



Youth Focus West Midlands

YFWM Annual Report

2021/22

June 2022

Charity Registration Number 1148687

Company Registration Number 8114745



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Introduction

Chair's Report

This is my first report as Chair of Youth Focus West Midlands and it is a pleasure to do so with so much that is positive to reflect on.

Firstly, I want to pay tribute to two people who have contributed so much to the history and development of YFWM over its lifetime;

Brian Goredema-Braid, our most recent Chair, has been a strong advocate for youth work in the region for many years and his contribution in supporting our CEO and other Board members over the years has been invaluable. As a small organisation with just one key employee, the provision of accessible, reliable support and advice to our CEO is vital and Brian has done this loyally throughout his tenure as Chair.

Hugh Disley was instrumental in the creation of YFWM's predecessor the West Midlands Regional Youth Work Unit from the outset and has been an ever-present source of advocacy, creative enthusiasm and an extensive network and knowledge of the youth work sector. Hugh recently stepped down from the YFWM Board and it is only right that this report acknowledges his central role in the growth of YFWM. I speak for the whole Board when I offer my sincere thanks to both of these stalwarts of youth work and wish them well with the next phase of their adventures!

Along with the rest of the youth work sector, YFWM has emerged from the challenging pandemic period with much to be positive and optimistic about. Our key contribution to the regrowth of the sector's workforce through the capacity building, partnership approach of our training centre is bearing fruit and it is very encouraging to note the rising demand for the training of new and existing youth workers.

There is new-found (for some!) recognition of the role of youth work and there are green shoots of development at national, regional and local levels that should give us all optimism for the future.

YFWM is better positioned than ever to underpin the work of all those in the West Midlands who share our commitment to work with young people and plays a vital role in helping partners and colleagues to keep in touch with and benefit from the developments and opportunities that are increasingly likely to emerge.

The YFWM board has recently approved a five-year business plan that will serve to keep us on track and maintain our focus on the role and purpose of our organisation. We are clear that we won't just "chase the funding" and risk losing sight of where our organisation can make the most positive difference to our youth work sector. Individual board members now provide support to the CEO on specific workstreams and we are all committed to working hard to make sure that youth work is celebrated, valued and adequately funded across our region.

Finally, my thanks must go to the YFWM CEO, Ruth Rickman-Williams.

The healthy position that the organisation finds itself in and the positioning of YFWM as a respected partner on the regional and national youth work scene is largely due to her tenacity and commitment to youth work and the value of good infrastructure support to the sector. Given the recent challenges and the ever-fluctuating funding environment, many would have faltered or walked away but Ruth has been tireless in developing different ways of working and spotting and grasping new opportunities whilst maintaining her positive attitude throughout. I speak on behalf all YFWM Board members in expressing our gratitude to her.

Onwards and upwards - the future is bright !

Paul Finnemore

Chair

Youth Focus West Midlands

Annual Overview

Chief Executive Officer's Report

This has been a different year again. In June 2021 we were tentatively coming out of Covid lockdown for the first time and moving into a period of lingering uncertainty, affecting youth organisations, youth workers and young people themselves. As we now look across the region there have been some losses across the voluntary youth sector, although these don't seem to have impacted as first feared. There has also been some growth and investment in youth work within local authorities. With the lift of lockdown there has been a move back to face-to-face delivery across the region, although some aspects of online delivery have remained, so a hybrid model of delivery is emerging particularly in training delivery.

We still await the review of the statutory guidance, which we have been awaiting for over 12 months now. This is still promised but no clear dates/timeline have been set. The full Youth Investment Fund (YIF) is due to be launched in the Autumn and we are awaiting more details on this, although the Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport (DCMS) have been in contact with Local Authorities to discuss potential allocations.

Youth work is still clearly on the agenda and is being recognised more and more for the role it has to play in the lives of young people, which is good news.

YFWM has had a very positive year and has seen some further growth and expansion. The Board are now engaged in reviewing the position of the organisation to ensure both growth and development, alongside sustainability of the organisation. I am extremely grateful to them for their continued support.

As we look ahead YFWM will continue to consolidate its position as a key provider of infrastructure support for youth work across the West Midlands, and to look forward to working with partners (old and new)

Strategic Leads Network

- The network has continued to meet online, providing an opportunity for members keep up to date on national and local developments.

