

LEVEL UP YOUTH WORK

NW LONDON

Evaluation report Executive summary



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Executive summary

The Level Up Youth Work Programme

Level Up Youth Work (LUYW) (2023-2026) was a professional development programme for practitioners working with young people, delivered in six northwest London boroughs. Funded by City Bridge Foundation via London Funders' [Propel](#), it was led by Young Westminster Foundation (YWF), one of the place-based [Young People's Foundations](#) (YPFs; Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Kensington and Chelsea). These YPFs, established by John Lyon's Charity in 2017, aim to connect public, private and voluntary sectors to support young people and respond to the pressures on the children and young people's sector, including increased demand for support and complexity of challenges, alongside the [significant reduction](#) in local and national investment in youth work over the last 15 years.

Based on a 2021-22 YWF pilot programme, LUYW offered professional development opportunities (practitioner forums, specialist training, and youth work qualifications) to practitioners in small, local community organisations working with children and young people. The programme targeted [equity-led](#) organisations (under £100k turnover) in which staff and trustees are members of the community they serve, or have experience of their challenges.

This evaluation

This independent qualitative evaluation explored the impact of LUYW's professional development offer for practitioners in small, diverse community organisations delivering support and activities for children and young people today. Qualitative research focused on practitioner experience of forums, training and qualifications, alongside exploration of the professional context in which they work. Summary quantitative training and qualification data provided by YWF can be found in Appendices B and C.

Our learning questions (see top of each Findings section below) explored: who is working with children and young people today; the professional development context for this workforce; the impact of LUYW forum activity on workforce connectedness; and the impact of the specialist training and the qualifications programme elements of LUYW. Over two research phases, we explored what drove impact, and what can sustain it. Our evaluation methodology featured a comprehensive two-stage thematic analysis process and two opportunities for reflective learning; one between the research stages and the second after analysis completion. In total, 56 participants shared their experience and views in groups and interviews.

Findings

1. A diverse and varied workforce: youth work as a profession today

How does today's youth workforce describe and think about their work?

- Who works with young people in northwest London today?
- What does the youth workforce think about the term 'youth worker'?
- How do members of the youth workforce describe themselves, their roles and their work?

[We wear different hats when we're in the office. So when I'm in the office I'm the community worker, family worker. But when I step into the youth work project, I bring my youth side out.](#)

Practitioner, member organisation

People working in small community organisations with children and young people are non-homogenous in background, mission and methods; a highly diverse workforce, connected through their focus on supporting young people. In describing how they think about and define their roles, participants fell into four groupings, with varying degrees of overlap:

A. Youth worker ‘through and through’

All these practitioners had positively experienced youth work themselves; they’d attended a local youth club, benefited from meeting youth workers there, and wanted to do the same valuable work. For this group, youth work was their vocation, described with strong emotion and pride.

B. Community worker with multiple roles: ‘Youth work is only one part of what I do’

For many participants, ‘youth worker’ brought connotations of working exclusively with young people in a youth club, and they preferred job titles such as coach, teacher and mentor. For some, ‘youth worker’ inadequately reflected their variety of projects and the community groups they supported, while for others, the term didn’t fit because their work was centred on a specific cohort, need, or practice model.

C. Specific mission-driven workers

Some participants described their work primarily in relation to the specific gap, need or cohort they focused on, e.g.: teaching a specific language to children in group sessions, media skills or therapeutic group work using a specific manualised model. Many participants had started these organisations themselves and brought lived experience, alongside relevant specific skills and qualifications, such as psychology, play work and sound engineering.

D. Young people who progress from participant to youth worker.

Some young people told us about progressing from participant to volunteer, completing a Level 1 youth work course, and then progressing to paid sessional work in their project or club. We heard about the importance of ‘growing your own’, cultivating a future youth workforce with lived experience of attending a youth club or project.

Youth work as a profession

[We don’t really get spoken of, but we are so important because if there’s no youth clubs, where do these young people go?](#) Practitioner, member organisation

Participants were asked about what ‘youth work as a profession’ meant to them, and the relevance of youth work to their own roles. Three themes emerged:

A. The majority of participants didn’t use the term ‘youth work’, or connect it with their work

For many, the term ‘youth worker’ wasn’t one they had thought much about, and they didn’t use the term in reference to their own work with young people. They had limited awareness of the qualification pathway for people wanting to study youth work.

