

***Evaluation of
Young People's
Fund
on behalf of
The Big Lottery
Fund***

**Annual Report
2006 - 2007**

GEN Consulting

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Evaluation of Young People's Fund

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1 Introduction

1.1 *Evaluation of the Young People's Fund*

In 2006 GEN Consulting and Wavehill Consulting were commissioned by Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to carry out a five-year evaluation of the Young People's Fund across the UK.

The evaluation will assess the impact of each of the four country programmes in meeting their aims and outcomes, and will examine the impact of involving young people in all areas of the projects and programmes (from development to evaluation) on young people themselves, communities and projects.

There are a number of objectives for the study, and a number of areas of interest to BIG that will be explored as part of the research:

Involvement

Objectives:

- To assess how effective the programme has been in involving young people in the design, development, implementation decision-making and evaluation of the programme and projects. In addition the client is interested in the different levels of involvement and the characteristics of those involved.
- To make an assessment of the longer-term impacts of the programme on young people.

Areas of particular interest include:

- How and whether projects in Northern Ireland promoted equality and opportunity for young people including those at greatest risk of exclusion and offending.
- How effective the programme in Wales has been in meeting the needs of young people who are either at risk or who are disaffected or disengaged from their peers or mainstream services.

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- How successful the programme in Scotland has been in meeting the needs of prioritised groups of young people. The client is also interested in how Black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and those with additional support needs have been involved.
- How successful the programme in Scotland has been in meeting the prioritised programme projects.

Delivery

Objectives:

- To make an assessment of the different delivery mechanisms being applied in terms of meeting the aims of the programme.

Areas of particular interest include:

- How successful the programme in Wales has been in meeting local need and filling gaps in provision.
- How effective the involvement of the 32 local panels has been in the Scotland programme.
- The impact of alternative application formats on young people and how effective these are in encouraging the involvement of young people in projects in Scotland.

Good Practice

Objectives:

- To highlight what works in terms of meeting the aims of the programmes and the impact that involving young people in all areas has had on them, the community and the sustainability of projects.

Areas of particular interest include:

- Examples of good practice in meeting the hardest to reach / disadvantaged groups of young people and in particular meeting the needs of 10 -18 year olds in Northern Ireland.

This report sets out findings of the first year of the evaluation. The remainder of this chapter of the report provides details of:

- BIG's aims and objectives
- Overview of the Young People's Fund
- The structure for the remainder of the report.

1.2 Big Lottery Fund

BIG is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It is responsible for giving out half the money for good causes raised by the National Lottery, giving it a budget of around £630 million per year.

The mission statement of BIG states that it is committed to bringing about real improvements in communities and in the lives of people most in need. In order to achieve this, the organisation has seven values which underpin all of its work:

- Fairness
- Accessibility
- Strategic focus
- Involving people
- Innovation
- Enabling communities to achieve lasting change
- Ensuring that funding adds value which is additional to government funding.

1.3 *Young People's Fund*

In July 2003, following the lottery review, the Secretary of State announced that young people were to be major beneficiaries of the newly formed Big Lottery Fund through the Young People's Fund; one of the key programmes of the organisation.

Two hundred million pounds was made available across the UK to fund projects for young people. The fund was divided between the four countries of the United Kingdom, with each country designing a programme allied to the specific policy context within that country and individually identified needs.

Each of the four programmes has further divided their funding allocation into a number of strands, with each strand offering variable levels of funding to different groups, each meeting differing funding criteria. Table 1.1 summarises the key characteristics of the Fund in each country.

Table 1.1 – Overview of each country's programme

Country	Total Fund	Aims	Outcomes	Target Groups
England	£77.6 million (plus £76 million recently committed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme • Achieve the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes (see column on right) • Make a difference to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living healthy lifestyle • Staying safe: being protected from harm, neglect and growing up able to look after themselves • Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood • Making a positive contribution: to the community and to society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour • Economic wellbeing: overcoming socio-economic disadvantages to achieve their full potential in life 	Young people aged 11 to 18 and up to 25 for those who find the transition to independent adult life difficult. Priority given to those who face difficulties and are at a disadvantage when it comes to getting involved in activities
Northern Ireland	£14.8 million (including additional £5 million for extension of Change UR Future)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme • Promote youth inclusion • Achieve at least 2 of the specified outcomes (outcome 1 is mandatory for all projects) • Consider three cross-cutting themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact of conflict and tackling sectarianism ○ Transitions from infancy to young adulthood ○ Additional needs of vulnerable, socially excluded and disaffected young people 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased participation of young people 2. Improved health and well-being of young people 3. Increased achievement and learning for young people 4. Wider family and community support for young people 	Young people at risk of exclusion and/ or offending

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Scotland	£20 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give lottery money to projects that help young people learn new things and take part in healthy and positive activities that make them feel good about themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills, and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities • more and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities • more and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves 	<p>Young people aged 11-25 with priority given to young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with no opportunities to volunteer, or facing barriers to volunteering • dealing with many and complicated problems • who do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community • teenage girls <p>In addition priority is given to projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage teenage girls to access activities • remove the barriers to volunteering or increase volunteering opportunities • help young people adopt active, healthy and positive lifestyles • encourage young people to make positive changes in their behaviour • bring young people together from different backgrounds and experiences • support young people through periods of transition • help young people gain confidence and skills to become active citizens
Wales	£13.2 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme <p>Help young people to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy life and achieve their potential • Develop skills and contribute to their communities • Choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour 		<p>Young people aged 10-19 with priority given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • groups run by disabled young people • groups run by young people from BME backgrounds • small groups that have not received funding before • groups of young people facing particular issues of disadvantage • projects which promote integration between young people with different experiences or backgrounds • the most disengaged and challenging young people • young people who are either at risk of being or are already disengaged, particularly in disadvantaged communities

1.4 Reporting structure

The remainder of this report is set out as follows:

- Chapter 2 details the study methodology
- Chapter 3 examines the policy context and environment
- Chapter 4 summarises the key findings from each country
- Chapter 5 details the findings for England
- Chapter 6 details the findings from Scotland
- Chapter 7 details the findings from Wales
- Chapter 8 details the findings from Northern Ireland.

2 Methodology

The methodology for the study involved:

- Desk review of the policy context in each of the countries.
- Qualitative face to face interviews with a sample of projects that had been awarded £100,000 or more.
- Quantitative telephone interviews with a sample of projects that had been awarded £100,000 or less.
- Qualitative interviews with relevant organisations or panels.

The remainder of this section sets out the detail of the work carried out in each country.

2.1 England

Four of the nine English regions were selected to be the focus of the qualitative element of the first year of the evaluation. The regions were:

- North East
- North West
- London
- East.

Between December 2006 and March 2007 face to face interviews were conducted across these regions with fourteen projects that had been awarded funding through the Grants to Organisations strand of the fund. A further six interviews were conducted with National Grants projects, including the award partner, Big Boost.

A telephone survey was conducted across the nine English regions in June and July 2007. This involved 100 projects that had been awarded less than

£100,000. The survey sample was selected such that it was proportionate to the overall sample in terms of size of award however projects were selected at random from within these criteria.

2.2 Scotland

Eight projects that had received awards over £100,000 were selected at random from across Scotland and face to face interviews were carried out during March and April 2007. The geographical distribution of selected projects was:

- 3 Scotland wide projects
- 2 Projects serving multiple areas
- 1 East Lothian local project
- 1 Midlothian local project
- 1 Glasgow local project.

Information on the smaller projects was captured through a sample telephone survey, which was carried out in June and July 2007 with 25 projects. A representative sample was selected, ensuring a broad mix of target groups and project activities.

Visits were also made to three Local Area Panels and to the National Committee to observe the operation of this element of the programme. This included meeting with Volunteer Development Scotland, which is responsible for the co-ordination and facilitation of the Local Area Panels.

2.3 Wales

Semi-structured face to face interviews were undertaken in April and May 2007 with seven Welsh projects. Interviews were focused on organisations receiving grants in excess of £100,000 and were selected at random from the "Reaching Out" and "Bridging the Gap" strands of the Young People's Fund in Wales.

In addition a telephone survey of 25 projects receiving below £100,000 from the Young People's Fund was undertaken in June and July 2007. Care was taken to achieve a representative sample of projects working across the county, focusing on different groups and different activities.

2.4 Northern Ireland

At the time of the current evaluation, activity of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland was not as established as in other parts of the UK. As a result Big Lottery Fund staff felt it was not appropriate to carry out case study visits and survey work in the country. Fieldwork was therefore limited to consultation with the 'Big Deal' award partner organisations, which are:

- Youthnet
- Playboard
- The Northern Ireland Youth Forum
- The Education and Library Boards
- Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

This report provides an overview of:

- The operation and aims of the fund in Northern Ireland
- The scale of project activity to date
- The policy context within which the fund is operating.

3 Policy Context & Environment

This chapter considers the policy context and environment within which each of the country programmes sits. Given that many of the projects are working in partnership with other agencies, understanding this context is important in terms of being aware of the other activities that partners are likely to be involved in. As this chapter shows, at present there is a broadly consistent view about how work with young people should be focussed and as the findings of the current evaluation are discussed in subsequent chapters, it will be possible to see the extent to which the activities and aims of the Young People's Fund projects are in line current thinking.

The key related policies within each of the countries are:

- In England:
 - Every Child Matters, which aims to ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential by reducing levels of educational failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse, neglect, crime and antisocial behaviour amongst children and young people.
 - The Government's 10 year youth strategy, which aims to transform facilities and support services for young people in England, to help all young people, particularly those in deprived areas, to take part in enjoyable and purposeful activities, which can help them to develop skills and raise their aspirations.
 - The National Healthy Schools Programme which aims to support children and young people in developing healthy behaviours; to help to raise pupil achievement; to help to reduce health inequalities; and to help promote social inclusion.
 - Youth Matters-Next Steps, which supports choice and opportunity for all, with a focus on hard to reach groups.

- 21st Century Skills, Realising Our Potential (2003) which aims to ensure that individuals have the skills they need to be both employable and personally fulfilled.
 - Care Matters (2006), aims to ensure that children in care have the kind of happy, fulfilled childhood which people would wish for their own children. The strategy prioritises support for care leavers in the transition to adult life. Supporting the additional needs of young people experiencing difficulty in the transition from childhood to adulthood is also a priority of the Young People's Fund in England.
 - "Hear By Right", which is a set of standards for the active involvement of children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services that affect them at a national, regional and local level. The framework has been devised by The National Youth Agency.
- In Scotland:
 - Life Through Learning, Learning Through Life, which aims to aid progress towards a country in which people have the confidence, enterprise, knowledge, creativity and skills they need to participate in economic, social and civil life; people are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions; and people have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances.
 - More Choices, More Chances, the 2006 strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Scotland, prioritises education and training outcomes.
 - Improving Health in Scotland – The Challenge outlines a vision for a Scotland in which all children have a positive expectation of appropriate housing, education, community and family life, an expectation which matures into positive,

confident and productive citizenship. The framework also promotes the active participation of young people.

- Better Communities: Closing the Gap (2002) and Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities (2004) both of which emphasise the importance of increasing 'social capital' and the role of community learning and development, of which youth work is a key element, in strengthening social capital by improving the knowledge, skills, confidence, motivation, networks and resources of individuals and groups within the community.
 - In A Partnership for a Better Scotland (2004) the Scottish Executive recognises the importance of more active involvement of young people in the lives of their communities and wider society as a means to creating stronger, safer communities.
 - The recent publication of the national youth work strategy, Moving Forward: A Strategy for Improving Young People's Chances Through Youth Work (2007) provides a synthesis of all of these key policies. It identifies the key role of youth work in not only enhancing the lives of young people from all backgrounds, but also in acting as an early intervention and preventative measure, by engaging in positive activities young people who might otherwise become involved in anti-social behaviour, alcohol or drug misuse, or who would leave school with few qualifications and skills and perhaps not progress into education, employment or training.
- In Wales:
 - Extending Entitlement: Supporting Young People in Wales (2000) is the flagship policy of the Welsh Assembly Government for youth support services in Wales and tasks include: enthusing young people to seize opportunities for learning by demonstrating that this will help them get jobs and progress in employment; ensuring that all the services on offer to young people are of high quality, matched to their interests and aptitudes; and promoting equal

opportunities in order to ensure that all young people are able to take advantage of all that is on offer.

- “Rights to Action” translated the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into seven core aims to be promoted by the work of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). “Rights to Action” also confirms the roles and responsibilities of the various structures put in place to ensure the active participation of children and young people at a national, regional and local.
 - WAG appointed the first Children’s Commissioner for Wales in 2001. The commissioner was given responsibility for protecting children’s rights as set out in the UNCRC. The Commissioner has the power to review the effect of policies on and the delivery of services to, children and young people.
 - WAG has also assisted the set up of Funky Dragon; a peer led organisation which began work in April 2003. Funky Dragon spans Wales, evolved out of the network of local youth forums. It aims to encourage active citizenship and give young people aged 0 to 25 the opportunity to make their voices heard on issues which affect them.
- In Northern Ireland:
 - “Making it R Wrld 2” was a large consultation exercise which formed the basis for the “Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland: 2006 – 2016”. Recognising that children and young people have not always been granted high priority by policy makers or the opportunity to participate in shaping government policy it was underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and aimed to redress this balance, putting the rights and needs of children and young people at the heart of policy development and providing opportunities for them to participate in decision making.

- The “Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland: 2006 – 2016” aims to ensure that young people are: healthy; enjoying, learning and achieving; living in safety and with stability; experiencing economic and environmental well-being; contributing positively to community and society; and living in a society which respects their rights. The strategy also highlights three cross cutting themes: sectarianism and racism, the impact of the conflict and moving towards a shared future; transitions across the age range of the strategy, from infancy to childhood, to adolescence, to young adulthood; and the additional needs of children and young people who are especially vulnerable, and/or disaffected.
- The health and well being of children and young people is addressed by “A Healthier Future 2005 - 2025”. Key outcomes of the strategy include: to have improved the mental health and well-being of young people aged 16-24 by a fifth between 2001-2025; the proportion of young care leavers in education, training or employment at age 19 to be at least 75% of the levels of all 19 year olds; and to seek to reduce the poverty amongst children and young people which underpins the unacceptable levels of health and social inequality in our society.
- The health and well being of young people is also addressed by the “Strategy on Sport for Young People in Northern Ireland” (2002). Projects may support and develop sporting excellence while also developing the skills and confidence of young people through their active participation.
- Increased achievement and learning is addressed by the “Strategic Plan for Education (2006-2008)”. The mission of the framework is to “work together as partners in education and youth services to ensure a high standard of education for all children and young people, which will put them at the centre of education, motivate them, build their confidence, enrich their lives, and provide the basis for a strong and vibrant community”.

Although each of the four UK countries has its own policies and strategies, there are common themes across each of the four policy agendas, namely:

- An overall aim of reducing poverty, increasing social inclusion and maximizing the potential of every individual.
- The recognition that achieving this means ensuring that individuals are healthy, educated, safe and equipped to participate in the economy.
- An understanding that ensuring wellbeing in each of these areas requires active participation in order to ensure that services meet the needs of individuals and are therefore effective and used.
- A recognition that maximum impact can be achieved by engaging as many individuals as possible in work that benefits their community.

4 Findings from across the UK

4.1 Introduction

Full details of the findings from the research are discussed in the four individual country chapters that follow, whilst this chapter provides a summary of the findings from across the UK.

When the fieldwork was carried out (December 2006 to July 2007) the majority of projects were still in the early stages of their delivery. The first year of the evaluation has therefore been able to explore:

- The development process
- Project aims
- Structures for delivery
- Expected impacts.

The remainder of this chapter summarises the findings under each heading.

4.2 The development process

Across the countries it was found that the vast majority of projects:

- Were developed by an existing, adult led organisation.
- The involvement of young people in the development process appears in the majority of cases to have been as consultees rather than a more integral part of the process.
- Involved young people less in the development phases of the projects than was the case in the delivery phase.

- Felt that the consultation process was important for engendering ownership and ensuring that the project incorporates young people's ideas to maximize its appeal and ability to meet the needs of young people.

Although involvement of young people in the development process was in the main limited to consultation there were some examples of projects where young people were more integral to the development process. One example, found in Scotland, is described in project example Scotland 2.

Project Example Scotland 2 – International Youth Justice Project

A large-scale national youth justice project has been developed by two large national organisations, which came together to jointly develop and deliver the project. One of the organisations is run by young people for young people and both organisations have been equal partners since the outset. As a result young people themselves are very much driving and managing this project at all stages on an equal footing with the adults involved.

The management structures have been carefully established to maximise on this. The project worker is jointly managed by both organisations and has been purposely based within the young people's organisation rather than within the partner organisation.

The project itself involves recruiting a total of 96 young people aged 16 to 25 from across each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas and training them to be peer leaders. The training consists of three weekends over three months and focuses on justice issues and empowering young people to address the issues that are important to them.

Each of these 96 young people will identify an issue that is important to themselves and other young people in their local area and they will develop their own local project with around 10 other young people, which will mean that around 960 young people will have been involved. In turn some of these young people may decide to run their own projects, creating a cascade effect. The aim is to engage 4500 young people in projects across Scotland.

Project Example Scotland 2 (continued) – International Youth Justice Project

There is also an international strand to the project where a group of young people from Scotland meet in an online forum with other young people from across the world to plan the content of an international young person's event. This event is linked to and will run for the two days leading up to an existing high profile international event. Having held their own event, some of the young people will then run a plenary session in the main event, as well as having the chance to be full delegates.

4.3 Project aims

It was evident that in each country the projects were aiming to make a positive difference to the lives of young people and aligned with the aims of their country programme.

The survey found that the primary focus of projects in each country was:

- In England – enjoying and achieving (63% of English projects).
- In Wales – enjoying and achieving (44% of Welsh projects) and also developing skills and contributing to communities (44%).
- In Scotland – more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities (52% of Scottish projects).

Although projects could identify their primary focus, there was felt to be a strong inter-relationship between the aims and as a result all projects were found to be contributing to most, if not all of the aims within their programme. Project example England 5 below describes a project that appears to be contributing to all five of the Every Child Matters outcomes and is also helping young people to make a difference to the community.

Project Example England 5 – Cross Cultural Sports Programme

A national voluntary organisation has developed a local sports programme in an area where racial tension exists, with the aim of bringing together young people from across cultures through sport. It particularly aims to empower young people from black and minority ethnic groups to engage in sports, as this group has been found not to be engaging in mainstream sports to the same extent as the wider community. In addition it will support young people from BME groups to learn to teach the sports of their choice.

This project will have varying levels of impact on young people depending on the level and length of their involvement with the project. Some young people may engage with the project as a one off, perhaps through one of the large scale football tournaments that they organise, others might through working with the project be linked into to other services such as literacy and numeracy, whilst others might be supported to become volunteer or professional sports coaches.

In each scenario the impacts on the young people will be very different with some gaining only a short term social and health benefit, and others taking action that will have long term life changing impacts on areas of their life such as health and job prospects. It is possible however that even one off contact with the project might engender significant levels of impact such as motivating a young person to join a local sports club, increasing a young person's awareness of other cultures, motivating a young person to pursue a career in sports but without doing so through the project.

This project also found that the nature of the young people influenced the level of impact that the project had. The more disadvantaged or excluded a young person is the greater the impact even a simple intervention can have. For example the project has arranged for a session at a local swimming pool where there are no male lifeguards present, which allows a group of young Asian women who have never been able to go swimming before to do so. Project workers believe that the impact on this group is more significant than merely the health benefits of a swimming session, as it helps to empower the young women, giving them access to an activity from which they were previously excluded.

Although the aims in each country are slightly different, there are strong similarities. For example the English and Welsh aim of 'enjoying and achieving' is similar to the Scottish aim 'more and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves'. In each of the three countries 100% of projects felt that their project either contributed 'quite a lot' to these aims or these aims were their primary focus.

Similarly each country has an aim that addresses making a positive contribution to communities. Between 88% and 96% of projects in each country rated themselves as either contributing 'quite a lot' to these aims or having these aims as their focus.

Devising different aims in each country does not at this stage appear to have resulted in any noticeably different approaches taken by projects in each country. For example, although Scotland is the only country programme that explicitly states that one of the aims of the programme is to remove barriers to volunteering, there was evidence found in each country of projects providing volunteering opportunities for young people with whom they are engaging. It is often the case that these opportunities are part of a developmental progression for the young people involved.

Although each project is very different in terms of its activities, there are similarities in terms of the way that they are meeting these aims, with the key methods being:

- Simply engaging young people in positive activities and through this engagement project workers being alert to potential opportunities to link young people into activities that will build their confidence and skills.
- Developing confidence and skills through formal workshops, structured and unstructured activities and informal education.
- Community development workers working with young people on a one to one or group basis on issues around personal development, building self esteem and confidence.

- Exposure to new ideas and new activities encouraging young people to broaden their horizons and possibly to be more proactive about seeking new opportunities for themselves.
- Empowering young people to make decisions within the project, help organise events etc., which helps to build confidence, develop skills, support the young people to make a contribution and help them to value themselves.
- Training young people to be peer leaders, or supporting them and providing opportunities for them to become volunteers.
- Providing opportunities for young people to be involved in physical activity.
- Providing health related education aimed at harm reduction.

4.4 Structures for delivery

The projects tended to be embedded within the existing structures of the organisation responsible for its development. Partnerships with other organisations were established and developed as a means of maximizing the impact and reach of the projects. Partnership working was particularly important for referring or directing young people into the projects.

A number of projects are involving young people in the delivery and management of the project. In the main projects feel able to involve young people more in the delivery and management of projects than in their development. Once projects have been established young people are most commonly involved through one or both of the following means:

- Having young people as representatives on Board, Steering or Management groups.
- Developing youth steering groups, youth forums or youth advisory groups.

There were some projects that were not keen on such methods, feeling that they could exclude those young people not involved, or could be too formal

and not engaging enough for some young people, especially the hardest to reach young people.

The majority however felt that there was the potential for such methods to have positive impacts on those involved. These were felt to be useful methods for ensuring that the views of young people are listened to and are steering the project, however most felt that this happens informally on an ongoing basis anyway. Gathering feedback informally on an ongoing basis seemed to be a key strength of the projects.

A number of projects reported that they plan to involve young people in the delivery and management of projects more as the projects develop. This should be monitored in future years of the evaluation at which point the researchers should explore the pros and cons of the various methods of engagement that are being employed.

4.5 Expected impacts

Although it was early days for many of the projects, most projects were confident about reaching their targets in terms of levels of engagement of young people.

Research found that the Young People's Fund has provided support for a variety of projects and target groups. There does however appear to be bias towards the provision of activity in disadvantaged areas and to disadvantaged groups. This is in line with the stipulations of the fund to target "hard to reach" groups and those who are disaffected or at risk of becoming so. One example of a project that works with a disadvantaged group is described in projects example Wales 1 below.

Project Example Wales 1 – A Programme of Social and Medical Support for Young Disadvantaged People with Mental Health Needs

The idea for one project came about after a seconded mental health worker identified a gap in service provision and policy making for young people with significant mental health needs. It was found that these young people were hidden from formal provision and that many agencies experience difficulty in establishing and maintaining contact with them.

The project receives referrals from individuals, families, GPs, schools, social care and mental health workers. Where they can work with the referral, a course of individual or group support, or a mix of both is jointly agreed. Individuals are involved in assessing their own progress throughout their time with the project and any changes to the support offered are agreed jointly between the individual and project staff. Barriers to involvement are overcome by, what has come to be known as the “terrier” approach; finding ways round problems as they arise.

The project takes a holistic approach to mental health – both medical and social. Young people have however tended to take more of an interest in social aspects. Support is described as a cross between befriending, advocacy and mentoring. The project feels that ~~their~~its approach has been highly successful to date but recognises that staff costs can be high, and that it is demanding and stressful work, with few formal support mechanisms available to staff.

The key focus of the project is on helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential as mental health issues may have a serious detrimental impact on quality of life.

The project is now being used by the Mental Health Foundation as one of eight case studies in a UK wide research project and it is also set to feature on a BBC programme. It is hoped that such high profile activities will help the project to further raise awareness the work it undertakes and the very specific needs of the client group, thereby helping to sustain its activity in the future.

Some projects in Scotland identified that they are finding it difficult to reach BME groups, particularly so in rural areas or when the target group is hard to reach for reasons other than ethnicity. Projects in both England and Scotland also identified older young people (aged over 20) as a group that they are finding particularly difficult to reach. Future years of the evaluation should explore whether this is evident across all four countries, whether the situation improves and identify good practice in terms of overcoming difficulties in reaching these groups.

Projects are reporting that young people are benefiting from engagement with their projects in a number of ways. These include:

- Re-engagement of young people who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging
- Empowerment
- Increased confidence
- Improved self esteem
- Learning and skills development.

The projects believe that these impacts are not just bringing short term benefits for the young people, but that they will continue to reap the benefits of their engagement over the longer term, thereby having a positive impact on young people's future achievements. The evaluation will explore this in future years to assess to what extent these longer term benefits are in fact being realised.

The early indications are that in each country the programme will have a significant positive impact on the young participants. There are also expected to be some positive benefits for the wider community in which projects are located. As the projects develop there will be greater evidence upon which to base an assessment of impact.

4.6 Country differences

Given the broad nature of the aims in each of the country programmes and the similarity of the aims between countries it is perhaps unsurprising that there were no significant differences found between the operation of the programme in each of the countries. On the contrary projects within each of the countries were very similar in terms of their aims, methods, issues and ethos.

The key differences were found to be in the different structures that are operating within each of the programmes. These structures were found to add a unique dimension to the programme, namely:

- The Local Area Panels in Scotland provided a national infrastructure whereby young people were able to comment and make recommendations on applications to the programme, whilst at the same time those involved could develop a range of skills and gain valuable experience.
- The Big Boost in England provided large numbers of young people with the opportunity to apply for funding for their own project, and to deliver, manage and evaluate that project themselves. In doing so these young people had the opportunity to develop a range of skills as well as make a contribution to their local communities.

5 The Programme in England

5.1 Executive Summary

5.1.1 Introduction

Big Lottery Fund (BIG) commissioned this five-year evaluation of the Young People's Fund (YPF) to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Young People's Fund in each of the four countries in the United Kingdom. This report details the findings from the first year of the evaluation in England.

5.1.2 Project take up in England

In England funding was awarded through three separate strands to projects that:

- Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme (including design, development, implementation and evaluation).
- Achieve the following Every Child Matters outcomes:
 - Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
 - Staying safe: being protected from harm, neglect and growing up able to look after themselves
 - Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
 - Making a positive contribution: to the community and to society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
 - Economic well being: overcoming socio-economic disadvantages to achieve their full potential in life
- Make a difference to the community.

Through the national grants strand national charities were awarded funding for youth-led projects that would make a significant difference to young people in England, demonstrating innovative ways of meeting the five outcomes outlined in Every Child Matters. Between August 2005 and November 2006, 26 awards were made totalling £25,811,600. Awards ranged in size from £186,012 to £2,237,187, with the average amount being £992,754.

The Grants to Organisations strand was intended to fund projects in local areas which:

- Help disadvantaged young people to come together with other young people to enjoy and benefit from activities.
- Create a better understanding of disadvantage among young people.

Between February 2005 and July 2007, 396 grants to organisations were approved. Awards totalled almost £40,000,000 and ranged in value from £7,350 to a maximum of £150,000, with the average award being around £101,000.

The Grants to Individuals strand of the Young People's Fund awards grants directly to young people to implement project ideas that will make a difference in their community. Grants are awarded through BIG's award partner, The Big Boost. Acceptance of applications began in November 2005 and will close to applicants on the 1st November 2007. Grants range from a minimum of £250 to a maximum of £5000.

5.1.3 Project profiles

Both the case study visits and the telephone survey found that projects are providing a range of activities within their local communities. The most common are: creative arts; outdoor activities, games and sports; youth centres and drop in sessions; education, employment, vocational and life skills; and peer education and mentoring.

Projects reported providing activities and services to young people with multiple and varied needs. Around a quarter targeted those from deprived backgrounds, whilst many of the projects open to all young people also attract a high proportion of participants from disadvantaged areas. A quarter of those surveyed also reported focusing their activity on those with physical, sensory or learning disabilities, and projects are also targeting other disadvantaged groups.

In line with the programme aims projects are working in the main with those aged 11 to 18. Projects are also working with a smaller number of young people aged 19-25, which is to be expected given the expectation that projects will work with this age group where the young people are finding the transition to independent adult life difficult.

5.1.4 Alignment with the aims of the Young People's Fund

Projects appear to be well aligned with the outcomes set out in Every Child Matters. The majority of activity centres around the 'enjoying and achieving outcome', with around two thirds of projects identifying this as their primary focus. Conversely only 2% of those surveyed have 'economic wellbeing' as their key focus.

Both the case study and survey findings indicate that projects see a strong inter-relationship between each of the Every Child Matters outcomes; most would argue that they are contributing in some way to most if not all of the outcomes. As such, although it would appear that there is a lack of activity aimed at economic wellbeing, only one fifth of projects feel that they are not contributing in any way to this outcome.

Projects are also expected to make a difference to the community. For all of the projects in the National Grants strand, all in the Grants to Individuals strand and many in the Grants to Organisations strand this involves projects directly engaging young people in activities that will directly benefit the wider community, perhaps through volunteering activity or organising events or activities that encourage integration. For a number in the grants to individuals strand the focus is more about supporting young people who are in some way socially disadvantaged or at risk of disadvantage. These projects are therefore aiming to make a difference to the community by reducing social disadvantage.

5.1.5 Involvement of Young People

While the principles of the Young People's Fund to involve young people in all aspects of service delivery are being embraced in many ways, participation is still sometimes lacking in application and project management processes. Around a third of surveyed projects reported more adult involvement than young people involvement in the design and delivery of projects.

Both the case study visits and survey found that in the development phase of the Grants to Organisations and National Grants projects young people were most commonly involved through consultations and surveys. There was less evidence that they are involved in a more practical way or in a management role. The findings suggest that there has not been a cultural shift in the nature of involvement of young people as yet.

Involvement appears to be increasing as the projects move into the development phase, with steering groups and youth forums being a key method of involvement, in addition to ongoing consultation with project participants. However in some cases involvement of young people remains limited.

Where involvement was limited, project workers often identified capacity issues amongst the young people as being the reason for this. The capacity issues were felt to be around young people often not having the confidence, communication skills, focus or motivation to be involved beyond being participants in the project, issues that were often most pronounced with the hardest to reach groups. Project workers felt that, for those dealing with multiple and complex issues such as substance abuse, homelessness and family issues, supporting them to become involved in a youth forum or steering group was not an immediate priority.

Where young people required support to build their capacity to enable their involvement, projects often felt that they did not have the resources to support this, especially in the very early stages of developing the project.

There was also a sense however that many workers have yet to make the cultural shift from being a deliverer of services to young people to being a

facilitator who empowers young people to develop, manage and deliver their own project.

A number of projects indicated that involvement would increase as the project developed and the young people and staff had been given time to build the capacity that would enable them to work together in this way. In future years the evaluation can expect to find more and more projects that have a dedicated youth forum, steering group or advisory group. It will be important to explore the impact of such groups on the young people and the projects.

In contrast to the Grants to Organisations and National Grants findings, the Grants to Individuals strand does appear to have been extremely successful in involving young people. By its very nature this strand is supporting young people to lead on the projects.

The key difference appears to be that the young people have to demonstrate to the Big Boost from the very outset that they are responsible for the project. Having the young people come up with the project idea and complete the application themselves genuinely gives them ownership, as does awarding the money directly to the young person rather than an adult. The small size of the grants makes the projects a manageable size for the young people to genuinely own it, with the minimum of support from adults.

5.1.6 Impact of project activity

At this early stage a small number of projects were able to say that they are reaching or are close to their targets in terms of the numbers of young people with whom they are engaging. For the remainder it was too early to say, however the vast majority were confident that they would reach their target over the duration of their funding.

The fact that projects were found to be well aligned with the Programme aims is encouraging. The projects are anticipating that they will have a significant impact on the young people with whom they engage. Some also expect to impact positively on the wider community. At this early stage evidence of impact was not available, however both case study projects and those who were surveyed are expecting or are beginning to see impact on the young people with whom they are working.

