

PRESTON'S YOUTH STRATEGY

2025 – 2035



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Plan on a page

Vision

Young people want Preston to be a place they can be proud of and want to live in. They want Preston to be a city where young people have an influential voice, can be safe and healthy, have access to more opportunities and have well trained adults supporting them. They want the city to be friendly, clean and affordable with more accessible, inclusive activities and places for them to use.

Objectives

Youth Participation & Influence	Partnership & Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A youth friendly city recognising the value of young people • A city-wide Youth Voices/Young Leader's model • Development of existing organisational youth panels • Reward & Recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising available resources for the good of young people through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A governance structure - A delivery framework - Infrastructure development - Workforce Development

Working in Partnership to Deliver

Community Safety Partnership

Health & Wellbeing Partnership / Integrated Care Partnership

Youth Forum

Lancashire Employment & Skills Framework

- Delivering on issues that matter to young people
- Work with young people and help them discover their agency, be involved in problem solving and build and practice the skills they need to navigate life
- Workforce development through subject matter training and awareness of services for young people

Outcomes

Be Safe

Be Healthy & Resilient

Be Enabled & Empowered

Be Ready for the Future

Introduction

Welcome to Preston's Youth Strategy 2025-2035.

This strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Preston Youth Forum which is a network of youth service providers from the voluntary, community, faith, social enterprise and public sector from across the city. These services have worked hard to understand the issues facing young people, aged 8 to 25 in Preston and how youth related services across the city can work together to provide better support to help young people live to their full potential.

Purpose of the Strategy

Why do Preston's young people need this strategy?

Research shows that the period of adolescence is as big, if not bigger, developmental leap than that between 0-2 years. Adolescence is a period where the human brain 'rewires' itself by learning to take risks, develop meaningful relationships and discover self-awareness. What happens to young people during this 'rewiring' is crucial to the formation of the adult. If society does not help young people and their carers through this process it will store up problems for the future (Jensen and Nutt 2015). This investment in the future is well worth it and it is a driver for this strategy.

The strategy will:

- State a commitment from organisations to have an ambitious and innovative approach to improving the lives of young people from Preston
- State a commitment from partners to collaborate through the youth forum and other related partnerships for the benefit of young people
- Be a structured way to help guide collective and individual efforts when delivering services with young people
- Empower young people to have a voice across the city and feel like they can affect change
- Develop a shared and ongoing understanding of the needs of young people in Preston.
- Keep services accountable to young people
- State a commitment from partners to take risks and allow for failure (young people make mistakes and so do adults – we can learn together)
- Allow for the celebration of young people and the positive role they play within communities in Preston

Vision

Young people want Preston to be a place they can be proud of and want to stay. They want Preston to be a city where young people have a voice, can be safe and healthy, have access to more opportunities and have well trained, adults supporting them. They want the city to be friendly, clean and affordable with more accessible, inclusive activities and places for them to use.

Links with Key Strategies



Preston's Youth Strategy

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Lancashire Violence Reduction Network
Lancashire Youth Violence Strategy 2022</p> <p>2 Lancashire 2050
A strategic framework for Lancashire</p> <p>3 Lancashire Skills & Economic Board
The Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2024-2029</p> <p>4 Preston Community Safety Partnership
Preston Combined Partnership and Serious Violence Plan</p> <p>5 Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership Strategy
Integrated Care Strategy 2023-2028</p> | <p>6 Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
Mental Health Strategy: Children, Young people and Adults 2021-2024</p> <p>7 Lancs and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Children in Care and Care Leavers Health Strategy</p> <p>8 Lancashire and South Cumbria Joint Forward
Plan for 2023 onwards</p> <p>9 Lancashire Public Health Strategy
Public Health Strategy 2024-2030</p> <p>10 Lancashire County Council
Lancashire Children & Young People's Plan 2024-2028</p> <p>11 National Youth Agency
Enabling Great Youth Work to Happen</p> |
|---|---|

NB: The duration of the aforementioned strategies differ and the content of the Preston's Youth Strategy will be reviewed to ensure that alignment remains current.

Delivery Partnership Landscape in Preston

Preston Anchor Board

Preston Strategic Youth Partners Group



A brief description and any associated weblinks for each of the delivery structures can be seen in the Glossary.