B. Youth work did not offer a relevant or attractive professional pathway for many participants

Several participants told us that youth work did not have a pathway for progression, in which they could increase their responsibility and salary over time. They contrasted youth work with professions such as teaching and social work, referencing the low status and respect for youth workers, along with the low

pay, part-time and sessional employment, and relatively few permanent jobs. Participants reflected on the relative importance of experience and qualifications, with some (but not all) concerned that youth work's low status was due to the relative ease with which someone can begin working in a youth-work context without a youth work qualification, especially if previously a participant.

C. Some respondents described youth work as a rewarding, albeit challenging, profession

The 'youth worker through and through' cohort readily identified with the concept of 'youth work as a profession', expressing pride in their work and a strong sense of fulfillment. However, they felt youth work was not well understood, nor widely respected, and that the work was difficult to convey. They felt this led to a widespread lack of awareness of, and connection to, youth work and its qualifications pathway. Numerous participants attributed this lack of awareness to funding cuts and the closure of open-access youth spaces. This group had often undertaken qualifications late, due to facing financial constraints (personal, organisational, or both) earlier in their career.

2. Connection

What impact has the LUYW programme had on small organisational connectedness?

- What has driven these changes?
- What network and collaboration developments have occurred?
- What developments and connections have occurred?

In-borough connection: the borough forums

[We might be super busy, but we'll make sure someone from the team can make it to that meeting so they can speak to someone else, find out something new.](#) Practitioner, member organisation

Prior to LUYW funding, YPFs had focused mainly on supporting managerial staff, and excepting Westminster, none had run a consistent practitioner forum. Boroughs operated forum meetings throughout the LUYW period, delivering at least four meetings per year. Over three years, 75 forum meetings were held with a total of 1,128 attendees, averaging 15 practitioners per meeting. In years two and three of the programme, 222 small community organisations attended forum meetings, 56% of these self-identified as equity-led. Attendees were mainly from small-medium sized organisations (62% of total), alongside practitioners from larger ones (37%).

Forum members across all six boroughs described their borough forum as a gateway to information, support and opportunity. Forums enabled members to connect in-person, and in doing so, helped them achieve a host of important personal and professional outcomes, often with positive ripple effects for their organisation. Participants described six ways in which forum attendance helped them:

A. Reduces isolation by enabling human connection

Face-to-face borough forums helped participants combat some of the challenges inherent to working in a small community organisation. We heard about the precious little time participants had for networking and their reduced capacity for professional development. Members repeatedly talked about the role of forums in helping them feel connected to their colleagues.

B. Space for practice discussion, advice-seeking, and problem solving

Members described borough forums as safe, trusted places to go for practical help and support, to discuss and debate practice or operational questions, and ask for advice to help solve a problem.

Example topics included policy development, risk management and thinking about a young person's particular need.

C. Build individuals' knowledge of organisations

Borough forum meetings help build member knowledge of organisations working with young people and communities in the area, and sometimes further afield. Meetings enable connection with people beyond the hyper-local area in which many small organisations operate, helping build a broader understanding of the borough landscape.

D. Build relationships and partnerships between organisations

Forums are an important opportunity to meet other members, get to know each other, and build relationships. We heard of numerous cases in which relationships made through forum attendance led to working partnerships and joint projects, resource sharing and a reduction in competition and duplication.

E. Yields related benefits for young people

Attending their borough forum brought various ripple-effect benefits to the young people members worked with. For new practitioners, wanting to understand their borough's youth offer and develop it for their young people, the forums acted as a 'bridge' to deepen their knowledge and thinking about their own offer.

F. Supports professional development

In many boroughs, forums offer practitioners access to professional development opportunities that may be out of reach for small organisations. We heard how mini training sessions were often built into the forum agenda, and how connections made at forum meetings led to professional development support offered between organisations. For the LUYW programme team, forum meetings have played an important role in helping each borough, and the programme overall, to explore member training needs.

Cross-borough connection between YPFs

Core work for all YPFs requires focus on their boroughs and the small organisations within their membership. The LUYW programme work, with member-led training priorities emerging from borough forums, only strengthened the YPFs' in-borough focus.