By far the most commonly reported impact/anticipated impact was improving the confidence and self esteem of the young people, which given the nature of the young people involved was expected to have a significant positive effect on their engagement with society. Anticipated benefits included:

- Increased achievement and learning
- Increased social awareness
- Increased motivation
- Improved mental and physical wellbeing.

Future years of the evaluation will gather evidence of the extent to which these impacts are being achieved and explore the most effective methods for achieving them.

5.1.7 Partnership working

Partnership working was evident across the case study projects; 71% of those surveyed reported there being a partnership element to their project.

Partnership working was seen as important for ensuring engagement with the appropriate young people. This was seen as particularly important when targeting the hardest to reach groups. For example schools, youth offending teams or a social worker might refer young people who are at risk of exclusion into an alternative curriculum project.

Partnerships were also important for ensuring that young people were engaging with the appropriate services and therefore receiving the support that they need. Once the young people are engaged with the project and trust has been built some projects will identify any difficulties that the young people might have and support them to engage with the appropriate service to help them in their current situation.

The importance of these partnerships in ensuring the effectiveness of the projects will be explored further in future years of the evaluation.

5.1.8 Sustainability and future activity

Although it is early days for most of the projects, many are already thinking about their future sustainability and most are aiming to ensure that their projects continue beyond their YPF funding.

In the case of the Grants to Organisations projects, for most this will involve seeking further funding from another source. The projects can therefore not say with any certainty that they will be able to continue beyond the life of the funding and they feel restricted in terms of their ability to make long term future plans.

The National Projects appear to be operating rather differently. Many of the organisations running these projects do not foresee their involvement in the project beyond the duration of the funding. Their aim therefore is to develop a self sustaining infrastructure that will continue to generate benefits beyond the life of the project, by for example developing a network.

It is encouraging that, in the majority of cases, financial support from the Young People's Fund is being used to develop projects with long term objectives as opposed to one-off interventions. In this way the contribution of the programme to the achievement of the outcomes contained in Every Child Matters is likely to be increased.

Initial findings do however indicate that, at present, many organisations do not have a clear idea of how they will sustain the project when their BIG Funding comes to an end and this will need to be monitored by the evaluation as projects near the end of their funding period.

5.2 The Programme in England

The Young People's Fund in England had an original grant allocation of £77.6 million. It aims to help increase opportunities for young people and make a lasting difference to communities, through projects run by and for young people. The three different strands of the programme are outlined below. There are also four ring-fenced strands of the Young People's Fund in England, however they are not included in this evaluation. In May 2005

an additional £100 million was allocated to empower more young people. Of this £100 million:

- Up to 19 million has gone to support the final roll out of the Out of School Hours Learning/School Sport Co-ordinators programme
- Up to £76 million is for a YPF 2 programme and will support youth led local and national projects.
- Up to £5 million is being used to provide support and development activities to help organisations involve young people more in their projects.

The overall aims of the YPF programme are described in paragraph 5.1.2 above. Those young people who face difficulties and are at a disadvantage when it comes to getting involved in activities are a priority of this programme. In terms of disadvantage BIG expects projects to do either or both of the following:

- Help disadvantaged young people to come together with other young people to enjoy and benefit from activities.
- Create a better understanding of disadvantage among young people.

The strands being examined as part of this evaluation are:

Strand One - Grants to Individuals (£10 million)

This strand provides funding for young people's ideas for projects that will make a difference in their community. Grants are between £250 and £5,000 for a maximum of one year to help individuals and small groups of young people aged 11 to 25 years to run a project in their area. Every project should help to achieve one of the five main outcomes (outlined in the overall aims above).

Grant-management and decision-making powers for this strand have been delegated to the award partner UnLtd and its partners which include: Changemakers, The Scarman Trust and The Prince's Trust. UnLtd awards the funding through an open bidding process direct to individuals which is promoted as 'The Big Boost'. They also provide help and support to the young people that are funded to enable them to use their grant effectively.

Strand Two - Grants to Organisations (£40 million)

Strand two provides grants to voluntary and community groups to run local projects. The projects should provide activities and services that young people are involved in developing and running and that make a lasting difference to them and their communities. It funds projects that achieve two or more of the five main outcomes (again outlined in the overall aims above). The emphasis is on young people coming up with their own ideas and being involved from start to finish. Funding is for young people aged 11 to 18 and also for young people up to the age of 25 who find the transition to independent adult life difficult. Grants between £5,000 and £150,000 for a maximum of three years are available. Regional decision making and the involvement of young people on the regional panels was facilitated through a contract with YouthBank UK.

Strand Three - National Grants (£27.6 million)

The National Grants strand has funded projects of national significance that demonstrate innovative solutions to meeting one or more of the five main outcomes (again outlined in the overall aims above). Projects should provide a new activity or service, or develop an existing one in an innovative way. There should also be a strong focus on learning and providing opportunities for best practice. The target age range is young people aged between 11 and 18 years, but up to the age of 25 for people who find the transition to independent adult life difficult. Grants are available for up to £5 million for a maximum of three years, although the anticipated average size was £1 million.

The following table (Table 5.1) provides an overall summary of the Young People's Fund in England.

Table 5.1 – Aims of YPF in England

Aims	Outcomes	Target groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme Achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes (see column on right) Make a difference to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living healthy lifestyle Staying safe: being protected from harm, neglect and growing up able to look after themselves Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood Making a positive contribution: to the community and to society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour Economic wellbeing: overcoming socio-economic disadvantages to achieve their full potential in life 	<p>Young people aged 11 to 25 with priority given to those who face difficulties and are at a disadvantage when it comes to getting involved in activities or are finding the transition to adult life difficult</p>

This remainder of this chapter sets out the findings of the qualitative and quantitative research carried out during the first year of the evaluation of the programme in England, covering the following issues:

- Policy and environment
- Project take up
- Project feedback – qualitative
- Project feedback – quantitative
- Summary.

5.3 Policy and Environment

The Young People's Fund in England is well aligned with the current policy agenda. The programme in England is set against the backdrop of the Government Green Paper, "Every Child Matters". This policy document aims to ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential by reducing levels of educational failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse, neglect, crime and antisocial behaviour amongst children and young people. The paper identified the Young People's Fund as one of the initiatives that will contribute towards building strong and vibrant communities.

"Every Child Matters", sets out a vision for children and young people premised on the belief that every child, whatever their background or personal circumstances, should have the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

The Young People's Fund in England aims to contribute to the delivery of the Every Child Matters vision by awarding funding to projects that are aiming to achieve at least one of these five Every Child Matters outcomes.

The aims of Every Child Matters permeate all aspects of Government policy concerning young people. As a result, the Young People's Fund is also well aligned with a range of policies, including:

- The National Healthy Schools Programme which aims to support children and young people in developing healthy behaviours; to help to raise pupil achievement; to help to reduce health inequalities; and to help promote social inclusion.
- Youth Matters-Next Steps, which supports choice and opportunity for all, with a focus on hard to reach groups.
- 21st Century Skills, Realising Our Potential (2003) which aims to ensure that individuals have the skills they need to be both employable and personally fulfilled.
- Care Matters (2006), aims to ensure that children in care have the kind of happy, fulfilled childhood which people would wish for their own children. The strategy prioritises support for care leavers in the transition to adult life. Supporting the additional needs of young people experiencing difficulty in the transition from childhood to adulthood is also a priority of the Young People's Fund in England.

Earlier this year saw the publication of Aiming High for Young People: A 10 Year Strategy for Positive Activities (2007). In this ten year youth strategy, which aims to contribute to achieving the outcomes set out in Every Child Matters, the Government sets out a vision which aims to:

- Foster a more positive approach to young people across society and in particular within communities.
- Increase their participation in high quality positive activities, which build resilience and social and emotional skills.

- Empower young people to have greater influence over services for them, with parents and communities playing their part.

The strategy is centred around three themes:

- Empowerment - when young people have the opportunity to influence services they are more likely to find them attractive and to access and benefit from them. More marginalised young people can find formal processes unappealing and will need additional support to influence provision. Communities can also play a powerful role in improving and raising the priority of youth support services in their area.
- Access – young people often face barriers to accessing activities and support services. These can be practical barriers, such as lack of information, cost, transport or safety issues; or personal, for instance a lack of confidence or low aspirations. Supporting young people to overcome these barriers is crucial to engaging and supporting all, particularly those facing disadvantage.
- Quality – only high quality services have a real impact on young people's outcomes.

A central aim of the Young People's Fund is the involvement of young people at all stages of the project and programme, from development through to evaluation. Stakeholder participation in the decision making process is currently high on the political agenda.

The participation of children and young people in this process is promoted through "Hear By Right", a set of standards for the active involvement of children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services that affect them at a national, regional and local level. The framework has been devised by The National Youth Agency with the full support of the then Department for Education and Skills. "Hear By Right" is premised on:

- The assumption that active participation is essential in order to improve services and respond to the needs of children and young people.

- An acknowledgement that children and young people have a right to be involved in decisions which affect them, a right which was formally recognised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that “parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”.

The programme in England also aims to “make a difference to the community”. This goal is prioritised by government strategy in a number of policy areas, including the “Respect Action Plan”, intended to strengthen communities and address the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour. “Strong and Prosperous Communities”, the White Paper that supports the Action Plan prioritises action to support children and young people, making services more responsive to their needs and increasing their stake in the places where they live. The activity of the Young People’s Funds clearly has an opportunity to contribute to these goals.

5.3.1 Evaluation Evidence

There are a number of initiatives with which the operation, aims and objectives of the Young People’s Fund in England can be compared. Findings from evaluations of these programmes can add depth and provide a useful comparison for the findings from the Young People’s Fund evaluation. Initiatives that promote the active involvement of children and young people include:

- v (an independent charity championing youth volunteering in England)
- The Young Advisors Programme
- Mentor UK Rural Youth Project
- Millennium Volunteers

- The Powerful Voices Conference.

Created following a Government study into youth action and engagement, v is an independent charity championing youth volunteering and community action in England. The initiative is led by v20, a group of 20 young people who come together to form the youth advisory board. v was established in March 2006 and as yet no evaluation of their work has been published. Given the alignment between v's focus on youth involvement and that of the Young People's Fund it will be important in future years of the YPF evaluation to consider any evaluation evidence that v produces.

The Young Advisors Pilot programme, run by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, aims to remove barriers between young people and key stakeholders. It provides young people with the skills to influence change and a range of opportunities to be involved in decision making and policy development. The young advisors are regarded as a move from consultation to action.

Evaluation of the Young Advisors Programme (2006) revealed that the views of young people were highly valued by decision makers, although there was little evidence that the advice of young people was indeed influencing change in working practices. The evaluation did however conclude that the programme is still at an early stage and the fact that agencies are beginning to utilise the service should be regarded as a positive step that should be further developed in the future. Similarly it might be expected that the involvement of young people in YPF projects might not lead to immediate changes in working practices amongst services, agencies and perhaps even projects themselves.

The Mentor UK Rural Youth Project aimed to increase understanding of the experience of young people living in rural areas, specifically their experience of drugs and alcohol. Young people were recruited, trained and supported by Mentor UK to assess the effectiveness of the drug prevention projects and give feedback on prevention resources.

Key findings from the evaluation of this project suggest that engaging young people can be difficult as some do not want to give up their free time, whilst others are already heavily engaged in other projects; forming appropriate partnerships with agencies who work with at risk groups is a

more successful way of engaging these groups than through partnerships with established youth forums who tend to contact young people through schools; and local workers are key to maintaining the motivation of young people. Again, it is expected that the evaluation of YPF in England is likely to identify similar findings.

Millennium Volunteers (MV) is a UK wide initiative, supported by government, to promote sustained volunteering among young people aged 16 to 25, but particularly among those with no previous experience of volunteering or those vulnerable to social exclusion.

Evaluation of the initiative stated that youth involvement was reported positively in the majority of cases, however, as was found with the mentor UK Rural Youth Project some reported challenges in involving young people, including lack of resources and time on the part of managers and volunteers and a lack of interest on behalf of young people in serving on committees. The current evaluation will explore whether these issues are evident in the YPF projects.

Evidence of the participation of young people in local government is provided by Ealing Council through support for the Powerful Voices Conference. The conference, now in its third year, gives able bodied and disabled young people the opportunity to participate in the services that affect them. The conference involves workshops which facilitate conversation in an informal setting and is unusual in that children and young people give all the presentations. Adult representation is deliberately low key but adult support is available for any young people who would like assistance.

5.3.2 Conclusions

Given the alignment of the Young People's Fund in England with the priorities set out in Every Child Matters, it is no surprise that the programme has considerable opportunity to contribute to achievement of a wide variety of policy objectives across many Government Departments.

Further, examples provided in this chapter demonstrate widespread commitment to the involvement of children and young people in services and projects that affect them. In addition, there is mounting evidence of the

benefits that can accrue to young people and their communities through their active participation. However, despite positive sentiment, the full potential of children and young people in this area is yet to be realised and difficulties appear to focus on:

- Lack of time and resources.
- Apathy or lack of awareness among children and young people of available opportunities.
- Resistance on the part of policy makers to embrace this development.
- Adult project leaders finding it difficult to share development responsibility with young people.

The above will be important to consider in relation to the operation and activity of projects supported by the Young People's Fund in England.

5.4 Project Take Up

This section considers the allocation of grants in each of the three strands:

- National Grants
- Grants to Organisations
- Grants to individuals.

5.4.1 Grants to national organisations

Through the national grants programme, the Young People's Fund wanted to make grants to national charities for youth-led projects that would make a significant difference to young people in England, demonstrating innovative ways of meeting the five outcomes outlined in Every Child Matters.

The first grant to a national organisation was awarded August 2005 and the latest in November 2006. As shown in table 5.2, twenty-six national awards, totalling £25,811,600 have been made during this period. The programme is now closed having allocated 94% of its available funds.

Table 5.2 - Grants to national organisations*

National Grants	
Number of awards	26
Value of awards	£25,811,600
Maximum award	£2,237,187
Minimum award	£186,012
Average	£992,753.85

* From Management Information provided by BIG on 29 June 2007

5.4.2 Grants to organisations

'Grants to Organisations' was intended to fund projects in local areas which:

- Help disadvantaged young people to come together with other young people to enjoy and benefit from activities.
- Create a better understanding of disadvantage among young people.

Between February 2005 and July 2007, 396 grants to organisations were approved. Awards totalled almost £40,000,000 (Table 5.3). Awards ranged in value from £7,350 to a maximum of £150,000, with the average award being £100,880.22. The scales of awards are detailed in table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3 - Award Values*

Value of Award	Number of awards
Less than 10,000	7
10,000 - 19,999	15
20,000 - 49,999	52
50,000 - 99,999	103
100,000 - 149,999	188
Max award 150,000	31
Total	396

* From Management Information provided by BIG on 29 June 2007

The geographical distribution of awards across England's nine regions is shown in Table 5.4. The table is ordered by the size of the population aged 11 to 25.

Table 5.4 - Geographical Distribution of awards

RDA Region	Pop. Aged 11- 25yrs*	No. of projects	Value of awards	Award per head
South East	1,446,876	38	£4,057,917	£2.80
London	1,423,761	59	£6,579,176	£4.62
North West	1,271,013	65	£7,371,218	£5.80
West Midlands	996,291	44	£5,062,893	£5.08
East	955,776	37	£2,861,799	£2.99
Yorkshire and The Humber	947,281	48	£5,038,292	£5.32
South West	858,213	41	£2,804,056	£3.27
East Midlands	772,151	36	£3,215,272	£4.16
North East	474,457	28	£2,957,943	£6.23
Total	9,145,819	396	£39,948,566	£4.37

* refers to the total population aged 11-25 by Government Office Region at the 2001 Census of Population. Source: Nomis Web

As the table shows, the North West received both the largest number and value of awards. This was followed by the London area. The North East received the smallest number of awards and the South West the least amount of funding.

When we consider the value of awards per head of target population, it emerges that:

- The North East, despite the small number of awards, received the most funding per head of population at £6.23.
- The South East received funding equating to £2.80 per head of target population, the least of all of the regions.

Whilst it might be expected that awards per head would ideally be similar across the regions, it is important to remember that levels of disadvantage vary across the country and that some level of variation should therefore be expected. It is not possible to say what might be the optimal level of variation in award amounts per head between the region with the most disadvantage and the region with the least. However if in future regional allocations were being applied, these should reflect not only the number of young people in the region, but also the level of disadvantage in that region.

5.4.3 Grants to individuals

The third strand of the Young People's Fund in England is "Grants to Individuals". This strand of the Young People's Fund awards grants to young people to implement project ideas that will make a difference in their community. Grants of between £250 and £5,000 are allocated to individuals and small groups of young people run a project in their area.

"Grants to Individuals" began accepting applications in November 2005 and closed to applicants on the 1st November 2007. Grants range from a minimum of £250 to a maximum of £5000.

Grants are awarded through BIG's award partner The Big Boost and at present there is no project management information available on the number of awards made through "Grants to Individuals".

5.5 Project Feedback Qualitative

5.5.1 Method

Case study visits took place between December 2006 and March 2007 with staff in six national projects, including the Award Partner and 14 regional projects.

In the case of regional projects the consultations focussed on projects that had been awarded £100,000 or more. Given the likely relationship between scale, complexity and impact it was felt that a qualitative approach was required to develop an understanding of this relationship. Information on the smaller projects was captured through a sample telephone survey and is discussed in the next chapter.

At this early stage in the delivery of the projects the views of young people were not sought, however it is the intention that young people will be consulted in future years of the evaluation.

5.5.2 Grants to Organisations

As previously mentioned the case study visits focussed on the larger YPF projects, those that had been awarded £100,000 or more. As the maximum award value in this strand was £150,000 all 14 case study projects from this strand had received similar levels of funding, that is between £100,000 and £150,000.

Given the size of England and the number of projects receiving funding it was agreed that during the first year of the evaluation case study visits with the Grants to Organisations projects would focus on four of England's nine regions: North West; North East; East of England; and London.

Projects based in these regions with awards over £100,000 were then selected at random to be case study projects.

The following regional visits were carried out:

- 6 in the North West
- 3 in the North East
- 3 in the East of England
- 2 in London.

Originally a similar number of projects had been selected in each area, however one project with a London address turned out to be based in the North West and a further London project had difficulties that meant their funding had to be stopped. When replacing the latter a project from the North West was selected for logistical reasons.

All of the projects had received their award between October 2005 and June 2006, with all but one having commenced between April 2006 and September 2006. One project, which was awarded funding at the end of 2005 had, at the time of interview (January 2007), yet to commence due to problems with recruitment.

When the research took place all projects had been running for less than one year, and in some cases had only been in operation for as little as three months. Impacts to date have therefore been limited, however projects were able to discuss what they are hoping to achieve over the three years of their funding. The intention is to revisit a number of these projects at a later date to find out if the expected impacts are achieved.

5.5.2.1 Involving young people

As mentioned previously one of the key aims of the Young People's Fund in England is to encourage projects to move away from the more traditional model of project delivery where young people are often passive recipients of a service or provision, to one where young people are more involved in driving and owning the project. Active participation can bring benefits for young people, service providers and the wider community, such as:

- Fresh perspectives and new ideas about services, policies and democratic processes, helping tackle key objectives and promoting social inclusion.
- The development of new and existing skills by young people and increasing confidence and self esteem.
- A more vibrant local democracy.
- Community cohesion.
- An empowering environment that raises aspirations among children and young people and the wider community.

The Young People's Fund aims to secure the engagement of young people at all stages of the project including development, delivery, management and evaluation.

At the development stage all except three projects reported involving young people in this phase of the project. In the main however this involvement appeared to be more on the periphery of the project's development rather than integral to it. The main method of engaging young people in this phase was found to be limited to consultation.

The consultative process led to projects gaining fresh perspectives and new ideas about delivery. The main benefits of consulting young people at this stage were:

- Gaining a young person's perspective to maximise the project's attractiveness to young people, thereby maximising engagement.
- Ensuring that the project fully meets the needs of the young people who are being targeted.
- Engendering a level of ownership amongst the young people who were consulted and helping to empower them.
- Benefits to consultees showing that their opinion is valued.

A small number of projects took the involvement of young people in the development phase a step further. In the case of one project, which is described in Project Example England 1:

- The idea came from young people themselves.
- A group of nine young people came together and, with the support of youth workers developed and submitted the bid to BIG.
- The young people are responsible for steering and managing the project.

The apparent level of control that young people have in this project was unique amongst those interviewed.

Project Example England 1 – Personal development programme for young people with disabilities

Some of the young people within an organisation that provides support for young people with disabilities had undertaken the Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Award. Those who had taken part felt that other disabled young people from within the area could benefit from doing the same. In particular they felt that they wanted the young people from within their organisation to have the opportunity to benefit from gaining accreditation for the work that they were doing.

Nine young people, supported by some of the youth workers, developed and submitted the bid to BIG. Despite being turned down on a few occasions the young people worked with BIG until they came up with a proposal that met the criteria. In the end one of the young people, along with a worker from the organisation met with BIG and explained the reason for the costs of their project being so high, namely the additional costs required to ensure accessibility such as paying for British Sign Language interpreters etc. The application was eventually approved thanks to the hard work and persistence of the young people who drove it from start to finish.

The benefits of the young people being involved in this way was said to be felt mainly by the young people themselves. Being involved, and indeed driving the process gave confidence to the young people, and helped to empower them. This was felt to be particularly important given that those involved have disabilities. Because of their disability they have often been so looked after that they have had little opportunity to make a decision or have an opinion, and being involved in such a process helps them to gain experience of doing these things. This level of involvement is being sustained throughout the delivery of the project, with young people managing and steering the project, and developing their own ideas about the activities that they undertake.

There are a range of beneficiaries from this project. Each year 30 new young people will join the project to undertake their DoE Award, which they will do over a two-year period. In addition part of the work towards the Award involves a volunteer placement so a whole range of other people will also benefit from the project, such as youth or disability organisations, professionals, carers, parents, brothers and sisters. Able bodied young people also volunteer within the project to support the young people working towards the Award.

Where young people were not involved in the development phase, project managers gave reasons that centred around the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of the young people involved in the project. A number of projects across the UK spoke of the difficulties of involving young people when the project is designed to help the hardest to reach young people who often have multiple barriers to engagement. The more traditional, formal mechanisms for engagement, such as steering groups are often not engaging enough for these young people and may prove to be too challenging for those with self esteem and confidence issues. Project example England 2 shows an innovative way of overcoming these difficulties.

Project Example England 2 – Alternative curriculum programme in mechanics

An established youth organisation heard young people at a local event talk about how they would be less likely to steal cars if they had somewhere to go and tinker about with cars in a workshop. The workers in the organisation took the young people's idea on board and set about establishing a new arm to their existing project, which would offer a mechanics related alternative curriculum programme to young people experiencing difficulties.

Although the advisory group that was set up to develop the project did not include any young people, the youth organisation's existing youth forum was consulted during the development phase. Although these young people were not the beneficiaries of the programme this is an example of how young people can be involved in developing a programme when the direct beneficiaries are hard to engage. The benefit of using the youth forum in this way was being able to test out ideas and ensure that the programme would be appealing to young people.

In addition, one young person who had been a prolific offender was taken on in an advisory capacity to help with the development of the project. This young person's involvement was intensive. He would go out with staff to visit other projects and glean ideas from them. He was instrumental in developing a number of the ideas that were used in the final programme. This involvement helped to ensure that the programme would be attractive and engaging to other young people, who like him were experiencing difficulties and had either been excluded from the education system or were at risk of becoming so.

Project Example England 2 continued – Alternative curriculum programme in Mechanics

It also had significant benefits for the young person himself. It provided him with the opportunity to make a fresh start, helped steer him away from crime, gave him a sense of purpose and helped him to develop respect for others.

Once projects had moved into the delivery phase the majority reported that they will continue to consult young people on an ongoing basis. In most cases this will take the form of continually seeking feedback from participants on an informal basis. This is seen as an intrinsic part of what project workers do, and this ongoing feedback is used to continually shape the projects.

Some projects have also built in formal mechanisms for gaining feedback from beneficiaries, although this is less common. Whether formal or informal, the feedback gleaned from young people benefits the project as it allows workers to maximise the extent to which the project meets the needs of the young people and ensures that it continues to meet their needs over time. This may help to improve the impact that the project has on the young people, something that can be explored in future years once projects are more established.

In addition to consultation a small number of projects also involve young people in youth forums, advisory groups or project steering groups during the delivery phase. This was much more common during the delivery phase than was the case during the development phase.

Where such groups exist they are commonly established by workers who invite the young people involved in the project to be representatives on the group. Those who volunteer would then meet on a regular basis to discuss the progress of the project and identify ideas that they would like to see implemented. In most cases these groups form part of the formal structure of the organisation that is running the project, so for example a representative from the youth forum may also sit on the project steering group or attend Board meetings.

Again, such involvement is felt by workers to help ensure that the project is meeting the needs of the young people that it was set up to help as it provides a formal forum for hearing the views of the young people. It is also believed to benefit those on the groups who have the opportunity to develop skills such as team working, decision-making, communication etc. As these groups were in the process of being established or only recently established it will be important for the evaluation in future years to measure their impact.

The project described in Project Example England 1 above, has a number of young people working as volunteers to deliver the project. This is an important development opportunity for these young volunteers. A small number of other projects hope to engage young people as volunteers in the future, once their projects are more established. One example is a project that aims to support young people to acquire sports coaching qualifications in whatever sport they are interested in, enabling these young people to the go on and coach others. Another is described in detail in Project Example England 3.

Project Example England 3 – Health and wellbeing mentoring project

One project has developed an innovative way of providing health and wellbeing mentoring to young people through the use of young volunteers as peer mentors. This was in response to requests from young people that they would feel more able to confide in someone of their own age. The young volunteers have been given training as counsellors and are coached before and after each one to one session with a young person to ensure issues are not emerging that they are unable to cope with. They are given clear parameters to work within at the start of their involvement so that they know the sorts of confidences that may be shared with them and the options that are available with regards to the mentoring they can provide. With especially challenging issues the preferred option is to try to persuade the mentee to confide in a responsible adult. The encouragement and support of the young volunteer mentor is expected to make this more likely to take place. Good practice from adult peer mentoring is being drawn on to ensure support for young volunteers and beneficiaries is comprehensive and appropriate.

Even at this early stage those projects that are involving young people are finding that there is added value in doing so, as involvement develops

within the young people invaluable attributes such as confidence and self esteem, as well as developing more practical skills such as team working and communication.

The other potential benefits of involvement: a more vibrant local democracy; community cohesion; and an empowering environment that raises aspirations among children, young people and the wider community are impacts that can only be expected in the longer term. As such measuring the impact of young people's involvement on each of these areas will be a focus of the evaluation in future years.

5.5.2.2 *Every Child Matters*

One of the aims of YPF in England is to support Every Child Matters and as such the programme aims to contribute to the five Every Child Matters outcomes described on page 24. The following section describes how projects are meeting these aspirations.

5.5.2.3 *Being Healthy*

At the most basic level all of the projects could claim to be contributing towards improving the health of young people in terms of the mental health benefits that it is well documented that young people gain from involvement in any form of positive activity. Example 4 below illustrates a non-health focussed project that is expected to have long term benefits on the mental health of young people.

Project Example England 4 – Supporting young carers

Recognising the lack of provision available to support young carers in their local area, one voluntary organisation decided to set up a project to fill this gap. They have developed a programme of support to provide young people with the opportunity for social interaction, as well as helping them develop practical skills such as cooking and money management, and personal development type skills such as confidence.

The project uses a number of delivery methods such as courses, modular workshops and one to one work and over the course of three years is aiming to work with 100 young carers.

The project workers have been surprised to find how significant the youth groups have been in terms of proving helpful to the young people. In particular one drama group is doing fantastically well. The key to the success of these groups appears to be the peer interaction and support that these young people would otherwise not have access to. This social interaction is felt to bring short term benefits to the young people, enabling them to take some time out to be young people.

The social and practical skills that they are being equipped with are expected to provide longer term benefits in terms of equipping young people to deal with the caring situation within which they find themselves, and helping them to overcome the apathy that can come with having such a level of responsibility. Helping the young people to be more in control of their circumstances rather than at their mercy could have significant long term mental (and as a result physical) health benefits.

The extent and longevity of such positive impacts is likely to depend on levels and length of involvement, which varies across and within projects. The nature of participants may also be a factor in determining the extent of such impacts. Example 5 below not only illustrates these points but also illustrates an example of a project that has the improvement of physical health and wellbeing as one of its aims.

Project Example England 5 – Cross cultural sports programme

A national voluntary organisation has developed a local sports programme in an area where racial tension exists, with the aim of bringing together young people from across cultures through sport. It particularly aims to empower young people from black and minority ethnic groups to engage in sports, as this group has been found not to be engaging in mainstream sports to the same extent as the wider community. In addition it will support young people from BME groups to learn to teach the sports of their choice.

This project will have varying levels of impact on young people depending on the level and length of their involvement with the project. Some young people may engage with the project as a one off, perhaps through one of the large scale football tournaments that they organise. Others might, through working with the project, be linked into other services such as literacy and numeracy, whilst others might be supported to become a volunteer or professional sports coach.

In each scenario the impacts on the young people will be very different with some gaining only a short term social and health benefit and others taking action that will have long term life changing impacts on areas of their life such as health and job prospects. It is possible however that even one off contact with the project might engender significant levels of impact such as motivating a young person to join a local sports club, increasing a young person's awareness of other cultures, motivating a young person to pursue a career in sports but without doing so through the project.

This project also found that the nature of the young people influenced the level of impact that the project had. The more disadvantaged or excluded a young person is the greater the impact even a simple intervention can have. For example the project has arranged for a session at a local swimming pool where there are no male lifeguards present, which allows a group of young Asian women who have never been able to go swimming before to do so. The project workers believe that the impact on this group is more significant than merely the health benefits of a swimming session, as it helps to empower the young women, giving them access to an activity from which they were previously excluded.

Similarly, around 14 projects work or aim to work specifically with groups of young people who are socially disadvantaged in some way. In addition, whilst the others may be targeting young people more generally they also expect to work with significant numbers of young people who are considered to be at risk or hard to reach. Target groups include young people:

- Who are not in education, employment or training
- Who are excluded or at risk of exclusion from school
- With a disability
- From a minority ethnic community
- With mental health difficulties
- Who are carers
- Living in a community where there are high levels of deprivation.

There was a sense that for the most disadvantaged young people even a small amount of intervention can have a significant impact on their mental health & wellbeing, whilst significant levels of engagement can have a profound impact. This was the case in Project Example 1 above, where making decisions and being asked their opinion was novel for many of the young people with disabilities who were involved in developing the YPF bid. Project workers reported that such involvement can have significant impacts on the self esteem and confidence of the young people, which in turn has a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to the sports project already described in Example 5, consultations also took place with a number of projects that are contributing to improving the health of young people through providing opportunities for physical activity. These three projects are all arts projects rather than sports projects, however they engage young people in dance. Whilst improving the health of young people is a key impact of these projects, it is not their primary focus:

- Two projects are using the arts to engage young people from minority ethnic groups, encourage positive representations of these groups and ultimately encourage cross cultural understanding and integration. By including dance in their programme however they are also helping to improve the physical health of young people.
- One project is a dance project whose primary focus is to use dance to try and change the behaviour and aspirations of young people who are not attending school, are at risk of offending or who have already offended.

These examples show the complex interaction between the Every Child Matters outcomes, with each of the projects addressing several outcomes at a time.

Other projects have been established with health as their primary focus. These are:

- A project that provides guidance on healthy eating through their youth café. The project aims to establish good eating habits that will contribute to health throughout life.
- A project that provides peer mentoring on health issues.
- A project that works with young people to find out what would stop them from smoking and provides educational information on the risks of tobacco smoking.

5.5.2.4 Staying Safe

Amongst the case study projects the staying safe outcome was not a key outcome. One project (described in Project Example England 4 on page 51) would appear to contribute to this outcome to an extent. This project supports young carers and contributes to staying safe by providing both respite from the difficult responsibilities of their daily lives, and helping develop the skills that enable them to look after themselves.

In future years, if information on the projects' outcomes can be provided at the sampling stage then projects that are working towards the staying safe outcome will be included.

5.5.2.5 *Enjoying and Achieving*

As was the case with 'being healthy' all of the projects can claim to contribute to the enjoying and achieving outcome. The key things that distinguish these projects from each other are:

- Their target group
- The activity that they use to engage young people.

