



Independent Evaluation June 2021

What next. . .?

Money Saved. Quality Assured.





Independent Evaluation

June 2021

Funded by
Big Lottery Fund

Commissioned by
Ynot Aspire

Delivered by
Wider Impact Consultancy

widerimpact



Contents

| Sections | Description | Page |
|-----------------|--|-------------|
| 1.0 | Executive Summary | 1 |
| 1.1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 1.2 | About the Project | 1 |
| 1.3 | Methodology | 2 |
| 1.4 | Findings | 2 |
| 1.5 | Good Practice | 2 |
| 1.6 | Social Returns on Investment (SROI) | 2 |
| 1.7 | 'An Amazing Project' | 3 |
| 1.8 | Future Challenges | 3 |
| 1.9 | Recommendations | 3 |
| 1.10 | Conclusion | 4 |
| 2.0 | Terms of Reference / Methodology | 5 |
| 2.1 | Introduction | 5 |
| 2.2 | Timetable | 5 |
| 2.3 | Methodology | 5 |
| 2.4 | Quantitative (Desk) Research | 5 |
| 2.5 | Qualitative (Field) Research | 6 |
| 2.6 | Questionnaire Surveys | 6 |
| 3.0 | About Ynot Aspire – Past, Current & Planned | 7 |
| 3.1 | Introduction | 7 |
| 3.2 | Staffing | 7 |
| 3.3 | Board / Trustees | 7 |
| 3.4 | Independent Evaluation | 8 |
| 3.5 | Key Current Partners | 9 |
| 3.6 | Local Consultation | 10 |
| 3.7 | Current Projects and Initiatives | 11 |
| 3.8 | Continue Future 'Need' for the Organisation | 12 |
| 3.9 | Future Plans | 13 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 4.0 | Current Lottery Funded Project | 15 |
| 4.1 | Introduction | 15 |
| 4.2 | Projects and Initiatives | 16 |
| 4.3 | Activities | 17 |
| 4.4 | Outcomes | 18 |
| 4.5 | Project Indicators | 18 |
| 5.0 | Quantitative Findings | 20 |
| 5.1 | Introduction | 20 |
| 5.2 | Activities | 20 |
| 5.3 | Performance Indicators | 21 |
| 6.0 | Qualitative Findings | 23 |
| 6.1 | Introduction | 23 |
| 6.2 | Case Studies | 23 |
| 6.3 | Alice – Longevity Study | 32 |
| 6.4 | Client Questionnaire Findings | 33 |
| 6.5 | Ethnicity of Respondents | 33 |
| 6.6 | Age Profile of Respondents | 34 |
| 6.7 | Frequency of use of Services | 34 |
| 6.8 | Reasons for Utilising Ynot Aspire Services | 35 |
| 6.9 | Views about Ynot Aspire | 36 |
| 6.10 | Outcomes | 37 |
| 6.11 | What is 'Good' about Ynot Aspire? | 37 |
| 6.12 | How the Project Could be Improved Further | 37 |
| 6.13 | Partner Agency Questionnaire Findings | 38 |
| 6.14 | Awareness About Ynot Aspire | 38 |
| 6.15 | Reasons for Encouraging Young People to Get Involved in the Project | 39 |
| 6.16 | Views About Ynot Aspire | 39 |
| 6.17 | Post COVID-19 Strategies | 41 |
| 6.18 | Additional Comments | 41 |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 7.0 | Ynot Aspire Board / Business Planning | 44 |
| 7.1 | Introduction | 44 |
| 7.2 | On-going Business Planning | 44 |
| 7.3 | Board Review | 44 |
| 8.0 | Summary of Findings | 45 |
| 8.1 | Introduction | 45 |
| 8.2 | Aims and Objectives | 45 |
| 8.3 | 'An Amazing Project' | 46 |
| 8.4 | Progress Made by the Organisation as a Result of Reaching Communities Funding | 48 |
| 8.5 | Good Practice | 48 |
| 8.6 | Social Returns on Investments (SROI) | 48 |
| 8.7 | Future Developments | 49 |
| 9.0 | Recommendations | 50 |
| 9.1 | Introduction | 50 |
| | Appendix A – Case Study Alice | 51 |
| | Appendix B – Ynot Board Skills Analysis Questionnaire (Sharon Burch) | 52 |
| | Appendix C – Ynot Board Skills Analysis Questionnaire (Paul Breaks) | 53 |
| | Appendix D - Ynot Board Skills Analysis Questionnaire (Gill Cookson) | 54 |
| | Appendix E – Client Questionnaire | 55 |
| | Appendix F – Partner Agency Questionnaire | 57 |

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

Wider Impact Consultancy has been commissioned by Ynot Aspire to carry out an independent evaluation of the Big Lottery funded Project (The Project). Terms of reference have been to:

1. Establish if the aims and objectives agreed with the principal funder, the Big Lottery Fund have been achieved.
2. Report on the progress the organisation has made as a result of Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding.
3. Based on research findings make recommendations that will support the positive future development of the organisation.

1.2 About the Project

Based in Hyndburn, Lancashire, **Ynot Aspire** (<https://ynotaspire.org.uk/>) is an innovative local charity that aims to support the area's most vulnerable young people. Funded by the Big Lottery, the Project aims to tackle key local issues such as a lack of aspirations, leading to gaps in education, training, work experience and employment; homelessness; mental well-being / coping skills; volunteering / skills and a sustainable local community. Additional Big Lottery Reaching Communities Funding is directed at supporting the growth and strategic direction of the organisation.

1.3 Methodology

This commission has been delivered in several phases, which has included an interim evaluation during August 2019, and funded by the Big Lottery *Reaching Communities Fund*, and supported by a further progress report during March 2018, direct support to enhance the strategic organisational development of the organisation. Such support resulted in the production and delivery of a Business Plan during January 2018.

Research has included both quantitative (desk) and qualitative (field) research. Carried out over nearly a five year period, such research has been extensive. During 2020 / 21 research tools such as one to one meetings have had to be adapted to take into account the unexpected arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to technologies such as ZOOM etc. there is a high degree of confidence that such has not hampered the quality of the research.

1.4 Findings

Based on research findings:

There can be no doubt that the aims and objectives agreed with the principal funders have been achieved and in a number of cases surpassed.

This statement is based on strong evidence, which includes numerical 'outcomes' and most significantly testimonies from key stakeholders such as past and current service users, Project staff, Board members and senior representatives of local multi-agency partnerships.

1.5 Good Practice

In no particular order, the following 'good practice' is noted:

- The professionalism and dedication of all those involved in the development and delivery of the Project / Ynot Aspire, which includes Board members, staff / volunteers, beneficiaries, partner agency members and the principal funder, the Big Lottery
- The manner in which the organisation continues to relate to beneficiaries, which included compassion, trust, 'tough love', honesty, reliability and patience
- Multi-agency partnership / consortia working, with the organisation regularly taking on a lead role
- The innovation and adaptability of the organisation to meet [significant] challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic
- Multi-agency strategic planning, with an ever watchful eye on funding, the organisation continues to seek ways to deliver what is needed for its local community

1.6 Social Returns on Investments (SROI)

Acknowledging that such is not an exact science and a number of assumptions are often made, there is **compelling evidence of SROI**. As is highlighted:

- Linked to issues such as lifetime costs of education and the criminal justice system, direct support provide to **371** local vulnerable young, supports a conservative SROI estimate of **£8.8m**
- Linked to issues linked to homelessness, and direct support to **70** local, potentially homeless young people supports an SROI estimate of **£1.4m**
- A total local estimate SROI of some **£10.2m**

1.7 'An Amazing Project'

As highlighted above good use is made of the testimonies of key stakeholders. The following provides a useful and poignant testimony from 'Alice' who first received support from the organisation and the previously funded Big Lottery Project:

*'They are always there if you need them. Either for a quick chat or to help you sort your mind out if you could risk getting in a bad place. **Without them I would be dead or in jail now.***

'Thank you for saving my life'. And thank you to the Big Lottery for helping them to help people like me'.

1.8 Future Challenges

Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic there could have been no doubts that the work of **Ynot Aspire** and similar organisations is not done. Indeed as highlighted in this report, the local area suffers high levels of deprivation, particularly in areas linked to education, homelessness and mental health.

COVID-19 has without any doubts had the potential to catastrophically change the landscape for young people. Indeed The Heath Foundation (see -

<https://www.health.org.uk/publications/long-reads/generation-covid-19>) reports:

- *Emerging evidence on the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic shows that young people aged 12 – 24 years are one of the worst-affected groups, particularly in terms of the labour market and mental health outcomes*
- *Analysis also shows that the effect is not equal for all young people. **Young people in the North of England, and young people from poor households are more likely to lose work.***
- *Data clearly shows that young peoples' mental health has worsened during the pandemic.*

1.9 Recommendations

Based on research findings the following recommendations are tendered:

1. Those responsible for the development and delivery of this Big Lottery funded Project should be congratulated for their hard work, diligence and professionalism.

2. With an emphasis on homelessness and young peoples' mental health, contact with the Big Lottery (and other funders) should be maintained with an objective to explore and ideally agree significant on-going funding beyond the life of this Project.
3. With a focus on young people, the development and delivery of innovative and effective multi-agency partnership and consortia working should be continued.
4. The contents of this report should be distributed to other organisations / multi-agency partnerships with an aim of sharing examples of innovative youth led partnership working and excellent examples of 'best practice'.

1.10 Conclusion

There can be no doubts that this Project, principally funded by the Big Lottery has been a huge success. Indicators are that SROI are impressive and it would be hard to argue against the evidence that many young people's lives have been saved and changed for the positive as a direct result of this Project - supported by an impressive host of dedicated local stakeholders.

Ynot Aspire has become a 'mature' and well-respected organisation in the area and with the support of Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding is well governed and well led by an innovative and professional management team – supported by dedicated staff, volunteers, partner agency members and of course local young people.

Enhanced by the terrible COVID-19 pandemic, the work of Ynot Aspire is certainly not done and it would be difficult to find another local organisation better placed to take on current and future challenges.

It is always a joy to submit such a positive report and thanks are given to everyone who has played a role in its delivery. Particular thanks are extended to those young people, who have actively participated by completing questionnaires and agreeing to be 'case studies'. Their honesty and bravery in 'opening up their lives' should be applauded!

2.0 Terms of Reference / Methodology

2.1 Introduction

Terms of reference of this commission are to:

1. Establish if the aims and objectives agreed with the principal funder, the Big Lottery Fund have been achieved.
2. Report on the progress the organisation has made as a result of Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding.
3. Based on research findings make recommendations that will support the positive future development of the organisation.

2.2 Timeline

The commission has been delivered in a number of distinct phases:

1. Interim evaluation, August 2019.
2. Submission of organisational Business Plan, January 2018.
3. Business planning progress report, March 2018.
4. Final evaluation, June 2021.

2.3 Methodology

As highlighted at **Figure 1**, a systematic approach has been taken to this commission.

Figure 1



2.4 Quantitative (Desk) Research

Opportunity has been taken to access, analyse and take due note of reports and documents, which have included:

- Original and planned funding applications to the Big Lottery
- Data and information supplied by the organisation
- Taking due note of previous [Wider Impact] research findings (see **Section 2.2**)
- Accessing the Ynot Aspire website – see <https://ynotaspire.org.uk/>
- Accessing and researching appropriate external data and information relative to the future development of the organisation

2.5 Qualitative (Field) Research

Whilst restrictions linked to the unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic have caused changes to the manner in which field research was originally planned (e.g. face to face meetings, site visits etc.) technologies such as ZOOM have enabled quality 'one to one' meetings and case study interviews. Research tools have therefore included:

- [ZOOM] meetings with Project staff
- [ZOOM] case study interviews with beneficiaries
- Telephone interviews with key stakeholders
- Use of visual images / photographs kindly supplied by Project staff
- Beneficiary questionnaire (**Appendix E**)
- Partner agency questionnaire (**Appendices F**)
- Board member questionnaire (**Appendices B,C &D**)

2.6 Questionnaire Surveys

Beneficiary questionnaires have been distributed at random by Project staff and returned to Wider Impact for independent analysis. Partner agency member questionnaires have been emailed by Wider Impact and returned direct to Wider Impact for independent analysis. Board member questionnaires have been emailed by Wider Impact and returned direct to Wider Impact for independent analysis

3.0 About Ynot Aspire - Past, Current & Future

3.1 Introduction

Ynot Aspire (<https://ynotaspire.org.uk/>) is a well-established and locally respected registered charity (No.1150198) and Company Limited by Guarantee (No 08290421). Having been running projects and initiatives for some 12 years of so, the organisation describes itself as:



'A grass roots charity working with young people in Hyndburn to raise their aspirations and inspire them to be all that they can be. Working in partnership with other organisations in the area, we run a range of activities to help address gaps in service, address issues that are relevant to the beneficiaries we intend to reach and deliver a value for money, needs led services for some of our most vulnerable young people'.

3.2 Staffing (see <https://ynotaspire.org.uk/who-we-are/ynot-staff/>)

Current staffing levels (June 2021) are:

- Chief Officer - FT
- Project Coordinator – FT
- Well-being Coordinator – FT
- Homeless Youth Worker - FT
- Admin Assistant – PT
- 2 Youth Workers – PT
- 7 active volunteers
- 103 volunteers trained during the life of the current Lottery funded Project

3.3 Board / Trustees

The organisation is supported by an experienced and multi-skilled Board / Trustees:

- **Paul Breaks** – Chair / Board member for 2 years

- **Gillian Cookson** – Treasurer / Board member for 4 years
- **Sara McCrossan** – Board member for 3 years
- **Jade Hargreaves** – Board member for 2 years

3.4 Independent Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the previous Lottery funded project was carried out by Wider Impact Consultancy in December 2016. Key findings included:

It is clear from both quantitative and qualitative research findings that the Project is a success in terms of achieving planned outcomes, and has on the whole exceeded in its delivery of indicator targets.