The original LUYW budget proposal had included resources for cross-borough partnership working and activities. During the proposal assessment stage, City Bridge Foundation asked YWF to reduce their total funding request by 20%, which resulted in the elimination of a designated programme management post. YWF's senior staff took on LUYW programme management in addition to their existing work. Despite the team's ambition to cultivate cross-borough projects, this proved time intensive and was very difficult to sustain over three years. The potential for developing a centralised picture of the work each YPF was undertaking, and for the cultivation of more strategic cross-borough vision and projects wasn't possible.

During the course of the evaluation, LUYW operational leads expressed interest in strengthening cross-borough work; to explore partnerships, share resources and collaborate on training. YPF CEOs told us that despite the minimal time they'd had together to explore cross-borough partnership, that

relationships and trust had been built through their participation in the LUYW programme, enabling future collaboration.

3. Training

Learning question

What impact has the LUYW programme's training activity had on participants?

- What was valuable and why?
- What impact did the training have on them and their work?
- Were there any 'ripple effect' impacts?

The LUYW programme delivered 127 distinct specialist training courses over three years, with 1,330 places offered across the six boroughs. Approximately 120 organisations benefited from training per year, the vast majority (79%) being small to medium sized community organisations (see Glossary for definition). Appendix B is a summary of training activity.

Practitioners consistently described training offered through LUYW as highly valuable, and especially so given their working context. We repeatedly heard that practitioners had limited access to, and few opportunities for, professional development, driven by the following factors:

- part-time and sessional employment that creates significant time pressures;
- funding that pays only for face-to-face work with young people, and doesn't cover professional development time (some participants told us they attend training in their own time);
- small multi-functional teams, in which there is significant time pressure to complete a wide variety of operational tasks within limited hours.

These working conditions simultaneously create a strong need for training, and make it difficult to attend. YPF staff recognised that these factors created challenges for coordinating and scheduling the training offer. Despite their context, participants attended LUYW-offered training in significant numbers and spoke very positively about their experiences. We heard that, prior to LUYW, training did not reflect workforce needs, but that LUYW gave YPFs an opportunity to create needs-led and appropriately designed youth worker training, on core subject matter (such as safeguarding and first aid) and specialist subjects.

Factors that made training valuable for participants

Participants were very positive about the quality of the specialist training in LUYW. They identified the following important factors that were central to their beneficial training experience:

- Training was delivered locally, face to face and in relatively small groups;
- Trainers brought lived experience and subject-matter knowledge;
- Trainers created a relaxed, inclusive, and authentic tone;
- Training included space for reflection and practice discussion;
- The content was well-tailored, and directly applicable to their practice.

The impact of training for participants

I don't think I've ever experienced training like that before, and my understanding of autism from someone with lived experience was incredible... Lots of people went away changing things.

Practitioner, member organisation

Participants told us that attending LUYW-funded training led to important changes for them as practitioners, and also had wider benefits for their organisations. Quality specialist training:

- built practitioner confidence for working directly with young people;
- led to changes in practice and organisational policy, and
- provided space for reflection and practice discussion.

Training on neurodiversity was particularly influential, leading to changes in accessibility of programmes to young people with additional needs. Participants also told us how demonstrating a commitment to professional development had positively impacted external stakeholders' views of their organisation.

4. Qualifications

Learning question

What impact has the LUYW programme's qualification activity had on participants?

- What was valuable and why?
- What impact did the qualification have on them and their work?
- Were there any 'ripple effect' impacts?

The LUYW programme aimed to remove funding-related barriers for practitioners undertaking qualifications, increase their awareness of courses, and encourage uptake. The programme provided funding for practitioners to undertake youth work qualifications (Levels 1 to 3) and funded young people volunteering in member organisations to complete Level 1 qualifications.

As with the forums and specialist training aspects of the programme, the context in which LUYW qualifications were offered is important. Participants described challenges they faced in starting or completing studies, echoing barriers described for training. They cited working hours (part-time, sessional, voluntary), time shortages (many 'hats' to wear and little time for professional development) and funding (paying for project delivery time only) as factors preventing them gaining qualifications.

Participants told us about these barriers (and their connected frustrations) time and again. Several had been working in youth services for many years (and some, for decades) without gaining qualifications. Despite these challenges, 196 practitioners registered for a funded qualification. Of the 184 who started their course, 156 (86%) completed the qualification. 52% of the qualification cohort were young people under the age of 25, predominantly completing Level 1 courses.

Impact of qualifications

You're constantly reflecting on your work and you have to use examples from sessions. It's connected directly to your workplace and asks you to constantly reflect on your work. It's super helpful.

