



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014–2018

Supporting young people to reach their potential and live fulfilled lives

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The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014–2018

- Audience** Organisations offering youth work provision including the statutory and voluntary youth services and young people aged 11 to 25.
- Overview** This strategy sets the direction for youth work organisations for the next four years and builds on a consultation exercise undertaken between 18 June 2013 and 16 September 2013.
- The strategy recognises the value and role of open-access youth work provision; promotes a stronger connection between youth work provision and formal education; identifies the need for closer working between statutory and voluntary youth work organisations; and identifies the need to significantly strengthen the evidence base on the impact of youth work across Wales. The Welsh Government, national and local voluntary organisations, as well as local authorities, will need to work together to successfully implement the identified actions and drive youth work forward.
- Action required** None – for information only.
- Further information** Enquiries about this document should be directed to:
Youth Support and Guidance Branch
Youth Engagement and Employment Division (YEED)
Department for Education and Skills
Welsh Government
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
LL31 9RZ
- Additional copies** This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills



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Ministerial foreword



High-quality youth work has a crucial role to play supporting many young people to achieve their full potential. Through informal and non-formal educational approaches, effective youth work practice builds the capacity and resilience of young people and can change young people's lives for the better. Through participation in youth work young people gain confidence and competence, develop self-assurance and have the opportunity to establish high expectations and aspirations for themselves.

Youth work practice needs to be seen across Wales as a strategic service, not as an aspect of a leisure service or indeed as a service of last resort. Through the direction set within this strategy and the actions supporting implementation, we want to strengthen the value and status of youth work as a service and a profession. We want to see youth work provision being delivered to maximise the contribution it can make to strategic Welsh Government priorities. This includes narrowing the gap in educational achievement between those of different socio-economic backgrounds and reducing the numbers of young people not engaged in education, training and employment

In presenting this strategy we wish to highlight four outcomes against which successful implementation must be judged. The first outcome is that young people across Wales continue to have access to diverse informal and non-formal learning opportunities that stretch horizons, challenge their thinking, and develop their skills. Open-access provision offers a safe environment where young people can engage with youth workers whom are able to help and support them in their transition toward adulthood. We know that open-access services are highly valued by many young people for the continuity of support they offer within communities. As we go forward it is vitally important that open-access provision is used to effectively connect young people with more targeted or specialised support where this is appropriate. To achieve this outcome statutory and voluntary providers need to take their collaborative working to new levels, maximising the impact of limited resources and presenting a high-quality and coherent offer to young people.

The second outcome we want to see is a strengthening of the strategic relationship between youth work organisations and formal education on a national basis. This

requires targeted youth work being embedded in how partners work to support positive outcomes for young people in mainstream education and training. We are concerned that youth work organisations are being insufficiently utilised across Wales in pursuit of the outcomes and aspirations we have for young people. For too long the contribution of youth work to strategic goals and outcomes has been regarded as peripheral. Youth work interventions have been shown to have a positive effect on formal education outcomes, behaviour, attendance and progression through key points of transition. Therefore we believe that empowered and embedded youth work practice can and should be expected to demonstrate how it is adding real value to the lives of young people in Wales.

The new *Youth engagement and progression framework* opens the way for the contribution of youth work organisations to be better connected with broader support services. Across Wales we look to the implementation of this strategy to underpin delivery of the *Youth engagement and progression framework* and in so doing to support a more consistent and integrated offer to young people. On that basis, we expect this strategy to support a sustained reduction in young people who are not in education, training or employment, be that as a result of education, health or other related interventions and support.

The third outcome this strategy pursues is a better coordinated and more consistent youth work offer to young people from youth work organisations in the statutory and voluntary sector. The voluntary sector has a reach which extends far beyond that of the statutory sector. We want to see statutory and voluntary youth work organisations working together to build, deliver and offer quality youth work opportunities to young people. We will use the period of this strategy to actively promote activities which underpin capacity building, partnership working and collaboration between voluntary and statutory service providers.

The fourth outcome this strategy must secure is a robust evidence base, capturing the outcomes and impact of youth work provision. We believe this is necessary both to underpin the strategic positioning of the sector and to inform future investment decisions. Evidence is also needed to inform debates on matters such as the introduction of statutory guidance and the most effective youth work delivery models. We expect the new Youth Work Reference Group to play a key role in supporting the introduction of an outcomes framework and in reporting on how this strategy is being worked out and implemented on the ground.

