YPF. The research has shown differences in local context and impact of each YPF so the Charity will need to be mindful of how it ensures its funding is having the greatest possible impact and benefit for children and young people.
- Local Authorities, funders and other local stakeholders should not only continue, but increase, their support to the YPFs, recognising the value they provide as convenors, brokers and local experts. Their role instils confidence in stakeholders to engage with and support the CYP Sector. For this to continue, it needs to be adequately supported.
- The YPFs should strengthen their communication around membership and what their role is to ensure all eligible organisations join their network and all stakeholders understand the YPFs’ specific remit; not to directly deliver Children and Youth Services, but to facilitate a well-connected, high-quality Sector.
- The YPFs should consider whether their four pillars of funding, networks, space and access remain most appropriate. As highlighted, space has been an area with least development and, whilst important, has not been viewed as a priority within this report by either the YPFs or the Sector. Conversely, this report highlights how the YPFs have developed a key role as a broker and as a mediator; this strength should be brought to the fore and potentially incorporated as one of their core functions.
- The YPFs should consider their legacy and succession planning beyond current leaders and wider staff teams. The review revealed how important the YPF leaders are to building relationships and maintaining contacts across the Sector. It is important that the YPFs as organisations are not too dependent on the charisma and contacts of individual characters but have a solid succession plan in place.

Whilst recognising the unique role and local context that each YPF operates in, there are several opportunities which would increase synergy, collaboration, and impact reporting across all eight YPFs, with a key role for the YPF Trust:

- The YPF Trust should co-create a space for YPFs to convene and collaborate more formally. As mentioned in the report, at present collaboration between the YPFs takes place informally and on a personal basis, and while the YPFs are hesitant about formalising this, there is value in extending the current, less formal, collaboration to the wider group. Whatever form this collaboration takes, it should be co-created with the YPFs, and they should be given ownership over how it is used. This should also include a coordination role in applying for longer term funding benefitting all the YPFs.
- The YPF Trust should explore the potential for standardisation across the YPFs with regards to impact measurement and data collection. This has been an ambition of the YPF Trust in the past, and they are best placed to coordinate this. This should involve establishing standardised terminology to ensure that all YPFs record delivery outputs, such as one-to-one capacity building support sessions, and inputs, such as core funding, the same way. It should also involve establishing and collecting key impact data across all the YPFs, such as the amount of additional funding YPF members get as a result of their membership that they would not have had access to otherwise. The lack of clear, shared definitions and standardised data collection methodologies posed a significant challenge for this report. Additionally, standardisation could be explored across other internal YPF systems and policies, such as HR and payroll.
- The role of the Trust going forward should be co-created with input from the CEOs of the longest standing YPFs. The new CEO of the Trust, who was the former CEO of Young Brent Foundation, provides a timely opportunity for a reset in the relationship.
- The YPF Trust and the Charity work together to support the YPFs with tools and resources that help them more coherently capture and articulate the impact of their work in developing partnerships and strengthening their local ecosystems and help them secure additional funding elsewhere.

The Young People's Foundations should feel proud of what they have achieved in the last ten years. It is evident that they are a valued and trusted resource at both a borough level and within the Children and Young People's Sector. They provide a voice to the Sector, to grassroots organisations, but most importantly to young people themselves. The YPFs have improved relationships between local authorities, funders and the local VCS Sector, driving up quality of provision, increasing credibility and improving trust between stakeholders. This report goes some way to evidencing that, but more could be done, and the recommendation to standardise data collection for impact measurement purposes would go some way to enhancing how their value is articulated. This will be of key importance as the YPFs move into their next decade. Whilst the Charity's commitment to the YPFs is strong, and the value of the core cost funding is undeniable, the YPFs must be able to better demonstrate their value to other stakeholders to ensure that they remain well-resourced for the inevitable challenges that lie ahead. Each YPF is unique, operating within its own context, and it is important not to lose this asset, but their collective power in evidencing their impact could be their greatest strength.



5. GLOSSARY

THE CHARITY

John Lyon's Charity

BENEFICIAL AREA

John Lyon's Charity operates in nine local authority areas, known as the Beneficial Area. The beneficiaries of the Charity are the inhabitants of the following London boroughs: Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and the Cities of London and Westminster. These boroughs are linked by their proximity to the two roads that were the original beneficiaries of the John Lyon Road Trust: Harrow Road and Edgware Road.

HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

A six-year funding programme that the Charity created in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, spanning from 2021 to 2027. This is in addition to the Charity's regular grant making, providing £22million of funding distributed to organisations in the Beneficial Area through five funds: Collaboration Fund, Cultural Capital Fund, Recovery Fund, Replication Fund, and the YPF Small Grants Fund.

INFRASTRUCTURE ORGANISATION

A body that exists to support other organisations within a sector. They provide a range of services, including capacity building, advice, training, networking, and funding support.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SECTOR

This Sector encompasses a wide range of services and organisations dedicated to the wellbeing and development of children and young people, ensuring that they have the best start in life and the support they need to thrive. Among other things, it includes education, healthcare, social care, and youth services, encompassing organisations and professionals such as local authorities, the National Health Service (NHS), charities, teachers, social workers, and youth workers.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS)

This Sector is made up of a diverse range of groups and organisations that work toward social good or the good of the community, rather than profit. Organisations that form part of the Sector are generally independent of government, driven by values, and not run for financial gain. Groups that make up the Sector include charities, community groups, Community Interest Companies (CICs), youth clubs, many sports clubs, churches and other faith groups, and other voluntary organisations.

'FUNDER PLUS'

This is used to describe 'any activity which is additional to a grant and the grant-making process', such as capacity building or organisational development activities (training, consultancy, support) aimed at developing the skills of individual funded organisations¹⁶.

COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES (CVS)

A type of infrastructure support organisation that exist to support and bring together frontline voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations. In London CVSs are borough-based, operating in 29 of the 33 London boroughs¹⁷.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD (HAF) PROGRAMME

A Department for Education programme that provides food, enriching activities, and free childcare places to children from low-income families during school holidays. The funding is coordinated by each local authority for their borough¹⁸.

PROPEL

A cross-sector collaboration of funders and organisations. The aim of Propel is to build long-term collaborations to tackle various issues impacting London, placing "money and power in the hands of communities that are best placed to make change happen"¹⁹. Around £100 million in funding has been distributed by Propel over 10 years.

¹⁶ Funding Plus - Grantee Capacity Building - IVAR UK

¹⁷ London CVS Network | London Plus

¹⁸ Holiday activities and food programme 2025 - GOV.UK

¹⁹ About Propel | Propel

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chief Executive Officer at Young Brent Foundation

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Chief Executive Officer at Young Ealing Foundation

Dan Burke,
Chief Executive Officer at Young Harrow Foundation

Nicola Butler,
Chief Executive Officer at Young K&C

Gareth Dixon,
Chief Executive Officer at Young Hammersmith and Fulham

Helen Mann,
Chief Executive Officer at Young Westminster Foundation

Daisy Srblin,
Chief Executive Officer at Young Camden Foundation

Ciaran Rafferty,
Director at Hilden Charitable Fund

Anne Dodwell,
Director (Arts & Heritage) at Julia Rausing Trust

Tim Dalton,
Director of Shaftesbury Enterprise at Harrow School

Ruth Pryce,
Head of Programme (Young People)
at Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Nigel Chapman,
Corporate Director of Children and
Young People at Brent Council

Sarah Newman,
Bi-Borough Executive Director of Children's Services
at Westminster City Council & Royal Borough of
Kensington and Chelsea

Helen Harding,
Assistant Director (Early Help and Prevention)
at Ealing Council

Anna Elliot,
Supporting Families Coordinator at Ealing Council

Gerard Darby,
Funding Manager at City Bridge Foundation

7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

While the YPFs share similarities in the way they work, there are differences in how they operate. To capture the effectiveness of the YPFs in nurturing and developing the local CYP Sector, Rocket Science adapted the **Strategic Added Value (SAV)** framework, which has been used elsewhere to analyse organisations' and programmes' contributions beyond direct project outcomes. It focuses on how interventions enhance coordination, influence decision-making, build capacity, and strengthen partnerships. The SAV framework was originally developed for the nine former Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), including the London Development Agency. The SAV framework was used to analyse the contributions made by RDAs, over and above their project and programme spend. The framework is particularly relevant for place-based agencies like the RDAs, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Business Improvement Districts, and now the YPFs, which operate in multi-stakeholder environments, across a wide range of issues and policy areas, and where the direct attribution of outcomes, or measurable returns on investment, can be challenging, even contentious.

The SAV framework is made up of five key elements. Table 7 below illustrates what these mean in the YPF context.

TABLE 7. ELEMENTS OF THE SAV FRAMEWORK AND THEIR MEANING IN THE YPF CONTEXT

SAV element	Meaning in the YPF context
Leverage	Contributing finances and human resources which lever additional external investment (financial and in-kind) into the local area to support young people.
Leadership / Catalyst	Articulating and communicating local need, opportunities, solutions and best practice to members, stakeholders and investors.
Influence	Generating commitment and activities towards shared goals of improving local youth provision and the life-chances of children and young people.
Synergy	Bringing together members' capacity, knowledge and expertise to improve the transfer, coordination and/or integration of learning and assets to ensure delivery is more than the sum of its parts.
Engagement	Designing and using non-financial mechanisms and services to engage stakeholders in the delivery of local youth initiatives.

The SAV framework is used for understanding the perceived local impact and value of the YPFs, the extent to which they align with the Charity's objectives, and, in a 'funder plus' context, what opportunities exist for their further development and long-term sustainability.

Table 8 below outlines the research questions, or key lines of enquiry, for the review, and how these fit within the SAV framework.

TABLE 8. KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY FOR THE RESEARCH

SAV element	Key lines of enquiry (KLOEs)
Leverage	What other income streams do the YPFs have apart from the Charity?
	What is the YPFs' experience of the current funding environment within their boroughs and/or opportunities to access future funding apart from the Charity?
	How do the YPFs secure and contribute funding and other resources to level additional investment into the local Sector?
	What is the case for other stakeholders with funding available to be investing in the YPFs?
Leadership / Catalyst	What work do the YPFs undertake to understand the need of the local Children and Young People's Sector?
	How do the YPFs communicate local need, opportunities, solutions and best practice to members, stakeholders, investors, and others?
	What is the value that the YPFs provide for the Charity, particularly around capacity building in the Sector?
	What is the value that the YPFs provide to the CYP and Education Sectors?
Influence	To what extent is investing in the YPFs contributing to the Charity's "funder plus" aspirations?
	How do the YPFs generate commitment and activities towards shared goals of improving local provision and the life chances of local children and young people?
Synergy	How do the YPFs coordinate members' capacity, knowledge and expertise to improve the transfer, coordination and integration of learning and assets, and as a result the efficiency and effectiveness of local delivery?
	What opportunities are there for the YPFs to learn from each other's challenges and successes?
	To what extent have the YPFs engaged in opportunities to learn from each other's challenges and successes?
Engagement	How do the YPFs design and use non-financial mechanisms and services to engage stakeholders in the delivery of local initiatives?
	How can what we have learnt be applied when replicating the YPF model elsewhere?

