



**Partnership
for Young
London**

**Invest in young Londoners, young
Londoners will in turn invest in London.**

A Vision for Young Londoners to 2025

Young people in London are
25% of the population,
but 100% of its future

Vision Statement, May 2015

A Vision for Young Londoners to 2025

In a context of an emerging London economy and evolving political landscape locally and across the capital, there is a need and an opportunity for all agencies working with and for young people to have a shared vision for what a London that is great for all young people can and should look like. And, most importantly, how we can get there together.

To support this ambition, initiated by London Funders, London Youth and Partnership for Young London, we have developed a cross-sector alliance with representation from funders, local authorities, youth work practitioners, formal education providers, arts and sports organisations, the wider voluntary sector and housing providers, which has culminated in this vision statement.

We see this work as part of an ongoing dialogue across providers and policy makers which will evolve and develop over time as momentum builds.

We welcome your comments and your feedback on the Vision and on how to make it a reality.

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London Funders is the membership network for funders and investors in London's civil society. We provide a safe place to think, share, learn and act together to meet the needs of Londoners. Our mission is to strengthen and support funders and promote effective funding practices, to meet the needs of Londoners.

London Youth supports a network of over 400 diverse community youth organisations where young people choose to go, reaching 75,000 young people across every London borough and at our two outdoor education centres out of town. We're here to support and challenge young people to become the best they can be.

Partnership for Young London believes in a future where every young person's right to wellbeing is recognised and fulfilled. With young people making up a quarter of London's population, we have to respect that they are crucial to its future.

A Vision for Young Londoners

A diverse, global city

London is one of the most vibrant and diverse cities on the planet. We live in a world cultural capital and the world's most-visited city. It is one of the world's leading financial centres and has one of the largest metropolitan GDPs in the world. London's 43 universities form the largest concentration of higher education institutes in Europe and more than 300 languages are spoken within Greater London. It is also a young city. Over two million young people – one in four of its population - live in the capital.

Challenges for young people

Despite its pre-eminence as a leading global city, life for its young people can be full of significant challenges. Child poverty levels in London are a third higher than in England overall, with this poverty deeply entrenched in some parts of the capital. 40% of 10-11 year olds are obese and one in ten children have mental health issues. Almost half of pupils receiving free school meals did not gain five good GCSEs in 2012/2013. One in seven children live in poor housing and, compared to the rest of the country, fewer young people are on apprenticeships in London.

Worse could be ahead

Without action, many of these challenges are set to worsen. As the population increases, cuts to youth services and local authorities will see health, housing, education and employment for young people even further stretched. As the cost of housing increases, it is likely that young people will either be forced out or into areas of poor provision. Services will be unable to meet rising demand. Communities will be less able to respond. For many young people, this will mean greater inequality, a lack of opportunities and low aspiration.

Investing in the future

And yet we know that, for this great city to continue to thrive, we must invest in, protect and nurture the health, creativity, talent and resilience of its young people. If London is to remain a centre of excellence, we have to strive for a brighter future for the capital's young people.

A shared vision

This is why organisations working for and with young people across London have come together to create a shared vision for young Londoners. We know there are enormous opportunities to be gained when we work together. And we know that what we do today will affect the future of the capital's young people and the future of London as a world city.

Commitment to action

In January 2015, we began an initiative to help design that future. Looking ahead to 2025, we expect it to lead to new alliances, to effective dialogue, to responsive and appropriate services and to a better use of resources in the interests of young Londoners. We are committed to action. Quite simply, the future of young Londoners – and London – depends upon it.

Our Values

In working together to deliver a brighter future for young Londoners, we know it is important to agree on shared values. This guides not just what we do, but how and why we do it. Our values amount to a set of principles that define the nature of the partnership between all of those working to improve the outcomes for London's young people. We hope as many organisations and institutions working with young people share these values and build them into their policy and delivery in whatever way is appropriate.

1. Youth-led

Most importantly, we will put **young people at the centre** of all we do. This means being youth-led and listening to the voices of young people. But it also means making sure we include all young people, to ensure all their voices are heard. In this way, our vision is inclusive and focused on developing the assets of every young Londoner, regardless of background, race, colour, sexual orientation or creed.

2. United

Secondly, we commit to **meaningful and sustained collaboration**. A vision for young Londoners implies the creation of a united young people's sector in London. This means developing a clear and common voice. It means combining our resources and innovating together where there are clear gains for young Londoners. It also means that we will share our knowledge and improve the evidence base of what works, so that all services and support for young Londoners improves.

3. Positive about potential

Thirdly, we will be **positive and aspirational** for young Londoners. Of course, we will be pragmatic working for what is realistic and achievable. But we aim to work constructively not confrontationally with all those who can influence the future for London's young people. Where this takes us into advocacy and influencing others, we will emphasise the collective benefits to be gained. Where it involves delivering services, we will be guided by where we can create and add value, always seeking to focus on positive opportunities for young people, challenging the barriers they face, rather than presenting young people themselves as part of the problem.