- The Project has enabled positive impacts on the lives and well-being of scores of young people, and in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour, has as a result, no doubt also improved the lives and general wellbeing of wider community members
- Against a target of 5% to reduce the number of people who fail to move into education, training or employment, the Project has achieved an impressive **48%** success rate
- Against a target of 10% to reduce reported youth related anti-social behaviour, the Project has achieved an impressive **30%** success rate
- Against a target of 10% to reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system, the Project has achieved an impressive **74%** success rate
- In terms of SROI, there are positive indications that such is extremely impressive, and is likely to run into many thousands of pounds, far exceeding current financial inputs. For example, potential saving to the public purse as a result of the Project are estimated to range from **£328,000** in relation to young people prevented from entering the criminal justice system to over **£10m** in relation to the life time potentially negative costs savings of those **[458]** young people, who as a result of the Project have now seen their life chances drastically improve as they are steered away from being involved in anti-social behaviour

The following examples of good practice were noted:

- **Involving young people** – in the development and delivery of the Project
- **Confidence building** – successfully supporting young people with low aspirations and negative views about how the world around them and how they can improve their lives and achieve their ambitions

- **Extensive partnership working** – with a wide variety of committed stakeholders
- **Innovative projects and initiatives** – ranging from establishing a snooker club, drama to cell visits at the local police station
- **Targeting** – achieved by:
 - Positive and effective partnership working with all relevant agencies
 - Extensive work in schools, covering whole year groups
 - Working with schools and agencies such as the police to identify and target current and potential ‘young offenders’, with strategies that include understanding the consequences of criminal behaviour / not achieving an adequate education
- **Never letting go** – adopting mentoring roles, understanding the specific need of individuals and ensuring they receive the [multi-agency] support they need and deserve. Operating an ‘open door’ policy, which enables young people to receive support and guidance as and when they need it
- **Delivering what is needed** – which is centred on the needs and requirements of young people
- **Encouraging entrepreneurship** – the Project has directly supported two entrepreneurial young people, who are beneficiaries of the Project to launch and develop their own successful not for profit business. In addition to providing full time employment for the two young men and part time employment for **20 to 30** other local people, funded by the Big Lottery, their business also supports the development and wellbeing of local young people
- **Having ‘fun’** – those young people met during the research period have clearly enjoyed being a part of the Project, many of whom have lives which are chaotic and often dysfunctional
- **Social returns on investments (SORI)** – see above

3.5 Key Current Partners

Partnership working continues to be integral to ethos of the organisation as it: ‘..... *Constantly consults with stakeholders and beneficiaries to ensure that our activities compliment other work going on in the area, avoid duplication, offer clear and easily accessible referral pathways and adapt them to meet the changing needs and priorities of our service users*’. The organisation has: ‘..... *built up a great network of partners over the last 5 years. We also chair*

and facilitate a bi-monthly multi-agency meeting to help explore collaborative working and funding opportunities, gaps in service and to discuss good practice and learning’.

Key partners include:

- Children’s Social Care
- Hyndburn Borough Council Housing Advice Team
- Local youth homeless charities and organisations
- Local Registered Social Landlords
- Local schools
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue
- Lancashire Constabulary
- HARV Domestic Violence Team
- Lancashire County Council Prevention
- Wellbeing and Early Help Service
- Prince’s Trust
- NCS
- Accrington and Rossendale College
- Youth Offending Team
- Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Council for Voluntary Services

‘Working in partnership with these and other organisations assists us in reaching our beneficiaries, referral pathways, volunteer recruitment and awareness raising of our projects. We access various training opportunities for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries through this partnership work, address areas of duplication and gaps in service to help provide more streamlined and effective services for beneficiaries’.

3.6 Local Consultation

A major continuing strength of the organisation is its ability to consult widely with a wide range of local stakeholders.

For example:

‘Through our involvement in Hyndburn Youth Homeless Forum, working with other relevant agencies in the borough to identify the causes of youth homelessness and help to



tackle the issues, we know that there is still a significant need for our one-to-one mentoring service. This helps to ensure that young people don't 'fall through the gaps' and receive support and guidance at a vulnerable transition point for them.

We have held a number of consultation events with stakeholders and beneficiaries. As outlined in our last evaluation document, they have stated that there is a need for our project as we are addressing gaps in service in the area and providing a value for money, accessible service that is helping to address local priorities and enhance existing services. This consultation also highlighted the need for gaps in service around young people's mental health to be a key priority for us moving forward. We will continue to operate a signposting and awareness raising service alongside delivering programmes aimed at helping to support positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young people.

Consultation and feedback forums with our volunteers has shown that access to comprehensive training and valuable work experience has improved their prospects for moving on to further education, training and employment. It has helped to reduce their feelings of social isolation, improved their self-confidence and, for those from the recovery community, the opportunity to make sustainable changes to their lives and feel less socially excluded.

3.7 Current Projects and Initiatives

Table 1 highlights current projects and initiatives.

Table 1 Current Projects and Initiatives

| Activity | Agencies Delivering | Frequency | Description |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Know Stigma | Ynot / ASCT | Specific dates throughout the year | Full day workshop around mental health awareness, Stigma and supporting our own wellbeing |
| MH Champions | Ynot / Secondary schools | Ongoing | Recruiting and training young people to be mental health ambassadors in their school, this is a yearly programme |
| Well-being Champions | Ynot / Primary schools | Pilot on one primary school | Train Year 6 students to become well-being ambassadors for their school, asked to provide this service after hearing about the MH Champions |
| Youth Homeless Worker | Ynot / Hyndburn Council | Full-time | Providing a single point of contact for any young person presenting as homeless in Hyndburn and Ribble valley under the Trailblazer initiative |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| One to One Mentoring | Ynot staff / volunteers | Weekly | 1:1 support for any young person provided on a weekly basis |
| Group Work | Ynot staff / volunteers | Weekly on request by schools | Support for young people |
| CHARM | Ynot / Carer's Link, civic theatre, secondary schools, sponsors | Annual event supported by the forum and partners throughout the year | Flagship showcase and fundraising event. Highlighting the talents of young people in our area and also raising funds, all schools are involved in the event |

Table 2 highlights projects and initiatives that have been developed by Ynot Aspire as a direct result of the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2 COVID-19 Specific Project and Initiatives

| Activity | Agencies Delivering | Frequency | Description |
|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| Walk and Talk | Ynot / Hyndburn Leisure | Monthly weather and restriction dependant | Set up with Hyndburn Leisure to get young people out and about after lockdown |
| Online Drop-In and One to Work | Ynot / Schools | Weekly throughout Covid-19 / online and face to face | Drop-ins and 1:1 work has continued throughout the pandemic with sessions being moved online and increased when schools closed. Now back delivering face to face sessions in all our schools |
| Anxiety workshops | Ynot / Schools | Weekly | Set up for Year 7s returning to school after lockdown, students identified by school staff as struggling with return to 'normality' |
| Boys only Group – thoughts and feelings | Ynot staff / Schools | Weekly | Sessions are now on a 1:1 basis due to different year groups not being allowed to mix |
| 2 new youth workers | Ynot staff | 2 x 25 hour posts | Both recruited as part of the Covid-19 relief funding, to provide group sessions and 1:1 session to primary and secondary school children |

3.8 Continued Future 'Need' for the Organisation

According to the 2015 National Indices for Multiple Deprivation, 12 districts of Hyndburn fall into the most deprived 10% of Local Super Output Areas in the country. This ranks Hyndburn at **33rd** most deprived area in the country out of 326 districts and unitary authorities. Six districts also fall in the most deprived 10% of LSAO's for income deprivation affecting children.

Lancashire County Council figures show that the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths in 2014/15 was **52.3%** in Hyndburn district.

This was below the 58.8% for the Lancashire County Council area. According to the DfE Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2014 to 2015, attainment is lower for disadvantaged pupils compared to all other pupils across all headline measures.

NHS East Lancashire's recent Health Profile Summary for Hyndburn states that 'Mental Ill-Health is an important priority for the borough. Hyndburn ranks **24th highest** of 324 districts in England in terms of rates of hospital admissions with self-harm'. In the Child Health Profiles for 2016 Hyndburn is showing figures as being 'significantly higher than England' for young people in hospital admissions, under 18 conception rates and alcohol specific admissions.

3.9 Future Plans

Ongoing consultation by the organisation has shown that there are still gaps in service around work with young homeless people and also young people's mental health services. The organisation therefore plans to shift its focus to help to address these gaps in service and ensure that they are not duplicating work already being done in the area.

The organisation is currently working more closely with other homeless charities in the area such as Crossroads (Salvation Army young people's homeless project) and *Nightsafe*, which provide emergency accommodation for young homeless people.

They are also developing plans with them and our local Housing Advice Team from Hyndburn Borough Council to provide a 'one-stop-shop' providing help, advice and clear referral pathways for young people presenting as homeless or at risk of becoming so. This is based on the Positive Pathway Model developed by St Vincent's Housing Association.

Working with relevant agencies to continue development of the Wellbeing Panel and the Coordinator role, funded by the Primary Care Networks in Hyndburn. We would also like to bring in more youth worker roles to address the growing number of referrals.

A consultation questionnaire was put out during lockdown and the findings from that being that young people want the face to face one-to-one support more than ever due to the pandemic, which inform in building future plans.

The organisation is also looking at formalising some partnerships to aid delivery and exploring the need to extend the project to cover more of East Lancashire.

Such will help the organisation to ensure that some of its most vulnerable beneficiaries have:

- Timely and meaningful intervention
- That are easily accessible
- With clear referral pathways and an asset based programmes to help young people achieve a better state of mental health, wellbeing and resilience

Such plans fit in with Lancashire County Council's plan Lancashire public health suicide prevention plan, the public mental health training offer and the children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing plan. It also fits in with NHS England and the Department of Health 'Future in Mind' plan, promoting, protecting and improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Ynot Aspire will assist in partners plans to help young people have good mental health, tackle problems early to stop them getting worse and act quickly if they do and make it easier to get the right support at the right time. The organisation's homeless work will contribute to the aims of Lancashire Young People's Homelessness and Housing Strategy and the Prevention and Early Intervention Agenda.

As pointed out by the organisation: *'Whilst recognising that there is still a need for prevention and early intervention projects addressing crime and anti-social behaviour, there are now a range of other agencies delivering this work and we feel that our role is to signpost young people into these projects rather than deliver them ourselves'.*

4.0 Current Lottery Funded Project

4.1 Introduction

Launched in January 2016 and planned to end December 2021, the current Big Lottery funded project aims to address local 'need', which has been summarised by the following evidence:

- According to the 2015 National Indices for Multiple Deprivation, 12 districts of Hyndburn fall into the most deprived **10%** of Local Super Output Areas in the country. This ranks Hyndburn at **33rd** most deprived area in the country out of 326 districts and unitary authorities. Six districts also fall in the most deprived **10%** of LSAO's for income deprivation affecting children
- Lancashire County Council figures show that the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths in 2014/15 was **52.3%** in Hyndburn district. This was below the **58.8%** for the Lancashire County Council area. According to the DfE Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England, 2014 to 2015, attainment is lower for disadvantaged pupils compared to all other pupils across all headline measures
- NHS East Lancashire's recent Health Profile Summary for Hyndburn states that 'Mental ill health is an important priority for the borough. Hyndburn ranks **24th** highest of 324 districts in England in terms of rates of hospital admissions with self-harm'. In the Child Health Profiles for 2016 Hyndburn is showing figures as being 'significantly higher than England' for young people in hospital admissions, under 18 conception rates and alcohol specific admissions.
- Through our involvement in Hyndburn Youth Homeless Forum, working with other relevant agencies in the Borough to identify the causes of youth homelessness and help to tackle the issues, we know that there is still a significant need for our one-to-one mentoring service. This helps to ensure that young people don't 'fall through the gaps' and receive support and guidance at a vulnerable transition point for them
- We have held a number of consultation events with stakeholders and beneficiaries since submitting our Stage One application including forums and questionnaires. As outlined in our evaluation document, they have stated that there is a need for our project as we are addressing gaps in service in the area and providing a value for money, accessible service that is helping to address local priorities and enhance existing services. This consultation also highlighted the need for gaps in service around young people's mental health to be a key priority for us moving forward. We will continue to operate a signposting and awareness raising service alongside delivering programmes aimed at helping to support positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young people
- Consultation and feedback forums with our volunteers has shown that access to comprehensive training and valuable work experience has improved their prospects for moving on to further education, training and employment. It has helped to reduce their feelings of social isolation, improved their self-confidence and, for those from the recovery community, the opportunity to make sustainable changes to their lives and feel less socially excluded
- The project fits in with Lancashire County Council's plan Lancashire Public Health Suicide Prevention Plan, the Public Mental Health Training Offer and the Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Well-being Plan. It also fits in with NHS England and the Department of Health 'Future in Mind' plan, promoting, protecting and improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. We will assist in their plan to help them have good mental health, tackle problems early to stop them getting worse and act quickly if they do and make it easier to get the right support at the right time

- *Our youth homeless work contributes to the aims of Lancashire Young People's Homelessness and Housing Strategy and the Prevention and Early Intervention Agenda.*
- *Whilst we recognise that there is still a need for prevention and early intervention projects addressing crime and anti-social behaviour, there are now a range of other agencies delivering this work and we feel that our role is to signpost young people into these projects rather than deliver them ourselves*
- *If we are unsuccessful with this funding bid, we will find it difficult to change our activities to meet the needs identified by stakeholders and beneficiaries as we will be severely restricted in staffing and resources. Beneficiaries have told us that this would be a great loss to the area*
- *This latest Big Lottery funded Project has set up new needs identified during periods of intensive consultation with key stakeholders that include beneficiaries and multi-agency partners. Following the most recent consultation, the Ynot Aspire team have set out new project areas to help address the needs identified*

4.2 Projects and Initiatives

Planned projects and initiatives (see [Section 3.5](#)) included:

- **One-to-one mentoring for young people presenting as homeless or at risk of becoming so.** Mentors not only act as a single point of contact but support young people into accessing stable accommodation, getting the correct benefits in place and encouraging pathways into further education, training or employment. They also work with them on the underlying issues that led them to becoming homeless to try and prevent them from re-presenting in the future and achieve sustainable changes
- **Working more closely with the Housing Advice Team and other youth homeless charities and organisations** to draw up a 'Positive Pathways' model to promote prevention and early intervention work and referral pathways for homeless young people. Also to explore the possibility of providing a 'hub' for these services
- **Group work and one-to-one mentoring to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for young people,** prevent social isolation, help them to develop strong coping skills and raise awareness about other services available to them
- **Recruit and train community volunteers** to help deliver activities to reach as many beneficiaries as possible as well as break down generation barriers and help create more resilient, sustainable communities. Ynot Aspire recognises the assets and value of local communities to help address issues important to them, feel safer and have the opportunity to do something of social value

- **Chair, co-ordinate and facilitate regular multi-agency forums** to bring organisations and services working with young people and families together to share best practice, receive updates on services and projects, explore collaborative working and funding opportunities and networking. These forums also allow us to look at areas of duplication and gaps in service and help address them.

