

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

### NORTH BENWELL YOUTH PROJECT CIO

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# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Andrea Spowart - Chairperson

2025 has truly been a landmark year for North Benwell Youth Project a year marked by celebration, achievement, and continued dedication to supporting young people and families in the West End of Newcastle.

This year, NBYP proudly celebrated its 25th anniversary, a milestone that brought together past and present participants, staff, volunteers, and supporters for a vibrant community event. The day was filled with joy and energy. There was live music, creative activities, games, and a timeline exhibition that beautifully showcased the journey of the project over the past two and a half decades. The atmosphere was inclusive and uplifting, a true reflection of the deep roots NBYP has established in the community.

We were honoured to receive an invitation to the King's Garden Party at Holyrood Palace in July 2025. This prestigious event recognised organisations making a meaningful difference in their communities, and NBYP was proud to be among them. It was a moment of national recognition that highlighted the growing reputation and impact of our work.

Throughout the year, young people have continued to play a central role in shaping the project. The Young People's Committee has been actively involved in decision-making panels, helped design new initiatives, and lead seasonal projects with great success. Their work on Christmas Eve boxes, winter packs, and soup kits was thoughtful, practical, and deeply appreciated by families across the area.

Our summer programme was another highlight. Young people took part in beach trips, paddleboarding, horse riding, and residencies in Beadnell. A community coach trip and participation in a local cook-off added to the fun, with young people engaging confidently and enthusiastically throughout.

NBYP has also continued to support young people in expressing

themselves through music, art, and performance. This year's music showcase at DiverCity was a proud moment, and the Holocaust memorial artwork displayed in local libraries showed the depth of thought and creativity within our groups. Community craft events have brought families together in celebration, strengthening bonds and building new friendships.

We have also deepened our partnerships with schools and local organisations. These relationships are vital to our work, and we're grateful for the collaboration and shared commitment to young people.

Financially, NBYP has secured significant funding from the Henry Smith Foundation, DCMS, the Willan Charitable Trust, and others. This support has ensured the sustainability of our key programmes and opened the door to new opportunities.

## INTRODUCTION

Another year has flown by which has been as busy as ever.

Our group sessions remain popular, we remain open on a Saturday, and we have had great holiday activities during school holidays. We even received an invite to the Kings Garden Party in the summer.

A massive thank you to our incredible staff and dedicated board of trustees: thank you for your unwavering commitment, compassion, and tireless efforts in supporting children and young people of North Benwell.

Your belief in their potential, your resilience in the face of challenges, and your generosity of spirit make a huge difference every day. Your teamwork, integrity, and leadership are at the core of NBYP. I am deeply grateful for your vision, passion, and care.

Because of you, lives are changed.

None of the success we've seen this year or over the past 25 years would have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our staff and volunteers. Their passion, resilience, and dedication are the heartbeat of North Benwell Youth Project. Whether planning activities, supporting young people through challenges, or simply being a consistent and caring presence, they go above and beyond every single day. It's their hard work that has shaped NBYP into the trusted, vibrant, and impactful organisation it is today, and we are deeply grateful for everything they do.

NBYP has had an outstanding year celebrating its legacy while continuing to innovate and inspire. With strong leadership, committed staff, and empowered young people, the project is well-positioned to build on its success and continue making a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

Margaret Ridley - Project Coordinator

### Remembering Sue Leeder

Sadly, Sue, who was our administrator for many years, died suddenly in June. She will be missed by all of us at NBYP.

She always had an interest in the young people and what they were doing, and would always support us at our community events.





# 25TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

In November last year, we celebrated 25 years of North Benwell Youth Project.

With the support of the Young Peoples Committee, we held a community event on a Saturday afternoon. It was well attended by families, service users and ex-service users who wanted to celebrate with us.

We created a visual timeline of the project's history up to the present day and displayed all our annual reports since 1999.

The YPC organised an array of activities, including a bouncy castle, basketball challenge, face painter, crafts such as designing a canvas bag, and raffles. Some of our young musicians and a local band performed songs and music.







