

# EmpowHER Cohort Four Report

July 2021





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**“I am stronger and braver. EmpowHER has made me more confident to talk in front of groups of people than I was before. I am more likely to do more things out of my comfort zone”**

Young person, Young Gloucestershire



## Executive summary

Launched to mark the centenary of women's suffrage, EmpowHER encourages young women and girls (YW&G) to use their voices for positive change. Led by UK Youth, in partnership with the British Red Cross and Young Women's Trust, EmpowHER is a three-and-a-half year programme addressing the worryingly low levels of wellbeing amongst YW&G in the UK, supporting them to give back to their local communities with inclusive, meaningful social action.

EmpowHER is funded by Spirit of 2012 and the #iwill Fund. The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Culture, Media & Sport have invested £25 million seed funding to create the #iwill Fund, supporting young people to access high quality social action opportunities. Over 1,800 YW&G across England have completed the programme across four cohorts.

## Key findings and conclusion

In Cohort Four, delivered October 2020 to May 2021 through Covid-19, 21 youth organisations across England engaged 710 YW&G with 651 completing. Despite the challenges of Covid-19, the groups delivered 118 social action projects, raising £3,321 for causes of their choice. The YW&G achieved the intended outcomes of EmpowHER, improving their wellbeing, challenging limiting perceptions and building social cohesion. In addition, participants reported the following:

- 83% said that doing social action was a good experience for them.
- 57% felt more comfortable taking the lead in small groups
- 49% reported that they would take part in volunteering fundraising, or campaigning in the next 12 months - an increase from all previous cohorts.



## Programme context and need

### Low wellbeing of YW&G

The poor wellbeing and general low self-esteem of young people is alarming. More than one in five young people report that they have experienced a high level of emotional problems and other emotional difficulties during the last six months (Brooks et al., 2020).

YW&G, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are even more likely to experience poor wellbeing. A 2018 report by the Children's Society found that girls had lower wellbeing and higher depressive symptoms than boys, and are more than twice as likely to self-harm as boys. Furthermore, young people from lower income households had a higher than average risk of self-harming, making YW&G from poorer families a high-risk group.

These findings corroborate those of the Millennium Cohort Study in 2015 (when participants were 14 years old), which showed that girls were significantly less happy than boys with their lives overall, and especially less happy with their appearance. Girls from homes with lower family income were more likely to report poorer mental health and lower wellbeing than their better-off peers (Centre for Longitudinal Studies, 2020).

Public Health England funded research into the wellbeing of adolescent girls in 2017, finding similar results, with girls scoring lower than boys in life satisfaction, and a direct link between life satisfaction and family affluence. The report also identified key mitigating measures, such as having a trusted support network (Brooks et al., 2020).

As well as a greater likelihood of dissatisfaction with their lives, the research shows differences between how dissatisfaction manifests among girls and boys, with girls being more prone to concerns about how they look, a much higher likelihood of self-harming, and a higher likelihood of having (or developing) an eating disorder. A survey carried out by Girlguiding in 2017 points to some potential causes of these discrepancies. Almost all the girls surveyed (95%) said that the advertising industry should show more positive, diverse representations of women. Many felt angry about gender stereotypes in the media and the products sold to them, but despite this awareness many girls internalise these negative messages. More than half of the girls surveyed (55%) said that prevalent gender stereotypes affect their ability to say what they think, and they feel that stepping outside the norm will result in bullying and teasing from their peers. In addition, girls who identify as Black, Asian

or Minority Ethnic, LGBTQ+ or disabled face additional barriers when it comes to feeling safe and confident to be themselves (Girlguiding, 2020).

This issue is not receding and indeed has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Prior to the UK wide lockdown of March 2020, research released by Headstart in February 2020 showed emotional difficulties affecting girls escalate as they move from early to mid-adolescence, on average increasing by 17% between the ages of 11 and 14. During April and May 2020, during the height of government restrictions on socialising, young people reported lower scores on average across personal wellbeing measures and higher scores on feeling lonely (ONS, 2020). Young people are also increasingly concerned about the effect Covid-19 is having on their life, education and work, as well their wellbeing (22%). Young Minds' Covid-19 survey further corroborates the government findings, reporting that for those who already had poor mental health, 80% of respondents said the pandemic had made their mental health worse and 87% had felt lonely or isolated (Young Minds, 2020).

The ample research into the wellbeing of YW&G paints a clear picture:

- Low wellbeing is prevalent among YW&G – especially those from a low socio-economic background.
- YW&G are especially impacted by negative gender stereotypes.
- A trusted support network is important.
- The transitional ages are a key moment for intervention.
- Covid-19 is having a detrimental impact on young people's wellbeing.



Having this foundation of evidence to stand upon, the next question is: what can we do to overcome these challenges and provide opportunities for YW&G to feel happy, supported and valued members of their community?



## Impact of youth social action, youth groups and role models

Evidence suggests that inclusive and meaningful social action opportunities, including volunteering, and the influence of role models can improve the wellbeing of YW&G and inspire them to lead change in their communities. In addition, YW&G point to youth groups as places where they can be themselves, learn new things and build positive and supportive relationships (Girlguiding, 2020).

Volunteering opportunities, social action, and informal education expose girls to an environment in which they can be inspired by their own peers and challenge perceived norms. YW&G want to speak up, and they want to inform decisions that affect their lives (Girlguiding, 2020). They are also inspired by role models who challenge and overcome stereotypes, particularly women in sport, and are increasingly prepared, as they get older, to challenge sexism themselves (Girlguiding, 2017).

### Key Facts

Of 10,000 young people surveyed by NCVO in 2019;

- 77% agreed volunteering had improved their mental health.
- 53% said it had improved their physical health
- 74% said it gave them more confidence
- 84% of 18-24 year olds said it increased their confidence

In a 2015 study into regular weekly volunteering sessions with 13 and 14-year-old girls, Youth United found that self-reported self-confidence and the ability to work in a team both improved (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020). Similarly, a 2016 Cabinet office report shows positive improvements in resilience, problem solving, empathy and community investment among YW&G who participated in social action (Kirkman et al., 2016). Finally, the 2018 National Youth Social Action survey (funded by DCMS) found that volunteering and social action was particularly helpful for YW&G since – once involved – girls are more likely to believe their actions can have an impact on their community (Knibbs et al., 2019).

EmpowHER was created in this context and launched on the centenary of suffrage to address these worrying low levels of wellbeing in YW&G, through the mechanism of social action and delivered in the safe space of a youth group. Its importance has only been reinforced by the impact of Covid-19 on young people and their local communities. Through meaningful and inclusive social action opportunities, YW&G challenge limiting perceptions and are inspired to lead change in their local areas, building community cohesion and supporting their own wellbeing and confidence.

## Programme design and structure

EmpowHER was co-designed with young people to provide activities and learning around individuals' rights, wellbeing, empowerment, and resilience, and create opportunities to lead and design social action projects. The programme is targeted at "unusual suspects" - YW&G with low wellbeing who may have been excluded from social action opportunities due to lack of access or the necessary skills or confidence to engage, between the ages of 10 and 20.

UK Youth leads the programme which is delivered in partnership with the British Red Cross (BRC), and Young Women's Trust (YWT). The three partners bring together their expertise in youth work, social action, campaigning, national programmes, and gender specific advocacy, and work closely on the planning and delivery of EmpowHER across the country.

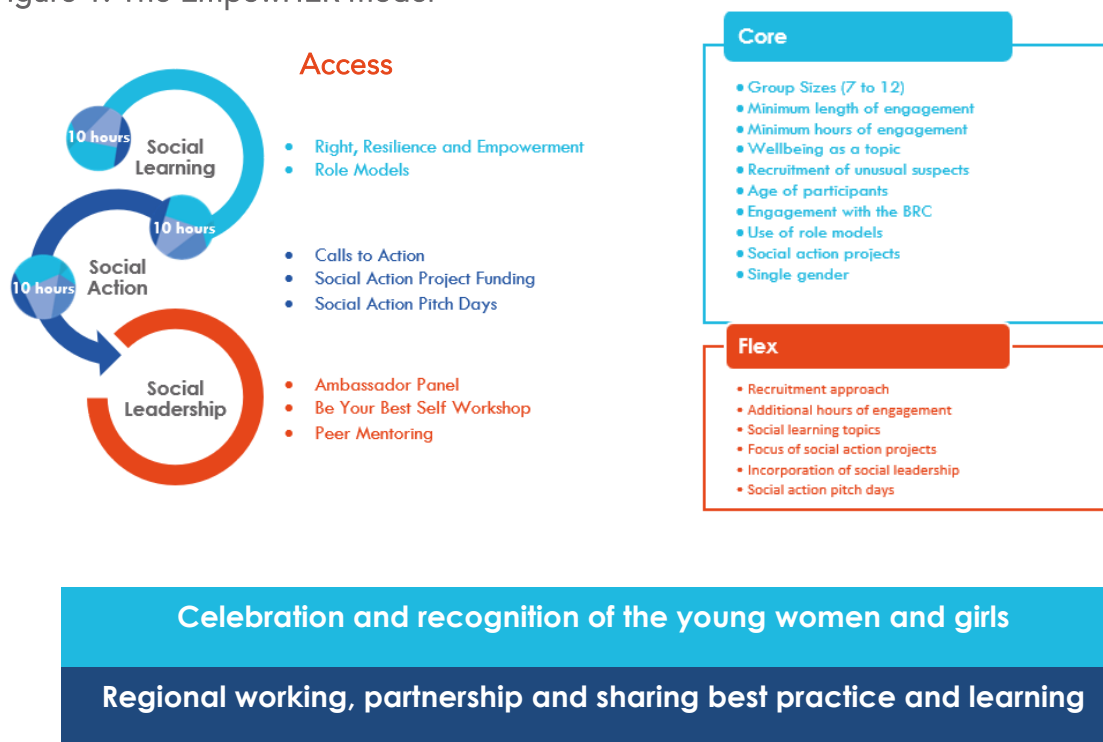
With an open network of over 7,000 youth organisations and nation partners, UK Youth is focused on unlocking youth work as the catalyst of change that is needed now more than ever. From across this network, 21 youth organisations have been recruited as delivery partners and trained on the aims, structure and delivery requirements of EmpowHER. They work closely with UK Youth to flexibly adapt elements of the programme to their local context. The youth organisations and youth workers bring incredible value to the programme through their knowledge and expertise in their local context. They reach and

engage “unusual suspects” and understand how to adapt the programme to meet the different needs of different young people.

The relationships and partnerships between funders, programme partners, delivery partners and young people enable wider sector development and sharing of best practice, particularly around social action, partnership working and a ‘test and learn’ approach.

Over the six months of each cohort, the YW&G meet together with a youth worker in small groups across the South West, West Midlands, North West and East of England for at least 12 weeks and complete a minimum of 30 hours. The programme has three key elements: social learning, facilitated by a youth worker; social action, led by the YW&G; and social leadership, with opportunities for the YW&G to further develop their confidence and lead change. Underpinning these elements are regional working and sharing of best practice and celebrating and recognising YW&G achievements.

Figure 1. The EmpowHER model



## Social learning

Social learning encompasses the emotional and social capabilities we all need throughout life, including becoming self-aware and receptive, motivated and resilient, confident and an effective communicator, and learning how to take personal responsibility. In EmpowHER, social learning enables the development of these emotional and social capabilities through the framework of learning about empowerment, resilience and individual rights.



**Social learning topics** The YW&G and youth workers can decide which of a wide range of topics they want to cover, including but not limited to: **Inspirational Women and Role Models, Body Image and Positivity, Social Media and Technology, Dating, Sexual Health and Relationships, Gender-based Violence and Exploitation, Women in Sports, Politics and Feminism, Destigmatising Periods.**



**Role models** Role models from the BRC network support bringing to life and embedding the social learning by attending sessions and running online events. This gives the YW&G the opportunity to ask questions on specific topics and inspires the transition for the YW&G from learning to action.

## Social action

Social action allows young people to practice life skills gained by learning through doing, volunteering, and engaging in democratic structures. EmpowHER provides the opportunity for young people to fail in a safe environment with the support and guidance that comes with having trusted caring adults and positive peer groups in their life. In EmpowHER, social action is first introduced by the BRC Youth Engagement Workers and then developed through Calls to Action, with the YW&G planning their own social action project, applying for funding and presenting their idea at a Social Action Pitch Day.





**Calls to action** Bitesize activities to help familiarise young people with social action act as a stepping stone towards larger projects.