Our City at a Glance

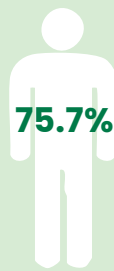
37,585

There are 37,585 residents aged between 8-25

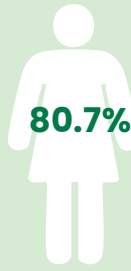
22.37%

From 2020 to 2030 the number of 16, 17 and 18 year olds is expected to rise by 22.37%

75.7%



80.7%



Life expectancy in Preston is 75.7 for males and 80.7 for females which are both below the national average

17.9%

17.9% of children under the age of 16 live in poverty

2,607

2,607 is the number of young people aged 18-25 not in employment

89.3%

89.3% of school leavers in Preston go onto further education which is above the Lancashire average

614

614 apprenticeship starts in 2022/23 in Preston which is higher than the national average

4%

4% of people aged 16-17 are classed as NEET which is above the national average of 3.6%

41%

41% of young people ages 5-16 are physically active for less than 30 minutes a day which is 11% under the national average

40%

40% of year 6 pupils are classed as overweight, above the national average of 36.6%

243

There are 243 care leavers in Preston

47.6

47.6 is the average attainment score in 2023/24 for key stage 4 pupils which is above the national rate of 46.4

*All data sets accurate at time of completion



Preston Youth Survey at a Glance

The views of young people and those of the professionals that support them underpin this strategy. In May 2023, two roundtable events were held with professionals to collect their views. Over the summer months, we worked with a group of young people to develop a series of questions relevant to young people across the city. Using these questions, we carried out the Preston Youth Survey with people aged between 8-25 from November 2023 until March 2024 and 1400 young people responded with their views.

Those that took part



72.2%
White



14.3% Asian
or Asian
British



7.2% Mixed
or Multiple
Ethnicities



3.8% Black
or Black
British



3.4% Other
Ethnic
Group



10% had a
disability

Young people said the top 3 problems were



Vaping



Drugs & Alcohol



Violence, Safety & Anti
Social Behavior

What would young people change about Preston to make it better for their peers



Make things cheaper or
free for young people



Make the city cleaner,
better upkeep of buildings
and roads



Cheaper transport

56%

56% said they
need more help
accessing careers
advice

43%

43% think there
are not enough
employment, careers
or further education
opportunities

53%

53% say there
is not enough
information and
support for mental
health

63%

63% don't know
where to go for
mental health
support

38%

38% think there
are not enough
opportunities to
engage in physical
activities

In addition to the Youth Survey, we used results from: UCLan, YouCount project, the national Make Your Mark consultation carried out by Lancashire County Council and the Youth Violence Consultation conducted by the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network. Results of these can be seen in the appendix at the rear of the document.

*More results from Preston's Youth Survey can be found in the appendix

Strategic Objectives & Outcomes

In developing this Strategy, partners have identified two Strategic Objectives and four Strategic Outcomes.

OBJECTIVE 1

**Youth
Participation
& Influence**

OBJECTIVE 2

**Partnership &
Collaboration**

Outcomes:

Be Safe

**Be Healthy
and Resilient**

**Be Enabled
& Empowered**

**Be Ready for
the Future**

OBJECTIVE 1

YOUTH PARTICIPATION & INFLUENCE

Our young people said...

“The hope for this strategy is that young people are listened to and heard. If it doesn’t change now there will be no opportunities in the future, every voice is a tool for making change”



Why is this important?

Our commitment to participation is led by the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. Our aim is to have effective and meaningful participation which is an ongoing process rather than a one-off activity. Whenever asked, by whichever consultation process, young people in Preston always express a desire to be heard. We want to develop a culture where young people are genuinely listened to and

are supported to become partners in a dialogue about issues that matter to them. Appendix 3 seeks to provide a broad understanding of what participation means in the context of this strategy as there is a recognition that definition and delivery of the word can mean different things to different organisations – all of which have value.

What is already happening?

- Since February 2023, youth organisations have joined forces to bring their young people together to help us develop this strategy. Together, the young people have helped us to develop the survey questions, discussed the survey results, helped to prioritise the issues raised and developed the strategy vision.
- Preston's young people are already making a difference to help improve the service for young people by participating in a variety of youth panels organised by public sector bodies and the voluntary sector.
- The variety of annual consultation exercises carried out by organisations (including those used to develop this document) have been collated and are being promoted widely to Preston young people so that they can exercise their voice in issues that matter to them.

What are we going to do?

- Work to develop a culture that makes Preston a 'youth friendly' city that recognises the value of young people.
- Develop a city-wide Youth Voices / Young Leaders model so that we have access to the voices of young people who can continue to work with us in developing and delivering this strategy.
- Develop and enhance existing organisational youth panels so that young people are aware of how they can be involved with organisations and issues that matter to them.
- Consider a programme of 'youth voice' events and experiences so that we can continue to engage with a wide range of young people

OBJECTIVE 2

PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

Our young people said...

“We need a strategy to make sure professionals do what they say they will do and do it properly. If there wasn’t a strategy, there would just be more problems and these problems would grow. The hope is that young people feel like their voices have been heard, which will only happen when they see change.”



Why is this important?