Two of the projects are perhaps helping young people to enjoy and achieve in a less direct way than the others. Rather than directly supporting young people to enjoy and achieve they are instead educating them to prevent them from engaging in negative activities, which could prevent them from enjoying life and achieving their potential. One of these is a harm reduction project aiming to tackle substance abuse related anti-social behaviour, whilst the other is a peer education anti tobacco project.

Two of the projects consulted offer alternative curriculum programmes for young people who are excluded or at risk of exclusion from the education system. Without these programmes these young people are unlikely to obtain any form of qualifications. The programmes provide practical activities, with a fun element that engage the young people more successfully than school does. Through these programmes the young people can gain accreditation, develop skills that they can use in a future career and in many cases begin to feel that they have found something that they are good at. The mechanical programme described in Project Example 2 above is one such case. The other is described in Project Example 6 below, which highlights how through providing an activity that is appealing and fun for disaffected young people these young people can begin to focus and work towards goals and accreditation.

Project Example England 6 – Alternative curriculum programme in radio broadcasting

A youth project linked to a local Community Radio project has developed an alternative curriculum course for young people whose behavioural difficulties mean that they are on the edge of the education system. The course is a 17 week radio broadcast training course and offers young people training to help them produce radio programmes to broadcast on the community radio station.

In learning to produce these programmes the young people develop I.T. and New Media skills, as well as communication skills, confidence, team working skills etc. Accreditation is built in through following the ASDAN Personal & Social Development programme. They do this at Bronze or Silver level which is GCSE level D-G. They hope that 20 people per year, 10 per intake, will be able to take on some independent learning and work towards the new Arts Council Arts Award at Bronze Level.

The programme is open to 13 to 25 year olds. This first year will be aimed at under 16s, however next year's funding will be capital funding to invest in new equipment to help them target and attract older young people. That said they are currently working with a group of young people who are in care and this group is aged 15 to 18. They also plan to use their mobile unit to deliver the programme to a group within the local Young Offenders Institution.

The workers are finding that young people who are not engaging with school are able to focus and work towards accreditation through the project. One boy who was constantly misbehaving in school was told by the school that he could only attend the project if he could behave appropriately in school for an entire week. At the time of the interview he had successfully managed this for two weeks running.

Several of the projects specifically target excluded or disadvantaged groups to engage them in positive activities. Some projects are working to help young people achieve their potential by offering programmes openly aimed at personal and social development. These are:

- The project aimed at helping young carers, described in Project Example 3 above.
- A project that provides development activities for young people with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- A dance project that uses dance to try and change the behaviour and aspirations of young people who are not attending school, are at risk of offending or who have already offended. This project is described further in Project Example England 7 below.

Project Example England 7 – Dance programme for young offenders

One of the projects uses the medium of dance to try and change the behaviour and aspirations of young people within their catchment area who are not attending school, at risk of offending or who have already offended. The project works in partnership with the youth offending team (YOT) and has maximized this relationship by seconding a member of staff from the YOT to be project co-ordinator.

The project offers an accredited dance-led rehabilitation and resettlement programme for juvenile offenders, most of whom will be serving ISSPs (Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes). The project aims to lead rather than merely support youth justice objectives. It offers dance as a powerful tool to channel young offenders away from re-offending and into further education, training and employment.

The course runs from 9.30-4.00 pm, five days per week over 12 weeks and ends with a performance which the young people give to an audience. The young people are treated as dancers and as such are expected to act in accordance with the discipline framework at the centre and eat healthily and exercise during the 12 weeks.

Other projects focus more on the enjoying element, but with the underlying aim of helping young people to broaden their horizons, identify goals and work towards them. The young people engaging with these projects may do so purely to be engaged in a social activity or to do an activity that they enjoy. By engaging in these activities workers believe that the majority will develop their confidence, improve their self-esteem and broaden their

horizons. In doing so, it is hoped that many of the young people will become better equipped to achieve more in their future.

All of these projects however are not merely about providing an activity for young people to engage in, but instead use the activities that project participants enjoy to encourage their personal and social development. One example is illustrated in Project Example England 8.

Project Example England 8 – Arts development programme for the Roma community

One project provides art based activities to disadvantaged young people aged 11 to 25 years from the Roma community. Expression through music and dance is extremely important in Roma culture therefore the activities provided are an ideal mechanism for engaging these young people and providing them with the opportunity to express themselves, promote Roma culture to the wider population (thereby working towards greater understanding between cultures and improving integration and tolerance) and develop their skills further. For the older young people this skills development provides an opportunity to transfer their arts skills into job opportunities.

The project offers a range of arts based activities for Roma young people to engage in, with the aim of countering the negative impact of anti-Roma/Gypsy discrimination, bullying and prejudice, offering them a place to express themselves, and ultimately to positively challenge the negative stereotypes of their race and culture. In addressing the alienation felt by these young people it is hoped that anti-social behaviour issues will be prevented or reduced.

Once the young people begin to feel more confident and comfortable about sharing their culture with others they perform at events and try and teach others about their culture and encourage integration. Through partnership with a local studio young people can learn and practice skills used in the music industry, and already the project has seen young people go to college to study music.

Many of the projects that focus on 'enjoying' are also particularly useful mechanisms for re-engaging young people who might otherwise not be engaged with any service. If young people are reluctant to engage with any services, then merely securing their engagement in the first place is an achievement in itself. Offering activities that young people enjoy in a non-

intimidating manner is the key to this. Once the young people are engaged with the project and trust has been built some projects will identify any difficulties that the young people might have and support them to engage with the appropriate service to help them in their current situation. This requires strong partnership working, and even at this early stage most projects appear to have established good relationships with the key agencies that are relevant to their client group.

One example of this is the sports project described in example 4 above. This project operates within a larger organisation that has a range of projects providing literacy, numeracy and ICT support, as well as having an employment liaison officer. Having engaged young people in sporting activities project workers can, where appropriate refer young people into any of the other projects which are more focussed on developing basic skills that will help young people to maximise their potential.

5.5.2.6 Making a positive contribution

Making a positive contribution is not only about young people contributing to their communities, but also about not engaging in anti-social behaviour. All of the projects could be said to be contributing to this outcome as they all provide diversionary activities.

A number of projects target those who are engaging in or are at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour. Examples include:

- The two alternative curriculum programmes (mechanics and community radio) described in Project Examples 2 and 5.
- The dance programme described in Project Example England 6.

Given the direct link with young people involved in or at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour, monitoring the impacts on the young people involved in these programmes over time should provide an indication as to the extent that these projects are reducing levels of anti-social behaviour. This will be a focus of the evaluation in future years.

A number of other projects contain a strong element whereby the project not only benefits the young people involved, but also encourages and

supports young people to make a contribution to their community. Examples of these projects are given below:

- An anti-tobacco project where young people are involved in researching what would help to stop young people smoking and are supported to present the findings at conferences and in schools.
- A youth work project that uses an environmental focus to help young people become better involved in their communities.
- The community radio project (Project Example England 6) where young people can use broadcasting as a means to share important messages with other young people. One example was given of how a group of looked after young people are potentially helping other looked after young people by discussing issues that are important to this group during their radio broadcast.
- Two projects that are using the arts as a means of promoting minority ethnic cultures and ultimately encouraging integration.
- The sports project described in Project Example 5 that supports young people from BME groups to acquire sports coaching qualifications and then supports them to set up their own clubs where they can teach their sport to others.

A further example is discussed in detail in Project Example England 9 below.

Project Example England 9 – Community activities for young people living in an area of high deprivation

One project is bringing about a range of improvements to the local environment. Young people were originally incentivised through a sportswear voucher scheme to clear their local community of rubbish, graffiti and weeds working with the local housing association and the factors responsible for maintenance of the outside spaces in the community. They started to develop a pride in their work and discourage others from undoing their work by recruiting them into the scheme. Others began to develop a genuine interest in gardening and started to grow plants for the outside spaces.

This is turning into a social enterprise horticulture business selling plants back to the company which maintains the gardens. The young people are gaining in confidence and beginning to take a lead in developing a range of community activities for young people, as well as influencing those responsible for making decisions on behalf of the community through joining fora of local people thereby representing the views of young people.

The Big Lottery grant helped to supplement the voucher scheme which is rapidly becoming self sustaining. This is because money which used to be used to clean graffiti and tidy outside spaces is now being diverted into the voucher scheme.

The impact of these projects on the communities around them can be explored in future years by gathering case study examples of work that projects have done to benefit their local community.

5.5.2.7 Economic Wellbeing

Whilst none of the projects consulted specifically target young people who are experiencing socio economic disadvantage, the difficulties that many of the projects' target groups are experiencing are often a symptom of economic disadvantage. This means that many of those who are engaged with the projects are currently experiencing economic disadvantage and many more, by being socially excluded and disengaged from services, are at risk of being economically disadvantaged in the future.

There are close links here with the enjoying and achieving outcome, therefore many of the projects described in that section are also contributing to the economic wellbeing outcomes.

Some projects are developing specific skills that can be used by the young people in a future career. Examples include:

- The mechanical alternative curriculum programme described in Project Example England 2 aims to support young people into relevant courses at the local college, and through partnership with the RAC is hoping to offer young patrolman placements to two young people.
- The young people gaining sporting qualifications through the project described in Project Example England 4 may use these qualifications to teach sport as their paid occupation.
- The minority ethnic arts project described in Project Example England 7 helps young people to develop technical skills that are used in music industry careers. Already some of the young people from the project have begun studying music subjects at college.

5.5.2.8 *Make a difference to the community*

The third and final aim of the YPF Programme in England is to make a difference to the community. As discussed under 'Making a positive contribution' there are a number of projects that are engaging young people in making a positive contribution to their community. It is hoped that the projects will make a difference to communities by:

- Working with the young people on projects that are designed to benefit their local community.
- Improving the life chances of the young people involved in the projects, or at least preventing their disadvantage or difficulties from worsening.
- Encouraging young people and giving them the skills to be more active in their communities.

5.5.2.9 Conclusions

Whilst projects provided a number of examples of involving young people in project development, management and delivery, in many cases this involvement was limited. It would appear that there has not been a significant cultural shift in terms of handing ownership of projects over to young people, with only one of the projects interviewed being able to demonstrate this.

Project workers felt that this limited involvement was due to capacity issues amongst the young people, especially the hardest to reach. It was felt that projects did not have the resources to build this capacity, especially in the very early stages. There was also a sense however that many workers have yet to make the cultural shift from being a deliverer of services to young people to being a facilitator who empowers young people to develop, manage and deliver their own project.

A number of projects indicated that involvement would increase as the project developed and the young people and staff had been given time to build the capacity that would enable them to work together in this way. In future years the evaluation can expect to find more and more projects that have a dedicated youth forum, steering group or advisory group. It will be important to explore the impact of such groups on the young people and the projects.

The projects that were consulted fit very well with the aims of Every Child Matters, with all projects aiming to address a number of the policy's goals. At this early stage it is impossible to say what impact these projects are having on the Every Child Matters outcomes, however early indications show that the ideas are relevant and already some positive outcomes have been recorded.

At this early stage a small number of projects were able to say that they are reaching or are close to their targets in terms of the numbers of young people with whom they are engaging. For the remainder it was too early to say, however the vast majority were confident that they would reach their target over the duration of their funding. The early indications are therefore that the programme will have a significant impact on achieving the aims of Every Child Matters. In future years the evaluation will explore the extent

to which these anticipated impacts are being realised and also the extent to which impacts are being felt within the wider community.

5.5.3 National Grants

5.5.3.1 Introduction

The National Grants strand of the programme is similar to the Grants to Organisations strand, but with projects operating on a much larger scale and receiving significantly larger award amounts. The case study sample was selected at random. The value of awards received by the five projects that were interviewed ranged from £330,000 to £2.2 million.

In terms of project take up the majority of the projects reported that they are either on target or exceeding their target, whilst those that are below target were aware of the reasons for this and were taking action to increase the numbers of young people engaging with them.

5.5.3.2 Target Groups

Two out of the five consulted projects work specifically with young people from a disadvantaged group. The remainder are targeting young people in general, although most do aim to reach a high percentage of young people from disadvantaged groups, something they are achieving in the main through partnership working. Key partners used to reach these groups include:

- Connexions
- Youth Offending Teams
- Social Services
- Schools
- Voluntary youth organisations.

5.5.3.3 *Involvement of young people*

Methods of involving young people in the National projects are in many cases the same as those used by the projects in the Grants to Organisations strand, namely:

- Consulting young people in the development phase.
- Involvement of young people in the delivery phase through youth forums and steering groups.

One of the projects is run by a youth led organisation, with the Board of Trustees, their Advisory Forum and various sub groups being made up of young people. In this case the involvement of young people has been much more extensive and integral to the project. The organisation was awarded a grant from BIG to help them develop their bid, which enabled them to bring together 45 young people from across the country to help develop the application.

Another project is training young people to be peer mediators and peer trainers; therefore once they have received their training the young people are in essence the deliverers of the project (see Project Example England 10 below).

An arts based project is providing training to young people during the first two years of the project and sees this phase as a capacity building phase. In the final year the young people who have been involved with the project will be invited to help organise and/or perform at a large arts event.

Project Example England 10 – Developing a network of peer mediators

Operating in three of England's nine regions, one project provides training and a support network for young people to be mediators and peer trainers in mediation. They aim to have a core group of about 50 young people, who will sit on the national steering group and the three local steering groups. The project invests heavily in these young people.

Training to become a peer trainer is provided to young people aged 16 to 21 years old, where they acquire skills in:

- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution
- Mediation
- Facilitation.

These young people then disseminate their training to other young people, creating a cascade effect.

Young people who receive this training can become peer trainers. Youth Development Workers link peer trainers with young people who want to develop mediation skills. The basic mediation training is delivered by peer trainers to young people aged 11-21.

The project is aiming to have its training accredited, which would enable it to be used as a progression route into an apprenticeship to become a freelance trainer.

The organisation that operates the project is a membership organisation, so young people who have received mediation training or are interested in mediation, can sign up as members. They then receive a regular newsletter and can access the website. These mediums provide members with information and advice, keep them updated with the Network's activities and provide a vehicle for sharing ideas.

The YPF money has provided the resources to enable more training to be delivered, local Youth Development Workers to be taken on and for the network to be promoted by hosting events and carrying out outreach work in schools etc. This cash boost should raise the profile of the network and generate enough peer trainers for the model to become self sustaining.

5.5.3.4 Every Child Matters

Each of the consulted projects in the National Grants strand is meeting a number of the Every Child Matters outcomes, with the most common being 'Making a Positive Contribution', 'Enjoying and Achieving' and 'Economic Wellbeing'.

More of the National Grants projects seemed to be focussed on 'Making a Positive Contribution' than was the case in the Grants to Organisations projects. These projects include:

- The project described earlier in Project Example England 10 where young people are trained to be peer mediators and trainers.
- A project that aims to increase the number of 'youth banks', enabling young people to apply for funding to develop projects in their local communities.
- A project that aims to generate a greater culture of volunteering amongst Further Education students.

From the consultations there was a sense that:

- Grants to Organisations projects are more likely to focus on working with disadvantaged young people and improving their life chance.
- National Grants projects are more likely to work with young people in general, supporting them to make a positive contribution in their community.

One possible reason for this different focus may be the fact that in the case of many of the National Projects, the organisations running the YPF funded project are not expecting to continue in this role beyond the funding period, thereby making them less conducive to directly providing a local support mechanism for disadvantaged groups. The short term nature of these projects will be discussed further in section 5.5.3.5.

5.5.3.5 Sustainability

The National Grants funding has been awarded to large, national organisations to run projects across a number of regions in England. In the case of three of the case study projects large national organisations have applied for funding to run a short term project that will help kick start an idea that is expected to be self sustaining. These organisations intend to establish an infrastructure, or an ethos or a culture amongst young people and then they will withdraw, leaving a lasting legacy from their initial input. These projects are:

- An arts project (described in Example 9 above), which over the duration of the funding will establish local hubs, where young people will drive the activity of the hub and support other young people in the way that an arts counsellor would. The aim is to build these hubs into the local infrastructure to ensure that they are self sustaining once the project funding has ended.
- The peer mediation project described in Example 10, where the large cash injection from YPF will enable the national organisation responsible for the project to provide peer mediation training and peer trainer training to sufficient young people to ensure there is a self sustaining network of peer mediators.
- A project that aims to develop within Further Education establishments a similar volunteering culture to that found in Higher Education establishments.

5.5.3.6 The effect of local circumstances

In working across a number of regions some of the National projects have found that local factors can have a significant influence on the impact of their project. For example the arts project described in Project Example England 11 has found that they are able to recruit significantly higher numbers of young people to their courses in a region where Connexions has a policy of paying £10 to young people who engage in a positive activity.

Project Example England 11 – Arts programme for young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Several large national organisations have come together to develop an Arts programme that operates across four of the nine English regions. The project targets young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET and provides:

- week long courses/workshops giving young people the opportunity to be involved in and learn about various art forms.
- specific arts based training to young people equivalent to that which is provided to professionals.
- the opportunity for those who have been involved in training to attend a drop-in session facilitated by a regional coordinator. These drop-ins form a hub in each region, which is driven by the young people. The hubs could begin to offer ongoing support and guidance for other young people.

All young people that have come into contact with the programme during its first two years will be invited to help organise and/or perform at a large live event that will take place in the third and final year of the programme.

Each of the regional Hubs has space for 10 to 15 young people, and those involved can do work towards obtaining their bronze arts award. The aim is that these hubs will be self sustaining and continue at a local level after the project funding has ended. At the time of consultation these innovative Hubs were relatively new. In future years the evaluation will monitor their success.

The project contributes significantly to 'enjoying and achieving' and also, in helping young people towards arts careers could be said to contribute to 'economic wellbeing'.

5.5.3.7 Conclusions

The National Grants strand is meeting the programme aims in a similar way to the Grants to Organisations Strand, but with National projects appearing to have more of a focus on the 'Making a Contribution' outcome set out in Every Child Matters.

Young people tend to be involved in projects through consultation in the development phase, with youth steering groups being set up when the project moves into the delivery phase. Most of the projects are building the capacity of young people to enable them to be more involved in the delivery of the project, or to sustain the benefits beyond the life of the project. As a result, involvement of young people appears to be more integral to some of the National Grants projects than was the case with the Grants to Organisations projects.

In essence a number of the National Grants projects seem to be using the funding to build the capacity of young people who will then, at the end of the project, be in a position to perpetuate the work of the project on their own, without the support of the organisations who established the projects

Issues that are specific to the National Grants strand, which the evaluation should monitor in future years are:

- The short term nature of many of the projects and how their benefits can be sustained beyond the life of the project.
- The impact of local circumstances on project outcomes and outputs.

5.5.4 Grants to Individuals

5.5.4.1 Introduction

Grants to Individuals are distributed by UnLtd and its partners through the Big Boost programme. Distribution began in November 2005 and the programme is due to end on 31 March 2008. Big Boost is made up of 4 partners:

- UnLtd (Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs)
- Changemakers (educational charity to help young people play an active role in changing society for the better)
- The Scarman Trust (National charity that helps young people bring about change in their community)
- The Prince's Trust (helping young people to overcome barriers, get back on track, realise their potential and transform their lives).

The aim of this strand is to award grants directly to young individuals who have identified a project idea. Young people aged 11 to 16 can be awarded up to £1000, whilst those aged 16 to 25 can receive up to £5,000. At the time of the interview (January 2007) 1600 awards had been made.

There are also top-up awards available for projects showing the most potential, who can receive up to £10,000. There will be 88 of these awarded by the end of the programme.

An interview was carried out with representatives from UnLtd to discuss the aims of the programme and progress to date. The remainder of this section reflects the findings from that research.

5.5.4.2 Beneficiaries

Although the projects themselves are important, the key aim of this strand is supporting individuals to be the social entrepreneurs of tomorrow. The key beneficiaries of this strand are therefore the applicants themselves, although the projects that they obtain funding for will benefit a range of other people in a variety of ways. Each young person who receives an award has come up with the idea for their project, applied for the funding and they are responsible for delivering the project and evaluating it. There is therefore the potential for these young applicants to develop a wide range of skills, including:

- Generating ideas
- Communication skills
- Problem solving

- Financial management
- Decision making.

This model is also very empowering and is expected to help young people improve their confidence and self esteem, and develop belief in their abilities to achieve their goals.

Beneficiaries have been from a wide range of backgrounds, which is a function of the range of partners e.g. some of the young people who have applied through the Prince's Trust have been in young offenders' institutions. In terms of demographics, at the time of the interview:

- 7% of applicants have a disability
- 63% are aged 11-16, 10% are aged 17-18, and 27% are aged 19-25
- 39% are students, 13% are part time employed, 28% are unemployed
- 64% are white
- 57% are male.

5.5.4.3 Supporting the young people

Young people submit applications and awards managers, who are employed across the partners, review these and visit each applicant. After meeting the young people there are two courses of action depending on the age of the applicant:

- After meeting with the 11 – 15 year olds the awards manager can make a decision as to whether to approve the award or not, and if approved the grant is awarded.
- Having met the 16 to 25 years olds the awards manager makes the decision as to whether or not the project should be declined, or whether it is should be considered for approval. If it is to be considered for approval it will then be passed to the Youth Panel, which makes the final decision.

The awards managers also function in a support and outreach role. Each awards manager has a caseload of 70 to 80 projects. They can offer advice at the application stage to enable someone to strengthen their application if it

is not quite strong enough to be successful. They then provide support to successful applicants as and when required. Some projects make regular contact with their awards manager and others will be very independent. Each project will have a minimum of two meetings with their awards manager.

Awards managers carry out a lot of outreach work to promote the grants to intermediary bodies who work with young people. There is a lot of work required to get young people to generate ideas. The level of outreach work that is required was underestimated in the beginning. However without it the number of applications would be far less as young people have not generally been forthcoming with ideas.

5.5.4.4 Youth panels

There are two youth panels (a North and a South panel) that meet monthly to make the decisions on which of the applications from 16 to 25 year olds should be approved. There are around 24 young people sitting on the panels and representatives from each panel also sit on the project's management steering committee.

To become a member of the panel young people must complete an application and have an interview, although the process is not harsh. The panels have a very positive impact on the young people involved, giving them the chance to develop a range of skills, such as:

- Communication
- Negotiation
- Decision making
- Team working.

These young people contribute good insights to the decision making process, giving a young person's perspective on what is important to young people. That way, the approved projects are more likely to be those that will be attractive to other young people.

Originally the youth panels were purely about making the final decision on the applications, however as they have developed and more members have been recipients of awards, the young people have identified that they would

like more opportunity to offer advice to the projects and help them to link up with other projects. The young people on the panels are therefore organising an away day to discuss the role of the panels and how it should develop. This demonstrates that panel members feel empowered and believe in their ability to offer something more to the programme than was originally expected of them.

5.5.4.5 *The application process*

The criteria for applications are very broad. It has to be clear that the application has come from a young person, and they have developed the idea and will lead the project. The application must also demonstrate that the idea will lead to some level of positive impact for others. The young person has to show that they are motivated and the project must be achievable.

It is not common for applications to be rejected, but the main reason for rejection would be if it is obvious that the young person has not really developed the application, but is just representing an organisation. The other main reason would be if there was no real expected impact from the project.

This breadth of the application criteria is necessary to encourage as many young people as possible to apply with as wide a range of project ideas as possible. If the criteria were strict and there was a high number of unsuccessful applications this could put young people off.

Even though attempts have been made to keep the application process as simple and efficient as possible it is understood that young people still feel that the application form is too long, and they are not keen on the paper based form. Also some young people feel that the turnaround is not quick enough, even though it is relatively short, taking on average six weeks, but no more than eight weeks.

5.5.4.6 *Impact*

Despite the small amounts of money involved some projects are having or have the potential to have significant impact on the applicant and the wider

community. For example one young person received a grant of £3000 - £4000 and with that he is working with around 300-400 young people in a disadvantaged area in London.

An internal evaluation will be conducted by Big Boost, and they will be including young people in the process. They plan to hold an evaluation workshop with award winners and are using a self evaluation model. Award winners will be encouraged to reflect on their relationship with Big Boost and asked to consider which points in the award period they had the thought "if only". For example "if only I had more support then it would have been easier for me to...". They will also be assessing impact, support experiences and support needs. The aim is to make the evaluation fun and highly participative.

5.5.4.7 Conclusions

There is strong evidence that young people are involved at every stage in this strand of the Programme. Young people come up with the ideas, complete the application, then deliver, manage and evaluate the project. Young people are also involved in the overall management of the programme and in the decision making around which applications receive awards through the youth panels. They are also being involved in the evaluation of this strand of the programme.

By providing young people with the opportunity to apply for funding to run their own project there is the potential to impact significantly on the individual applicants. The impacts of their projects will also be felt by a range of people within communities across England.

This strand of the programme therefore makes a significant contribution to the following programme aims:

- Engaging and involving young people in all aspects of the projects and programme.
- At least three of the Every Child Matters outcomes (Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution, Economic Wellbeing).
- Making a difference to the community.

5.6 Project Feedback Quantitative

5.6.1 Introduction

A telephone survey of 100 projects supported by the Young People's Fund "Grants to Organisations" was undertaken in June and July 2006. Care was taken to achieve a representative sample of projects from across the county, focusing on different groups and different activities. All organisations included in the survey had received grants of below £100,000.

The remainder of this chapter details the main findings of the survey, considering, in turn:

- Operation of the projects
- Outcomes and impact
- Involvement of young people
- Future sustainability.

5.6.2 Operation of the projects

5.6.2.1 Target Groups

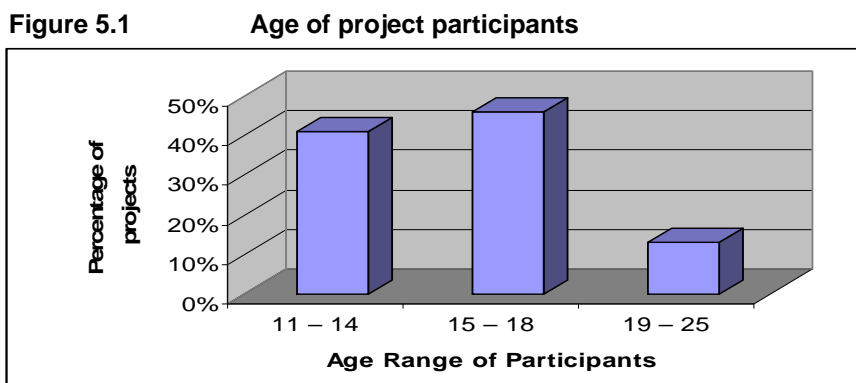
The projects selected for inclusion in the survey provided activities and services to young people with multiple and varied needs. The largest number of projects stated that their work was targeted on those from deprived backgrounds. While this was specifically mentioned by 23 interviewees, it also emerged that many of the projects open to all young people attract a high proportion of participants from disadvantaged areas. In addition:

- 21 interviewees said that they focused their activity on those with physical, sensory or learning disabilities.
- 8 provided services for those with mental health issues.

- 9 provided services for young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 7 targeted activity on young carers.
- 5 each focused on the needs of young offenders and those at risk of offending, those with emotional and/ or behavioural problems and those not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Other groups targeted by projects included, those affected by rural isolation, young people who are homeless or have been homeless, teenage parents, refugees and asylum seekers, gay/ lesbian young people, and young people who are in care.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the average age of project participants revealing that the majority of activity is focused on those aged 11 to 18.



Number of respondents: 100

5.6.2.2 Project activity

The survey revealed that many projects provide multiple activities within their local communities, the most common of which are illustrated in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 - Project activity

Activity	Percentage of projects (%)
Creative arts (inc. film, theatre, arts, crafts and dance)	33
Outdoor activities games and sports	23
Youth centres and drop in sessions	15
Education, employment, vocational and life skills	14
Peer education and mentoring	8
Awareness raising and health promotion	8
Youth cafes/ allotments/ farming activity	7
Work in the community (inc. gardening litter picks etc)	5

Number of respondents: 100

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

5.6.2.3 Focus and fit with the aims of the Young People's Fund

Table 5.6 categorises projects, which participated in the survey, according to their strategic fit with the priorities set out in Every Child Matters. The table reveals that the focus of the majority of projects is on "enjoying and achieving". Further:

- There was little difference in the number of projects focusing on health, safety and making a positive contribution to society.
- Very few survey participants felt that their projects focused on the achievement of economic well-being.

Table 5.6 - Every Child Matters priority closest to the focus of the project

Priorities	Percentage of projects (%)
Enjoying and achieving	63
Making a positive contribution	13
Staying safe	12
Being healthy	10
Economic well-being	2
Total	100

Number of respondents: 100

Participants were also asked to rate the contribution of their project to the five priorities set out in Every Child Matters (Table 5.7). In line with Table 5.6, “enjoying and achieving” emerges as the most important project component, this was followed by making a positive contribution, also an outcome anticipated by all survey participants.

Table 5.7 - “Fit” of project with the priorities of Every Child Matters

Priorities	Number of projects				
	1 – Not focus	2 – A bit	3 – Quite a lot	4 – Focus	Total
Being healthy	10	24	45	21	100
Staying safe	5	20	40	35	100
Enjoying and achieving	0	0	19	81	100
Making a positive contribution	0	12	32	56	100
Economic well-being	19	47	27	7	100

Number of respondents: 100

Among those who stated that their project principally promoted **enjoyment and achievement**, work was focused around:

- Creative activities such as art, acting, dancing, cooking, environmental activities.
- Educational pursuits, including alternative curriculum accredited courses.

Depending on the group targeted by the project, activities were intended to build self confidence and other soft skills, allow participation in activities from which young people have been excluded (such as outdoor recreation and sports for disabled children) and engage young people in the educational system and community life.

In realising these aims, many projects offered accreditation or awards to participants, reinforcing a sense of achievement. Awards included:

- John Muir Environmental Awards
- Youth Achievement Awards
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Activity of those projects which support young people in making a **positive contribution in society** included volunteering in community groups, litter picks and gardening and outreach work. The **health and safety** of young people is promoted by surveyed projects in a number of ways. These were found to include:

- Provision of a clean and safe environment in which to socialise.
- Education and advice regarding drugs, alcohol and sexual health.
- Activities to raise awareness of and promote mental health and well-being, including workshops, relaxation and stress management techniques.
- Healthy eating.
- Sports and other physical activities.

The work of those few projects with a focus on **economic well-being** included:

- CV writing and job search workshops.
- Supporting people, including young parents, into training.
- Budgeting activities in areas of high deprivation.

5.6.2.4 Development of the projects

The survey found that in the majority of cases, those involved in project development were:

- Part of an existing group that had expanded (49%).
- Part of an existing group into which additional young people were brought (31%).

In 14% of cases the group charged with the development of the project was a wholly new group of people brought together for that purpose (Table 5.8). Further, in 61% of cases the group of people who developed the project are the same group of people who are currently delivering it.

Table 5.8 - Status of the group responsible for development the project

	Percentage
An existing group that has expanded generally	49%
An existing group with young people brought in	31%
A wholly new group	14%
Other	4%
An existing group with no significant changes	2%
Total	100%

Number of respondents: 100

5.6.2.5 Partnership working

Seventy one percent of survey respondents stated that there was a partnership element to their project. Among those who were not working in partnership to deliver their project, the largest proportion felt that they had no need to form partnerships. Detailed explanations included:

- They had the necessary skills internally.
- They were part of an established charity or organisation.
- They were an “individual organisation”.
- They were unique in the group of young people that they were targeting with the intervention.

One organisation also commented that “due to past experience they had found it better to work on their own.”

Those who were working in partnership with other organisations were asked if the partnership was firmly established prior to the development of the project. It emerged that:

- 48% stated that the partnership was a mixture of new and established partners.

- 27% were involved in a new partnership.
- 25% were developing the project in association with an established partner.

Partner organisations principally included:

- Local authority departments
- Connexions
- Youth groups and services
- Colleges
- Charities
- Millennium Volunteers
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Local police and prison services.

5.6.2.6 External influences

Interviewees referred to a wide range of local policies, strategies and institutions which had benefited or facilitated the work of the project. Twenty three percent of respondents made specific reference to Every Child Matters as a framework upon which to base and promote their activity.

Conversely, external factors with a negative impact on the operation of the projects included:

- Lack of funding and resources.
- Perceptions of target groups; this included negative perceptions of young people and stigma surrounding disability, mental ill health, young parents, asylum seekers, travellers and hostels residents. Interviewees felt that these prejudices made it harder to integrate into the local community, gain recognition of their work and engage young people.
- Lack of support from local institutions including local councils and schools.