**Social action project** The EmpowHER groups are supported by their youth worker and the BRC to complete one or multiple projects following the #iwill principles of high quality youth social action: **youth-led, socially impactful, progressive, embedded, reflective and challenging.**



**Social action project funding** UK Youth provides up to £250 in funding for the projects for groups who submit an application stating their aims of the project, targeted beneficiaries and a detailed budget.



**Social action pitch day** The groups have the opportunity to pitch their project ideas in a 'Dragons Den' style pitch to increase their funding from £250 to £400, gaining life skills, practicing their public speaking, and experiencing pitching to a panel for a cause they believe in.



**Social action quality mark** A quality framework moderated by UK Youth to support youth organisations embed youth led social action in their work.

## Social leadership

EmpowHER aims to create lasting change for the YW&G by providing opportunities to progress into social leadership roles; applying their life skills and experiences to access training, employment and other opportunities, find roles in their community and become an empowered and contributing member of society.



**Peer mentoring** This strand of EmpowHER has developed organically over the first two cohorts as YW&G are keen to help their peers and so volunteer to support future groups. The YW&G work with the new groups to build their confidence, explore social learning topics and support with social action projects.



**Be Your Best Self workshop** This workshop is run by YWT and provides an opportunity for the YW&G to think about themselves and reflect on their achievements, both within the EmpowHER project and more widely. By the end of the session, YW&G feel more confident and inspired to continue to make change in their community.



**EmpowHER Ambassadors** YW&G from Cohorts One, Two and Three of EmpowHER who are interested in continuing in youth advocacy, social action or wellbeing can become an EmpowHER Ambassador, elevating the voices of young people in EmpowHER and encouraging regional sharing and collaboration.

## Celebration and recognition of the YW&G

Recognising and celebrating achievement in young people is a key part of cementing learning and can both increase self-esteem and motivation, as well as encourage continued engagement in learning. In EmpowHER, we acknowledge the importance and have built into the programme numerous mechanisms for celebrating success and encouraging reflective practice in the young people.



**Red Award** This award is given to YW&G who complete ten hours of volunteering with the BRC.



**UK Youth Achievement Award (UKYAA)** The UKYAAs formally recognise the learning and work young people are doing. They provide structure, and an accreditation, to the social learning or social action aspect of EmpowHER through

three simple steps: Plan, Do, Review. Through this process, young people gain vital life skills, as well as develop their reflective practice.



**EmpowHER awards** These commend YW&G for exceptional effort or growth in EmpowHER across the categories of Leadership, Courage, Peer Support and a Team Award.



**Celebration events** At the end of each cohort, the YW&G have a chance to meet other EmpowHER participants, celebrate their social action projects, participate in activities, receive their awards and hoodies, and have fun!

## Embedding best practice

Underpinning the EmpowHER model is a strand of the programme that focuses on outcomes for the youth workers and youth organisations; regional working and sharing best practice. This element was present in all three previous cohorts through partnership events and learning events; however, in Cohort Four, the EmpowHER model expanded slightly to test new approaches.



**Workforce development** Youth worker training to address emerging needs such as bereavement, community organising and working with neurodiverse young people.



**Accelerator pilot** This programme aims to support delivery partners to reflect on their learnings from EmpowHER, build and nurture lasting partnerships within their local community, and create a long-term plan, tailored to their regional environment, for embedding the lessons from EmpowHER into their services.





# EMPOWHER



## Cohort four delivery and reach

651

young women and girls  
completed the programme

£3,320

raised from social  
action projects

231

young people at  
celebration event



Coventry Boys and  
Girls Club



Henderson Trust



Uniting Communities  
Organisation



Infobuzz

£15,206

social action project  
funds given to 57 projects

North  
West

43

role models engaged  
with this cohort

West  
Midlands

84

UK Youth Achievement  
Awards moderated

East of  
England

57

funded social  
action projects

118

social action projects  
completed in this cohort

South  
West

12

Be Your Best Self  
workshop attendees

Inspiring young  
women and  
girls to lead  
change

EMPOWHER

Created by

UK YOUTH

In partnership with

BritishRedCross



Funded in partnership by





# EMPOWHER



## Social Action

83%

of respondents said doing social action was a good experience for them

77%

of participants felt that social action helped people in their community

85%

of young women and girls felt that doing social action helped them learn new things



"I would like to get more involved in local and national volunteering, fundraising and campaigning in the future as EmpowHER not only showed me how important it is, but also how fun it can be."

— Young Person

73%

of young women and girls felt like they had someone they feel comfortable talking to about their problems

49%

of young women and girls reported they would likely to take part in volunteering, fundraising, or campaigning in the next 12 months

57%

of young women and girls felt more comfortable taking the lead in small groups on completion of the programme



## Programme delivery and reach

Cohort Four, delivered from October 2020 to May 2021, looked very different than the Cohort Four originally planned by Spirit of 2012, UK Youth, BRC and YWT. First, this was intended to be the smallest cohort, allowing the national and local partners to focus on piloting sustainability projects. Second, it was expected to happen face to face, in a post-pandemic world. Third, it was intended to be limited to 10 to 15 year olds. Instead, Cohort Four was the largest cohort, engaging 21 delivery partners across four regions and over 750 YW&G<sup>1</sup>, including some 15+ who had tried to engage in Cohort Three and been unable to do, and finally it was delivered largely online. However, the ambition for Cohort Four, to be the smoothest cohort, the one that brought together over two years of learnings from previous delivery, was still there. This chapter provides a snapshot of delivery, but also demonstrates that after three cohorts of testing and learning, Cohort Four allowed delivery partners to really excel in their work and demonstrate increased creativity, inspired social action projects, and deep social learning.

“We’re at Cohort Four and it feels like EmpowHER is better than it’s ever been. The Sharepoint is a brilliant idea, the structure and the resources are great, I LOVE it.”

Youth worker, Infobuzz

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation is based on the 710 YW&G who engaged in, and 651 who completed the cohort by May 30th 2021; however one delivery organisation extended delivery until the end of June 2021, therefore total engagement numbers are higher.

## Overcoming barriers to access

The Access Fund is a crucial enabler for many YW&G in accessing, and meaningfully engaging, in the programme. In Cohort Three, a Digital Inclusion Fund was created as a response to the pandemic and expanded both the size and the intention of the existing EmpowHER Access Fund to cover digital inclusion needs. For Cohort Four these funds were combined in order to ensure a simple process for youth workers to best support YW&G. Through Cohort Four £6,717.21 was spent in access funding.

### Overcoming barriers - Young Carers

Wigan Youth Zone supported a group of young carers through EmpowHER. In order to allow a true break from caring and enable the YW&G to fully participate, it was important that the sessions were delivered face to face. The YW&G live significant distances from the youth zone and couldn't afford transport costs. Through the Access fund 11 young carers were able to attend their EmpowHER sessions in person.

## Digital inclusion barriers

The Access Fund enabled *New Routes Integration* to purchase seven tablets needed for the YW&G who didn't have a suitable device. In addition to the weekly sessions, many of the YW&G used their tablets to attend the social action pitch day where they pitched for their community social action project and some used their tablets to also attend role model sessions and the Be Your Best Self workshop.

During delivery, *Young Gloucestershire* found that several YW&G were experiencing technical difficulties with their webcams. The girls expressed their desire to be able to show their faces in the groups to feel more involved in the sessions. Through the funding, they were able to buy new webcams for the girls who needed it, enabling them to build stronger relationships with each other.



## Social engagement

With Covid-19 restrictions still in place through Cohort Four, many youth workers continued to explore different online delivery techniques to create safe and inclusive spaces for the YW&G to effectively engage in their groups. Effective techniques included a 'get to know you' first session with lots of games and icebreakers, EmpowHER Ambassadors joining sessions to encourage and inspire the YW&G, alternating sessions of social learning with time for the YW&G to mingle and have fun, and delivering weekly resources to YW&G homes.

“ We have really enjoyed delivering online and in some instances has proven more beneficial and positive. Girls feel more comfortable completing the tasks at home and really enjoyed receiving the package to their house.”

Youth worker, Bolton Lads and Girls Club





Henderson Trust was one of the many delivery partners that initially started delivery via socially distanced face to face sessions for their EmpowHER groups in the East of England. After the groups transitioned from face-to-face to online, they found it “was a bit difficult getting them engaged for the first few weeks, YW&G found it hard to build relationships as quickly online”. As a result, they adapted many of their initial online sessions by starting with a group session filled with lots of ice breaker activities, fun videos and presentations to help the YW&G feel more comfortable. The YW&G shaped what type of online space they wanted to have, working collaboratively to create session ground rules and a charter that they would all abide to during the sessions.

Prior to every weekly session, youth workers from *New Routes Integration* delivered session resources to the YW&G, such as stickers, pens, paper and activity sheets to help keep them busy and actively engage in the sessions. The group were most interested in different role models and their stories, and since they were not restricted by the location, they were able to have wide access to role models online, including an engineer, dentist, influencer, journalist, baker, nurse and painter!

“ Though they missed face to face sessions and are eager to get back, they have gotten accustomed to the online sessions now and their engagement is much better. We would love to deliver EmpowHER again ”

Youth worker, Henderson Trust

“ My daughter was a bit nervous at first, but she is really enjoying it and her confidence has grown. She is so pleased to have something to do on a Saturday morning. ”

## Social learning

Social learning was used to support the YW&G wellbeing and ignite their passion for social action. Although many partners continued to deliver online, the enablers (a safe-space, single-gender group, trusted adult) remained the same and allowed the YW&G to explore sensitive issues in a supportive environment.

“ Our youth worker spoke really frankly with us about all the topics. She didn’t sugar coat anything and treated us like adults. It made taking part a lot easier”

Young person, Young Gloucestershire



“ The body image session taught me that even though everyone is different you should never listen to nasty things people say about you and you should always be kind to yourself and love your body. We talked about the impact of social media and how people on social media look beautiful and it can make you feel sad that you don’t look like that but it’s important to remember that not everything you see on social media is real”

Young person, Inspire Youth Zone

“ The body positivity stuff was my favourite because I’ve got body shamed and bullied a lot. It helped me a lot because it made me feel more confident in myself”

Young person, Future Females Society

## Role models

During Cohort Four, seven online role model events took place with 43 Role Models and 102 young people attending. Ensuring the events reflected the YW&G interests, the themes of upcoming sessions were voted for by attendees of each session Topics covered included; female empowerment, women in sport, confidence, media representation, wellbeing and mental health, period poverty, anti-racism, inclusion and LGBTQI+. Whilst all events saw strong attendance, the most popular event was the final 'bumper' event exploring inclusion, anti-racism, and LGBTQI+.

### Erna, 21

"Treat yourself how you would treat a small child, a friend or a pet. Treat yourself in the same way you would treat your best friend"

Erna led a number of mental health and wellbeing workshops both at a BRC Role Model event and by joining youth groups.

Using the metaphor of the oxygen mask on the plane, she encouraged YW&G to reflect on ways they can be self-compassionate, as well as leading mindfulness activities, enabling the YW&G to leave with tangible methods to aid their mental health, including the '5, 4, 3, 2, 1' breathing exercise and the 'tense and release exercise.'

"Erna is so inspiring and the girls would absolutely love to hear her amazing words and advice"

Emily Clarke, EmpowHER youth worker.

### Saffiya, 14

"I have overcome anxiety when talking to other people. I feel more able to open up to other people... I can inspire others"

Before starting EmpowHER, Saffiya "wanted to achieve confidence and public speaking skills, **to gain the confidence to speak about topics that are taboo**".

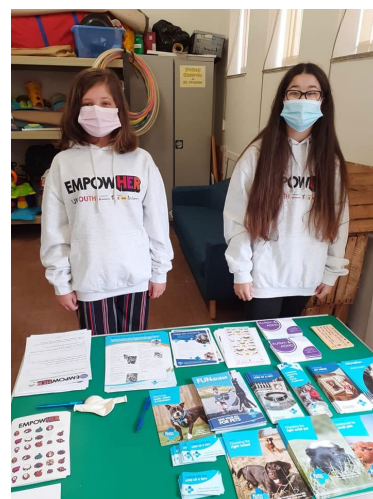
Prior to EmpowHER, Saffiya was part of a group of young people at Integrate UK that created an animated video titled 'Hijabs and Miniskirts', tackling sexual harassment, gender inequality and Islamophobia, reflecting that regardless of what a girl wears, people will always have something to say.

Saffiya was invited to speak at a Role Model event on 'Inclusion, anti-racism and LGBTQ+ rights', sharing ways young people can use creativity as part of their social action and to express themselves.