Since 2010 there has been a steady decline in a number of resources such as youth centres, youth workers, funding for the voluntary and public sectors and the current economic climate suggests that this is not going to change dramatically any time soon. It is important that we recognise the value of youth work and how this differs from services for young people delivered by the public sector and wider commissioned services (see appendix 4). Closer partnership and collaboration within and between the sectors are vital if we are going to maximise the

resources, we have available to us to support young people. Whilst this strategy does not claim to be the solution for all problems affecting young people, it is hoped that it will contribute to better co-ordination and joint working that in turn will improve the use of resources and young people's life chances. It is also important that where possible we increase the skills and confidence of communities to support young people so that in addition to their families, they have a wide network of trusted adults to help them navigate life.

What is already happening?

- The Youth Forum network is well established and is going from strength to strength, involving 69 youth related organisations. The development of this strategy has already led to improved relationships with key stakeholders, many of whom now work together on projects.
- The Family Hub structure is now in place with LCC working with partner organisations to support young people and their families. 4 Hubs exist across the city including Moor Nook, Preston West, Ribblesdale and Riverbank.
- The Team Around the Schools & Settings (TASS) network is now in place, bringing schools together with community stakeholders to discuss and address issues affecting school communities.
- The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is well established, bringing together stakeholders to address crime and disorder issues within the city.
- The Lancashire Violence Reduction Partnership (LVRN) is well established and is working to share best practice and connect services to tackle violent crime and its underlying causes.

What are we going to do?

- Create a strategic governance structure which will adopt, monitor and revise this strategy. We will engage senior leaders in the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector, public sector and private sector to formally endorse this strategy and find ways to embed the contents in core delivery.
- Continue to develop the Youth Forum to ensure that youth providers maximise use of existing services, reduce duplication, identify gaps and enable partners to deliver on the issues raised by young people both independently and collaboratively.
- Develop an Independent Incorporated Charitable Organisation that can attract additional funding and resources both internal and external to the city and disseminate investment within the sector to support a mixed economy of neighbourhood youth provision with national charities and public/private services.
- Develop the youth sector workforce with a training programme that provides strategic leaders and staff with the skills and knowledge they need to best support young people

OUTCOME 1

BE SAFE

Our young people said...

“Young people need assistance to be safer, young people are worried about crime and choose to stay in big groups to stay safe”

Why is this important?

Ensuring that young people are safe is a fundamental concern for young people, their families and practitioners alike. If young people are to learn, develop, feel a sense of wellbeing and play an active role in their community it is vital that they are supported to live without fear or intimidation. Through a variety of surveys including ones utilised to support the development of this strategy, young people themselves have identified concerns that matter to them and these concerns are shared by families and professionals.

The Community Safety Partnership and the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network utilise an evidence led approach to identify priorities based on data reviewed within a strategic assessment process. These priorities reflect the issues raised by young people and practitioners.



What is already happening?

NB-This is not an exhaustive list

- Preston Community Alcohol Partnership has identified that the supply and use of vapes poses a harmful threat to young people. Its members have formed a forum to share local intelligence on underage sales, 'spiking' with unidentified psychoactive substances and to co-ordinate interventions to disrupt illicit supplies.
- There has been a recent trend of young people going into buildings which are unoccupied and neglected. A group of key partners has intervened with owners to require them to improve security measures and is delivering information in primary and secondary schools about the risks of harm involved.
- A responsible retailer scheme is being rolled out in Preston to help reduce incidents in which knives are sold to young people. This will link into knife surrender schemes and test purchasing of retailers on knife sales. Knife bins have been located in Preston to encourage the surrender of bladed weapons.
- Monitored cameras have been installed on three parks in Preston, as part of a scheme to increase the safety of spaces used by young people by identifying where there is anti-social social behaviour and addressing the causes. The cameras cover sport and play areas on Moor Park, Haslam Park, and Deepdale Enclosure.
- Street Safety Officers provide a high visibility presence on the street and in parks. They are responsible guardians and intervene in low level anti-social behaviour cases, to provide advice and reassurance and to work with other partners engaging with young people during routine visits to parks and other public spaces.
- Environmental Visual Audits(EVAs) by policing teams, fire fighters and street safety patrols identify where measures are required to reduce anti-social behaviour and crimes and provide reassurance in public places. This includes checks on lighting at night, where surveys in the city centre resulted in several faults being repaired promptly to improve street safety.
- Multi agency information sharing forums safeguarding systems & pathways - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Children Safeguarding Support Hub, GENGA, Multi Agency Safeguarding Panel, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, Multi Agency Children Exploitation, PREVENT, Channel.

What are we going to do?

Through the Community Safety Partnership, Violence Reduction Network and Youth Forum, organisations will:

- Work in partnership to deliver practical preventative interventions on the things that matter to young people, families and the professionals working with them, including:
 - Knife Crime
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Feelings of safety in public places
 - Violence
 - Radicalisation and Exploitation
 - Racism & Sexism
- Work with young people and help them discover their agency, be involved in problem solving and build and practice skills they require to resist exploitation and radicalisation and have healthy relationships.
- Develop those working with young people with training and awareness sessions so that they can make every contact count and respond effectively to concerns affecting the safety of young people.