4.3 Activities

Table 3 outlines details of planned [annual] activities.

Table 3 Planned Annual Activities

| When | Activity |
|---------------|---|
| Year 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers b) Undertake training to enable us to deliver mental health and wellbeing work with groups and individuals c) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people d) Further explore the viability of a one-stop shop for homeless young people with relevant partners |
| Year 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers b) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries c) Provide one-to-one mentoring with vulnerable young people d) Develop a 'positive pathways' model with partners for prevention and early intervention work with young homeless people or those at risk |
| Year 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers b) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries c) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people d) Set up a social action project with young people and the wider community |
| Year 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers b) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries c) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people d) Develop a tenancy training programme for young people with relevant partners |
| Year 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers b) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries c) Provide one-to-one support for vulnerable young people d) Commission an external evaluation to review the Project |

4.4 Outcomes

Table 4 outlines details of outcomes agreed with the Big Lottery.

Table 4 Project outcomes

| No. | Outcomes |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Young people will have raised aspirations through exploration of opportunities open to them around education, training, work experience and employment |
| 2 | Young homeless people, or those at risk of becoming so will be supported resulting in a reduced risk of falling through gaps and being socially isolated |
| 3 | The mental health and wellbeing of young people will be improved resulting in better coping skills and reduced risk of social isolation |
| 4 | Young people and the wider community will have the opportunity to be involved in meaningful volunteering opportunities, resulting in more skilled, resilient and sustainable communities |
| 5 | The organisation will have increased its capabilities (knowledge / skills / confidence), acquired relevant supporting tools where / if appropriate, and used these newly developed capabilities to deliver outcomes more effectively and sustainability to beneficiaries |

4.5 Project Indicators

Table 5 outlines details of project indicators of success, which includes links to the five outcomes, timescales and targets / milestones.

Table 5 Project Indicators

| Outcome | Indicator | Timescales | Target |
|---------|---|----------------|--------|
| 1 | a. People involved in the Project will report raised awareness of the opportunities open to them around education, training, work experience and employment | Each year | 20 |
| | b. People accessing the Project will have undertaken some form of further education, training, volunteering or employment | End of Project | 80 |
| 2 | c. The number of young people presenting as homeless who are supported into secure accommodation | End of Project | 50 |
| 3 | a. People accessing the Project will report having better coping strategies | Each year | 30 |
| | b. People accessing the Project will report feeling less isolated and more confident to access other activities / services | End of project | 150 |

| | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|-------------------|
| | c. Beneficiaries will report having a raised awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing , and where to go for help and advice | Each year | 350 |
| 4 | a. The number of volunteers trained by the Project | Each year | 10 |
| | b. People involved in the Project will report increased self-confidence | End of Project | 100 |
| 5 | a. Within 3 months the organisational strengths review has been completed | Year 1 | Task |
| | b. In Year 1 the organisation will have bought in expert support and tools as relevant to develop capabilities as prioritised by the strengths review | 12 months | Task |
| | c. By Project end staff and trustees report how this support has enabled them to work more effectively for beneficiaries | End of Project | 360 degree review |

5.0 Quantitative Findings

5.1 Introduction

Utilising qualitative data and information kindly provided by Project staff, the following findings provide a useful indication of how well the Project has performed

5.2 Activities

Table 6 highlights annual activity targets and achievements over a 5 year period.

Table 6 Annual 5 year targets / achievements

| When | Activity Targets | Progress / Achievements |
|---------------|---|---|
| Year 1 | e) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers f) Undertake training to enable us to deliver mental health and wellbeing work with groups and individuals g) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people h) Further explore the viability of a one-stop shop for homeless young people with relevant partners | a) We have trained 7 community volunteers b) We have trained 15 staff, volunteers and partners c) We have volunteers actively mentoring 1:1 with young people d) We are established as the single point of contact for any young person presenting as homeless in Hyndburn |
| Year 2 | e) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers f) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries g) Provide one-to-one mentoring with vulnerable young people h) Develop a 'positive pathways' model with partners for prevention and early intervention work with young homeless people or those at risk | a) We have trained 7 community volunteers b) We have delivered 4 Know Stigma sessions total of 617 young people c) We have volunteers set up in 2 schools providing drop in sessions and we also have a webchat that runs 5 days a week d) We have a dedicated homeless worker through Trailblazer and we facilitate the bi monthly youth homelessness forum |
| Year 3 | e) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers f) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries g) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people h) Set up a social action project with young people and the wider community | a) We have trained 64 community volunteers b) We have delivered 4 Know Stigma sessions total of 579 young people c) 1) We have provided 1-1 support for 13 young people / 2) We have provided school drop-in sessions for 76 young people d) Our social action project was put on hold due to COVID-19 e) We have given support / advice to 29 young people at risk of homelessness |
| Year 4 | e) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers f) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries g) Provide one-to-one mentoring for vulnerable young people | a) We have trained 23 community volunteers b) We have delivered 2 Know Stigma sessions total of 328 young people c) 1) We have provided 1-1 support for 14 young people / 2) We have provided drop-in sessions for 156 young people |

| | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| | h) Develop a tenancy training programme for young people with relevant partners | d) Due to COVID-19 we have been unable to initiate a tenancy training programme for young people e) We have given support / advice to 20 young people at risk of homelessness |
| Year 5 | e) Recruit, check and train 10 community volunteers f) Deliver mental health and wellbeing group work to 30 beneficiaries g) Provide one-to-one support for vulnerable young people h) Commission an external evaluation to review the Project | a) We have trained 10 community volunteers b) Due to Covid-19 we have been unable to present our <i>Know Stigma</i> workshop in schools c) 1) We have provided 1-1 support for 39 young people / 2) We have provided drop-in sessions for 127 young people d) Ongoing – external consultant appointed e) We have given support / advice to 12 young people at risk of homelessness f) Our yearly anxiety workshop has been delivered to 8 groups |

5.3 Performance Indicators

Table 7 highlights performance indicators / achievements up to the 30th April 2021.

Table 7 Performance Indicators/ Achievements

| Outcome | Indicator | Timescales | Target | Achieved 31.5.2018 | Achieved 30.4.2021 |
|----------|--|----------------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | a. People involved in the Project will report raised awareness of the opportunities open to them around education, training, work experience and employment | Each year | 20 | 33 | 371 |
| | b. People accessing the Project will have undertaken some form of further education, training, volunteering or employment | End of Project | 80 | 34 | 165 |
| 2 | a. The number of young people presenting as homeless who are supported into secure accommodation | End of Project | 50 | 27 | 70 |
| 3 | a. People accessing the Project will report having better coping strategies | Each year | 30 | 23 | 1232 |
| | b. People accessing the Project will report feeling less isolated and more confident to access other activities / services | End of project | 150 | 23 | 395 |

| | | | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|
| | c. Beneficiaries will report having a raised awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing , and where to go for help and advice | Each year | 350 | 341 | 3149 |
| 4 | a. The number of volunteers trained by the Project | Each year | 10 | 14 | 103 |
| | b. People involved in the Project will report increased self-confidence | End of Project | 100 | 25 | 458 |
| 5 | a. Within 3 months the organisational strengths review has been completed | Year 1 | Task | Completed | |
| | b. In Year 1 the organisation will have bought in expert support and tools as relevant to develop capabilities as prioritised by the strengths review | 12 months | Task | Completed | |
| | c. By Project end staff and trustees report how this support has enabled them to work more effectively for beneficiaries | End of Project | 360 degree review | Part Completed | Completed |

Notes

- Additional workshops devised in schools specifically around raising aspirations.
 - Taking on the *Mental Health Champions* and providing them with training has affected numbers achieved around this indicator. Also having recruited and trained more volunteers than anticipated.
- Additional numbers due to being involved in the Lancashire wide *Breathing Space* project, allowing the Project reach even more young people than anticipated.
- Outcomes exceeded due to the introduction of the *Know Stigma* workshops delivered in schools across the Borough, and also due to the work of the Mental Health Champions recruited and trained by the Project.
- Training of *Mental Health Champions* in schools has resulted in increases of the numbers of volunteers. Also working closely with the newly formed Volunteer Hub led by the local CVS.
 - The Project has been in a position to capture additional outcomes through effective feedback sheets.

6.0 Qualitative Findings

6.1 Introduction

As with our previous evaluations of Ynot Aspire projects, there is a wealth of positive and informative qualitative and quantitative data and information to collate, process and present. Whilst tables, charts and graphs have an integral role to play in such presentation, it is becoming ever more apparent and important that 'real life' stories / case studies really bring home what constructive differences such Lottery funded projects can make on the lives of the [young] people to whom such funding is directed.

6.2 Case Studies (names and a number of personal details changed to ensure anonymity)

Case Study 1 Tilly

Tilly is 16 years of age and lives with her mum and 4 sisters. She is currently studying Farm Management at College. Her aim is to become a zoologist, or a vet which reflects her love and interest in nature and animals.

She instantly comes across as a highly intelligent, well presented young woman, who takes care and deliberation in her responses to questions.

She says, 'In the past I would have had great difficulty in carrying out this interview, as I was extremely shy about leaving my bedroom and meeting other people. I wouldn't even go to the shops. I think part of my problems was the fact that I suffered significant personal trauma when I was younger and it played a huge role in undermining my confidence.

I was reluctant to leave my room and was very lonely as a result. I am not into social media and apart from my close family I wasn't really relating to other people.

Asked what has changed her life she says, 'A teacher who was aware of my past trauma and the challenges I was facing approached me and along with another pupil asked if I would represent the school at an initiative called '**CHARM**'. I trusted the teacher and took the plunge.

I remember the first day I attended. I was so nervous. But there was no need. It was immediately apparent that those running it were caring, considerate and kind. They were in no rush, and seemed to understand my fears and took a lot of time to settle us all down and get to know each other. The other pupils were just as nice. We seemed to bond quite quickly and I almost instantly knew I had made the right move in attending.

People of my own age were there and there was no nastiness you can get sometimes when you mix with young people. We were all committed to enjoying ourselves and for my part to get over my social anxieties.

Asked what she achieved as a result of CHARM she says, 'Goodness where do I start? I quickly realised that this was an opportunity to build my confidence levels and learn new skills. I took on the job as Stage Manager, which was explained to me as a tough ask.

I would be in direct charge of everything that went on at an awards ceremony, which was a huge responsibility.

I would need to learn and demonstrate enhanced communication skills, judgement and decision making.

I would need to stay calm under pressure and support those who needed support and guidance.

Whilst we were all 'volunteers', we all took our roles extremely seriously and looked to act as 'professionals'. This was important to us as the Project and those who were supporting us deserved this as they had put so much trust in us.

On a personal note, I became more confident and certainly felt less socially isolated. I have met lots of new nice people, who will stay friends. I am no longer 'confined' to my bedroom and there is a new world to discover and enjoy out here.

I wore an amazing ball gown at the Ynot Black Tie ball, where I was asked to talk about CHARM and introduce the Talent Winners.

*I felt wonderful. **A beautiful me!** I had never been to a party before that. I had been too scared to leave my bedroom and mix with people outside my direct family.*

Asked why CHARM worked for her she says, 'Thanks to my teacher and those who run CHARM, the Project 'found me' at the right time in my life. If things had of stayed as they were I could still have been in my bedroom looking out at the world moving on without me. Those who run CHARM are amazing and are good at supporting young people. They are so kind and take time to understand your needs. CHARM is just the right thing to engage young people from different backgrounds and bring them together for a 'common good' as volunteers representing their schools and of course themselves. It pushed me just hard enough to move me on and out of myself.'

Asked what differences it has made to her life she says, 'Massive! I am so much more confident. I have learnt to trust people who are there to support me. I have learnt to laugh and be happy. I have learnt so many new skills, which I am using in College and in my future life. After being a Stage Manager I know that nothing is beyond me and I can support and lead others. I guess I have blossomed

Asked what her future aspirations are she says, 'To be self-dependent. Perhaps a vet and certainly living in my own home. A '**happy me**', enjoying my life as I am now thanks to my teacher and all those who run CHARM and Ynot Aspire. I don't want to be as over-reliant on mum as I have been in the past.'

Tilly's mother has passed on the following comments:

When Tilly was young I knew she was destined for big things, a very independent confident baby and toddler never demanding. She loved to dance from a very young age as a toddler I used to say to her, 'Tilly you were born for the stage'

Unfortunately events occurred at home and it took a long while for me to say enough was enough and I finally plucked up the courage to ask for a divorce from her father. A result of it was I lost my bouncy happy daughter, as she went into herself and became an isolated child in her bedroom.

Then she met a beautiful woman called Sharon who showed Tilly that she was capable of so much more by giving her a role in an amazing talent show. Day by day she came back to me smiling, singing telling me about this lady called Sharon and how she loved music, just like her and how much fun she was.