## Social action

Through Cohort Four, EmpowHER groups delivered 118 social action projects and raised £3,321 for causes of their choice. Approximately 11,408 community members were reached, an incredible achievement by the YW&G, the highest seen in any Cohort, almost five times that of Cohort One and almost double that of Cohort Two, a Cohort of a similar size.

Social action projects were geared towards showing kindness in the community. From care packages for the local nurses to homemade treats for homeless people and their pets, to spreading kindness as pen pals to young people seeking asylum, to fundraising to support organisations such as the Samaritans.



Many social action projects were inspired by personal experiences of the young people involved. EmpowHER has not only provided a safe space for young people to open up about those experiences, but those same young people have felt empowered to seek more information and plan social action projects aimed at contributing meaningful solutions. The YW&G at Wigan Youth Zone were inspired to raise money for Macmillan as one group member had lost a family member to cancer. One group from Essex Youth Service focused on sexual harassment following personal experience. Another Essex Youth Service group



made sensory bags responding to a young person sharing about the experiences of her sibling who has autism whilst the other group of YW&G, where one young person's parent had experienced homelessness, made homelessness packs. Responding to a family tragedy, *Young People Cornwall* raised money for Samaritans, whilst *Henderson Trust* made pamper packs for NHS workers in Covid-19 inspired by family members who were nurses.

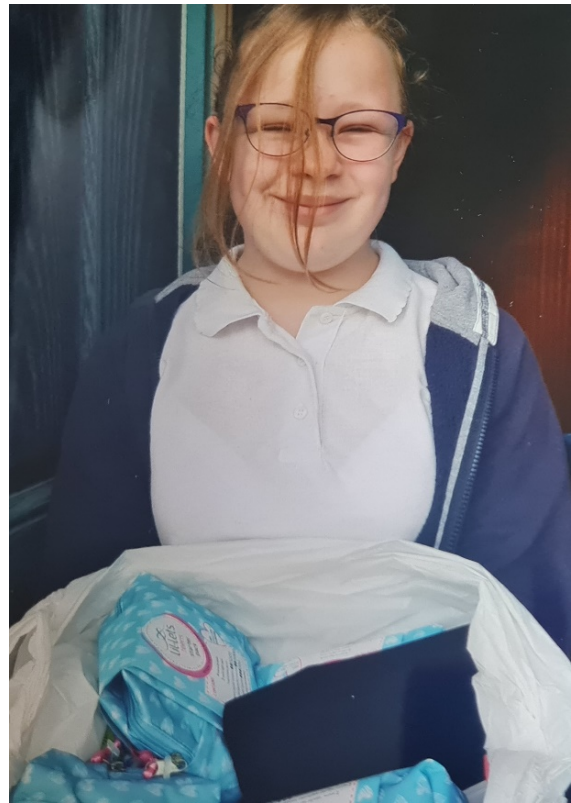
Despite the challenges of Covid-19, the EmpowHER groups showed a drive and tenacity to make a positive impact in their communities and the case studies and quotes received from the YW&G, their parents, youth workers and community, demonstrate the wide reach of their projects.



Following the murder of Sarah Everard, the young women at *InUnity* wanted to address negative behaviours of the young men in their year group. They created posters containing tips about how their male peers can support the women in their year group to feel safe. They also organised an expert to facilitate a workshop to address negative language towards young women and young LGBTQI+ people, encouraging discussion and exploring questions such as 'why do you think you can comment on our bodies?'. The young women have been working alongside their senior leadership team to address their school P.E uniform.

“We just wanted to share with you the box that Ruby made last Sunday at the Youth Zone. She decided to split it into two and took it to two elderly ladies who lived on the estate. What joy; the ladies absolutely loved them, it really made their day. (One cried happy tears) It also gave Ruby and myself a happy glow. I also received a message on social media from one of the lady’s friends (who is in her bubble), praising Ruby’s act of kindness. We are so happy that we did this and will definitely do it all again at some point”

Young person’s parent – Wigan Youth Zone



## British Red Cross support

With Covid restrictions still in place, the BRC continued to adapt to support the EmpowHER YW&G with their social action, providing resources by post, as well as attending many online group session, providing valuable ideas and inspiration.

The Youth Engagement Team at the BRC have been vital in working alongside delivery partners to support and prepare young people in their social action project applications, connect young people to relevant and inspiring Role Models and provide opportunities for further development such as First Aid Training. “We hope to develop a workshop with the support of the British Red Cross to create an arts project to educate and promote good body image” youth worker, Preston Impact Group.

## Social Action Spotlight 1

YW&G with *West Essex Youth Service* learned about homelessness and the issues people face when they are homeless, especially through the pandemic. One of the girls opened up about her personal experience of her dad being homeless for a time, how difficult it was for her dad to access basic necessities, and the impact on her family. The group were passionate about supporting the homeless community with personal care and hygiene and decided to partner with a local homeless shelter. They created over 50 parcels to help support the homeless community safe during the pandemic, providing toiletries such as bath soaps, toothbrushes, anti-bacterial hand sanitizers, face masks, and wipes.

## Social Action Spotlight 2

The YW&G from *Coventry Boys and Girls Club (CBGC)* were interested in tackling period poverty and the environment. They decided to merge their two passions into one, providing sustainable, environmentally friendly, re-usable pants. Using the money they received from the *EmpowHER Social Action Pitch Day*, as well as other donations they received from local businesses, they made up packs with sanitary essentials. They then partnered with a local foodbank, '*Bare Necessities*', donating their packs alongside additional funding. The group also started a social media campaign to work with young women to reduce the stigma and shame associated with periods.

**"The social action project was the best. I liked going into the community and getting to meet people, but the main thing was how grateful some people and organisations were to receive the care packs"**

Young person, CBGC

## Social Action Spotlight 3

The YW&G from *YMCA* wanted to focus their social action to support the mental health of young people who have experienced bullying. When it came to the pitch day, one young woman ended up doing the pitch for her whole group, successfully pitching to receive a total of £133.14. The group created 60 care packages that focused on the four senses: sight, touch, smell and taste, containing items such as hot-chocolate and stress balls.

After they had a visit from a professional at *People Too*, sharing their recommendations on how this organisation can better support young people and their mental health, the group also created an Instagram page sharing quotes and signposting helpful resources as a way to destigmatise mental health and to encourage people to feel less alone in their feelings.

They also created positive letters and notes, handing these to their peers as well as creating a questionnaire that 70 other young people in their school year filled out reflecting on their mental health. One of their peers shared,

**"As a boy, everyone expects you to be ok, but this questionnaire gave me a chance to write down some thoughts I've been having and really helped"**

“ I wanted to do the social action project to help people in need mainly women and girls who are most in need and didn't have the things we have when on your period”

Young Person

“ From doing our social action project I learnt the importance of getting involved in the community and that if you're passionate about something, the impact you can have on other people is huge. I've never had the opportunity to do something for my community and EmpowHER gave me that opportunity.”

Young Person, Inspire Youth Zone

“ The quiz was great – it really made my family's Friday night much more exciting. The rounds were well thought through and there was something for all ages. I liked that Emily explained at the beginning why we were all there and how something so fun can raise money for such a good cause”

Community Benefactor, Wigan Youth Zone

“ It was exciting to see our young members tackling a daunting industry and developing their business skills, whilst contributing to the good of the area”

Youth worker, CBGC





## Social action pitch days

Piloted in Cohort Three, the online pitch days in Cohort Four moved from strength to strength with **£15,206 in funding given out to 57 social action projects**. As before, the pitch days kicked off with a youth-worker-led confidence and public speaking workshop, followed by break out rooms with their youth workers to prepare the YW&G pitches for the panel.



The judging panel included EmpowHER Ambassadors, representatives from Spirit of 2012, the BRC, #iwill Ambassadors, representatives from Oliver Bonas, and UK Youth staff. YW&G were given feedback and suggestions to make their projects even stronger. The pitch days not only allowed the YW&G to practice their public speaking and presentation skills, but also provided opportunities to showcase the power of youth and value of this programme to wider stakeholders.

“It was an absolute pleasure to be part of the panel. It’s always so inspiring hearing young people’s plans to change the world one small step at a time!”

Trustee, UK Youth

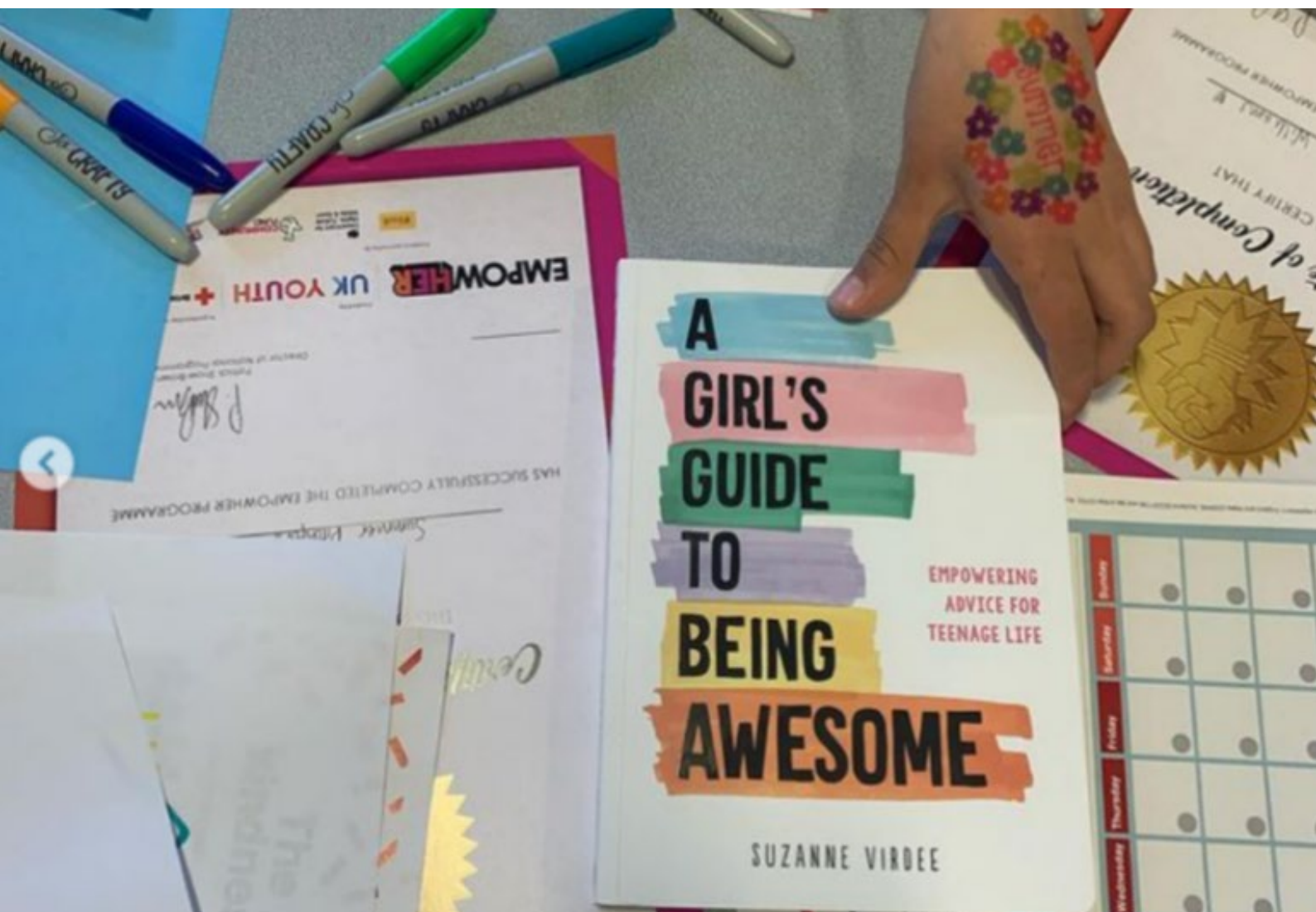
“The workshop really helped to bring one of our young people out more and resulted in her feeling more comfortable turning on her camera more in the online sessions”

Youth worker, New Routes Integration

Additionally, UK Youth were able to run small individualised pitching sessions for groups who were keen to pitch but unable to attend the planned events. These ad-hoc days allowed some groups who had not initially received their full funding request to work on their pitch and come back stronger!