OUTCOME **2**

BE HEALTHY & RESILIENT

Our young people said...

“The people in charge need to understand about what will make young people safer and healthier, with more homes, a better environment and safer schools. Young people need your support, need better opportunities and better mental health support”

Why is this important?

The Lancashire Public Health Strategy and the Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care Strategy highlights the need for young people to have the best start in life. The building blocks for lifelong emotional and physical health are laid down in the period from conception to the age of two. However, adolescence is the fastest changing period of development after infancy and whilst it's an exciting time for young people, it is also a period of increased risks. It can represent a crossroads in life and a time of setting new and positive norms. It is a time of learning and most young people are in education, so it is an ideal time to promote positive health behaviour. It is also a time that can be challenging for young people and services as they transition from young people's services to those working with adults.



What is already happening?

NB-This is not an exhaustive list

- Lancashire Trading Standards are working to improve reporting of underage sales of vapes or tobacco and any activity relating to illicit vape or tobacco products
- The LCC funded Family Healthy Weight programme is being delivered in Fishwick, Ribbleton, St Matthew's, University wards. The family programme reaches families that have children aged 5-10 and activities are based on promoting healthier eating, development of cooking skills and taking part in physical activity in a fun, interactive and safe environment.
- Through the Adult Healthy Weight programme, participants 18+ can receive guidance from qualified weight management and exercise specialists, supporting behaviour change, overcoming barriers to weight loss, making healthier dietary choices and becoming more active.
- Holiday Activity & Food (HAF) is a programme of free activities with food during the school holidays for eligible families.
- A number of sports and physical activity projects have been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- The Preston Sports Forum is where sporting organisations can work together to offer a grants scheme to clubs and individuals.
- Improvement of facilities on parks & open spaces including tennis and cricket facilities have been funded through the UKSPF with community sporting activities now taking place in these spaces.
- Cooking programmes are taking place in a small number of primary schools and community settings in Preston.
- In addition to core services, a number of new mental health services are now delivering support to young people and their families including the McMullen Project, Barnardos, Preston North End Community & Education Trust - Game Changers and Lancashire Mind.
- The Active Madrassah initiative is a collaboration between Active Lancashire and Together an Active Future working closely with Madrassah leaders to embed physical activity into Madrassah settings with the aim of increasing the activity levels and overall wellbeing of their children and young people.
- Empire Fighting Chance, a programme successfully developed and delivered in Bristol is being brought to Preston through a partnership with LYC, Foxtan, Active Lancashire, Archbishop High, St Augustine's Primary School, Vault Youth Zone. The programme uses a combination of non-contact boxing and intensive personal support to challenge and inspire young people aged 8-25 to realise their full potential.
- Foxtan & Jamea Mosque are working together to support sports programmes in Avenham.
- Investment in suicide and self-harm prevention training in organisational and community settings.

What are we going to do?

Through the Preston Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board and the Youth Forum, organisations will:

- Work in partnership to deliver practical preventative interventions and opportunities for new experiences on the things that matter to young people, families and the professionals working with them, including:
 - Mental Health & Wellbeing (Including Five Ways to Wellbeing and the benefits of being in nature)
 - Preventing Suicide & Self-Harm
 - Healthy Weight
 - Physical Activity
 - Food access, diet & nutrition education
 - Substance Misuse – Vaping, Drugs & Alcohol
 - Confidence & Self-Esteem
 - Sexual Health
 - Housing
- Work with young people and help them discover their agency, be involved in problem solving, build and practice the skills they need to resist risk taking behaviours, and look at the barriers that exist which prevent them from forming healthy behaviours.
- Develop those working with young people with training and awareness sessions so that they can make every contact count and respond effectively to concerns affecting the health of young people.

OUTCOME **3**

BE ENABLED & EMPOWERED

Our young people said...

“This strategy will give young people places to go to make friends, feel safe, participate in social and recreational activities, have more support and something to inspire us.”

Why is this important?

Adolescence is a time of brain development that requires young people to take part and gain experience. They need to develop and practice the skills that will carry them into adulthood. Through this strategy, we need to have young people’s real-life experience at heart and embed this approach across all adult led organisations enabling young people to work alongside friendly, trusted adults who will give them a chance.

Despite our best endeavours, if young people do not have the confidence and capabilities to craft the lives they wish to lead, they will always struggle to express their needs and to engage with the support they are offered. As a city, we need to encourage young people to remain curious and develop the skills and self-awareness they need to navigate life.



What is already happening?