5.6.3 Outcomes and impact

Survey participants felt that their projects were achieving extremely positive outcomes and stressed the “life changing” impact on some of the young people involved. Table 5.9 details the responses of interviewees when asked about the contribution of the project to a number of specified outcomes. The table shows that:

- The most significant benefit reported by projects, by some margin, is increased confidence.
- With the exception of physical well-being (which may be considered as dependent on the activity of the project), the contribution of projects to other outcomes is roughly similar.

Once again, with the exception of physical well-being, over 90% of interviewees believed that the benefits accruing to young people would be long term in nature, bringing benefit to the young person after they had left the project.

Table 5.9 - Benefits of project activity

Benefit	Percentage of projects reporting change				
	(1) Little benefit	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Significant benefit
Increased confidence	0	0	7	41	52
Increased achievement and learning	0	1	22	38	39
Increased motivation	0	3	22	38	37
Improved communication skills	0	1	23	41	35
Improved relationship with others	0	0	14	53	33
Increased engagement	0	2	18	48	32
Greater social awareness	0	1	29	38	32
New transferable skills	0	4	21	45	30
Improved mental wellbeing	1	1	25	44	29
Improved physical wellbeing	6	16	37	22	19

Qualitative comments concerning the positive aspects of the projects were grouped together and presented in Table 5.10. As illustrated by the table, interviewees provided myriad responses to this question. The largest

proportion of interviewees made reference to the empowerment and engagement of young people as the “best” thing about their project. Although this was referred to by 43 respondents, this may be considered low given the aims and objectives of the Young People’s Fund in England. The provision of education and training, the development of skills and the improved self confidence were also cited regularly by survey participants.

When asked about difficulties and barriers faced by the projects, logistical difficulties, including, accommodation, transportation and accessibility were most prominent. These were closely followed by concerns over funding (Table 5.11).

Table 5.10 - Best things about the projects

Categorised responses	No. of projects
Empowerment of young people through their participation/ engagement with project and community	43
Education/ training/ development of skills	21
Self confidence	21
Sense of achievement	13
Partnership working	10
Contribution to society	9
Enjoyment and positive focus	8
Enthusiasm	8
Opportunity to be involved	6
Health and physical activity	6
Goodwill/ commitment of staff/ volunteers	5
Commitment	2
Raising aspirations	1
Environmental awareness	1

Note:- Multiple answers to this question were sought

Table 5.11 - Difficulties and barriers faced by projects

Categorised responses	No. of projects
Logistics (accessibility, accommodation/ transportation etc)	32
Funding	31
Reaching and engaging young people from differing backgrounds and with differing abilities	24
Recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers	17
Time	9
Prejudices	9
Working with the community	9
Attendance of young people	6
None	6
Paperwork (funding applications, monitoring and evaluation)	5
Working with other organisations	5
Sustainability	4
Other	3

Note:- Multiple answers to this question were sought

5.6.4 Involvement of young people

As previously mentioned, projects supported by the Young People's Fund are required to demonstrate the active involvement of beneficiaries in the design and delivery of the project. As was discussed in the previous section

interviews with projects found that the form and extent of participation may vary significantly from project to project, with influencing factors including the specified aims of the project and the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of both the young people and adults involved. Similarly the telephone survey found variations in the level of involvement between projects.

5.6.4.1 *Involvement in the application and development stages*

Tables 5.12 and 5.13 illustrate the involvement of young people in:

- The initial formulation of a project idea.
- The development the funding application and subsequent project.

Encouragingly, and in line with the stipulations of YPF, the majority of organisations did involve young people in the initial formulation of the project idea. In addition, just over two thirds of organisations also gathered the opinions of young people by means of a formal structured questionnaire (Table 5.12). As was the found in the case study visits survey respondents predominantly involved young people through dialogue of a formal and informal nature, indicating again that involvement may have been more peripheral than it was integral to the project development.

Just under half of the projects included in the survey gauged the opinions of young people through their involvement on management/ steering groups. Given the evidence presented in Chapter 3, suggesting that greater ownership by young people will increase the success of the project this is a practice which should be encouraged.

It is however acknowledged that this process may be problematic, especially for established projects or groups (like the majority of those surveyed) or smaller organisations with little resource.

In around one fifth of cases it appears as if young people were not involved in the initial formulation of the project.

Table 5.12 - Involvement of young people in the initial development of the project

	Percentage
Consulted young people by speaking with them	96
Surveyed young people using a structured survey	67
Young people are already on the management / steering group	45
Young people were not involved in the initial development of the project, but were involved once the project was up and running	17

Number of respondents: 100

Note:- Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple answers

As can be seen in Table 5.13, the involvement of young people in the development of the funding application and subsequent activity varied significantly between projects. However, with 47% of organisations claiming that the input of adults and young people was evenly distributed, it would appear that the principles of the fund are being embraced by many organisations. One project stated that the application for funding from BIG and development of project activity was undertaken exclusively by adults. It is unclear why this should be the case given the requirements of the Young People's Fund.

Table 5.13 - Involvement of young people in the development of the application and subsequent project

	Percentage of projects (%)
Even Mix	47
More adult input than young people	28
More young people input than adult	21
Exclusively developed by young people	2
Application by adults, development more young people involved	1
Exclusively developed by adults	1
Total	100

Number of respondents: 100

5.6.4.2 The skills brought by young people

Young people possessed a range of skills which were of value in the development of the funding application and project itself, the most significant of which was knowledge of the target group, cited by 90% of respondents.

As Table 5.14 illustrates, few projects felt that young people had the skills to contribute to project management and application writing. This may be an accurate reflection of the target group involved in the project and/ or the

complex range of skills required to fulfil these tasks. However, it may equally reflect the fact that young people were not included in this process, and that projects do not fully know how this could be done.

Given that the active participation of children and young people in all aspects of service delivery is a relatively new and innovative development, it may take time to be fully integrated into established structures. This is an issue that has been identified in relation to other projects involving young people (see chapter 3).

Table 5.14 - Skills brought by young people to the development process

	Percentage of projects (%)
Knowledge of the target group	90
Communication Skills	66
Project Management Skills	15
Application writing skills	7
Other	5

Number of respondents: 100

Note:- Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple answers

Organisations were asked about the support and training that was required by young people to enable them to contribute to the development of the funding application and project (Table 5.15). It was found that training to improve networking skills and support to communicate with the local council and other formal institutions were provided most frequently, cited by 63% and 54% of projects respectively. In addition, it was found that:

- The project management skills of young people were only developed in 43% of projects.
- Training in application writing was provided by 33% of respondents. In addition, many projects commented that young people were not involved in the development of the application process.

This finding would suggest that projects should strive to be more proactive in facilitating the development of project management and application writing skills among their young people. In doing this, projects may also make a greater contribution to the wider aims of Every Child Matters. Through nurturing qualities such as team working, time management, verbal and written communication and self confidence, important

transferable skills for adult life, projects which currently focus on enjoying and achieving may expand their contribution into areas such as future economic well-being.

Table 5.15 - Training and support required by young people

	Percentage of projects (%)
Networking skills (bringing together the right people to make the application work)	63
Support to communicate with the local council and other formal organisations	54
Project management skills	43
Technical skills (how to make costings, use Excel & Word, prepare an attractive document, etc.)	35
Training in peer mentoring	35
Application writing skills	33
Other	23

Number of respondents: 100

Note:- Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple answers

5.6.4.3 Involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity

The responses of survey participants indicate that young people are actively involved in the development and evaluation of project activity (Table 5.16). Young people were also involved in the delivery of project activity in 68% of cases. While this is a lower percentage than that achieved in other aspects, this may reflect the type of activity undertaken by the project. For example, projects featuring outdoor pursuits may require qualified adult staff to lead activity to ensure the safety of participants.

Table 5.16 - Role of young people in the delivery of project activity

	Percentage of projects (%)
They review the activity	94
They design what is done	88
They engage potential young people	85
They deliver the activity	68

Number of respondents: 100

Note:- Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple answers

5.6.4.4 Impact of change

As previously mentioned (section 5.6.2.4), in 61% of cases, those who were involved in the initial development of the application and project are the same people who are currently delivering the project.

Among those where project personnel and/ or young people have changed the majority of interviewees did not feel that this had impacted negatively on the project. Indeed, many felt that a degree of change was a positive thing. Specific comments on the impact of change included:

- It is positive as new young people came in with different, new ideas.
- Change was positive as there were new people with more input - energy, skills bigger variety of skills to pass on to the young people.
- The project is constantly evolving, this is positive as it keeps up momentum and energy levels.

However, there is cause for some concern as a small number of projects responded to this question stating that changes within the group of young people had made no impact on the project as they are not involved in all aspects of activity. Specific comments included:

- Changes have had no impact on the project as the team of adult supporters has stayed the same while the young people have changed.
- The project application was done by the management of the charity and the project's activities are delivered by employees and volunteers.
- The paid staff are running it.
- The people who deliver the project are adults.

5.6.5 Future sustainability

In order to make a significant and long term difference to the lives of children and young people, it is recognised that projects should work towards achievement of sustainability. Accordingly, interviewees were asked for their thoughts on what will happen following the cessation of their BIG Funding.

Ninety three percent of projects indicated that they had planned for this eventuality and 70% felt that they would be able to sustain their project after their BIG funding comes to an end. Further:

- 15% believed they would be able to sustain the project to some extent.
- 11% did not know if they could sustain the project.
- 4% were sure that they could not sustain the project in the absence of BIG funding.

When asked to provide further detail of their plans the majority of organisations simply stated that they would be looking for alternative sources of funding to enable them to continue the work of the project. Other comments included:

- Plans to train enough volunteers to deliver the project when funding runs out and then look at alternative funding.
- The young people have produced a CD which the local record shop is going to sell. The profits will go to the project. Two bands have been invited to play elsewhere and the payment will go back into the project.
- The project is in the process of looking to return to social enterprise.
- The university has cleared us for the placement for students, for which we get paid. We are also going to look at a range of social enterprise opportunities.

Interviewees were also asked about the way and extent to which young people will be involved in planning what happens post BIG funding. Responses to this question were very mixed and although answers were qualitative in nature it has been possible to group responses into three main categories:

- Around 37% of projects stated that young people are involved in forward planning to some extent. The level of this involvement may however vary.
- 28% of interviewees stated that young people are not involved in this process.
- A further 25% stated that it was too early to be considering this option post funding. Some of these did indicate that young people would have some involvement when the time came to make these decisions.

Once again, this question highlighted the mixed levels of participation by young people in project management and planning. The full spectrum of comments is illustrated below:

- Young people are involved in looking at bids and doing presentations to secure funding.
- Young people will be very involved post funding. At that stage it is intended that young people will be doing the main running of the project.
- Part of the original concept of the project was for the young people to manage the project's funding so they do this already with a massive amount of help.
- They are the directors - we are accountable to them so they are extremely involved.
- At present young people are not involved. But a Young people's Forum has been started, with the aim to look to address the project.
- Young people are aware but not involved.

- Not a matter for the young people really.

5.6.6 Conclusions

Survey responses indicate that the projects are well aligned with the outcomes set out in Every Child Matters and that they are making a positive contribution to the achievement of these goals. In addition the projects appeared to value this framework as a basis for planning and developing activity.

In relation to project activity it was found that:

- The majority of activity currently centres on enjoying and achieving.
- Just over half of projects were focused on creative arts, outdoor activities and sports.
- There is a lack of projects contributing to the achievement of economic well being.

It was found that the majority (86%) grants have been used to implement projects conceived by existing organisations. This may go some way to explaining the levels of engagement and participation of young people described previously, as it may take time to alter structures and processes in established organisations.

While the principles of the Young People's Fund to involve young people in all aspects of service delivery are being embraced to an extent, participation is still lacking in application and project management processes. Around a third of projects reported more adult involvement than young people involvement in the design and delivery of projects. This supports the finding from the qualitative interviews that involvement of young people does not appear to be as evident within the projects as might have been expected. In addition the survey shows that young people were most commonly involved through consultations and surveys, supporting the earlier finding that there has not been a cultural shift in the nature of involvement of young people as yet.

Projects felt that young people possessed a range of skills which were of value in the development of the project, the most significant of which was knowledge of the target group. However few projects felt that young people had the skills to contribute to project management and application writing. It is unclear whether or not this perception is a true reflection of the abilities of the young people however; in either case it is recommended that projects should strive to be more proactive in facilitating the development of project management and application writing skills among their young people. In doing this, projects may also make a greater contribution to the wider aims of Every Child Matters. Through nurturing qualities such as team working, time management, verbal and written communication and self confidence, important transferable skills for adult life, projects which currently focus on enjoying and achieving may expand their contribution into areas such as future economic well-being.

The survey also supported the earlier finding that projects are developing partnerships with a wide range of agencies. Survey respondents however indicated that although Local Authorities are one of the major partners, there is still some hesitation and lack of support in some areas.

It is encouraging that, in the majority of cases, financial support from the Young People's Fund is being used to develop projects with long term objectives as opposed to one-off interventions. In this way the contribution of the programme to the achievement of the outcomes contained in Every Child Matters is likely to be increased. The survey does however indicate that, at present, many organisations do not have a clear idea of how they will sustain the project when BIG Funding comes to an end.

5.7 Key Findings in England

- Projects are offering young people opportunities to engage in positive activities, which to varying degrees are expected to contribute to their personal development and in many cases provide them with a range of skills that can be transferred to other areas of their lives.

- Due to the strong inter-relationship between each of the Every Child Matters outcomes, the majority of projects are contributing or expecting to contribute to most, if not all of the outcomes to some extent.
- The majority of projects in the Grants to Organisations Strand and National Grants Strand report that they are involving young people, which is encouraging. However at this early stage this involvement is often marginal, with young people in many cases continuing to be recipients of a service or provision rather than key drivers.
- Involvement of young people is often greater once projects are established than is the case in the delivery phase, and staff are expecting involvement to increase over the life of their project.
- By requiring young people to complete their own application and paying their Grant directly to them, the Grants to Individuals Strand appears to be ensuring that young people are truly designing, developing, managing, delivering and evaluating their own projects.
- Projects have been successful in engaging many of those who are considered hardest to reach, with partnership working cited as a key mechanism for reaching these young people.

6 The Programme in Scotland

6.1 Executive Summary

6.1.1 Introduction

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) commissioned this five-year evaluation of the Young People's Fund to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Young People's Fund in each of the four countries in the United Kingdom. This report details the findings from the first year of the evaluation in Scotland.

6.1.2 Project take up in Scotland

Between August 2005 and April 2007 a total of 311 applications were received and 135 awards made to projects in Scotland, totalling over £15.5 million. Award values ranged greatly from £6,500 to £1.2 million and provided projects with funding to achieve one of the three programme aims, which were to provide young people with:

- Opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives and contribute to their local communities.
- More and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities.
- More and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves.

6.1.3 Local Area Panels

Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS), with the support of YouthLink Scotland, was awarded the contract to establish a Local Area Panel (LAP) in each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. This was done through the local Volunteer Centres which advertised and used other contacts to attract

a wide range of young people. This has led to the successful recruitment of almost 500 young people, from a range of backgrounds.

Panels were asked to review applications to the programme and make a recommendation to the national committee as to whether or not the project should be funded, with the national committee, a group that also has young people as members, making the final decision. The national committee, who makes decisions on which YPF projects are funded, valued the local knowledge of the LAPs, which were able to highlight applications where there appeared to be a high degree of substitution with existing provision. Indeed, it appears that the main impact of LAPs is at this level rather than influencing the types of application made.

A significant benefit of the panels was the personal development of the young people involved, who developed a range of skills and experiences including working in a group; understanding their local area; and increased volunteering activity.

Moreover, participants are encouraged to gain awards to recognise their participation including a Millennium Volunteer award, Youth Achievement award and a Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework level 5 award in Participative Democracy.

One difficulty has been the limited number of applications that some panels have had to deal with. Where numbers of applications have been low workers have chosen to run social events, or personal development events to keep the group together. However, whilst beneficial for the young people it may not be maximising the return on investment.

6.1.4 Project profiles

Projects are aiming to achieve the programme outcomes in a variety of ways, with the activities that projects were involved in varying significantly. Amongst the 25 projects that were involved in the survey it was found that:

- The most common project activity on offer is the provision of a youth centre and/or drop in facility, with a quarter of projects offering this provision.

- Around a fifth of projects are mainly focussed on outdoor activities, games and sports.
- 17% involve creative arts, whilst another 17% focus on education, employment, vocational and life skills.

In line with the programme aims, projects are working with young people aged 11 to 25, although the majority of project participants are aged 11 to 16. Around half of projects reported that they are working with young people who are at greatest risk of exclusion or offending and projects also reported targeting those young people from within the programme's target groups, with:

- 76% of projects targeting young people with no opportunities to volunteer or facing barriers to volunteering.
- 92% targeting young people dealing with many and complicated problems.
- 92% targeting young people who do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community.
- 84% targeting teenage girls.

6.1.5 Alignment with the aims of the Young People's Fund

Projects are not only working with the programme's target groups and fitting with the priority project areas, but also appear to be well aligned with the programme's outcomes. Although at this early stage projects were unable to provide evidence of meeting the programme outcomes, there was significant evidence that each project is aiming to contribute to one or more of the programme outcomes. In doing so, the projects expect to contribute to the overarching aim of helping young people to "learn new things and take part in healthy and positive activities that make them feel good about themselves".

Despite the fact that the majority of case study projects had indicated on their application that they are aiming to provide young people with "more

and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities”, the case study visits found limited evidence of this. This could be due to the early stage that the projects are at and given the nature of this aim it may be that, once time has been spent building the capacity of the young people, they will become more involved in making decision about policies and issues affecting them and their communities. This should be explored in future years.

6.1.6 Involvement of young people

Projects that apply to the Young People's Fund are expected to involve young people throughout the project, from development, through delivery to evaluation. For the majority of projects, involving young people in the development phase meant conducting some level of consultation. The reported benefits from carrying out consultations included: confirming demand for the project; using young people's ideas to refine the activity; and securing buy-in from the young people.

It is encouraging that consultation was so widespread during the development phase, however the involvement of young people in a more integral way at this stage was far less common.

Both the survey and case study visits found more significant levels of involvement of young people in the delivery phase. Consultation also featured heavily at this stage, although mainly in a more informal and ad hoc way than was the case in the development phase.

The fact that projects are gathering regular ongoing feedback from young people is commendable and to be encouraged, however given the aims of the programme it would be expected that the involvement of young people would go beyond this method alone. For a small number of the case study projects however, this was not the case. There were reports from some case study projects about difficulties in engaging young people in such groups, but this is expected to increase over time.

More positively, the survey found that over one third of projects are engaging young people through formal groups such as youth steering groups or as representatives on the overall project Steering Group, giving them a role in the management of the project.

The findings suggest that as time goes on levels of involvement of young people within the majority of these projects will increase, as capacity is built. This hypothesis can be tested in year two of the evaluation by visiting projects that have been in possession of their Young People's Fund money for longer than was the case in year one. This should also include re-visiting some of this year's case study projects to assess progress over time.

6.1.7 Impact of project activity

At the time of the case study visits the majority of projects were at the early stages of development and were therefore yet to see any impact. They were however confident that their project would generate significant benefits for the young people involved. Survey participants felt that their projects were achieving extremely positive outcomes, in terms of the behaviour, well-being and social skills of young people.

6.1.8 Partnership working

Around half of the projects in the survey (52%) stated that there was a partnership element to their project. Partnership working appeared to be more prevalent amongst the case study projects who all reported some form of partnership working. This difference may be due to the fact that survey projects are smaller than case study projects.

Case study projects reported that partnership working was key to reaching young people and engaging them with their project. This was particularly important when targeting those who are hardest to reach. Partner organisations that already had contact with young people would refer appropriate young people into the project.

6.1.9 Conclusions and next steps

The Young People's Fund in Scotland has funded a number of well intentioned and interesting projects. Both the qualitative and quantitative research found that there is a strong fit between the activities of the

projects and the overall aims and outcomes of the programme in Scotland. The programme has also been successful in funding the prioritised programme projects and projects are working with the priority groups identified by BIG. Projects have identified BME groups and older young people (aged over 20) as groups that they are finding particularly difficult to reach. This should be monitored in future years of the evaluation.

Participants felt that they are achieving extremely positive outcomes, particularly in terms of engaging young people, developing their confidence and helping them to make positive changes within their lives. These impacts were not measured during the case study visits due to the early stage that the projects were at; however this will be a focus in future years of the evaluation.

The local area panels and national committee provide an opportunity for young people to be involved in the decision making process about how YPF grants are awarded. The young people involved appear to be benefiting significantly, however low levels of applications in a number of areas has meant that panels have not had the opportunity to review as many applications as they would have liked.

All projects are involving young people to some extent, with the main method of involvement being through consultation. However the extent of that involvement appears to be limited in some cases, especially in the development stage, where the only method of involvement in the majority of cases appears to have been through consultation. The extent to which young people are involved does however seem to be growing over the lifetime of the projects and this will continue to be a focus of the evaluation.

Partnership working appears to be extensive and in many cases strong. For many this is an important way of reaching young people and beginning to engage with them. This is particularly important for reaching the most excluded and hardest to reach groups.

6.2 The Programme in Scotland

The Young People's Fund in Scotland has a grant allocation of £20 million. Applications had to be received by August 2007, but money can be spent until 2012. This is available to help young people aged 11 to 25:

“learn new things and take part in healthy and positive activities that make them feel good about themselves”.

More specifically, the intended outcomes of the programme are that young people will have:

- Opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives and contribute to their local communities.
- More and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities.
- More and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves.

Across these outcomes are a series of target groups, namely:

- Young people aged 11 to 25.
- Young people dealing with many and complicated problems.
- Young people with no opportunities to volunteer, or facing barriers to volunteering.
- Young people who do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community.
- Teenage girls.

Moreover, BIG is clear that priority will be given where projects:

- Encourage teenage girls to access activities.
- Remove the barriers to volunteering or increase volunteering opportunities.
- Help young people adopt active, healthy and positive lifestyles.
- Encourage young people to make positive changes in their behaviour.
- Bring together young people from different backgrounds and experiences.
- Support young people through periods of transition.
- Help young people gain confidence and skills to become active citizens.

The Fund in Scotland has been split across three types of projects, namely local projects, wider inclusion projects and new ideas. These are described in Table 6.1 below.

Local projects	Wider inclusion projects	New ideas
Projects based in one local authority area Panels of young people will be set up in each local authority area to prioritise local projects Indicative allocation for each local authority area Total of £11.4 million for local projects Min. £5,000 Max. none, but be aware of local allocation	Projects that cover more than one local authority area Projects that target non-geographic communities, e.g. disability projects Total of £2.85 million available Min. £10,000 Max. £500,000	Projects that try out new approaches for engaging young people Projects that carry out groundbreaking work Projects that adapt approaches that have been successful elsewhere Total of £4.75 million available Min. £200,000 Max. £1,000,000

Each local authority area was given a minimum allocation. This was in proportion to the population base, but with a minimum set so that the level of investment could still be significant in smaller areas.

6.3 Policy and Environment

6.3.1 Key Policies in Scotland

Analysis of the policy environment in Scotland shows that the aims and objectives of the Programme in Scotland can be seen to complement and in turn be supported by the country's current key policy documents.

The intended outcomes of the Programme include enabling young people to contribute to their communities and to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities. This is strongly reflected in a number of policy documents, including:

- Better Communities: Closing the Gap (2002) and Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities (2004) both of which emphasise the importance of increasing 'social capital' and the role of community learning and development, of which youth work is a key element, in strengthening social capital by improving the knowledge, skills, confidence, motivation, networks and resources of individuals and groups within the community.
- The Volunteering Strategy (2004) places particular emphasis on involving young people in voluntary activity and states that priority should be given to removing barriers to volunteering and increasing opportunities for groups who do not normally participate in voluntary activity.
- In A Partnership for a Better Scotland (2004) the Scottish Executive recognises the importance of more active involvement of young people in the lives of their communities and wider society as a means to creating stronger, safer communities.
- Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those freely in all matters

affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”.

Helping young people to learn new things and providing opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives are key aims of the programme in Scotland. Whilst these issues are addressed in some of the policy documents listed above, they are a specific focus of “Life Through Learning, Learning Through Life” the lifelong learning strategy of the Scottish Executive published in 2003, which aims to make progress towards a country in which:

- People have the confidence, enterprise, knowledge, creativity and skills they need to participate in economic, social and civil life.
- People are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions.
- People have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances.

Similarly, “More Choices, More Chances” the 2006 strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Scotland, prioritises education and training outcomes. In doing so it recognises the additional barriers to education, training and employment faced by young people in certain groups. The Young People’s Fund programme in Scotland has identified a number of target groups with whom projects should work to help these young people overcome the additional barriers that they face.

The programme in Scotland also aims to engage young people in healthy and positive activities. Health is a key policy area in Scotland, reflected in Improving Health in Scotland – The Challenge (2003), which provides a framework to support the delivery of the health improvement policies set out in “Partnership for Care”, Scotland’s White Paper on Health. In line with the Young People’s Fund, the framework highlights the teenage transition as a priority area, recognising that the transition from childhood through adolescence to adulthood is a period in which young people are subject to major external influences and must feel supported to achieve their potential, maintain self-esteem and avoid a range of health damaging behaviours.

In addition, the national physical activity strategy highlights the potential of increased physical activity to contribute to the successful delivery of a range of social, economic, environmental and community policies, while "Sport 21" aims to make sport more widely available to all through the "Active Schools" initiative. Active Schools aims to increase physical activity levels among school age children in general, but with a focus on:

- Girls and young women.
- Young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Young people with physical and learning disabilities.
- Young people in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

As can be seen, the aims and objectives of the active schools programme and the focus on girls and young women align closely with the goals of Young People's Fund in Scotland.

The recent publication of the national youth work strategy, *Moving Forward: A Strategy for Improving Young People's Chances Through Youth Work* (2007) provides a synthesis of all of these key policies. It identifies the key role of youth work in not only enhancing the lives of young people from all backgrounds, but also in acting as an early intervention and preventative measure, by engaging in positive activities young people who might otherwise become involved in anti-social behaviour, alcohol or drug misuse, or who would leave school with few qualifications and skills and perhaps not progress into education, employment or training. The national youth work agency in Scotland is YouthLink, which acts as the collective voice of youth work and represents the sector with regard to policy and practice.

6.3.2 Evaluations of Similar Programmes

There are a number of initiatives with which the operation, aims and objectives of the Young People's Fund in Scotland can be compared. Findings from evaluations of these programmes can add depth and provide a useful comparison for the findings from the YPF evaluation.

The Young Advisors Pilot programme, run by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, aims to remove barriers between young people and key stakeholders. It provides young people with the skills to influence change and a range of opportunities to be involved in decision making and policy development. The young advisors are regarded as a move from consultation to action.

Evaluation of the Young Advisors Programme (2006) revealed that the views of young people were highly valued by decision makers, although there was little evidence that the advice of young people was indeed influencing change in working practices. The evaluation did however conclude that the programme is still at an early stage and the fact that agencies are beginning to utilise the service should be regarded as a positive step that should be further developed in the future. Similarly it might be expected that the involvement of young people in YPF projects might not lead to immediate changes in working practices amongst services, agencies and perhaps even projects themselves.

The Mentor UK Rural Youth Project aimed to increase understanding of the experience of young people living in rural areas, specifically their experience of drugs and alcohol. Young people were recruited, trained and supported by Mentor UK to assess the effectiveness of the drug prevention projects and give feedback on prevention resources.

Key findings from the evaluation of this project suggest that engaging young people can be difficult as some do not want to give up their free time, whilst others are already heavily engaged in other projects; forming appropriate partnerships with agencies who work with at risk groups is a more successful way of engaging these groups than through partnerships with established youth forums who tend to contact young people through schools; and local workers are key to maintaining the motivation of young people. Again, it is expected that the evaluation of YPF in Scotland is likely to identify similar findings.

Millennium Volunteers (MV) is a UK wide initiative, supported by government, to promote sustained volunteering among young people aged 16-25, but particularly among those with no previous experience of volunteering or those vulnerable to social exclusion.

Evaluation of the initiative stated that youth involvement was reported positively in the majority of cases, however, as was found with the mentor UK Rural Youth Project some reported challenges in involving young people, including lack of resources and time on the part of managers and volunteers and a lack of interest on behalf of young people in serving on committees. The current evaluation will explore whether these issues are evident in the YPF projects.

Overall the MV programme was found to have been successful in generating a wide variety of opportunities for young people and, while additional recognition of the barriers to volunteering faced by those from disadvantaged backgrounds was thought necessary, MV proved to be influential in the personal development of many young people. In addition, respondents spoke enthusiastically about the contribution that MV could make in the search for employment, thereby aiding future economic wellbeing.

6.3.3 Conclusions

The Young People's Fund in Scotland appears to fit well within the current strategic context and is well placed to make a valuable contribution to key areas of policy including, education and employability, health and wellbeing, community safety and social inclusion.

In addition, the priority groups targeted by the Young People's Fund, namely those with no opportunity to volunteer or who face barriers to volunteering, those dealing with multiple and complex problems, those who lack positive relationships with family, friends or community and teenage girls are also recognised as priority groups within the current political environment.

Evaluations of other UK projects with similar aims to the young people's fund indicate that the YPF programme is likely to have a positive impact on the personal development of the young people involved, however projects may experience difficulties with securing involvement from some young people, whilst staff may feel that they do not have enough resources to involve young people. These are all issues that will be tested in the YPF evaluation.

6.4 Project Take Up

Applications made to the Young People's Fund in Scotland from August 2005 were each reviewed at one of the bi-monthly national committees. This report is based on management information provided by BIG in June 2007, thereby incorporating data on those projects whose applications were approved at one of the 8 national committees held between February 2006 and April 2007. During that time, from a total of 311 applications there were 135 awards made to projects in Scotland, totalling over £15.5 million. Award values ranged greatly from £6,500 to £1.2 million. Table 6.2 shows the distribution of award values across the projects:

Table 6.2 – Award Values

Award Amount	Number of Awards
Less than £10,000	4
£10,000 to £19,999	7
£20,000 to £49,999	30
£50,000 to £99,999	36
£100,000 to £199,999	40
£200,000 to £299,999	13
£300,000 to £399,999	4
More than £400,000	1
Total	135

Eleven of the projects that received funding are operating across the whole of Scotland. A further 17 are projects that serve more than one local authority, but are not Scotland wide projects. The remaining 107 projects serve only one local authority area. The geographical distribution of Awards is shown in table 6.3:

Table 6.3 – Geographical Distribution of Awards

Local Authority	Population aged 11 - 25*	No. local area projects	Value of Awards	Award amount per head of population	No. multiple area projects**
Multiple areas but not Scotland Wide	N/A	17	£2,708,679	N/A	N/A
Scotland Wide	948775	11	£2,972,114	N/A	N/A
Glasgow City	121539	17	£2,174,185	£17.89	6
City of Edinburgh	95500	9	£1,427,521	£14.95	4
Fife	65494	7	£581,071	£8.87	1
North Lanarkshire	62161	2	£502,436	£8.08	1
South Lanarkshire	55545	2	£257,891	£4.64	-
Aberdeen City	45645	1	£80,000	£1.75	-
Aberdeenshire	39722	3	£247,061	£6.22	1
Highland	35202	6	£310,260	£8.81	2
Dundee City	31690	5	£394,083	£12.44	4
Renfrewshire	31230	2	£328,223	£10.51	-
West Lothian	29171	2	£193,684	£6.64	3
Falkirk	25827	1	£194,606	£7.54	2
North Ayrshire	24675	2	£359,941	£14.59	1
Dumfries & Galloway	23371	3	£181,466	£7.76	-
Perth & Kinross	22074	8	£438,916	£21.92	1
East Ayrshire	21536	2	£87,824	£4.08	1
East Dunbartonshire	20246	-	-	£0.00	1
South Ayrshire	18683	2	£117,349	£6.28	1
Angus	18172	1	£37,101	£2.04	1
West Dunbartonshire	17843	5	£306,842	£17.20	1
Stirling	17207	3	£209,075	£12.15	1
Scottish Borders	16386	4	£274,549	£16.76	1
East Renfrewshire	16061	1	£24,999	£1.56	-
Inverclyde	15619	2	£327,008	£20.94	1
Moray	15021	2	£22,862	£1.52	1
Argyll & Bute	14710	2	£252,480	£17.16	1
East Lothian	14050	5	£285,684	£20.33	2
Midlothian	13984	3	£162,511	£11.62	4
Clackmannanshire	8835	-	-	£0.00	1
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	4355	2	£24,674	£5.67	1
Shetland Islands	4049	2	£86,873	£21.46	1
Orkney Islands	3172	1	£40,848	£12.88	1
Total		135	£15,612,816		

*Population data taken from 2001 census (Scottish Census Results Online)

** Three of the projects also serve East, North East, South and West Scotland, however no information was available on precisely which Authority areas are served, therefore these project are not counted in this column

The table is set out in order of size of population of young people. It can be seen that Glasgow, with the largest population under the age of 25, is as might be expected also the Local Authority area that has benefited most from the programme. Glasgow has received over £2 million funding for 17 Glasgow specific projects and is also served by six multiple area projects. Edinburgh, with the next highest population comes second to Glasgow in terms of both numbers of Awards and Award amounts. The City has received almost £1.5 million for nine Edinburgh specific projects and is also served by four multiple area projects.