APPENDIX B – HISTORY OF THE YPFS

The Young People's Foundation (YPF) model was developed by John Lyon's Charity in response to the ongoing pressures on the Children and Young People's Sector and specifically the issues faced by the voluntary sector in the Charity's Beneficial Area. Austerity in the 2010s brought about huge cuts to local public services, particularly non-statutory and grants from the public sector, which the Charity observed was more pronounced in the outer London boroughs. Youth work fell into this category with sizeable cuts across the Beneficial Area (and London), and some local authorities immediately or eventually withdrew all funding for youth services to drastically meet the financial challenges they were each confronted with. This decimated youth provision and the credible prospect of future cuts across local authorities created a bleak outlook which encouraged the Charity to step in.

By 2014, both Harrow and Barnet Local Authority Youth Services had closed, and commissioning opportunities had stopped. The Charity commissioned a London based think tank New Policy Institute (since closed) to research population trends and third sector profiles in the outer London Boroughs. The research indicated that there was a demographic shift of poorer people, younger people and families moving from Inner London to Outer London as a result of rising housing costs and changes to the benefits system (a trend which is still evident today). The analysis of the voluntary sector pointed out that inner London had an older and better developed voluntary sector that had the experience of seeking and successfully receiving grants from trusts and foundations. This contrasted with the voluntary sector in outer London, which was more dependent on local authority grants and was less well established as suburbs only began to grow in the twentieth century. It also noted that the voluntary sector in the outer boroughs was extremely diverse, fragmented, and consisted of lots of small groups that were unable to receive large funding amounts or win leases for community spaces, which were under threat of sale as local authorities looked to sell off assets to meet the demands of savings set by central government.

Extensive scoping work was undertaken to explore how the Charity could support the Sector, but it became evident that it was not feasible to work with existing infrastructure providers; they were often not focused on specific boroughs, did not have the appetite to engage, or did not have the

necessary broad children and young people expertise. Something new was needed that had charitable status, was independent, locally rooted, children and young people focused, and could invest capacity into the smaller groups which were often overlooked.

In 2014, Brent Council shared intentions to withdraw its youth services as neighbours Harrow and Barnet had done so in the preceding years. The Charity knew of the very acute needs in Brent and was keen to be proactive with a particular emphasis on maintaining the buildings for youth provision when the Council services ended. Based on the scoping work already undertaken, in late 2014 a model for a Brent Youth Partnership was developed and by spring 2015 several local stakeholders had come together to form a steering committee for the Young Brent Foundation. At this time the Charity commenced talks with the City Bridge Foundation, which at the time did not fund youth work, but did fund infrastructure support. The Charity was able to leverage match funding for core operations for the first three years of the new model.

During summer 2015 like-minded organisations in Barnet and Harrow saw the progress being made in Brent and, together with the Charity, the foundations were laid for YPFs in both boroughs. By Autumn 2015, Harrow, Barnet and Brent had recruited Trustees and received charitable status. Following this, all three were funded by the Charity with City Bridge Foundation matching the Charity's commitment.

Although formed for the outer London boroughs, the initial months of operations highlighted the flexibility of the model and how it could adapt to meet the needs of the local sector in different areas. As 2016 progressed, plans were made for the YPFs in Camden and Westminster with both being formed in early 2017, and later that year, YPFs in Hammersmith & Fulham and Ealing were established. The eighth and final YPF in the Charity's Beneficial area, Young Kensington & Chelsea, was established in 2019. As each of the YPFs began to develop a positive reputation, the model garnered recognition from other funders and stakeholders beyond the Charity's borders and central government. The Charity recognised the need to protect the model, direct future use of the model in other localities, and provide a support network for the eight existing YPFs in the Beneficial Area. In 2019, the YPF Trust was given charitable status, and it began to receive funding from the Charity in 2020.

APPENDIX C – YPF BIOGRAPHIES

YOUNG BARNET FOUNDATION

Founded in 2015, Young Barnet Foundation serves the largest borough by population in the Charity's Beneficial Area. Since its inception, Young Barnet Foundation has administered almost 40 rounds of its Space2Grow Children and Young People's Fund which receives investment from a variety of stakeholders, including the Local Authority, providing small grants for local charities and community organisations. The Foundation is the local funding partner for the Department for Education's HAF programme in partnership with London Borough of Barnet. It also formed the Barnet Together partnership in 2018 alongside Volunteering Barnet and Inclusion Barnet to pool resources, and provide a 'one stop shop' for capacity building support services for the borough's Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Sector, including funding, training, resources, advice, and advocacy.

[Young Barnet Foundation](#)

YOUNG BRENT FOUNDATION

Founded in 2015, Young Brent Foundation serves the Children and Young People's Voluntary and Community Sector in the most diverse borough in the Charity's Beneficial Area; almost two thirds of the population are from BAME groups, the third highest in London. Young Brent Foundation established a consortia framework for its membership which has been a successful vehicle for investment in youth provision from national funders, businesses, social housing providers, and the Mayor of London, to name a few. Young Brent Foundation has been supporting its members to access spaces for activities, meetings, and events that foster growth and development of young people. It has acted as a facilities manager and facilitated access at five community venues across the borough.

[Young Brent Foundation](#)

YOUNG CAMDEN FOUNDATION

Young Camden Foundation was established in 2017, serving a famous and well visited borough which has indicators of latent poverty, including the third highest percentage of school pupils eligible for free school meals in London. Young Camden Foundation was founded by the Charity in partnership with the London Borough of Camden. The Foundation has been a key conduit between the third sector and funding opportunities from local corporate groups to tackle some of the most hard-hitting youth issues in Camden, including a lack of positive activities during the summer holidays, and mental health and wellbeing.

[Young Camden Foundation](#)

YOUNG EALING FOUNDATION

Young Ealing Foundation was founded in 2017 to connect and equip grassroots youth charities, supporters, and key stakeholders in the borough to open up a brighter future for Ealing's children and young people. Ealing is the third largest borough by population in London and has an extremely diverse population, including large global majority communities. Young Ealing Foundation has been extremely successful in protecting and advocating for more delivery space for children and young people's activities, successfully reversing the closure of a large youth centre and taking over the management of a community library. The Foundation runs a thorough training programme for members on topics such as working with special educational needs and/or disabilities, fundraising, and trustee training.