We wish to thank all those who took the time to engage and share views on the development of this strategy. This strategy is all about realising the contribution of youth work as a strategic service capable of making a significant contribution to the lives and futures of young people across Wales and to our Welsh economy. In partnership with young people we believe the outcomes this strategy aims to deliver can become a reality with responsible action from government at all levels, the

support of youth work organisations and the commitment of wider partners working with young people.



Huw Lewis AM
Minister for Education and Skills



Ken Skates AM
Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology

Introduction

Youth work has an important role to play in supporting the Welsh Government's commitment to help everyone reach their potential. Also to tackle poverty, reduce inequality, increase levels of educational attainment and employment, improve economic and social well-being, address health and other inequalities and increase young people's participation in society.

This strategy aims to give direction to those planning and delivering youth work provision and replaces the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales; young people, youth work, youth service (2007)¹. It supports the vision within Extending Entitlement² to raise the bar on our expectations and aspirations for all young people, and close the gap between the most and least advantaged.

In so doing the strategy supports the broader European agenda – the EU Youth Strategy (2010–2018)³ – which aims to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and in the labour market. It also support the Council for Europe's Agenda 2020 aim for the successful integration of all young people into society, ensuring young people have access to quality education and enabling them to contribute to the development of society.

Through the implementation of this strategy the expectation is that delivery partners across Wales develop a more consistent offer of high-quality youth work for young people, enabling youth work organisations to operate as strategic and valued partners. To achieve this youth workers need to be recognised for their professionalism and impact within the broader educational system, and have their services and expertise recognised and utilised effectively to help deliver the best possible outcomes for young people.

Youth work provision is offered through youth services. Youth work is an intrinsic element of youth support services which seek to ensure that all 11 to 25-year-olds have the services, support and experiences they need to achieve their potential. In Wales the youth service is a universal entitlement, open to all young people. Through the Learning and Skills Act 2000, section 123(1), Welsh Ministers have directed local authorities to provide, secure the provision of, or participate in, the provision of youth support services.

¹ The National Youth Service Strategy for Wales (2007) can be found at <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/national-youth-strategy-wales?lang=en>

² Extending Entitlement; support for 11 to 25-year-olds in Wales Direction and Guidance July 2002, set out a statutory basis and directions for the Youth Service in Wales for the first time. It stated that, in the context of youth work provision, 'informal education' refers to a process of learning which involves the voluntary engagement of young people with services that enable them to participate in a wide range of experiences and activities that promote their personal and social development.

³ EU Youth Strategy (2010–18) report *An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering*

Youth work provides and facilitates an environment within which young people can relax, have fun, feel secure, supported and valued. Through non-formal⁴ and informal⁵ educational opportunities and experiences youth work approaches challenge young people to enhance their personal, social and political development. By engaging in youth work young people can learn to take greater control of their lives and be supported to recognise and resist the damaging influences which may affect them.

Youth work practice is committed to a participative way of working which encourages and enables young people to share responsibility and become equal partners in their learning processes and decision making. In this way youth work seeks to encourage young people to be active citizens and participate in society, an approach which supports the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

*Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes*⁶ sets out the key principles which underpin youth work in Wales. It provides an overview of the nature, purposes and delivery methods used in youth work practice. Youth work is provided through both the voluntary and local authority sectors and through a variety of youth work settings and methods. Youth work provision is open to all young people within the specified age range 11 to 25.

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

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

The scope of the Youth Work National Occupational Standards is expressed by the Key Purpose and Functional Map. The functional map describes the functions and associated principal activities undertaken by those working within youth work.

⁴ Non-formal education: any organised educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity.

⁵ Informal education: the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in their environment.

⁶ *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes* (WLGA, 2013) www.wlga.gov.uk/publications-and-consultations-responses-III/youth-work-in-wales-principles-and-purposes

Youth work practice in Wales

The following characteristics are critical to youth work practice and help distinguish between youth work practice and where activity or service delivery is better described as part of the wider youth support service.

Voluntary engagement: one of the fundamental aspects of youth work practice is that young people should choose to engage and access the provision when it is required or needed by them. Youth workers build trust and retain a voluntary relationship with young people.