The table shows that between February 2006 and April 2007 distribution of funding varied greatly across the Local Authority areas. South Lanarkshire for example has a relatively large population of young people aged 11 to 25 (around 55,500), yet only has two funded projects in the area, which have received £258,000. On the other hand Perth & Kinross, which has a population of young people that is less than a half that of South Lanarkshire (around 22,000) has received two thirds more funding (£438,916) to fund four times the number of projects. In addition Perth & Kinross is served by a project that is working across multiple areas. The amount of Award per head in South Lanarkshire is £4.64 compared to £21.92 in Perth & Kinross.

The Award per head figure is useful for giving an indication of which areas have benefited most and least in relation to population size. However, these figures do only provide a rough guide as they do not give any indication of levels of need in an area. For example Glasgow, which is one of the areas with a high Award amount per head of population, is also the area in Scotland with greatest levels of deprivation and social need (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2006). It would therefore be reasonable to expect higher levels of awards in this area.

It would also be expected that amounts per head would be high in areas with extremely small populations. This is due to the fact that economies of scale can not be achieved in these areas and a minimum level of funding is required, and indeed was allocated (minimum £100,000 for each area), regardless of population size. Only when a minimum level is set can the potential impact of projects in areas with low populations be safeguarded.

There are two Local Authority areas that have yet to receive funding for a project working specifically in their area. These are:

- East Dunbartonshire
- Clackmannanshire.

Although they do not have their own specific projects, these areas are each served by a multiple area project.

There are also 18 Local Authority areas that have received funding for two or fewer local projects, which gives an indication of the low levels of applications available for consideration by the Local Area Panels. This will be discussed further in the section that follows.

The analysis shows that to date the Young People's Fund money has been spread such that every Local Authority area in Scotland will have received some benefit from the programme. There are Local Authority areas however where there has been extremely low benefit from the fund thus far and it may be that future marketing needs to target these areas specifically to attempt to redress the balance.

6.5 Project Feedback Qualitative

6.5.1 Method

Case study visits took place with eight Scottish projects that were randomly selected to be case studies. The only criterion for selection as a case study project was that the project had received an award of £100,000 or more. Given the likely relationship between scale, complexity and impact it was felt that with these larger projects a qualitative approach was required to develop an understanding of this relationship. Information on the smaller projects was captured through a sample telephone survey and is discussed in the next chapter.

At this early stage in the delivery of the projects the views of young people were not sought, however it is the intention that young people will be consulted in future years of the evaluation.

The geographical distribution of selected projects was:

- 3 Scotland wide projects

- 2 Projects serving multiple areas
- 1 East Lothian local project
- 1 Midlothian local project
- 1 Glasgow local project.

The value of the Awards that the case study projects had received are shown in table 6.4

Table 6.4 – Case study projects award values

Award Value	Number of projects
£100,000 – £150,000	4
£150,000 - £200,000	1
£200,000 - £300,000	1
£300,000 +	2

The types of projects visited varied, and are shown in table 6.5.

Table 6.5 – Case study project types

Project type	Number of projects
Justice and citizenship	1
Arts, Culture & Media	1
Sport development	2
Disability	1
Health Issues (e.g. sexual health, substance abuse etc)	1
Employability	1
General Youth Project	1

Each of the projects had indicated on their application which of the three main aims their project was addressing. The case study projects indicated the following:

- 3 projects cover all three aims.
- 4 projects are aiming to involve young people in making decisions that affect their community.

- 1 project is aiming to help young people to have the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives and contribute to their local communities.

Visits were also made to three Local Area Panels and to the National Committee to observe the operation of this element of the programme. This included an interview with Volunteer Development Scotland, which is responsible for the co-ordination and facilitation of the Local Area Panels.

6.5.2 Local Area Panels

The development of local area panels (LAPs) was a key innovation of the programme in Scotland. The development and facilitation of the panels was funded through the Young People's Fund as a key part of the programme infrastructure. Delivery of the programme is the responsibility of Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS), with the support of YouthLink Scotland, which was awarded the contract following competitive tender.

A key task for VDS was to establish an LAP in each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. This was done through the local Volunteer Centres which advertised and used other contacts to attract a wide range of young people. The panels vary slightly in size, but most have between 10-20 members. Recruitment was easier in some areas than others, but in time only one or two areas appear to be struggling for membership. As at October 2007:

- All 32 local authority areas have a panel in place.
- 252 recommendations have been made by 32 local area panels.
- 516 young people have been recruited and trained, which can be broken down as follows:
 - 41 disaffected young people
 - 104 young people experiencing barriers to volunteering

- 59 young people with multiple and complex problems
- 208 teenage girls
- 104 unknown.

It should be noted however that these categories are open to a degree of subjectivity and some young people might fall into more than one category.

The committees meet on a regular basis, with meetings scheduled around application times. There is a small window between BIG receiving an application, the local panel reviewing it and the national committee making its decision. The establishment and maintenance of such an infrastructure, involving many young people is a significant achievement.

The panels are asked to comment on applications to the programme, but the final decision on whether a project gains funding rests with the national committee.

The national committee has a number of young people as members. Our observations following our invited attendance at a committee meeting at which a number of awards were discussed and, either approved for funding or rejected, were as follows:

- The culture and chairing of the meeting contributed to the willingness of the young people to both contribute to the debate and challenge the thinking.
- The young people were given space to contribute, often speaking first.
- The input of young people suggests that they regularly contribute to the discussion and that their views and opinions are valued by the adults on the committee.
- The young people also developed and challenged the thinking of the other young people on the committee, occasionally being the first to comment on the input of other young people.

- The committee as a whole saw the input of the Local Area Panels as being invaluable in terms of their understanding of the local context for a project and were keen to follow their recommendations where possible.

In most cases the national committee will follow the LAP recommendation. However, this is not universal with around one in ten being reversed, a not unreasonable number overall. The divergence is explained by the committee having additional information, for example about the financial status of the bidding organisation; the LAP is simply asked to comment on the need for a project at a local area level. We were given a range of examples where the local knowledge of young people has been important in highlighting applications where there appeared to be a high degree of substitution with existing provision. This is a valuable contribution.

Indeed, it appears that the main impact of LAPs is at this level rather than influencing the types of application made. In this sense it is difficult to know how many of the national committee's decisions would have been different in the absence of the recommendations made, but the infrastructure appears to increase the confidence of such decisions.

That said, there was also some frustration where recommendations by LAPs were not followed. This appeared to be as much an issue of communication as disagreement. The LAPs we visited were clear about their role, but where their decision was reversed they often were not clear why. VDS has made representation to BIG around this issue and we understand that improved feedback is now being provided.

A further benefit which was apparent from our visits to LAPs was the development of the panel members themselves. A significant amount of time and effort had gone in to building the group dynamic and developing ways of working, through which all young people could contribute. This has given the young people a range of skills and experiences including:

- Working in a group
- Respect for others
- Understanding their local area

- Self confidence
- Increased volunteering activity.

These are valuable skills which will benefit participants in later years. Moreover, participants are encouraged to gain awards to recognise their participation including:

- MV awards (described earlier in section 6.3.2).
- Youth Achievement (awarded by UK Youth to recognise young people taking on progressive levels of responsibility through involvement in a wide range of self-identified activities).

By October 2007, 256 young people had registered for either a MV award (only available to those aged 16-25) or a Youth Achievement award (only available to those aged 14+).

All young people participating in the Young People's Panels (YPP) have the opportunity to gain formal acknowledgement for their learning experience through Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF). It is expected that there will be 235 successful candidates, who will receive a certificate from the Adam Smith College, Fife, which acknowledges the young person's learning at level five. SCQF has 12 levels and level five is the equivalent to a credit standard or an Intermediate two module. Participative Democracy is the title of the certificate as this emphasises the essential role of young people taking part in a decision-making process on behalf of BIG's Young People's Fund. By completing the YPP training young people will receive a SCQF Participative Democracy certificate to demonstrate they can:

- Use research techniques
- Articulate awareness about where you live and the issues that affect young people
- Devise and deliver a presentation to other people
- Work in a group with respect and fairness

- Communicate effectively through body language, active listening and speaking
- Negotiate priorities
- Make decisions as an individual and a group member based on needs and priorities
- Support others to participate in a group.

However, a number of issues had also arisen with the panels. Perhaps prime amongst these was the limited number of applications that some had to deal with. The numbers of applications that panels reviewed ranged from 1 to 28, with an average being eight. Table 6.6 summarises the distribution of applications across the 32 panels.

Table 6.6 – Distribution of applications across the 32 panels

Number of applications reviewed	Number of panels
1 to 5	9
6 to 10	18
11 to 20	3
20+	2

Panels were required to meet bi-monthly, with some choosing to meet more frequently to maintain momentum and membership. Where the number of applications was low workers have sought to maintain engagement with the group by running social events, or personal development events. While beneficial for the young people it may not be maximising the return on investment.

One option to increase the number of applications reviewed may have been to have joined some areas together across local authority boundaries. However, this would in turn have raised even greater logistical issues, and these were already sizeable with some very young people required to travel significant distances and often in the evenings. Further, a key benefit of the panels was their local knowledge. From our observations and consultations with panel members this was very localised and would have been diluted at a larger scale. Indeed, in some cases only a few panel members know the area from which the application comes.

This discussion highlights the difficulties involved in agreeing the geographical coverage of such panels, with the implication that smaller is better but with significant cost and deadweight implications.

6.5.3 Case Study Projects

6.5.3.1 Meeting the programme aims

As previously mentioned the overall aim of the programme in Scotland is to help young people “learn new things and take part in healthy and positive activities that make them feel good about themselves”.

More specifically, the intended outcomes of the programme are that young people will have:

- Opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives and contribute to their local communities
- More and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities
- More and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves.

The majority of case study projects were, at the time of interview (February to April 2007) within their first six months of delivery and as such were limited in terms of being able to provide evidence of meeting the programme outcomes. Discussions therefore centred around interviewees describing their projects and explaining how the project expected to meet the outcomes.

All of the projects are confident that engagement with their project is having or will have a positive impact on the young people involved. The varied nature of the projects means that outcomes will also be varied. Despite the fact that five of the case study projects had indicated on their

application that they aim to meet one of the programme outcomes, in reality the majority could claim to be meeting all three.

Examples of activities that projects are engaging in that “provide opportunities for young people to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with change in their lives and contribute to their local communities” include:

- Supporting young deaf people who are leaving school in the transition from school to work or further/higher education through a 5 day residential programme offering courses and workshops on such issues as CV development, managing finances, mock interviews, sex education and drugs education.
- An arts project that targets young people with multiple and complex needs, such as drug addiction, and supports them through artistic media to develop skills and begin to set themselves goals and take control of their lives.

A further example is given in Project Example Scotland 1 below:

Project Example Scotland 1 – Employability project to tackle generational unemployment

One project is working in a deprived area in Glasgow where generational unemployment is a big issue. The YPF funded project is the third level of a project that supports young people from age five to adulthood. The project already had a children's group for those aged 5 to 12 and a youth group for younger teenagers. A need was identified to support older young people make the transition into employment or further to help break the generational unemployment cycle, and YPF funding was secured to do so.

The project works with young people to improve their employability skills and does so through three strands. In strand one the programme is designed by experts on the young people's behalf, although the young people provide ongoing feedback and the programme is shaped based on that feedback and any ideas that the young people have. At this stage young people are engaged in interactive workshops where they begin building basic employability skills, such as interview skills, teambuilding, I.T., first aid etc.

By strand two the young people are more skilled and as such are empowered to make more decisions. They again participate in workshops, this time around volunteering, which again they can shape through feedback. However the aim is for the young people to take responsibility for developing a team project and identifying an individual volunteering opportunity for themselves. Last year the group organised a fundraising event to help young people in the Philippines and invited other groups of local young people along to showcase the work that they were doing. They are also working towards the Millennium Volunteer Awards at this stage, which will give them recognition for their efforts.

Strand three is the youthbank, which is run by the young people so they are completely in control at this stage. Their responsibilities include designing the application form, shortlisting the applications, interviewing applicants and making the decisions on who receives an award.

The project targets young people aged 15 to 25, although the majority are aged 15 to 21. The project aims to work with over 200 young people in its first year. It is working with 40 to 50 young people on an ongoing basis and will work with others through larger, one off events and workshops.

Despite the fact that the majority of case study projects had indicated on their application that they are aiming to provide young people with “more and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities”, the case study visits found little evidence of this. This could be due to the early stage that the projects are at and given the nature of this aim it may be that once time has been spent building the capacity of the young people that they will become more involved in making decision about policies and issues affecting them and their communities.

Alternatively when projects selected this as their aim they may have been focussing on the fact that they are or will be involving young people in the running of the project. This is discussed further in the next section.

There were two extremely strong examples of involving young people in decisions affecting them in their community. One was the Local Area Panels described earlier. The other is described in Project Example Scotland 2 below:

Project Example Scotland 2 – International youth justice project

A large scale national youth justice project has been developed by two large national organisations, which came together to jointly develop and deliver the project. One of the organisations is run by young people for young people and both organisations have been equal partners since the outset. As a result young people themselves are very much driving and managing this project at all stages on an equal footing with the adults involved.

The management structures have been carefully established to maximise on this. The project worker is jointly managed by both organisations and has been purposely based within the young people's organisation rather than within the partner organisation.

The project itself involves recruiting a total of 96 young people aged 16 to 25 from across each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas and training them to be peer leaders. The training consists of three weekends over three months and focuses on justice issues and empowering young people to address the issues that are important to them.

Each of these 96 young people will identify an issue that is important to themselves and other young people in their local area and they will develop their own local project with around 10 other young people, which will mean that around 960 young people will have been involved. In turn some of these young people may decide to run their own projects, creating a cascade effect. The aim is to engage 4500 young people in projects across Scotland.

There is also an international strand to the project where a group of young people from Scotland meet in an online forum with other young people from across the world to plan the content of an international young person's event. This event is linked to and will run for the two days leading up to an existing high profile international event. Having held their own event, some of the young people will then run a plenary session in the main event, as well as having the chance to be full delegates.

Although the only case study projects that identified themselves on their application form as aiming to provide “more and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves” were the three projects that are aiming to deliver all three outcomes, there was evidence that a higher number of projects are in fact expecting to achieve this outcome. Examples include:

- A project that is developing a network to enable young deaf people to increase their level of social interaction and access more social activities.
- A dance project that offers dance workshops to young people, in particular teenage girls, who are experiencing difficulties.
- A 21st century community centre, which offers skateboarding, bmxing and blading and links these sports to youth work.
- An arts project that aims to advance the education of young people in all aspects of music, theatre, dance, art, film, digital media and similar technology, and offers opportunities for young people to volunteer in a number of ways, including the organisation of a Scotland wide arts event for young people.
- A youth project that provides a facility for a range of recreational activities, including social space, a film club, youth café, I.T. facilities, pool table and also organises access to local facilities for football and dance sessions.

It is interesting that some of these projects (three of those listed) did not put “taking part in activities that make them feel good about themselves” as one of the aims on their application. Certainly all of these projects are about more than enabling young people to take part, with the majority helping young people progress towards taking up volunteering opportunities, whilst some involve young people in the management of the project or offer workshops or activities aimed at personal development. It would seem that although projects are offering young people the opportunity to take part in activities that will make them feel good about themselves, they perhaps feel that people who are external to the project may not value this aspect as much as some of the other elements of the

project. This may be an issue worth exploring in year two of the evaluation.

The key methods being used to achieve the programme outcomes seem to be:

- Simply engaging young people in positive activities and through this engagement project workers being alert to potential opportunities to link young people into activities that will build their confidence and skills.
- Developing confidence and skills through formal workshops, structured and unstructured activities and informal education.
- Community development workers working with young people on a one to one or group basis on issues around personal development, building self esteem and confidence.
- Exposure to new ideas and new activities encouraging young people to broaden their horizons and possibly to be more proactive about seeking new opportunities for themselves.
- Empowering young people to make decisions within the project, help organise events etc., which helps to build confidence, develop skills, support the young people to make a contribution and help them to value themselves.
- Training young people to be peer leaders, or supporting them and providing opportunities for them to become volunteers.
- Providing opportunities for young people to be involved in physical activity.
- Providing health related education aimed at harm reduction and by making positive choices young people will feel better about themselves.

Although at this early stage projects were unable to provide evidence of meeting the programme outcomes, there was significant evidence that each project is aiming to contribute to one or more of the programme outcomes.

In doing so the projects will all contribute to the overarching aim of helping young people to “learn new things and take part in healthy and positive activities that make them feel good about themselves”. In addition it is clear that each project can claim to fall into at least one of the priority project categories, which are projects that:

- Encourage teenage girls to access activities
- Remove the barriers to volunteering or increase volunteering opportunities
- Help young people adopt active, healthy and positive lifestyles
- Encourage young people to make positive changes in their behaviour
- Bring together young people from different backgrounds and experiences
- Support young people through periods of transition
- Help young people gain confidence and skills to become active citizens.

6.5.3.2 *Involvement of young people*

Projects that apply to the Young People's Fund are expected to involve young people throughout the project, from development, through delivery to evaluation. Involvement of young people was therefore a key area for exploration in this research.

Levels and nature of involvement varied across the case study projects, with the majority appearing to be better at engaging with young people at the delivery stage rather than the design and management stages of the process. This is perhaps unsurprising given that project workers will in the main have more experience of working with young people at the delivery stage, with the idea of involving them in design and management being a relatively new practice.

Five of the case studies were already established projects, which had applied to the Young People's Fund to fund the continuation of their project, to enhance its provision or both. Two of these had originally been developed through statutory funding, whilst the remaining three had been established by voluntary organisations.

Only two of the projects were newly established using funding from the Young People's Fund, whilst the remaining project had been piloted for 10 months and, although a new project, it forms a strand of a wider established project. The fact that so many of the projects had been established for several years may be part of the reason why there did not appear to have been significant involvement of young people at the development stage

Only two of the projects, one established and one new project appeared not to be adult led at the development stage, and this seems to have continued into the early stages of project delivery. That said the majority of the project workers were keen to ensure that levels of involvement of young people increased over the duration of the project and a number of ideas are currently being considered to make improvements in this area.

For the majority of projects, involving young people in the development phase meant conducting some level of consultation. The reported benefits from carrying out consultations included:

- Confirming demand for the project
- Young people's ideas used to refine the detail of the project
- Securing buy-in from the young people.

Only four of the projects reported having at least one young person represented on their Board or project steering group during the project development stage.

There were however examples where young people were more significantly involved in the development phase. One example is described in Project Example Scotland 2 above. The pre-existence of the young people's organisation has resulted in an unusually high level of

involvement of young people in this project, suggesting that existing infrastructure can significantly assist in this regard.

Only one of the projects had grown out of a young person's idea, whilst the remainder had been devised by adults (see Project Example Scotland 3 below). This is perhaps to be expected given the prevailing culture whereby young people are often seen and see themselves as the recipients of provision that is developed for them by experts. It would be hoped that the Young People's Fund might go some way towards changing this culture.

Project Example Scotland 3 – Using the arts to support young people in transition

In 2001 a schoolboy from Dundee, who at the time was suffering from depression, decided he wanted to run a music event, which he did with the support of a youth worker from within his school. The event was successful and not only had a positive impact on the boy himself but also on the many other young people who became involved. The youth worker then used this model to establish a project aimed at using the Arts to support young people in transition and helping to make their ideas real. The young boy who conceived the idea is still involved with the project today.

The project ran for a number of years by providing a studio space which young people could request to use for whatever arts based activity they wished, however there was no real infrastructure and the project ran through word of mouth. Each year a Scotland wide event was organised where young people could come along and showcase their talent. Each year the event was doubling in size (3000 young people last year) and demand for the access to the project on an ongoing basis was growing.

The YPF money has been used to employ a project co-ordinator and sessional staff. This has enabled a structured programme of arts based activities to be organised, which allows the project to advertise and recruit more people.

The project uses artistic media such as music, theatre, dance, art, video and digital media to support young people in transition and ~~as such~~ works with a number of young people experiencing difficulties that range from relatively minor issues to those that are more complex and long term such as drugs misuse.

The project is driven by the ideas generated by the young people and aims to support young people into volunteering opportunities, both within the project and beyond, and also into employment or careers in the Arts.

Between August 2006 and March 2007 the project worked with 448 young people (excluding audiences).

When asked about the involvement of young people in the delivery of their project there was a sense from all of the project workers that they see it as unquestionable that they would be listening to young people on an ongoing basis and shaping their service in response to the feedback they receive through their day to day engagement with them. It was seen as an inherent part of what they do in delivering a young persons' project. One project reported running a training session on how to gather this type of feedback, to ensure that delivery staff are competent in carrying out this important element of their job. Some projects also spoke of formal mechanisms for feedback such as regular evaluations or an urban art wall available at the end of each session.

This self evaluation through ongoing, open relationships with the young people is indeed an important element of involvement and all of the projects are to be applauded for their commitment to it. For a small number of projects however this is the only real way in which young people are involved, which perpetuates the culture of experts delivering a service or provision to young people, who only have an influence at the margins.

Where young people were involved in other ways this tended to be through having one or more young person represented on a Board or steering group, or through the establishment of a young people's forum or steering group, which might in turn send a representative to a Board or steering group meeting.

There were reports from some projects however about difficulties in engaging young people in such groups, a problem found in both the development and the delivery stages of a small number of projects. Problems included:

- Young people from the project who were not on the steering group felt excluded.
- Despite trying to operate a young persons' steering group, those engaged with the project were not interested in being involved.
- A project working with young people with complex needs and chaotic lifestyles felt that steering groups are not appropriate fora for their client group. Putting a young person on such a group

when they do not have the capacity to engage does more harm than good.

The benefits of such groups were thought by most to be felt mainly by the young people involved, as they are able to develop a number of valuable skills through participation in meetings. There was no strong sense that involvement of young people in such a way made any significant contribution to the development of the project. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the purpose of these groups was felt to be about giving young people a forum to provide feedback that shapes the project, something that project workers believe they are doing on an ongoing basis anyway. One project did however mention that where a Board might be inclined to veto a suggestion put to them by a project worker on the young people's behalf, they would be less inclined to make the same decision in a young person's presence.

The point mentioned earlier about young people having the capacity to be involved in project delivery was a recurring theme. Whilst all of the project workers seemed convinced of the potential benefits of involving young people where possible, their experience tells them this involvement must be appropriately matched to the confidence and skills level of the young person, otherwise more harm will be done than good. The nature and level of involvement of young people within a particular project is likely therefore to be determined by the capacity of the client group with which they work. One project that works with a client group that is extremely hard to engage plans to secure the involvement of young people by training other young people from outwith the project's client group to be peer educators. This project is described in Project Example Scotland 4 below:

Project Example Scotland 4 – Sexual health and substance misuse project

One of the projects started out as a statutorily funded project providing health information and advice to young people. Recognising the links between sexual health and substance misuse the project will use YPF money to deliver workshops to the most at risk young people, as part of a health education and harm reduction programme. The project is operating as an action research project, which will learn from the young people themselves the best way to deliver their programme to others.

The nature of their project and their client group limits their ability to involve young people in the project. The young people they work with are often hard to reach and the chaotic lives that they lead means that it is difficult to engage them beyond being recipients of support and advice. This project plans to explore the possibility of engaging other young people and training them to be peer educators with the project's core client group.

Between November 2006 and February 2007 the project worked with around 50 young people.

Building the capacity of young people over time is a strong feature in a number of projects, and in many of the projects opportunities exist for young people to become more involved in their delivery as their capacity increases. This may involve developing a young person's skills and confidence to enable them to become a member of the Board or a steering group. Alternatively it may involve developing young people to become volunteers, enabling them to help other young people to participate in the project.

Many of the project workers were recruited using the funding from the Young People's Fund and as such many had only been in post for a few months at the time of the case study visits. A number indicated that they have plans for increasing levels of involvement of young people as the project develops. These plans seem in part to have come about as a result of the project worker developing within their role, and in part due to the evolution of the project itself whereby things such as structures and partnerships are now becoming able to support greater involvement of

young people. That said, at this stage the involvement of young people still appears to be on the fringes of project delivery in a number of cases.

The findings suggest that as time goes on levels of involvement of young people within the majority of these projects will increase, as capacity is built. This hypothesis can be tested in year two of the evaluation by visiting projects that have been in possession of their Young People's Fund money for longer than was the case in year one. This should also include re-visiting some of this year's case study projects to assess progress over time.

6.5.3.3 Target groups

In their applications projects identified the target number of young people with whom they would work over the duration of their funding. These numbers vary significantly depending on the nature of the project activity, level of funding and intensity of engagement.

In the main the projects were at a very early stage of delivery therefore it is too early to predict whether they are likely to achieve these targets or not. One common problem was that once funding was received recruitment of project workers always took around 2 to 3 months, and then further development time of another 2 to 3 months was generally required before the project was engaging with the predicted numbers. This means that many projects are struggling to reach their year one targets, however given the numbers that they are now engaging with foresee no difficulties with reaching their target numbers in future years. This is something that both funders and future applicants need to be aware of.

The target groups within the Scotland Programme are:

- Young people aged 11-25
- Young people dealing with many and complicated problems
- Young people with no opportunities to volunteer, or facing barriers to volunteering

- Young people who do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community
- Teenage girls.

All of the projects are targeting young people aged 11 to 25 or an age band within this range, however the majority of young people that are engaging are those aged 11-21. Reaching young people over the age of 20 was felt to be a big difficult. This was attributed to a lack of existing infrastructure for this client group. The main agency which might engage with these young people is Job Centre Plus, however their remit is so generic that engagement with this agency was not found to be a particularly useful way of reaching young people in this age group.

Many of the young people falling into the categories of “dealing with many and complicated problems” and “do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community” are likely to be hard to reach. The majority of the projects either solely target young people who are experiencing the difficulties described, or else they are aimed at young people more generally but aim to have a high representation of young people who are experiencing difficulties. Reaching these hard to reach groups is an issue that is being overcome by many of the projects through partnership working. The list of key partners was extensive, however some are listed below:

- Local volunteer centres
- Community planning partnerships
- Other local young people’s projects
- Issue specific organisations related to the project theme
- Social work departments
- Youth justice
- Police
- Community safety department

- Schools.

Projects that are solely targeting the most disadvantaged young people identified the engagement of people from BME communities as a particular issue. The combination of being hard to reach for reasons of ethnicity as well as for reasons shared with other project participants, makes these young people much more difficult to find and engage with. In areas where there are low numbers of BME young people there is little in the way of infrastructure for projects to tap into to find and begin engaging with these young people. Even where numbers are higher and infrastructure does exist there can still be difficulties.

The project described in Project Example Scotland 1 above is working with disadvantaged young people in an area with high deprivation and is aware that there is a large asylum seeker community in their area. The project worker is currently engaging with the asylum seeker worker in the area to explore how the project can support that group. It is felt that integration may be difficult at first, therefore much work is likely to be required with each group to pave the way for future involvement of the asylum seekers within the project.

One of the key aims of the programme in Scotland is to engage with teenage girls. None of the case study projects targets this group exclusively, although the dance project described earlier is aiming to engage mainly teenage girls. One of the projects, which provides physical activity opportunities that happen to be much more attractive to boys, attempts to encourage the engagement of teenage girls by running a mothers and daughters evening one night per week. This night has been popular, although the project still only has a 3-4% take up from girls.

The evaluation of the Millennium Volunteers programme found barriers to volunteering tended to be:

- Language barriers, which in the main excluded young people from BMR groups
- Living in a disadvantaged area.

The majority of projects are targeting young people with difficulties, who in many cases are from disadvantaged areas. The majority are also providing opportunities for these young people to volunteer or are supporting them into volunteering opportunities outwith the project. In this regard the projects are reaching those facing barriers to volunteering and helping to break down those barriers. The one group that they are having difficulty in reaching however, as has already been discussed, is those from BME groups.

Overall, projects seem to be successfully engaging with young people, and in particular seem to be targeting hard to reach and at risk young people. There have been some successes with targeting teenage girls, however reaching older young people and BME groups is proving to be more difficult.

6.5.3.4 Looking to the future

All of the projects were asked about the sustainability of their project once their Young People's Fund money has ended. It is of course very early days however most had some notion of the future direction of the project.

For the vast majority it is expected that they will continue seeking other funding sources and will rely primarily on such funding. Such an existence is what most in the voluntary sector are used to, however the impermanence of funding provision in this way has great implications for the development of projects, as it is difficult to make the long term strategic decisions required to maximise the benefits of the project.

One of the projects is only partly funded through grants and secures a significant amount of its income through generating its own revenue. Another of the projects, which is an Arts, Culture, Music and Media project sees potential for generating some of its own income in the future through the sale of products created by young people. However this project's concern is that it does not have the business skills required to operate in such a way. BIG may wish to consider funding the development of such skills for future applicants who can demonstrate the potential to generate their own revenue

Another approach to sustainability that has been used by one of the projects is to invest in building the capacity of young people to enable and encourage them to go on and carry out their own projects in their local area. By training young people to be peer leaders this project is expected to have wide reaching effects that will continue long after the YPF funding has ended.

6.5.3.5 Conclusions

The case study visits found projects to be well aligned with the programme aims and outcomes, with all projects expecting to make a significant contribution to at least one of the three programme outcomes, thereby contributing to the overall aim.

It is also positive to see that projects are targeting those in the programme's target groups. It would seem that projects are reaching these groups in the majority of cases, although BME groups and older young people appear to be under-represented in many projects.

BIG is particularly interested in learning about how young people from BME groups and with additional support needs are being involved. At this stage there is little involvement of BME groups, although two case study projects spoke of building partnerships to redress this. However both of these projects feel that it will take time to build these relationships and also to prepare the young people for integration. One of the case study projects works specifically with young people with additional support needs, whilst the others are conscious not to exclude any young people; however they do not target those with additional support needs specifically.

All projects are involving young people to some extent, with the main method of involvement being through consultation. A number of projects are either involving young people in their projects as volunteers, or are planning to do so in the future. Some are also involving young people through youth forums or steering groups, or are planning to do so in the future. The involvement of young people in project delivery is expected to grow as the projects develop and this should be explored in future years of the evaluation.

At this very early stage in the development of the projects there is no evidence of impact as yet however projects are confident that they will have significant impacts over the duration of their funding. In future years of the evaluation project visits will be carried out with a mixture of newly established projects and those that are more established, thereby enabling impact to be measured.

Similarly, in future years, information will be sought on different application formats projects had applied to the programme through. This will enable a mixed sample to be selected making it possible to explore the impact of the alternative formats on young people and how effective these are in encouraging the involvement of young people in projects.

The 32 Local Area Panels have been established across the country, with around 10 to 20 young people being recruited to each and the panels appear to be providing the young people involved with a positive self development opportunity. The panels were felt to provide the national committee with valuable local knowledge that helped increase their confidence in their decisions, although it is difficult to know to what extent decisions would have been different had the panels not been in place. There was no evidence of panels influencing the types of application made.

In all the projects appear to be well aligned with the aims of the programme and as such should make a significant contribution to achieving the programmes aims and objectives.