## Social leadership and embedding youth voice in EmpowHER

To ensure that EmpowHER is driven by the voices of diverse groups of young people, the opportunities for YW&G to be leaders on the programme have continued to expand each Cohort. With opportunities now ranging from the YWT Be Your Best Self Workshops to the Project Steering Group and judging panels and EmpowHER Ambassadors proving a highly effective way of embedding youth voice across the layers of the programme



## Be Your Best Self workshop

YWT delivered another fantastic Be Your Best Self workshop, with 12 YW&Gs attending from *Preston Impact Group*, *Henderson Trust*, *New Routes Integration* and *Essex Youth Service*. The workshop involved confidence building activities, overcoming nerves, using your voice for change as well as safe spaces for the YW&G to reflect about themselves and role models (SHEroes) they admire. For some YW&G, simply attending was a huge step, as a youth worker commented - *"one of the girls did not have a lot of confidence and this workshop has been great for her personal development"*.

## EmpowHER ambassadors

“ Thank you for your compassion Thea. Shauna\* gets a lot out of this programme. She struggles with personal connections, and this is really engaging, and Empow(H)ering ”

Parent of EmpowHER Ambassador

\*name has been changed

Since the EmpowHER Ambassador Pilot Programme launched in September 2020, 14 Ambassadors have met monthly and completed a weekend-long online residential in March 2021. Co-designed with the Ambassadors, the weekend focused on team bonding activities and role model workshops. Supported by the social design agency Sisterhood, the Ambassadors also started to work on the EmpowHER toolkit, beginning with the ideation stage of what advice and information would be useful for young people in a future EmpowHER-like programme. Prior to the residential, Ambassadors were sent a 'pre-event' goodie bag with activities and items for the weekend, as well as hot-chocolate and pizza!

### Macie, 16, EmpowHER Ambassador

*'Right now might feel like a bad time in the pandemic, which might bring down your confidence and your self-esteem but... you need to try and find a light in a dark situation. Go down different paths, open doors and windows to your future.'* Macie, 16, speaking at a Role Model event.

Macie also supported Wigan Youth Zone, sharing her lived experiences of racism to support them with their social action. Macie has grown in confidence – speaking about EmpowHER on Sky News! With support from her EmpowHER youth worker, Macie also gained experience as a youth worker, supporting a youth-group called 'Empower YOU.'



“ Keep at it. Things might go wrong along the way but you have the potential to change the world.”

EmpowHER Ambassador

The Ambassadors have also taken up individual opportunities including visiting and supporting EmpowHER youth groups; judging EmpowHER Social Action Pitch Days; presenting to The National Lottery Community Fund, joining interview panels with the BRC, and speaking at the EmpowHER Learning event. Excitingly, two Ambassadors became Role Models themselves – sharing their experience and expertise around confidence and mental health social action.





## Embedding youth voice in EmpowHER

This cohort, EmpowHER continued to embed youth voice, both by supporting young people to lead on programmatic activities, as well as bringing YW&G into conversations with decision makers. The broad range of opportunities ensures that many different YW&G could have their voices heard, whether as a judge at a social action pitch day, EmpowHER award moderator, or through co-design workshops for a legacy funding opportunity from Spirit or 2012 or speaking to the National Lottery Community Fund England Committee about mental health and youth work. Engagement continues to grow and nine different young women spoke at the 'How to Have Powerful Partnerships' event, making up over one third of speakers, advising organisations on how they can meaningfully engage young people, **with one young person advising the attendees: "treat us as young adults who have a voice, not children."**

### Leadership Award Winner

Charli received the leadership award for sharing her skills, experience and voice with the younger girls joining EmpowHER and acting as a role model for her peers. Charli draws on her own experience and encourages the quieter, shyer members because "she used to be that person, so she knows what works". Charli has been able to gain experience as a mentor and was given responsibility for small groups of younger participants. Leading activities in breakout rooms has given Charli "a sense of commitment and experience of taking on a more accountable role" where both other young people and youth workers "rely on her for support, encouragement and trust." Acting as a leader in the group, she has improved her communication skills - something that will benefit her greatly as she moves forward. Charli is set to continue working for Future Female Society as a mentor, leading workshops and planning events for local girls in the community, including a summer festival and exhibition.

## Celebration and recognition of the YW&G



### EmpowHER Awards

This was the third cohort of EmpowHER Awards and the number of nominations continues to grow with **44 young women and girls nominated in Cohort Four**, including 15 courage award nominations, 11 leadership award nominations, ten peer support nominations and eight team award nominations. Moderation was led by four Ambassadors, with winners announced at the Cohort Four Celebration event by an EmpowHER Ambassador and Oliver Bonas representative. Two young people from each category received an award and a £10 gift voucher.

### Celebration event

The content and structure of the celebration event was shaped by a planning group including two Ambassadors and six youth workers and with much consideration for feedback from previous events. Highlights of the Celebration event included keynote speeches from the CEO of UK Youth, Ndidi Okezie, and an EmpowHER Ambassador, a mask-making workshop, and a performance from a young woman, DJ Van Van. Each workshop was held twice to ensure that young people didn't miss a workshop should they

want to, and the attendees could navigate and jump between different workshops. Prior to the event, young people were sent packages with masks, hand creams and perfume rollers from Oliver Bonas, and a pre-event digital pack with instructions on how to navigate the event website.





The event was live-streamed to accommodate young people that were not permitted to use Zoom; there were two British Sign Language translators to support young people that are hard of hearing, and despite the technological issues during the live stream, **231 young people attended the event!** Although the majority accessed the event individually online, some youth organisations such as *InUnity*, *Wigan Youth Zone*, *Henderson Trust*, *Young People Cornwall* and *Coventry Boys and Girls Club* brought the EmpowHER groups together to watch and celebrate in person. The recording of the celebration event was sent to all delivery partners following from the event to ensure those that had issues connecting to the livestream could still access the awards and recognition section of the event.

## Youth Achievement Awards



The Youth Achievement Awards (UKYAA) take a peer education approach to recognising and accrediting young people's achievements. Designed to encourage young people to take an active role in youth work activities that interest them, they enable young people to set personalised challenges, evidence progress, reflect on achievements and receive recognition. With online schooling UKYAA were understandably too much for some YW&G to take on but Cohort Four still saw 84 YW&G complete the Bronze level UKYAA, an increase from Cohort Three (47).



The YW&G who did take part were glad that they were able to take on personal challenges to not only improve their confidence and life skills but also have the experience and certificate which they can use for future opportunities.

## Collaboration, partnership, and regional working

Responding to the request for greater collaboration with youth workers, this Cohort we continued to host national, rather than regional, network meetings, with the larger number of attendees and different perspectives providing greater opportunity for generating solutions.

We also introduced drop in 'Coffee-catch ups', giving youth workers the opportunity to come together informally with other youth workers and UK Youth and BRC staff members. After one catch-up, a youth worker from *Young People Cornwall* was seeking advice about recruitment and connected with another youth worker from *Preston Impact Group* in the North West. A new youth worker in the West Midlands had questions about delivering EmpowHER as a male, so UK Youth staff members connected him with another male EmpowHER youth worker from the North West who has been delivering the programme since Cohort One. Following the call, the youth-worker felt more confident delivering the programme, and in his wrap up call he reflected *"it's been huge having a male doing a programme like this. We've had so much feedback saying it was great to see a male pushing female empowerment...this has helped me on a personal level too."*

The partnership between UK Youth and the BRC continues to be strong despite staff changes. The structures we have put in place, including fortnightly meetings and regular team days to embed team-bonding and trust, continue to be effective at building team unity. The main change to the partnership this cohort was the introduction of SharePoint for both UK Youth and the BRC, which allowed us to overcome some previous inefficiencies when working collaboratively on resources.

The relationship between EmpowHER and Spirit of 2012 has continued to grow, providing multiple opportunities to connect and share learnings. In particular, UK Youth and an EmpowHER Ambassador were invited to speak alongside Spirit of 2012's CEO at a National Lottery England Committee event about the role of youth workers in supporting the mental health of young people. In addition, UK Youth has participated in information sessions on new funding rounds for Spirit of 2012, providing insight and feedback from the youth sector, and Spirit of 2012 has been very present at several learning events.

## Sector upskilling and sharing learnings

### Youth worker training

Covid-19 has impacted both how youth work is delivered, and the types of issues young people are presenting with. Through initial discussion with youth workers, followed by a survey and skills audit, we heard a need for more support and training both around online delivery and supporting young people with mental health concerns. We then worked with both external training partners and delivery partners with specific skills or expertise to create a training package including:

- Specialist training on bereavement and trauma, delivered by Grief Encounter.
- Essential Zoom skills for online delivery, provided by NILC Ltd.
- Community organising – four-part workshops, delivered by YWT on supporting young people in amplifying their voices, campaigning and community social action.
- Creating safe, inclusive and accessible online spaces for young people, delivered by Participation People.
- Facilitating engaging and safe online sessions for neurodiverse young people, delivered by Dr Annie Clements from Autism and ADHD.
- Culturally Responsive Youth Mentoring Training delivered by The Mentoring Lab.,

Training sessions were recorded, with videos and resources saved and added to the EmpowHER SharePoint site for those who missed sessions.

### Youth worker Training – Key stats

- 10 workshops
- 27 youth workers accessed training across the four regions
- An average of 10 youth workers attended each training session

“It was interesting, it made me think about who I’ll need to contact about campaigns and what their interests would be in”

Youth worker

“Really good and engaging online session – probably one of the best online training I’ve been to so thank you”

Youth worker

“It has enabled me to support some young women on a campaign they want to do”

Youth worker

“I learnt some new icebreaker games, we then went on to play chatterbox at our next sessions and the girls enjoyed taking part”

Youth worker

“Bereavement and trauma training was very useful as a young person had lost her dad halfway through programme delivery. Hannah was able to use the knowledge from the training to support the young girl”

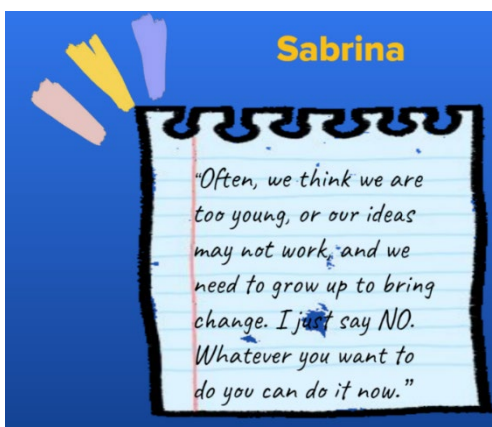
Youth worker

## How to have powerful partnerships – EmpowHER national event

Our first national sector event - 'How to have Powerful Partnerships' - took place in June and tied in with the celebration of the Power of Youth and Volunteers' Week. This event, delivered in partnership with the BRC, Spirit of 2012, youth workers and young people from the EmpowHER programme, highlighted the significance of cross-sector partnerships, harnessing the power of youth and enabling young people and youth workers to become advocates/ voices of national causes across various sectors. With 72 attendees, and 26 speakers from nine organisations, this proved an effective way to share valuable learning.

## EmpowHER toolkit

The UK Youth team are collaborating with BRC staff, youth workers and the EmpowHER Ambassadors to co-create an EmpowHER toolkit: A guide to delivering high impact wellbeing and social action programmes. The toolkit will be aimed at youth organisations, funders, and young people, containing tips and things to consider for a wellbeing programme, a single gender programme, a social action programme, and a programme in partnership. It will be launched at the next external EmpowHER learning event in September 2021.



As we move to our final learning phase, sector sharing is also ramping up, with data, case studies, testimonies and quotes from EmpowHER regularly shared on UK Youth's social media platform, and awareness of the programme in the sector continues to grow.



## Embedding sustainability

### Social Action Quality Mark

Due to the pandemic and the resulting strains on youth organisations, fewer partners than anticipated have completed the social action quality mark but those who have been able to have found it a valuable process with a meaningful end goal. Of the seven delivery partners who attended different social action quality mark training delivered this cohort, two have been awarded their qualification whilst three others are in the process of completing their portfolios to receive their qualifications for the quality mark.



“For us, it's having a deeper understanding of the word quality and ensuring that we are delivering to such a high standard. We've received our Social Action Quality Mark award and it's framed and sits proudly in our office”

Youth worker, Wigan Youth Zone

### BRC sustainability projects

The BRC team have two pilot programmes planned to look at embedding models of light-touch volunteering into BRC practices. One will be a series of online sessions engaging young volunteers in green issues. This will build on the successful model of online Role Model Events to explore youth-led social action solutions to an important issue that many EmpowHER groups expressed interest in and is integral to the Red Cross 2030 strategy.

Alongside recruiting EmpowHER alumni who are over 15 to the 'main' stream of young Red Cross volunteers on this project, they will be working with UK Youth and the Ambassador programme to engage 10-15 year olds.