Non-formal/informal educative approach: informal and non-formal education in support of young people's wider learning and development lie at the heart of the youth work. These opportunities should reflect the needs of young people and demonstrates an inclusive approach. For example, activities should provide opportunities for young people to develop their Welsh language skills in social settings. Informal and non-formal learning supports wider learning, development and participation in society. This is underpinned by the five pillars of youth work in Wales⁷: empowering, educative, participative, inclusive and expressive.

Participation of young people: youth work practice is committed to a participative way of working which encourages and enables young people to share responsibility and become equal partners in the learning processes and decision making. Youth work recognises that young people have rights and work in a rights-based way but also recognises that young people have responsibilities and requirements placed upon them. Youth work practice helps young people to understand their responsibilities. This approach supports young people to engage with the personal, social and political issues which affect their lives. It involves and empowers young people, thus supporting them to develop and build their capacity and resilience to become more independent during their transition into adulthood.

Outcomes for young people: there are many outcomes that young people can achieve when participating in youth work. The expected outcomes for young people can be identified under three broad themes.

- Active participation:
 - young people enjoy and achieve
 - young people make a positive contribution
 - young people have a voice
 - young people have the right to have their voice heard and opinion taken account of

⁷ *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes* (WLGA, 2013) www.wlga.gov.uk/publications-and-consultations-responses-III/youth-work-in-wales-principles-and-purposes

- young people have improved well-being
 - young people enhance/develop their practical skills
 - young people learn to manage risk.
- Wider skills development:
 - team building
 - communication
 - problem solving
 - decision making
 - influencing others.
- Enhanced emotional competence:
 - increased levels of confidence and self-motivation
 - improved self-awareness, motivation and self-worth
 - ability to develop and sustain relationships
 - empathy and consideration for others.

Supporting young people to develop life skills and resilience

The actions of the Welsh Government and those of key partners and delivery organisations should support the following strategic outcomes from youth work provision.

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

Supporting open-access youth work provision

All young people deserve to have a range of activities available to them which support their development needs by providing them with a safe place to relax and have fun. Strategically we recognise the importance and value of good-quality open access youth work provision and the role this can play in engaging and supporting young people. We acknowledge that the open-access youth work offer may, at times, be the only means of connecting with some young people and supporting them to re-engage in areas such as their education. Open-access provision also has a strategic role to play by offering a mechanism to identify potentially vulnerable young people and providing early intervention support.

Open-access youth work provision supports confident self-expression. For example, it can provide opportunities for young people to use and build confidence in using their Welsh language skills in an informal setting. The need to support Welsh language development and provision for Welsh learners should therefore be considered in the planning and delivery of youth work provision, be that the open access or targeted.

Supporting targeted youth work provision

Targeted youth work provision has an important contribution to make in supporting young people to succeed in education, stay safe, stay healthy, play a positive role in their communities and make informed life choices. To ensure better outcomes for young people it is imperative that targeted youth work provision is developed and delivered in ways that support strong and efficient connections with other forms of provision, wider support networks and relevant partnerships.

Youth work has been shown to be successful in supporting young people to progress into education, training and employment. The Wales Employment and Skills Board report, *Moving Forward: Foundations for Growth* (May, 2010), recommended that the youth service should be given a significantly enhanced role in combating disengagement. Our *Youth engagement and progression framework – Implementation plan* clearly articulates the expectation that support and delivery partners work together to promote positive outcomes for young people. The framework gives a key strategic leadership role to local authorities and requires stakeholders to develop an effective plan for the delivery of coordinated support at a local level.

One of the key aspirations for the implementation of the framework is the emergence of a network of 'lead workers' providing continuity of support and contact to vulnerable young people and supporting them to engage with and access wider support services. The *Youth engagement and progression framework* describes how lead worker functions may be performed by a wide variety of individuals in different types of organisation. Youth workers are both skilled and well positioned to provide the lead worker role for many of the young people identified as being in need of support to prevent their disengagement from education and training, or to support them to re-engage.

For young people over the age of 16 the allocation of the lead worker role will be guided by reference to the five-tier model as set out in the *Youth engagement and progression framework* (see Annex, page 21). While youth workers may support young people at any stage, the model identifies the youth worker support focused on supporting unemployed 16- and 17-year-olds, known to Careers Wales, who are not yet available for education, employment or training (Tier 2) and those young people at risk of dropping out of education, employment or training (Tier 4). All youth workers, including detached youth workers, have an important role to play in helping identify those who are unknown to Careers Wales (Tier 1). Youth workers may also be well placed to provide the lead worker role for young people pre-16 where they are judged to have a high or medium level of risk of disengagement, but who are not being supported by Families First-led arrangements.