NB-This is not an exhaustive list

- In partnership, Preston North End Community & Education Trust (PNECET), Vault Youth zone, Lancashire Youth Challenge, McDonalds, Police, Lancashire County Council and the Foxton have delivered detached youth work in the city centre, working with those young people who are engaging in risk taking behaviours.
- In partnership, organisations from the Youth Forum worked with young people to create the question set used in the Youth Consultation for this strategy and have continued to involve them in the development of this strategy, specifically the prioritisation of issues, collating meaningful quotes and developing the 10 year vision.
- Youth work support is taking place in local neighbourhoods across the city providing safe spaces for young people to engage in social and recreational activities that boosts their confidence, social skills and resilience.
- Preston has a large faith based and uniformed based youth engagement network which instils beliefs and values in young people while developing life skills which have a positive effect on their future goals and aspirations.
- The WHAY App, QR code access to consultation and SoundSkills in Brookfield give young people the opportunity to engage digitally and utilise technological developments to link with local services.

What are we going to do?

Through the Youth Forum, organisations will:

- Work in partnership to deliver practical preventative interventions on the things that matter to young people, families and the professionals working with them, including:
 - Exploring values, beliefs, morals and motivation
 - Instilling a growth mindset to enable greater resilience
 - Understanding the value of eloquent challenge and critical thinking - exploring and appreciating different opinions and beliefs
 - Exploring the benefits and challenges of digital and technological developments
 - Developing innovative and creative mindsets and an entrepreneurial spirit
 - Recognising the value of mistakes as a vital part of learning and personal growth
 - Developing the necessary skills required to express their needs and the challenges they face.
- Work with young people and help them discover their agency, be involved in problem solving and develop the skills they need to navigate life.
- Increase the numbers of trusted adults available to young people and develop those working with them with training and awareness sessions so that they can make every contact count and help young people develop the skills they need.

OUTCOME **4**

BE READY FOR THE FUTURE

Our young people said...

“We need a plan to make Preston better and safer for young people. We need people who make decisions to make Preston a place that young people are proud of and want to stay in. There needs to be better activities, more opportunities and good jobs”

Why is this important?

Lancashire 2050 is a shared strategy which sets out the vision and ambition for the county to be seen as the best place to make a home, raise a family, develop a career, do business and grow old. The Lancashire Skills & Employment Strategic Framework articulates the ambition and plans to enable people to develop their skills throughout their lives, flourish in their chosen career and to develop a highly skilled workforce which in turn will enable businesses and communities to take advantage of a strong and growing regional economy.

The importance of the future workforce is evident within the document, and this is reflected in the views and concerns raised by young people who value education and career opportunities and want support to make informed choices about their pathways into employment and careers.

However Lancashire businesses commonly cite that ‘employability skills’ are the most important attribute they are looking for in a job candidate and evidence from the Lancashire Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) highlighted the difficulty in finding individuals with the right employability skills.



What is already happening?

