




Supporting the  
youth sector across  
Oxfordshire

# CHANGEMAKER NETWORK

## 2025/2026



A community committed to tackling injustice,  
driving systemic change, and supporting young  
people across Oxfordshire

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# Welcome

We're thrilled to have you as part of this inspiring movement for change. By joining the Changemaker Network, you've become part of a community committed to tackling injustice, driving systemic change, and supporting young people across Oxfordshire.

This welcome pack is designed to help you make the most of the network, with access to expert-led training, exclusive networking opportunities, and tailored support to help you and your organisation grow.



**Oxfordshire Youth is Oxfordshire's leading youth work charity and, with our partners, we are endeavouring to ensure that best practice youth work is fully accessible and available to all young people.**

# Introduction



When you become a part of our Changemaker Network, you are joining a movement of people and organisations passionate about tackling injustice and facilitating systems change.

You are entering a community of youth workers, volunteers, leaders and practitioners through which you will upskill, meet new people, access motivational training and step into career-enriching opportunities. Oxfordshire Youth's sector support offer exists to ensure that the places and people who power our sector have the resources and support they need to thrive and be sustainable.

It has been formed through conversations and consultations with frontline youth workers, leaders, and volunteers of youth services. We are committed to our support being agile in the face of change, whether that's economic, climate, social or the ever moving needs of young people as they meet the challenges of life. From listening to you, we have enhanced our offer to:-

1. Deepen investment in resources that grow financial resilience
2. Direct increased attention and resources to equity, diversity and inclusion in our practices, professional development and organisational structures
3. Strengthen our specialised support for place-based offers for young people.

You will see these priorities reflected in this pack, from the brand new equity, diversity and inclusion working group, to funded spaces for under-represented communities on youth worker training courses, specialist fundraising clinics and place-based focus groups to spearhead innovation and unite local offers, skills, and people. Our sector is professional, progressive and remarkably innovative when addressing the complex needs of young people and communities. Our goal is for our Changemaker Network to learn together, grow together and advocate together, for a future where every child and young person is thriving and we have eradicated inequality of opportunity, for good.

We look forward to welcoming you soon!

**David Cruchley, Senior Youth Partnerships Manager**



# Background

Since 1947, we have championed the young people of Oxfordshire and seen many generations steer their own lives, and their communities in amazing directions. In 2022, Oxfordshire Youth celebrated its 75th anniversary. The entire staff team co-created a new Vision, Mission and Values for the organisation that reflect the dedication and calibre of our team and their aspirations for the young people of Oxfordshire.

In 2023, Oxfordshire Youth conducted an in-depth review of the sector, engaging in conversations with current members of the Changemaker Network as well as individuals with a keen interest in the support we provide. In addition we sent out a sector wide survey in January 2025. We have carefully considered the feedback and are confident that the offer outlined in this pack will provide significant benefits to your organisation, employees, young people and local communities.

We are thankful for the ongoing support we receive from the National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund and The Prudence Trust, which recognises the value of infrastructure support and wellbeing and is funding support for the children and young people's sector.

## Vision

A future in which every young person has the skills, support, and connections they need to thrive.

## Mission

Through the power of youth work, we transform young people's lives, unite communities, and tackle inequality of opportunity.

## Values

- We listen and respond to the wisdom of young people.
- We commit to anti-oppressive practice.
- We champion wellbeing.
- We prioritise reflection, learning, and growth.
- We act with integrity and courage.
- We make space for innovation and fun!

# Network Benefits

Our Changemaker Network is designed to help sustain, empower, and support the children and young people's sector to continue to deliver high quality youth work and be part of systems change.

## Overview

- **Bi-Monthly Network Meetings** – Connect with peers, share best practices, and collaborate on key initiatives.
- **Youth Sector Leadership Retreat & Youth Work Conference** – Learn from sector leaders and build new partnerships.
- **Youth Sector EDI Group & Wellbeing Programme** – Engage in meaningful conversations and access vital wellbeing resources.
- **Specialist Support Groups** – Join local and thematic groups tailored to your interests (e.g., mental health, arts, environmental work).
- **Personalised Support** – Consultations and mentoring to help your organisation thrive.