6.6 Project Feedback Quantitative

6.6.1 Introduction

In June and July 2007 a telephone survey was carried out with 25 of the projects that had received support from the Young People's Fund in Scotland. A representative sample was selected, ensuring a broad mix of target groups and project activities. Whilst the case study visits focussed on projects that had received £100,000 or more, the telephone survey was conducted with smaller projects, and included only those receiving grants of below £100,000.

The remainder of this chapter details the main findings of the survey, considering, in turn:

- Operation of the projects
- Outcomes and impact
- Involvement of young people
- Future sustainability.

6.6.2 Operation of the projects

6.6.2.1 Target groups

The projects selected for inclusion in the survey provided activities and services to young people with multiple and varied needs. Around half of respondents (48%) stated that their project works with young people who are at greatest risk of exclusion and offending. Of these:

- 42% of projects draw more than half of their young people from this group

Evaluation of Young People's Fund - Scotland

- A quarter have between 25% and 49% of their young people coming from this group
- A third have fewer than 25% of their young people being classed as being at greatest risk of exclusion and offending.

It was found that each of the four priority groups within the Scotland programme was being targeted by the majority of projects, with:

- 76% of projects targeting young people with no opportunities to volunteer or facing barriers to volunteering
- 92% targeting young people dealing with many and complicated problems
- 92% targeting young people who do not have positive relationships with family, friends or community
- 84% targeting teenage girls.

Other groups that projects were targeting included young people:

- Not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- With physical or learning difficulties or special educational needs
- Who are homeless
- Who are young carers
- Who are young parents
- Who are geographically disadvantaged
- From black and minority ethnic groups.

BIG is particularly keen to find out how in Scotland BME groups and those with additional support needs have been involved. Of the 19 projects who provided information about the groups that they target,

seven (37%) mentioned young people with additional needs and one (5%) mentioned young people from BME groups.

In addition to targeting specific groups, the Scotland programme also prioritises certain types of project. Again, the majority of projects would class themselves as contributing to each of these priorities:

- all projects:
 - bring young people together from different backgrounds and experiences
 - help young people gain confidence and skills to become active citizens.

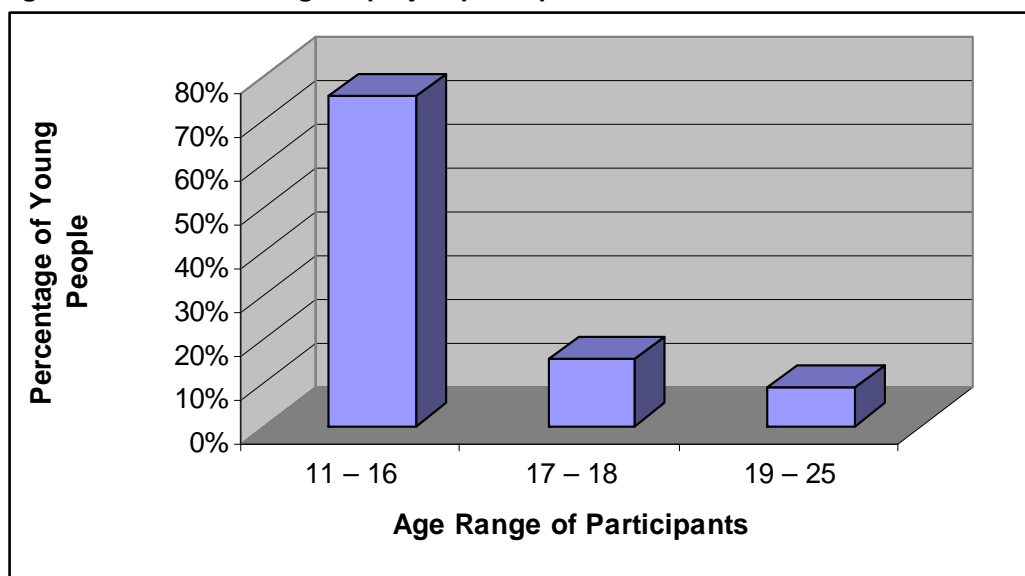
- 96% of projects:
 - help young people adopt active, healthy and positive lifestyles
 - encourage young people to make positive changes in their behaviour.

- 84% of projects:
 - encourage teenage girls to access activities
 - support young people through periods of transition.

- 76% of projects:
 - remove barriers to volunteering or increase volunteering opportunities.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the average age of project participants and shows that the majority of activity is focused on those aged 11 to 16. It should be noted however that only 60% of those surveyed were able to provide this information.

Figure 6.1 Age of project participants



Number of respondents: 15

6.6.2.2 Project activity

Projects were asked to give a brief description of what their YPF funded project does. From these qualitative responses it was clear that there were a number of common types of project. Table 6.7 classifies the types of projects that were interviewed.

Table 6.7 - Project activity

Activity	Percentage of projects (%)
Youth centres and drop in sessions	25
Outdoor activities games and sports	21
Creative arts (inc. film, theatre, arts, crafts and dance)	17
Education, employment, vocational and life skills	17
Awareness raising and health promotion	8
Befriending	4
Caring for animals	4
Other	4

Number of respondents: 24

Analysis shows that:

- The most common project activity on offer is the provision of a youth centre and/or drop in facility, with a quarter of projects offering this provision.
- Around a fifth of projects are mainly focussed on outdoor activities, games and sports.
- 17% involve creative arts, whilst another 17% focus on education, employment, vocational and life skills.

6.6.2.3 Focus and “fit” with the aims of the Young People’s Fund

Table 6.8 shows which of the three programme outcomes is the main focus of the projects. Analysis of the findings reveals that the focus of the majority of projects is on providing young people with “more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities”.

Table 6.8 – Programme outcome that is main focus of project

Programme outcome	Percentage of projects (%)
more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities	52
more and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities	12
more and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves	36
Total	100

Number of respondents: 25

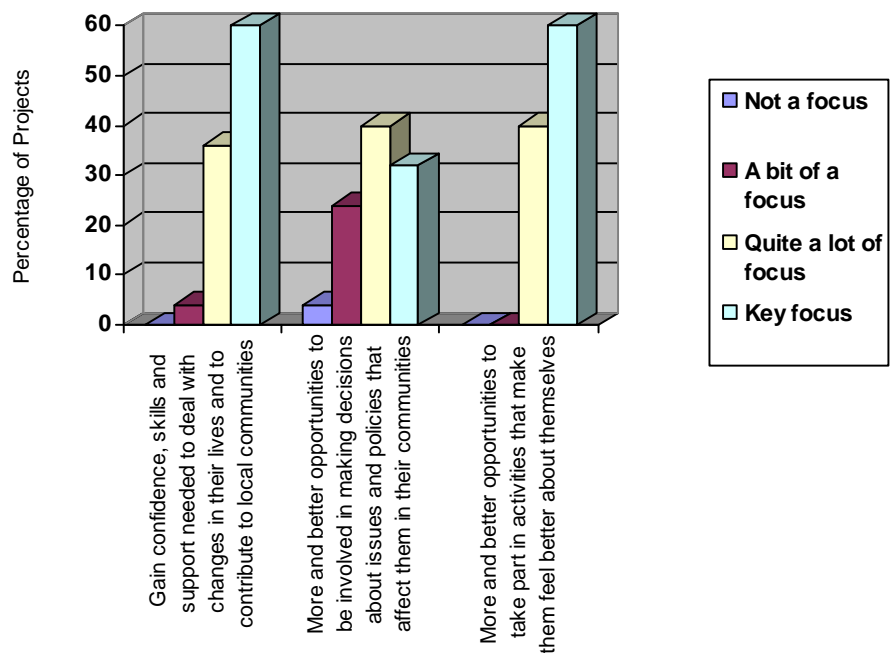
Participants were also asked to rate the contribution of their project to each of the three outcomes (Figure 6.2). It emerged that:

- “More and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves” is either the main focus or is a large focus of all of the projects.

- “Gaining the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities” is the main focus or is a large focus of all except one of the projects.
- “More and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities” is the main focus or is a large focus of almost three quarters of projects.

This shows that the vast majority of the projects are expecting to achieve all three outcomes.

Figure 6.2 – Project contribution to Programme outcomes



Among those who stated that their project principally focussed on “gaining the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities”, work was often focused around:

- Group work and workshops, often complemented by less formal and enjoyable activities that secure the engagement of young people.
- Giving young people responsibility within the project, for example by involving them in decision making or engaging them on a steering group.
- Using physical and other activities as a means of building confidence.

Projects spoke of engaging and empowering young people, with confidence building being identified by many as an important feature of their project.

Projects which focused on providing young people with “more and better opportunities to be involved in making decisions about issues and policies that affect them in their communities” did so in the following ways:

- Involving young people within the project, enabling them to make decisions, be involved in committees and steering groups.
- Supporting young people to organise events within the local community.
- Enabling young people to be peer educators.

Where providing young people with “more and better opportunities to take part in activities that make them feel good about themselves” was a key focus of projects, their main activities were:

- Providing opportunities for young people to be involved in activities that they wouldn't normally have access to and that they find engaging, such as sports, outdoors and arts activities.
- Involving young people in the decision making within the project.

The involvement of young people within the project, particularly in the decision making process appears to be an important feature across all

three project outcomes and there is evidence that involvement is being used as a tool to achieve the other programme outcomes.

6.6.2.4 Development of the projects

The survey found that in the majority of cases, those involved in project development were:

- Part of an existing group that has expanded generally (64%).
- Part of an existing group into which additional young people were brought (20%).

In 12% of cases the group charged with the development of the project was a wholly new group of people brought together for that purpose (Table 6.9). Further, in 76% of cases the group of people who developed the project are the same group of people who are currently delivering it.

Table 6.9 - Status of the group responsible for development the project

	Percentage
An existing group that has expanded generally	64%
An existing group with young people brought in	20%
A wholly new group	12%
Other	4%
An existing group with no significant changes	0%
Total	100%

Number of respondents: 25

6.6.2.5 Partnership working

Around half of the projects (52%) stated that there was a partnership element to their project. When asked about the nature of these partnerships it emerged that there was an even mix of:

- Established partnerships
- New partnerships
- Expanded partnerships / mixture of established and new partners.

Where there was not a partnership element to the project, in the majority of cases the reason was that projects felt that this was not necessary.

Partner organisations principally included:

- A wide range of related voluntary organisations
- Local schools
- Local authority departments (especially community learning and development, education, Dialogue Youth and community services)
- Local police service
- Community Drugs Team and Drugs and Alcohol Forum
- Colleges.

6.6.2.6 External influences

Interviewees referred to a wide range of local and national policies, strategies and institutions which had benefited or facilitated the work of the project. Many projects reported learning from and being supported by other organisations, some local and some national.

When asked about external factors that have impacted negatively on their projects, the majority raised the issue of shortage of funding opportunities or difficult and time consuming funding processes. A small number also mentioned the fact that some organisations are reluctant to engage with projects that involve topics such as drugs education and sexual health education.

The majority (88%) however felt that positive factors outweigh the negatives.

6.6.3 Outcomes and impact

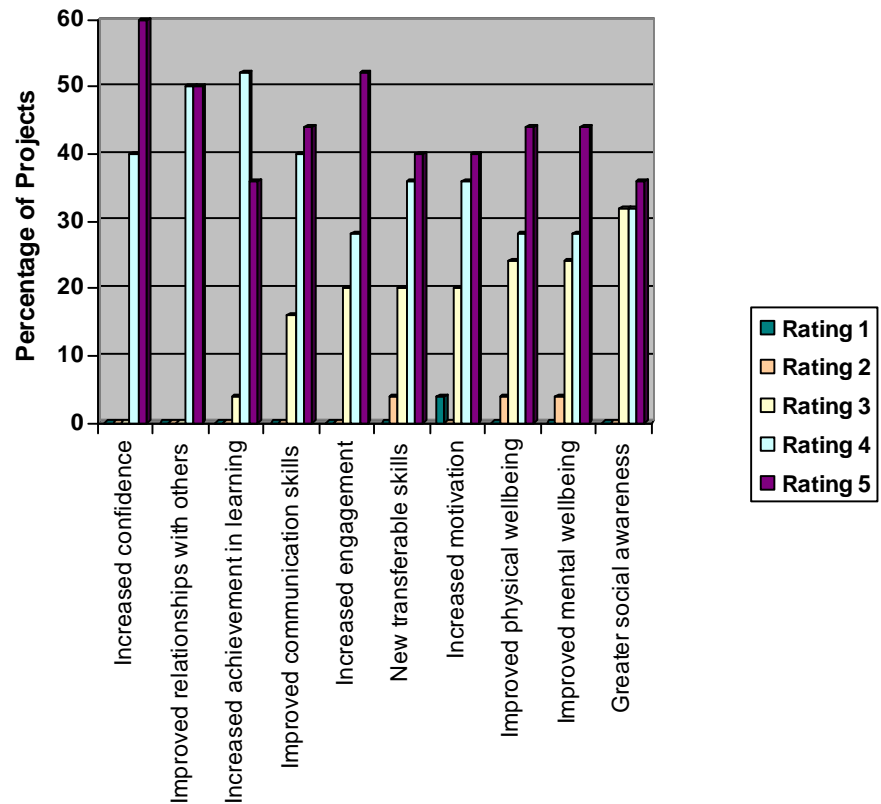
Survey participants felt that their projects were achieving extremely positive outcomes, with examples including:

- Issues of challenging behaviour in school and in the community being lessened by building confidence, educating and motivating young people through the work of the projects.
- Increased confidence amongst young people, especially those experiencing social difficulties, which in some cases is helping these young people to feel able to go to college or get a job.
- Young people from different schools or who find it difficult to engage with other young people now beginning to mix better.
- Improved wellbeing of young people with disabilities from having the opportunity to engage in activities that are new to them.
- Increased levels of physical activity amongst those engaged.
- Young people with the most significant social difficulties becoming more focused and taking steps to re-engage.
- Having been supported into volunteering roles many young people are progressing onto college or employment.

Figure 6.3 shows on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being little benefit and 5 being significant benefit) what level of benefit young people have gained from involvement in the project. Analysis shows that:

- All projects rate the level of benefit that young people gain from their project as a 4 or a 5 in terms of:
 - increased confidence
 - improved relationships with others.
- 80% to 88% of projects feel that the level of benefit young people gain is a 4 or 5 in terms of:
 - increased achievement and learning
 - improved communication skills
 - increased engagement.

Figure 6.3 – Level of benefit young people gain from involvement



Projects were asked which of these benefits they felt would be long term and for each of the benefits between 88% and 96% of projects felt that they would be long term.

Projects were asked what the three best things are about their project. The majority of comments centred around the extremely positive impacts that the projects are having on young people. The comment from one project provides a succinct overview of what many other projects said was one of the best things about their project:

“working with young people who get so much out of being part of a project, are learning something and having a positive experience”.

Projects also mentioned:

- Reduced levels of crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- Improved relations between adults and young people within the community.
- Helping excluded young people to go back to school.
- Giving young people a purpose.

Respondents were asked what the three greatest difficulties are that their project faces. Twenty four projects mentioned a total of fifty difficulties, with four issues emerging as key. These are listed in order of prevalence:

- Securing funding, operating with limited resources and the restrictions on future planning imposed by uncertainty over future funding (36% of the difficulties mentioned).
- The impact on staff of the challenging behaviour of some young people and the difficult issues that they are working with on a daily basis (16% of difficulties).
- Community holding negative perceptions of the projects' client groups (8% of difficulties).
- The transport logistics of reaching young people and bringing them together, particularly in rural areas (6% of difficulties).

6.6.4 *Involvement of young people*

The involvement of young people in the development, delivery, management and evaluation of projects is an area that BIG is keen to explore across all four countries and as such it is a key objective of this evaluation to assess the extent to which this is taking place. As such projects were asked a series of questions about the involvement of young people, which will be discussed in this section.

6.6.4.1 *Involvement in the application and development stages*

Encouragingly, when asked about the involvement of young people in the initial development of the application and project most projects have reported some level of involvement, however just over one quarter reported that young people were not involved at the development stage. As was found in the case study visits, the most common method of involvement was through consultation, with 88% of projects having consulted young people during the development phase. The next most common method was through a formal structured survey questionnaire (Table 6.10).

Again, as was the case with the case study visits it was found that there was less evidence of the involvement of young people being an integral part of the project, with only a quarter of projects having young people on management/steering groups at this stage.

The figures suggest that there may be some confusion around the question, with all but 12% of projects having consulted young people in the development phase, but 28% saying they did not involve young people in the development phase. There are a number of reasons why this could be the case:

- Some of those reporting having consulted young people may be referring to consultation that took place after the development phase.
- Some of those reporting that they did not involve young people in the development phase may have consulted young people but do not consider this to constitute involvement.

Table 6.10 - Involvement of young people in the initial development of the project

	Percentage of projects (%)
Consulted young people by speaking with them	88
Surveyed young people using a structured survey	40
Young people were not involved in the initial development of the project, but were involved once the project was up and running	28
Young people are already on the management / steering group	24

Number of respondents: 25

Note:- Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple answers

Projects were asked to assess the balance of young people involvement in the development phase in relation to adult involvement. Table 6.11 shows that:

- Almost half of the projects were developed with more adult input than young people input.
- Just over a third had an even mix of adult input and young people input.
- A minority (16%) had more young people involvement than adult involvement.

Table 6.11 - Involvement of young people in the development of the application and subsequent project

	Percentage of projects (%)
More adult input than young people	48
Even Mix	36
More young people input than adult	16
Exclusively developed by adults	0
Exclusively developed by young people	0
Total	100

Number of respondents: 25

6.6.4.2 Help, support and training required by young people

Organisations were asked about the support and training that was required by young people to enable them to contribute to the development of the funding application and project (Table 6.12). Three fifths of projects provided some kind of assistance, most commonly:

- Help to improve networking skills (32% of projects).
- Support to communicate with the local council and other formal institutions (24% of projects).

All 10 projects (40%) that answered 'other' stated that young people were not involved in developing the application or project other than through

consultation, and therefore training and support were not felt to have been necessary.

Table 6.12 - Training and support required by the young people

	Percentage of projects (%)
Networking skills (bringing together the right people to make the application work)	32
Links to the local council and other formal organisations	24
Technical skills (how to make costings, use Excel & Word, prepare an attractive document, etc.)	20
Training in peer mentoring	16
Project Management Skills	12
Other	10
Application writing skills	8

Number of respondents: 25

Note:- Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple answers

6.6.4.3 Involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity

The majority of projects indicated that young people are involved in the delivery and evaluation of projects (Table 6.13). In the majority of cases this involvement took the form of:

- Designing what is done, as was the case in 88% of projects.
- Reviewing the activity, which they did in 80% of projects.
- Helping to engage other young people in the project, which was a feature in 76% of projects.

Table 6.13 - Role of young people in the delivery of project activity

	Percentage of projects (%)
They design what is done	88
They review the activity	80
They engage potential young people	76
They deliver the activity	32
Other	4

Number of respondents: 25

Note:- Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple answers

When projects were asked to describe the process of involvement in the delivery phase, it was clear that:

- Most involvement is through formal or informal consultation with project participants, with discussions informing the detail of what the project delivers and also forming part of the review process.
- In some cases young people are involved through management/steering groups or youth forums.

6.6.4.4 Future sustainability

In order to make a significant and long term difference to the lives of children and young people, it is recognised that projects should work towards achievement of sustainability. Accordingly, interviewees were asked for their thoughts on what will happen following the cessation of their BIG Funding.

Ninety two percent of projects indicated that they have already begun considering what will happen when their funding ends. It was found that:

- 56% expect to be able to continue their project beyond YPF funding.
- 40% expect to be able to sustain their project to some extent.
- 4% were sure that they could not sustain the project in the absence of BIG funding.

When asked to provide further detail of their plans the majority of organisations simply stated that they would be looking for alternative sources of funding to enable them to continue the work of the project. Other comments included:

- Hoping for Local Authority backing
- Become a social enterprise
- Fundraising activities.

Interviewees were also asked about the way and extent to which young people will be involved in planning what happens post BIG funding. Responses fell into 2 categories:

- 52% of projects expect that young people will be involved in planning post funding, although in most cases this is not happening as yet as it is too early.
- 40% of projects stated that young people will not be involved at all.

6.6.5 Conclusions

The telephone interviews with the 25 Scottish projects found that there is a strong fit between the activities of the projects and the overall aims and objectives of the Programme in Scotland.

Over half of projects felt that of the three Programme outcomes their main aim was providing young people with “more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives and to contribute to their local communities”. However the vast majority of projects expect to contribute to all three outcomes, highlighting the inter-relationship between the three.

In terms of reaching the groups that are the target of the Scotland Programme it was found that:

- Projects are mainly working with 11 to 16 year olds, with 17 to 18 year olds and 19 to 25 year olds engaging in much smaller numbers.
- The vast majority are targeting the Programme’s priority groups, namely young people dealing with many and complicated problems (92%), young people who do not have positive relationships with family, friends, or community (92%), teenage girls (84%) and/or young people with no opportunities to volunteer or facing barriers to volunteering (76%).

- Over a third of projects mentioned working with young people with additional support needs, however only one project reported targeting young people from BME groups.
- Similarly, between 76% and 100% of projects consider themselves to be contributing to each of the seven prioritised programme project areas, suggesting a close fit with the Programme aims.

There was evidence that the majority of projects involved young people in the design and development of the project, although as was found in the case study visits this appears to mainly take the form of consultation rather than in a more integral way. The level and nature of involvement does however appear to be increasing as projects move into the delivery phase, again supporting the predictions of the case study projects. As a key objective of the evaluation is to measure the involvement of young people this will be monitored in future years.

To date survey participants feel that they are achieving extremely positive outcomes, particularly in terms of engaging young people, developing their confidence and helping them to make positive changes within their lives. Such changes include, reducing anti-social behaviour within school and/or within the community, feeling better about themselves and mixing better with other young people.

6.7 Key Findings in Scotland

- In line with the Programme aims projects are offering young people opportunities to engage in positive activities, which to varying degrees are expected to contribute to their personal development and in many cases provide them with a range of skills that can be transferred to other areas of their lives, thereby developing their potential.
- Projects fall into the category of at least one of the Programme's priority project areas and they are working with the Programme's priority groups.
- Most of the projects see 'more opportunities to gain the confidence and skills and support they need to deal with changes in their lives

and to contribute to their local communities' as the main aim to which they contribute, however the vast majority consider themselves to contribute in some way to all 3 aims.

- The majority of projects are involving young people in some way, which is encouraging. However at this early stage this involvement is often marginal, with young people in many cases continuing to be recipients of a service or provision rather than key drivers.
- Involvement of young people is often greater once projects are established than is the case in the delivery phase, and staff are expecting involvement to increase over the life of their project.
- Local Area Panels have ensured that young people are involved in the decision making process and provided a useful development opportunity for those involved. However in some areas the numbers of applications were extremely low, meaning that these panels had to engage themselves in other activities to ensure that the young people had a meaningful experience .
- Projects have been successful in engaging many of those who are considered hardest to reach, with partnership working cited as a key mechanism for reaching these young people.

7 The Programme in Wales

7.1 Executive Summary

7.1.1 Introduction

This evaluation was commissioned by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Young People's Fund in each of the countries which make up the United Kingdom.

7.1.2 Project take up in Wales

The Young People's Fund in Wales awarded funding through three separate strands: Make it Happen, Reaching Out and Bridging the Gap, and was initially allocated £13.2 million to pursue three strategic aims:

- Helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential
- Helping young people to develop skills and contribute to their communities
- Helping young people to choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour.

During the course of the programme, Reaching Out has been allocated an additional £1,454, 720 to further its aims.

As of May 2007 the Young People's Fund in Wales had awarded a total of £9,425,253; 64% of the total available budget. Amongst the individual strands:

- Make it Happen had awarded 48% of the available budget.
- Reaching Out had awarded 58% of the available budget.
- Bridging the Gap had awarded 75% of the available budget.

7.1.3 Project profile

The sample projects in Wales focused heavily on disadvantaged and “hard to reach” groups. Within this specific target group, those reached included:

- Homeless young people
- Ex-offenders and young people at risk of offending
- Young people who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from school
- Young people with learning and/ or mental health needs.

Project activity varied widely depending on the focus and scale of the project. Common themes did however include:

- Creative, cultural, sporting and outdoor activities
- Education and training
- Advice and support, to individuals and groups
- Lobbying and awareness raising activities.

Through the promotion of creative activity, healthy lifestyle, education and active citizenship project activity appears to fit well with the strategic priorities of WAG as set out in “Extending Entitlement”.

7.1.4 Alignment with the aims of the Young People's Fund

In addition to complementing the work of WAG, projects funded by the Young People's Fund were found to be well aligned with the priorities of the Young People's Fund in Wales.

While many projects felt that their activity had the potential to contribute to all three strategic aims of the fund, the largest proportion (50%) felt that their primary contribution was in helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential. Further:

- 38% felt that their principal objective was to help young people develop skills and contribute to their communities.
- 13% thought that their projects were focused on helping young people to choose positive activities that discourage anti-social behaviour.

7.1.5 Impact of project activity

At the present time, as many projects are at an early stage in their development, it is not possible to draw conclusions as to the impact of activity on young people. Consultees were however confident that positive impacts were becoming apparent and that benefit would continue to accrue to young people over time. Major benefits were found to include:

- Increased confidence
- Learning and skills development
- Empowerment.

The early indications are that the programme will have a significant positive impact on the participants. There are also expected to be some positive benefits for the wider community in which projects are located. This may be most apparent in relation to larger grants due to the nature and scale of activity. Wider benefits may include:

- Employment benefits
- A reduction in anti-social behaviour
- Lobbying and awareness raising activities.

7.1.6 Partnership working

Qualitative interviews with larger projects revealed some extensive examples of partnership working. It is encouraging that funding is being used to build links with existing structures within local and national government, including the Young People's Partnerships and Youth Forums established by the Welsh Assembly Government. In this way project activity may make a greater contribution to policy priorities and is more likely to be sustained and developed when BIG funding comes to an end.

Partnership working was, perhaps expectedly, less apparent among the recipients of smaller grants, just over half of those surveyed from the "Make it Happen" strand indicated that there was a partnership element to their project.

7.1.7 Sustainability and future activity

All of the larger projects involved in the case study visits indicated that they are hoping to sustain their activity following the cessation of BIG funding. This is principally to be achieved through alternative sources of funding or the mainstreaming of project activity. This is encouraging as it shows funding is being granted to those projects with long term aspirations to enhance the lives of young people in Wales.

The extent to which projects achieve mainstream funding will be an important indicator of the extent to which they filled a recognised priority gap in local provision. This will be considered further in subsequent reports.

7.1.8 Involvement of young people

One of the key stipulations of the Young People's Fund is that young people should be involved in the development, management and delivery of project activity. Most of the projects recognised the value of involving young people and appeared to be embracing this concept. The extent to

which young people are involved in some processes, particularly the management and delivery of activity, was however found to vary between projects, with some suggesting that participation had taken the form of informal consultation and others having developed sophisticated methods of involving young people in all aspects including the recruitment of adult project staff.

Early findings would indicate that youth participation is greater within larger projects although this may be a function of the project type. For example, smaller projects consulted included a variety of one-off interventions as opposed to the larger projects which often involved major programmes of advice and support which will aid the development of young people in this capacity over time.

It has also been noted that allowances were made for some projects, in relation to youth participation in the early stages due to the nature of the client group which was being targeted. Further research is therefore required to determine the scale and type of project in which the active participation of young people has been most successful and monitor changes in levels of youth participation over time.

It is also suggested that some projects may require additional guidance to inform them of innovative ways in which young people may be incorporated into management structures. Good practice examples of projects which utilise young people on management and steering groups or in the recruitment of staff may be useful for this purpose.

7.1.9 Conclusions and next steps

In conclusion, initial research would suggest that projects funded by the Young People's Fund in Wales have made a positive start and will continue to develop over the life of the programme. Projects appear to have been successful in engaging with "hard to reach" groups and there is evidence that the YPF is additional to available services.

Further, projects were also found to be positive about the involvement of young people in the development, management and delivery of funded activity.

In reality, there does however appear to be wide variation in the extent to which young people have been involved, an issue which has been identified by similar projects in Wales and across the United Kingdom. If the YPF is to achieve its vision and make a substantial contribution to the agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government set out in "Rights in Action" and "Extending Entitlement", this is an issue which should be carefully considered throughout the course of the evaluation. More substantial conclusion will be possible following research with young people planned for the next phase.

7.2 Introduction

The Young People's Fund in Wales was allocated £13.2 million to pursue three strategic aims:

- Helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential
- Helping young people to develop skills and contribute to their communities
- Helping young people to choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour.

To ensure that the funding is effective in promoting the above aims, funding has been divided into three strands:

- Make it Happen supports young people with innovative ideas for activities or projects that will help other young people in their communities.
- Bridging the Gap supports projects that identify and engage the most difficult to reach young people.
- Reaching Out supports activity that is focused on young people who are either at risk of being or are already disengaged, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

The operation of the Young People's Fund is summarised in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 – Summary of the 3 Strands in the Wales Programme

Strand	Criteria	Amount	Amt Range	Funding Time Range	Target Group	Management/ Decision Making
Make it Happen	Small grants for projects developed and undertaken by young people. Supports young people with good ideas for activities or projects that will help other young people or their local community.	£1 million	£500 to £5,000		If oversubscribed the following groups will be given priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups run by disabled young people or young people from BME backgrounds • Small groups who've not received funding before • Groups of young people facing particular issues of disadvantage • Projects promoting integration between young people with different experiences or backgrounds 	Decisions are delegated to officers.
Bridging the Gap	Supports projects that identify and engage with the most difficult to reach and challenging young people. Projects will assess young people's needs, actively support them in accessing existing services and assist them in re-engaging with constructive activities that will help turn their lives around. They will also achieve at least two of the main aims.	£6 million	Max £1 million	Max 5 years	Young people who may have experiences multiple problems such as exclusion from school, homelessness, or alcohol misuse.	A programme committee has been set up to provide strategic advice and make application decisions.
Reaching Out	Funding projects focussed on engaging target young people in activities by undertaking prevention and/or outreach and intervention work that will fill a gap in local provision. Projects will need to achieve at least two of the main aims.	£6.2 million	Max £300,000	Max 3 years	Young people either at risk of being or already disaffected and disengaged, particularly in disadvantaged communities	A programme committee has been set up to provide strategic advice and make application decisions.

7.3 Policy and Environment

7.3.1 Introduction

The policies and strategic objectives of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) are well aligned with those of the Young People's Fund in Wales. The work of the fund is therefore seen to complement and in turn be supported by the wider policy environment. This section outlines some of the key policies of WAG in relation to children and young people in order to achieve an understanding of the environment in which the Young People's Fund in Wales operates.

7.3.2 Strategic context

Extending Entitlement, published in 2000, is the WAG's flagship policy for youth support services for those aged 11 to 25. Extending Entitlement outlines 10 key rights to which all children and young people should have access. Entitlements which may be of particular relevance to the work of the Young People's Fund include the right to:

- Education, training and work experience, tailored to their needs.
- Basic skills which open doors to a full life and promote social inclusion.
- A wide and varied range of opportunities to participate in volunteering and active citizenship.
- Personal support and advice where and when needed and in appropriate formats with clear ground rules on confidentiality.
- Recreational and social opportunities in a safe, accessible environment.
- Sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences to develop talents, broaden horizons and promote rounded perspectives.

- The right to be consulted, to participate in decision making and to be heard on all matters which concern them or impact upon their lives.

In “Children and Young People: a Framework for Partnership” (2000), WAG went on to outline a vision for children and young people focusing on effective partnership working and streamlining existing funding sources. This guidance required each Local Authority to establish a Children and Young People’s Framework partnership to co-ordinate the planning and delivery of services for children and young people across all delivery areas. The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) supplied the government with principles underpinning the Children and Young People’s Framework partnerships. Framework Partnerships have now been established in all local authority areas.

7.3.3 Active participation of children and young people in Wales

Stakeholder participation in the decision making process is currently high on the Welsh political agenda. The participation of children and young people in Wales is promoted in Rights to Action (2004). This document presented the way forward on Children’s and Young People’s issues and rights, based on the UNCRC which has been adopted by WAG as the basis for all work with children and young people in Wales.