NB-This is not an exhaustive list

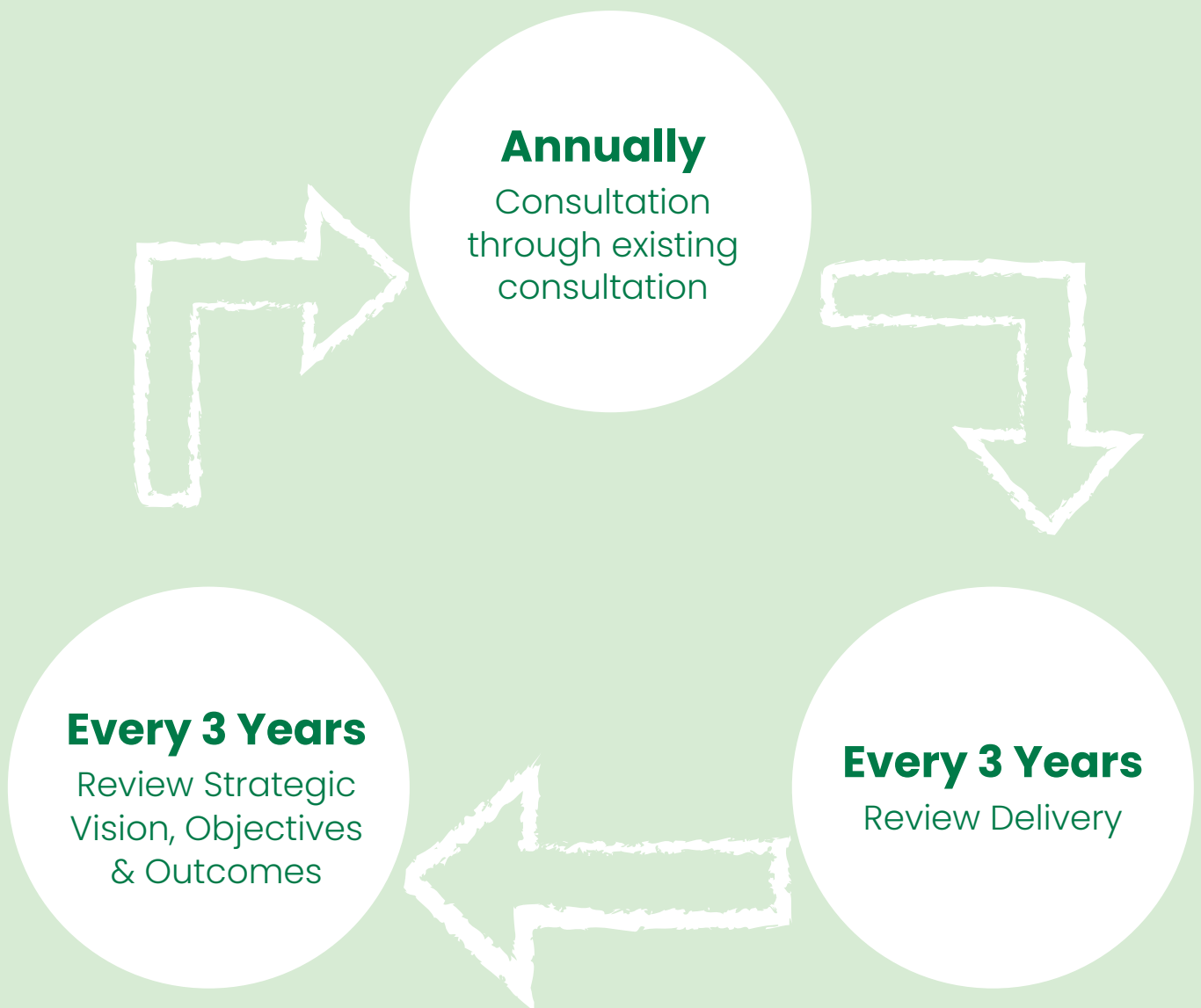
- Lancashire Careers Hub is supporting all schools in Preston in delivering their activities in line with the **8 Gatsby Benchmarks**
- Cornerstone Employers are:
 - Helping young people have the opportunities they need to be prepared and inspired for the world of work
 - Inspiring students about their sector or industry
 - Helping to develop the skills required for the future workforce and build a talent pipeline
 - Raising the awareness of career opportunities in key local priority sectors including Energy & Low Carbon, Manufacturing, Tourism, Culture & Place, Food & Agriculture, Digital and Health.
- The Work Ready Lancashire approach has been developed following employer feedback. The common language agreement fosters a unified understanding among young people, educational institutions and employers in Lancashire regarding the essential skills need for employment readiness.
- Organisations are working in partnership to better support those young people who are not in education, employment or training.
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund is supporting Invest in Youth, a programme specifically designed to support young people in Preston aged between 14-24 years.

What are we going to do?

Using the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework, organisations will:

- Work in partnership to deliver practical preventative interventions on the things that matter to young people, families and the professionals working with them, including:
 - Helping young people to take advantages of education pathways available to them
 - Helping young people to understand the career pathways and support available to them and providing help for them to access support and opportunities
 - Ensuring that young people have good quality employer encounters and work experiences
 - Working with businesses and organisations to explore any barriers to them becoming 'youth friendly' employers
 - Providing opportunities for young people to volunteer
 - Supporting young people to have formal and informal learning opportunities to develop their employability skills and behaviours
- Supporting entrepreneurial education/activities and helping young people develop new businesses including exploring democratic and inclusive models such as co-operatives and employee-owned businesses.
- Work with young people and help them discover their agency, be involved in problem solving and develop the skills they need to navigate their working life.
- Develop those working with young people with training and awareness sessions so that they can make every contact count and help young people develop the skills they need.

Review Period of the Strategy



Glossary

Background information on each of the delivery mechanisms

Preston Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are statutory partnerships of organisations who work together in an area to reduce:

- Crime
- Anti-social behaviour
- Drug misuse
- Reoffending

CSPs prepare strategic assessments and deliver Partnership Plans (**Preston Combined Partnership & Serious Violence Plan 2021-2025**). CSPs also work collaboratively with other partnerships and organisations, including the third sector.

The following responsible authorities make up Preston CSP:

- Preston City Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
- Probation Service
- Greater Preston Clinical Commissioning Group

The partnership has a shared understanding of community safety issues affecting individuals, families and communities in the city. This has been strengthened by the latest, consultation and analysis, including the latest strategic assessment.

Preparing a strategic assessment is a requirement for all 14 district CSPs in Lancashire to identify community safety issues in the county and provide a profile for each district to aid local, strategic decision making.

Preston Youth Forum

Preston Youth Forum is an informal network of 69 organisations who provide services for young people in the city.

Organisations include those from both the public and third sector. The network meets approximately 4 times per year with the purpose of sharing information on local services and funding opportunities, exploring joint working opportunities and exploring emerging national and local trends concerning young people.

The Youth Forum is currently Chaired by Preston City Council. The Youth Forum will adopt the priorities of the Preston's Youth Strategy and will strongly advocate for young people within decision making processes in the city.

