

# EVALUATION REPORT

<b>Project</b>	Yuvanis Youth Centre and Mentoring Programme
<b>Prepared for</b>	Yuvanis Foundation
<b>Date</b>	10 April 2026
<b>Funder</b>	National Lottery Community Fund Million Hours Fund P2
<b>Reporting Period</b>	Feb 2024 – Mar 2026

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# 1. FOREWARD

This report presents a comprehensive evaluation of the Yuvanis Youth Centre and Mentoring Programme, delivered between February 2024 and March 2026 with support from the National Lottery Community Fund's Million Hours Fund Phase 2 (funded by The Department for Culture, Media, and Sports). It has been produced to provide an honest, evidence-based account of what was delivered, what was learned, and the difference this programme has made to young people in Oldham.

Yuvanis Foundation began this two-year project with a clear ambition: to provide sustained, high-quality youth activities for young people aged 11–18, particularly those from minority ethnic communities in areas of Oldham where positive out-of-school provision was lacking. What unfolded over the following 24 months exceeded those expectations in almost every measurable respect — in the breadth of activities delivered, in the number of young people reached, and in the depth of relationships built.

This report is written from an evaluative perspective, drawing on monitoring data submitted across three reporting periods, attendance analytics, staff and volunteer records, participant feedback, and illustrative case studies of young people whose lives have been positively shaped by their involvement. It is intended to give a full and frank picture of the programme — including where challenges were encountered and what was learned as a result.

The evidence gathered here points clearly to a project that delivered real, lasting change for young people who needed it most. It also points to an organisation that has grown in capacity, confidence, and community standing — and that is well placed to build on this foundation.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Yuvanis Youth Centre and Mentoring Programme ran continuously for 24 months from February 2024 to March 2026, delivering approximately 15 hours of structured youth activities every week across three venues in Oldham: Yuvanis Foundation's main hub, a venue in Shaw, and Kicksonic Sports Complex. The programme was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund as part of the Million Hours Fund Phase 2, with a total grant of £89,910.

<b>1,440</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>25-28</b>
<b>Youth Work Hours Delivered</b> <i>Across full 24-month programme</i>	<b>Young People Engaged</b> <i>Total individuals across the project</i>	<b>Average Attendance Per Hour</b> <i>Across all activity types</i>
<b>12+</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>9,763</b>
<b>Activities Delivered</b> <i>Sports, arts, skills &amp; mentoring</i>	<b>New Young People Reached</b> <i>First-time participants</i>	<b>Total Individual Engagements</b> <i>Via booking platform</i>

Eight or more sessions were delivered each week across five days, catering to a diverse range of interests and needs. The programme operated on an open-access model, removing financial and registration barriers to participation. A parallel strand of activities was targeted specifically at older young people and at girls, responding directly to community need.

Young people consistently reported feeling respected, heard, and valued at Yuvanis. The programme was co-designed with participants throughout, with regular surveys, focus groups, and steering activities shaping what was delivered each term. Activities ranged from boxercise, football, and cycling to



mentoring workshops, arts and craft, rock climbing, and kayaking — rotating in response to feedback to sustain engagement.

The project contributed to a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour amongst participating young people, as reported by parents and partner agencies. It also supported Yuvan's Foundation's own organisational growth, enabling the recruitment of additional staff and volunteers and substantially increasing the organisation's capacity and reach.

Looking ahead, the relationships, evidence, and learning generated through this programme provide a strong foundation for the next phase of Yuvan's ambition: the establishment of a dedicated permanent youth centre in Oldham — a goal that has already attracted interest and early support from the local council and other funders.



### 3. ABOUT YUVANIS FOUNDATION

Yuvanis Foundation is a King's Award-winning community-based organisation established in 2009 and based in Oldham, Greater Manchester. Since its founding, the organisation has worked with young people aged 11–18 — particularly those from South Asian and other minority ethnic communities — providing a wide range of activities, services, and support designed to promote positive development and reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour.

Over its sixteen years of operation, Yuvanis has delivered programmes spanning sport and physical activity, arts and culture, mental health and wellbeing, educational support, leadership development, and community engagement. The organisation has an established reputation within the communities it serves in Westwood, Coldhurst, Chadderton, Werneth, Shaw, and the wider Oldham area.

A core principle running through all of Yuvanis's work is that young people should be at the centre of everything — not simply as beneficiaries, but as co-designers and co-producers of the activities and services they access. This ethos of young-people-led delivery underpins how the organisation recruits, plans, and evaluates its provision.

Yuvanis holds the Quality in Action Award, with its safeguarding policies reviewed annually by Action Together. The organisation works in close partnership with Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Oldham Council, and a range of local voluntary and community organisations, including longstanding collaborations with several local organisations and partners. This collaborative approach positions Yuvanis as part of a wider network of provision rather than operating in isolation.



# 4. PROJECT OVERVIEW

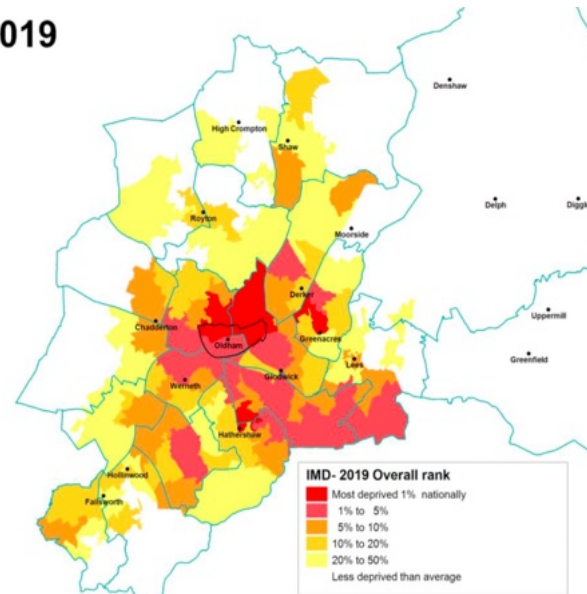
## Context and Need

Oldham is one of the most deprived local authority areas in England, with pockets of acute deprivation concentrated in neighbourhoods such as Coldhurst, Westwood, and Werneth. Young people from minority ethnic communities in these areas face compounding disadvantages: limited access to recreational and developmental activities, lower household incomes, and a shortage of dedicated youth provision during out-of-school hours.