## GROUP WORK

Group sessions remain one of our most popular services. We offer various sessions each week to suit different ages. We currently run 3 junior sessions, 4 inter sessions and 2 senior sessions (with different participants).

We also run 2 music sessions and a mum's group. An open session every Saturday. Alongside having fun, there is an informal educational element to all the sessions.

### Juniors age 8-11

- Social skills - new friendships, communication, self-confidence.
- The environment, - understanding recycling, reducing waste
- New opportunities - local places of interest, skills like swimming or cooking.

### Inters age 12-15

- Raising awareness, like knife crime, joint enterprise, hate crimes
- Community - engaging in community activities, help with Project giveaway days

- Empowerment - understanding they have a voice, self-awareness, and making decisions.

### Seniors age 16+

- Preparing for the future - employability, college or job applications, writing a C.V., training courses.
- Community - supporting the Project to organise community activities, attend local meetings to have their opinion heard.
- Social action - volunteering, mentoring others.









## SATURDAYS

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## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

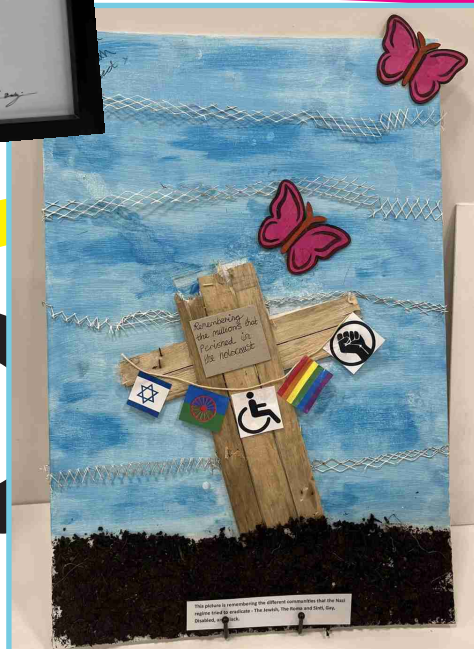
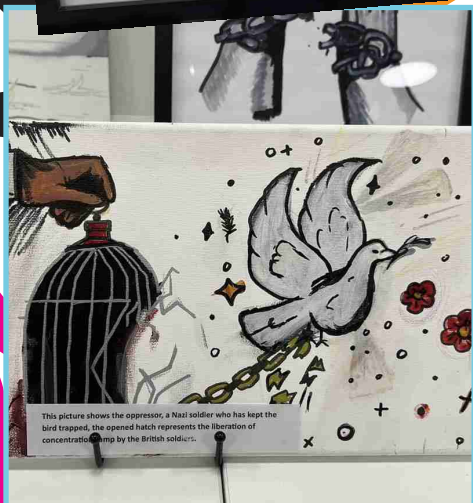
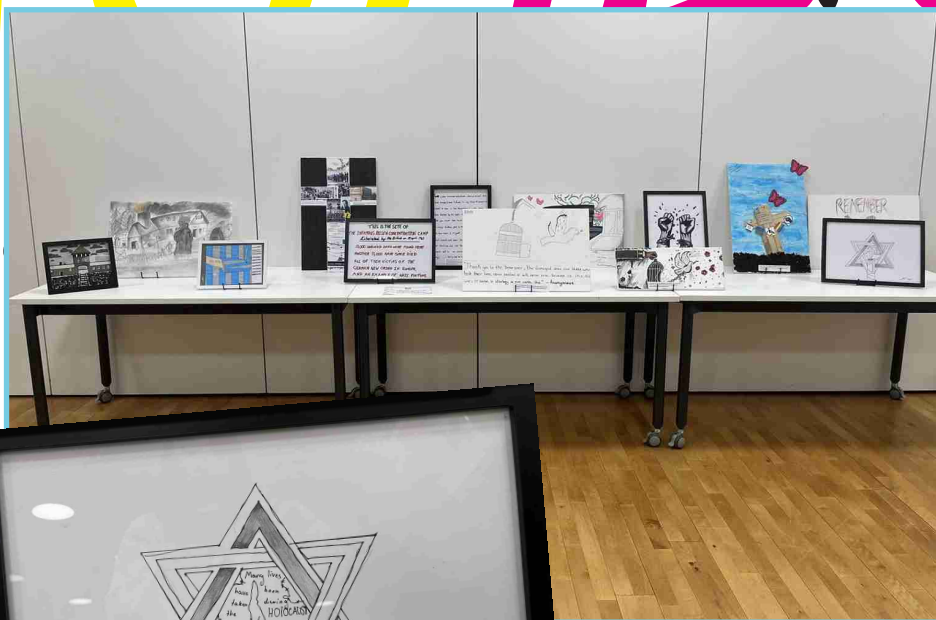
The young people who attend NBYP wanted to contribute in some way to the Holocaust memorial event organised by Peter Sagar from A Living Tradition. Workers discussed with them ways in which they could contribute; they decided to do this via artwork, they drew and painted pictures.