Supporting a strategic interface between youth work and formal education

The relationship between youth workers and young people can be very different from that of teachers or others from within the formal education establishment. Effective youth work practice can build relationships where otherwise these may be difficult to establish and in so doing may provide an effective bridge between the worlds of formal and non-formal education. Recent research carried out by the National Youth Agency⁸ found that, while there is a widespread misunderstanding of the role of youth work and what it can offer, youth work has a positive effect on a range of indicators linked to formal education, including behaviour, attendance and transitions. The research identified how youth work is of particular benefit in the delivery of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the delivery of sex and relationship education (SRE).

It is clear that youth work practice can be effective in directly and indirectly supporting learning outcomes and that there are significant benefits for young people from closer working between schools, colleges and youth work organisations. Therefore, to improve outcomes for young people the links between formal education provision and youth work provision must be further developed and better aligned. Currently partnership working between youth work organisations and schools are highly variable. To inform future direction and guidance the Welsh Government will undertake a review of the impact of youth work practice in schools by 2017. Whether the optimum expression of this closer working is a youth worker linked to every school or some other arrangement is a matter for the review and advice to determine.

Supporting effective collaboration between voluntary and statutory youth work organisations

To support the strategic positioning of the sector, statutory and voluntary youth work organisations need to work in partnership to provide young people with both open access and more targeted provision. The appropriate balance between open access and targeted provision should be determined based on the needs of young people at local level, evidence of impact, and the resources available to partner organisations.

Local authorities should work positively and collaboratively with voluntary organisations to help ensure that youth work provision meets local needs and that best use is being made of available resources. Locally the challenge is for the statutory and voluntary youth work sector (including national voluntary youth work organisations and uniformed youth services) to work collaboratively, developing

⁸ National Youth Agency (2013): Commission into the Role of Youth Work in Formal Education

appropriate means to share information and support mutual capacity for quality delivery. The outcome of strengthened relationships should be reduced duplication and more resilient services built and delivered around the needs of young people. As an expression of genuine partnership working, a youth work offer to young people on an area basis can be articulated in relation to Local Authority Single Integrated Plans.

To provide support and represent the voice of organisations delivering local and national voluntary youth work provision the Welsh Government will continue to support the umbrella body the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Service (CWVYS) and look to this body to promote and advise upon the contribution of voluntary youth work providers to the development and implementation of the *Youth engagement and progression framework*.

As part of the broader alignment and coordination of activity between partners, over the course of this strategy we wish to see significant steps taken in how the contribution of uniformed youth organisations is aligned with that of youth work organisations. Welsh Government looks to CWVYS to advise on how existing activities and structures can be aligned best with the unique contribution of uniformed youth work organisations in Wales.

The following actions will be progressed in support of the strategic goals and outcomes identified above.

1. An independent evaluation of the range, value and impact of youth work provision including its contribution to employability will be completed by April 2017.
2. The Welsh Government will monitor the contribution of youth work provision toward the Welsh Language Strategy and invite the Youth Work Reference Group to consider how best youth work organisations can grow and develop opportunities for young people to utilise and develop their Welsh language skills.
3. The Welsh Government will work through CWVYS to develop the voluntary youth work sector contribution to the delivery of the *Youth engagement and progression framework*.
4. The Welsh Government will develop good practice guidelines for lead workers by September 2014.
5. To support the role of the lead worker a professional development learning package will be developed by March 2015.
6. An independent evaluation of the impact of youth work in schools and examples of best practice will be presented in December 2015.
7. The Youth Service reference group will guide an independent review into effective youth work practice in schools by April 2016 [see action 12].

8. A joint youth work offer should be developed through Local Authority Single Integrated Plans which brings together the provision offered through statutory and voluntary youth work organisations.

Accountability, results and development

The actions of the Welsh Government and those of key partners and delivery organisations should support the following strategic goals for, and outcomes from, youth work provision.