[Young Ealing Foundation](#)

YOUNG HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Established in 2017, Young Hammersmith & Fulham exists to partner with local organisations, unlock opportunities, attract investments, and foster innovative ideas in order to provide children and young people in the borough with the platform they need to shine and thrive in their

community. Young Hammersmith & Fulham leads a successful consortium of local youth providers called Sync, which has successfully unlocked investment to the borough from sources including the Local Authority and the Greater London Authority. The Foundation is leading the way with youth participatory grant making, designing a training programme for young grant makers to provide youth voice and insight to the grant making functions at the Foundation.

[Young H&F](#)

YOUNG HARROW FOUNDATION

Young Harrow Foundation was founded in 2015 by the Charity and local stakeholders including Harrow School and John Lyon School, bringing together youth organisations, schools, and community groups to access funding, collaborate more closely, and grow their impact. The organisation is the local administrator of the Department for Education's HAF programme funding, and has hosted several government ministerial visits since the programme launched in 2021. Young Harrow Foundation carries out regular large-scale surveys to better understand and evidence the needs of children and young people in the borough. The biennial HAY (How are You) Harrow survey is in its fourth iteration, and engages close to 10,000 children and young people who contribute their thoughts, ideas and opinions about what life is like for them in Harrow.

[Young Harrow Foundation](#)

YOUNG KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

The youngest of the YPFs, Young Kensington & Chelsea was founded in 2019 by the Charity, with the support of the Local Authority, to form a cross-sector partnership, creating a community of member and partner organisations working together to support children and young people. Apart from the City of London, Kensington & Chelsea is the smallest borough in the Charity's Beneficial Area by population, but also one of the wealthiest boroughs in the Capital where affluence and deprivation live side by side. Young Kensington & Chelsea has been a key driver for increased investment in the borough's youth providers from a variety of trusts and foundations, and recently managed the commissioning of youth services and youth centres

on behalf of the Local Authority with recipients of funding coming from within the Foundation's membership. Young Kensington & Chelsea advocates for the Sector in a number of ways, including an annual exhibition of the life of young people in the borough hosted by the Saatchi gallery.

[Young K&C](#)

YOUNG WESTMINSTER

Young Westminster Foundation was founded in 2017 to support local youth clubs and organisations through grants, training, and networking opportunities, and to forge partnerships with businesses, public sector partners, individuals, and major funders. Despite being home to the capital's most famous landmarks and tourist attractions, Westminster has significant pockets of deprivation and large global majority communities within these pockets. Young Westminster Foundation has been particularly successful in engaging local businesses to redirect their corporate social responsibility efforts closer to home by investing in local youth organisations. The Foundation has been leading a joint three-year project with four of the other YPFs to upskill and provide ongoing support to the next generation of youth workers in North West London, one of the largest investments in youth workforce ever seen in the capital.

[Young Westminster Foundation](#)

THE YPF TRUST

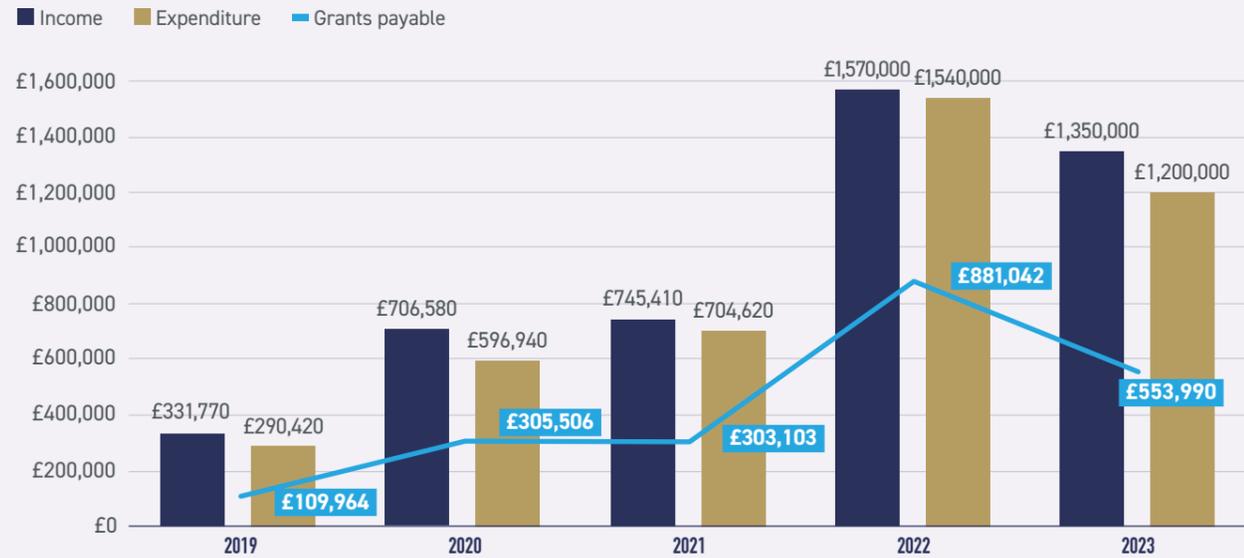
Established in 2020, the YPF Trust grows, supports, and enables place-based collaboration and partnerships focused on the needs of young people, and the organisations that support them, through a growing network of Young People's Foundations. It provides a number of support and development functions to an existing network of YPFs and supports the evolution and development of new and emerging YPFs across the country. The Trust is an advocate for youth work and the mouthpiece for the YPF collective and their membership.