The sessions have encouraged conversations about the holocaust and the dreadful treatment of so many in the concentration camps.

Some pictures represent the horrors of the concentration camps; most of them depict freedom and how it must feel after being a prisoner for so long. Some of the young people are Czech Roma and understand that many people murdered during the war were Gipsy /Roma. It was difficult to find a total number it is estimated 250,000 but could be as many as 500,000.

After both World Wars, doves emerged as emblems of peace and reconciliation. Because doves are so firmly associated with peace, they often serve as an international symbol for cooperation and hope.

The young people have met this project with compassion and respect.





# MUSIC SESSIONS

Music sessions at NBYP  
A huge thank you to GemArts, who have continued to support music sessions at NBYP.

These sessions give children and young people a vital outlet for creativity, self-expression, and emotional well-being. It builds their confidence, builds social skills, and provides a sense of achievement, which is often missing in their daily lives.

Music can bridge cultural divides, nurture talent, and inspire hope.

In communities facing hardship, these sessions become safe spaces where young people feel valued, heard, and empowered to dream beyond their circumstances and shape brighter futures.

Many children have had the opportunity to perform at local events, sharing their skills and talent.

They have taken part in:

- Songwriting
- Writing lyrics for raps
- Learning to play an instrument
- Perform as part of a band
- Perform solo
- Arts Awards





# YOUNG PEOPLES COMMITTEE

Our YPC have had another productive year. They are an asset to NBYP and enhance the work we do. In the last 12 months they have organised and delivered the following:

- With funding from LGA 12 days of Christmas, they made 50 Christmas Eve boxes, 30 winter soup packs containing a ham joint, vegetables, stock cubes, dumpling mix, in bespoke hand-designed canvas bags with a recipe (translated into appropriate languages), 40 sets of hats, scarves and gloves for local children.
- After the success of last year's community coach trip, they organised another 75-seat coach trip to South Shields during the Easter holidays. They made packed lunches for everyone and supplied families with tokens for the fair. It was lovely to see families from different cultural backgrounds enjoying a trip out together. Financially, many families would be unable to do this.
- Last December, they worked with Annemarie from Hatrick on a 'NE girls' sports project. The funding they received allowed 10 young women to have 6 private swimming lessons at Elswick pool.

- They have continued to work alongside Annemarie at Hatrick to become NE Girls champions. They have attended various events and sat on judging panels for funding applications. They raised money for young women to take part in various sporting activities during the summer, including canoeing, paddleboarding, bike riding and football.
- They are currently organising a Halloween party for the junior groups. They are turning the gazebo and summer house into a scary walk-through, organising games, and making food.
- The YPC support the free giveaway days the project holds, by sorting through and organising the many clothing donations we receive.
- They made an array of crafts to sell at Riverside's Christmas Fair (see Photo).

