



YOUTH MATTERS

**Your National
Youth STRATEGY**

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OVERVIEW

The government has launched **Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy**, a 10 year plan created together with young people to boost youth power and support right across government.



- Two clear ambitions - by 2035:
- 1) half a million more young people to have access to a trusted adult outside of their home.
 - 2) to have halved the participation gap in enriching activities between disadvantaged young people and their peers.

CO-PRODUCTION

Established a **Youth Advisory Group and Expert Advisory Group**. Engaged with close to **1,500 cross-sector experts**. Co-produced policies with young people across the country:

- Youth Survey: over **14,000 responses**
- Express Order: **980 responses**
- Focus groups: over **2000 young people** engaged
- **School assembly** and group session pack: **4000 young people** participated
- **Hacks** took place in Blackpool, Gateshead, Manchester, Ipswich and Bristol.
- Sector focussed deep dives - care experienced, young carers, SEND, arts, sports, culture, criminal justice, young asylum seekers.



YOUTH MATTERS: STATE OF THE NATION

Drawing on all the research evidence, the report identifies the following findings priority areas:

A generation under pressure: Young people report high levels of concern about money, mental health and wellbeing, friendships and social life, education and their future. These are confirmed across both the national survey and wider research.

Lack of local opportunities: A cross-cutting issue is the absence of local, in-person opportunities for socialising, engaging in activities, and forming supportive connections. This undermines young people's wellbeing, sense of belonging, and development.

Feeling unheard and unsafe: Many young people express a lack of voice in decision-making and anxiety about their personal safety, especially in public spaces and online.

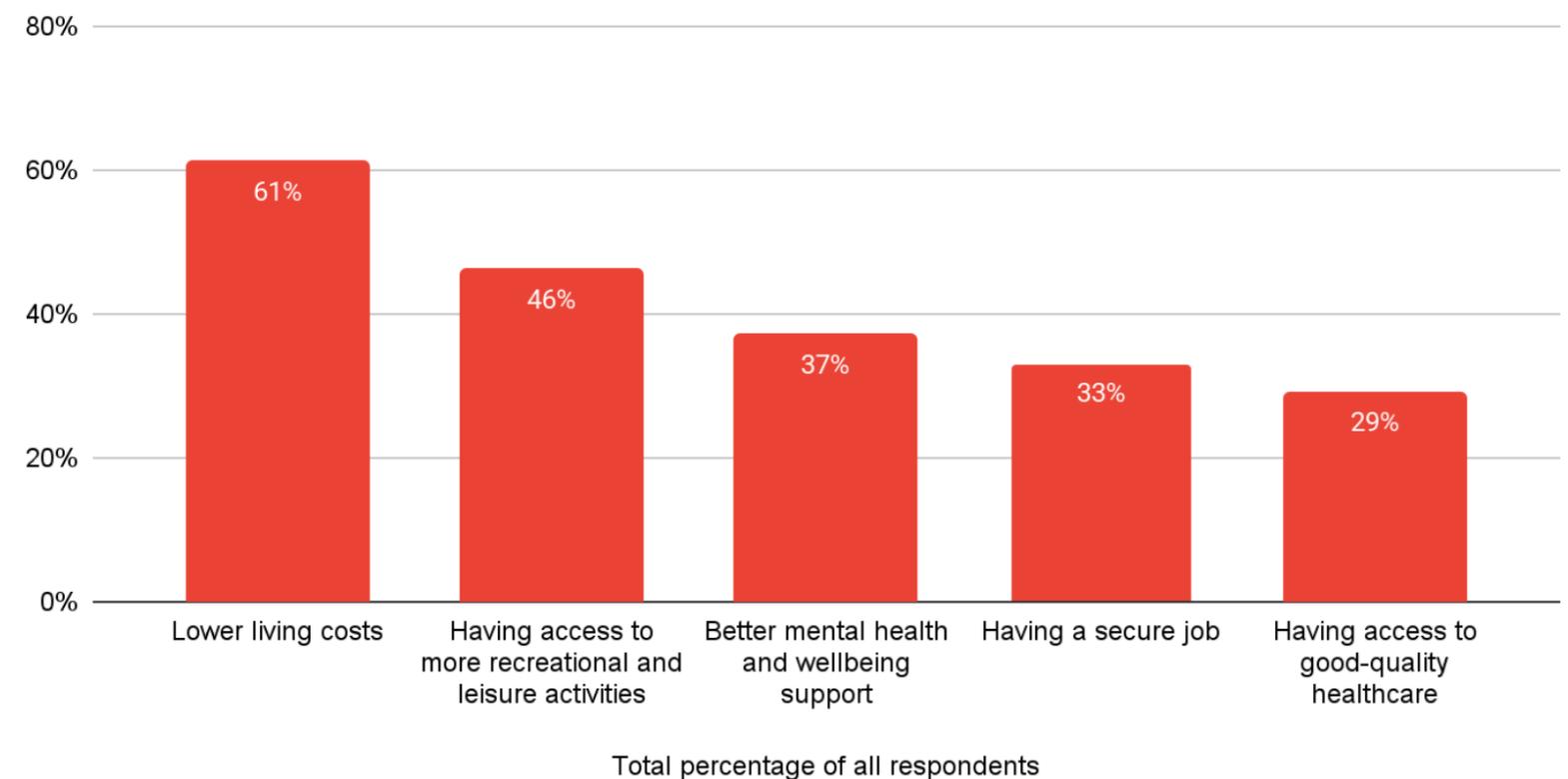
These challenges affect all young people, however some groups such as young people with SEN/D and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, are more highly impacted.