The Lancashire Skills & Employment Framework

The Skills and Employment Board was established in 2013 and it considers skills and employment priorities within Lancashire; which includes the areas supported by Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Unitary Authority and Blackpool Unitary Authority.

The Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub are a strategic team of experienced professionals, who are the engine behind the Skills and Employment Board supporting them and enabling a balanced, skilled and inclusive labour market which underpins and contributes to economic well-being and growth across Lancashire.

The team have developed an evidence base to help identify skills and employment issues across Lancashire. This evidence base, alongside consultation with stakeholders, has been used to develop a Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework, which underpins everything that the Team does.

The Strategic Framework sets out the skills and employment priorities for Lancashire and the team work in partnership with a wide range of partners and stakeholders both in Preston and across the county to achieve the objectives set out in the framework.

Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care Partnerships

An integrated care partnership (or ICP) is a group of partners in a geographical area working together to address the health, social care and public health needs of their communities. Always making sure the public's voice is at the heart of decision making.

Partners include local authorities, NHS organisations, businesses, education, Healthwatch and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations.

As part of the Health and Social Care Act 2022, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the unitary and upper tier local authorities hold a statutory duty to coordinate Lancashire and South Cumbria ICP together.

The integrated care strategy sets out the priority areas that will be the focus to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents, and to make sure that the health and care services are more joined up and easier to access.

The strategy has been written by a partnership of different organisations across Lancashire and South Cumbria, including local government, the NHS, Healthwatch, organisations from local business and education, and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups.

Youth Participation

What is youth participation?

(Credit: Contribution from Lancashire County Council – Children & Young People’s Participation Strategy)

Definition:

Opportunities to take part, express views in decisions that affect young people, be listened to, understood and have views taken into account.

Commitment to participation:

Our commitment is led by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our aim is to have effective and meaningful participation which is an ongoing process that is developed together rather than a one-off activity. Participation can be individual, operational or strategic.

Article 12 states that every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 23 states that a child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in their community.

Clarity on key language and definitions:

Consultative practices:

Adults seek views of young people, but it may be that some ideas are not taken on board in the outcome (the possibility of which should be explained at the beginning of the process)

Co-production or Collaborative practices:

Adults work in partnership with young people but the initial idea usually comes from the adult. The approach recognises the skills, strengths and experiences of young people are valuable.

Young people led practices:

Young people have the idea or raise the issue and adults then support them to develop projects and activities that young people think are important.

Defining 'Youth Work'

Over the years 'youth work' has tended to be a contested idea. However, for the sake of this strategy here are some key principles that if they are present in a piece of work can mean that youth work is taking place. It is important to know the difference between working with young people and the profession of 'youth work'.

Bernard Davies, a nationally known youth service historian, wrote a 'Youth Work – A Manifesto for Our Time' published by Youth & Policy and supported by the NYA. In his manifesto Davies reflects on youth work since the 1960's and summarises what elements make up good youth work practice.

Below is a paraphrase of this work:

PRINCIPLE

MEANING

1

Is the practice taking place in settings which are 'open access' and to which young people have chosen to come, that is, is their participation voluntary?

Free association is an important plank of youth work. Young people must choose to be involved, and that choice needs to be respected. It's also important that all young people are welcome.

2

Is the practice proactively seeking to tip balances of power in their favour?

Adults tend to have a lot of power and so they have to try to enable young people to make decision, to be taken seriously and even allowed to make mistakes. Adults should be respecting young people and their perspectives.

3

Are young people perceived and received as young people rather than, as a requirement, through the filter of adult-imposed labels?

Adolescence is a time of trying things, taking risks and discovering who they are. Adults that work with them need to be non-judgemental and have a high degree of empathy. They need a safe space in which to grow.

4

Is the practice starting where young people are starting, particularly with their expectation that they will be able to relax, meet friends and enjoy themselves?

Starting where young people are is to accept that they are a work in progress and that listening, non-judgemental adults can guide them beyond their starting point. This is part of the process that is educational- learning about life.

5

Is one key focus of the practice on *the young person as an individual?*

Whilst very often young people are in groups each one is unique and has unique needs. This means youth work is a balance between the group and the individual.

6

Is the practice respectful of and actively responsive to *young people's peer networks?*

Peer groups are of vital importance for young people. Youth work needs to take into account friendship and peer groups.

7

Is the practice respectful of and actively responsive to *young people's wider community and cultural identities and, where young people choose, is it seeking to help them strengthen these?*

Identity is an important part of the journey through adolescence. It shapes beliefs, belonging and confidence. Affirming these identities and not judging is crucial for the long term health of an individual.

8

Is the practice seeking to go *beyond where young people start, in particular, by encouraging them to develop their personal potential and be critical and creative in their responses to their experience and the world around them?*

Young people are full of potential, and it is the role of youth work to liberate this. Self-belief, confidence and self-acceptance are important goals for adolescent development and can be helped by experiencing acceptance by adults.