4. Enabling

Finally, our work together will be guided by the imperative of **enabling young people**, providing the tools and support for them to develop their own resilience and create their own futures. Our emphasis will be on providing the most enabling environment possible, creating a climate that encourages their participation, the use of their skills, interests and aspirations.

Our vision: how London could look in 2025

Our vision rests on the central premise that when we **invest in young Londoners, young Londoners will in turn invest in London**. Our shared aspiration is that:

*In 2025, London is a city where **all** young people are empowered with the personal resilience that enables their belonging, ownership and the ability to lead happy, healthy and safe lives. It is a city where there is innovative, supportive and collaborative youth-led action across all agencies, public, private and voluntary sector, to realise the potential of young Londoners.*

A Strategy to Deliver

We have set out below the key building blocks of the Vision for Young Londoners. We recognise there is much work to be done to build the support and plans to make this happen and we would like partners with particular expertise in relation to the themes set out to help develop practical proposals to underpin this strategy.

While this is a Vision that is in the first instance shaped by service delivery organisations, young people were involved in initial discussions, and we will continue to consult with and involve young Londoners at all further stages of its development. For the purposes of this strategy we are focusing on those aged between 11-25, recognising that young people within this age range have very diverse needs.

1. Involving young Londoners

We will commit to deep partnerships with young Londoners themselves, finding new ways to engage, consult and respond and support YP to lead. We will commit to reporting annually on the views of young people in London, using this work as a catalyst for service improvement and advocacy. In doing so, we will constantly challenge ourselves, celebrate their success and amplify the voice of young Londoners.

2. Advocating education and well-being for life

We want to ensure that young people have fun and are healthy, that they have access to a range of universal services and are able to make the best use of the vast range of facilities on offer across the capital. We recognise that the combination of quality provision inside and outside of school is what will give young people the best chances. We will encourage enhanced support for young people to make informed choices about their futures, with a commitment to evidencing outcomes to shape positive futures and clear community benefits. We want all young people to have the benefit of access to regular sport and physical exercise, and will work together across informal and formal education to enhance attainment and build confidence, resilience and social and emotional skills..

3. Ensuring safety and support

We will work to nurture local and community alliances that protect young people and support their development, recognising the different safeguarding needs of all young people. We will promote

safe streets and play areas. We will develop routes to support vulnerable young people, including improved referrals, helping them progress to lead active and independent lives. We will campaign to tackle stigma in all its forms, including on mental health.

4. Tackling inequality

We will work together and with other partners to focus services and resources on those young people in greatest need, with less access to opportunity and limited life chances. We will advocate for more prevention and early intervention services seeking the support of policy makers to do this.

5. Providing positive career options for all

We will work together both as advocates for young people, and as employers to develop training and work opportunities that lead to broader and sustainable career choices for young Londoners. We will work with London's businesses and other employers to ensure they provide sustainable opportunities, and expect that they will aspire to pay the London Living Wage so that all young people can lead a decent life in the capital. We will enhance careers information advice and guidance in and out of school, reach out to young people who are disengaged, and support all young people as they need it through their journey into work.

6. Enhancing democratic engagement

We will encourage young people's participation in the democratic life of the city, increasing their representation at all levels and in the decisions that affect their lives, beginning with a united call for young people to vote from age 16 in the 2016 London Mayoral election and beyond.

7. Improving access to housing

We will work with public and private sector housing providers and registered social landlords, to include affordable housing for young adults in their long term plans, as well as developing provision for young people who may experience homelessness or be in housing need. We will advocate for licensing private landlords and greater devolution of housing to local authorities.

8. Innovating and learning

We will develop and disseminate and share with each other a compelling evidence base for solutions that have impact, building on existing practice, as well as delivering targeted and effective research, learning from innovation, developing pilots and spreading exemplar practice.

9. Leveraging investment

We will work closely with businesses in London to encourage long-term investment and commitment to young people, seeking incentives for those that do. We will develop innovative funding arrangements through partnerships and foundations that pool resources to influence others and attract further investment. We will advocate for commissioning and contracting to be used to deliver benefits for young Londoners.

10. Building stronger partnerships

Finally, we will forge and improve the partnerships for young people at all levels: amongst local and community interests; within and between local authorities and at a pan-London level, seeking leadership from City Hall. As youth-centred organisations, we will develop new alliances for advocacy and around innovative service provision.

A Strategy to Deliver

Through this cross-sector alliance, we aim to share this vision with wider stakeholders aiming to gather endorsement in this call to action. This will be further embedded in existing participation processes with young people. We encourage you to share this with your own stakeholders and with young people that you come into contact with. If you are willing to commit to making this vision a reality, then let us know and we will include you in further discussions about how we can deliver it together.