This block contains a collage of promotional posters for several programs:

- oxfordshire youth PRUDENCE TRUST Youth Practitioner Wellbeing Programme**: A poster with a woman's photo. Text includes: "Who is this for? This programme is open to all third sector staff and volunteers supporting young people.", "Why attend? The impact of working with children and young people recovering from the pandemic and now enduring the cost of living crisis can be significant.", "We want to support you to thrive, reduce your burnout and stress, increase your empowering support networks and champion our sector's mental health.", "Join us on our fully-funded wellbeing programme and let us help you do the following: Address the demanding nature of your role by prioritizing your own well-being, Boost your practice by attending up to six specialist training sessions such as psychological safety, non-violent communication, self-harm and suicide.", "Sign up now! Sign up here on Eventbrite or reach out to Neve for more information! 07828 414588 for".
- COMMUNITY FUND oxfordshire youth**: A poster with a hand icon. Text includes: "WHEN? This year long programme of support begins on Friday 22nd November 24 and finishes on Friday 7th March 25", "WHERE? Oxfordshire Youth, 4150 Chancellor Court, Oxford Business Park South, Oxford, OX4 2GX", "HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? This programme is fully funded, though spaces are limited and we are operating on a first come, first served basis."
- Trusts and Foundations: Bid Writing Clinic**: A poster with a woman's photo. Text includes: "Are you seeking expert guidance on writing compelling bids for trusts and foundations? Join OY for a dedicated Bid Writing Clinic designed to support organisations in crafting successful funding applications.", "23rd September, 10am".

## Youth Work Conference 21st November 2024



This block contains a poster for the Youth Work Conference:

- Mercure Oxford Hawkwell House Hotel, OX4 4DZ**
- oxfordshire youth COMMUNITY FUND**

## Senior Leadership Mentoring Program



This block contains a poster for the Senior Leadership Mentoring Program:

- oxfordshire youth**



This block contains a poster for the Empower Youth Leadership and Wellbeing Retreat:

- oxfordshire youth PRUDENCE TRUST Empower Youth Leadership and Wellbeing Retreat**
- The retreat designed to empower YOU!**
- WHEN?** Thursday 13th March 9:30am - Friday 14th March 3:00pm
- WHERE?** Milton Hill House, Stevenage, Abingdon OX13 6AF
- WHY ATTEND?** Leaders within Oxfordshire based CYP organisations (CEOs, Deputy Directors, Senior Managers) Leading an organization in youth services demands empathy, patience, creativity, and strategic thinking. Balancing these responsibilities can be challenging—so when was the last time you truly stepped away to focus on yourself and your leadership journey? Join us for this fully-funded two-day retreat at Milton Hill, designed to:
  - Help you prioritize self-care and develop compassion-focused strategies to manage the challenges of leadership.
  - Strengthen your leadership skills to foster a culture of empathy and resilience within your organization and the wider community.
  - Reflect on your role as a systems leader and explore strategic planning through the lens of compassionate leadership.
- Enjoy complimentary overnight accommodation. Day one includes lunch and dinner, while day two offers breakfast and lunch, with refreshments available throughout both days.**
- HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?** This retreat is fully funded, though spaces are limited and we are operating on a first come, first served basis.
- This fully funded two day retreat will feature expert workshops on the following topics: Prioritising my own wellbeing, the intersection of wellbeing and leadership, embracing vulnerability, an introduction to systems change and more...**

# Training and Development

We believe participation in CPD is important for youth workers because youth work is not static, the challenges young people face evolve. Training and development enable us to stay current with changing education trends and policies, develop core leadership or management skills, build relationship networks, and improve our knowledge base.

All training, workshops and events are relevant to the changing climate for young people and the sector, to support us all to be informed and to develop skills peer to peer.

## Spotlight: Youth Work Qualifications

The Level 2 Award in Youth Work Principles is an introductory qualification that has been developed with industry experts including the National Youth Agency, ETS England and Wales. This qualification embraces the National Occupational Standards for youth work. Youth work training courses delivered by Oxfordshire Youth are accredited through Skills & Education Group Awards regulated by Ofqual.