9

Is the practice concerned with *how young people feel as well as with what they know and can do?*

In a world of testing, achieving and social media success, youth work seeks to listen to how young people are feeling and validating those feeling. This can help with self-understanding and self-worth.

Appendix

Consultation results summary

This strategy is based upon real life views, experiences and needs of children and professionals who live and work in the city.

From October 2023 till February 2024 we did a youth consultation exercise across Preston with 1400 young people aged between 8-25 to gather the views of their life in the city. Here is what they said.....

What are the top three problems for young people in Preston?

1. Vaping
2. Drugs or Alcohol
3. Violence, Safety and Anti - Social Behaviour

What would you change about Preston to help make it better for young people?

1. Make the city cleaner, better upkeep of buildings and roads
2. Make things cheaper or free for young people
3. Better or cheaper transport

What do you want professionals to do for young people in Preston?

1. Support families more that are struggling
2. Make public areas cleaner
3. Let young people have a say about their services

The Youth Strategy Steering Group were keen to hear the views of professionals working with young people. As such, two round table listening events were held during the Spring of 2023 where professionals from the whole range of youth related services were invited to tell us:

- What the key challenges were facing young people? (lack of universal youth provision/places to go, mental health, exploitation)
- How could organisations work better together? (better understanding of services, improved networking, more collaboration)
- What was working well? (VCFSE provision, partnership working, sports clubs, partnership working, Holiday Activity & Food provision)
- What opportunities did we have to hear the voice of young people? (youth/school councils, outreach, social media, lived experience)

Here is what they said.....

- There needs to be clearer referral pathways and better knowledge of services
- Organisations need to share good practice and share resources with other youth partners
- There needs to be more partner attendance at networking groups and more collaborative working between services
- Organisations need to include young people in the strategic decisions they make and continue to have two-way conversations with young people going forward

Whilst we have based our findings on consultation that the Preston Youth Forum completed with young people we wanted to make sure we included other pieces of consultation happening in the city at the same time.....

In 2023 UCLan carried out the YouCount project with 50 young people and a group of young citizen scientists about how to increase social inclusion in the city. Some of the critical issues identified were.....

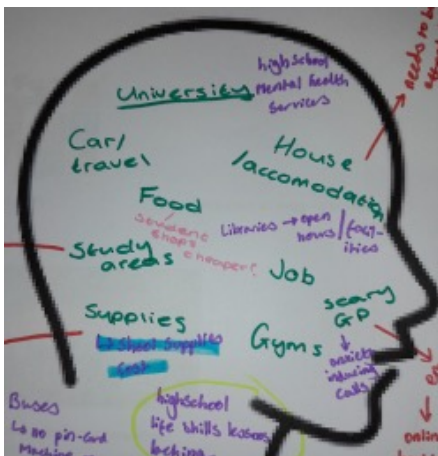
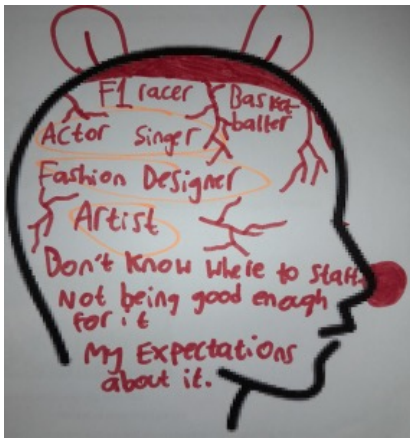
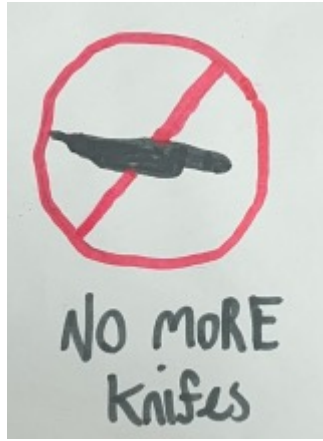
- Young people didn't feel safe and secure
- A lack of youth voice and influence in the city
- A lack of youth friendly places available
- Economics and affordability were major barriers for young people's positive development.

From January to March 2023 Lancashire County Council carried out their national Make Your Mark consultation with 1700 young people aged 11 -18 in Preston taking part. The topics most affecting the youth of Preston were.....

- Culture media & sport
- Health & wellbeing
- Crime & safety
- Jobs, the economy & benefits.

The Lancashire Violence Reduction Network carried out a youth violence consultation in July 2022 in order to support the development of the Lancashire Serious Violence Strategy. 146 young people from 32 different organisations across Lancashire were asked what they thought were the main causes of violence....

- Exposure to violent media
- Lack of opportunities
- Attention, or a cry for help
- Seeing violence around us all the time
- I have been told to stand up for myself



With thanks to partners and all children and young people whose views have contributed to the development of this strategy.



Bren Cook



withyou