YOUTH MATTERS: STATE OF THE NATION

- 76% of young people spend most of their free time on screens
- NEET 16–24 year-olds is approximately 946,000 (12.5%)
- Only one in five young people in England and Wales do not have a trusted adult outside their family.
- 16% of young people report feeling very unsafe or unsafe in their local areas.
- The UK as a whole ranks 21st out of 36 countries for child wellbeing. One in five young people in England (8-25) has a probable mental health disorder.

Which of the following things, if any, would most improve your day-to-day life? / Which of these things would make your life better?



THE VISION

Every young person – no matter where they're from – should have a safe place to go, someone who cares for them and a community they feel a part of.

The strategy will deliver on four key outcomes:

- Young people feel **safe, online and offline**
- Young people feel **connected** to people their own age and in their wider community
- Young people build **skills** and have **opportunities** at school, work and in free time
- Young people have better **physical and mental health** and **wellbeing**

IMPORTANT SHIFTS BEING MADE

We know that change needs to start with us. So we're making three big shifts in the way government will work:

- **From national to local:** We will use funding to empower local communities and increase place-based decision-making. We will work with local authorities and VCSE to build and strengthen their local offer for young people.
- **From fragmented to collaborative:** Helping to ensure services - from mental health support, to careers advisors and schools, councils and youth clubs - talk to each other and work together to help young people thrive
- **From excluded to empowered:** Giving young people the power to shape new policies and the tools to shape their community



CHAPTER 1: PEOPLE WHO CARE

Action 1: Trusted Adults

More adults around young people to talk to, from trusted adults in schools, clubs and communities, as well as more support for families.

Action 2: Supporting and improving the workforce

Investing in and providing training for the individuals and organisations who guide and support young people. More apprenticeships and pathways into youth work.

This is backed by **£15 million** for youth workers, volunteers and other trusted adults to better support young people and **£5 million** to support the youth sector infrastructure. .

Action 3: Friends and relationships

Making sure young people have more opportunities to connect with others, build friendships at school, in communities and providing support to address loneliness. Delivering a safer internet.

CHAPTER 2: PLACES TO GO AND THINGS TO DO

Action 4: Richer lives

More high-quality, inclusive activities in and out of school, from cultural programmes to outdoor adventures and information.