The young people gain valuable skills which they can transfer to other areas. These include: Leadership, planning and organising, researching, communication, following and understanding a budget, health and safety, safeguarding, and having responsibilities.





## DETACHED WORK

Detached youth work is a form of outreach that engages young people in their own environments—streets, parks, and other public spaces rather than traditional settings like youth centres.

It's vital because it reaches individuals who may feel excluded, distrust institutions, or face barriers to accessing support. Workers build relationships based on trust, respect, and consistency, offering guidance, advocacy, and a listening ear.

This approach helps reduce anti-social behaviour, promotes safety, and connects young people to services they might otherwise avoid. It's especially important in areas like North Benwell, where informal support can be a lifeline.

As well as meeting young people, workers get to know parents and residents, and they can chat about issues they are experiencing in the neighbourhood.

## ONE-TO-ONE

At NBYP we offer one-to-one support on an as-and-when-needed basis.

One-to-one support empowers young people by offering personalised guidance and emotional reassurance. It builds trust, boosts confidence, and helps address individual challenges.

Support can vary from practical help, for example, opening their first bank account to emotional support, such as homelessness or issues at school.

## MUM'S GROUP

The mum's group has been running for several years now with them regularly attending every Thursday. This is an opportunity for them to take time out of their daily lives, for themselves, away from just being mums.

They can either have a cuppa and chat, take part in activities or cook recipes they can take home for their families. Many of their children now attend school, which gives them more time at the project.

This year they have improved their cooking skills with more complex

recipes plus traditional ones like corn beef pie and lasagne. They've been on trips around the Northeast including Ridely Park in Blyth and Shiremoor adventure playground. Both days were cold but enjoyed by both the mums and the kids.

They are a very bonded group who support each other and strive to see one another achieve the goals they set. Again, due to the number of young people attending and a lack of suitable transport, we have not been able to take them out as much as we would have liked.





# PRISON, ME? NOW WAY!

We wanted to run a session about raising awareness about the causes, consequences, penalties and impact of crime.

We organised a visit with Prison Me! No Way! The Trust wants young people to stay safe, aspire and become law-abiding citizens. They visited with prison officers and an ex-prisoner. They brought a life-size replica and fully furnished prison cell to realistically present prisoners living conditions and cell.

'The No Way Trust provides real-life learning experiences for children and young people between 8 and 18, to help reduce risky behaviour and prevent them from becoming involved in crime. We want young people to think carefully about the decisions they make throughout their lives, stay safe, positively manage the temptations of modern society, and increasing risks posed through social media, develop into law-abiding citizens, and achieve their full potential. Collectively helping young people and their communities to reduce crime, reoffending and anti-social behaviour and contribute towards creating safer communities for all.'

It was an excellent day, an open and honest account of the reality of being in prison. The young people were able to ask questions and were listened to.



## BOXING SESSIONS

Charlie from Union Jab Boxing club attended the project to deliver boxing sessions to one of the junior boys' groups.

By giving them this opportunity with a boxing coach, they can improve their listening skills, show respect for others, demonstrate commitment, and divert them away from unacceptable behaviour in and outside the project.

A community engagement officer worked alongside the group to talk with them about keeping safe, understanding joint enterprise and hate crimes.

We have since secured funding from The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust, which has enabled us to deliver a longer boxing programme.



# HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES

During every school holiday, workers at NBYP plan a range of off-site activities. During the May half-term and summer, we aim for these to take place outdoors. During the winter, ice skating is popular for all ages.

Funding from Streetgames - Holiday Activity Fund has allowed us to deliver a full spring and summer programme and ensure every child is fed

This year, the girls have taken on the challenge of trying as much as the boys, including kayaking, paddleboarding, surfing and bodyboarding at Whitley Bay.

This was a massive confidence boost for them, proving they can do what the boys do. Some groups tried horse riding for the first time, which took place in Northumberland, in the countryside. They did amazingly well, especially as they have previously been around horses. There were several bike rides along the banks of the River Tyne, our annual residential trip to Beadnell and beach days at South Shields.