These qualifications are designed to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, and understanding required to work effectively with young people.

By offering youth work qualifications, we:

- Provide Essential Skills: Youth work qualifications equip learners with many transferable skills, including communication, problem-solving, leadership, and empathy.
- Support Career Progression: Youth work qualifications can open doors to numerous career paths, such as youth work, community development, education, and social work.





# Training and Development

In the works

We're developing the following workshop topics and we'd greatly appreciate any individual or organisation that has expertise or interest in these areas to contribute. Help us make these workshops the best they can be for the sector!

- **Anti-Racism & Diversity Training** – Equip yourself with actionable strategies to promote equity.
- **Sustainability & Policy Workshops** – Gain tools to integrate eco-conscious practices into your work.
- **Digital Literacy & Digital Strategy Training** – Expand your organisations digital presence and engage young people effectively online.
- **Impact Measurement Training** – Learn how to track and communicate your organisation's effectiveness.

## Professional Development Events

Throughout the year, we deliver exciting events featuring experienced practitioners who share their valuable insights on various subjects that are highly relevant to young people from knife crime awareness to gang exploitation to suicide prevention.

## Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

Our exciting collaboration with Oxfordshire Mind enables us to offer Changemakers continued and discounted access to youth mental health first aid training (M.H.F.A) sessions across the year.



## Spotlight: First Aid Training

First aid training is crucial in providing immediate and effective responses to accidents and emergencies!

This course ensures participants can administer basic care and stabilise a casualty until professional medical help arrives. The skills learnt are essential for ensuring safety and can potentially save lives in critical situations.



# Sustainability

## Financial Sustainability

To support your organisation's long-term success, we're continuing our fundraising clinics to stay ahead of trends and learn strategies to secure funding.

Our team has extensive experience in crafting bids for grants and trusts of all sizes. Once you are a part of the Changemaker Network and need assistance with an application, we're here to help.

Here at Oxfordshire Youth we will take an active role in championing your work where there is good fit to relevant funders and businesses, ensuring that knowledge and opportunities are shared in the spirit of collaboration.

## Environmental Sustainability

New addition

Environmental sustainability in the youth sector is vital for empowering young people to become responsible global citizens and equip them with the knowledge to address environmental challenges for a better future. We are committed to embedding sustainability in the sector.

Our support includes:

- Tailored policy guidance to help you adopt eco-conscious practices.
- Workshops to align your organisation's mission with sustainability goals.







# D.B.S

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks, formerly known as CRB checks, are criminal record checks that help employers make safer recruitment decisions, especially when hiring individuals to work with children or vulnerable adults. This is such an important safeguard in our work, and so we provide this essential service to the sector at discounted rates!

## D.B.S Verification Training

The best way to speed up the D.B.S process is for your organisation to have a named individual as a verifier. Becoming a verifier is a simple process which our D.B.S coordinator can talk you through.

## Value of a D.B.S check

The Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) process and issue DBS checks as part of a safer recruitment process. They share varying levels of someone's criminal record. A DBS check serves to:

- **Protect vulnerable groups.** DBS Checks are designed to prevent unsuitable candidates from working with vulnerable people. If you have employees who will be working in regulated activity with children or young people, it is against the law to employ someone who is barred from working with these groups. DBS Checks are a vital part of the safeguarding process.
- **Legally compliant.** It's illegal to employ someone to work in regulated activity with children or if they've been barred from doing so. Avoid risk to both your organisation and the vulnerable groups it works with, by carrying out relevant DBS Checks when required.
- **Part of building confidence.** DBS checks are a step towards ensuring you are hiring the right people for the position. They will only be relevant from the moment it's completed and will only support identifying criminal records of those that the law are aware of.

A DBS check must be used in conjunction with an effective Safer Recruitment process, and employment of good management, training, monitoring and supervision processes. When used together these measures offer a more holistic approach to safeguarding.