In the period leading up to this project, community intelligence gathered through Yuvan's partnerships with GMP and Oldham Council identified a rise in anti-social behaviour among young people — particularly South Asian teenagers — in these neighbourhoods. Young people themselves, when consulted, described a lack of safe, welcoming, and affordable spaces where they could spend their time constructively and feel a genuine sense of belonging.

Yuvan's existing youth hub was already delivering positive outcomes, but the scale of need outstripped its capacity. The Million Hours Fund grant enabled the organisation to substantially expand its provision — increasing session frequency, diversifying activities, and extending its reach across additional venues and communities.

2019



## Project Aims

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The Yuvanis Youth Centre and Mentoring Programme was designed to deliver against the following aims:

	Aims	Description
1	<b>Reduce anti-social behaviour</b>	To extend access to high-quality youth activities during out-of-school hours, particularly for young people at risk of anti-social behaviour.
2	<b>Create a youth space</b>	To create an inclusive, welcoming environment that fosters emotional wellbeing, practical life skills, and trusted relationships with adult mentors and youth workers.
3	<b>Increase Inclusion and Access</b>	To operate on an open-access basis, removing barriers of cost, registration, and prior skill level.
4	<b>Youth-centred activities</b>	To co-design provision with young people, ensuring activities reflect their interests and evolve in response to their feedback.
5	<b>Build Skills and Confidence</b>	To deliver a structured mentoring strand focused on confidence, leadership, career development, and life skills.
6	<b>Strengthen Organisational Capacity</b>	To strengthen Yuvanis's organisational capacity and deepen its partnerships with local statutory and community bodies.

## Delivery Model

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The programme ran over 24 months from February 2024 to March 2026. Delivery took place across three venues: Yuvanis Foundation's primary community hub, a venue in Shaw, and Kicksonic Sports Complex. In addition, two online sessions ran throughout the full 24-month period, providing open-access provision that averaged approximately 20 participants per session.

Approximately 15 hours of activities were delivered every week — across eight or more sessions, five days a week — with the programme operating for around

48 weeks of each year. Some activities, including football, boxercise, mentoring workshops, open youth sessions, and craft clubs, ran continuously throughout the year. Others were delivered as short term-based programmes of around six weeks, selected through a voting process led by the young people themselves, and rotated based on their feedback.

This model — combining a stable core of consistent provision with a rotating offer of term-based activities — proved effective at sustaining engagement over time, particularly for older teenagers who might otherwise disengage from a fixed programme.



# 5. WHAT WAS DELIVERED

## The Activity Programme

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Across the two years, the programme delivered a broad and varied range of activities, each chosen by and with young people. Rather than prescribing a fixed offer, Yuvanis used a rotating model in which activities were voted on each term, with the programme evolving in response to what participants told them was working. The table below sets out each activity, its purpose, and the outcomes observed.

Strand 1:	Sports and Physical Activity
Activity	Purpose and Outcomes
<b>Weekly Football</b> (boys and girls, year-round)	Football served as one of the programme's most reliable entry points — a familiar, accessible activity that consistently attracted young people from different backgrounds and ability levels. Sessions were deliberately non-competitive and open access, creating an environment where turning up mattered more than skill level. Beyond the sport itself, football provided a reliable weekly anchor: a space where young people could meet friends and neighbours, release energy, and feel part of something regular and welcoming.
<b>Boxercise Classes</b> (3 sessions per week, boys and girls separately)	Launched in response to direct demand from young people, boxercise quickly became one of the programme's most attended and most valued sessions. The structured, high-energy format gave participants a weekly outlet for stress and pressure — something older teenagers in particular described as genuinely important to them. Over time, sessions became a space in which young people built mutual respect across differences of background, size, and confidence, developing self-discipline alongside physical fitness. The sustained weekly contact also gave coaches and youth workers the opportunity to build some of the deepest and most trusted relationships in the programme.

<p><b>Group Cycling</b></p>	<p>Cycling was delivered as a structured progression: from initial confidence-building sessions and skills training through to group rides along routes across Oldham that were safe, accessible, and — for many participants — previously unexplored. For young people who had never cycled confidently, the sessions offered both a practical skill and a tangible sense of achievement. A significant number of participants continued cycling independently beyond the structured sessions, suggesting the programme successfully instilled a habit rather than simply providing a one-off activity.</p>
<p><b>Rock Climbing and Kayaking</b></p>	<p>These activities were introduced specifically to give young people access to sports and environments they would not normally encounter in their communities. Both proved to be powerful experiences — partly because of the physical challenge involved, but also because of what it meant to young people to be in those spaces at all. Participants described feeling better represented in environments that had previously felt inaccessible or not meant for them. The activities also offered natural opportunities for young people to support and encourage one another, building peer bonds and a collective sense of achievement.</p>
<p><b>Hiking and Camping</b></p>	<p>Delivered periodically as full-day events, hikes and camping trips took young people out of their immediate environment and into scenic locations across the region — with routes that involved reaching summits and exploring landscapes most participants had never visited. These were among the most memorable experiences of the programme: physically challenging, socially connective, and deliberately unhurried. Trips typically concluded with a shared meal, creating space for conversation and reflection that the busier weekly sessions rarely allowed. For many young people, these days out represented their first experience of the countryside.</p>
<p><b>Badminton, Roller Skating, and Table Tennis</b></p>	<p>These activities were introduced as alternatives to the sports most readily available in the community, broadening the programme's offer and reaching young people whose interests were not served by football or boxing alone. Badminton and roller skating in particular were well received, generating genuine enthusiasm and, in the case of roller skating, a sustained training programme. Table tennis attracted a smaller but dedicated group of young people who engaged with it seriously and developed real skill over time. Together, these activities reinforced the programme's message that sport comes in many forms — and that there is something here for everyone.</p>