Tilly still doesn't go out socialising as much as other young people, but thanks to Sharon and all at Ynot Aspire I see my daughter coming back to me a little bit every day.

Thank you Sharon and thank you Ynot Aspire!

Ynot Aspire CEO Sharon says, 'Tilly was very shy and quiet when she first joined the CHARM Forum and it was a real pleasure to watch her confidence grow and grow. She did such a fantastic job as Stage Manager that I asked her to give a speech at our Annual Ball to share her experience of CHARM and to introduce our talent winners. It's amazing to see how far she's come and I know that her future is bright whatever she decides to do'.

Case Study 2 Alisha

Alisha is 23 years of age, female and lives with partner and small children, with her third baby in 10 weeks. She currently works part time at a local pub.

She says, 'I first remember getting involved with Ynot in 2014, when my Support Worker from Barnardo's referred me to their outdoor activity weekend project and that is where I first met Sharon (YNOT Aspire Chief Officer).

I've had a support worker for most of my childhood, I've a long history of CSC involvement. I was either on CP plan or CIN plan or in foster care or living with relatives. My home life was quite chaotic. By 15 I was sofa surfing a lot – sleeping on other people's settees.

*At 16 I was placed in **Stepping Stones** (see <https://www.stepping-stone.org.uk/>), which is supported accommodation but independent living. That didn't work out as I needed much more supervised support, so I was then placed in **Crossroads**, (see <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/crossroads>), which has staff on site 24/7.*

I met up with Ynot again when they came to Crossroads to ask us to help them design a flyer that would help young people understand homelessness and what help was out there. It was a good flyer, and they used our design to give out to schools etc.

I was by this time smoking weed and taking other drugs and I ended up in rehab and met a heroin addict and ran away with him. That was the first time I smoked crack. I was completely off the rails at this time.

In 2017 I went back to Crossroads and I was doing OK, but still smoking weed and drinking though. There was an incident where I was drunk and off my head that ended up with me being pepper sprayed and locked up in the cells by the Police. I kicked a police officer and Crossroads said I wasn't able to stay there anymore.

*This is when I went to Ynot, I didn't know where else to go and I knew they were helping young people who were homeless. To be fair I don't know what I expected them to be able to do as there weren't any accommodation providers that would help me with my history, but they got me in **Nightsafe** (see <https://www.facebook.com/pg/NightsafeBwD/events/>) for 9 nights – but I got kicked out of there for smoking Spice (see <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/spice>). I slept rough for a couple of nights in Blackburn, smoking Spice. I didn't ring Ynot for a couple of days, I was embarrassed, but I eventually phoned them and told them that I had been smoking Spice and staying in my mum's flat in Blackburn, she didn't live there anymore.*

Paula (Ynot Project Coordinator) came and picked me up every day from that flat and brought me to their office to try and keep me occupied and keep me away from Spice. They brought me clean clothes and fed me every day, but I went back to that flat every night and smoked Spice, I wasn't ready to stop so I could be put in suitable housing.

This went on for about 3 weeks and then I phoned them up one day said come and get me I've had enough, and they did. They got me into the night shelter at Maundy as I needed to be 28 days clean before I could go into recovery housing. It was good there, but I had to be out all day, so I went to Sharon and Paula's office and 'annoyed' them and they made me done the lunch run to Pound Bakery - after everything they trusted me with money. That was a big thing for me that.

They also teamed me up with a Mentor who got me into attending Narcotics Anonymous meetings. They did the referrals to Recovery Homes for me and really kept me on track with my 28-day target.

I relapsed 3 times whilst in recovery homes, but I owned up and admitted my mistakes, so they moved me to a different one. I didn't really like being in there as I was regularly tested and had to go to meetings, but all I wanted to do was smoke weed, not Spice, I knew I was never going back to that. I ended up going to mum's. It wasn't great and I went on a bender again and ended up with alcohol poisoning. I wasn't in regular contact with Ynot now as I thought I was doing OK, I wasn't.

I eventually made my way to recovery for good, I moved in with my now partner. I rang Ynot and let them know what I was up to. They always finish with 'Well you know where we are if you need us'; and they always are.

Can you summarise the support you received from Ynot Aspire? - *I got from them was what I needed. They gave me emotional boundaries. I knew I had a base with them no matter what and I don't know why but I listened to them as they didn't talk to me like I was nothing and it was all my fault that I was in the situation I was. The constant nagging (I mean that in the nicest way) was them letting me know that they actually believed in me.*

They even convinced me to hand myself into the police as there was a warrant out for my arrest. It was the weekend of my 19th birthday and I had missed my court date and it was a Bank Holiday, so I refused to go, I was in my Spice Den. I turned up at Ynot on the Tuesday and said I've got a warrant out for my arrest. I don't know how they talked me into going to the police station, but they did and I spent the night in the cells and went to court the next day, I got a fine. The good news was it was all out of the way and I could move on without looking over my shoulder'.

What's good about Ynot Aspire? – Sharon and Paula will go out of their way to help you even if you don't realise you need it. They don't blame young people for their situations. They genuinely want to help you, but they want you to help yourself too and they help to point you in the right direction'.

Describe your life now? - 'I'm living the dream. I don't take drugs, I have a lovely home, partner and soon to be 3 beautiful children. When I was in addiction all I wanted was a normal life, clean bedsheets and food in the cupboards. The dream then was transitioning to a non-chaotic life. **I have that now' thanks a great deal to Ynot Aspire'.**

What are my aspirations for the future? – 'I just want a happy life with my babies; maybe a campervan or a move to Spain. My partner has 3 businesses, so we are financially stable. I did a nail course but got fed up with it so I might look at going back to college at some point. To bring my kids up better than my Mum did. I wouldn't change any of my past, it's made me who I am!'

Ynot Aspire Project Coordinator **Paula Swainston** says, 'Where do I start with Alisha. She was one of the most frustrating, but inspiring young people that I have worked with. Her back story made you want to look after her, you could see the potential in her, she is such a clever girl and she knew she could achieve brilliant things, but the self-destruct button was permanently switched on, it was like she thought she didn't deserve anything good to happen to her.

Picking her up every day and bringing her with me was a battle, sometimes she would be late or wouldn't be there or she'd be off her head. I'll be honest it made me sad and mad that she couldn't see what we saw but we still made sure that she knew we were there regardless of what she was doing.

I remember asking Sharon if I could take her to my house so she could have a shower (she hadn't showered for days and stunk of Spice) and a proper meal, Sharon said 'no' and that made me question my job, as it's human nature to help someone and that is when my heart ruled my head. Sharon knew that we couldn't break the boundaries we had set because boundaries were what Alisha needed to get her through.

I hated taking her back to that flat because I didn't know if she would be there the next day, but we had to keep going because we knew deep down that eventually she would reach a point where she had had enough, and we wanted her to know we would be there for her. I work with young people on a daily basis, and I want to help every one of them achieve everything they can but every now and then 1 comes along that absolutely pulls at your heart strings and you know that that person will leave an impact on you, she certainly did that. We still keep in touch and I love to see the pictures of her children but also, I love to see how happy and content she is, it's what she deserves. Alisha always finished conversations with "love you, bye" She still does now.

Case Study 3 Shayle

Shayle is 12 years of age and lives with her Grandparents and 2 sisters. She is in year 7 at High School and has been diagnosed with **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)** – see <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html> .

She was interviewed with 'Nikki', her Ynot Aspire Well-being Coordinator and says, 'Nikki makes me feel safe. She works with me to help be learn and develop the skills I need to stay safe and out of trouble with other people. What we do is fun and structured.

She is always there when I need her. She helps me deal with my emotions when I am lost at what to do. She has taught me about my 'Blue Brain' and the Red Brain' (see <https://self-reg.ca/reframing-challenging-behaviour-part-1/#:~:text=When%20children%20are%20in%20Blue,is%20more%20rhetorical%20than%20int%20err%20ogative>).

The Red Brain gets me out of trouble when the Blue Brain helps to get me there.

I have also learnt about my 'Hidden Chimp' (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOsdY0g-iEA>), all of which is helping me to understand myself and why I sometimes act like I do'.

Asked how she met Nikki she says, 'A teacher told me about Nikki and she has been brilliant. As well as a teacher in Year 7 I have a Social Worker who is nice, but sometimes she can't make a meeting with me when I need her. But Nikki is always there and never lets me down. Even when she is on holiday she gives me a number to ring her - but I have never had to'.

We couldn't meet once due to COVID and we arranged a ZOOM meeting like this. We both made stress balls and it was fun as well as useful.

Asked about specific problems she has, she says, 'Some kids at school are mean to me, which has happened each time I move into another year group and I can feel lonely without friends and kids I can trust. Before I met Nikki it was really horrible as I just didn't know what to do and how to cope. But now I am better at it. Once I got into difficulty in Tesco and I can get into real danger around strangers. So I know I really need Nikki and the skills she is giving to me.

Asked why Nikki is so useful to her she says, 'As I have said she is always there and never lets me down when I need to speak to her. We have a plan and I have to do work in preparation for our meetings. The plan will go on for a while yet, and I know I will cope better when we have finished it. She is also fun and that is important to me. I can say lots to her and she understands. She understands how I feel and my emotions. She is helpful to me and has arranged for me to get involved in Ynot Aspire Activities with other kids'.

Asked about her life before Nikki was supporting her she says, 'Lonely and not safe'.

Asked about her future plans she says, 'To finish my work with Nikki and later when I leave school to get a job. If it helps me with this I may go to College.

I like animals but an allergic to fur, so I guess a Vet wouldn't work. I want my own home one day and would like a chimp instead of kids (ha ha!). If I become Prime Minister I would look after the poor and provide blankets for the homeless and those who are vulnerable. I wouldn't stop lock down until the children and sick people have had the jab. We all have to be safe!

Asked to summarise how she feels about Nikki she says, *'She is always there for me and never lets me down. She understands me and what is going on in my life. Without her support I would be lonely and probably not safe. She is fun and she makes me feel good about myself. I don't feel so lonely now'.*

Nikki, Ynot Well-being Coordinator says, *'Shayle was first referred into me from her school as she was showing some concerning behavior around risk and potentially putting herself in some dangerous scenarios. When I first met Shayle she had worked with other organisations and felt let down as they would stop coming to see her with no warning. She had participated in numerous intervention methods but then they would stop. Shayle told me she was looking for somebody who could support her and not just 'disappear'.*

I have worked closely with Shayle through the COVID-19 pandemic and supported the rest of her family with her behaviour. I have attended courses to gain a thorough understanding of Shayle's diagnosis of FASD. I have passed on resources to help her Grandparents gain a better understanding too. Most importantly, I have been able to discuss with Shayle her diagnosis as she has never really understood what it means for her to have FASD and that she isn't alone. From all the work I have done with Shayle I think she has found this the most useful.

This has worked great for Shayle as she can use the 'Chimp' method to understand her brain which is ultimately right and wrong but sometimes they can get mixed together.

Shayle will often say 'My blue brain wants me to do it'. Working through 'My Inner Chimp' we have managed to reflect on Molly's experiences when she could have done things differently, particularly around her risky behavior.

Shayle has made some exceptional progress and I am proud of the way she has engaged with the work that we do. She has managed to use the skills we have worked on through the pandemic, her transition to high school, catching a bus on her own and other daily activities. At Ynot Aspire we always put young people at the heart of what we do, therefore I will always encourage her to make suggestions on what else she would like to work on rather than professionals telling Shayle what she needs to work on.

I have seen the progress that Shayle has made and also how her family have adapted to her behavior.

It has shown us that for real change to happen the environment of the young person has to be changed too and we can do that by helping each member of the family should they need it.

Case Study 4 Laila

Laila is 33 years of age and lives with her husband and 3 children. She is a volunteer Mentor, having supported the Ynot Aspire Project for around 2 ½ years. She describes herself as a 'full-time student', studying Criminology at University.

She says 'Like my mother, sister and husband I entered academia late into my life. I did not do well at all at my GCSE examinations and priority has been to bring up 3 lovely children with my husband. As things settled down and my family became less dependent on me I was determined to achieve my full potential and follow my interest in the criminal justice system, with a focus on young people'.

Asked how she found about Ynot Aspire she says, 'Paula, one of the key staff came to the University and spoke about the organisation and its achievements to my course. I was fascinated and saw it as an opportunity to 'put something back' and gain valuable 'front-line' experience for future job applications. I emailed first and after a prompt response spoke to Paula; and it quickly became clear I had a role to play.

After appropriate background checks I attended training and induction sessions. The training was extremely detailed and thorough, with lots of role play and group work over an initial 3-day period. Lots of support and guidance was and continues to be available'.

Asked how she enjoys her role as a Volunteer Mentor she says, 'Extremely and it is so interesting. I work mostly with school age young people and whilst schools are excellent at safeguarding issues, I find as a 'non-teacher' and 'mum', a number of young people feel able to open up more and share their concerns and worries. They seem to relate to me as someone who has 'worn lots of the tee shirts' in relation to the challenges they are facing. They can vent their frustrations and aspirations in safe environments and know that we are all there to support them and often keep them out of trouble and safe. We can work **with** them to develop and deliver **their** coping skills and 'moving forward' strategies.

Asked how valuable her work is to young people and the wider community she says, 'Extremely. Without appropriate support many more young people will enter the criminal justice system and begin that long and horrible slide into depravity and 'no hope'. They will have children and they will likewise have less chances in life.

*At the moment, as a direct result of **COVID-19** 'lockdowns' it is clear that local gangs are targeting vulnerable, lonely young people to feed **County Lines** (see https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/what-is-county-lines?gclid=EAlaQobChMIvLg26iR7wIVSYjVCh1mJwQmEAAYASAAEgKOQvD_BwE).*

This is a fact and real at the moment and a real concern to local agencies.

On the positive side she says, 'Feedback from the schools is clear. Many of the young people we support do keep out of trouble and move forward positively with their lives. It is a joy to see a young person smile when they tell you about a positive achievement in their life!'