Young People's Foundation

Adult practitioners who completed Level 2 or 3 courses readily described the positive impact of the course on their knowledge and practice. The course experience had strengthened their work personally, and benefitted their organisation in various ways:

- safeguarding skill development
 - focused coursework on safeguarding strengthened knowledge and helped students bring more awareness, nuance, inclusivity, and planning to their work;
- empowerment for young people

- e.g., one participant described how completing the qualification enabled them to give young people more ownership to organise themselves;
- policy awareness and development
 - this helped the workforce to understand the relevance of policy and law in their workplace and use this to protect themselves and their colleagues;
- ripple effects across their organisations
 - to colleagues and into practice development, funding applications, and strengthened leadership skills;
- the importance and value of reflection on practice
 - courses taught participants to reflect, and to use reflective skills to learn and improve their practice.

A few participants felt that qualification content may not reflect the context and needs of today's youth workforce.

The small group of five young people we spoke with about their experience completing a Level 1 qualification told us of their positive experience of learning (which some contrasted with their experience in formal education) and that the course had helped them on their path toward the world of work and improved their confidence and self-esteem. For some young people volunteering in small organisations, the course potentially marked the beginning of a career in youth work.

5. Overall programme impact

Learning question

How has the LUYW programme been most impactful for practitioners and organisations?

- Which programme elements have been most impactful, and why?
- Have any 'ripple effect' developments been especially impactful, and why?

Practitioner forums

LUYW's original aim was to create forums that enable the sharing of knowledge, skills, and good practice. Evidence strongly indicates that this aim has been met, and that practitioner forums have made a significant positive impact on the working lives of those who attend them, across all six boroughs. YPFs were all too aware of the challenging and time-poor context for their members, and strove to create meetings that delivered as much value as possible when connecting participants. Meetings were shaped by and met participant needs, and evolved as attendee numbers increased and new members joined.

The connections that occur at forum meetings have very positively impacted the working lives of attendees. In the challenging context for small youth-oriented organisations, with precious little time for professional development and networking activity, practitioners who attend their local borough forum feel more connected, strengthen their local knowledge, build relationships, and find space to seek advice and discuss practice or organisational problems.

Specialist training

The LUYW programme aimed to deliver a specialist training programme shaped by the most important issues for young people, that built practitioner confidence and improved their capacity to respond to young people's needs. Our findings indicate this aim was met. With very few exceptions, we heard that practitioners had found the training experience to be high quality and valuable to their professional development and practice. They relished the trainers' combination of lived experience and in-depth knowledge and their relaxed, authentic, inclusive styles. Training sessions provided valuable time for

reflection and practice discussion, enabling participants to explore challenges and learn from each other.

Training also led to increased practice confidence, and to changes in how organisations worked with young people. This was notable particularly regarding neurodiverse young people. This subject had strong demand for training and led to participants better understanding how they could adapt or open their offer to be more inclusive of neurodiverse young people.

Core training subjects, such as safeguarding and first aid, were also delivered through the LUYW programme and this free, high quality training was just as positively received.

Qualifications

Participants attending LUYW courses, particularly at Level 2 and 3, described positive impact on their practice, their skill development, understanding, and awareness of policy and legal requirements. They also described positive ripple effects of their learning within the organisation, both regarding modelling good practice to junior team members, and for demonstrating professional development and practice quality to funders. Young people who completed Level 1 courses found it a very positive experience and helpful in a variety of work- and career-focussed ways, whether it represented the start of a potential youth work pathway or more general positive engagement with learning and their future.

In giving practitioners working with young people the funding to undertake qualifications, the LUYW programme removed one of the most important barriers - finances. This was essential for organisations in which there was enough capacity to enable a practitioner to take the time for study. Many small organisations, however, can only afford to fund part-time and sessional staff, who then typically hold other jobs to earn enough income. They are often juggling too many commitments to easily undertake further study. These funding and workforce challenges in the small organisations that LUYW supported prevented greater numbers from undertaking Level 2 and 3 qualifications.

Ripple effect impact

The profile of the youth sector amid small organisations working with young people

By bringing together practitioners in small organisations for connecting and networking, for training and qualifications, the LUYW programme has raised awareness of, and fertilised, the current youth sector landscape in northwest London. The creation of a forum in each borough has been immensely valuable, and creates a sense of collegiality and community for those who attend. Through training and qualifications, this diverse group of practitioners are brought together again, to learn and reflect on their work alongside each other. Bringing practitioners working with young people together raises their collective awareness of the youth work underway and creates a sense of a youth sector amongst this diverse group.