Strand 2:	Arts, Culture, and Creativity
Activity	Purpose and Outcomes
<b>Craft and Creative Workshops</b>	<p>Delivered specifically for girls due to demand, these sessions were structured around multi-week projects rather than one-off activities. Young women returned each week to continue and develop their work, building skill, investment, and a genuine sense of pride in what they produced. Girls consistently described the workshops as a space where they felt comfortable and free to explore — with many going on to contribute ideas and help shape later sessions themselves.</p>
<b>Arts and Theatre —</b> Partnership with Oldham Coliseum Theatre	<p>A collaboration with Oldham Coliseum Theatre brought professional artists into the programme to work with young people on heritage and culture-themed creative projects. These sessions introduced participants to artistic practice in a way that felt relevant to their own identities and backgrounds, and demonstrated that the arts were a space in which they could genuinely belong. This project was a part of a borough wide initiative through which the participants of our project were able to exhibit their work in Gallery Oldham each year throughout Summer for public viewing.</p>

Strand 3:	Open-Access Youth Centre Sessions
Activity	Purpose and Outcomes
<b>Free Play and Participant Led sessions</b>	<p>Regular open-access sessions ran throughout the programme across all three venues throughout the duration of the project, providing an informal, self-directed space where young people could socialise, play games, and spend time together without obligation or expectation. These sessions served a vital function beyond recreation. For young people not yet ready to commit to a specific structured activity, they offered a low-barrier entry point — a way of building familiarity with Yuvanis, getting to know staff, and gradually becoming part of the wider programme community. They also reflected one of the most consistent pieces of feedback from older teenagers: that what they valued most was a space that felt genuinely theirs, where they could come as they were without pressure to perform or participate in a particular way.</p>

Strand 4:	Mentoring and Personal Development
Activity	Purpose and Outcomes
<b>Bi-Weekly Mentoring Workshops</b>	<p>Delivered fortnightly throughout the programme, these workshops covered a structured range of topics including ICT skills, career development, leadership, confidence-building, health, and stress management. The sessions were designed to complement the physical activity offer by addressing the longer-term developmental needs of participants — giving young people the knowledge, language, and self-awareness to begin thinking seriously about their futures. Where sport and creative activities built confidence through doing, the mentoring workshops gave young people the space to reflect, ask questions, and explore who they wanted to become.</p>
<b>Professionals and Career Exposure</b>	<p>The mentoring workshop involved guest professionals from a variety of fields — spanning business, technology, the creative industries, healthcare, and public services — who visited to speak directly with young people and share their experiences. These visits opened up conversations about careers and life pathways that many participants had not previously considered within their reach. For young people growing up in communities with limited professional networks, direct access to people who had built careers in fields they were curious about proved to be one of the most motivating elements of the entire programme. Abraham Khan's journey — from a young person with no clear direction to someone training in automotive mechanics and preparing to become a youth work volunteer — began with exactly this kind of exposure.</p>

## How Activities Were Selected

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A distinguishing feature of this programme was the genuine role young people played in shaping what was delivered. Activities were not simply prescribed by staff — they were voted on by participants, with each term's rotating programme reflecting the expressed interests and feedback of the young people attending. Focus groups, steering activities, and informal conversations were used throughout the programme to gather views, identify what was working, and adjust the offer accordingly.

This approach required staff to be responsive and adaptable. When young people indicated a preference for more structured, staff-led activities over open-access provision, the delivery model was adjusted to reflect this. When older teenagers expressed a desire for a more informal, drop-in style environment, this was noted and responded to — informing the organisation's

longer-term thinking about the kind of permanent youth centre space that would best serve this group.



## 6. REACH AND PARTICIPATION

The following figures are drawn from funder monitoring submissions and booking platform analytics covering the period April 2024 to July 2025, with additional estimates for online sessions not captured in the platform data. All cumulative totals reflect the scale of the programme across its full two-year lifespan.

<b>1,225</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>9,763</b>
<b>Young People Engaged</b>	<b>New to Yuvanis</b>	<b>Cumulative Engagements</b>



Across the full two years of the programme, 1,225 individual young people engaged with Yuvanis's provision — a figure that reflects both the breadth of the activity offer and the programme's consistent presence in the community week after week. Of these, 830 were accessing a Yuvanis programme for the first time, representing a substantial expansion in the organisation's reach beyond its existing base. The booking platform, which captured the majority but not all of the programme's activity, recorded 8,116 free booked sessions and 1,647 paid sessions — with the overwhelming majority being free, reflecting the programme's open-access ethos and its commitment to removing financial barriers.

Across all reporting periods, new participants consistently reported hearing about the programme through word of mouth from friends — a strong indicator that young people themselves were actively recommending Yuvanis to their peers. The 1,440 hours of youth work delivered over the full programme — equivalent to 60 full days of provision — represents a substantial and sustained investment in the lives of young people in Oldham.