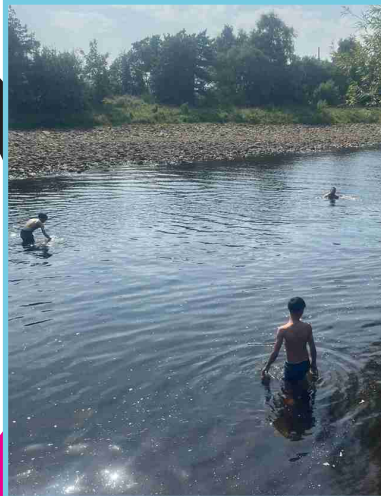
The activities give vital opportunities for physical health, social interaction, and emotional well-being. The experiences broaden horizons, reduce inequality, and inspire ambition helping children develop skills and aspirations that can positively shape their future, not forgetting, making unforgettable memories they can treasure.













# THE KING'S GARDEN PARTY

## Invitation to the King's Garden Party

Margaret and Lisa were invited to the King's Garden Party held at Hollywood Palace on 1st July. We had a challenge getting there as the trains from Newcastle to Edinburgh were cancelled at the last minute.

A dash up the motorway got us there, though 2 hours later than we hoped.

It was a lovely afternoon with bands playing and afternoon tea served.

We missed the royal arrival but did get a glimpse of the royal party and enjoyed the surroundings of the palace.



## COMMUNITY COOK OFF

We were invited to take part in a community cook-off competition.

12 teams of 6, were competing. It was very competitive! It was organised by the police and was well attended.

It took place next to Westgate police station, it was outdoors, and we cooked on barbecues.



All teams had to cook the same dish of Spatchcock chicken and make two side dishes. Our team made a stuffed pepper and grilled pineapple dessert.



The dishes were judged by a Michelin Star chef from the House of Tides. We didn't win but really enjoyed it.

## SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

### One-to-one support

Over the years, there has been a growing need from residents, mainly parents, asking for our support on various issues.

Financial struggles tend to be at the root of many difficulties, including growing rent charges, increasing fuel bills, and rising costs of food and household necessities.

We have supported families when they have been evicted from their homes and don't know who else to turn to.

At NBYP, we can listen, offer a cuppa and try to link them to the right organisation. Language barriers can cause feelings of isolation and being misunderstood.

### Free giveaway days

For the last few years, we have been holding giveaway days at the project.

We receive donations of clothes, shoes, uniforms, winter coats, household items such as towels and duvets, baby equipment, and toys.

When we have an abundance, the staff and volunteers sort it into sizes

and order, then invite people from the community to make an appointment and take what they need. Many residents now donate, supporting each other whilst recycling.

### Food parcels

For 5 years now, the project has been supplying weekly food parcels to local families. We started during the lockdown, and there has been a continuous need.

We are a member of the FareShare food donation scheme which saves food from going to waste and



redistributes to frontline charities and community groups across the UK.

For the second time, we received funding from Hill-Dickeson Trust, which meant we could supplement the parcels with extra food such as fresh bread, cereal, milk and extra fruit.

#### Vodafone SIM cards

Vodafone has kindly donated SIM cards for us to pass on to young people (over 18) and parents. The SIM cards give 6 months of free data, texts and calls, helping to combat data poverty.



## COOKING AND CRAFT SESSIONS

All ages and genders enjoy cooking and baking at NBYP. They like to attempt new recipes and challenge themselves.

The photos highlight some of their dishes.

Crafts are a great way to test their creativity, develop skills, improve mental wellbeing and create a sense of achievement.

















## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - for the year ended 31 March 2025

Analysis of Income	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £	Analysis of Expenditure on charitable activities	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Donations and Legacies Received</b>	2,531		2,531	739	<b>Charitable activities</b>				
<b>Charitable Activities</b>	2,531		2,531	739	<b>Direct costs</b>		101,142	101,142	86,190
Income from grants & contracts					Wages & salaries		2,224	2,224	915
NCS		17,200	17,200		Staff other costs		29,415	29,415	28,419
Newcastle City Council		17,200	17,200	31,341	Other project activities		2,756	2,756	2,500
Newcastle City Council Warm Spaces		3,250	3,250	250	Transport costs		2,429	2,429	20
46 Wearside Group					Volunteers				
Street Games		2,926	2,926	402	<b>Support costs</b>		4,764	4,764	5,850
County Durham Community Foundation				3,902	Rent & rates		4,924	4,924	5,302
Hat Trick				300	Utilities		659	659	680
Community Foundation Milburn Briel Fund				8,450	Telephone & fax		1,366	1,366	320
Community foundation - Wellesley Trust		6,030	6,030	6,321	Printing, postage & stationery		1,058	1,058	1,196
Key Fund					IT costs		2,529	2,529	1,176
Garfield Weston		15,000	15,000	1,347	Subscriptions & membership		1,956	1,956	3,291
Henry Smith		50,550	50,550	15,000	Repairs & maintenance		6,539	6,539	4,321
The National Lottery - Million Hours		6,955	6,955	34,000	Professional fees		689	689	3,116
The National Lottery - Awards for All		28,105	28,105	5,796	Cleaning & hygiene		2,228	2,228	2,268
William Leech		1,960	1,960		Other office expenses				
LGA Foundation		8,000	8,000	7,948	<b>Governance costs</b>				
Other small grants		2,000	2,000		Independent examiners fees for reporting on the accounts	700		700	946
					Bank charges	218		218	280
					Trustee expenses & AGM				966
		168,976	168,976	115,057			<b>164,677</b>	<b>164,677</b>	<b>147,753</b>

Expenditure on charitable activities was £165,595 (2024: £147,753) of which £918 was unrestricted or designated (2024: £5,558) and £164,677 was restricted (2024: £142,195)

[illegible]

There were no other fees paid to the examiner (2024: £nil)

Income was £178,687 (2024: £123,888) of which £9,711 was unrestricted or designated (2024: £8,831) and £168,976 was restricted (2024: £115,057)

Independent examiner's statement - In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or

- The accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or

- The accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



# STAFF AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

## Management Committee

*Chairperson* - Andrea Spowart

*Treasurer* - Chloe Eastabrook - *joined 12/24*

*Trustees* - James Garratt, Mike Keller, Kirsty Daniels

*Young Persons Representative* - Keera Storey

## Staff Team

Margaret Ridley - Project Coordinator

Lisa Young - Deputy Coordinator

Malcolm Wharton - Youth Worker

Sarah Howe - Youth Worker

Jennifer Horvathova - Youth Worker

Jan Cina - Saturday Support

Sue Leeder - Administrator

## Volunteers

Laura Ward, Kevin Bagar, Filip Sivak, Martina Horvathova

## Young Peoples Committee and Young Volunteers

Martina Horvathova

Jennifer Horvathova

Lucy Cinova

Keera Storey  
Adela Sivakova



## What is Youth Work

Youth workers play a crucial role in the lives of many thousands of young people. They bring fun, a sense of structure and a whole host of new opportunities to the people they work with, broadening their horizons, boosting their social skills and giving them a place to simply be themselves.

By supporting young people at one of the most important periods of their lives they help them learn new skills, embrace their passions and develop a sense of identity and independence. And because youth work is not confined to a single location or structured curriculum, it offers a flexibility that traditional education cannot.

Youth workers build voluntary, trusted relationships with young people, away from many of the other pressures they may be facing in their lives. (National Youth Agency)

## What is the North Benwell Youth Project CIO?

The North Benwell Youth Project CIO is a charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a constitution which states every trustee must be appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees.

The objects of the CIO are to help young people up to the age of 25 living in North Benwell (the area of benefit), especially but not exclusively through leisure time activities so as to develop their capabilities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society.

The trustees have ensured that benefit to the local community has been at the centre of the work of the project.