The second will be an adaption of the BRC On Campus model of student volunteering to youth spaces, building on the legacy of peer leadership developed through EmpowHER. Over the summer they would have access to regular online sessions with the BRC EmpowHER team, supporting them to develop their ideas, access resources and speakers, and troubleshoot any issues.

The learnings from these projects will contribute to the Youth Engagement and Volunteer Experience teams' reviews of youth involvement in the British Red Cross 2030 strategy.

### Accelerator spotlight: Inspire Youth Zone

After it was brought to their attention by their Youth Council, made up of active members of the youth zone, that no targeted programme like EmpowHER exists for young boys, *Inspire Youth Zone* responded by launching HIMpact. The programme aims to encourage positive mental health and help break stigma, teach life skills and respect, have a positive impact on vulnerable young boys and actively encourage participation in social action. Through the Accelerator pilot, they have already connected with many local partners to deliver aspects of specialist support, such as Lancashire Sexual Health Team, who will deliver safe sex sessions. Positive male role models, including a former athlete now Councillor, and local businesses are helping raise career aspirations.

## Accelerator programme

The pilot programme kicked off in March 2021 with seven organisations attending a workshop where they talked through their projects and received peer feedback, as well as tips from UK Youth's Head of Partnerships and Philanthropy on communicating their work. Each will complete two challenges to build partnerships in their local area and build a strategic plan for embedding social action, wellbeing, or single gender programmes in their

work. Each partner receives funding and support and will submit their final reports in August 2021. The pilot aims to directly support partners, alongside testing a model for accelerator strands, to inform future programme design in UK Youth's wider programme portfolio.

## Key delivery learnings



Cohort Four provided the opportunity to implement the learnings identified in the Cohort Three report. Overwhelmingly, this was a cohort about consolidation for older partners and ensuring that newer delivery partners benefited from the many lessons learnt over the past two and a half years. The Programme Evaluation below will cover the Cohort Four research questions; however, there were four key delivery learnings that deepened our understanding around the challenges and opportunities of online delivery, celebration and recognition, and peer support.

## Access funding remains essential above and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic

Access funding again proved essential through Cohort Four, particularly in supporting with digital access. As the UK Consumer Digital Index 2018 revealed, over 700,000 young people do not have a computer or tablet at home, and 60,000 young people do not have any access to the internet. Providing individual grants is an effective, and crucial, enabler to overcoming barriers to access. Although this need was highlighted by the pandemic, it is

evident that the benefits of an individual access fund reaches far beyond the pandemic and that the challenge of digital inclusion was one that thousands of young people already faced, and continue to face. Access funding will therefore remain a core part of UK Youth's approach to youth work programmes going forward.

## **Online delivery breaks down geographic and temporal barriers to training, insight, and inspiration**

Online delivery provided opportunities to both bring partners together to share ideas and learnings, as well as for more formal training and to also connect a wider range of Role Models with groups. It was positive to see clear examples of partners learning from one another and the positive impact on delivery. Training was well received by youth workers – for many of whom the pandemic has both changed the nature of delivery and increased the level and complexity of support needed by young people.

## **Celebration of young people's achievements is important at every stage of a programme**

It was fantastic to see such an enthusiastic response to the awards and an incredible turn out for the celebration events. The impact that YW&G are having within their communities and in supporting other YW&G is inspiring to see. Youth workers fed back that recognition throughout programmes, as opposed to just at the conclusion, would be beneficial.

## **Championing youth voice presents huge benefits and new challenges**

The Ambassadors programme has been highly successful and clearly demonstrates the value for the YW&G themselves, as well as for YW&G on the programme and the profile of

EmpowHER. Alongside positive social action, this has also been a highly effective way to embed youth voice throughout the programme – from speaking at the steering group, to direct delivery, to co-designing the EmpowHER toolkit.

Ambassadors at the June 2021 learning event also spoke about their role in supporting peers' mental health and wellbeing and what they needed in order to be better able to fulfil this role safely. Peer support was always an organic part of EmpowHER, but through the development of the toolkit we will ensure that advice for supporting peer leaders and mentors is an area of focus.



## Programme evaluation

The evaluation indicates that the outcomes of Cohorts One to Three have been reinforced through a larger and more diverse cohort in Cohort Four. This gives us further assurance that the programme is producing all five desired outcomes for the YW&G, including improved wellbeing and forming of long-term social action habits. There are also signs that



wider outcomes, such as embedding sustainable youth social action practice within youth organisations, are developing positively. This section presents the detailed analysis of the outcomes and research objectives.

## Evaluation objectives

The evaluation focused on both impact and programmatic (process) components of the EmpowHER programme. The research objectives agreed for Cohort Four of EmpowHER were:

1. To what extent is the programme meeting its desired outcomes for YW&G (in relation to Theory of Change - see Appendix A)?
2. To what extent has digital delivery affected programme outcomes?
3. To what extent has social action improved social cohesion and how is sustainability embedded?
4. How can learning from EmpowHER inform future programming and the sector?

## Methodology

A mixed methods approach using qualitative and quantitative social research techniques was used to collect, synthesise, and analyse evidence for the evaluation. The evaluation incorporated a number of data sources to explore impact and learnings, including participants, youth workers and partners. The triangulation of quantitative data with qualitative data sources is further supported by a rigorous thematic review of the evidence and data and statistical testing of the core outcomes data. Overall, the evaluation design, approach and analysis give confidence in the results of the evaluation.

To assess the extent of change across participants, we designed entry and exit surveys to capture indicators of EmpowHER participants' wellbeing, self-perception, emotional and social capabilities at the start and end of the programme. We provided the tools and guidance to youth workers who distributed the surveys and provided support as required.

To assess the extent to which EmpowHER participants' demographic characteristics were associated with changes in outcomes, information was collected about YW&G age, ethnicity, postcode, and any personal barriers as reported by youth workers. To gain further understanding of YW&G experiences of EmpowHER and outcomes, we conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with YW&G at, or close to, completion of Cohort Four. The sessions were aimed at encouraging the girls to reflect on their experience of EmpowHER and what they gained from the programme.

To gain further insight, the team conducted in-depth interviews with youth workers, the BRC and YWT. Youth workers from each delivery partner were also responsible for submitting a delivery report for each group. Feedback from the local community on the social action delivered was also collected and reported via the youth workers. A detailed summary of the data collection methods and the number of participants engaged is presented in Appendix B.

## Continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

For Cohort Four, much of the qualitative data collection was conducted online, as lockdown restrictions were still in place. This included the interviews with youth workers, YW&G and partners. Additional questions on the impact of Covid-19 were included across all the data collection tools, to capture the ongoing effect of the pandemic on programme delivery and participant outcomes.

## Participants engaged

In Cohort Four of EmpowHER, UK Youth successfully engaged 710 YW&G between the ages of 8-20.<sup>2</sup> Of the 710 YW&G that engaged in the programme, 651 completed the

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<sup>2</sup> 17 YW&G were under 10 years old; one delivery partner was granted special permission to include them in EmpowHER as they met 'unusual suspect' criteria.

programme - a retention rate of 92% - which is as high as the retention rate of Cohort Two, pre-pandemic.<sup>3</sup>

After a difficult Cohort Three that was interrupted by Covid-19 and the subsequent government lockdowns, in Cohort Four, youth workers spoke about being more prepared to adjust and tailor delivery as Covid-19 restrictions changed, using interactive games and creative sessions to keep YW&G motivated, as well as working closely with families in the home environment.

## Digital delivery did not deeply impact YW&G engagement

YW&G completing EmpowHER engaged for an average of 33 hours, with an average of 18 and 14 hours respectively spent on social learning and social action. 16% of the YW&G completed well over the minimal requirement, spending 40 to 59 hours on the programme, and three girls engaged for over 60 hours. Combined with the data about overall programme retention, the evaluation indicates that digital delivery did not substantially impact YW&G level of engagement with the programme or reduce the amount of time spent on the programme. This is an encouraging finding that demonstrates youth workers built on the lessons learnt from Cohort Three on online delivery and engagement.

## Almost three quarters of the YW&G that engaged in EmpowHER are in a transitional age range

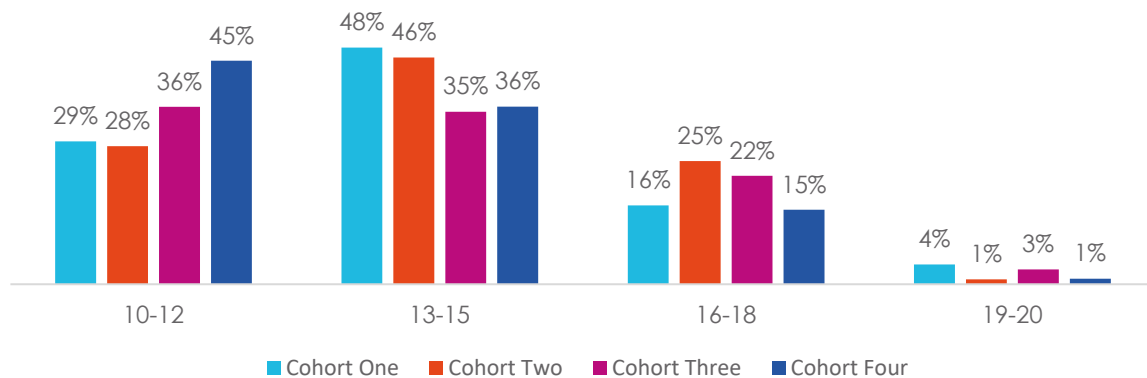
In agreement with Spirit of 2012, the target numbers for Cohort Three were reduced and delivery organisations were granted permission to run groups scheduled for Cohort Three in Cohort Four (which was previously planned to be fully focused on those aged 10 to 15). However, even with partners bringing forward some groups, the majority (84%)<sup>4</sup> of the

<sup>3</sup> Completion is defined as YW&G engaging in 30 hours of sessions (with a minimum of 10 hours of social learning and 10 hours of social action) over a minimum of 12 weeks.

<sup>4</sup> This figure includes those under 10.

YW&G that took part in Cohort Four were under 16. Interestingly, 72% of the YW&G that engaged in Cohort Four were in the transition ages of 10-13 and 16-19 years.<sup>5</sup> Although transition age is an important need identifier, delivery partners communicated that there is also a significant need for support amongst girls aged 12-15 and 19-20.

**Figure 2: Age ranges of YW&G across four cohorts**



Base size: Cohort One - 306 YW&G who engaged on EmpowHER. Cohort Two - 625 YW&G who completed EmpowHER. Cohort Three - 288 YW&G who engaged on EmpowHER and we had age information. Cohort Four – 708 YW&G who engaged on EmpowHER and we had age information. In addition, in Cohort Four, 2% of YW&G were aged 8-9 years old. Source: UK Youth.<sup>6</sup>

## Cohort Four saw an increase in engagement by YW&G from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds

23% of YW&G in Cohort Four were from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic groups, an increase of 8% from Cohort Three, and significantly higher than the national average of 14%. Figure 3 shows the breakdown of ethnicities. UK Youth worked with the delivery partners to support better recruitment from ethnic minority groups, making this a focus at Train the Trainer sessions. Some of the methods of engagement included: wider marketing in the

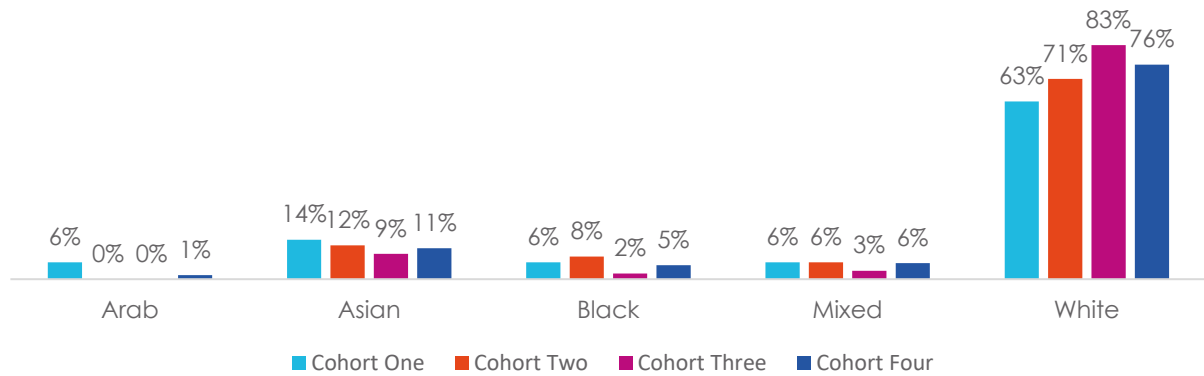
<sup>5</sup> Transition age refers to those moving from primary to secondary and secondary to sixth form, college or work.