[YPF Trust](#)

APPENDIX D – YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE

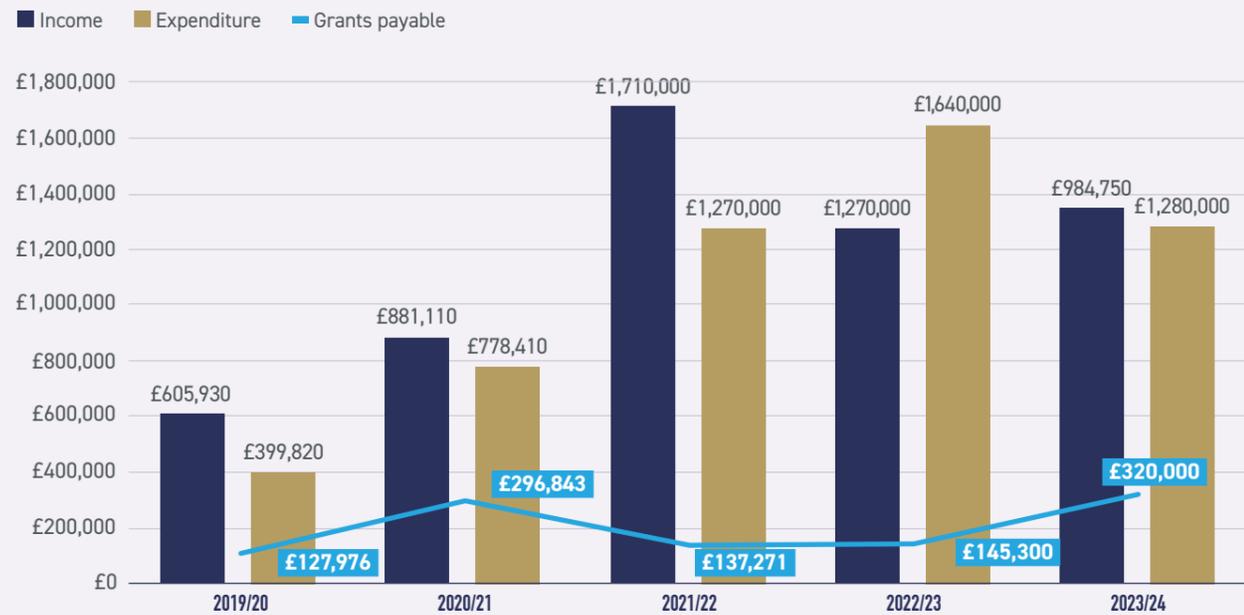
Please note: In all the following charts, grants payable is part of total expenditure.

FIGURE 13. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – BARNET



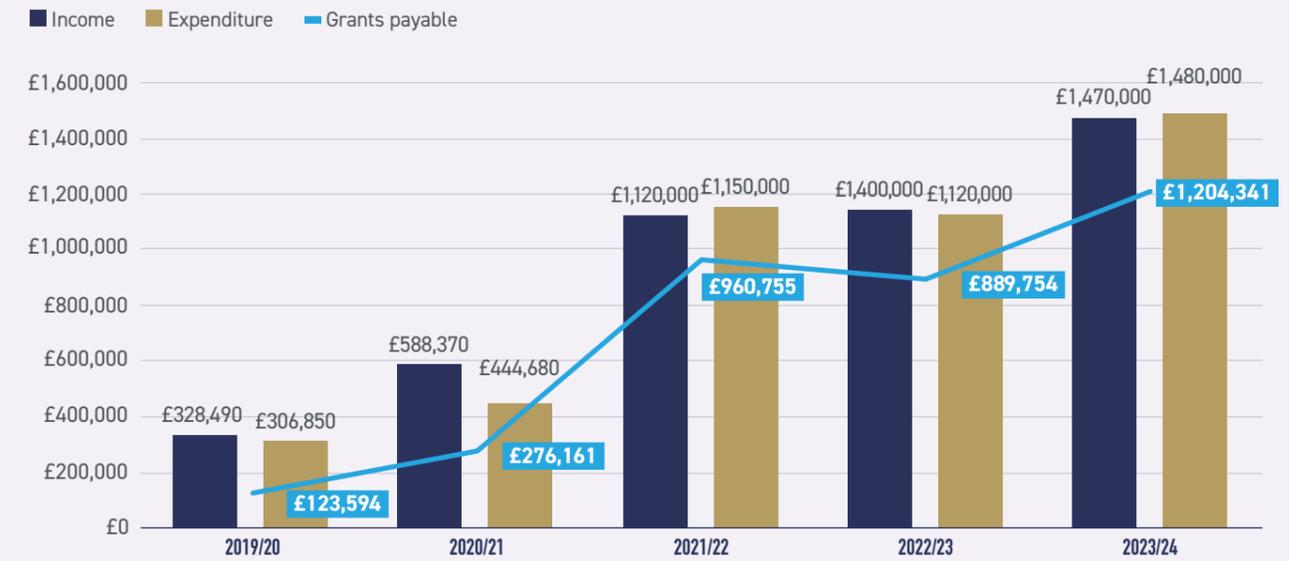
Source: Charity Commission data.