The network covers 12 of the 14 local authority areas – Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke, Telford, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire, Sandwell. The network sees leads from both voluntary and local authority sector services coming together to help support, inform and develop youth work across the region. This has proved particularly useful with regards to local delivery and strategic planning

National Work

- YFWM continues to work with the other 'regional youth work units' through the national Network of Regional Youth Work Units. The network now has units in all 9 of the regions in England.
- The network meets regularly in its own right, as well as meeting with a range of strategic partners – DCMS, Local Government Association (LGA), National Youth Agency, (NYA) UK Youth, Centre for Youth Impact (CfYI) , Young People's Foundation Trust (YPF). This allows us to both be involved in, and inform, national debates on youth work at a strategic level.
- YFWM is also working closely with NYA on the development of a workforce development strategy for the sector

Quality, Impact and Outcomes – Rachel Edwards

- YFWM has continued to work closely with the Centre for Youth Impact and as part of this work also run a regional impact network that helps support the work going on at a strategic level, with regards impact and outcomes.
- There have also been developments on the data capture/systems for recording work and outcomes with young people. This group has met to share information on the various platforms that are currently being used. It is planned to develop this further looking at how we can now share data and learning with regards to young people's outcomes. This in turn will help inform 'telling good stories' and turning data into narrative.

Youth Voice – Josh Armitage

- YFWM has established a Strategic Youth Voice Group for the region involving the British Youth Council (BYC), West Midlands Childrens' Services (WMCS), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and representatives from the strategic leads network. The aim of this group is to provide a strategic steer for where youth voice in the region should head, and to better align different streams of youth voice work
- YFWM has also secured the contract for delivery the Midlands UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) programme, supporting local authorities signed up to the UKYP programme across both East and West Midlands.

We have held our first convention bringing young people together for the first time since Covid-19 and are now in planning for the Annual Sitting in Hull at the end of July.

- We are working with BYC to secure funding for a series of regional events, led by young people to include information sharing and training and collaborative working between young people and workers.

Training / Workforce Development

YFWM has continued to run an Approved Training Centre, with Skills & Education Group (SEG), formerly Awarding Body Consortium (ABC) Awards, to support youth work training across the region. We have successfully delivered a bespoke programme of management training for Warwickshire and Level 3 certificate top up for Young Solutions members.

Through the bursaries programme we have delivered a capacity building model with Birmingham Association of Youth Clubs (BAYC) who now have a member of staff enrolled on assessor training, along with a YFWM Associate. We have also recently completed delivering a level 2 award for Herefordshire.

Plans are also underway to deliver a capacity building model with Worcestershire.

The established regional training network continues to deliver further approved qualifications at both Level 2 and Level 3, ensuring good reach across the region

Worcestershire Mapping & Network Development Work – Cal Williams

This has been an extensive piece of work for YFWM. Worcestershire is in the process of recommissioning its Positive Activities work. YFWM has supported Young Solutions to undertake a mapping exercise to identify where current provision for young people is available by district. The mapping has included a wide range of activity providers from across the voluntary sector. This mapping will help identify gaps in provision to help inform the re-commissioning process.

Alongside this, work is now underway bringing providers together at district and county level to strengthen local networks able to support commissioning and delivery of Positive Activities.

Ruth Rickman-Williams

Chief Executive Officer

Youth Focus West Midlands
Income/expenditure 2021/2022 as at 30.6 2022

Opening balance 1.7.21 **£116,050.59**

Income

CfYI	£13,600.00
Bespoke support	£25,950.00
IQA	£1,830.00
Subscriptions	£3,175.00
Bursaries	£68,905.00
Bursaries mgt	£6,890.00
Paul Hamlyn	£5,000.00
Training Delivery	£2,090.00
RYWU's Event	£242.00
Interest	£5.43

Total £127,687.43

Expenditure

Salaries & Expenses	£46,726.50
Bursaries	£49,185.00
IQA	£1,845.00
AQA	£400.00
SEG	£1,834.00
Insurance	£339.50
ICO	£40.00
Bank charges	£39.10
RYWU's event	£113.63
Assessor training	£960.00

TOTAL £101,482.73

Income over Expenditure **£26,204.70**

Closing balance **£142,255.29**

Restricted Funds

<i>Bursaries (ring fenced)</i>	<i>£45,441.00</i>
<i>Bespoke support (ring fenced)</i>	<i>£17,550</i>
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>£62,991.00</i>

YFWM available balance **£79,264.29**

For the year ending 30.6.22, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.