YPFs knowledge of their member network

Through creating and developing a member forum in their borough, each YPF has had particular cause to make regular contact with member practitioners, to survey their workforce needs, to create and evolve a space that reflects these needs. This process has introduced member feedback cycles into YPFs; they now do this at various points, for new and existing members, and use forum meetings to deepen their understanding of member needs.

Conclusions

The youth workforce needs and deserves more than grant funded, time-limited professional development

Due to the seismic defunding of the youth sector since 2010, small local organisations delivering youth and community support provide critically important support and activities for young people today. These organisations operate within a depleted and precarious wider voluntary and community sector context. Many organisations are battling for survival and delivering support to young people with increasingly complex needs. Professional development can be viewed as a luxury, rather than essential to the provision of quality preventative services.

LUYW offered a highly-valued professional development-centered antidote for many small grassroots organisations in northwest London. It was a grassroots-oriented, foundation-layer professional development programme, for people who are part of the communities they serve.

However, LUYW's valuable professional development offer was a time-limited, grant-funded opportunity for six local authority areas benefiting from a YPF. We heard about how this youth workforce lacks clear training requirements, regulated progression pathways, and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Currently, unless a 'bolted-on' offer such as the LUYW programme exists, practitioners do not have ready access to 'built-in', ongoing, high quality opportunities for connection, specialist training, or qualification courses. Yet what LUYW delivered was not luxurious, it was essential.

This diverse youth workforce is exposed to substantial risk by gaps in the statutory and regulatory landscape

Those working with children and young people in small community organisations in northwest London come from a wide variety of backgrounds and fields, and are united in their commitment to their communities. There are, however, some notable differences in how they think about and define their roles: some identify strongly with youth work and others not at all.

The current youth workforce is fragmented. They have little statute to guide their work, and no meaningful regulation to provide parameters or set standards. Infrastructure is patchy at best. In contrast to the pre-2010 era of youth and community work, few practitioners benefit from a local authority presence that, to a greater or lesser extent, set certain minimum requirements (and often also provided) for their training and professional development. They struggle to generate core costs to pay for training, development, and the management time required to support staff.

Practitioners have a significant need for support, advice and guidance on matters of practice, policy, and governance. These needs suggest the presence of risk, both at organisational and practice levels. In the absence of sector-wide support and standards, practitioners help each other when they meet in forum meetings, training, or qualification sessions.

While forums, training and courses play a role in meeting practitioner needs and reducing operational risks, the absence of clear standards, expectations and the regulatory support to achieve these leaves organisations and practitioners dependent on circumstance.

There is little in the way of guard rails for practitioners and their organisations, even while many manage to effectively learn as they go, seeking and finding appropriate help along the way. The standards and qualifications in existence were largely created in a youth sector context of local authority leadership and infrastructure that no longer exists. In the highly pressured local community context in which today's varied youth workforce operates, current standards and qualification courses do not meet their needs.

With the loss of much of the former youth sector and much of its workforce, essential systems of debriefing, reflective practice, and supervision are being forgotten

We heard repeated reference to the value of the reflective discussion elements within LUYW's offer, be it in training sessions or qualification tutorials. Participants told us how valuable they found it to discuss their practice, their sessions, and the challenges they experience, with colleagues from other organisations. Participants completing Level 2 and 3 youth work courses emphasised the value of reflective aspects of the course, both during course discussions and in assignments. Yet only once in our fieldwork did we hear the word 'debrief'.

It was beyond our project's scope to explore practitioners' supervision, debriefing, and reflective practice arrangements in their organisations. Yet, our findings suggest that such systems, which could be critical factors in supporting individual practice development, quality improvement, and organisational risk management, are not widespread or frequent enough for today's youth workforce. Young Hammersmith and Fulham's supervision initiative [see Appendix A] begins to address this worrying gap within small organisations.

Recommendations

The research team proposes four recommendations, with corresponding actions, to support and strengthen the youth workforce in northwest London beyond the LUYW programme timeframe. Coordination, facilitation, and funding support will be required to ensure YPFs can dedicate time to them. We encourage local authorities to increase their funding and infrastructure support for professional development of the youth workforce. John Lyon's Charity, together with the YPF Trust, are in a unique neutral position to work across local authority areas in support of these recommendations.