FIGURE 14. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – BRENT



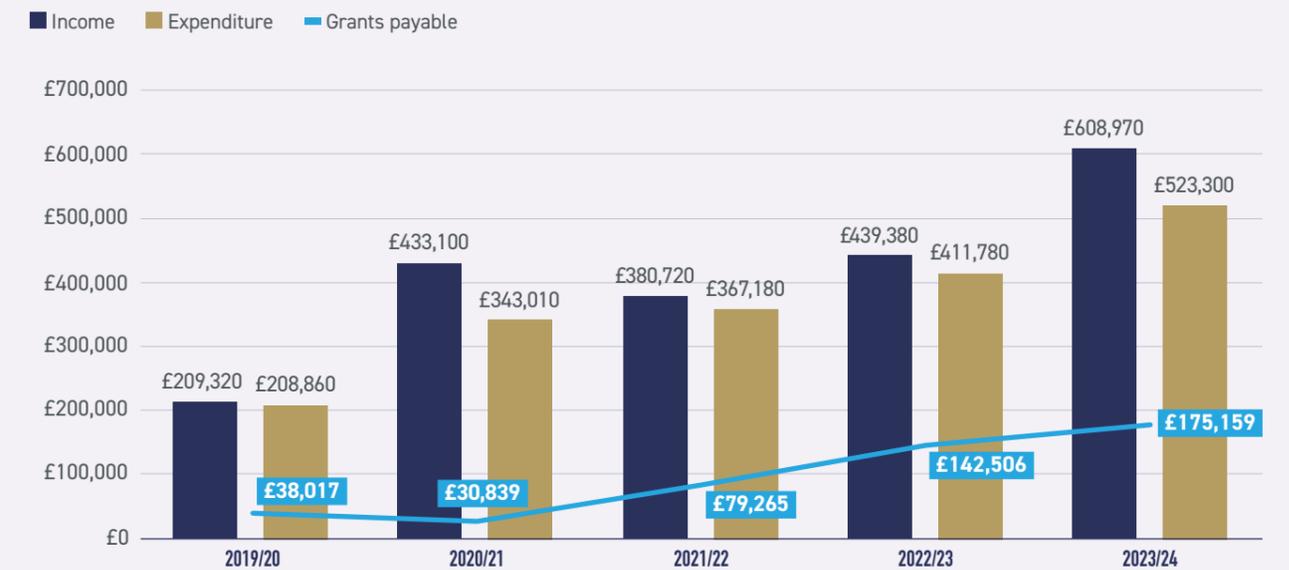
Source: Charity Commission data. 'Grants payable' was not available in Young Brent Foundation's accounts for financial years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 due to a change in how the organisation's expenditure was recorded. For these years, self-reported expenditure on grant funding was used instead.

FIGURE 15. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – CAMDEN



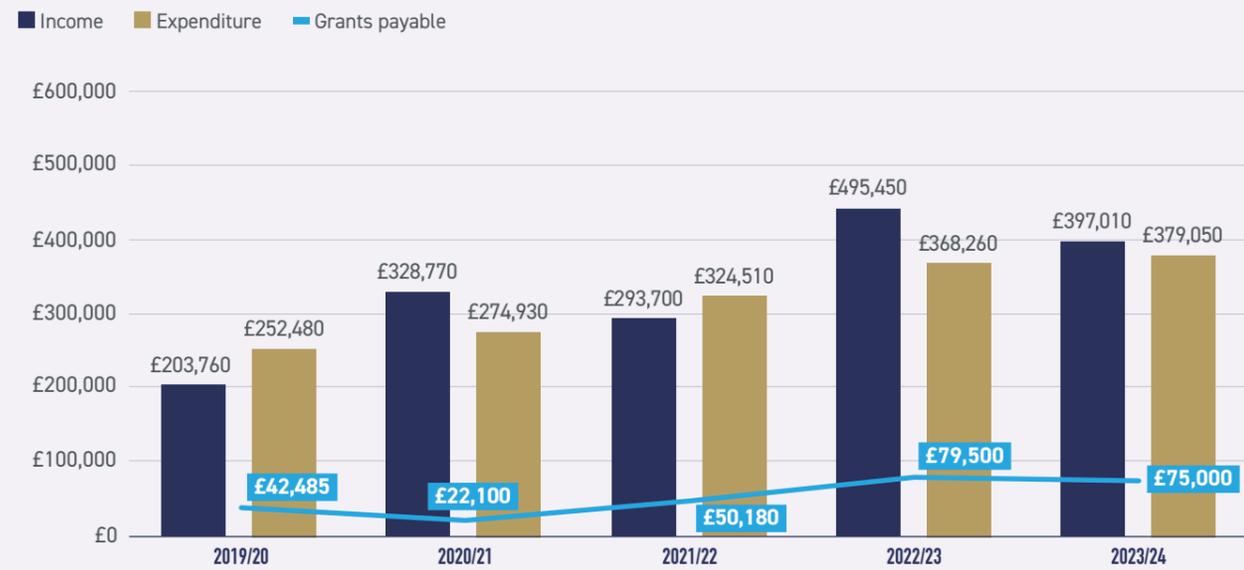
Source: Charity Commission data.

FIGURE 16. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – EALING



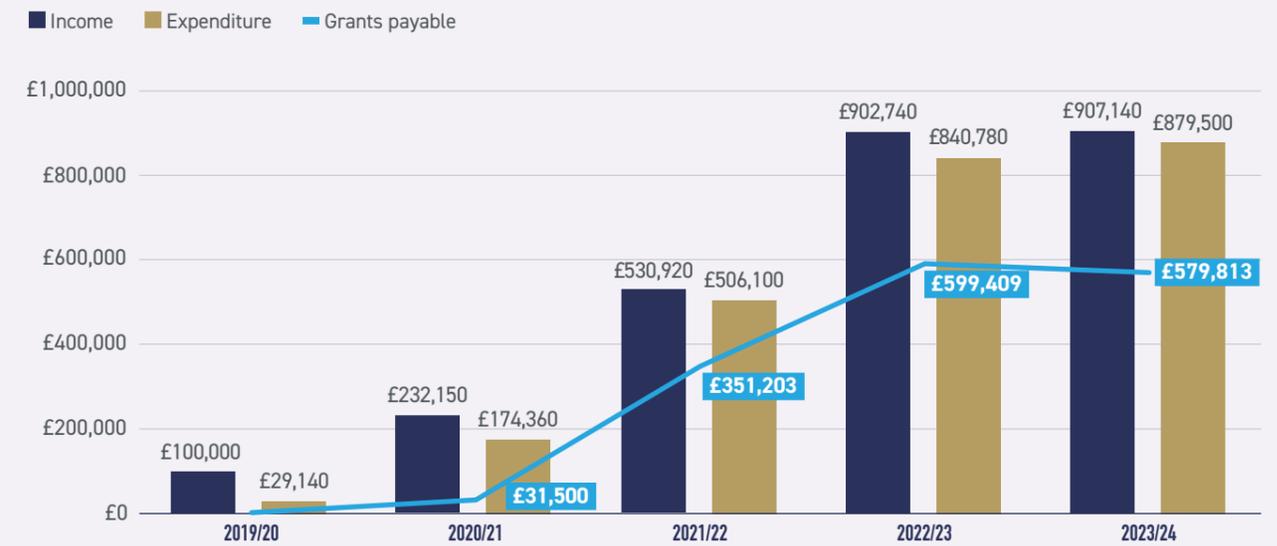
Source: Charity Commission data.