The programme engaged with young people across a wide age range within its 11–18 target group. Feedback and observation indicated different engagement patterns by age cohort, which shaped how provision evolved over time. Younger participants (aged 11–14) responded well to structured

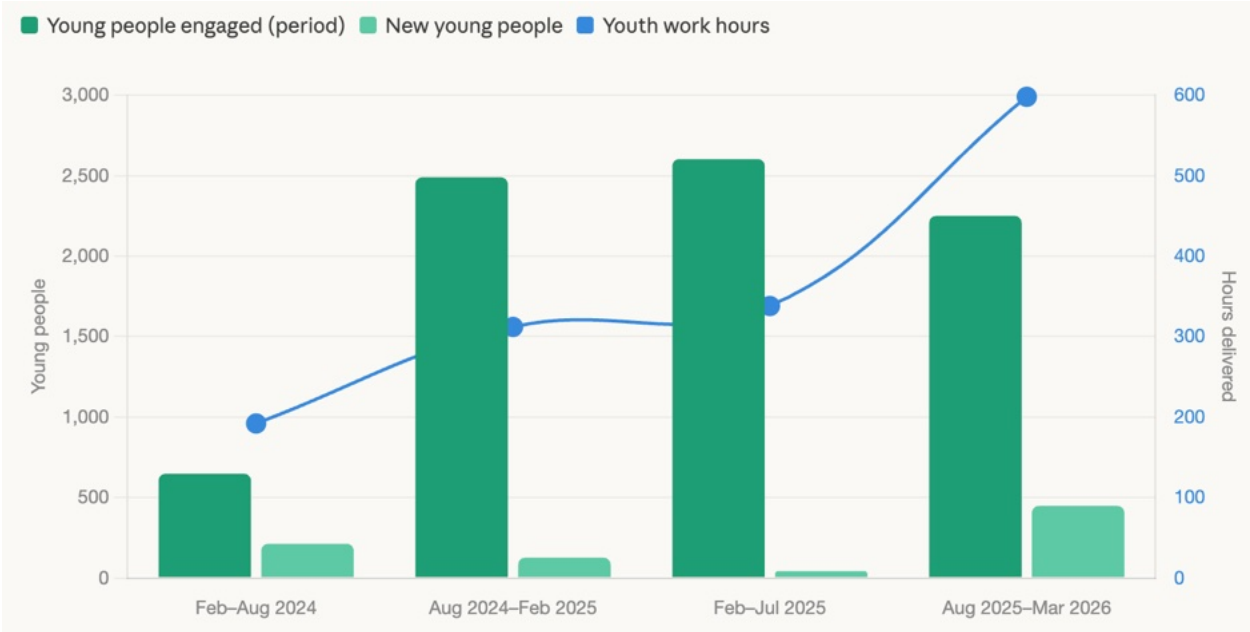
activities, clear instruction, and variety. Older teenagers (aged 14–18), particularly boys, were harder to engage consistently and responded most strongly to football, boxercise, cycling, and kayaking. These activities were therefore maintained as a continuous core throughout the year.

### Participation Growth

The programme sustained strong and consistent participation across all four reporting periods, with both session attendance and hours delivered growing steadily as the programme matured and its reputation spread through the community.

In the opening period (February to August 2024), the programme focused on establishing its foundations — consulting with young people, launching sessions across venues, and building the initial cohort of participants. From August 2024 onwards, participation grew significantly, with each subsequent period delivering more hours and engaging more young people than the last. By the programme's final year, sessions were running at full capacity across all three venues, with an average of 25 to 28 young people attending each hour of provision. The 830 new participants reached across the two years — many of whom came through word of mouth from friends already attending — reflect not only the programme's growing reach, but the strength of its reputation within the communities it served.

The chart below illustrates participation across the four reporting periods, showing young people engaged per period, new participants, and total hours delivered.



## 7. STAFFING, VOLUNTEERING, AND PARTNERSHIPS

The programme was supported by a dedicated coordinator/centre manager, a team of paid sessional staff and volunteers recruited specifically for this project, alongside existing Yuvanis staff who contributed to planning and quality assurance.



In the first reporting period alone (February to August 2024), ten new staff members were recruited to deliver the expanded programme. By the second reporting period, four additional staff had been recruited, reflecting growing demand and the increasing complexity of the activity offer. Volunteer involvement was substantial throughout: staff delivered 1,490 hours of direct delivery time in the first two reporting periods combined, with volunteers contributing 559 hours — representing a significant in-kind contribution to the programme's total value.

The programme also supported the development of young volunteers from within its own participant base.

Abraham Khan (see Case Studies, below) is one example of a young person who moved from participant to volunteer-in-training — a journey supported by staff who invested time in building trusted relationships and nurturing his interests.

Beyond its own team, Yuvanis maintained and deepened its partnerships with Greater Manchester Police and Oldham Council, both of which contributed to the programme's community intelligence and helped ensure activities were responsive to local need. The collaboration with Oldham Coliseum Theatre, which brought professional artists into the programme to work with young people on heritage-themed creative projects, exemplified the kind of cross-sector partnership that enriched the programme and extended its reach.

## 8. OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

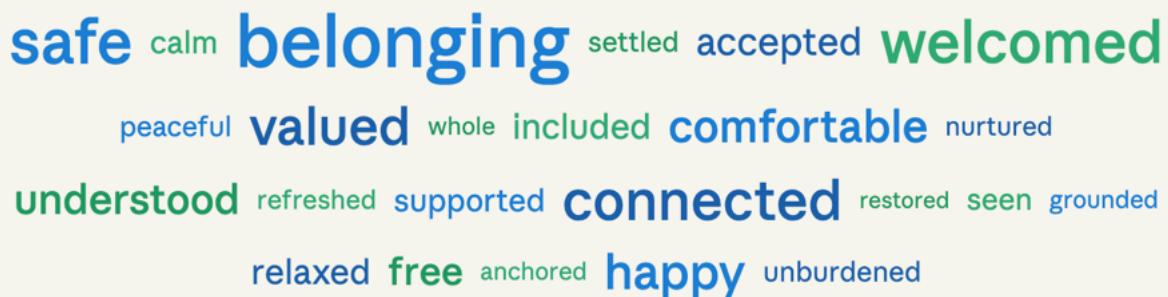
### Emotional Wellbeing and Belonging

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Across the programme, one of the most consistent and powerful themes in participant feedback was the sense of belonging that young people experienced at Yuvanis. This was not incidental — it was the direct product of a delivery model in which young people's voices shaped the programme, adult staff were trained and supported to build genuine relationships, and no one was made to feel excluded or out of place.