Asked how she feels her role and experiences will assist her personally she says, *'Hugely, in the past, now and in the future. In addition to supporting so many extremely vulnerable young people, I am becoming a wiser, stronger and ever more caring individual. I don't just have an interest in supporting young people – I have a passion for it. I keep changing direction as my course develops and I experience more as a Mentor. At the moment I am considering becoming a Social Worker after I graduate. My course has become 'more real' as I understand more about the challenges so many of our vulnerable young people and their families face in their lives. I would also like to think that such experience will assist me when I apply for jobs, as I am gaining so much valuable 'front-line' experience and important relevant skills.*

Asked what her family thinks about her role as a Volunteer Mentor she says, *'My children and wider family are really impressed with me and interested. My husband is also a student at University. Like me he came late into academia. He has also followed me as a volunteer Mentor with Ynot Aspire.*

As an Asian male he is relating extremely well with young Asian males, who culturally find it difficult to 'open up' to others. Indeed there is often a queue waiting for him.

Ynot Aspire Project Coordinator Paula Swainston says, *'Laila has been with us for about 2 ½ years and is a much valued member of our team. I think for me it's watching how her confidence has built up over her time with us. It's a privilege to see how she has developed not only her role with us but also how she interacts with the young people she mentors.*

She has a natural empathy and relates really well with the young people she works with; she has had some quite complex cases and has had to deal with things that she hasn't faced before.

The role of the Mentor is to provide support to enable the young person to become confident, problem solve and able to cope with things in a positive way, she has done that with several young people and she now runs drop ins in 1 of our local high schools for young people with low level mental health issues. A lot of our young people are hard to engage and tend to drop off the radar after 1 or 2 sessions, it's testament to her ability to engage and support young people that 2 of her mentees stayed in weekly sessions for 12 months. I think the fact that she is always there either in person or on the phone is why young people want to continue sessions with her, she's reliable and constant and for some young people that is the thing missing from their lives.

Volunteers for us are the backbone of our organisation, we simply would not be able to do what we do without their support. The fact that they give their time whilst studying, working or looking after family still continues to amaze me after 10 years in the job and I think that is the reason that a lot of our young people engage so well with our volunteers. A lot of young people, when told that volunteers do the work they do for free are genuinely astounded and I think that means a lot to a young person as it's not just someone getting paid to do a job but it's seen as someone who genuinely wants to help them.

6.3 Alice – Longevity Study

Reference is made to **Appendix A**, which is a summary of a case study interview with ‘Alice’ a then client / service user carried out in **December 2016**. As Alice candidly pointed out at the time:

‘I was a little shit before I got involved in the Project and I was heading for a serious fall. I suppose I had ADHD and was not a nice person to get involved in. I am off the drugs now – in fact I no longer know where to get them from as I have lost touch with the dealers. I have lots more confidence now, and like being ME more. I no longer get so angry, and know I am a nicer person the get on with’.

And as she summarised:

‘I would like to stay involved with the Project and Sharon, as it is important for me to have someone there when things get tough. I am looking at College and want to start my education again, and am considering child care or the performing arts. Thanks to Sharon and all those involved in the Project I feel I have a future and am determined to make something of myself. It’s ME time!’

Opportunity has been taken to meet with Alice during **May 2021** and the following is a summary of findings:

Alice is now **27 years old** and works in the security industry. She has a partner and lives locally with her mother. She has attended college and describes her life during the current COVID-19 pandemic as ‘Not bad’, as she is currently on furlough.

She remains extremely grateful to the Ynot Aspire team – *‘It still seems incredible that I didn’t end up in prison or with a string of criminal convictions. It is clear to me now that I wouldn’t have this job if either had happened. When you’re young and daft you just don’t appreciate that.*

*I have so much to thank Sharon and Paula for and all those at Ynot. They just don’t let go of you. They are always there if you need them. Either for a quick chat or to help you sort your mind out if could risk getting in a bad place. **Without them I would be dead or in jail now.***

I’m an adult now and I know I have to behave as one. I don’t drink or take any drugs and am certainly no longer an angry person. You can’t be in my job.

*What do I want to say to them? – **‘Thank you for saving my life’** And thank you to the Big Lottery for helping them to help people like me’.*

6.4 Client Questionnaire Findings

173 client questionnaires have been received for analysis, of these:

- 61% were completed by females
- 39% were completed by males
- 42% reside in the BB5 postal area
- 13% reside in the BB1 postal area
- 5% reside in the BB6 postal area
- 35% did not indicate a postal area of residence

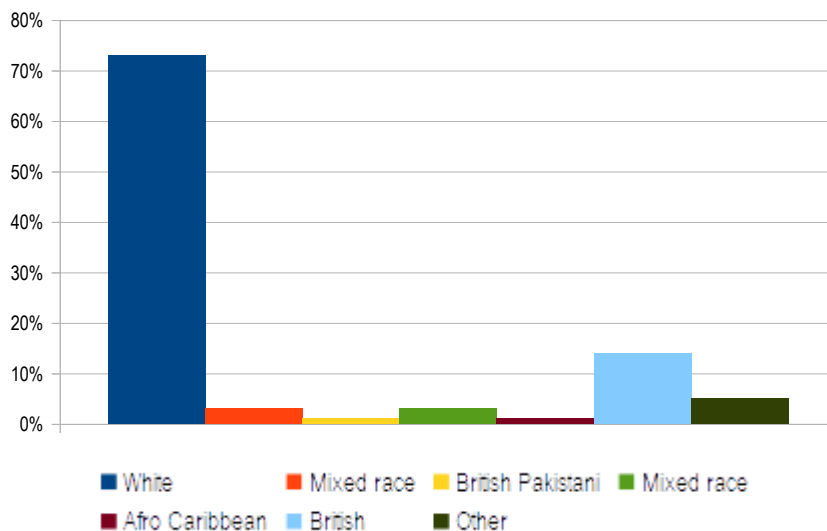
Employment status

- 49% stated they were volunteers
- 36% stated they were unemployed
- 13% stated they were employed
- 1% stated they were parents

6.5 Ethnicity of Respondents

Graph 1 highlights the ethnicity of respondents

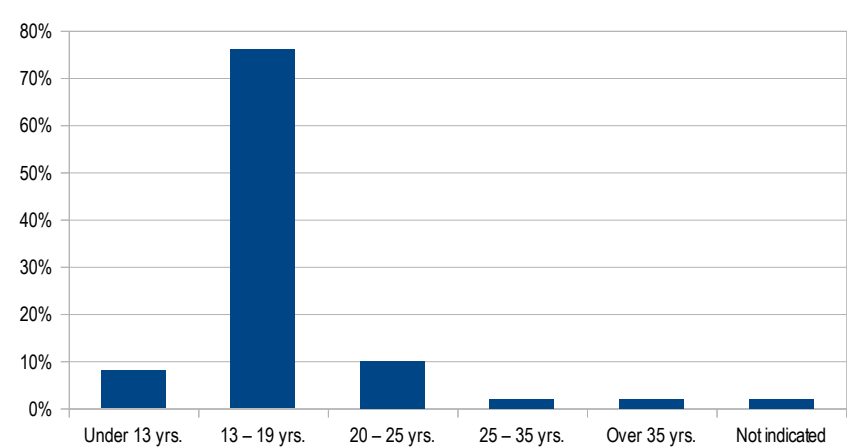
Graph 1 Ethnicity of Respondents



6.6 Age Profile of Respondents

Graph 2 highlights the age profile of respondents

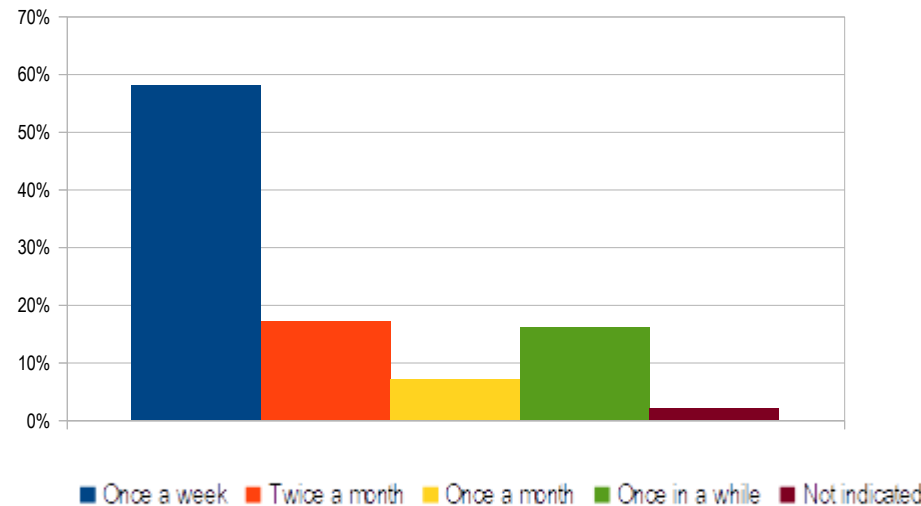
Graph 2 Age Profile of Respondents



6.7 Frequency of use of Services

Graph 3 highlights how often respondents get involved in Ynot Aspire activities

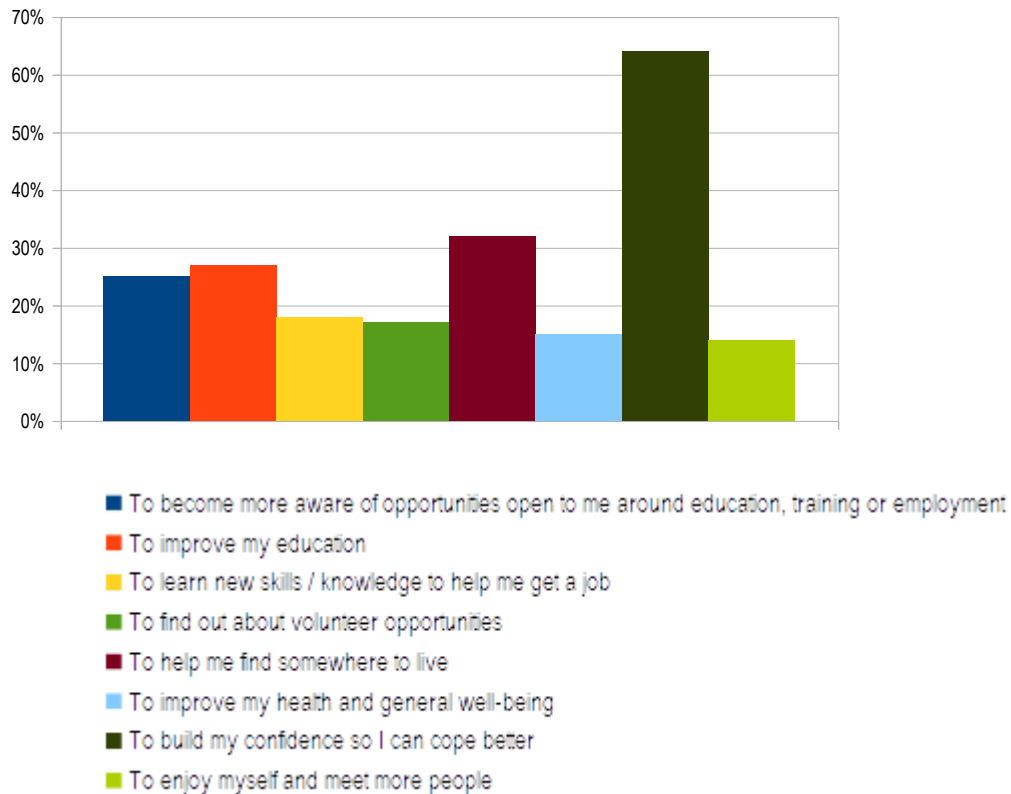
Graph 3 ‘How often do you get involved in Ynot Activities’



6.8 Reasons for Utilising Ynot Aspire Services

Graph 4 highlights reasons why respondents become involved with Ynot Aspire.