“Rights to Action” translated the UNCRC into seven core aims to be promoted by the work of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). “Rights to Action” also confirms the roles and responsibilities of the various structures put in place to ensure the active participation of children and young people at a national, regional and local. These structures include:

- The Children’s Commissioner
- Funky Dragon- the Children and Young People’s Assembly
- Children and Young People’s Forums which WAG has requested be set up in each local authority area.

7.3.3.1 *The Children's Commissioner*

WAG appointed the first Children's Commissioner for Wales in 2001. The commissioner was given responsibility for protecting children's rights as set out in the UNCRC. The Commissioner has the power to review the effect of policies on and the delivery of services to, children and young people.

7.3.3.2 *Funky Dragon – The Children's and Young People's Assembly*

WAG has also assisted the set up of Funky Dragon; a peer led organisation which began work in April 2003. Funky Dragon spans Wales and evolved out of the network of local youth forums. It aims to encourage active citizenship and give young people aged 0 to 25 the opportunity to make their voices heard on issues which affect them. Funky Dragon is attempting to achieve this through a number of key objectives:

- To undertake consultations with children and young people around relevant policies, strategies and initiatives.
- To work with local Forums and other participation-based organisations and groups to ensure effective participation of children and young people.
- To provide links with similar organisations in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Europe and beyond.
- To participate in monitoring and reporting processes around the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Wales.
- To provide information and training materials to support consultations with children and young people.
- To maintain regular contact with children and young people, particularly through the Funky Dragon website.

Funky Dragon is widely regarded as a good practice example of youth participation and is a model of delivery which is now being employed

elsewhere. For example, the evaluation of Scotland's Dialogue Youth project highlighted the local infrastructure employed by Funky Dragon as an example of good practice, which was seen to provide useful learning for other initiatives across the UK.

Rights in Action (2007) reaffirmed the commitment of WAG towards implementing the rights enshrined in the UNCRC. Indeed one of the progress reports to be submitted to the UN Committee in autumn 2007 is currently being compiled by young people through Funky Dragon.

7.3.4 Further policy developments

Further developments which may influence policy in relation to children and young people in Wales include:

- The Communities First Initiative; WAG's programme to tackle deprivation in Wales. Communities First provides a basis for enabling disadvantaged communities to identify their own needs and play an active role in shaping the future of their communities.
- The recently published National Youth Service Strategy for Wales. This document sets out the way in which WAG intends to achieve a fit-for-purpose youth service which works closely with partner organisations for the benefit of all young people. The strategy recognises that youth work depends on highly skilled interventions with clear outcomes which recognise young people's needs, their potential, and helps them to grow and develop.
- Making Connections – Delivering Beyond the Boundaries; WAG's response to the Beecham review of Local Service Delivery published in 2006. This document sets out an agenda for transforming the delivery of public services in Wales.

7.3.5 Evaluation evidence

7.3.5.1 Extending entitlement – making it real

In 2004 WAG published a pilot evaluation of Extending Entitlement. The evaluation was primarily intended to assess key issues concerning how the effectiveness of the policy could best be measured and was not an impact assessment in its own right. The evaluation did however highlight some issues which may be of relevance to the evaluation of the Young People's Fund in Wales. The evaluation found high levels of familiarity with Extending Entitlement objectives among members of the Young People's Partnerships (YPP) although concern was expressed over the ability of YPPs to achieve these due to resource limitations. In spite of these concerns YPP coordinators were hopeful for the future effectiveness of the programme.

The evaluation team also found differing levels of engagement and partnership working among the YPPs. This is an issue which should be investigated in relation to projects funded by the Young People's Fund as the extent of partnership working with statutory organisations may reasonably be expected to impact upon the effectiveness of funded projects.

In terms of the rights set out in Extending Entitlement, consultation with young people found that access was considered highest for "sporting activities" (84%) and lowest for "the opportunity for young people to be asked what they think and want" (22%). Given the requirements of BIG, to involve young people in the design and delivery of activity, it will be important for this evaluation to examine the extent of youth participation at a project level to discover if this differs significantly from the national picture.

7.3.5.2 The Mentor UK Rural Youth Project

The Mentor UK Rural Youth Project aimed to increase understanding of the experience of young people living in rural areas, specifically their experience of drugs and alcohol. Young people were recruited, trained

and supported by Mentor UK to assess the effectiveness of the drug prevention projects and give feedback on prevention resources.

Key findings from the evaluation of this project suggest that engaging young people can be difficult as some do not want to give up their free time, whilst others are already heavily engaged in other projects; forming appropriate partnerships with agencies who work with at risk groups is a more successful way of engaging these groups than through partnerships with established youth forums who tend to contact young people through schools; and local workers are key to maintaining the motivation of young people. Again, it is expected that the evaluation of YPF in Wales is likely to identify similar issues.

7.3.5.3 Millennium Volunteers

Millennium Volunteers (MV) is a UK wide initiative, supported by government, to promote sustained volunteering among young people aged 16 to 25, but particularly among those with no previous experience of volunteering or those vulnerable to social exclusion.

Evaluation of the initiative stated that youth involvement was reported positively in the majority of cases, however, as was found with the mentor UK Rural Youth Project some reported challenges in involving young people, including lack of resources and time on the part of managers and volunteers and a lack of interest on behalf of young people in serving on committees. The current evaluation will explore whether these issues are evident in the YPF projects.

Overall the MV programme was found to have been successful in generating a wide variety of opportunities for young people and, while additional recognition of the barriers to volunteering faced by those from disadvantaged backgrounds was thought necessary, MV proved to be influential in the personal development of many young people. In addition, respondents spoke enthusiastically about the contribution that MV could make in the search for employment, thereby aiding future economic wellbeing.

7.3.6 Conclusions

It would appear that the aims and objectives of the Young People's Fund in Wales are well aligned with those of WAG. This is evident in the vision for children and young people promoted through "Rights to Action", "Rights in Action" and "Extending Entitlement". In addition, with the basis for engagement with children and young people rooted in the UNCRC, the activities of WAG and the YPF should both complement and support one another.

It will be interesting for the evaluation to examine the extent to which YPF projects are engaging with the bodies put in place by WAG, such as the Children's Commissioner, the Children and Young People's Framework Partnerships and Funky Dragon.

This chapter also highlighted mounting evidence of the benefits that can accrue to young people and their communities through their active participation in the development and delivery of services. However, despite positive sentiment, the full potential of children and young people in this area is yet to be realised by many similar projects. These will be important considerations in the evaluation of the Young People's Fund in Wales.

7.4 Project take-up in Wales

7.4.1 Introduction

As previously discussed the Young People's Fund in Wales is divided into three strands to support young people aged 10 to 19. This section considers the allocation of awards in each of the three strands.

7.4.2 Make it Happen

The Young People's Fund – 'Make it Happen' was developed to help young people to plan and run projects to meet their own needs. It launched on 31st January 2005 and will run until 31st January 2008. The strand aims to distribute £1,000,000 for groups of young people to plan activities which must meet at least one aim of the YPF in Wales and allow

young people to become involved in the community. The programme aims to bring a wide range of young people together to take part in activities they would usually not be able to do. Awards range from a minimum of £500 to a maximum of £5000.

As of May 2007 Make it Happen had made 119 awards to the value of £484,679.00, with the average award being around £4,072. A break down of award allocations is provided in table 7.2.

Table 7.2 - Award Value – Make it Happen (May 2007)

Award Value	Number of awards
500-999	5
1000-1999	11
2000-2999	9
3000-3999	11
4000-4999	59
Max grant 5000	24
Total	119

The geographical distribution of awards is shown in table 7.3.

Table 7.3 – Geographical Distribution of Awards (May 2007)

Local Authority	Population aged 10-25*	Number of awards	Value of awards (£)	Award per head (£)
Newport	27,597	14	£67,749	£2.45
Blaenau Gwent	13,940	5	£22,534	£1.62
Caerphilly	34,096	10	£45,867	£1.35
Powys	21,464	8	£29,347	£1.37
Carmarthenshire	32,040	9	£37,479	£1.17
Swansea	46,922	12	£49,432	£1.05
Merthyr Tydfil	11,438	4	£9,576	£0.84
Denbighshire	16,993	3	£13,675	£0.80
Bridgend	24,420	5	£19,590	£0.80
Vale of Glamorgan	22,994	5	£17,072	£0.74
Gwynedd	23,224	5	£21,306	£0.92
Torfaen	17,833	3	£12,799	£0.72
Pembrokeshire	20,599	4	£14,393	£0.70
Cardiff	75,195	13	£46,506	£0.62
Monmouthshire	14,799	2	£8,919	£0.60
Rhondda Cynon Taff	48,356	7	£27,365	£0.57
Ceredigion	17,570	2	£9,854	£0.56
Wrexham	25,741	4	£11,967	£0.46
Neath Port Talbot	25,507	2	£9,955	£0.39
Flintshire	28,719	2	£9,294	£0.32
Total	549,447	119	£484,679.00	£0.88

Source: Census 2001 from Nomisweb

The table shows spend per head of population ranging from £2.45 to £0.32. Newport emerges as the local authority area which has received both the highest number and value of awards, while no awards appear to have been made in Conwy or the Isle of Anglesey.

7.4.3 Reaching Out

Reaching Out was launched in July 2005 and ran until 31 July 2007. The closing date for outline proposal applications to 'Reaching Out' was the 31st January 2007. The programme was designed to provide services and activities for young people at a local level, fill gaps in provision and undertake prevention, outreach or intervention work. It had an initial

indicative budget of £6.2 million available to support projects which contributed to at least two of the aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales. Grants were available up to a maximum of £300,000. An additional budget of £1,454,714 was made available to Reaching Out following final commitment figures for the Bridging the Gap programme.

As of May 2007 Reaching Out had awarded funding to the value of £4,445,288 to 21 individual projects throughout Wales. Grants ranged in value from a minimum of £10,071 to the maximum of £300,000. Maximum awards were made on three occasions. The average award was around £211,680. A break down of award allocations is given in table 7.4.

Table 7.4 – Value of awards – Reaching Out (May 2007)

Award Value	No. awards
0-9,999	0
10,000- 49,999	1
50,000-99,999	2
100,000 - 149,999	2
150,000 - 199,999	2
200,000-249,999	5
250,000-299,999	6
Max 300,000	3
Total	21

The geographical distribution of awards is shown in table 7.5.

Table 7.5 – Geographical Distribution of Awards (May 2007)

Local Authority	Population aged 10-25*	Number of awards	Value of awards	Award per head
Conway	18,699	2	£444,016	£23.75
Bridgend	24,420	2	£550,898	£22.56
Ceredigion	17,570	2	£359,812	£20.48
Merthyr Tydfil	11,438	2	£223,012	£19.50
Torfaen	17,833	1	£298,776	£16.75
Vale of Glamorgan	22,994	2	£355,437	£15.46
Cardiff	75,195	4	£948,431	£12.61
Rhondda Cynon Taff	48,356	2	£482,865	£9.99
Flintshire	28,719	1	£258,480	£9.00
Carmarthenshire	32,040	1	£246,736	£7.70
Pembrokeshire	20,599	1	£139,043	£6.75
More than one area	-	1	£137,782	-
Total	317,863	21	£4,445,288	£13.98

*Source: Census 2001 from Nomisweb

The table shows that “Reaching Out” has made awards in 11 of Wales’s 22 local authority areas. Spend per head of population ranged from £23.75 to £6.75 and, understandably, the highest concentration of awards has been in Cardiff.

7.4.4 Bridging the Gap

‘Bridging the Gap’ is the strategic strand of the Young People’s Fund in Wales. The programme was designed to fund intensive outreach and support services for young people aged between 10 and 19, who are the most disengaged and hardest to reach. Bridging the Gap aims to fund innovative and strategic projects which fill a clear gap in services. The aim is to link disengaged young people with mainstream services and allow young people access to support and interventions, which will re-engage them with society and their peers. It had an indicative budget of £6 million to provide large grants of up to £1,000,000 for a maximum of five years. It was anticipated that the strand would support between 6 to 15 projects. The fund closed to outline applications on the 30th June 2005.

'Bridging the Gap' awarded funding to the value of £4,495,286 to six organisations. Awards ranged in value from £528,150 to £977,333, with the average grant being around £749, 214.

Table 7.6 details the geographical distribution of 'Bridging the Gap' awards across Wales.

Table 7.6 – Geographical Distribution of Awards

Local Authority	Population aged 10-25*	Number of awards	Value of awards	Award per head
Bridgend	24,420	1	739,054	£30.26
Powys	21,464	1	528,150	£24.61
Wrexham	25,741	1	977,333	£37.97
Cardiff	75,195	2	1,497,809	£19.92
Swansea	46,922	1	752,940	£16.05
Totals	193,742	6	£4,495,286	£23.20

*Source: Census 2001 from Nomisweb

As Table 7.7 shows, Cardiff has been the most substantial beneficiary of Young People's Fund awards. As of May 2007, the Isle of Anglesey was the only area not to have received any specific funding.

Table 7.7 Summary of Awards at May 2007

Local Authority	Make it happen (£)	Reaching Out (£)	Bridging the Gap (£)	Total
Cardiff	£46,506	£948,431	£1,497,809	£2,492,746
Bridgend	£19,590	£550,898	£739,054	£1,309,542
Wrexham	£11,967	-	£977,333	£989,300
Swansea	£49,432	-	£752,940	£802,372
Powys	£29,347	-	£528,150	£557,497
Rhondda Cynon Taff	£27,365	£482,865	-	£510,230
Conwy	-	£444,016	-	£444,016
Vale of Glamorgan	£17,072	£355,437	-	£372,509
Ceredigion	£9,854	£359,812	-	£369,666
Torfaen	£12,799	£298,776	-	£311,575
Carmarthenshire	£37,479	£246,736	-	£284,215
Flintshire	£9,294	£258,480	-	£267,774
Merthyr Tydfil	£9,576	£223,012	-	£232,588
Pembrokeshire	£14,393	£139,043	-	£153,436
More than one area	-	£137,782	-	£137,782
Newport	£67,749	-	-	£67,749
Caerphilly	£45,867	-	-	£45,867
Blaenau Gwent	£22,534	-	-	£22,534
Gwynedd	£21,306	-	-	£21,306
Denbighshire	£13,675	-	-	£13,675
Neath Port Talbot	£9,955	-	-	£9,955
Monmouthshire	£8,919	-	-	£8,919
Isle of Anglesey	-	-	-	-
Total	£484,679	£4,445,288	£4,495,286	£9,425,253

7.5 Project Feedback Qualitative

7.5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of seven semi-structured interviews undertaken in April and May 2007. interviews were focused on organisations receiving grants in excess of £100,000 and were selected at random from the “Reaching Out” and “Bridging the Gap” strands of the Young People’s Fund in Wales. Given the likely correlation between scale, complexity and impact it was felt that a qualitative approach was best suited to understanding this relationship.

Information on smaller projects was captured through a telephone survey discussed in the next chapter. As projects were in the early stages of development the views of young people were not sought in this instance. This will however be incorporated into subsequent evaluation reports. The remainder of this chapter will consider:

- Project profile
- The contribution of projects to the aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales
- The involvement of young people in the development and delivery of project activity
- The sustainability of project activity.

7.5.2 Project profile

A total of seven case study visits were carried out with YPF projects in Wales, these comprised:

- 4 projects which received funding from "Reaching Out"
- 3 projects which received funding from "Bridging the Gap".

Awards ranged from £258,480 to £977,333. At the time of interview, all projects had been operational for between 4 and 8 months. As projects were still in the early stages impacts were found to be limited. However, projects were able to discuss what they were hoping to achieve over the funding period. The intention is to revisit a number of these projects at a later date to see the extent to which anticipated benefits are being realised.

7.5.2.1 Target groups and project activity

The projects selected for involvement in case study visits delivered a wide range of activities to differing client groups. In line with the aims of the fund in Wales, the majority was focused on areas of disadvantage and

deprivation; this was mentioned by 86% of interviewees (six projects). Within these areas, specific target groups included young people who were:

- Homeless
- Ex-offenders or young people at risk of offending
- Young parents
- Disengaged or excluded young people.

The services delivered with the support of “Reaching Out” included:

- Provision of advice and practical activities around nutrition and exercise.
- Provision of advice and support to young people at risk of social exclusion.
- Opportunities to participate in sports and creative activities such as art, music and drama.
- A youth drop-in centre, comprising a skate park and “chill out” area.

Interviews with projects highlighted a focus on mental health issues in a number of projects, including all three which received support from “Bridging the Gap”.

These projects provide advice, support and activities for young people with unmet mental health needs, with one project focusing specifically on those displaying self-harming behaviours. By focusing on those with unmet mental health needs lottery funding is providing services in addition to the mainstream and filling a perceived gap in provision.

Given the nature of these projects, activity was tailored to the needs of the individual and was found to vary both within and between projects. Activities included:

- Individual and group support
- Development of personal care / development plans by young people, in conjunction with key workers
- Provision of activities to support non-medical and emotional needs
- Therapeutic services
- Basic cookery, budgeting and finance skills and other skills required for an independent life
- Lobbying and awareness raising activity.

7.5.3 Contribution to the aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales

Operation of the Young People's Fund in Wales is based around 3 strategic aims as discussed in section 7.1.2. While the majority of interviewees felt that their projects contributed, to some extent, to each of these aims, it emerged that:

- 71% (five projects) focused on helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential.
- One project was intended to help young people to develop skills and contribute to their communities.
- The final project could not say which aim they contributed to the most as there was felt a strong inter-relationship between them.

7.5.3.1 Helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential

All of the projects included in the research felt that they contributed to the enjoyment and achievement of young people in some way. Indeed the majority felt that their prime focus was in this area.

The projects included in the research contribute to this aim in two principal ways:

- Providing a safe, comfortable environment with opportunities for young people to take part in enjoyable activities from which they may otherwise be excluded.
- Working to improve the physical and mental health of young people, allowing them to achieve their potential (Project Example Wales 1).

Project Example Wales 1 – A programme of social and medical support for young disadvantaged people with mental health needs.

The idea for one project came about after a seconded mental health worker identified a gap in service provision and policy making for young people with significant mental health needs. It was found that that many agencies experience difficulty in establishing and maintaining contact with this group.

The project receives referrals from individuals, families, GPs, schools, social care and mental health workers. Where they can work with the referral, a course of individual or group support, or a mix of both is jointly agreed. Individuals are involved in assessing their own progress throughout their time with the project and any changes to the support offered are agreed jointly between the individual and project staff. Barriers to involvement are overcome by what has come to be known as the “terrier” approach; finding ways round problems as they arise.

The project takes a holistic approach to mental health – both medical and social. Young people have however tended to take more of an interest in social aspects. Support is described as a cross between befriending, advocacy and mentoring. The project feels that their approach has been highly successful to date but recognises that staff costs can be high, and that it is demanding and stressful work, with few formal support mechanisms available to staff.

The key focus of the project is on helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential as mental health issues may have a serious detrimental impact on quality of life.

The project is now being used by the Mental Health Foundation as one of eight case studies in a UK wide research project and it is also set to feature on a BBC programme. It is hoped that such high profile activities will help the project to further raise awareness the work it undertakes and the very specific needs of the client group, thereby helping to sustain its activity in the future.

7.5.3.2 Helping young people to develop skills and contribute to their communities

The second strategic aim of the Young People's Fund in Wales is to help young people develop skills and contribute to their communities. One interviewee made reference to this aim, stating that their project was focused on providing young people with the knowledge and practical skills to make positive lifestyle choices. It was also felt that these skills would benefit young people throughout their lives (Project Example Wales 2).

Project Example Wales 2 – A project to encourage young people from disadvantaged areas to make healthy lifestyle choices, focusing on nutrition and physical activity.

In order to aid positive lifestyle choices among young people, one project organises residential courses providing nutritional information and advice, practical shopping and cooking skills, and opportunities to be involved in physical activity. It is felt that residential courses allow the young people escape their everyday problems, and to learn and participate in an environment free from peer pressure.

The project was developed following recognition that there was a lack of knowledge around health issues among young people in the area. The project idea was reinforced by a 1999 survey indicating that around a third of people in the area had a very poor diet and a third had been diagnosed with depression. Recognising the links between food, exercise and mental health, the project was developed in conjunction with health promotion staff, and dieticians, following wide scale consultation with young people.

Activities provided by the project include:

- Duke of Edinburgh awards
- Cooking and menu planning
- Nutrition advice
- Juice bar
- Health fairs
- Dance classes
- Outdoor activities.

Project Example Wales 2 (continued)

Skills gained at the residential sessions are reinforced through activities at the local centre in which the project is based. The centre is equipped with modern catering facilities and young people are encouraged to become involved in mentoring activities, by cooking meals for others and discussing nutrition and health issues with their peers.

While direct reference to this aim was not made by other projects, their potential contribution is very apparent. For example, the skills of young people may be developed through projects which provide an opportunity to participate in sports, and creative activities such as, art, music, drama and dance. Such activities have been shown to aid the development of skills and attributes which may be of significant benefit in all aspects of professional and social life. These may include:

- Self confidence
- Communication skills (verbal and non-verbal)
- Team working
- Expression
- Problem solving.

Development of skills and contribution to the local community was further demonstrated by one interviewee who highlighted the recruitment procedures in place within their organisation. The project, which received the maximum grant of £300,000 from "Reaching Out", stated that, when possible, they try to employ young people from the local area.

The interviewee was of the opinion that deprivation presented a significant barrier to employment for young people in the local area and felt that the project was employing those who would not otherwise be given such an opportunity.

The interviewee was impressed by the progress of the staff and felt that the faith and trust that had been placed in the young people was being repaid with dedication and commitment. The interviewee went on to comment that *"we understood their needs and worked with them to get round their problems, and now they refuse to even take their holidays! They love working here... You just need to understand them and give them a chance, whoever they are"*.

7.5.3.3 Helping young people to choose positive activities that discourage anti-social behaviour

No interviewees felt that their primary contribution was in helping young people to choose positive activities that discourage anti-social behaviour. However, it is evident that a number of projects would contribute, at a basic level, to this aim through the provision of diversionary activity. Project examples include:

- Provision of an indoor skate park and "chill out" area which includes play stations and computers allowing young people to relax and socialise with friends, email and do homework.
- Provision of activities for disadvantaged or excluded young people including sports, creative arts and cookery.

Case study visits highlighted reluctance among project representatives to align themselves closely with this aim, despite the fact that two projects arose in direct response to youth disturbance and low level offending in local areas. One interviewee also stressed that their project was not intended to tackle anti-social behaviour; instead it was designed as a "detached youth project" providing advice and support to young people.

Unease within projects may reflect the negative connotations of young people that are associated with terms such as anti-social behaviour. As a result projects preferred to be associated with providing opportunities for young people to have fun and develop.

7.5.3.4 Impacts

Interviewees were unable to provide much information on the impact of the projects to date as most have only been operating for a short period of time. Most were however of the opinion that the projects were beginning to have a positive impact on the young people and that benefits would continue to increase over time.

Although it is, as yet, too early to comment on progress, one organisation provided some detail of the types of outputs and targets they are hoping to achieve. These included:

- Reducing risky behaviour
- Improving family relationships
- Increasing self-esteem
- Increasing well-being.

Project Example Wales 3 presents further evidence of the potential impact of projects supported by the Young People's Fund.

Project Example Wales 3 - A youth project based within a residential centre for homeless families to deliver opportunities for young people to participate in social activities

Staff at the centre identified a gap in the provision of onsite activities for teenagers. The project received a grant of £258,480 from "Reaching Out" to build a facility to host activities for specifically for teenage residents / past residents.

The project representatives commented on the changes that they have witnessed in the young people since delivery of the activities began.

They felt that homeless teenagers are by nature disadvantaged, excluded and hard to reach and that enhancing their self confidence is a key achievement of the project.

Project Example Wales 3 (continued)

They felt that homeless teenagers are by nature disadvantaged, excluded and hard to reach and that enhancing their self confidence is a key achievement of the project. Many of the young residents at the centre came from families experiencing multiple disadvantages associated with homelessness, such as barriers to employment and misuse of drugs or alcohol. These multiple problems may result in young people becoming withdrawn or displaying problem behaviours. As the focus of assistance through Social Services is often focused on homeless adults, the specific additional needs of young people from homeless families can be overlooked. Re-engaging this group and focusing on their needs was the key role of the project.

The interviewees went on to say that *“when they first come in they are silent and don't want to know, but within a couple of weeks they are coming to everything and are really engaged”*.

Although the project is not at the stage where it can make specific claims about the impact on individuals, it is confident that access to opportunities and involvement in the design and delivery of activity will help the young people develop into confident adults.

When asked about the best aspects of their projects, the majority of interviewees commented on the way in which participation is beginning to influence the young people and aiding the personal development of staff and young people alike. Other positive aspects of activity included:

- The fresh ideas that have been brought through the active participation of young people.
- The provision of opportunities for young people at risk of social exclusion.
- The flexible nature of activities which can be altered to meet the specific needs of young people at any one time. Projects valued the support of BIG in encouraging this flexibility.

- The range of young people from different backgrounds who have become involved.

Barriers to the successful implementation of project activity were varied and were found to include:

- Lack of time and resources.
- Working relations with external agencies and statutory bodies; fuelled by differing operational cultures.
- Difficulty in engaging and meeting the needs / expectations of young people.
- Recruitment of project staff.

A number of projects also referred to the prejudice within local areas towards the young recipients of project activity. These prejudices and negative perceptions were highlighted by both the projects providing activities for disadvantaged young people and the projects working to maintain and improve the mental and physical health of young people.

Two interviewees could not comment on any barriers or difficulties faced by the projects.

7.5.4 Involvement of young people

The Young People's Fund in Wales, as with the rest of the UK, is committed to ensuring the active participation of children and young people in the development, delivery and evaluation of project activity.

7.5.4.1 Initial development of the project idea

Interviewees were asked to speak about the initial development of their project and the ways in which young people have been involved. It emerged that, in the majority of cases, needs were identified by professionals or by existing organisations as opposed to young people

themselves. In two instances projects were developed following attempts to understand and address issues of youth disturbance in the local area.

The involvement of young people in the development of project ideas, prior to the receipt of funding, was also found to vary. All projects made an attempt to gauge the needs and wants of young people through a process of consultation. In some instances this process appears to have been informal in nature, while three projects indicated that they used formal structured questionnaires. Further examples of youth participation included:

- Employing the services of young consultants from the Young People's Partnership in Cardiff to administer a questionnaire through outreach activity.
- Setting up a detached youth team to interview 4000 young people about youth disturbance in the local area.
- A partnership of health and social work professionals consulted with youth forums across Wrexham when developing ideas for project activity.

By facilitating this type of involvement projects felt that the young people were taking the lead, and that their role was simply to aid the development and organisation of activity desired by young people.

7.5.4.2 Involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity

As many projects are still in the early phases of development, some found it difficult to provide details about the ways in which young people will be involved in the delivery of services. The evidence provided suggests that, once again, youth involvement may vary significantly between projects.

One organisation stated that they still invite the ideas of young people through regular group discussions and an ideas box. Another demonstrated a far greater level of youth participation stating that the young people run the centre and communicate their views through a regular forum, a youth committee and monthly magazine.

The case study visits did not reveal any significant differences in youth participation between the programmes funded by "Reaching Out" and those receiving grants from "Bridging the Gap". Examples of youth participation from projects in each strand are provided by Project Examples Wales 4 and 5.

One organisation indicated that, to date, young people have not been involved in the development of project activity but that they would be consulted from next year onwards.

Project Example Wales 4 – Street based detached youth project to provide advice and support to young people at risk of social exclusion.

One project which received a grant from "Reaching Out" highlighted a number of ways in which young people participate in the running of the project and delivery of services. These included:

- Having the area Youth Forum represented on the project steering group
- Involving young people in interviews for the youth workers and allowing them to develop their own questions for candidates. The questions of young people were given equal importance to those of project staff
- Development of a Young Person's Panel with representatives from each Ward served by the project. The panel should comprise young people from a mix of backgrounds, from young people with ASBOs to those who sit on their school council.

Project Example Wales 5 - A programme of social and medical support for young disadvantaged people with mental health needs.

This example was offered by a project providing befriending, advocacy and mentoring to young people with mental health needs. The organisation received support from "Bridging the Gap" in order to develop the programme. Examples of youth participation included:

- Large scale consultation concerning needs in relation to mental health and the barriers to accessing these services
- Preparation of project literature
- Active involvement in the short listing, interview and selection of project staff. Arrangements were made to involve a range of young people in this process including a young person who was in the care of mental health professionals at the time.

Project staff felt that this approach had been very successful at engaging young people and tailoring the service to their needs.

7.5.5 Sustainability

All of the projects consulted indicated that they are hoping to sustain their activity following the cessation of BIG funding. This is encouraging as it shows funding is being granted to those projects with long term aspirations to enhance the lives of young people in Wales.

Four projects indicated that they will seek alternative funding for the project when support from the Young People's Fund is over. One of these projects hopes to become self-sufficient by charging a small membership fee to service users which will cover the maintenance of the facility. This is however some years down the line as further funding will first be required to enhance the project and increase capacity in line with current demand.

The remaining three projects are beginning work to monitor progress and build a robust evidence base to ensure the future continuation of activity.

Two of these projects are hoping that their position within a partnership of statutory sector organisations will lead to the programmes being mainstreamed when funding comes to an end. The extent to which these projects achieve mainstream funding will be an important indication of the extent to which they are filling a recognised priority gap in local provision. This will be an important issue to monitor as it is one of the areas in which BIG in Wales is particularly interested.

Once again, no significant differences were found in the approaches of projects funded by "Reaching Out" or "Bridging the Gap".

7.5.6 Conclusions

All projects involved in the research appeared to be well aligned with the strategic aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales.

Projects involved in the research have only recently begun to deliver services. As a result it is not yet possible to draw any firm conclusions as to the benefits of the programmes for young people. It does however appear as if most are making a concerted effort to aid the active participation of young people, enhancing their confidence and enthusiasm and equipping them with transferable skills that will be of benefit throughout their lives.

Organisations are working in partnerships to maximise their impact and link their activity to existing structures. Some of the projects have also demonstrated good practice by:

- Involving young people in the recruitment of project staff
- Recruiting staff from young people in the local area, thereby aiding community development and fostering a sense of ownership.

There is also early indication that projects believe their activity may be additional to mainstream provision and is filling a recognisable priority gap in local and national provision.

No real difference has been observed in the development, operation and impact of projects supported by "Reaching Out" and "Bridging the Gap".

7.6 Project Feedback Quantitative

7.6.1 Introduction

A telephone survey of 25 projects supported by the Young People's Fund was undertaken in June and July 2007. The sample was selected at random. With the exception of one project, supported by Reaching Out, all organisations included in the survey had received grants of £5000 or less from the Make it Happen strand.

The remainder of this chapter details the main findings of the survey, considering, in turn:

- Operation of the projects
- Outcomes and impact
- Involvement of young people
- Future sustainability.

7.6.2 Operation of projects

7.6.2.1 Target groups

The majority of projects (68%) stated that they were inclusive and targeted their activities at young people from all backgrounds. Other specific target groups that were highlighted by projects included:

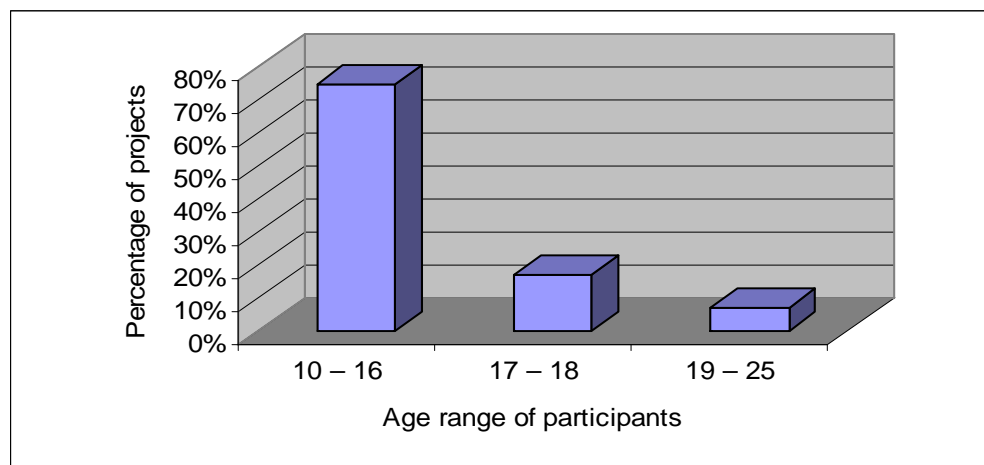
- Disadvantaged young people (12%).
- Those excluded or at risk of exclusion from school and those engaged in alternative curriculum programmes (8%).
- Those with learning difficulties or additional learning needs (8%).
- Young people disadvantaged by domestic abuse (4%).