Additionally, we hope that those working in and with the youth and community sector nationally will find them a useful contribution to current debates about rebuilding youth workforce capacity as part of the government's 10-year Youth Matters strategy.

Recommendation 1: Formalise a cross-borough strategic YPF partnership to jointly champion and capacity build the northwest London youth sector.

In the depleted youth sector landscape, the local infrastructure and influencing role of YPFs is of critical importance. Currently there is relatively little focus on cross-borough partnership and projects. The successes of the cross-borough LUYW programme suggest that joining together with strategic focus will pool resources, reduce duplication, maximise skills and strengths, increase purchasing power, amplify influencing voices, and promote widespread awareness of sector challenges.

Recommended actions:

- A. Undertake joint strategic planning and vision-setting activity to identify sector goals
- B. Develop a cross-borough Theory of Change to clarify impact goals, and to align and strengthen central initiatives such as training programmes and forum development
- C. Better align monitoring and evaluation systems to the Theory of Change
- D. Explore opportunities for joint procurement
- E. Develop relationships with grant makers across northwest London to explore joint opportunities, and resultant economies of both scale and scope
- F. Share cross-borough plans with YPF members across the LUYW partnership, raising awareness of the drivers for the joint project, and the opportunities for working more closely together.

Recommendation 2 : Strengthen YPFs' infrastructure role to develop cross-borough baseline workforce development standards for organisations working with young people.

YPFs already set some baseline expectations of organisations as part of their current ways of working, whether it be at point of membership signup or when an organisation has applied for a small YPF grant. Checks include risk management, knowledge of safeguarding, insurance, and health and safety. The proliferation of small organisations working with young people without the benefit of robust sector infrastructure carries significant potential risk for staff, volunteers, and young people and families, and to the organisations themselves. YPFs are in a prime position to support organisations to build robustness and safe practices through standard-setting, thereby supporting their long-term health and longevity.

Recommended actions:

- A. Undertake a collaborative process with members to identify and agree a common set of baseline standards. This process will also identify the most pressing organisational and practice risks and inform the training offer. Existing youth work standards (e.g., [NYA, 2023](#)) may be a useful starting point for the process, but it will be necessary to consider what is most important for small local organisations who don't consider themselves to offer 'youth work'
- B. Add checks on debriefing, supervision and reflective practice to existing baseline organisational checks.

Recommendation 3: Add workforce professional development explicitly as a YPF focus area.

Currently, supporting the professional development of members is not explicitly part of the YPF remit. Small local organisations work in a wider training and professional development vacuum, have a strong need for high quality training, and lack funds to purchase such provision for themselves. LUYW funding enabled YPFs to take a lead role on training provision, developing an offer shaped by and tailored to members' needs. YPFs now have a well-developed understanding of these needs and are in an excellent position to update and deepen that knowledge via ongoing forum and training activity. A more explicit focus on training would assist the baseline standard-setting process referred to in Recommendation 2.

Recommended actions:

- A. Develop a deep understanding of who accessed (and who didn't access) the LUYW training offer and why. Each YPF could understand borough level facilitators and barriers to engagement before pooling this information to establish regional insights
- B. Share and build on existing knowledge and learning about specialist training within the LUYW YPF group, and beyond, to deepen understanding of need and what works
- C. Explore an aligned programme tailored to understanding organisational-level professional development needs, such as governance, risk management, debriefing, supervision, and reflective practice. Understand where else training and resources may be offered, develop inter-organisational links, and consider how to meet gaps
- D. Explore ongoing appetite for cross-borough communities of practice, connecting practitioners working on important practice challenges.

Recommendation 4: Continue to offer, develop and facilitate borough forums.

Borough forums are a highly valued connecting space for YPF members and provide plentiful rewards for individuals, organisations, and the sector. Forum meetings serve to connect members to each other, better connect YPFs to their members, surface organisational and professional development needs, and pave the way for relationships and partnerships between small local organisations.

Recommended actions:

- A. Consider building or strengthening a peer-led element for each borough forum to help reduce YPF team time and sustain them post-LUYW funding
- B. Work on capacity-building members to enable them to develop and facilitate focused sessions, perhaps through regional training and support efforts
- C. Use forum meetings to share evaluation findings and plans for the future with members.