FIGURE 17. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – H&F



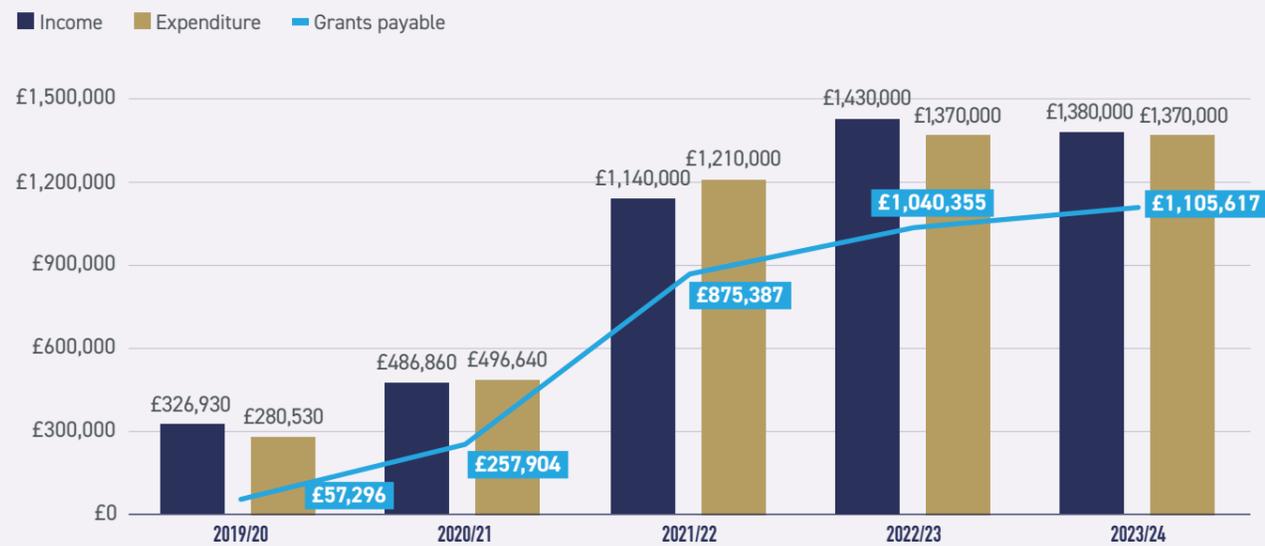
Source: Charity Commission data.

FIGURE 19. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – K&C



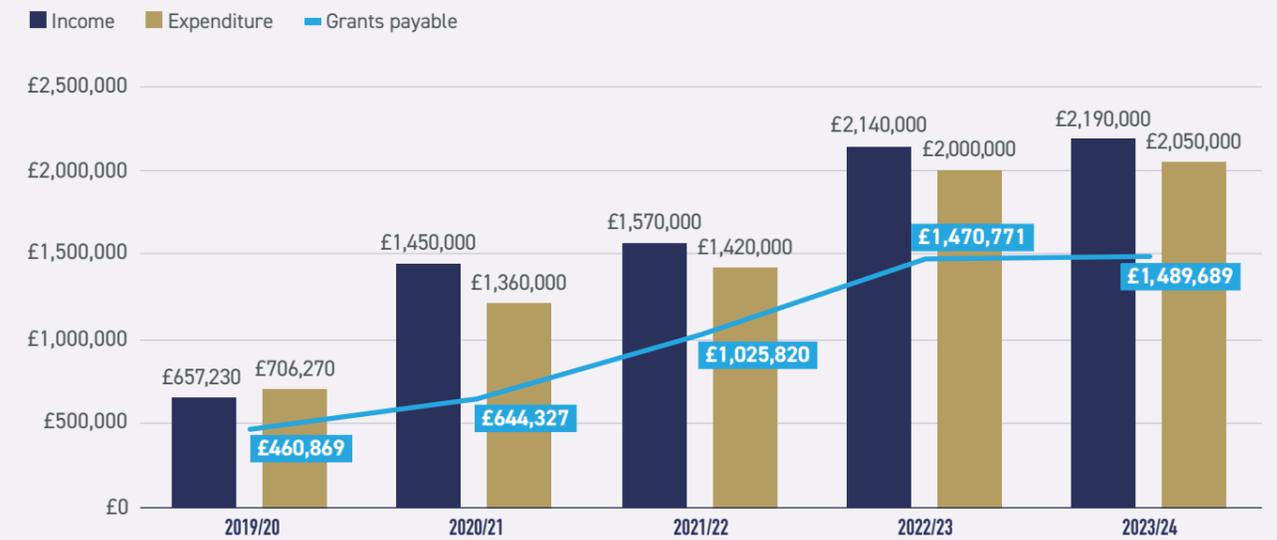
Source: Charity Commission data.

