



# **Annual Report & Accounts 2006-07**

*Promoting quality youth work  
and  
Integrated youth support*

## **DIRECTOR'S WELCOME**

Welcome to the fifth Annual Report of the Youth Work Unit (YWU). The report aims to provide stakeholders, users, partners and other interested parties with an overview of the Unit's activities, achievements and finances over the last year.

The year began with great uncertainty, due in the main to the fact that the Transforming Youth Work Development Fund from Government Office(GO)/Department for Education and Skills (DFES) was not being extended. This funding, received for three years, led to an expansion of the YWU's work and to the appointment of 2.5 additional staff members – a full-time and a half-time Development Officer plus a full-time Administrator.

Unfortunately, the uncertainty over funding prompted the Administrator to leave. The other two posts were only retained by a combination of savings from the Administrator post, the Local Authorities (LAs) agreeing to pay higher fees – 20p per head of youth population versus the previous year's figure of 15p; and an increased focus on income generation and bidding for funds. It was fortunate also that the YWU had some reserves which allowed Unit Management Group (UMG) to withstand the budgetary pressure and allow the Unit to continue with its present staffing complement. In addition, the three-year Youth Arts (YANY) project came to an end in April 2006 and with it the loss of the half-time co-ordinator post.

The consequence was that a vibrant and growing support organisation suddenly felt extremely vulnerable and under threat, particularly as re-structuring within LAs to create new Children and Young People's Services departments, meant that the core funding could not be assured. In the event, however, all 15 LAs paid their annual subscriptions and all but two agreed to the increased charge. Additional income was generated from hosting conferences and events, and from successful funding bids. The YWU, therefore, was able to continue to function and by year end was able to break-even in financial terms.

Taken overall then the Unit has had a successful year and has continued to deliver the objectives laid out in the 2004–07 Business Plan and Annual Work Programme with the exception of gaining funding to establish a Participation-focused post.

Uncertainty remains, with further financial pressures such as the loss of Connect Youth International (CYI) funding. At the same time, the establishment of new Children and Young People's Services in parallel with the demise of discrete Youth Services may present future problems in securing LA contributions. It is hoped, however, that as structures settle down, many funding arrangements can be continued and new ones developed so that the YWU can continue in its role of advocating for and supporting youth work development.

We look forward to a busy and demanding year.



**Miriam Jackson – Director**

## **BACKGROUND**

The YWU was established in 1998 as an unincorporated association by the 15 LA Youth Services and key voluntary sector officers with the aim of helping to develop voluntary and statutory youth services and youth work provision. In particular, it was charged with:

- adding value to local provision;
- bringing a strategic and regional dimension to work; and
- creating economies of scale to practice development from joint/shared initiatives.

In 2002, the Unit became a company limited by guarantee and in May 2003 was established as a registered charity. This provided clearer legal status and accountability.

The YWU has a unique position and role in the region – namely bringing together strategic youth work development with advocacy on behalf of the youth work sector, both voluntary and statutory. It is the focal point for both sectors for developing innovative practice, identifying and highlighting best practice, sharing information and supporting staff in the following areas:

- strategic and policy development
- training and workforce development
- quality assurance
- voluntary youth work
- work with disabled young people
- accreditation
- voice and influence
- international youth work
- arts
- hard-to-reach
- children and young people's trusts (CYPT)
- rural work
- health
- management information systems (MIS) benchmarking

It is the regional partnership of youth work providers, enabling them to work together and collaborate on issues of common purpose.

In June 2006, the YWU's overall aim and objectives were reviewed and amended to ensure that it remained relevant and reflected the changing context in children's and young people's services developments.

### **Aim:**

***To be the focus for high quality youth work in the Yorkshire and Humber (Y&H) region supporting on-going development of services within the voluntary, independent and statutory providers.***

### **Objectives:**

- To bring a strategic regional perspective to influence and shape the planning, commissioning and delivery of high quality youth work services for young people.
- To support innovation and identify and develop best practice against current agendas
- To promote young people's voice, influence and their active role in society
- To facilitate improvements in professional practice and quality assurance, and to promote effective international youth work
- To be the voice of the youth work sector
- To promote links and develop key partnerships to enhance outcomes for young people

### **Membership**

As a result of restructuring within the LA sector, some discrete Youth Service departments with dedicated budgets have disappeared to be replaced by new integrated and locality-based Children and Young People's Service departments. Nevertheless, during 2006–07 all 15 Y&H LA Youth and Young People's Services remained members of the YWU and paid annual fees. In addition, a broad range of local voluntary umbrella bodies (councils of voluntary youth services or equivalents); regionally-based or regional sections of national voluntary youth organisations; and regional youth work higher education (HE) training institutions have paid a membership fee and are now company members.