Backed by over **£60 million** on a Richer Young Lives Fund, **£22.5 million** on the Enrichment Expansion Programme, and **£132.5 million** from Dormant Assets.

Action 5: Good work

Providing better careers advice, more work experience, opportunities to learn new skills and more support in schools to help every student thrive.

Including **£820 million** through DWP's Youth Guarantee.

Action 6: Keeping young people safe

Providing support for young people to stay safe, with restored policing in your neighbourhood.

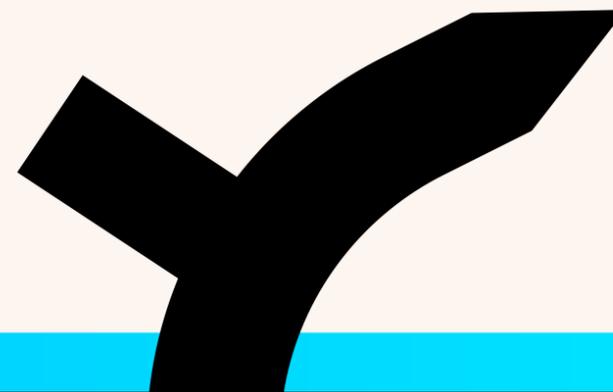
Action 7: Places to go

Providing more welcoming spaces, including time to be in nature. Making transport more accessible to help young people reach these spaces.

£350 million to refurbish or build up to 250 youth facilities and **£70 million** to support 50 Young Futures Hubs.

Action 8: Health and wellbeing

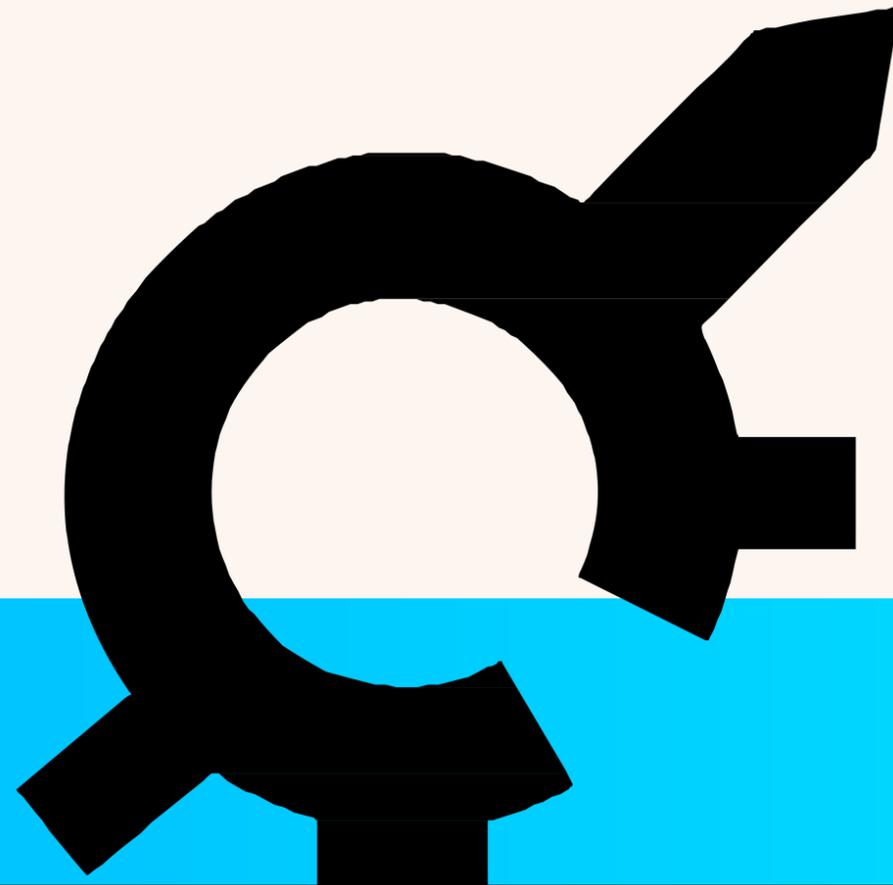
Making sure wellbeing support is part of everyday life through more chances to get active, wellbeing support teams in schools and colleges, and targeted support for those who need it.