FIGURE 18. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – HARROW



Source: Charity Commission data. 'Grants payable' was not available in Young Brent Foundation's accounts for financial years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 due to a change in how the organisation's expenditure was recorded. For these years, self-reported expenditure on grant funding was used instead.

FIGURE 20. YPF INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND GRANTS PAYABLE OVER THE PAST FIVE FINANCIAL YEARS – WESTMINSTER



Source: Charity Commission data.

APPENDIX E – CASE STUDIES

Propel - Level Up Youth Worker Qualifications

In Spring 2023, a consortium of YPFs led by Young Westminster Foundation, alongside Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, and Kensington & Chelsea, was successfully funded by Propel to deliver Level Up. Level Up is a three-year programme investing in training and qualifications for youth and play service frontline practitioners, offering partly and fully funded Level 1, 2 and 3 youth work qualifications. Seeking to address the large gap in supply and demand for front line youth workers which has been a growing challenge for the Sector, the programme is now in full flow offering a variety of funded youth work courses and sector specific training workshops. During the winter of 2024, 20 young people from Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham completed their Level 1 Youth Worker awards and 22 young people Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster completed their Level 2 Youth Worker awards. This is a major and much needed investment in the youth work force in West London which has been under great pressure due to lower staffing levels and traditional 'youth work' colleges closing over the last ten years.

Reinventing Short Breaks provision in Harrow

Short breaks provide a chance for children with disabilities to spend time away from their carers, try out new things, have fun, and make new friends. They also provide families with respite from their caring responsibilities. Each borough provides support to eligible families to organise and source short breaks. Young Harrow Foundation has been working with Harrow Council to consider new ways of offering a more diverse and attractive range of activities for those children and young people in families eligible for short break services. In 2024, Young Harrow Foundation secured £40,000 from Harrow School, DVS Foundation, and a private donor to pilot an offer of weekly after-school short breaks activities delivered by its members at Shaftesbury High School. As plans for the pilot grew, Harrow Council

released a further £35,000 to offer young people and their families a wider range of activities delivered by Young Harrow Foundation members. The programme benefitted 36 young people, aged 12 to 18 years old, with needs including complex learning difficulties, behaviour needs, autism and ADHD. Five Young Harrow Foundation members have been delivering the pilot which has been extended to the new academic year to trial it over a longer period. The pilot was such a success that the Local Authority has ringfenced £50,000 per annum for the next five years (starting in academic year 2025/26) to scale up the programme across two school sites.

Commissioning in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC)

Following a review of youth commissioning services in the borough, in July 2024 the leadership team at RBKC approved the landmark decision to invite Young Kensington & Chelsea to take responsibility for the recommissioning of services from February 2025, which Young Kensington & Chelsea accepted. The new youth funding partnership will deliver a grants programme for local voluntary organisations worth £4,700,000 over five years (around £940,000 per annum) directed towards local play and youth services. This funding secured the future of local play and youth services in the borough and provides additional funding for small grants and specific grants for the inclusion of disabled young people in mainstream and targeted activities. The Local Authority recognised Young Kensington & Chelsea's unique position of being close to the Sector and the experience gained from running smaller grant programmes for a variety of local trusts and corporate donors.

My Ends

In September 2020, The Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) launched the 'My Ends' programme, a £6.6 million fund for strategic place-based violence

reduction interventions to support those neighbourhoods that have experienced sustained and high levels of violence. Over 31 consortia from across London applied, including a bid led by Young Brent Foundation. In a high quality, highly competitive assessment process, successful bids were awarded to local groups in eight London Boroughs, with Young Brent Foundation awarded £750,000 over two years. Working in conjunction with local Housing Associations, ten community partners delivered interventions across three keys estates in the borough, Chalkhill Estate, Stonebridge, and Church End, to break the cycle of youth violence. The programme was a huge success, engaging young people across the borough and was timely as the borough began to emerge from the pandemic and front line youth work was needed more than ever.

Ampacc

Ampacc is an excel-based full cost recovery/ financial costings analysis tool aimed at small voluntary sector organisations, to support them to accurately calculate their service costs and have the key data they need to make sound strategic decisions that will support the long-term financial sustainability of their organisation. Through the YPFs around 70 voluntary sector organisations have participated in Ampacc since 2023. Whilst the actual Ampacc programme is time limited over six sessions, its focus on capacity building means that participants are able to continue applying the principles and practices they have learnt in using the resource by themselves in the future. The YPFs used their local knowledge of members to identify and recruit organisations from their membership who would benefit from better understanding of their financial position, budgeting, and fundraising. The financial literacy of some small organisations had been poor and Ampacc, through the YPFs, has been an effective way of enabling small organisations to access consultancy-style expertise and processes in a way that would be financially prohibitive, if they were to commission it directly themselves.

Saving the Young Adults Centre (YAC) in Southall

In 2021, under funding pressures, Ealing Council elected to sell one of the Council's three remaining Youth Centres with the caveat that a new, undesignated youth centre would be built or integrated into residential developments close

by. The Young Ealing Foundation and its members were concerned that the loss of the bespoke youth space would be catastrophic, and any substitute centre would more than likely not have the same size space afforded to it. In the spring of 2021, Young Ealing Foundation led a campaign of local stakeholders, members and young people to #SaveTheYAC, and petitioned Ealing Council to save the YAC from demolition in the summer of that year. Young Ealing Foundation's group of dynamic Ealing Young Champions, a group of young people supporting the foundation's grants and youth voice work, campaigned tirelessly against the decision until it was reversed, organising a petition with over 1,500 signatures and debating the matter at a cabinet meeting. The decision was reversed with the Council citing the voice and opinion of young people and Young Ealing Foundation members being the key argument to change the opinion. Subsequently, in 2024, the Council committed to spend £2.8million to retrofit and renovate the building which reopened in January 2025.