### **Board**

The board – known as the Unit Management Group – manages the Unit's work programme, contracts and service level agreements (SLAs), oversees partnership development, monitors financial performance and budgeting, oversees staffing, and ensures compliance with company and charity regulations.

The original Memorandum and Articles established the YWU's board with nine trustees/directors drawn from the key groups. Given the shifts in Children and young people's services during 2006–07, the UMG felt the board needed to broaden out and increase membership from other strategic groups and representatives of the broader young people's services field.

At the last AGM the UMG confirmed an amendment to the Unit's Memorandum & Articles and revised the membership of the board to: two representatives from each of the strategic groups and five from the broader young people's services field. This would inform the Unit's recruitment strategy of new Board members when resignations occur.

From 01 April 2006–31 March 2007 the following served as trustees/directors:

Strategic Groups:

- Head of Service (HOS)  
Chris Whiley (*PYO, Bradford Youth Service*)  
Carol Stone (*HOS, Calderdale Youth Service*)
  
- Voluntary Youth Organisations Nation  
Ken Montgomery (*Regional Officer, YMCA*)  
Phil Pearce (*Chair, Hull CVYS*)

Young People's Services:

Roger Simmons (*Team Leader, Sheffield Futures*)  
Geraint Owen (*Lecturer, University of Huddersfield*)  
Three vacancies

The Chair of the Board is currently drawn from the regional Heads of Service/Principal Youth Officer's group.

In addition to the above, an observer from Government Office (GO) attended board meetings to help the board maintain a strategic overview of national and regional policy and developments affecting young people.

## **Staffing**

Throughout the year, the YWU employed the following:

- Director (*full-time*)
- Development Officer – Training and QA (*full-time*)
- Development Officer – VYON (*half-time*)
- Finance & Administrative Officer (*20 hours*)

## **REVIEW OF 2006–07 WORK PROGRAMME**

As stated above, the overall aim of the Unit was reviewed and six new objectives replaced the 11 formerly used. It is against these objectives that the work programme and this review are written.

### **Objective 1: To bring a strategic regional perspective to influence and shape the planning, commissioning and delivery of high quality youth work services for young people.**

The Director visited all 15 HOS to discuss structural changes and on-going support needs. A pro-forma was circulated and based on the information collected a strategic overview paper was produced on the structural re-organisation within each LA. This report was discussed and analyzed with the National Youth Agency (NYA) as well as other relevant colleagues within the region.

The keynote speaker at the Unit's AGM was the NYA's Assistant Director who addressed the subject of the 'Ten-year Youth Strategy' and gave an update on progress being made in LAs towards the establishment of Children and Young People's Trusts (CYPT).

Visits were made by the Development Officer – VYON to various voluntary youth sector (VYS) organisations while promotion continued of the newly-developed and 'Change Up'-funded start-up pack for voluntary umbrella bodies and the self-assessment framework for voluntary organisations. Each of these initiatives led to over 100 downloads from the YWU website.

The VYON Annual Conference was held in May 06 with the Regional GO Director of Children and Learners delivering the keynote address. The event also offered workshops on participation, safeguarding, lottery funding, the compact, accreditation training, and integrated children and young people's services.

Working with GO, the YWU helped facilitate two events:

- Youth Work and Neighbourhood Renewal/Regeneration
- Publicising Positive Activities

The Unit maintained close links with the Regional Forum and worked collaboratively with National Council for Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO), in particular on 'Change Up'-funded activity. Further income was obtained from 'Capacity Builders' to support voluntary sector preparedness for CYPT developments and the dissemination of the newly created resources.

The Unit hosted and organised the regular cycle of 4 HOS and 4 VYON meetings, while bids were made to the Charities Aid Foundation, the Big Lottery, Basis, and Local Government Association (LGA) Y&H.

A total of eight UMG meetings were held with discussions focusing on future funding, staffing, direction and objectives, work delivery and future developments, and partnerships. All charity and company requirements were met with an AGM/Annual Conference organised and Annual Report produced and distributed.

**Objective 2: To support innovation and identify and develop best practice against current agendas.**

In October 2006 the YWU organised an initial workshop on the newly introduced Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF), in particular drawing on practice in Kirklees to assist in the thinking and planning for young people to be responsible for these funds. The Unit, together with the NYA (the DFES-commissioned lead on the YOF/YCF work), organised another workshop six months later to review the lessons learned both in Y&H and in the UK more broadly.