CHAPTER 3: SEEN AND HEARD

Action 9: Delivering with young people

Putting young people in the driving seat of their own lives and empowering them to shape the solutions and decisions that impact them.



Action 10: Holding us to account

We have clear plans across our 10 action areas for the next decade and will make sure young people can hold us to account through:

Regular opportunities for young people to help shape programmes and policies and seeing updates online to track what we're doing.

Inviting young people to annual national hearings on our delivery.

Inviting young people to shape a report outlining progress on our delivery and impact.

FUNDED FIRST STEPS

The Strategy is for the next decade and we are therefore not able to confirm funding amounts for its duration. However, the Strategy does include a number of funded first steps for the next 3 years, including:

- **£350 million** to refurbish or build up to 250 youth facilities through our Better Youth Spaces programme.
- **Over £60 million** on a new Richer Young Lives Fund to improve access to enriching activities and youth work.
- **£15 million** for youth workers, volunteers and other trusted adults to better support young people.
- **£70 million** to rebuild and improve local youth services and establish a network of 50 Young Futures Hubs.

The majority of the funding underpinning the first steps of the Strategy will be available from 2026/27. We will be designing the funding and programmes in more detail over the next few months and will share more information in due course.

Outdoor learning and 'Youth Matters'

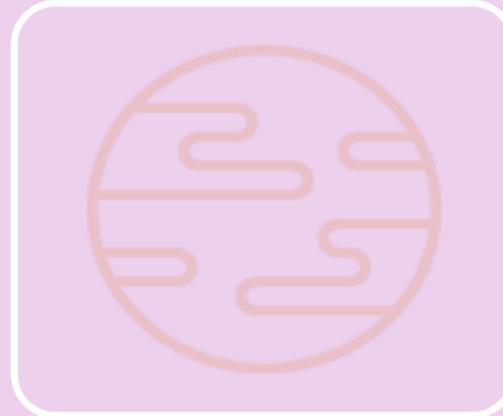


Youth Strategy supports outdoor learning by:

- Embedding nature access as a right
- Framing outdoor activity as essential to wellbeing, inclusion, and skill development
- Encouraging local, place-based, and youth-designed outdoor provision
- Linking outdoor learning to future employment, health, and community connection

While not branded as “outdoor learning,” the strategy provides a mandate to develop an outdoor learning approach in response to the strategy.

Outdoor Learning Opportunities Identified in the Strategy



Learning in Nature

The strategy commits to ensuring young people can access green and blue spaces

Outdoor Enrichment & Activities

The government commits to expanding quality activities including Sport, outdoor adventures, volunteering & holiday programmes

Volunteering & Community-Based Outdoor Projects

Volunteering is repeatedly referenced to build skills, confidence, and belonging .

