

Hundreds of youth groups across the country to benefit from £380 million Youth Investment Fund

Hundreds of youth services, facilities and organisations for young people in areas with poor provision will benefit from a cash injection as the Government begins to deliver on its £380 million Youth Investment Fund.

The Fund has been designed to create, improve and expand local youth facilities and services across the country, to support young people's health, wellbeing and skills for work and life, no matter where they live.

£12 million funding has been fast-tracked to local youth services where supply is currently far short of meeting demand. This will help to level up access to services, trusted youth workers and dedicated facilities for young people.

The funding will help to expand the reach and range of services on offer, meet demand and reduce running costs. It will be used to cover small-scale capital improvements such as providing new laptops to youth groups, small redevelopments of buildings and facilities, and improving transport, such as providing a new minibus for a youth club so they can keep young people safe and extend activities beyond their local area.

Nigel Huddleston, Minister for Sport, Tourism and Civil Society, said:

We want every young person, no matter where they're from, to have the chance to get the best start in life.

Today we are firing the starting gun on the rollout of our National Youth Guarantee and putting more money into improving access to youth services where it is most needed.

Examples of those supported through the fund and being announced today include:

- Carlisle Youth Zone, which provides a safe meeting place for young people, particularly those experiencing poverty, family breakdown and who are at risk of becoming involved with antisocial behaviours. It has benefitted from a grant worth £48,770 to create an inviting space within its current building through a new lighting system and durable furniture. It has already resulted in an increase in new members and more young people coming to use the centre for study sessions, peer mentoring, one-to-one chats with youth workers, as well as wellbeing sessions.

- Simple Norfolk CIO in Thetford, which provides services and volunteering opportunities to young people from low income families who are new to the UK. It has benefitted from a grant worth £19,924 to fund new equipment for woodworking sessions that are helping to increase skills and employment opportunities.
- Aptitude Organisation in Coventry, which aims to support children and young people facing mental ill-health to develop new skills, improve their mental wellbeing and reduce the risk of antisocial behaviour. It has benefitted from a grant worth £18,046 for building improvement materials that have made the building a warmer and more welcoming space, alongside kitchen and gaming equipment. It is helping the young people to learn and develop new skills through meaningful activities.

Applications for funding were assessed by BBC Children in Need as an Intermediary Grant Maker.

Today's announcement forms part of the Government's ['National Youth Guarantee'](#) that will ensure young people right across England are given access to more activities, trips away from home and volunteering opportunities, backed by a £560 million investment.

This includes building or refurbishing up to 300 youth facilities over the next three years via the Youth Investment Fund, offering The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to every state secondary school for the first time, as well as increased access to social action projects or the opportunity to learn new money management or public speaking skills through the National Citizen Service.

The pledge will mean that by 2025, every young person in England will have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home and opportunities to volunteer as part of the Government's commitment to level up opportunities for all young people. This includes all 11-18 year olds, and up to 25 years old for those with special educational needs and disabilities.

Simon Antrobus, CEO of BBC Children in Need said:

We are incredibly proud of the work that has been delivered in phase 1 of the Youth Investment Fund with DCMS.

A wide range of grants have been awarded, from providing minibuses to enable children living in left behind areas access to youth provision, to upgrading buildings so that young people facing mental health challenges have a safe place to go and talk to a trusted adult.

This funding will make a huge difference to the way these projects deliver their crucial work all over England and have a lasting effect on the children and young people that they support.

The application process for the remaining £368 million tranche of the Youth Investment Fund is expected to begin in summer 2022. Youth services across 45 local authorities and over 600 district wards in the most deprived parts of England will be eligible to apply.

Ahead of this, the Government has also launched a competition to identify four organisations across England to pilot a minimum of four new youth facilities. Successful organisations will receive funding to pilot a range of new facility concepts and the delivery process associated with their construction. More details, including eligibility, can be found on our [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) page.

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Notes to editors: * Applications were invited from local authorities, district councils, voluntary organisations and housing associations, and have been assessed by BBC Children in Need, Intermediary Grant Maker for Phase 1 of the Youth Investment Fund who distributed £12m funding to successful grant recipients. [A full list of funded projects can be found here.](#)

- Further details on the eligibility criteria for the first tranche of the Youth Investment Fund can be found [here](#). DCMS has developed a [detailed methodology](#) underpinning the selection of areas.
- The £380 million Youth Investment Fund comprises capital and resource funding.
- The National Youth Guarantee follows the completion of a [review of DCMS spending on out-of-school youth programmes](#). The review, which was announced in 2020, engaged around 6,000 young people and 175 youth sector organisations, and found that:
 - The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact upon young people – their mental health and wellbeing has declined, with anxiety levels at a 12 year high – and they have seen the largest increase in unemployment of all age groups.
 - Youth services are a vital part of the response to these challenges, delivering benefits for wellbeing and employability skills.
 - Going forward, young people would like the Government to prioritise regular clubs and activities, adventurous trips, and support to volunteer in their local communities.
- The government listened to those young people and created the new National Youth Guarantee, which will ensure that long term Government spending on youth programmes is focused on supporting young people's mental wellbeing and developing skills for life and work. In response to feedback from youth organisations, it will work to ensure the Government's youth funding is coordinated, levels up accessibility across every region, so that no young person is left behind as the nation recovers from the pandemic.

- The full findings of the Government's review of public spending on out-of-school youth programmes can be found [here](#)