The YWU AGM, Annual VYON Conference, Annual Training Conference, as well as regular strategic (HOS & VYON) and operational (training, quality assurance and international) groups' agendas all explicitly focused on innovation, current developments and on the dissemination of good practice. Examples of this included the Regional Training Group (RTG) closely monitoring the revision of the new national occupational standards, the Regional Quality Assurance Network (RQAN) monitoring the development of the Youth Service Quality Mark and the International Committee (IC) delivering workshops on accrediting international youth work.

HOS held detailed discussions on Integrated Youth Support, the development of Children and Young People's Trusts (CYPT), the NYA Audit as well as future funding issues. VYON held detailed discussions on play strategies, the VCS Engage Project and Quality. It also began a pilot of the 'Clubs for Young People Quality Mark', organising training and establishing small support networks,

At the end of the three-year Youth Arts (YANY) project (which had been funded by the Arts Council – Yorkshire), a good practice booklet was produced highlighting good youth arts practice in the five Every Child Matters areas. Entitled, 'Youth Arts Matters', the report was widely distributed across the region. Two arts-based research reports were also published as part of this project: one on the contribution of Hip Hop as an educational tool; the other on training for youth arts work. The Director held discussions with the Arts Council regarding continued funding for the project and attended a newly established regional English National Youth Arts Network (ENYAN).

**Objective 3: To promote young people's voice, influence and their active role in society.**

The YWU has for some considerable while co-ordinated a Voice and Influence Network (V&I) of 13–19 workers involved in participation work – circulating information to them and organising occasional events. Due to limited resources, however, this work has been somewhat curtailed.

In the previous year, collaborative work had taken place with the Regional Assembly's Children and Young People's Inclusion Officer. This led to a joint bid submitted to the LGA's Capacity Building Fund to establish a 0-19 Participation Unit.

Unfortunately, this bid was unsuccessful and on the demise of the Regional Assembly initiative, the YWU assumed co-ordination of the Participation Workers' Network England Y&H 0–19. This work included attending the national PW steering group; co-ordinating an event in August on 'Ready Steady Change', the DFES participation

toolkit; a further workshop at YWU AGM; and in March, having gained some funding, the launch of the PWN – Y&H at a specially organised event which featured speakers from PWNE, the Office of Children’s Commissioner and the NYA’s Hear by Right team. This work complemented and enhanced the work with the 13–19 Network and strengthened advocacy for children and young people’s involvement.

A further small contract was delivered for the Learning and Skills Network to extend its citizenship work from its predominantly FE-based work into the YWU’s informal education network.

A ‘snapshot’ of regional V&I work – showing a wide variety of practice involving young people in forums, inspections, recruitment, research and events – was produced and shared with the NYA. In addition, a grant was obtained to carry out a feasibility study into how young people can be more fully involved in international work and exchanges.

**Objective 4: To facilitate improvements in professional practice and quality assurance and to promote effective international youth work.**

Professional Practice

- Annual conference in April with speakers from Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC), Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and NE trainers group.
- Organised 4 RTG meetings.
- Maintained an overview with summaries of both Youth Support Worker (YSW) training and workforce development regularly posted on the Unit’s web site.
- Sessions were held with FE colleagues and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) seeking to improve resources to YSW training.
- The Unit maintained City & Guild (C&G) centre status, meeting all requirements and supporting Barnsley MBC. While it was planned that this would end by April 2007, a few remaining candidates still await final accreditation after which the YWU will cease to function as a C&G centre owing to the reduction in administrative capacity.
- A workshop on the revision of the National Occupational Standards for youth work was held at the YWU AGM.
- The Director attended 4 Education and Training Standards (ETS) meetings and 2 validation events, and ensured a flow of information to regional trainers and other units.
- Unit staff attended various of the regions training institution’s professional advisory and course committees, including Bradford College and Huddersfield University.

Quality Assurance

- RQAN established a task group to revise the regional scheme document and new clusters of LAs were established. Termly sampling visits were undertaken with all 15 LAs participating in the moderation scheme.
- RQAN maintained a close overview of Youth Service Quality Mark (YSQM) developments and organised a regional seminar.
- 4 RQAN meetings were organised and a workshop, ‘How To Attain An Outstanding Ofsted Report’, was facilitated by Doncaster YS at the YWU AGM.

- A focus was maintained on MIS to support quality, with LAs sharing their experience of the various programmes and packages, and how to make them work to best advantage.
- Voluntary sector colleagues also focused on quality improvement, particularly with a longer term view of commissioning. The YSQM was seen as too process driven, lengthy and expensive for small voluntary sector projects and so a pilot of ‘Clubs for Young People Quality Mark’ was started.