- Young people in rural communities (4%).

Reference to these groups of young people would indicate that projects are proving effective in engaging with young people who are considered “hard to reach” or a risk of disengaging from their peers or mainstream services. It will however be possible to expand on this point following consultation with young participants.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the average age of project participants revealing that the vast majority of activity is provided to those aged 10 to 16.

Figure 7.1 - Age of project participants



Number of respondents: 25

7.6.2.2 Project activity

Through the survey it emerged that organisations are receiving funding for the provision of a wide range of activities and services. Project activity included:

- Creative arts, including music, dance, drama, film, broadcasting and sewing.
- Outdoor activities and sports such as canoeing, abseiling, horse riding and skateboarding.

- Provision of education and training.
- One off festivals, events, equipment and trips for young people, including:
 - The purchase of an interactive “Drugs Box” computer to allow young people to make informed choices concerning drugs and alcohol.
 - A three-day visit to Urdd Eisteddod; a Welsh language cultural youth festival, recognised as Europe’s largest arts youth festival.

In addition, some grants have been used to facilitate awareness raising and lobbying activity such as the establishment and running of youth forums and conferences.

7.6.2.3 Focus and fit with the aims of the Young People’s Fund

Table 7.8 categorises projects according to their strategic fit with the priorities of the Young People’s Fund in Wales. It emerged that equal numbers of projects were focused on helping young people to:

- Enjoy life and achieve their potential
- Develop skills and contribute to their communities.

Table 7.8 – Strategic priority closest to the focus of the project

	Percentage of projects
Enjoy life and achieve their potential	44%
Develop skills and contribute to their communities	44%
Choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour	12%
Total	100%

Number of respondents: 25

Participants were also asked to rate the contribution of their project to the three strategic aims of the Young People’s Fund in Wales (Table 7.9). All of the projects felt that their activity made some contribution to the enjoyment and achievement of young people and 82% stated that this was a key focus of their project.

Table 7.9 – “Fit” with the project priorities of the Young Peoples Fund in Wales

	1 – Not a focus	2 – A bit	3 – Quite a lot	4 – Focus	Total
Enjoy life and achieve their potential	0%	0%	32%	82%	100%
Develop skills and contribute to their communities	4%	4%	28%	64%	100%
Choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour	4%	4%	56%	36%	100%

Number of respondents: 25

Among those stating that **enjoyment and achievement** was a focus of their project, interviewees felt that their contribution included:

- Giving young people the opportunity to take part in new activities that they would not normally have the chance to experience.
- The preparation of personal development plans in which young people can document their aims, values, ideas and goals.
- Fostering a sense of belonging and ownership as they had been actively involved in the delivery of the projects.

In addition, one interviewee also commented that their project had helped young people to believe that anything is possible as they had developed the project and addressed all the barriers that were placed in their way.

Project representatives felt that they helped young people to **develop skills and contribute to their communities** in 2 main ways:

- The provision of training and equipment to take control of their own learning and personal development.
- Informing and empowering young people to have a voice in society. An example of this was provided by a youth radio station which broadcasts programmes about the rights and entitlements of young people and encourages research and discussion around topics such as health, housing, employment and education.

The third strategic aim of the Young People's Fund in Wales; **to help young people choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour**, is principally promoted through the provision of diversionary activity in a safe environment. For example, some projects stated that their contribution to this aim was achieved by providing a safe place for young people to meet or an opportunity to participate in new activities as opposed to "hanging around on the streets". However, in this way, projects can only contribute to this aim at a very basic level.

Some projects provided more insightful understanding of the way in which they could discourage anti-social behaviour amongst young people:

- One project spoke about bringing young people from a variety of backgrounds together in order to foster greater understanding and respect.
- Another used the medium of film to allow young people to explore issues around anti-social behaviour. The interviewee believed that "looking at themselves on camera helps young people to understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable".

While some focused responses to questions concerning the strategic fit of projects were received, the replies of many projects lacked clarity and evidence about the ways in which projects were contributing to aims of the Young People's Fund. Specific comments included:

- "the project did a lot for them – it encouraged and inspired them to go to do a lot more".
- "it enabled young people to access the services they want – we are constantly informing them".
- "aim is to get young people together socialising where they can have a night of fun activities".
- "by giving them somewhere safe to hang out it's given them a sense of belonging. As they have been involved since the start, they don't want to wreck it".

7.6.2.4 Development of the projects

In the majority of cases, those involved in project development were part of an existing group, which was expanded in a general way to accommodate the needs of the project (60%).

In 24% of cases the group charged with the development of the project was a wholly new group of people brought together for that purpose (Table 7.10). Further, young people were brought in to an established group to aid the development process in only one project.

Table 7.10 - Status of the group responsible for development the project

	Percentage of projects
An existing group that has expanded generally	60%
A wholly new group	24%
An existing group with no significant changes	8%
An existing group with young people brought in	4%
Other	4%
Total	100%

Number of respondents: 25

Seventy six percent of interviewees stated that the group which developed the project is the same group that is currently delivering it. Among those organisations which have experienced changes in project staff and/or young participants, this was not thought to have had a detrimental impact. Indeed, some commented that the fresh ideas and knowledge had further aided the development of the project.

7.6.2.5 External influences

Just over half of survey respondents (13 projects) indicated that there was a partnership element to their project. Among those who delivered their project in conjunction with other organisations:

- 38% were delivering the project with an established partner.
- 38% had formed a new partnership to deliver the project.
- 24% had expanded an existing partnership to develop the project.

Partner organisations were found to include:

- Statutory organisations such as the police, health and social services, youth offending teams and other local authority departments
- Local schools
- Community organisations
- The Prince's Trust.

The majority of organisations choosing to deliver activity unilaterally did not feel that they required a partner as they had the necessary skills and capacity within the organisation. One project did however state that they are now looking for a partner to enable project activity to continue once BIG funding comes to an end.

7.6.2.6 Outcomes and impact

Survey participants were positive about the impact of their projects on young people. Table 7.11 details the responses of interviewees when asked about the contribution of the project to a number of specified outcomes.

The table shows that the most significant benefit accrued by young people was increased confidence. This was closely followed by improved relationships with others and increased achievement and learning. Project representatives indicated that their activities have made the least contribution to improvement of physical well-being.

Table 7.11 - Benefits of project activity

Benefit	Percentage of projects reporting change				
	(1) Little benefit	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Significant benefit
Increased confidence	0	0	4	24	72
Improved relationships with others	0	0	8	24	68
Increased achievement and learning	0	0	8	24	68
Improved communication skills	0	4	12	28	56
Increased motivation	0	0	20	32	48
Greater social awareness	0	0	28	24	48
New transferable skills	0	4	16	40	40
Improved mental well being	0	0	24	36	40
Increased engagement	0	0	16	44	40
Improved physical well being	4	8	36	20	32

With the exception of physical well-being, over 90% of interviewees felt that the immediate benefits of project participation would be translated into long term benefits for young people.

When asked about the best aspects and greatest achievements of their projects, interviewees provided a wide and varied range of responses, the most significant of which was the fact that the projects are bringing young people from different backgrounds together and uniting them with a common focus (Table 7.12). Representatives also spoke about:

- The impact of the project on young people and the community.
- Enjoyment that young people gain through participation.

The impacts to which survey respondents referred appear to be well aligned with the strategic aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales. It is however too early to comment on the extent to which these benefits are accruing to service users.

Table 7.12 - Best things about the projects

Categorised responses	Number of projects
Bringing people from different backgrounds together	9
Impact on young people (including increased confidence and sense of achievement)	7
Enjoyment and enthusiasm shown by young people	7
Active participation and ownership of the project by young people	6

Development of skills	5
Opportunities to be experience new things	5
Provision of a safe environment in which to socialise	4
Making a difference in the community	2
Partnership working	2
Awareness raising	1

Number respondents: 25

Factors which have hindered the implementation of project activity were:

- A lack of time and resources
- Communication with partner organisations
- Logistical difficulties
- Funding
- Recruitment and retention of staff.

7.6.3 Involvement of young people

Projects supported by the Young People's Fund are required to demonstrate the active involvement of beneficiaries in the design and delivery activity. However, the form and extent of participation may range significantly from project to project depending on the specified aims and the characteristics of those involved, both young people and adults.

7.6.3.1 Involvement in the application and development stages

The majority of interviewees stated that they had involved young people in the initial formulation of the project idea through verbal consultation (Table 7.13). As it is not possible to infer the rigour with which this consultation was undertaken, it is possible that activity ranged from informal conversation to structured focus groups with the target audience.

Just over a third of the projects included in the survey gauged the opinions of young people through their involvement on management/steering groups. Given the ideas promoted by WAG through "Rights to Action" and "Funky Dragon", this is a practice which should continue to

be developed. In this way services will better meet the needs of young people and contribute to the development of skills and confidence.

Twelve percent of respondents stated that young people were not involved in the initial development of the project idea and funding application but were involved once the project was up and running. In addition, only 8% (two projects) attempted to gather the opinions of young people by means of a structured survey. It may be the case that funding was sought to support existing projects where staff had already developed a relationship with young people. However, if funding was intended to support the development of a new project, a formal survey may be an appropriate means of gathering and documenting the opinions of a large number of potential beneficiaries.

Interviews with Young People's Fund staff at BIG did however reveal that allowances, with respect participation in funding applications, were made in Wales as projects were very often targeting "hard to reach" groups whom it was difficult to involve in the early stages of project development.

Table 7.13 Involvement of young people in the initial development of the application and project idea

	Percentage of projects
Consulted young people by speaking with them	96%
Young people are already on the management/ steering group	36%
Young people were not involved in the initial development of the project, but were involved once the project was up and running	12%
Surveyed young people using a structured survey	8%

Number of respondents: 25

Note: percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

As can be seen in Table 7.14, the intensity of young people's involvement in the development subsequent project activity varied between projects. However, it would appear as if all projects have made an attempt to involve young people in the process, including those in which the initial idea was developed by adults (Table 7.13). This suggests that the principles of the fund are being embraced; indeed 8% (two projects) were developed exclusively by young people.

Table 7.14 - Involvement of young people in the development of the project

	Percentage of projects
More adult input than young people	32%
Even mix	32%
More young people input than adult	28%
Exclusively developed by young people	8%
Exclusively developed by adults	0%
Total	100%

Number of respondents: 25

The comments of respondents illustrate differing levels of participation among young people. The range of comments included:

- “We consulted with them and asked them what they wanted”.
- “We held meetings and workshops to consult with young people”.

“We had an advocacy group of young people who met monthly to discuss their work and training needs. A gap in the provision of services for young people with special needs was identified and they felt they were entitled to access courses such as hairdressing and mechanics the same as everyone else. The group considered how to achieve this and with support they made it happen”.

7.6.3.2 The skills brought by young people

Survey respondents felt that young people possessed a variety of skills that were of value during the drafting of the funding application and development of project ideas, the most significant of which was their knowledge of the target group.

As no information is available detailing the characteristics of young people involved in the project development process, it is not possible to comment on the extent to which views may be representative of target groups. However, given the inclusive nature of projects involved in the research, this is not felt to be an issue of significant importance. Further:

- Over 50% of respondents felt that the communication skills of young people were of value to the process.

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- Around a quarter commented on the project management skills of young people.
- One fifth of interviewees felt that the young people had skills to contribute to the application writing process.

Table 7.15 - Skills brought by young people to the development process

	Percentage of projects
Knowledge of the target group	72%
Communication Skills	56%
Project Management Skills	24%
Application writing skills	20%
Other	16%

Number of respondents: 25

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

Organisations were asked about the support and training that was required by young people to enable them to contribute to the development of the funding application and project (Table 7.16). The most significant training needs were found to be in peer mentoring and project management; each cited by 52% of respondents.

While a number of organisations provided young people with training and support in project management and application writing, it appears as if there is scope for these activities to be increased further. Provision of more intensive support in these areas will increase the contribution of activity to the second aim of the Young People's Fund by developing the skills of young people.

Just under a third of interviewees felt that young participants required additional support to enable effective communication with local authorities and other institutions. This reinforces the findings presented in Table 7.15 indicating that most young people had these skills prior to involvement in the project.

Table 7.16 - Training and support required by young people

	Percentage of projects
Training in peer mentoring	52%
Project management skills	52%
Technical skills (how to make costings, use Excel & Word, prepare an attractive document, etc.)	40%
Networking skills (bringing together the right people to make the application work)	40%
Application writing skills	36%
Support to communicate with the local authority and other formal organisations	32%
Other	28%

Number of respondents: 25

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

7.6.3.3 *Involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity*

Table 7.17 shows the involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity. Ninety two percent of respondents indicated that young people were actively involved in engaging their peers in project activity.

By employing young participants in this manner, projects demonstrate a clear contribution to the second strategic YPF aim; to contribute to the local community. Involving young people in peer mentoring activity may also increase their skills and confidence and add to their sense of achievement.

Table 7.17 – Involvement of young people in the delivery of the project

	Percentage of projects
They engage potential young people	92%
They design what is done	88%
They review the activity	80%
They deliver the activity	60%

Number of respondents: 25

Note percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

Given the nature of projects, described in section 7.6.2.2, it is perhaps disappointing that young people are only involved in project delivery in 60% of cases. Although, 68% of organisations also stated that the involvement of young people in the delivery of project activity has increased since they received the grant award from the Young People's Fund. It is possible that this will continue to increase in subsequent years and this is a trend that will be monitored throughout the course of the evaluation.

At the time of the survey only 32% of respondents indicated that young people had become more involved in the recruitment of project staff. Organisations may therefore require additional support and encouragement to realise that this is a workable option and begin to incorporate youth participation into existing recruitment practices.

Table 7.18 – Change in participation of young people since receiving the grant

	Percentage of projects
Given more say to those young people that were already involved	84%
Developed new skills in young people to contribute to the running of the project	84%
Young people are now involved in the reviewing of the project	84%
Young people's own ideas have been incorporated into the project	84%
More young people involved in running the project	68%
Activities now led by young people	68%
Young people are involved in a steering group (or board)	60%
The influence of young people has changed the direction of the project	60%
Young people involved in the recruitment of staff	32%

Number of respondents: 25

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to multiple answers

7.6.4 Future sustainability

While “Make it Happen” was intended to provide small one off awards to fund specific activities, the survey found that many projects were hoping to continue following the cessation of YPF funding.

Twenty two percent of respondents indicated that they had considered the future of the project post BIG funding. However, only 48% of these felt confident that they would be able to sustain the project, either partially or completely.

When asked about options for sustainability the majority of projects indicated that they would be seeking alternative funding to continue their activity. Other options included:

- Local people maintaining the project voluntarily.
- Those who have already been trained to run the project passing on their knowledge to others.
- Forming partnerships with other organisations.

- Attempting to become self-sufficient through fund raising activity such as advertising. This was suggested by a Youth Radio station as a means of supplementing support received from elsewhere.

The survey also found that 12% of projects were unsure if they would be able to sustain their activity and a further 40% were clear that their project would cease when BIG funding came to an end as the award had been provided for a one off activity. The project funded by Reaching Out was intended to be a one off purchase, although further funding will be required to keep software up to date.

7.6.5 Conclusions

Survey responses indicated that projects are aligned with the strategic aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales. However, it is felt that the broad scope of these aims has resulted in a lack of clarity, in some cases, as to the ways projects could contribute to the wider development of young people.

In relation to project activity it emerged that the majority of projects are principally focused on helping young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential. However, a number of projects also indicated involvement in awareness raising and lobbying activity, which may make a significant contribution to society as a whole.

In line with the intentions of Make it Happen a number of grants had been used for one off projects and events. It also emerged that many projects were hoping to sustain their activities. While this may be an unintentional outcome, it is considered to be positive as the continuation of activity should offer further opportunities for young beneficiaries. It was also found that just under a quarter of grants had been awarded to recently established groups. This may present a significant opportunity to incorporate young people into management structures and further develop their skill set.

The majority of respondents were able to offer examples of ways in which young people have participated in the development of projects and delivery of activity. In addition, it was demonstrated that the involvement of young people has increased in the time since funding was received. This is a trend that should be monitored over the course of the evaluation.

At the present time it is not possible to make firm conclusions on the impact of projects on young people due to the early stage of development that they are in. Survey respondents were however certain that positive impacts were becoming evident and that benefit would continue to accrue to young people over time, through process of:

- Bringing young people of different backgrounds together.
- Listening and responding to the needs of young people.
- Giving young people ownership of services and project development.

7.7 Key findings in Wales

- In line with the intentions of the programme in Wales awards have been targeted towards the provision of activity in disadvantaged areas.
- Activity was found to represent a good fit with strategic local plans and priorities.
- All of the projects involved in the research appeared to be well aligned with the strategic aims of the Young People's Fund in Wales.
- While it was not possible to draw firm conclusions as to the impact of activity on young people consultees were confident that positive impacts were becoming apparent.
- Projects recognised the value of involving young people in the development, management, delivery and evaluation of activity. However, the extent to which young people are involved in some processes was found to vary.
- Positive benefits for the wider community in which projects are located were found to be emerging as a result of activity.
- Further research is required to ascertain the impact of the fund on young people. This evidence base will be developed throughout the course of the evaluation.

8 The Programme in Northern Ireland

8.1 Executive Summary

At the time of the current evaluation, projects funded by the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland were still in the early stages of development. As a result the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) felt that it was not appropriate to carry out case study visits and survey work in Northern Ireland at this stage.

This report has therefore simply provided an overview of:

- The operation and aims of the fund in Northern Ireland
- The scale of project activity to date
- The policy context within which the fund is operating.

At May 2007, Change UR Future had allocated just over £10.8 million to 53 projects. In the second year of this evaluation a sample of beneficiaries will be selected for inclusion in qualitative research and a quantitative survey. Key findings of this research will be discussed in subsequent evaluation reports.

An overview of the policy context in Northern Ireland found the strategic objectives of the Young People's Fund to be well aligned with those of the recently restored Northern Ireland Assembly. This is believed to provide a strong focus for project activity and basis for partnership working. In addition, the work of the programme should complement and in turn be supported by wider policy objectives. During the course of this evaluation, the extent to which projects are building on this foundation and impacting on the lives of young people will be examined.

Evaluation evidence from comparable initiatives highlighted a similar focus on issues of deprivation, social inclusion, and youth participation, reinforcing the aims and objectives of the Young People's Fund. The extent to which the programme is addressing and impacting on these issues will be examined in subsequent evaluation reports.

8.2 Introduction

The Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland has a grant allocation of £14.8 million. This is available to help young people aged 0 to 25 and is intended to promote youth inclusion by targeting resources at those young people at greatest risk of exclusion and/or offending.

The overall aims of the programme are to:

- Engage and involve young people in all stages of the projects and programme
- Promote youth inclusion
- Achieve at least two of the specified outcomes:
 1. Increased participation of young people¹
 2. Improved health and well-being
 3. Increased achievement and learning
 4. Wider family and community support for young people.

There are also a series of cross cutting themes:

- Impact of conflict and tackling sectarianism
- Transitions from infancy to young adulthood
- Additional needs of vulnerable socially excluded and disaffected young people.

The programme in Northern Ireland is split into two strands: Change Ur Future and the Big Deal.

¹ Outcome one is compulsory for all projects

8.2.1 Change UR Future

The Change UR Future programme is the largest strand of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland with an allocation of £10.8 million. In September 2005 the initial £5.8 million programme was extended through an additional £5 million. The extension focused on projects for young people aged 10 to 18 years old that met the programme criteria. This was an open programme with awards available for up to five years of activity. This part of the programme is administered directly by BIG in Northern Ireland. Young people are also involved in the process as members of the decision making committee.

Young people were recruited to the decision-making committee by responding to open advertisements placed by BIG in the Belfast Telegraph in January 2006. Forty applications were received and 16 young people ranging in age from 15 to 24 were short listed. Interviews consisted of a standard panel interview and a group exercise undertaken by an external facilitator and observed by two staff members. Four young people were appointed to the decision making committee based on their interests and aptitudes and were provided with support and training to aid their contribution to the award process. One of these young people was also made the Deputy Chair of the committee.

8.2.2 Big Deal

The Big Lottery Fund has delegated grant management and decision-making powers for this strand to the award partner YouthNet and its partners Playboard, The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, The Education and Library Boards, and The Youth Council for Northern Ireland. YouthNet awards funding through the Big Deal programme. This strand has been allocated £4 million and has been split as follows:

- £1 million is a small grants programme for young people and projects. Awards can range from £500 to £2,500 and young people are included in the decision making panel.
- £3 million is to be used for a series of strategic interventions aimed at 3 specific age groups: 0 to 10, 11 to 16 and 17 to 25. These

interventions are delivered through a partnership headed up by YouthNet. This programme is unique to Northern Ireland.

The strategic interventions are not a standard programme of grants. Rather, a series of Play Rangers (directed at the 0 to 10 strategy) and Participation Workers will be funded to work with organisations and individual young people across the country. The programme is managed and run by young people via the young person's forum. The Forum comprises a group of more than thirty young people from the differing age specific strategy groups, areas and backgrounds. The aim is to stimulate organisational change by showing the advantages that can be derived through play (for younger people) and involvement (for older young people).

The Big Deal will be subject to external evaluation to be commissioned through the award partner. In addition work will be undertaken by the Northern Ireland Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) which has observer status on the Steering Group of The Big Deal programme. The ETI inspection team is responsible for providing the Steering Group and the Youth Service Liaison Forum (YSLF) with regular evaluation reports and a final evaluation of the Big Deal programme.

Table 8.1 provides an overall summary of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland.

Table 8.1- Summary of the two strands within the Northern Ireland programme

Strand	Country	Criteria	Amount	Amt Range	Funding Time Range	Target Group	Management/ Decision Making
The Big Deal delivered by the award partner YouthNet.	Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award partner will deliver small strategic grants programme to help young people to run projects in their area that will make a difference and address at least one of the 4 main outcomes set out in the Northern Ireland programme. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award partner will provide support for young people by developing strategic programmes that increase young people's participation and wider family and community support for young people. 	<p>£4 million</p> <hr/> <p>£1 million to be used for small grants to young people</p> <hr/> <p>£3 million for award partner to support young people by developing age specific strategic programmes</p>	<hr/> <p>£500 to £2,500 (applies to small grant only)</p> <hr/>	From late 2005 for up to 5 years	Overall NI objective - Young people aged 0-25 at greatest risk of exclusion and offending	YouthNet
Change UR Future	Northern Ireland	Open grants programme to provide support to voluntary, community, statutory, and private sector organisations whose projects achieve 2 of the main outcomes set out in the Northern Ireland programme.	£10.8 million (includes £5m extension awarded in Sept2005)	Large grants £250,000 to £500,000 (must be delivered in partnership) and medium grants £40,000 to £150,000	Max 5 years	Overall NI objective - £5 million extension focuses on young people aged 10-18 who meet the programme criteria	

8.3 Policy and Environment

8.3.1 Introduction

The political environment in Northern Ireland has undergone major changes in recent years, affecting both strategic direction and governmental structures. In 2002 the devolved government of Northern Ireland was suspended and direct rule returned to Westminster. Devolution was restored to the Northern Ireland Assembly in May 2007 following the election of a four party Executive of 12 Ministers. The restored Executive represents a historic coalition and one which is likely to have a profound impact on the policy environment.

This section outlines some recent policy developments relating to children and young people in Northern Ireland. This is intended to provide an understanding of the environment in which the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland operates.

8.3.2 “Making it R Wrld 2” and the “Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland”

The aims and objectives of the Young People's Fund in Ireland are primarily based upon the “Ten year strategy for children and young people in Northern Ireland”: 2006-2016. The consultation document upon which this strategy was based was published in 2001 and was known as “Making it R Wrld 2”

“Making it R Wrld 2” recognised that children and young people had not always been granted high priority or the opportunity to participate in shaping government policy. The principal aim of “Making it R Wrld 2”, underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, was to redress this balance, putting the rights and needs of children and young people at the heart of policy development and providing opportunities for them to participate in decision making. The strategy for children and young people was also developed in recognition of the ongoing effort to transform Northern Ireland into a post-conflict society.

The specific aims and objectives of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland are based upon those originally set out in "Making it R Wrld 2" and developed by the "Ten year strategy for children and young people". The Young People's Fund is hence well aligned with political priorities and well placed to contribute to policy across many spheres of government.

8.3.3 Key Policies in Northern Ireland

Key areas of policy which reflect the aims and outcomes of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland include:

- A Healthier Future 2005-2025 is concerned with the physical and mental health of young people. The focus on vulnerable young people and those undergoing periods of significant transition, reflects the cross-cutting themes of the ten year strategy and hence the Young People's Fund.
- The Strategy on Sport (2002) also addresses issues of physical and mental health. The strategy was developed to reconcile the two perspectives on sports participation held by those who prioritise the development of sport and those who consider the development of young people to be the priority. The strategy recognises that sporting excellence will only be achieved through the development of personal characteristics such as confidence and independence. The requirement of the Young People's Fund, to add additional value and ensure youth participation places the fund in an excellent position to contribute to the above stated aims. The strategy also acknowledges the role of sport in facilitating engagement with those living in areas of high social deprivation.
- The Strategic Plan for Education 2006-2008 is intended to increase achievement and learning and ensure economic well-being. Strategic aims of the framework include valuing education, enabling young people to fulfill their potential and the promotion of wider inclusion.
- In 2006 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the Commissioner for Children and Young People for

Northern Ireland commenced work to develop a Play Policy for Northern Ireland. This policy is intended to lead to a shared understanding on play and its importance. This policy is clearly well aligned with the Play Rangers funded through the Big Deal.

8.3.4 Review of Public Administration Northern Ireland

A further development which is likely to have a significant impact on the operation of the Young People's Fund, particularly large scale projects that require partnerships with public sector bodies, is the Review of Public Administration (RPA). The review was a comprehensive examination of the structures in place to administer and deliver public services in Northern Ireland which covered over 150 public bodies including:

- District Councils
- Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts
- Education and Library Boards.

Key outcomes of the review that will impact significantly on the policy environment in Northern Ireland include:

- Major restructuring of local government. This will reduce the number of Local Councils from 26 to 7 by 2009. New councils will increased powers, a statutory duty to lead the community planning process and the power of "well-being".
- Establishment of a new Education and Skills Authority to focus on delivery of education services. Strategic development will remain with the existing Department of Education.
- A smaller and strategically focused Department of Health and Social services to replace the existing four Health and Social Services boards.

8.3.5 Evaluation Evidence

8.3.5.1 *The Schools Community Relations Programme*

The School Community Relations Programme (SCRP) (formerly the Cross-Community Contact Scheme) was established in 1997. The programme is administered by the Education and Library Boards. Funding totalling £1.3 million per annum is currently available to encourage schools to bring together young people from across the community divide and provide a valuable dimension to Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Cultural Heritage (CH) in the curriculum. The SCRP appears to be a good fit with the aims of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland through its educational objectives, focus of community activity, inclusion and diversity.

The 2002 review of the programme by the University of Ulster praised the commitment of many partners involved in the initiative and highlighted numerous examples of good community relations practice in schools. However, the review also commented on the low strategic importance placed on the programme and the lack of a coherent definition of community relations to underpin the intervention.

Further research revealed that pupils felt the programme, and associated activities, had been largely imposed on them and that there had been very little participant consultation. Young people expressed a preference for active negotiation in order to develop more effective and relevant programmes. Recommendations made by pupils for the improvement of the SCRP included:

- More visits between schools
- More mixed groups
- More debates
- More residential and sporting activities.

These findings may offer an interesting insight in to the potential impact of the Young People's Fund and suggest that significant benefits may

accrue to young people if projects embrace the strategic aims of the Young People's Fund.

8.3.5.2 *The North South School Exchange and Cooperative Activity*

Issues of diversity and inclusion are also addressed by the North South School Exchange and Cooperative Activity. The initiative, which is supported by the Department of Education, facilitates youth exchange activities between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

In the last five years some 55,000 individuals have participated in the programme through schools and youth groups. In line with the goals of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland, many of the activities address the themes of peace building and reconciliation.

Exchange and cooperation activities have been seen to help young people develop both socially and intellectually. As a result participants often develop a more inclusive perspective, enabling them to deal with diversity in a productive manner.

The 2003 summary of the North South School Exchange and Cooperative Activity, noted an emerging trend towards dealing with wider diversity issues as opposed to just the narrow Catholic/ Protestant or Northerner/ Southerner divide.

The summary also highlighted the significant amount of structured work that has been done on themes such as citizenship, vocational training and the environment, increasing knowledge and understanding thereby enabling young people to be more active in society.

8.3.5.3 *Youth Development Programme 2003-2004*

The Youth Development Programme (YDP) was established by the North Belfast Community Action Unit in 2003 to encourage the local community, churches and youth organisations to work together to develop targeted youth interventions across North Belfast. The programme was initially allocated £250,000 with a subsequent £120,000 extension until the end of March 2004.

The main aims of the Youth Development Programme were:

- To enable community organisations to work together in the design and delivery of appropriate programmes.
- To build the capacity of the communities of North Belfast.
- To focus on the long-term development of young people (particularly the 18-25 age group) through empowerment, citizenship and mediation.
- To promote working partnerships within and across communities, through the development of community Consortia.

The programme is considered a good fit with activity currently funded by the Young People's Fund due to focus on areas of social deprivation, capacity building and long term developmental needs of young people. Evaluation of the programme concluded that it had been broadly successful in achieving its aims and had made a positive contribution to the local community. The evaluation also raised a number of issues of interest to the current evaluation.

The range and quality of activities funded by the programme was found to vary, with the most significant impacts reported for those activities in which young people were involved in identifying and prioritising needs. It was also found that organisations which were traditionally focused on recreational and diversionary activities found it more difficult to adjust to the change of focus brought about by the introduction of the YDP, compared to those organisations with greater capacity which had embraced a community development approach prior to the receipt of funding. Further, it was found that participation of statutory bodies with the YDP was limited and generally concentrated at the operational rather than strategic level.

Organisational characteristics, the extent of youth participation and partnership working will hence be important considerations for the current evaluation.

8.3.5.4 Millennium Volunteers

Millennium Volunteers (MV) is a UK wide initiative, supported by government, to promote sustained volunteering among young people aged 16-25, but particularly among those with no previous experience of volunteering or those vulnerable to social exclusion.

Evaluation of the initiative stated that youth involvement was reported positively in the majority of cases however, some reported challenges in involving young people, including lack of resources and time on the part of managers and volunteers and a lack of interest on behalf of young people in serving on committees. The current evaluation will explore whether these issues are evident in the YPF projects.

Overall the MV programme was found to have been successful in generating a wide variety of opportunities for young people and, while additional recognition of the barriers to volunteering faced by those from disadvantaged backgrounds was thought necessary, MV proved to be influential in the personal development of many young people. In addition, respondents spoke enthusiastically about the contribution that MV could make in the search for employment, thereby aiding future economic wellbeing.

8.3.6 Conclusions

The strategic objectives of the Young People's Fund in Northern Ireland appear to be well aligned with those of the recently restored Executive providing a strong focus for project activity and basis for partnership working. The work of the fund is therefore seen to complement and in turn be supported by the wider policy environment. During the course of this evaluation, the extent to which projects are building on this foundation and impacting on the lives of young people will be examined.

Evaluation evidence from initiatives similar in nature to those which will be supported by the Young People's Fund highlighted the importance of wider social inclusion and extensive youth participation. These issues will also be addressed by subsequent evaluation reports.

8.4 Project Take-up in Northern Ireland

The Change UR Future programme in Northern Ireland commenced on schedule in 2006 and was initially heavily oversubscribed. The first awards were made in late July 2006, with these projects becoming operational late in that year or early in 2007. These timescales meant that it was not appropriate to visit projects in the current evaluation round, but they will be included in future years.

At May 2007 a total of 53 awards had been made, totalling £10,837,405. The average award was therefore around £204,480.

The Big Deal started over a similar period with the initial staff being appointed in June 2006 and a team of 16 being built up. This programme is now building momentum which should translate into project delivery in the next period. Evaluation of the programme can then be undertaken.