Graph 4 *'Why do you become involved with Ynot Aspire?'*



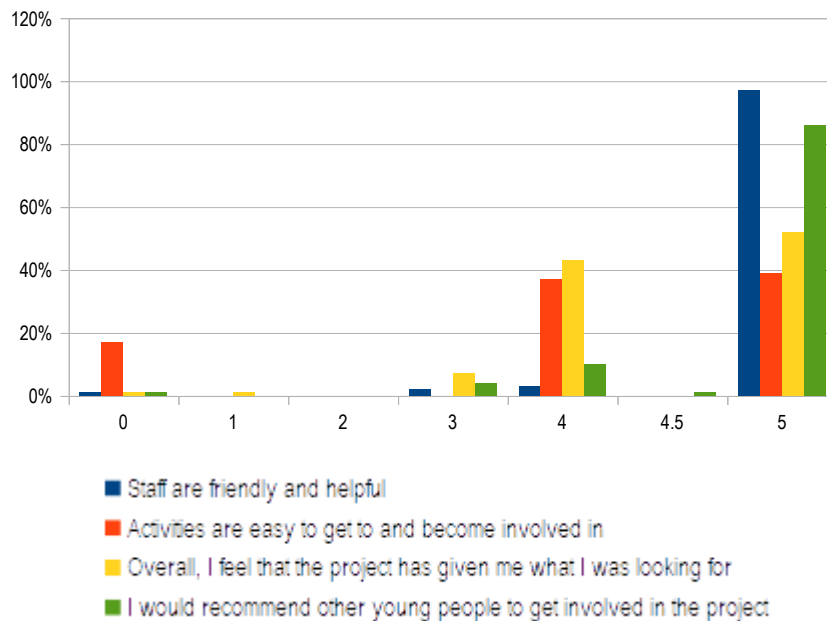
Other reasons include:

- [My] Behaviour - x10
- [Availability of] Drop Ins - x10
- Anger issues - x5
- Anxiety / Depression – x5
- Mental health - x4
- ACHD - x3
- [Access to] Mental Health Ambassador – x2
- Drug misuse
- Advice for son

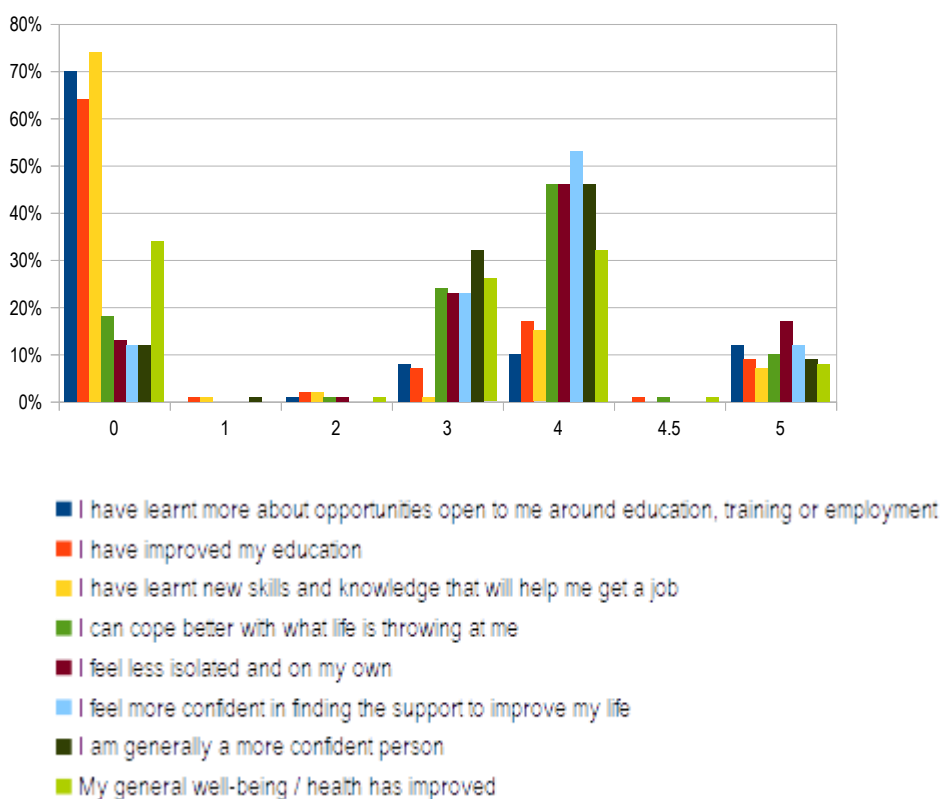
6.9 Views about Ynot Aspire

Graphs 5 & 6 highlight respondents' views about Ynot Aspire.

Graph 5 'What do you think about the following regarding Ynot Aspire?'



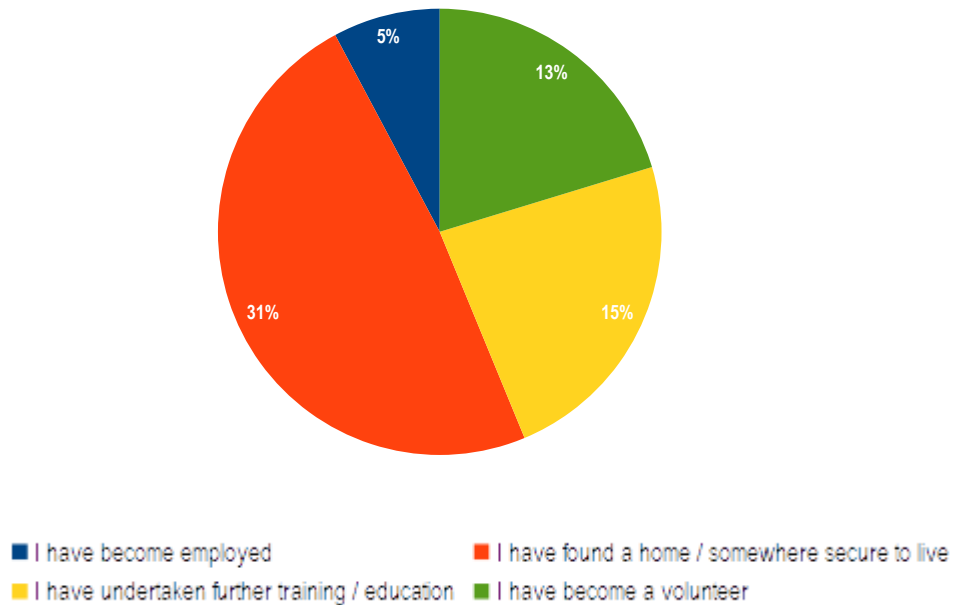
Graph 6 'What are your views about the following?'



6.10 Outcomes

Graph 7 highlights respondents' personal outcomes as a result of being supported by the Project.

Graph 7 Outcomes as a result of being supported by the Project



6.11 What is 'Good' about Ynot Aspire?

The following is a summary of what respondents' feel is especially 'good' about the Project.

- *Nice people to talk to* – x **52**
- *Helpful / knowledgeable supporting staff* – x **42**
- *Support for my feelings / mental health issues* – x **11**
- *Staff are easy to talk to, they listen and don't judge* – x **37**
- *Staff reliable / always there / don't judge, or let you down* – x **17**
- *Support with family / relationships / housing issues* – x **12**

6.12 How the Project could be Improved Further

- *More of the same please* – x **16**
- *Even stronger links with schools / outside school day* – x **5**
- *Advertise more* – x **2**

6.13 Partner Agency Questionnaire Findings

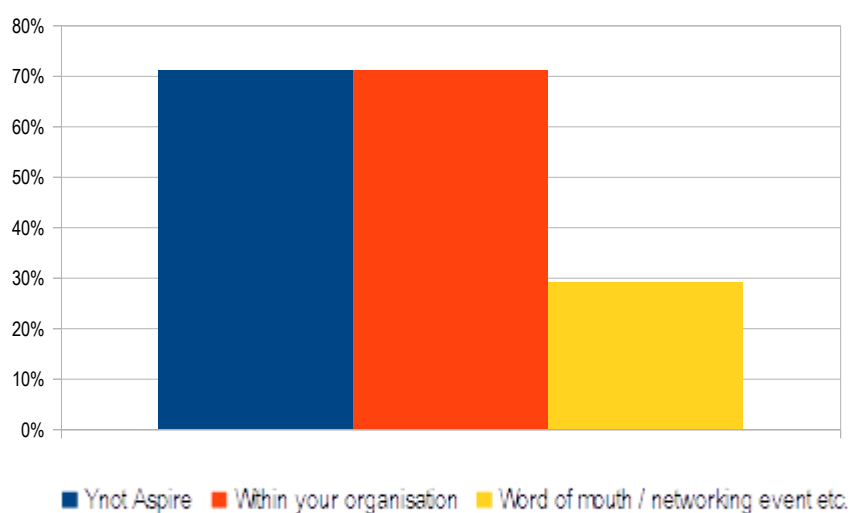
7 questionnaires have been received from representatives from the following, all of whom refer / receive referrals, or encourage young people to become involved in the Ynot Aspire Project.

| Organisation | Job Title |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Stepping Stones Projects | Service Coordinator |
| Accrington Academy | Head of Year |
| The Hyndburn Academy | Assistant Head Teacher |
| Hyndburn Leisure | CEO |
| St Pauls Primary School | Pupil Support Worker |
| Hyndburn Borough Council. Housing Advice Team | Housing Advice & Homelessness |
| Richmond Medical, Hyndburn Central Primary Care Network | GP, PCN Clinical Director |

6.14 Awareness about Ynot Aspire

Graph 8 highlights where respondents' heard about the Ynot Aspire Project.

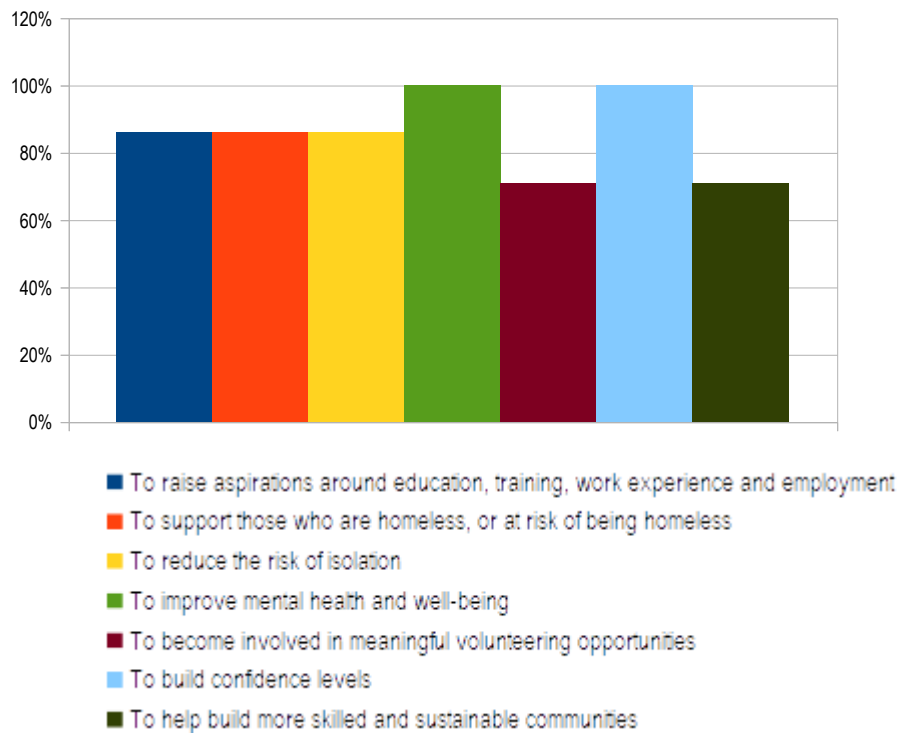
Graph 8 'Where did you hear about the Ynot Aspire Project?'



6.15 Reasons for Encouraging Young People to Get Involved in the Project

Graph 9 highlights reasons why respondents' encourage young people in their care to get involved in the Project.

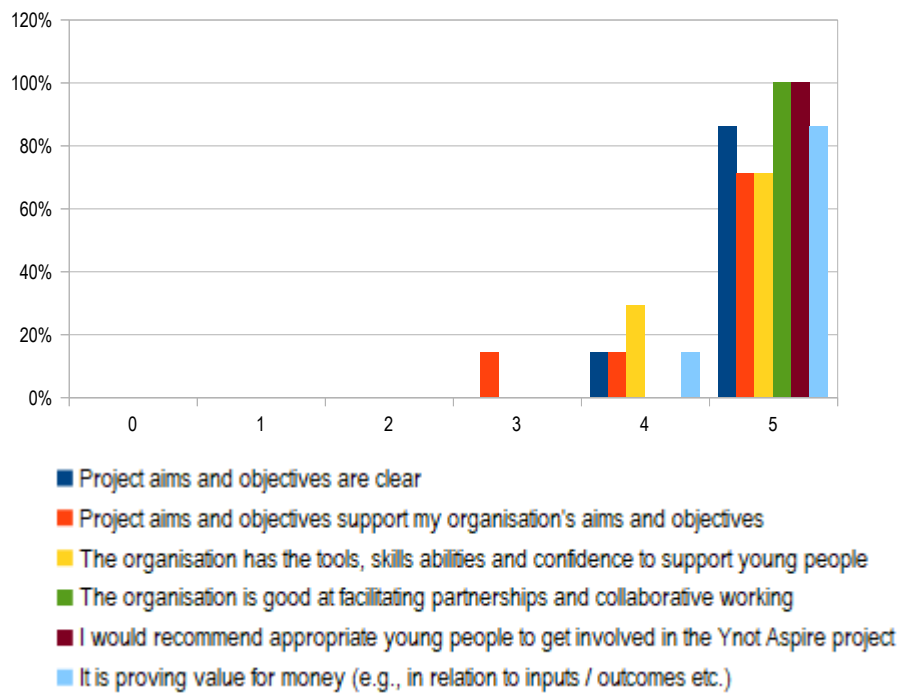
Graph 9 *'Why do you / would you encourage young people to get involved in the Ynot Aspire project?'*
(Please tick all that apply)



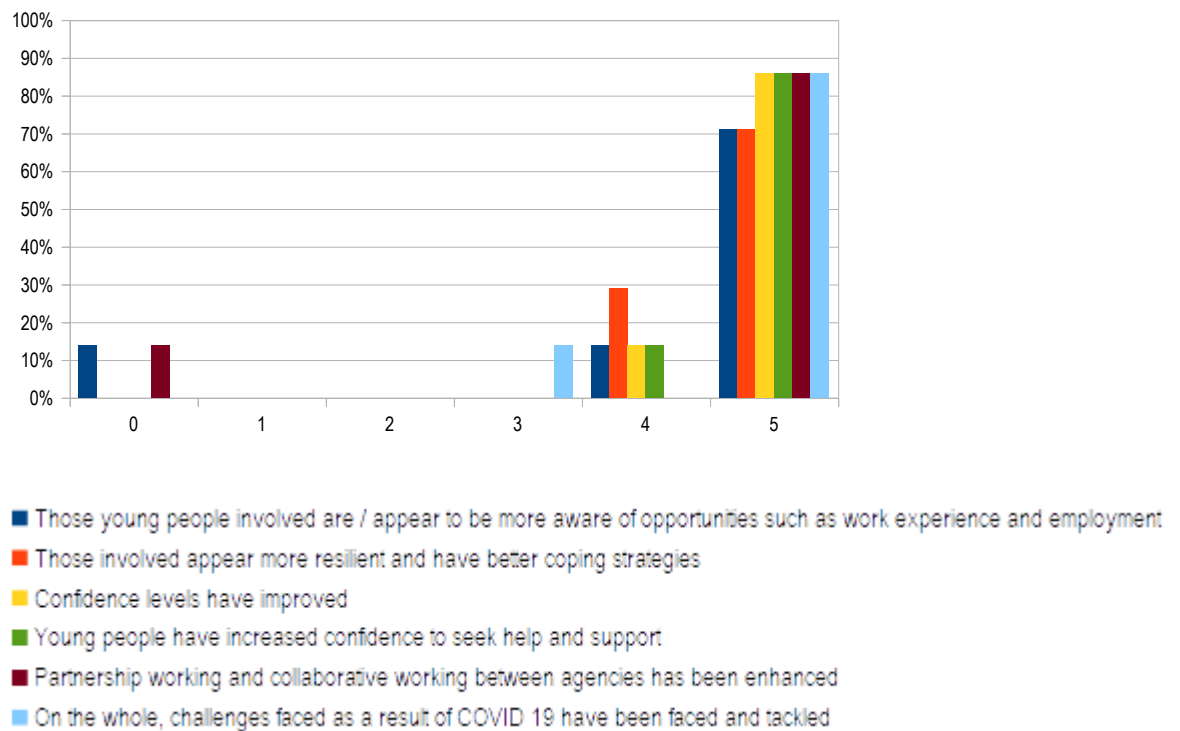
6.16 Views about Ynot Aspire

Graphs 10 & 11 highlight respondents' views about Ynot Aspire.