Young people described Yuvanis as a place where they felt respected and listened to. Staff who attended focus groups and participated in steering activities repeatedly encountered the same message: young people valued not just the activities themselves, but the quality of the relationships they had with the adults around them.

*"I love Yuvanis activities. I get to meet so many different people of different ages who don't judge you or exclude you from things. The staff at Yuvanis are so friendly, understanding, and caring. They talk to every one of us in every single activity. I never feel like I'm just one person in a big group. I feel like I matter to them."— Khadijah Ahmad, aged 13*



safe calm belonging settled accepted welcomed  
peaceful valued whole included comfortable nurtured  
understood refreshed supported connected restored seen grounded  
relaxed free anchored happy unburdened

*One-word description of participants' experience of **Emotional Wellbeing and Belonging***

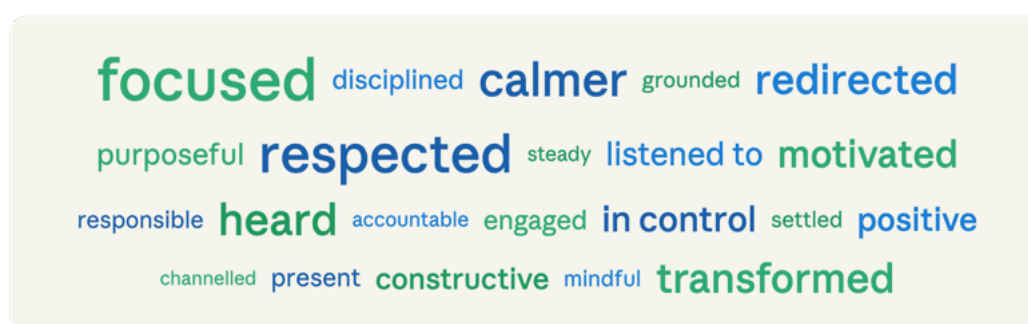
### Behaviour, Anti-Social Activity, and Risk

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A central aim of the programme was to provide a constructive alternative for young people at risk of anti-social behaviour — particularly during the out-of-school hours when risk is highest. The evidence gathered across the two years suggests this aim was substantially met.

Parents and carers of young people attending the programme reported positive changes in behaviour both at home and in school. In several cases, young people who had been the subject of complaints or concerns from parents, teachers, or neighbours showed marked improvements in conduct after sustained engagement with the programme. These changes were not attributed by parents or young people to any single activity, but to the cumulative effect of regular attendance, trusted adult relationships, and a sense of being invested in.

*"Teachers in school have always told me that I'm difficult and can't behave. At Yuvanis I feel like the adults respect me. They give me time to share my opinions and feelings, they listen — and they even respond by putting on activities that we ask for."— Mohammed Aryan, aged 15*



*One-word description of participants' improvement of **Behaviour***

## **Skills, Confidence, and Aspiration**

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The mentoring strand of the programme — delivered bi-weekly in workshops covering ICT, career development, leadership, and life skills — was designed to extend the programme's impact beyond recreation and into longer-term personal development. Over two years, this provision gave young people access to professionals from a range of fields, opened conversations about career pathways that many had not previously considered, and helped build the confidence to engage with those conversations.

For some young people, this translated into concrete next steps. For others, the impact was subtler but no less real: a stronger sense of their own capabilities, an ability to articulate their ambitions, and an emerging sense of agency about their own future.

*"Yuvanis is a place and space where I truly feel I belong. At Yuvanis, we don't just say things, we actually do things. We don't make promises we can't keep. It's where young people are at the heart of everything we do.*

*I'm glad I got to be part of Yuvanis. They accepted me with open arms and have since developed me so much."— Abraham Khan, aged 16*

inspired capable ambitious aware skilled curious  
determined empowered driven proud hopeful growing  
discovered confident learning recognised achieving stretched motivated  
awakened progressing ready

*One-word description of participants' improvement of **Skills, Confidence, and Aspiration***

## Physical Activity and Health

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The programme made a substantial contribution to the physical health and activity levels of young people in Oldham. Sport and physical activity accounted for the majority of the session hours delivered, with regular provision of football, boxercise, cycling, badminton, and outdoor activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, and hiking ensuring that young people had sustained opportunities to be physically active — many of whom would not otherwise have had access to these activities.

The boxercise sessions, in particular, proved to be one of the most effective tools for engaging older teenage boys — a cohort that is historically the hardest to retain in structured youth provision. Delivered three times a week for boys and girls separately, these sessions gave participants a physically demanding and emotionally engaging outlet that built discipline, self-regulation, and peer bonds.

energised active alive refreshed strong adventurous  
fearless resilient fit free unstoppable challenged pushed outdoors  
released lighter exhilarated balanced surprised capable healthy  
moved joyful proud