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

Strengthening the evidence base

A strengthened and robust evidence base on the impact of youth work is vital to inform and drive the development of a more consistent and high-quality national youth work offer across Wales. Currently there is a wealth of anecdotal evidence demonstrating the contribution of youth work and positive outcomes for young people. However much more needs to be done to systematically and robustly evidence the contribution of youth work. This evidence is critical if those responsible for youth work (in both statutory and voluntary contexts) are to successfully compete for resources. Evidence also has an important role to play in underlining the legitimacy and credibility of youth work to partner organisations.

To realise improvements in the evidence base a National Outcomes Framework will be developed and rolled out to capture and reflect the value being added by youth work practice in both statutory and voluntary contexts and to illuminate differences in service delivery and reach. Strategically, the evidence base generated through the National Outcomes Framework will inform the planned review of youth work practice identified in 'Supporting young people to develop life skills and resilience' (page 9).

In support of the wider National Outcomes Framework the National Youth Service Audit will be developed into a National Youth Work Audit, focusing on the outcomes and outputs of youth work across Wales. Going forward the audit will help establish

a more consistent picture of delivery across Wales and can be used more effectively to benchmark service provision in different parts of Wales.

Recognising quality

Youth work organisations should ensure that young people are offered quality youth work interventions that are fit for purpose for the groups of young people they are working with. Good interventions rarely produce bad outcomes. To support the quality agenda a Quality Mark for Youth Work organisations will help to clearly define quality youth work provision.

A key purpose of the Quality Mark will be to challenge services, drive up quality youth work provision, support the development of a more consistent youth work offer across Wales to young people and build confidence between services.

Valuing and supporting the workforce

To operate as a credible strategic service, youth work providers have to demonstrate high levels of professionalism. Moreover, young people should rightly expect to be supported by skilled, competent youth work practitioners. Youth work is a skilled profession and strategically we believe we must continue the drive towards an appropriately qualified youth work workforce.

In support of this there is a need to develop a clear coherent qualifications route and continuous professional development framework for those involved in youth work provision. Such a framework needs to ensure those engaged in youth work provision and management are supported to develop the required skills, knowledge and competencies relevant to their roles. Pathways of learning and development for youth workers also need to exist which take into account the role and commitment already provided by volunteers.

In July 2013 the Education (Wales) Bill was introduced by the Minister for Education and Skills. The Bill will introduce a new, robust registration system for the whole education workforce. It is the intention of the Welsh Government to include youth workers in the future, in recognition of their key role in supporting young people to successfully remain engaged in, and progress through, their formal education and training.

Leadership, oversight and advice

Positioning youth work provision to fully deliver on the goals set out within this strategy will require leadership and challenge at all levels. This strategy explicitly seeks to more centrally position and capitalise upon the unique approach and

contribution of youth work provision toward government priorities for education and beyond. To support strategic and well-structured dialogue between Ministers and those engaged in the sector the Welsh Government will establish a reference group of key stakeholders remitted to report directly to and advise Ministers on youth work practice. This group will advise the Minister on key issues and developments associated with the implementation of this strategy, and provide a critical forum for debate on issues such as whether to take forward the development of statutory guidance for youth work.

Effective practice and innovation

Good youth work practice can effectively support a wide range of government agendas, including health and well-being. There are many examples of good-quality youth work being delivered in a diverse range of settings. A strategic role for the Welsh Government is therefore to work with stakeholders to identify and share best practice, drawing on evidence from across the UK and beyond.

Recognising the achievements of young people

Celebrating and recognising achievement is important and it is essential that youth work provision continues to recognise young people's development through accreditation, local⁹ and national¹⁰ awards. Accreditation opportunities in youth work can enable young people to see their achievements, inspire personal confidence and self-assurance. Making this opportunity available for young people can be significant in giving young people the confidence to reconnect or progress with formal education. Accreditations can also provide young people with evidence of the skills they have developed, skills which are valued by potential future employers. Certain types of accreditation are particularly well respected and understood by employers – such as Duke of Edinburgh's Awards – because they evidence skills in team working, decision making and communication skills.

For these reasons youth work organisations are encouraged to extend opportunities for young people to achieve nationally recognised accreditations. A target for accreditations from youth work provision will not be set as this would likely drive the allocation of resources in ways that may not support achievement of the wider strategic outcomes being sought. However, through the National Youth Work Audit

⁹ Locally recognised awards are those successfully completed that are not part of the national programme and assessed locally, for example: individual modules of DofE or PSD; Mayor's Awards; In-house Certification; Children/Youth University; and John Muir Award.