Graph 10 'What are our views about the following regarding the Ynot Aspire project?'



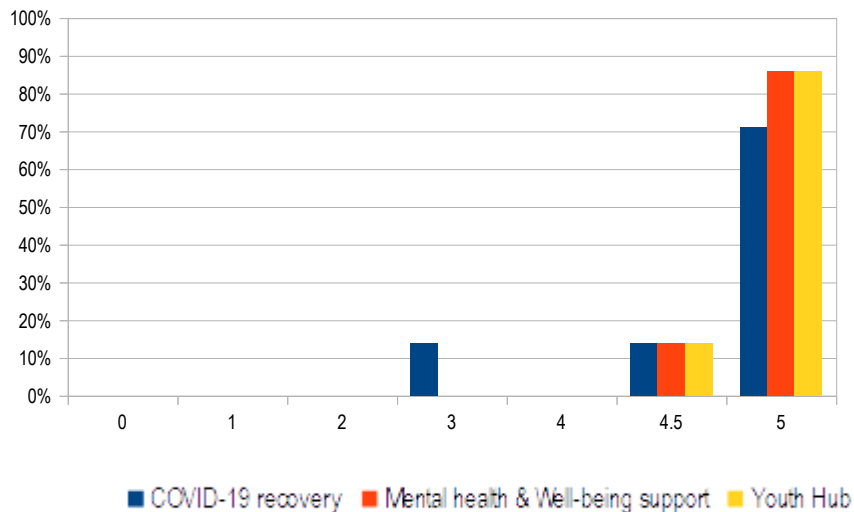
Graph 11 'What are your views about the following? As a result of the Ynot Aspire project'



6.17 Post COVID-19 Strategies

Graph 12 highlights respondents' views about post COVID-19 multi-agency strategies.

Graph 12 'How important is it for the following services for young people to be delivered?'



Other

- *Well-being panel, CHARM event, on-line support – all these services that Ynot Aspire offer are so important to both young people and the professionals supporting them, they share information among agencies and ensure that up to date guidance is made available on a regular basis - Ella O'Neill, Service Coordinator, Stepping Stones Projects*
- *Future Aspirations - Denis Aldridge-Priestley, Housing Advice & Homelessness*

6.18 Additional Comments

'I am always proud to have the opportunity to work with Ynot Aspire, they have an amazing culture where everyone who has had experience of receiving support from them is able to do so without judgement, prejudice and stigma. Their way of working breaks down barriers and ensures inclusiveness at every level of intervention and their project is pivotal to young people in Hyndburn having the access to services that they need. Ynot Aspire work tirelessly to bring providers together and always go above and beyond to ensure that the needs of the young people are met in an appropriate way, they are approachable, accessible and dynamic in their offer, changing this to meet the current demand and listening to feedback to improve their services.'

*I absolutely cannot stress what a precious service they offer and cannot speak highly enough about the brilliant work they do, without them, there is a huge gap in services for young people in Hyndburn – Thank you for everything you currently do and continue to do'. **Ella O'Neill**, Service Coordinator, Stepping Stones Projects*

*'Ynot Aspire has been an invaluable resource for us as a Secondary School in the area of Hyndburn, due to lots of agencies that used to have access to no longer existing, Ynot Aspire has very much filled gaps in many areas where they can, they are also a great source of support in finding the most suitable support out there for our students. They have helped raise aspirations in students, empowered them to become better individuals, worked with students to train them in supporting others, boosted their self-esteem and been a source of support and guidance offering both mentoring services and drop-in services for that personal 1:1 support. If Ynot Aspire had not been there for us to access, I very much feel that our students would be poorer without their expert knowledge, experience, understanding and care. I truly hope that their service is not one we would have to face a future without'. **Kelly Irvine**, Head of Year, Accrington Academy*

*'I have worked with Ynot Aspire for a number of years now, they are always forward thinking with the young people at the heart of any support they feel needs putting in place. They work tirelessly with schools and the community and become part of your school. I enjoy working with them and I know our students benefit greatly' **Lisa Braysford**, Assistant Head Teacher, The Hyndburn Academy*

*'Ynot Aspire are seen locally as the 'go-to' organisation for young people's services. They have a flexible, can do attitude and are a well trusted organisation who deliver great outcomes for young people'. **Lyndsey Sims**, CEO, Hyndburn Leisure*

'In my role as a primary school Pupil Support Worker, it is vital I have lots of organisations in my 'toolbox' of resources. Ynot Aspire are one of those invaluable tools. I attend the monthly meetings which not only give an opportunity to seek support for individual cases but also provides a forum for multi-agency networking. Ynot Aspire also provides the training and support for our team of Year 6 Well-being Ambassadors that are now well established in our school.

*Ynot Aspire are a dedicated team of professionals who provide a personable and caring support service for the children and young people in our area'. **Gary Fielding**, Pupil Support Worker, St Pauls Primary School*

*'Hyndburn Borough Council part fund a post at Ynot to deal with young people who are at risk of homelessness and to offer them in partnership with the Council and supported housing projects options and resolutions to the prospect of homelessness. Since we have funded the post there have been a number of people in this particular post. The current post holder has exceeded all our expectations for us in the post and has proved beyond doubt she is an excellent candidate for the job'. **Denis Aldridge-Priestley**, Housing Advice & Homelessness, Hyndburn Borough Council. Housing Advice Team*

*'Ynot Aspire have been an invaluable resource in drawing together resources to help children and young people in a very deprived community, where NHS mental health services are entirely inadequate for their needs, and in bringing together schools, the voluntary sector and local GP practices to better serve the community'. **Dr Fiona Ford**, GP, PCN Clinical Director, Richmond Medical, Hyndburn Central Primary Care Network*

7.0 Ynot Aspire Board / Business Planning

7.1 Introduction

As highlighted in the Wider Impact, March 2018, *Business Planning Progress* report, as a direct result of Big Lottery *Building Communities* funding, the organisation has achieved impressive outcomes that include:

- A successful 360 degree review of the organisation
- An independent skills analysis / review of the Board's skills and experience
- Bespoke training for Board members
- A recruitment campaign for new Board members in areas associated with **Finance, HR and Legal Services**
- The Chief Officer taking part in an independent Belbin skills review
- Bespoke training / support for the Chief Officer in areas associated with **consortia working, fundraising and bid / tender writing**
- A local multi-agency agreement for the development and delivery of **consortia working**, which will result in Ynot Aspire becoming less reliant on ever scarce grant funding
- Built on the front line team – see <https://ynotaspire.org.uk/who-we-are/ynot-staff/>
- A marketing campaign, which includes a logo rebrand and a new / bespoke website

7.2 On-going Business Planning

Building on new skills the Board / the organisation has:

- Delivered an innovative Business Plan – see https://issuu.com/smithdavispress/docs/ynot_aspire_business_plan_spring_20
- Created an innovative new website – see <https://ynotaspire.org.uk/>

Ongoing priorities include:

- Resource analysis
- Funding applications

7.3 Board Review

As will be noted at Appendices **B, C & D** it is encouraging to note that the CEO, Chair and Treasurer all report positive reports about the structure and effectiveness of the Board.

8.0 Summary of Findings

8.1 Introduction

Based on research findings, the following is a summary of:

- How successful the organisation has been in achieving aims and objective agreed with the Big Lottery Fund
- Progress made by the organisation as a result of Reaching Communities funding

8.2 Aims and Objectives

There can be no doubt that aims and objectives agreed with the principal funder have been achieved and in a number of cases surpassed. Linked to Project Outcomes highlighted at **Section 2.1**, **Table 8** outlines evidence of achievements to date.

Table 8 Evidence of Achievement of Project Aims and Objectives (See Section 5.3)

| Outcome | Evidence |
|---------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 4.2 – Projects and initiatives on offer to young people ○ Section 5.2 – activities on offer ○ Section 5.3 – Performance indicator 1.a. 371 young people supported / 1.b. 165 young people supported ○ Section 6.2 – Case studies ○ Section 6.3 – Alice, Longevity study ○ Section 6.4– Client survey results – see graphs / feedback ○ Section 6.13 - Partner agency members' questionnaire see graphs / feedback |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 4.2 – Projects and initiatives on offer to young people ○ Section 5.2 – activities on offer ○ Section 5.3 – Performance indicator 2.a. 70 young people supported into secure accommodation ○ Section 6.2 – Case studies ○ Section 6.4– Client survey results – see graphs / feedback ○ Section 6.14 - Partner agency members' questionnaire see graphs / feedback |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 4.2 – Projects and initiatives on offer to young people ○ Section 5.2 – activities on offer ○ Section 5.3 – Performance indicator 3.a 1232 young people reporting having better coping strategies / 3.b. 395 young people reporting feeling less isolated and more confident to access other support services / 3149 young people having raised awareness of positive mental health and where to go to access help and advice ○ Section 6.2 – Case studies ○ Section 6.4– Client survey results – see graphs / feedback ○ Section 6.14 - Partner agency members' questionnaire see graphs / feedback |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 5.3 – Performance indicator 4.a. 103 volunteers recruited and trained / 458 reporting increased confidence ○ Section 6.2 – Case study 4 Laila |

| | |
|---|--|
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 7.0 – Ynot Aspire Board / Business Planning ○ Appendices B, C & D |
|---|--|

8.3 ‘An Amazing Project’

There is certainly value in highlighting examples of the large number of quotes enthusiastically provided by those interviewed:

‘I remember the first day I attended. I was so nervous. But there was no need. It was immediately apparent that those running it were caring, considerate and kind. They were in no rush, and seemed to understand my fears and took a lot of time to settle us all down and get to know each other. The other pupils were just as nice. We seemed to bond quite quickly and I almost instantly knew I had made the right move in attending.’ **Case Study 1 Tilly**

Can you summarise the support you received from Ynot Aspire? - *‘I got from them was what I needed. They gave me emotional boundaries. I knew I had a base with them no matter what and I don’t know why but I listened to them as they didn’t talk to me like I was nothing and it was all my fault that I was in the situation I was. The constant nagging (I mean that in the nicest way) was them letting me know that they actually believed in me’.* **Case Study 2 Alisha**

Asked to summarise how she feels about Nikki (Ynot Support Worker) she says, *‘She is always there for me and never lets me down. She understands me and what is going on in my life. Without her support I would be lonely and probably not safe. She is fun and she makes me feel good about myself. I don’t feel so lonely now’.* **Case Study 3 Shayle**

Asked how valuable her work is to young people and the wider community she says, *‘Extremely. Without appropriate support many more young people will enter the criminal justice system and begin that long and horrible slide into depravity and ‘no hope’. They will have children and they will likewise have less chances in life. At the moment, as a direct result of COVID-19 ‘lockdowns’ it is clear that local gangs are targeting vulnerable, lonely young people to feed County Lines’.* **Case Study 4 Laila Ynot Volunteer Support Worker**

*'It still seems incredible that I didn't end up in prison or with a string of criminal convictions. It is clear to me now that I wouldn't have this job if either had happened. When you're young and daft you just don't appreciate that. I have so much to thank Sarah and Paula for and all those at Ynot. They just don't let go of you. They are always there if you need them. Either for a quick chat or to help you sort your mind out if you could risk getting in a bad place. **Without them I would be dead or in jail now.***

'Thank you for saving my life'. And thank you to the Big Lottery for helping them to help people like me'. Alice, Longevity Case Study

Partner Agency Members

'I am always proud to have the opportunity to work with Ynot Aspire, they have an amazing culture where everyone who has had experience of receiving support from them is able to do so without judgement, prejudice and stigma. Their way of working breaks down barriers and ensures inclusiveness at every level of intervention and their project is pivotal to young people in Hyndburn having the access to services that they need'. Ella O'Neill, Service Coordinator,

Stepping Stones Projects

'Ynot Aspire has been an invaluable resource for us as a Secondary School in the area of Hyndburn, due to lots of agencies that used to have access to no longer existing, YNOT Aspire has very much filled gaps in many areas where they can, they are also a great source of support in finding the most suitable support out there for our students. They have helped raise aspirations in students, empowered them to become better individuals, worked with students to train them in supporting others, boosted their self-esteem and been a source of support and guidance offering both mentoring services and drop-in services for that personal 1:1 support.'

Kelly Irvine, Head of Year, Accrington Academy

'Ynot Aspire are seen locally as the 'go-to' organisation for young people's services. They have a flexible, can do attitude and are a well trusted organisation who deliver great outcomes for young people'. Lyndsey Sims, CEO, Hyndburn Leisure

'Ynot Aspire have been an invaluable resource in drawing together resources to help children and young people in a very deprived community, where NHS mental health services are entirely inadequate for their needs, and in bringing together schools, the voluntary sector and local GP practices to better serve the community'. Dr Fiona Ford, GP, PCN Clinical Director,

Richmond Medical, Hyndburn Central Primary Care Network

8.4 Progress Made by the Organisation as a Result of Reaching Communities Funding

As outlined at **Section 7.0** impressive progress has been as a direct result of Big Lottery *Building Communities* funding. This is supported by the impressive outcomes highlighted at **Sections 7.1** and **7.2**.