*Participants' one-word description of their **Physical Health***

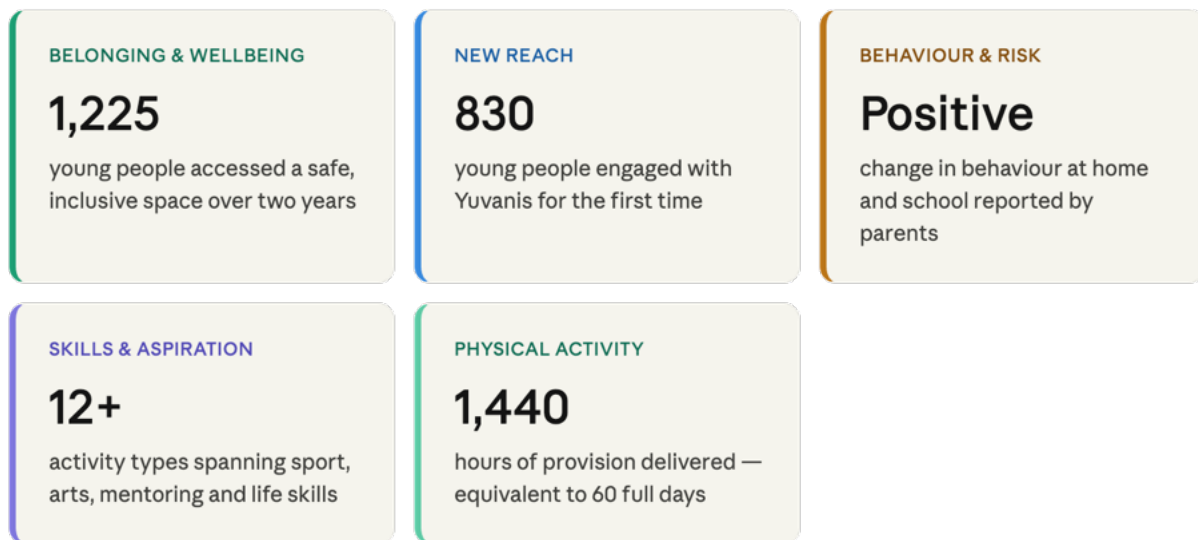
## Key Outcomes Summary

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Across five outcome areas, the programme delivered impact that was both broad in scale and meaningful at an individual level — from the 1,225 young people who found a safe and welcoming space, to the participants who left with new skills, clearer ambitions, and trusted relationships with adults who believed in them.

These outcomes did not happen by accident. They were the product of a sustained, consistent, and genuinely young-people-led approach — one in which the programme adapted to what participants needed rather than asking them to fit a predetermined model. The numbers capture the scale; the case studies in the following section speak to the depth. Together, they reflect a programme that took its responsibilities to young people seriously and delivered on them, week after week, across 24 months.

The summary below illustrates the five core outcome areas and the headline figures behind each.



## 9. PARTICIPANT CASE STUDIES

The following case studies illustrate the range and depth of impact this programme has had on individual young people. They are presented with the knowledge and consent of those involved, and reflect broader themes that emerged consistently across the wider participant group.

### Case Study 1: Abraham Khan | Age 16

Abraham joined the mentoring programme with limited confidence and no clear sense of direction. Through regular attendance at workshops and one-to-one conversations with youth workers, he began to discover a passion for the automotive industry — something he would not have encountered through school alone. He went on to enrol in Auto Mechanics at college and continues to attend Yuvan's activities. He is now training to become a cycling lead and sessional volunteer and has become a visible role model for younger participants, several of whom are following his path into volunteering.

*"Yuvan is a place and space where I truly feel I belong. At Yuvan, we don't just say things, we actually do things. We don't make promises we can't keep. It's where young people are at the heart of everything we do. I'm soon going to become one of the sessional workers helping the staff run some of the activities like cycling and football."*

### Case Study 2: Mohammed Aryan | Age 15

Mohammed joined the weekly boxercise sessions 18 months ago, at a time when his parents were struggling to manage his behaviour both at home and at school. Through boxing and adventurous activities including kayaking and rock climbing, Mohammed found a positive channel for his energy. The relationship he built with Yuvan's boxing coach proved pivotal — a trusted adult who respected him and gave him room to express himself. His parents have since reported a significant and sustained improvement in his behaviour in both settings.

*"Teachers in school have always told me that I'm difficult and can't behave. At Yuvan I feel like the adults respect me. They give me time to share my opinions and feelings, they listen — and they even respond by putting on activities that we ask for. I'm really looking forward to being part of Yuvan's future Youth Centre."*

### Case Study 3: Khadijah Ahmad | Age 13

Khadijah has attended virtually every girls' session Yuvanisa has offered over the full two years of the programme. She describes it as the space where she feels most herself — surrounded by people of different ages who accept her without judgement. She is thriving at school, has developed lasting friendships through the programme, and continues to engage actively with new activities as they are introduced. Her feedback has been a consistent voice in shaping what is delivered for girls in the programme.

*"I love Yuvanisa activities. I get to meet so many different people of different ages who don't judge you or exclude you from things. The staff at Yuvanisa are so friendly, understanding, and caring. They talk to every one of us in every single activity. I never feel like I'm just one person in a big group. I feel like I matter to them."*

### Case Study 4: Saleem Shah | Age 12

Saleem joined Yuvanisa's holiday activities at a time when anxiety and hypersensitivity made every day social situations genuinely difficult. Making new friends felt overwhelming, and unfamiliar group settings left him easily intimidated and withdrawn. Through consistent attendance, and within an environment where no one is expected to perform or prove themselves, Saleem began to find his footing. Staff who noticed his sensitivity adjusted their approach to ensure he felt supported rather than singled out, and over time the change became visible to everyone around him.

A young person who once hung back at the edges of a group can now regularly be found laughing and joking alongside his peers — including young people older than himself. His parents have expressed their deep appreciation for the strides Yuvanisa has supported, describing a son who is not only more confident and socially at ease, but who has developed the maturity to make positive choices independently — discerning right from wrong on his own terms, without needing to be guided at every turn.

*"I used to not really want to come because I didn't know anyone. But the staff were really nice and no one made me feel weird. Now I actually look forward to coming. I've got friends here now."*

# 10. LEARNING AND CHALLENGES

## What Worked Well

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- The combination of a stable core programme (football, boxing, mentoring, open sessions, craft clubs) with a rotating term-based offer proved effective at sustaining engagement across different age groups and interests.
- Genuine co-production — allowing young people to vote on activities, contribute to focus groups, and see their feedback reflected in what was delivered — built trust and a sense of ownership that was evident in participation levels and in the quality of relationships observed between young people and staff.
- Sport, and in particular boxercise, proved to be one of the most effective tools for engaging older teenage boys — a group that statutory services consistently find hard to reach.
- Delivering across multiple venues increased the programme's geographic reach and enabled Yuvanis to engage young people who would not have travelled to a single central venue.
- The mentoring strand, particularly the involvement of professional guest speakers, opened up conversations about careers and aspirations that young people found genuinely motivating.