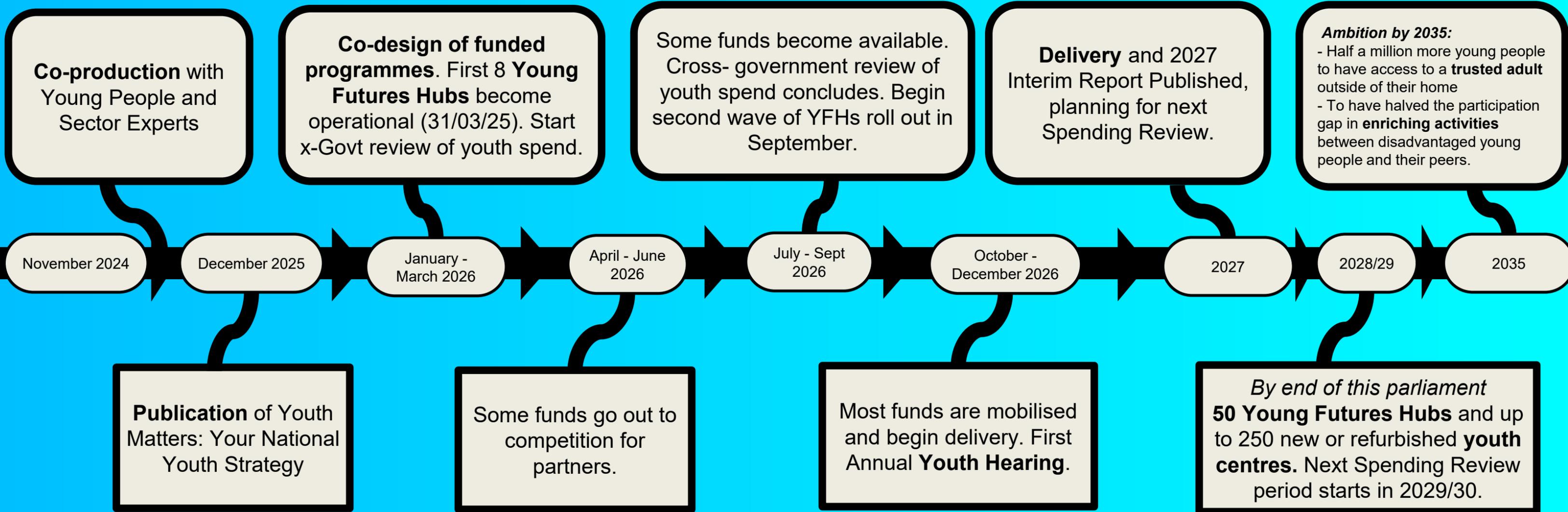
Wellbeing & Mental Health Through Outdoor Spaces

The strategy explicitly links being outdoors to improved mental and physical health, positioning nature as part of everyday

Skills for the Future: Climate & Green Careers

The strategy recognises climate change as a key driver of future skills needs, committing to opportunities to learn skills for fast-growing sectors, including green industries

Roadmap for DCMS deliverables



DELIVERING CHANGE TOGETHER

The launch of this strategy is just the beginning. We want it to spark a conversation that lasts, where young people help to shape their future, not just watch it unfold.

Join us on the journey to help deliver this strategy by:

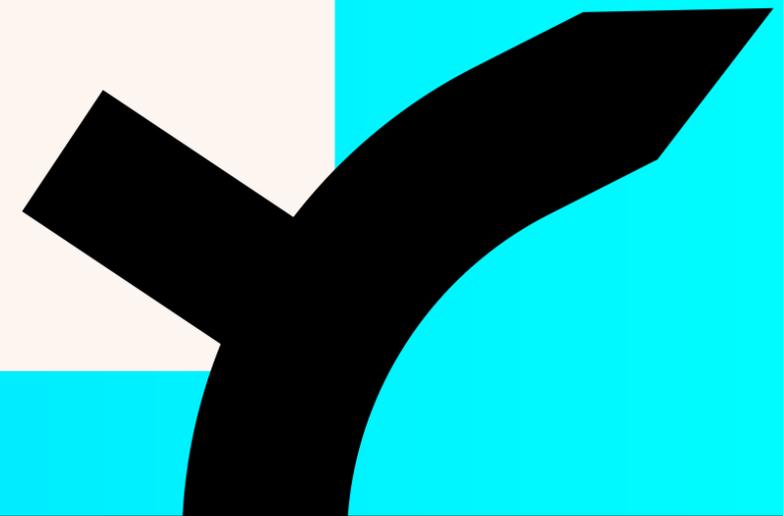
- using the [toolkit](#) to run sessions and send us feedback.
- signing up to our **regional events** [for young people](#) and [the sector](#).
- Sign up to our next [webinar](#).
- signing up to the DCMS Youth team [newsletter](#) to be kept updated.