Due note should also be taken on how the organisation has adapted to the unforeseen challenges the world has faced by the COVID-19 pandemic. As highlighted at **Section 3.7** the organisation has / is delivering a significant number of additional and adapted projects and initiatives, which are clearly impressive examples of adaptability and innovation (see **Section 8.5**).

8.5 Good Practice

In no particular order, the following 'good practice' is noted:

- The professionalism and dedication of all those involved in the development and delivery of the Project / Ynot Aspire, which includes Board members, staff / volunteers, beneficiaries, partner agency members and the principal funder, the Big Lottery
- The manner in which the organisation continues to relate to beneficiaries, which included compassion, trust, 'tough love', honesty, reliability and patience
- Multi-agency partnership / consortia working, with the organisation regularly taking on a lead role
- The innovation and adaptability of the organisation to meet [significant] challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic
- Multi-agency strategic planning, with an ever watchful eye on funding the organisation continues to seek ways to deliver what is needed for its local community

8.6 Social Returns on Investment (SROI)

Whilst not an exact science, it will be useful to have some understanding of the financial impacts this Big Lottery funded Project. For example:

- **371 vulnerable young people** have had their aspirations raised through the delivery of opportunities around education, training, work experience and employment (**Outcome 1**). The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence estimates that the lifetime costs to education and the criminal justice system range for such vulnerable people from **£23,800** to **£104,900** per young child.

- Based on the lower figure, this Project could have a local SROI of **£8.8m** for the above 371 young people supported.
- Based on the higher figure the higher figure the SROI could be as high as **£52.2m**.
- In relation to **homelessness (Outcome 2)**, research presented by Crisis estimates that the social costs of a rough sleeper over 12 months is around **£20,128**. Based on such as assumption and with the Project directly supporting some **70** young people away from homelessness, it could be reasonable to assume the Project is demonstrating a local SROI of around **£1.4m**

8.7 Future Developments

As highlighted at **Section 3.8** there is clearly an ongoing 'need' for the organisation, with future plans being highlighted at **Section 3.9**. Such 'need' has certainly been exacerbated by challenges such as post **COVID-19** and concerning issues linked to **drug abuse / supply** – in particular challenges linked to '**County Lines**' (see **Section 6.2, Case Study 4**).

Based on such and linked to **Section 3.9 (Future Plans)**, it is apparent from ongoing consultation by the organisation that there are still gaps in services around work with **young homeless people** and also **young people's mental health services**. It is therefore apparent that the organisation is right to shift its focus to help to address these gaps in service and ensure that they are not duplicating work already being done in the area. Such is noticeably supported by partner agency members (see **Section 6.18 – Post COVID-19 Strategies**).

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

Based on research findings the following recommendations are tendered:

1. Those responsible for the development and delivery of this Big Lottery funded Project should be congratulated for their hard work, diligence and professionalism.
2. With an emphasis on homelessness and young peoples' mental health, contact with the Big Lottery (and other funders) should be maintained with an objective to explore and ideally agree significant on-going funding beyond the life of this Project.
3. With a focus on young people, the development and delivery of innovative and effective multi-agency partnership and consortia working should be continued.
4. The contents of this report should be distributed to other organisations / multi-agency partnerships with an aim of sharing examples of innovative youth led partnership working and excellent examples of 'best practice'.

Appendix A

Case Study Alice

Name / certain details changed to ensure the anonymity.

Case Study 1 Alice

Alice is 22 years of age and local to the area where the Project operates. She is currently unemployed and lives with her mum and her 'fella'.

She left school at 16 years with 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades B to U. She never really enjoyed school and says *'I messed about a lot. I didn't like rules and messed about with friends on the streets'*.

She started using drugs such as cannabis, cocaine and pills from the age of 14 or 15 years.

In her words, *'I messed about a lot and came to the notice of the police regularly as a missing person, being drunk and disorderly, shoplifting and for being violent. I just didn't give a shit and felt that no one was on my side. I was spending £60 or so a week on drugs and drink and often got the money off my mum, who I never got on with'*.

Despite 'sailing close to the wind' she has no criminal convictions, although she received a number of warnings from the police.

She acknowledges, *'I had anger management issues and was so argumentative and unhappy'*.

It is apparent that things changed dramatically for Alice when she became involved in the Ynot Project. She says, *'A local police officer referred me to Sharon from the Project and they took an interest in me. At first I thought 'way a load of bollocks' and thought they were 'idiots', but Sharon and others on the Project never gave up on me. I just didn't know how to take her, as someone taking me for who I am and taking an interest in ME was a strange concept for me. She talked to me lots and listened – which was new to me. She seemed to 'get me' and after a while I trusted her and others on the Project'*.

After a while they encouraged me to become involved in drama and I have really enjoyed it. I never thought I would, but it was an amazing thing for me. Besides it being 'fun', it has taught me that there is another world out there. I have met new people and gained so much confidence. They threw me in the deep end and I had to act in a show – ME!!! Amazing!

I have written some poems and learnt stuff about myself I didn't know. I can sing and can have happy thoughts in my head. My confidence is based on achievements, and I know I can do things that I want to do'.

What has changed about you? *'I was a little shit before I got involved in the Project and I was heading for a serious fall. I suppose I had ADHD and was not a nice person to get involved in. I am off the drugs now – in fact I no longer know where to get them from as I have lost touch with the dealers. I have lots more confidence now, and like being ME more. I no longer get so angry, and know I am a nicer person the get on with.'*

What is the key? *'I suppose it is Sharon and others involved in the Project. Sharon has been a mentor to me and knows how to handle me when I go off on one. She never gives up and has faith in me, which I am gaining for myself now. The Project has given me the opportunity to seek and find the help I need when I need. I have been given the opportunity to become involved in activities such as drama and meet new people.'*

What is the future? *'I would like to stay involved with the Project and Sharon, as it is important for me to have someone there when things get tough. I am looking at College and want to start my education again, and am considering child care or the performing arts.'*

Thanks to Sharon and all those involved in the Project I feel I have a future and am determined to make something of myself. It's ME time!

Appendix B

Ynot Aspire Board Skills Analysis (April 2021)

Section 1

Name **Sharon Burch**

Period as a member of the Ynot Aspire Board: Founder

Roles / Functions held: **Chief Officer**

Section 2

Overall on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 low; 5 high) how do you rate the skills / experience / competencies of the Ynot Aspire Board as a whole in the following areas?

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The 3 rd Sector (Voluntary & Community Sector) generally | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Finance – rules regulations | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Financial analysis | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Third Sector funding opportunities | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Employment - law / regulations | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Health & Safety / Safeguarding | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Performance management / Appraising staff | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Ability to question and challenge | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Problem solving | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Managing change | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Strategic Planning | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The performance of Ynot Aspire | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The challenges and opportunities currently being faced by Ynot Aspire | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Additional Comments:

With a majority of the Board still relatively new and the loss of Chair last year, there are still areas of development needed

Appendix C

Ynot Aspire Board Skills Analysis (April 2021)

Section 1

Name **Paul Beaks**

Period as a member of the Ynot Aspire Board: 2 years

Roles / Functions held: **Chairman**

Section 2

Overall on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 low; 5 high) how do you rate the skills / experience / competencies of the Ynot Aspire Board as a whole in the following areas?

| | |
|---|---|
| The 3 rd Sector (Voluntary & Community Sector) generally | 5 |
| Finance – rules regulations | 5 |
| Financial analysis | 3 |
| Third Sector funding opportunities | 3 |
| Employment - law / regulations | 5 |
| Health & Safety / Safeguarding | 5 |
| Performance management / Appraising staff | 5 |
| Ability to question and challenge | 5 |
| Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively | 5 |
| Problem solving | 5 |
| Managing change | 5 |
| Strategic Planning | 5 |
| The performance of Ynot Aspire | 5 |
| The challenges and opportunities currently being faced by Ynot Aspire | 5 |

Additional Comments:

Appendix D

Ynot Aspire Board Skills Analysis (April 2021)

Section 1

Name **Gill Cookson**

Period as a member of the Ynot Aspire Board: 4 years

Roles / Functions held: **Treasurer**

Section 2

Overall on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 low; 5 high) how do you rate the skills / experience / competencies of the Ynot Aspire Board as a whole in the following areas?

The 3rd Sector (Voluntary & Community Sector) generally

Finance – rules regulations 4

Financial analysis 3

Third Sector funding opportunities 4

Employment - law / regulations 3

Health & Safety / Safeguarding 4

Performance management / Appraising staff 4

Ability to question and challenge 4

Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively 4

Problem solving 4

Managing change 4

Strategic Planning 3

The performance of Ynot Aspire 4

The challenges and opportunities currently being faced by Ynot Aspire 4

Additional Comments:

Appendix E



PRIZE DRAW – WIN £25.00

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short questionnaire, which will be used to independently evaluate the Big Lottery funded **Ynot Aspire project**.

Personal Information

Name Contact Phone No.

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Ethnicity

Age Postcode Email

Are you: Student ☐ Employed ☐ Volunteer ☐ Other ☐

Other (Please state):

Section 1 – Use of the Project

On average, how often do you get involved in Ynot activities?

Once a week ☐ Twice a month ☐ Once a month ☐ Once in a while ☐

Why do you become involved with Ynot Aspire? (please tick **all** that apply)

To become more aware of opportunities open to me around education, training or employment ☐

To improve my education ☐

To learn new skills / knowledge to help me get a job ☐

To find out about volunteer opportunities ☐

To help me find somewhere to live ☐

To improve my health and general well-being ☐

To build my confidence so I can cope better ☐

To enjoy myself and meet more people ☐

Other (please state) **Please trn over**

Section 2 – What do you think about the following regarding Ynot Aspire?

(1 – low; 5 – high; 0 – no views)

Staff are friendly and helpful 0 1 2 3 4 5

Activities are easy to get to and become involved in 0 1 2 3 4 5

Overall I feel that the project has given me what I was looking for 0 1 2 3 4 5

I would recommend other young people to get involved in the project 0 1 2 3 4 5

What are your views about the following? As a result of your involvement with Ynot Aspire:

(1 – low; 5 – high; 0 – no views)

I have learnt more about opportunities open to me around education, training or employment 0 1 2 3 4 5

I have improved my education 0 1 2 3 4 5

I have learnt new skills and knowledge that will help me get a job 0 1 2 3 4 5

I can cope better with what life is throwing at me 0 1 2 3 4 5

I feel less isolated and on my own 0 1 2 3 4 5

I feel more confident in finding the support I need to improve my life 0 1 2 3 4 5

I am generally a more confident person 0 1 2 3 4 5

My general well-being / health has improved 0 1 2 3 4 5

More about YOU. As a result of Ynot Aspire (please circle as appropriate):*I have become employed* **Yes / No**; *I have found a home / somewhere secure to live* **Yes / No**;*I have undertaken further training / education* **Yes / No**; *I have become a volunteer* **Yes / No****Section 3 – What 3 things are really GOOD about Ynot Aspire?**

1.

2.

3.

Section 4 (If appropriate) How do you feel Ynot could be improved?**Anything else you wish to add?** (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary)

Appendix F



Thank you for taking the time to complete this short questionnaire, which will be used to independently evaluate the Big Lottery funded **Ynot Aspire project**.

Personal Information

Name

Organisation

Job Title

Email Phone

Where did you hear about the Ynot Aspire project? (please tick **all** that apply)

Ynot Aspire ☐ Within your organisation ☐ Word of mouth / networking event etc. ☐

Other (Please state)

Section 1 – Links with Ynot Aspire

Does your organisation refer / receive referrals / encourage young people to become involved in the Ynot Aspire project? (Please tick **all** that apply)

Yes ☐ No ☐ Would consider ☐

Why do you / would you encourage young people to get involved in the Ynot Aspire project? (Please tick **all** that apply)

To raise aspirations around education, training, work experience and employment ☐

To support those who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless ☐

To reduce risks of social isolation ☐

To improve mental health and well-being ☐

To become involved in meaningful volunteering opportunities ☐

To build confidence levels ☐

To help to build more skilled and sustainable communities ☐

Other (please state) **Please turn over**

Section 2 – What are your views about the following regarding the Ynot Aspire project?

(1 – low; 5 – high; 0 – no views)

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Project aims and objectives are clear | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Project aims and objectives support my organisation's aims and objectives | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The organisation has the tools, skills, abilities and confidence to support young people in this area | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The organisation is good at facilitating partnerships and collaborative working | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I would recommend appropriate young people to get involved in the Ynot Aspire project | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| It is proving value for money (e.g. in relation to inputs / outcomes etc.) | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

What are your views about the following? As a result of the Ynot Aspire project:

(1 – low; 5 – high; 0 – no views)

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Those young people involved are / appear to be more aware of opportunities such as training, work experience and employment | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Those involved appear more resilient and have better coping strategies | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Confidence levels have improved | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Young people have increased confidence to seek help and support | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Partnership working and collaborative working between agencies has been enhanced | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| On the whole, challenges faced as a result of COVID-19 have been faced and tackled | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |

Section 3 – How important is it for the following services for young people to be developed in this area:

(1 – low; 5 – high; 0 – no views)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| COVID-19 recovery | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Mental health & Well-being support | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Youth Hub | 0 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Other (please state) | |
| | |

Anything else you wish to add? (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary)

widerimpact

Independent Analysis. Strategic Reviews

Wider Impact Consultancy Limited
Newport House
Newport Road, Stafford
ST16 1DA

Phone: 0845 165 0491
Mobile: 07871 179 780
Email: enquiries@widerimpact.com



Scan QR Code to visit website