## Challenges Encountered

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Sustaining a flexible delivery model across multiple venues, staff teams, and activity types required significant coordination. Maintaining quality and consistency whilst adapting to young people's evolving preferences meant that planning and programme management required more resource than originally anticipated.

Engaging young people aged 14–18, particularly boys, remained the programme's most persistent challenge. This group responded selectively — strongly to physical and adventurous activities, but far less to structured workshops or skills-based provision. Understanding and responding to this preference shaped the programme's evolution, but it also pointed to a need that the existing model could only partially meet: a dedicated, freely accessible drop-in space that older teenagers could genuinely call their own.

Not every activity worked for every young person, and some term-based programmes attracted lower attendance than expected. Yuvanis's model of piloting, gathering feedback, and rotating activities allowed the organisation to respond to this without sustained resource being committed to provision

that was not meeting need. This approach to risk and adaptation is one of the most transferable lessons from the programme.

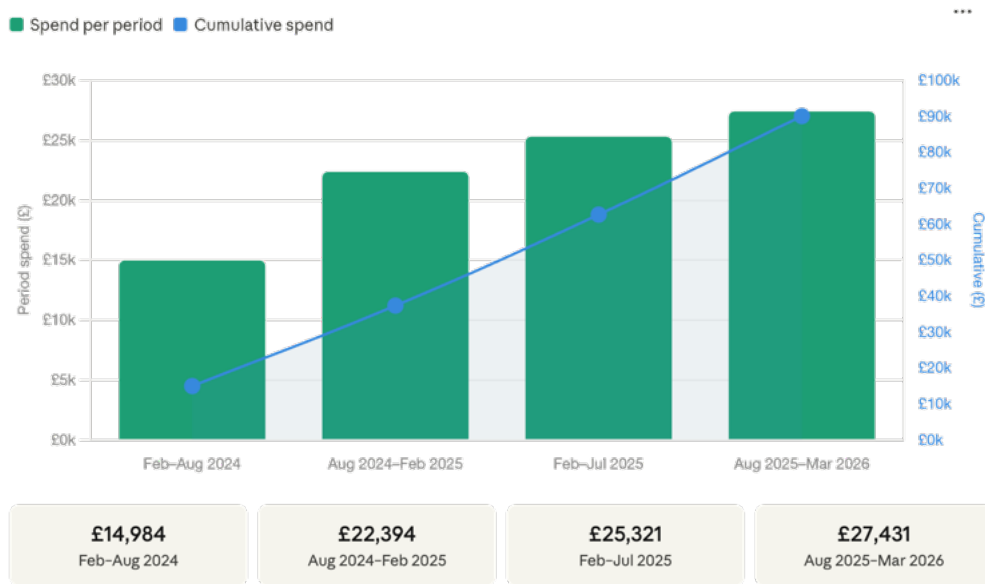


# 11. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The programme was funded by a grant of £89,910 from the National Lottery Community Fund's Million Hours Fund Phase 2. Total expenditure across the full two-year project came to £90,130 — marginally above the grant figure, with the small difference met by Yuvan's from its own reserves. The following table summarises expenditure across all four reporting periods.

Reporting Period	Spend in Period	Cumulative Spend
Feb 2024 – Aug 2024	£14,984	£14,984
Aug 2024 – Feb 2025	£22,394	£37,378
Feb 2025 – Jul 2025	£25,321	£62,699
Aug 2025 – Mar 2026	£27,431	£90,130
<b>Total Project Spend</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>£90,130</b>

Spend in the first period was lower than subsequent periods, reflecting the time invested in consultation, co-design, and recruitment before full delivery began. From the second period onwards, expenditure increased and stabilised as the programme reached its intended scale, with the final two periods each accounting for roughly equal shares of the remaining budget. The largest cost throughout was staffing — a reflection of Yuvan's commitment to quality youth work practice, where trained, experienced adults were present not just to run activities, but to build the kind of trusted relationships with young people that make the difference between a programme that is attended and one that genuinely changes lives.



## 12. ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

One of the less visible but highly significant outcomes of this programme has been its contribution to the growth and sustainability of Yuvanis Foundation as an organisation. The Million Hours Fund grant did not simply fund a programme — it created the conditions for Yuvanis to develop its infrastructure, expand its team, deepen its community relationships, and generate the evidence base needed to make a compelling case for continued and expanded investment.

Over the two years of the programme, Yuvanis recruited fourteen or more new staff members across the reporting periods, significantly increasing its delivery capacity. Volunteer numbers grew substantially, with over 559 volunteer hours contributed to the programme across the first two reporting periods. The organisation's booking and data systems were developed to capture participant data more effectively, generating the kind of analytics that funders and commissioners increasingly expect to see.

The programme also accelerated Yuvanis's thinking about its long-term future. Feedback from young people — consistently expressing a desire for a permanent, dedicated space they could consider their own — has informed a strategic ambition to establish a Yuvanis Youth Centre. This vision has already attracted serious interest from Oldham Council and other potential funders. The evidence gathered through this programme — of sustained demand, genuine impact, and organisational credibility — forms the core of that case.



## 13. LOOKING AHEAD

The Yuvanis Youth Centre and Mentoring Programme has demonstrated that sustained, high-quality, young-people-led provision can make a measurable difference to the lives of young people in one of England's most deprived areas. It has also demonstrated that Yuvanis Foundation has the capacity, the relationships, and the knowledge to deliver at scale — and to learn and adapt when circumstances change.

The next phase of Yuvanis's ambition builds directly on the foundations laid by this programme. The organisation is working with Oldham Council and a range of other partners to explore the feasibility of establishing a dedicated permanent youth centre — a space that would provide the drop-in, community-owned environment that young people have consistently asked for, alongside the structured provision that supports development and prevents harm.

The learning from this programme — about what engages different age groups, what builds trust, and what sustains participation over time — will be central to designing that future provision. So too will the relationships built with young people like Abraham, Mohammed, and Khadijah, some of whom are now returning to Yuvanis not as participants alone, but as volunteers and junior leaders in their own right.