<sup>6</sup> All figures used in the charts have been rounded to the nearest whole number; therefore the total may not always equal 100%, but will be in parameters of +/- 3.



local community and in schools; creating better links with local agencies and youth services; understanding the cultural factors and barriers preventing engagement; and ensuring the topics covered in the sessions were relatable and appropriate for the group.

**Figure 3: YW&G ethnicity across four cohorts**



Base size: Cohort One - 300 YW&G who engaged in EmpowHER. Cohort Two - 625 YW&G who completed EmpowHER. Cohort Three - 286 YW&G who engaged in EmpowHER. Cohort Four - 703 YW&G who engaged in EmpowHER and had ethnicity information. Source: UK Youth.

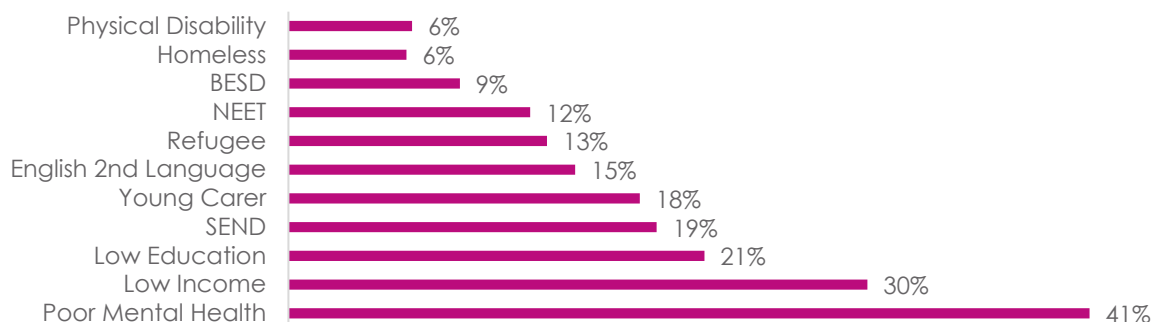
## Almost three out of four YW&G had at least one reported personal barrier

69% of YW&G engaging in Cohort Four were reported by youth workers to have at least one personal barrier - a slight increase from Cohort Three where 64% of YW&G experienced at least one barrier. Of the YW&G reporting barriers, 57% had one barrier, 27% had two and 15% had three or more barriers. Of the 59 YW&G who did not complete EmpowHER, 32% had one or more personal barriers and 68% had no barriers or did not state a barrier. Thus, suggesting that having a personal barrier did not impact on the likelihood of completing EmpowHER.

The most prevalent barrier reported in Cohort Four was poor mental health, at 41% of the YW&G - almost double the level in Cohort Three. Young Minds (2020) found that for many young people the pandemic is having a negative impact on mental health, reporting that 83% of young people said Covid-19 made their mental health worse. (Young Minds survey,

2020). Almost a third of the YW&G were from a low-income family and almost a quarter were reported as having low educational attainment.

**Figure: 4 Percentage of YW&G in Cohort Four with personal barriers**



Base size: 696 YW&G who engaged on EmpowHER Cohort Four and had information about personal barriers.

Source: UK Youth.

## 41% of the YW&G experienced high deprivation levels

In addition to the personal barriers the YW&G experienced, 41% of participants came from the 30% most deprived areas of the UK and 21% came from the top 30% 'cold spots' or least socially mobile areas of the UK. This demonstrates that EmpowHER is engaging YW&G from areas of high deprivation and low social mobility, and both they and their communities stand to gain from wellbeing and youth social action efforts.

## Cohort Four research focus

### Research question one: to what extent is the programme meeting its desired outcomes for YW&G (in relation to Theory of Change)?

In Cohort Four, EmpowHER has engaged YW&G who struggle with significant, personal, social and development barriers. It has also reached the "unusual suspects", defined as YW&G with low wellbeing, who have not previously engaged in social action. In this section, the evaluation will demonstrate that the overall desired outcomes for YW&G on EmpowHER have been achieved.

## Wellbeing of YW&G improved

EmpowHER has successfully reduced the overall 'low wellbeing' (as classified by ONS<sup>7</sup>) of the participants engaged in the programme<sup>8</sup>. Figure 5 illustrates the shift from pre to post programme, which was taken from data submitted by the YW&G in the entry and exit surveys<sup>9</sup>. The chart shows that EmpowHER participants ended the programme reporting a far closer pattern of wellbeing to the UK population average than when they began<sup>10</sup>. In particular, the percentage of YW&G reporting low life satisfaction almost halved (from 23% to 12%), and those reporting very high life satisfaction also improved.

*"In a really tough time for kids, this has given her much needed support and a group of friends that she is now confident enough to turn to when things are hard."* Parent of EmpowHER Participant

For life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness reporting of 'low satisfaction' by the end of the cohort reduced. Additionally, those reporting 'very high' increased - by 11% for life satisfaction, 13% for happiness and 13% for feeling worthwhile. The results show that EmpowHER is engaging YW&G with lower levels of wellbeing compared to the national average.

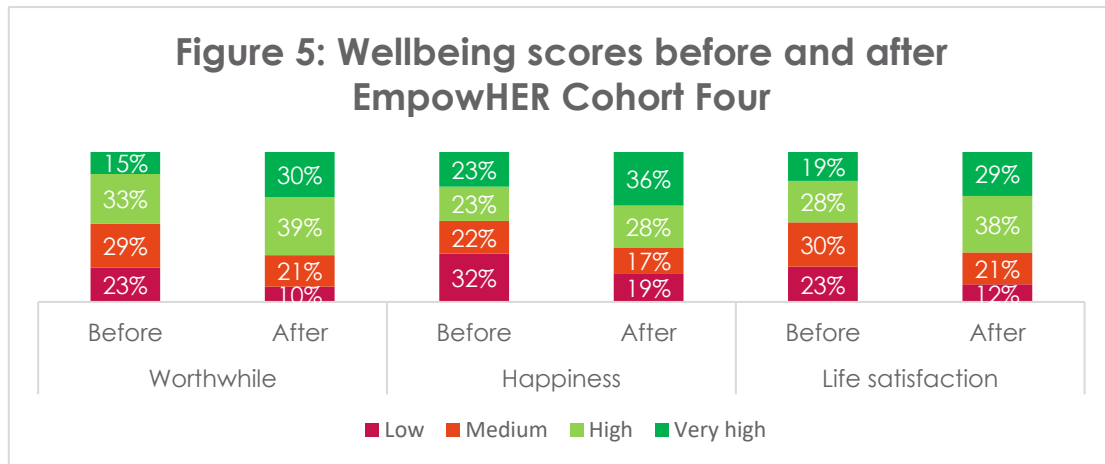
The increase in the number of YW&G with personal barriers may be due to new referral routes for participants. A number of delivery partners received multiple referrals of young people who were at risk of child sexual exploitation, young carers, young refugees, young people in foster care and young people without access to any type of youth support services. These referrals came from local police, councils, concerned parents, youth clubs and schools. One EmpowHER delivery partner in Blackburn was able to collaborate with youth workers in the Whalley Range area of Manchester to recruit and deliver online EmpowHER sessions to YW&G who had no access to any form of youth clubs, after school groups or youth worker support. This delivery partner also had an EmpowHER alumni volunteer as an ambassador to help support the online delivery of EmpowHER to the new groups.

<sup>7</sup> ONS uses four indicators to measure wellbeing – life satisfaction, worthwhile, happiness and anxiety. They use a scale from 0-10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely' agree with the metric for the indicators. Low on these indicators are at the lower level of spectrum and very high at 10 of the scale.

<sup>8</sup> Analysis conducted was to compare three patterns: YW&G wellbeing in ONS categories before EmpowHER (pre); YW&G wellbeing in ONS categories before EmpowHER (post); UK population's wellbeing in ONS categories.

<sup>9</sup> Anxiety indicator is based on only 45 responses.

<sup>10</sup> Based on ONS averages for 16-19 years old, very high results for life satisfaction are 31%, worthwhile is 32%, happiness is 36% and anxiety is 39%.



Base size: Worthwhile – 353. Happiness – 350. Life satisfaction – 358. Anxiety – 45. All scores are calculated on matched entry and exit surveys for each metric. Source: UK Youth.

“The most important thing I learnt was that I was not alone and don’t feel like I’m the only one who sometimes struggles, the girls really made me feel so much better.” Young Person, BLGC

## The increase in wellbeing represents a ‘real’ change in wellbeing

We applied some statistical tests to assess whether the change in the wellbeing scores was ‘real’ or likely to be due to random fluctuations in the data. We reviewed whether the changes reported were ‘trustworthy’ (statistically significant) and objectively ‘large’ enough to celebrate (effect size).<sup>11</sup> Appendix C shows that for the three positive ONS indicators, worthwhile, happiness and life satisfaction, the increase reported by participants is statistically significant. This analysis gives us confidence that only the positive increases reported by EmpowHER participants are real. In terms of the size of the increases, we found that all three increases are large enough to be classed as having have ‘real world’ effects. The effects on size are slightly higher than those detected for previous cohorts and would

<sup>11</sup> Significance testing is used to ascertain whether the difference between the sample/ cohort is big enough to signify a real difference, for the analysis the Paired t-test was used. Effect size testing using Cohen’s d, was used to establish the strength of and association or a causal relationship.



be categorised as small but significant.<sup>12</sup>

For this cohort anxiety levels improved overall. YW&G reporting very high anxiety decreased from 44% to 40%. Levels of change for Anxiety are not significant.

## **EmpowHER reduces YW&G limiting perceptions of themselves and their gender**

At the beginning of the programme, 56% of YW&G reported having limiting perceptions of their own ability, which reduced to 38% at the programme end. At the start of the programme, limiting perceptions of gender were already low but this also improved post-programme from 26% to 11%. Using a similar statistical test methodology to that used for the wellbeing indicators, the evaluation found that the results are statistically significant and valid (see Appendix C for a breakdown of the figures). This proves that EmpowHER tackles YW&G limiting perceptions of both their own ability and, when present, their gender.

## **YW&G are empowered to identify and lead change**

YW&G in Cohort Four also reported statistically significant improvement in their ability to make a positive difference where they live and to lead change. At the beginning of the programme, the number of YW&G who reported being empowered to lead and identify change were low (all under 50%). However, by programme end, the readiness being reported by YW&G increased. We saw an increase in agreement with the following statements, measuring leadership, community agency, and empowerment:

- “I feel comfortable taking the lead in small groups” increased from 38% to 57%.
- “I can make a positive difference to where I live” increased from 40% to 60%.

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<sup>12</sup> Reference ranges for effect size using Cohen's d are as follows: d=0.2 represents a 'small' effect size, 0.5 represents a 'medium' effect size, and 0.8 represents a 'large' effect size.

- "I feel happy when I think about my future" increased from 48% to 66%.

We can conclude that EmpowHER has helped YW&G to feel empowered to identify and make change.

“

I think the most important thing I've learnt is to be yourself and not to be afraid to be you"

EmpowHER participant

“

Some of the stuff we discussed I'd never really thought of before. I hadn't considered how differently women across the world are treated and that so many of them are second class citizens. It opened my eyes and I found it really interesting"

EmpowHER participant

“

I was really proud of myself. When I believe in myself, I did it and I didn't think it was possible at the start"

EmpowHER participant

## Participating in EmpowHER led to improvements across all emotional and social capabilities

In Cohort Four YW&G reported statistically significant improvement across all indicators for emotional and social capabilities, with a higher increase for confidence, followed by leadership and responsibility (see Appendix C for statistical significance and effect size levels). EmpowHER participants are baselining lower across all seven of the social and emotional capabilities, especially communication, confidence, responsibility and resilience, in comparison with the average of all UK Youth programmes. This further demonstrates that EmpowHER is reaching vulnerable YW&G.

**Figure 6: Average of Emotional and Social Capabilities scores before and after Cohort Four**



Base size: All scores calculated on matched entry and exit surveys. Communication – 359. Receptiveness and Self-awareness – 357. Resilience – 361. Responsibility – 362. Motivation – 360. Confidence – 363. Source: UK Youth.

Similarly to previous cohort evaluations, all the YW&G interviewed about their experience of EmpowHER mentioned improved confidence levels as a key learning and benefit of the programme for them.

