



Esier to read version

Youth Work and Funding

A report about the funding of youth work in Wales



This document was written for the **Welsh Government**. It is an easier to read version of 'Youth Work Funding Review: Phase 2 Executive Summary'.

May 2024

How to use this document



This is an easier to read document. You may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

Phone: 0300 0604400

Email: Youthwork@Gov.Wales



[Easy Read Wales](#) made this document into Easier to Read. [To tell us what you think about this easier to read version, click here.](#)

[Photosymbols Licence number 403527247](#)

© Crown copyright 2024, Welsh Government, ISBN 978-1-83625-109-5

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg.
We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh.

Contents

What this report is about.....4

What we found out8

What the researchers think should happen next 12

What this report is about

Some research was carried out by 3 Welsh Universities:

- Cardiff Metropolitan University
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- and Wrexham University.

The research was about youth work funding in Wales.

They did this to help Welsh Government find out more about how youth work is funded across Wales.

Youth work supports young people aged 11 to 25 years old. It helps with:

- having a say
- learning
- and being the best young people they can be.

Youth work takes place in lots of different places in Wales. It gives a safe space to young people.

It gives young people the chance to get to know other people and to be part of the community.

Youth work can be arranged by lots of different organisations, including voluntary organisations and councils.

Voluntary youth work organisations mean organisations such as charities who run youth services.



We wanted the research to find out:

- How well youth work funding works.
- How well youth work supports young people.

We looked at 4 areas:

1. The funding organisations get, where they get it from, and the costs of running services.
2. How applying for funding works, what works well and what is difficult.
3. How money is spent.
4. How organisations make decisions about funding and how young people are involved.

We gathered information from:

- Looking at the information that is already available. For example, information collected by councils (also called local authorities).
- Questionnaires for voluntary youth work organisations.
- Interviews and focus groups. An interview is when one person talks to a researcher. A focus group is when a group of people come together to talk to a researcher.



What we found out

Voluntary organisations have received less funding in the last 3 years. Councils have had more funding.

But overall, all services have had less money to work with in the past 3 years. This is because of issues related to rising costs of things such as bills and wages.

A rise in staff costs means it is more expensive for an organisation to run, and they may need to change or stop some of their activities.

Councils tend to spend more money on training for their staff than voluntary organisations.

Councils also spend money differently in each area of Wales. It depends what is important to that area and what they feel they need to focus on.



Sometimes voluntary organisations think it is not clear enough how decisions are made about funding by councils, this includes how and when they can apply for it.

Funding has come from a lot of different sources. These can last for different amounts of time. This means it has not felt very stable.

Some voluntary organisations raise money too. For example, they may have fundraising events.

Councils have a more stable income than the voluntary organisations.

But some are also getting funding from other places than they used to. For example, from health services or even from organisations like charities.

The changes in funding have had an effect on all youth services.



Some of the effects are:

- Where the funding comes from can affect what services are offered.
- Lots more time is being spent applying for funding. This costs a lot in staff hours. It takes time away from providing services to young people.
- Over half of voluntary youth organisations said they did not have enough funding. They were also not confident they could carry on running services.
- Applying for funding is hard for voluntary organisations, because there are so many types.
- Funding often does not last long. So, organisations have to keep applying for more funding.
- Both councils and voluntary organisations would prefer funding to last longer. This is so they can plan further into the future.
- One of the highest costs for both voluntary and council youth services is staffing.

- The decisions made about funding varies a lot across Wales. And it depends on what is going on in each area.
- Councils give funding differently in each area of Wales. This means areas are funding different things.
- Young people are often involved in making decisions about how services are run.
- Young people from council youth services are often involved with local issues within their own community. They seem to be less involved with bigger issues which may affect more people across a bigger area.



What the researchers think should happen next

The research team suggest a number of things need to happen next after carrying out this research. This is a summary of the main things:

1. The Welsh Government and other organisations use the information gathered in this work to help make a model of the best ways to run youth work services in Wales.
2. The Welsh Government and other organisations should look at ways to improve how funding works for all organisations.
3. The Welsh Government and other organisations should find ways to make applying for funding easier. It should not take so much time.
4. The Welsh Government should look at how reporting is carried out. The same information should be collected from all services.

5. The Welsh Government and other organisations should provide training to youth organisations. For example, on how to apply for funding and fundraising.

6. It should be clear how funding decisions are made.

7. Organisations need to work together more.

8. Young people must be involved in making decisions.