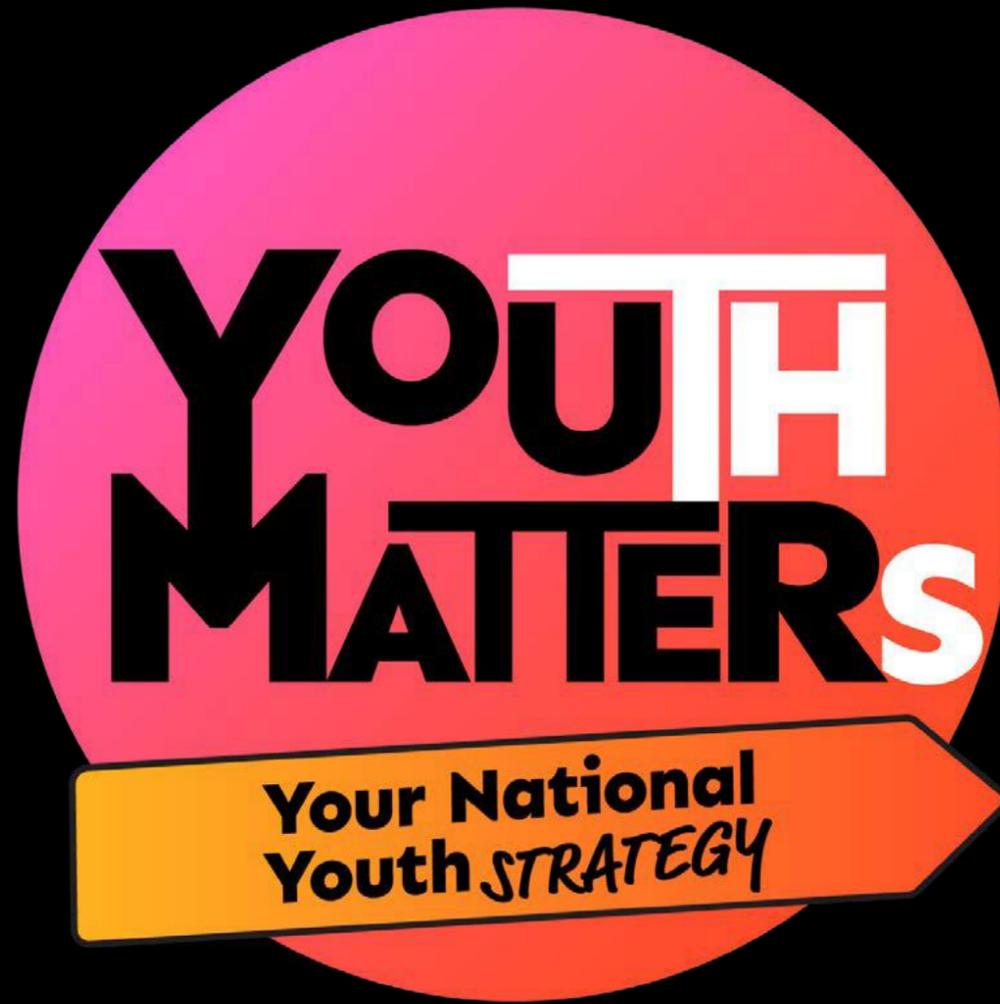


FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy](#) (collection page)
- [Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy](#) (summary version)
- [Youth Matters: State of the Nation](#) (collection page)
- [Youth Matters: State of the Nation](#) (summary version)
- [The Big Ambition Analysis for the National Youth Strategy](#)
- [National Youth Strategy Research Project](#) (summary version)
- [National Youth Strategy Press Release](#)
- [Youth Matters Toolkit](#) (to support sharing with young people)

We are planning a range of stakeholder engagements over the next couple of months (including webinars and roadshows) - **sign up to our [Newsletter](#) to hear more!**





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