**“It helped my confidence, because I sometimes hold back to speak to other people, but when you go out and see the smile on their faces, I actually did something, it gives you confidence boost”**

EmpowHER participant

**“I do feel different. I feel more positive and inspired because I talked about what I wanted to do, but now I will do it”**

EmpowHER participant

**“The pitch, and then the poem I did for the magazine, the piece I wrote and everyone reading it, that was confidence building”**

EmpowHER participant

Through the interviews YW&G also reported other personal development areas including: making friends, having the safe space to discuss gender centred issues, better ways to communicate ideas and their concerns and opportunities to think about topics they have not previously explored, such as gender identity.

**“I gained more independence in different activities, gained more confidence, and more understanding about my gender and my identity. It helped me understand that my gender can be more independent and powerful”**

EmpowHER participant

## Long-term, youth led, meaningful social action habits are formed

### Initial youth social action activity levels were below the national average

45% of respondents<sup>13</sup> had not engaged in social action activities such as volunteering, fundraising, campaigning, or ‘simple acts of kindness’ before the EmpowHER programme. A further 22% had only volunteered once or twice and 21% had volunteered more than two times, resulting in a total of 43% with previous volunteering experience. This is lower than the national average of 51% identified by #iwill in 2019 (Mori and #iwill, 2020)

### EmpowHER has motivated YW&G to engage in future social action

YW&G perceptions about doing social action in EmpowHER remained highly positive, with over 89% enjoying taking part and 83% feeling it was a positive experience for them. In addition, it helped the YW&G to learn new things and reflect on their learning (79% and

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<sup>13</sup> Based on 351 YW&G that provided responses.



85% respectively) and over two-thirds (77%) felt that their social action efforts had helped their community.

Almost half (49%) of the YW&G in Cohort Four indicated they were likely to take part in volunteering, fundraising, or campaigning in the next year. This is the highest percentage reported across the four cohorts. Almost a third (31%) said that they are likely to volunteer with BRC in the future, which considering only 5% had volunteered previously, is a large increase.

It was clear to see the skills YW&G will take away, as well as the legacy a number of the social action projects themselves will leave.

“

**I wanted to do my social action project because I wanted to help homeless, vulnerable people and their pets who may not have enough money to buy food for themselves and their pets and to show that people, including strangers, do care and that help is available if needed"**

Young Person, Young People Cornwall

“

**We hope that our social action will bring people closer together. I would definitely consider doing more social action, such as volunteering, in the future"**

EmpowHER participant

“

**Before, my teachers were very close minded about race. My topic was race, my approach was aggressive, but now through the poem it is less aggressive, more informative and my teachers are more understanding now. I'm going to now work with the headteacher to change the bullying policy"**

EmpowHER participant

In programme exit surveys, YW&G reported multiple motivations for engaging in social action projects. Of 317 YW&G who responded to the question about what motivated them to do their social action activities, around half indicated helping others, the community, and

charities.

Around a quarter indicated that they wanted to make an impact and / or raise awareness about a cause they cared about. One YW&G stated “My brother has severe autism, I help to care for him, and I asked him what toys help him with his autism and he helped me pick some for our project. I think autism needs to be raised awareness of and we helped to do that”.

Others outlined that they were interested in social action because it helped their personal development. One young person told us “I wanted to do the social action project because it will make me feel a lot more confident in myself and will help others be aware and more happy with them self and more grateful and appreciative about their life and the people and things they have”. Another said, “I wanted to do our social action project as I felt as though I could learn new skills, which I definitely did.”

## Research question two: to what extent has social action improved social cohesion and how is sustainability embedded?

Despite Covid-19 restrictions, overall evaluation findings in relation to social cohesion and sustainability tells a positive story and suggests that EmpowHER is improving feelings of social cohesion amongst YW&G and that positive links have been established with the community by youth workers and their organisations. YW&G have gained awareness of issues in their community and felt a sense of belonging within their group and youth organisations have used their learning from EmpowHER to improve opportunities available to young people by reviewing their offer, creating new opportunities, and making social action more accessible.

EmpowHER has managed to place the seeds for sustainability with the YW&G and youth workers taking part. There are clear indications that foundations for long-term, meaningful

social action habits have been laid. The evaluation only considered post-programme; assessing whether long-term meaningful social action habits have been formed is more difficult to assess. It is recommended that this is an area to explore.

## EmpowHER is improving feelings of social cohesion amongst YW&G

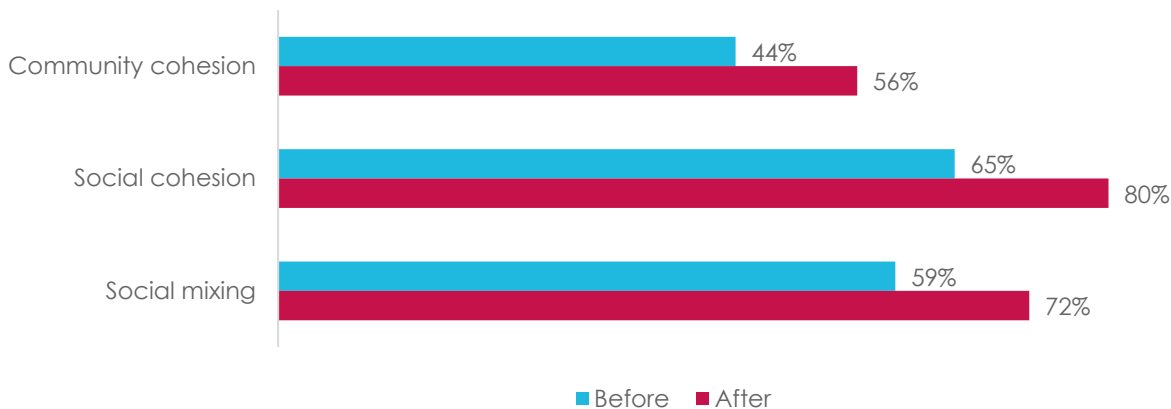
Despite the challenges of digital delivery, YW&G reported improvements in their perceptions of acceptance by those they spend time with, with trust for others around them and with comfort at interacting with people different from them.

Whilst YW&G baselined high in metrics of social cohesion, we still saw improvement, thus inferring improvements in social cohesion, social mixing and community cohesion:

- “I am accepted by people that I spend my time with” increased from 65% to 80
- “I often meet people that are different to me” increased from 59% to 72%
- “I can trust people that live near me” increased from 44% to 56%

YW&G are meeting different people in the community than they would usually be exposed to, joining groups with girls from different backgrounds, or mixing with those within their direct community. For a number of YW&G, EmpowHER has created a sense of belonging and purpose: “We will carry on with a little group to talk to each other and help each other, meet up here every so often and have chats”. While another told us that they gained increased awareness of their community and the issues that local people encounter, they said: “I feel all girls at my school will benefit from the information packs created for period poverty because they will be able to find the products. I am in year 8 and still did not know where to find the products, so the girls will know that.” EmpowHER also gave a number of the YW&G the opportunity to “try different things, see different people.”

Figure 7: Social cohesion scores before and after EmpowHER Cohort Four



Base size: Community cohesion – 359. Social cohesion – 358. Social mixing – 357. All scores calculated on matched entry and exit surveys for each metric. Source: UK Youth.

## EmpowHER has managed to plant the seeds for sustainability with YW&G and youth workers

We know from Cohorts One to Three that EmpowHER successfully supports long term social action amongst YW&G. Identified enablers include; sessions that explore YW&G to identify causes they feel passionate about, instilling positive feelings from accessible social action participation, increased awareness of issues and how to tackle them, increasing confidence in ability to succeed (overcoming limiting perceptions), building a social action skillset and increasing YW&G awareness of opportunities.

Through Cohort Four, 49% of YW&G reported they would take part in volunteering, fundraising, or campaigning in the next 12 months - an increase from all previous cohorts (with 46% reporting this in Cohort Three, 37% in Cohort Two, and 34% in Cohort One).

Alongside this, EmpowHER is also showing clear signs of sustainability for youth organisations, with youth organisations embedding social action, developing local partnerships, as well as developing their wellbeing offer and sustaining single gender groups.

73% of youth workers expressed that the programme improved links with local organisations. Youth workers perceived social action projects as a key part of building sustainable links. 66% of youth workers stated that the programme enhanced and improved relationships between the young person and the local community and 61% stated that it led to further social action. Youth workers also stated that that they worked with a range of additional partners in delivering youth social action, including schools, local councils, other local charities, national charities (e.g. Age UK and NCS), as well as local agencies such as the police and other youth or community organisations. 61% expressed that it is likely that they will continue to work with BRC and YWT beyond EmpowHER.

### Research question three: to what extent has digital delivery affected programme outcomes?

Despite the challenges of digital delivery, the programme achieved its overall desired outcomes for the YW&G. This was largely due to youth organisations being better prepared, tailoring and adjusting the programme and being committed to the cause of delivering EmpowHER. As demonstrated in the Programme Delivery chapter above, youth workers used a variety of approaches to delivering online and there continues to be advantages and challenges to this mode of delivery.

### Impact of delivering the programme online

Whilst delivering components of the programme online continued to be the dominant delivery mode in Cohort Four, there was increased face-to-face and blended delivery in comparison to Cohort Three. Several of the delivery partners reported that they were better equipped and organised for digital delivery, having embedded learning from Cohort Three and through UK Youth support. Youth workers told us that a blended approach worked well where youth organisations were able to offer online and face-to-face sessions during the relaxing of the lockdown restrictions.



Key to successful online sessions was interactivity and fun: “We added a new dimension to our work, we found new ways to engage with girls. Last week we had an illustrator teach us how to express our emotions with drawings.” Overall, this evaluation found that digital delivery impacts the YW&G experience of EmpowHER but not necessarily the outcomes.

## **The majority of YW&G had internet access, but some experienced digital poverty**

86% had internet access at home on a computer or tablet and 83% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were confident using online communications tools to attend the EmpowHER online programme.

12% of YW&G reported that the programme being online was a barrier to them completing it, whether due to poor internet connections, not having their own device or needing to share with other members of the family. In addition, some YW&G stated that they lacked confidence or experienced anxiety with online delivery.

Overall, YW&G reported they preferred face to face sessions, as one of their motivations to participate was to make friends and do something outside of home or school with other young people. However, some, in particular those with low confidence, actually preferred the online mode, as they felt they were able to open-up more easily, discuss issues without feeling embarrassed and the fact they did not need to travel or get ready for the sessions was also reported as a positive.

## **Impact on youth workers**

Overall, youth workers reported that it is more difficult and time consuming to deliver the programme online. They reported that they needed to do extra work to ensure sessions

could continue, including sending resources and equipment to YW&G homes and ensuring content and material were adapted to suit online delivery. They were also conscious that many of the YW&G were spending a lot of time online for school. As expressed by a youth worker: "Initially online makes things harder, as we need to be conscious of timings, young people doing home schooling and been on Zoom for 6 hours already; we tried to make sessions interactive."

In terms of social action, the youth workers reported that planning and setting up worked well online, but actual delivery of social action activities was more challenging. As a result, some delivery partners waited for restrictions to be eased before completing the social action.

## Fostering relationships online

Establishing relationships and maintaining engagements was the one of the key challenges of delivering EmpowHER online. Some YW&G did not switch their cameras on, others were shy and did not join the discussion or speak throughout the session, preferring to use the chat function, making it more difficult to establish rapport. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp were used to keep in contact and send reminders to the YW&G; many also used it to share ideas, talk about social action updates, and send photos of the activities they did. Some delivery partners switched to shorter sessions with greater regularity, taking into account YW&G having school lessons online and not wishing to create Zoom fatigue.

Some of the strategies youth workers implemented to overcome these barriers were to promote sharing of experiences, linking young people with YW&G local to them or from the same school via activities such as posting flyers together and developing social media chat forums for them to engage outside of the sessions. Some youth workers expressed that they were open with the YW&G about their situation of working online, which helped the YW&G to relax and share: "I was at home. I made the decision not to blur the background, I

was in my living room, I showed them my dog, I had my kids around, I completely levelled with them. I encouraged them to have their snacks and tea together. The language I used was less formal.” As the programme progressed, YW&G became more confident to speak up, share experience and switch their cameras on. Breakout rooms were also used to help facilitate engagement by splitting large groups according to need, for example by age or social learning topic.

## Research question four: how can learning from EmpowHER inform future programming and the sector?

As an innovative programme with learning and iteration stages built into the delivery, EmpowHER has allowed us to engage in deep and purposeful learning. The analysis of the evidence and data collated for the evaluation establishes several learnings for future programmes and the sector.