¹⁰ Nationally recognised accreditations are those successfully completed under nationally recognised programmes that are assessed and verified, for example: Agored Cymru/OCN; ASDAN; DofE; BEL Award and Personal Social Development (PSD).

there will be monitoring of levels of accreditation in the context of broader outcomes and service priorities.

Virtual youth work

Not all young people are the same. The use of technologies, from more traditional telephone-based services, to web-chat or social network-based support models is opening new opportunities for supporting and engaging young people and may provide valuable opportunities to compliment face-to-face youth work.

Those commissioning and providing youth work provision are encouraged to explore how technology is able to create and sustain effective engagement with young people. Technology-driven opportunities must, however, be explored and developed with young people as part of a balanced and responsive youth work offer.

The Welsh Government will continue to support young people's national information website CLIC online until 2016. During this time future options for delivery of a national youth information service will be explored.

The following actions will be progressed in support of the strategic goals and outcomes identified above.

9. The Welsh Government will develop and implement a National Outcomes Framework by September 2015. This framework will align with other relevant Welsh Government outcomes frameworks.
10. A youth work Quality Mark suitable for both the statutory and voluntary youth work sector will be developed and made available by April 2015.
11. The annual National Youth Service Audit will be developed into a National Youth Work Audit and will be used as a tool for demonstrating a national picture of outputs and outcomes of youth work. We will continue to monitor national accreditations young people achieve through this audit.
12. The Welsh Government will establish a Youth Work Reference Group with representation from key stakeholders, including young people, which will directly report to and advise Ministers on the implementation of the National Youth Work Strategy. The Youth Work Reference Group will convene and be asked to agree both terms of reference and a provisional work programme by December 2014.
13. The Welsh Government will advise on the most appropriate arrangements for supporting the voluntary youth work sector beyond 2016 with support and input from the Youth Work Reference Group.
14. The Welsh Government will advise on the scope and delivery of youth work programmes in schools with support and input from the Youth Work Reference Group.

15. The Welsh Government will advise on the most appropriate arrangements for supporting the voluntary youth work sector beyond 2016 with support and input from the Youth Work Reference Group.
16. The Welsh Government will explore youth work practice across the UK, Europe and internationally with support and input from the Youth Work Reference Group and consider the merits and risks associated with alternative models of youth work delivery and contracting.
17. The Welsh Government will provide advice on the merits of statutory guidance for youth work, building on the evidence base generated through the Audit and National Outcomes Framework with support and input from the Youth Work Reference Group.
18. The Youth Work Reference Group will advise on the criteria for the evaluation of the impact of youth work.
19. The Welsh Government will work with stakeholders to identify and effectively share good practice and develop good practice in respect of this strategy and wider Welsh Government priorities.
20. Increase the number of youth workers holding a JNC recognised youth work qualification.
21. A coherent training package for youth workers will be developed by 2016.
22. The Welsh Government will continue to promote and support high-quality nationally recognised professional training for youth workers through ETS Wales.
23. The Welsh Government will work with stakeholders to explore the registration of youth workers.
24. The Welsh Government will recognise, promote and celebrate outstanding youth work practice and youth workers across Wales through ongoing support to the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards.

Funding youth work in Wales

The great majority of public funding available to support youth work in Wales is administered by local authorities with funding allocated from the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) provided by Welsh Government.

The RSG is an unhypothecated funding stream and it is therefore a decision of local authorities as to how this funding is utilised in order to best meet their local needs and priorities – including the provision of youth services.

The Welsh Government has historically provided direct support to a number of grant schemes intended to support the outcomes of youth work.

Directly supported Welsh Government grants will continue to be available for the lifespan of this strategy. This additional funding is not provided to offset or substitute RSG funding, but should be used to build capacity and promote quality outcomes, and support the development of a more consistent offer to young people across Wales.

Revisions to the suite of grants available to support the previous National Youth Service Strategy will be introduced and include the following.

Youth Work Strategy Support Grant

We will offer a four-year grant from April 2014, initially using the same funding formula as applied to the previous Youth Service Revenue Grant. This new grant will be available to local authorities to support open-access provision to meet local need and fill gaps identified within the Local Authority Single Integrated Plan; to support the implementation of the *Youth engagement and progression framework – Implementation plan*, including supporting and facilitating the contribution of the voluntary sector and to support training needs for staffing (including the voluntary sector).