### International

- In line with the CYI SLA, five grant decision-making groups and five IC meetings were organised.
- All grant assessment work was undertaken in addition to giving advice and guidance to applicants via web and phone.
- Four Youth Initiative projects received €24,728.
- Ten bi-lateral and tri-lateral exchanges received €40,088.
- Two multi-lateral exchanges were granted €71,369.
- Additional grant-funding of £8,253 was received which enabled three pieces of work to be undertaken:
  - ‘Introduction to International Youth Work’ residential course.
  - Two ‘Accrediting International Work’ workshops plus a web-briefing for HOS.
  - ‘Youth Involvement’ feasibility study to enhance work in the region.

As Regional Co-ordinator, the Director also attended two residential programmes at CYI including one introducing the new Youth in Action 2007–13 Programme which changed the way international grants were to be assessed, in particular the centralisation of all decision-making into the National Agency – CYI in London. Despite objections from all regional IC committees and across the field, CYI were immovable, feeling it had been forced into this position by European audit requirements. Unfortunately for the YWU, this would mean a further reduction in funding from 2007–08 from £15,000 to £3,000 for the first year and nothing thereafter.

### **Objective 5: To be the voice of the youth work sector**

A key role for the YWU is advocating on behalf of the region’s youth work sector with local, regional and national government, strategic bodies, funders, and training providers. Under this remit, the Unit carried out the following:

- letters were sent to Yorkshire Forward, the LGA and the Y&H Regional Assembly seeking support for the creation of a Participation Unit. Further discussions were held with the LGA.
- the Director met with the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and assisted with the induction of its staff.
- the YWU organised the visit of HM Treasury officials to regional youth work provision.
- a presentation was made to Leeds University Adult and Continuing Education Department on CYPT developments and implications.

The YWU website has been kept up to date with key information about youth work as well as new developments, documents and links. YWU leaflets and information have

been sent to potential partners – such as all new Directors of Children and Young People’s Services, YOT managers – advocating on behalf of youth work.

The HOS group held detailed discussions on the NYA Annual Audit and a letter outlining key issues was sent to both the DFES and the NYA.

The Unit also prepared responses to various national consultations, for example, Section 6 Consultation.

**Objective 6: To promote links and develop key partnerships to enhance outcomes for young people**

- Quarterly reports were prepared for and regular meetings were held with the NYA’s Development Director.
- As regional CYI Co-ordinator, the Unit held two meetings, one residential, with the British Council.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) contract saw the Director actively involved in finding a replacement for the Young Roots Co-ordinator Roxie Reavey and then in supporting the new appointee, Phil Pearce; as well as attending regional Young Roots events.
- Close liaison was maintained with other regional Youth Work Units and support was offered to newly established units.
- Regular discussions were held with members of the GO team and attendance at HOS, VYON, RQAN and RTG encouraged.
- Relationships with NCVYS and with APYCO and with other national focus groups were actively maintained, while in the region staff worked to extend the Unit’s involvement with the Regional Forum, and develop productive relationships with Yorkshire Planning Aid, Yorkshire Museums and Libraries Association, Sport England, LSC, LGA and IdeA.

## Key Achievements and Developments 2006–07

**All targets and SLAs met:** NYA, HLF, CYI, YANY, Change Up, Capacity Builders

**YWU aim and objectives:** successful reviewed and revised

**Finance:** transformed a shortfall of £50,000 into a break-even position through active funding bids and income generation initiatives

### **Facilitated and serviced the following meetings:**

- 8 UMG
- 4 PYO
- 7 VYON
- 5 IC
- 4 RQAN + 2 review task groups
- 4 RTG
- 3 DLP
- 4 YANY

### **Organised the following events:**

- AGM/Annual YWU Conference – 70-plus attendees (*hosted by Huddersfield University*)
- Annual Training Conference held in April 2007
- Annual VYON Conference – 60-plus attendees
- Launch of PWN-YH with Ready Steady Change
- Two YOF workshops

**Regional Quality Assurance Moderation:** scheme implemented throughout all 15 LAs – commended by JAR inspectors

### **VYON:**

- Successfully bid for £4,000 from Change Up and £8,000 from Capacity Builders to support infrastructure development across the sector and the dissemination of the start-up pack for umbrella voluntary youth organisations network and self-assessment framework
- Piloted 'Clubs for Young People Quality Mark' in voluntary youth projects

### **International:**

- 10 bi-lateral and tri-lateral Youth Exchange projects granted a total of €40,088
- 2 multi-lateral exchanges granted a total of €71,369.
- 4 Youth Initiative projects received €24,728 – a total of €136,186

### **YANY:**

- 1,500 Youth Arts Matters leaflets distributed across region
- 3-year project successfully completed in April 2006

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