As we look towards dissemination of learning through national learning events, the EmpowHER toolkit, and the EmpowHER legacy programme, we will be focussing our work on the benefit and enablers of impactful youth-led social action, the importance of single-gender groups for rich social learning, the value of a core and flex model with tailored training and support, the exponential value add of partnership-working, and how the principles of youth work provide a core foundation for impactful wellbeing programmes. The challenge here will be around the selection and streamlining of our learning to ensure it is digestible and engaging to the wider sector. We have already established strong links with our in-house design team and will be working closely with them to ensure not just what we share, but how we share it, is based on user-need and continues to put young people and youth workers at the heart of our work.

Thanks to the ongoing funding from Spirit of 2012 for a legacy project for EmpowHER, we have an exciting opportunity to test exactly this question over a two-year programme that will be based on the EmpowHER model and will allow us to answer “once you have established best practice, how do you invest in organisations to embed sustainable projects?”



## Conclusions and next steps

As we re-analyse our data to produce our final report, we will be reflecting on EmpowHER’s learning throughout the four cohorts. For Cohort Four, we have the following key reflections, which will be fed into the wider evaluation of the programme.

### Enablers remain the same online and offline

Social learning and role models continue to be key enablers of the programme and instrumental for positive outcomes achieved in the programme. Single gender groups also continue to work effectively as they enable YW&G to feel comfortable, creating a safe

space for them to explore, challenge and develop their understanding of key issues affecting them and their communities. Flexibility, and the core and flex model, are also fundamental to successfully delivering the programme, whether online, offline or in a blended model.

## Online delivery – a mixed picture

As echoed on a number of our programmes, we saw both the challenges and opportunities of online delivery which impact YW&G experience if not their outcomes. Learning from experience in Cohort Three and wider work through the pandemic, complemented by EmpowHER shared learning events and training, youth workers felt more confident in adapting delivery and finding ways to engage YW&G online. The Digital Access Fund continued to be effectively utilised but it should be noted that despite this some YW&G cited digital access as a barrier to completion. We should also be mindful of the increased demands on youth workers time in online delivery. Whilst the view from YW&G was a mixed one, with some YW&G feeling more able to open up online, for the majority of YW&G face to face is the preferred method.

## Diverse reach, strong retention

As Covid-19 exacerbated inequalities and barriers to access to support for young people, there was a significant risk that EmpowHER would not be able to recruit its target group of unusual suspects. However, Cohort Four not only reached “unusual suspects”, it also increased engagement with young people from ethnic minority communities, and participants struggling with significant, personal, social and development barriers and reporting low social and emotional capabilities, especially communication, confidence, responsibility and resilience. The retention rate also returned to pre-pandemic levels, showing that with time, effective partnership and recruitment methods, and dedication, it is possible to engage the most vulnerable young people in online delivery.



## Organic, multi-faceted legacy

EmpowHER is poised to leave an exciting tangible legacy, a real strength of which is the organic nature in which Delivery Partners have grown and embedded the work. Indeed, the Accelerator fund has frequently supported organisations to progress and expand work they had already taken initial steps with. The fact that youth organisations are shaping and owning a legacy, tailored to local need, suggests a strong path to sustainability and of course demonstrates clear belief in the value of EmpowHER.

**“We have decided to add a girls only group to our weekly timetable... this is because the girls have fed back that they love this safe space”**

**Youth worker, New Routes Integration.**

For the YW&G themselves, as well as clear improvements on their own wellbeing, they have also developed confidence and motivation to take this work forward – whether through social action in their communities or as role models to other YW&G. **“I used to doubt myself a lot, but EmpowHER has helped massively with this and I feel like I can be a role model to younger students”**. A programme like this inspires young people to be community activists and support their community with the problems they are encountering.

As we look ahead to the development of the EmpowHER toolkit, the Legacy Funding launch in Autumn, and our final learning event in September, we can see how these exciting workstreams will combine to enable us to use the rich insights and valuable tools to empower young people and youth workers to lead change in their local communities and national level.

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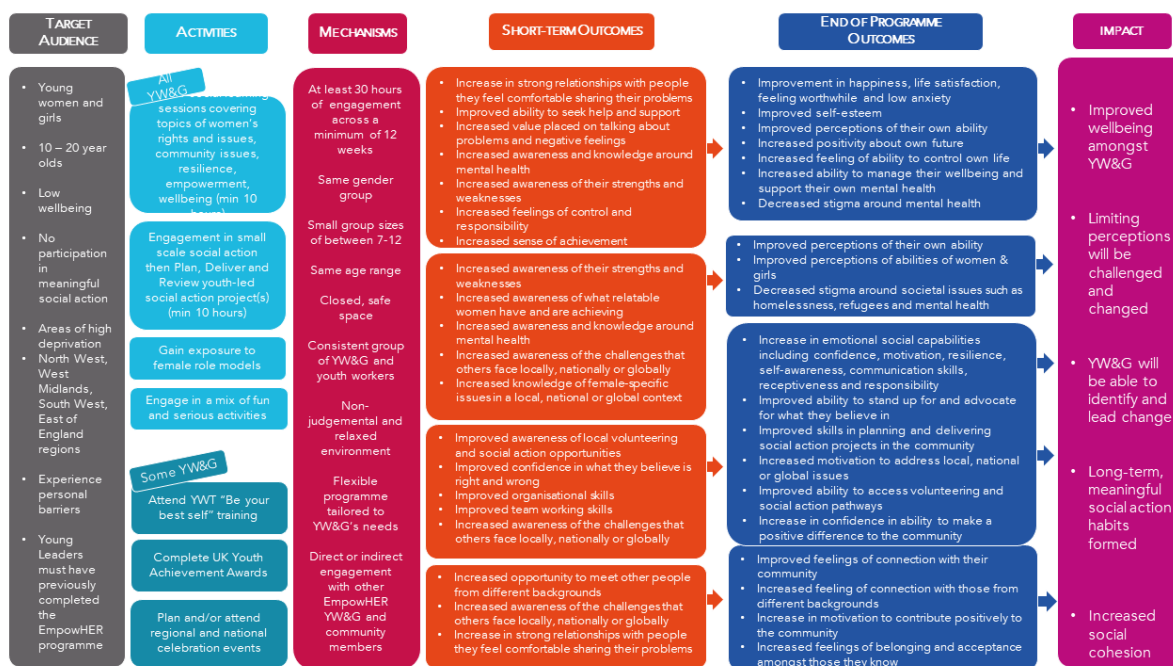
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# Appendix A

## Theory of Change

### Young women and girls



## Youth workers/Youth organisations

TARGET AUDIENCE	ACTIVITIES	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth organisations and youth workers directly involved in the programme delivery ('Delivery Partners')</li> <li>Organisations that are able to reach young people living in deprived areas of the UK</li> <li>North West, West Midlands, South West, East of England regions</li> <li>Group of Delivery Partners that are diverse in size and capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend Train the Trainer workshop</li> <li>Lead programme delivery</li> <li>Receive support from UK Youth</li> <li>Support YW&amp;G to plan, deliver and review social action projects</li> <li>Receive support from British Red Cross Youth Engagement Workers to facilitate youth-led social action</li> <li>Support YW&amp;G to attend YWT training and take on leadership opportunities</li> <li>Support all young people to complete the Youth Achievement Awards</li> <li>Engage with learnings from the programme, shared by UK Youth</li> <li>Attend regional meetings</li> <li>Plan and attend regional and national celebration events</li> <li>Some Delivery Partners will also: Complete the UK Youth Social Action Quality Mark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge in delivering high quality, youth-led social action (will principles)</li> <li>Increased knowledge in delivering inclusive social action</li> <li>Increased knowledge in relevant accreditations</li> <li>Increased knowledge of how to engage the 'unusual suspects' in social action projects</li> <li>Improved awareness of how to support young women and girls to improve their wellbeing</li> <li>Improved opportunities to build links within the community</li> <li>Improved understanding of what young women and girls perceive to be their limiting perceptions</li> <li>Greater awareness of what BRC and YWT can offer our young people</li> <li>Improved awareness of how the organisation can engage with the local community</li> <li>Improved relationship with organisations that offer social action opportunities e.g. BRC</li> <li>Increased opportunity to communicate their work externally</li> <li>Improved perception of youth organisation amongst young women and girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in provision of high quality and inclusive social action opportunities</li> <li>Improved ability to support YW&amp;G to improve their wellbeing</li> <li>Increased opportunities for young people to engage with people in their local community</li> <li>Improved ability to support young people to feel empowered to identify and lead change</li> <li>Increased number of young leaders within their youth organisation</li> <li>Increase in accreditations available to young people attending the youth organisation</li> <li>Improved signposting to opportunities for young people that involve social action</li> <li>Increase in partnership working with other organisations (e.g. to recruit young people or to provide further opportunities)</li> <li>Improved opportunities available to young women and girls</li> <li>Improved awareness within the community of the organisation and the value of its work</li> <li>Increased ability to reach and engage young women and girls</li> </ul>

## Local communities

TARGET AUDIENCE	ACTIVITIES	SHORT TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People that live locally to the young people participating in the programme</li> <li>Areas of high deprivation</li> <li>North West, West Midlands, South West, East of England regions</li> <li>Exact audience selected by the YW&amp;G</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement in young people's social action projects</li> <li>Example include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attending events</li> <li>Exposure to campaigns</li> <li>Receiving messages of support</li> <li>Receiving products</li> <li>Benefitting from charity activity due to fundraising activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific outcomes based on youth-led social action activity</li> </ul> <p>For those that engage directly with YW&amp;G:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased opportunities to meet other people in the community</li> <li>Improved feelings of connection with their community</li> <li>Increased awareness of positive contribution YW&amp;G make to the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific outcomes based on youth-led social action activity</li> </ul> <p>For those that engage directly with YW&amp;G:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased social cohesion</li> <li>Improved perceptions of young people</li> </ul>



## Appendix B

### Quantitative data collection

Tool	Data collected	No. of participants
Profiling record	Demographic data - including age, ethnicity, postcode, and personal barriers.	710 YW&G records
Entry & Exit outcomes survey – YG&W	Outcomes data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal wellbeing (ONS indicators)</li> <li>• Ability to identify and lead change</li> <li>• Social cohesion</li> <li>• Previous involvement in social action</li> <li>• Limiting perceptions</li> </ul>	546 entry & 496 exit surveys Matched entry and exit surveys equalled 366. <sup>14</sup>
Entry & Exit outcomes survey - youth workers	Outcomes data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved ability to support YW&amp;G on the programme and with their social action</li> <li>• Increased partnership working with other organisations</li> <li>• Improved awareness within the community of the organisation and the value of it's work</li> <li>• Increased social cohesion</li> </ul>	33 entry & 41 exit surveys. Matched entry and exit equalled 18.

Tool	Data collated	No. of participants
Semi-structured in-depth interviews – YW&G	Views on: overall experience, social action activities, personal benefits, online delivery, social cohesion, and future social action activity.	14 YW&G

<sup>14</sup> Note - CAN and YMCA are not included in outcomes data as we have not received any matched surveys

Semi-structured in-depth interviews – youth workers	Views on: Participation, retention of the 'unusual suspects' & individual benefits, programme delivery & impact of online delivery, social cohesion & sustainability, key outcomes, and learning.	16 youth workers
Youth worker delivery partner reports	Information collected: social learning topics, social action activities led by YW&G and reach from the social action from all partners.	66 delivery reports submitted.
Partner in-depth focus group	The BRC and YWT were interviewed, to gain their perspective on the elements of the programme they delivered and their learning.	Group interviews – BRC interview with 4 colleagues & YWT with 2 colleagues.

## Appendix C

### Metric statistics

Metric	Question	Sample size	Sig level	Effect size (Cohen's d)
Self-efficacy/Perception of own ability	I can do things as well as most other people	361	Sig	0.44
Leadership	I feel comfortable taking the lead in small groups	361	Sig	0.45
Optimism	I feel happy when I think about my future	358	Sig	0.44
Empowerment	I feel in control of my future	351	Sig	0.5
Relationships	I have someone I feel comfortable talking to about my problems	360	Sig	0.32
Community cohesion	I can trust people that live near me	359	Sig	0.32
Social cohesion	I am accepted by people that I spend my time with	358	Sig	0.39
Social mixing	I often meet people that are different to me	357	Sig	0.33
Community agency	I can make a positive difference to where I live	358	Sig	0.46
Happiness	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	350	Sig	0.35

Worthwhile	Overall, how much do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	353	Sig	0.47
Life satisfaction	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?	358	Sig	0.42
Anxiety	Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? (16+ years old only)	45	Not sig.	N/A

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