Yuvanis is grateful to the National Lottery Community Fund for the support that made this programme possible. The investment has been repaid many times over — not only in hours delivered and young people reached, but in the quieter, harder-to-measure outcomes that matter most: confidence rebuilt, futures reimagined, and a community that knows it has an organisation that will show up for its young people, week after week.



## 14. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evidence gathered through this evaluation points clearly to a programme that has delivered sustained, meaningful impact for young people in Oldham. It also points to an organisation that has grown in capacity, credibility, and community standing — and that is well placed to build on what has been achieved. The following recommendations are offered in that spirit: not as criticisms, but as a considered view of what the evidence suggests should happen next.

### **Establish a permanent, dedicated youth centre**

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The single most consistent piece of feedback to emerge from young people across the full two years of this programme was the desire for a space they could genuinely call their own — somewhere freely accessible, shaped by them, and built around their needs. The current model, delivered across multiple venues and dependent on external bookings, has proven effective but is inherently limited in what it can offer. A permanent youth centre would remove that ceiling. It would give young people the drop-in, community-owned environment they have repeatedly asked for, provide a stable base from which Yuvan is can deliver and expand its offer, and send a powerful signal to the communities it serves that their young people are worth investing in for the long term. The groundwork for this is already in place — early interest from Oldham Council and other funders, a strong evidence base, and a growing cohort of young people who are ready to help shape and lead it.

### **Secure longer-term and more sustainable funding**

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Project-based funding cycles, whilst valuable, create structural uncertainty that limits what any organisation can plan, deliver, and sustain. Yuvan is has demonstrated over two years that it can manage public funding responsibly, deliver against its commitments, and generate genuine community impact. That track record makes a compelling case for longer-term grant relationships — multi-year awards that allow the organisation to plan with confidence, retain experienced staff, and invest in the infrastructure needed to grow. Yuvan is should actively pursue relationships with Trusts and Foundations, statutory commissioners, and local authority partners that can provide this kind of reliable, sustained income alongside project-specific grants.

### **Develop a formal volunteer and young leaders pathway**

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One of the less visible but highly significant outcomes of this programme has been the emergence of young people — including programme participants —

who are ready and willing to step into volunteer and junior leadership roles within Yuvanis. This is a significant asset that the organisation should formalise. A structured pathway from participant to volunteer to sessional worker would not only deepen the impact of the programme on individual young people, but would also build Yuvanis's delivery capacity from within its own community. Abraham Khan's journey is the clearest example of what this can look like in practice — and it should not be left to chance.

### **Extend reach to harder-to-engage young people**

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The programme was most effective at engaging young people who were already connected to Yuvanis or who came through word of mouth from friends. Older teenagers — particularly boys aged 14 to 18 — were harder to retain consistently, and young people facing the most acute forms of disadvantage or risk were not always the ones who found their way through the door. As the programme develops, Yuvanis should consider how it can extend its reach more deliberately to these groups — through targeted outreach, partnerships with schools and statutory services, and the kind of detached youth work that meets young people where they are rather than waiting for them to arrive.

### **Deepen and formalise community partnerships**

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The partnerships developed through this programme — with Greater Manchester Police, Oldham Council, Oldham Coliseum Theatre, and others — have added real value to what Yuvanis has been able to offer. These relationships should be formalised, deepened, and expanded. Memoranda of understanding, joint delivery agreements, and shared data protocols would help to embed these partnerships more durably and ensure they survive changes in personnel or organisational priority. There is also scope to develop new partnerships — with employers, further education providers, and health services — that would extend the programme's reach into areas where young people's needs are not currently being met.

## 15. CONCLUSION

Two years ago, Yuvanis Foundation set out to do something straightforward but ambitious: to provide good quality activities for young people in Oldham during the hours when they needed them most, and to do it in a way that put those young people genuinely at the centre. What this evaluation has found is that they did exactly that — and then some.

Across 24 months, 1,225 young people engaged with the programme. Eight hundred and thirty of them were there for the first time. They came for football and boxing, for craft workshops and kayaking, for mentoring and open access sessions where they could simply be themselves. Some came quietly and nervously, not sure if this was a place for them — and stayed because they found that it was. What made the difference was not the activities themselves, but the quality of the relationships built between young people and the adults who showed up for them, week after week, with consistency and genuine care.

The outcomes speak for themselves. Young people who arrived with anxiety, low confidence, or a reputation for difficult behaviour left with something more — confidence, direction, friends, and a sense that they matter. For some, like Abraham, that translated into a college place and a path into youth work. For others, like Saleem, it meant simply being able to walk into a room full of people and feel at ease. Both matter. Both are the point.

Yuvanis is at an inflection point. The foundation built through this programme creates a genuine opportunity to move from a project-based model to something more permanent and more ambitious. The young people of Oldham have shown, in their thousands, that they will come when the provision is right. The task now is to make sure it is there for them — not just for the duration of a grant, but for the long term.



# APPENDIX: KEY DATA SUMMARY

The following figures are drawn from National Lottery Community Fund monitoring submissions (3 reporting periods) and booking platform analytics (April 2024 – May 2026).

Metric	Figure
Total youth work hours delivered (full programme)	<b>1,440</b>
Total young people engaged (full programme)	<b>1,225</b>
New young people reached	<b>830</b>
Average attendance per hour	<b>25–28</b>
Total booked sessions (platform)	<b>9,763</b>
Staff hours delivered (first two reporting periods)	<b>1,490+</b>
Volunteer hours (first two reporting periods)	<b>559+</b>
New staff recruited (all periods)	<b>14+</b>
Grant total	<b>£89,910</b>
Total project spend	<b>£90,130</b>

*Note: Booking platform data runs from April 2024 to May 2026. Two online sessions delivered throughout the full 24-month period are not captured in platform analytics; these averaged approximately 20 participants per session.*

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