The Welsh Government will work with the Youth Work Reference Group to review the current formula used to allocate the Youth Work Strategy Support Grant to support the development of a consistent offer for young people and ensure resources support effective collaborative working.

Local authorities will be required to demonstrate how they propose to spend their allocation annually and demonstrate the impact of this grant.

Grants for voluntary youth work organisations

The current National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) Grant will continue during 2014/15. From April 2015 a revised NVYO grant will be open on a competitive basis to organisations on a local and national level.

Voluntary youth work organisations will be offered the opportunity to compete for core funding through the NVYO grant from April 2015. New criteria for the NVYO Grant will seek to target resources where organisations are best positioned to lever-in additional investment from other sources, growing the overall resource available to invest in youth work provision and creating opportunities for more young people across Wales.

Young people have said they want more opportunities to use their Welsh outside the confines of schools¹¹ and value having their achievements accredited. Consideration will therefore be given to how funding can be used to provide young people with more opportunities to use their Welsh, increase their confidence and fluency in the language and increase their awareness of the value of Welsh¹² as part of the youth work offer. Consideration will also be given to how NVYO Grant funding can be used in the future to develop quality-accredited outcomes for young people.

Grant funding to support CWVYS

CWVYS plays a valued role providing representation for voluntary youth work organisations at a national level. To help support and promote the contribution of the voluntary sector to this strategy and wider Welsh Government objectives grant funding to support the work of CWVYS will be retained for at least two years, at which point it will be reviewed in line with development of support to the broader voluntary sector.

Supporting standards and the workforce

It is essential that youth work training meets minimum requirements for the profession and continues to be transferable into and outside of the UK. The Welsh Government will continue to fund ETS Wales for the next four years to ensure that programmes of training for youth workers are of a suitable high quality, relevant to the needs of employers, youth workers themselves and the young people with whom they work.

In 2014/15 the Welsh Government will provide resource for the development of a coherent workforce pathway for youth workers in Wales.

¹¹ Urdd Gobaith Cymru (2011) *The Needs and Aspirations of Young People in Relation to the Welsh Language*.

¹² Welsh Government (2012) *A living language: a language for living*. Welsh Language Strategy 2012–2017.

Annex: Five-tier model of engagement

The five-tier model of engagement as set out in the *Youth engagement and progression framework – Implementation plan*.

Tier	Client group	Lead worker
Tier 5 Young People in Further Education, Employment or Training (EET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining education, employment or training (EET). • Working or studying part time over 16 hours. • Voluntary work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No lead worker is judged necessary given that young person is already engaged and not judged to be at risk of disengaging.
Tier 4 Young People at risk of dropping out of EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those engaged in less than 16 hours of EET. • Those who have been identified at risk of disengagement pre-16 and/or were judged as at risk of not making a positive transition who are subsequently in FE, sixth form or training. • Those who have been made aware to CW by EET providers (or themselves) as at risk of dropping out of EET. 	<p>Allocation of lead worker depends on level of risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low and medium risk – provider pastoral systems and/or allocation of learning coach as a lead worker. • High risk – may be allocated lead worker from either Youth Service or Careers Wales or if Families First involved Team Around the Family will decide allocation of lead worker.
Tier 3 Unemployed 16 and 17-year-olds known to Careers Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged with CW and/or known to be actively seeking EET; either ready to enter EET, or assessed as requiring career management or employability skills support to enter EET. • This tier should also include those known to CW, actively seeking EET but not requiring CW enhanced support, i.e. accessing support via CW.com, awaiting a college start date, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead worker identified for 100% cohort. • Careers Wales will provide the lead worker in nearly all cases.
Tier 2 Unemployed 16 and 17-year-olds, known to Careers Wales, who are not available for EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young person not available/ unable to seek EET (sickness, young carers, pregnancy, custody). • Young people with significant or multiple barriers requiring intensive personal support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead worker identified for 100% cohort. • Youth Service will provide lead worker in nearly all cases.
Tier 1 Unknown status on leaving Careers Wales services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people unknown to Careers Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once individuals are identified they are allocated to appropriate tier and allocated a lead worker accordingly.