**Changemakers are entitled to 5 admin-fee free checks this year. For information on our DBS process, and how you can become a signatory within your organisation to help speed up the process, email Alice Warland [db@oxfordshireyouth.org](mailto:db@oxfordshireyouth.org)**



# Partnerships and Networking

The Changemaker network offers youth workers and organisations a space to build relationships that strengthen their ability to deliver meaningful programs and services to young people across Oxfordshire.

## Stronger Together

### Bi-Monthly Meetings

New addition

These once quarterly now every other month online meetings are a space to share best practices, tackle challenges, and collaborate on initiatives with like-minded organisations. Oxfordshire Youth provides updates from a national and county-wide context, regarding policy changes, projects and funding opportunities.

Each organisation is given the time to share news of their exciting work, helping provide the sector with valuable opportunities to network and build connections.



### Annual Youth Work Conference

Grab the opportunity to add new skills to your portfolio of knowledge. Our annual youth work conference comprises of workshops designed to target the subjects that will pique your interests or fill the gaps in your skill set.

The day is also suited to growing your network and engage in thought-provoking conversations about youth work in Oxfordshire.



**By fostering collaboration within the Changemaker Network, Oxfordshire Youth ensures that youth-focused organisations are not working in isolation but are part of a supportive and active community. This network helps organisations access a wider range of opportunities, ensures that they are better equipped to address the challenges facing youth today, and empowers them to make a lasting impact in their communities.**

# Partnerships and Networking

To help support Changemakers to make a lasting impact, we have geographical and thematic groups, ensuring that youth organisations can benefit from both localised collaboration and specialised focus. While geographical groups foster a sense of local community and enable region-specific solutions, thematic groups create a space for concentrated expertise and addressing particular challenges in-depth.

## Specialist Support Groups

### Geographical Groups

The geographical groups within the Changemaker Network focus on specific areas across Oxfordshire, allowing Changemakers to address challenges and opportunities unique to their local communities.

These groups foster collaboration in various towns and districts, ensuring that local voices are heard and that projects are relevant to the needs of each area.



### Thematic Groups

The thematic groups provide a space for the youth sector and organisations to collaborate on specific areas of interest, allowing professionals, service providers, and advocates to come together to drive positive change. Group themes are flexible and open to change depending on the networks membership. Past themes have included music and theatre, mental health and wellbeing, and nature connection.

These groups serve as a platform for sharing best practices, developing strategic initiatives, and ensuring that young people across Oxfordshire receive the best possible support and opportunities.





# Policy Support

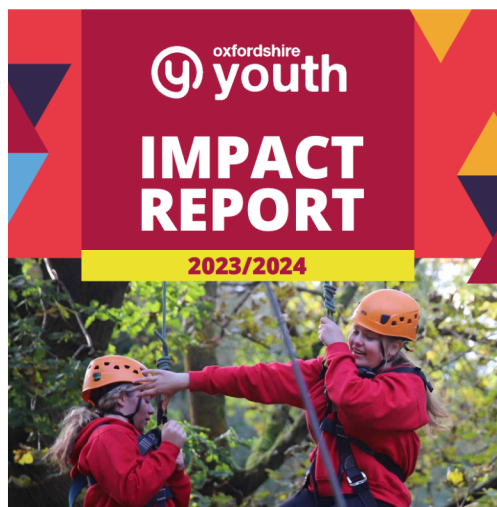
When you join our Changemaker Network, you will be invited to receive our monthly youth sector publication '**Sector Insider**' signposting you to the most important updates on local and national policy, safeguarding essentials, sector vacancies and all the latest on our offers

We help you navigate the ever-changing landscape of legislation and policy with:

- **Youth Sector Advocacy Training:** Equip your team with the skills to influence decision-makers at all levels. New addition
- **Policy Briefings and Templates:** Access updates on key legislation and practical templates for your organisational policies.



UK YOUTH



# Information and Bespoke Support

As a member of the network, you will have direct access to Oxfordshire Youth.

The Youth Sector Development Coordinator is not only on hand to provide help, as and when you need it, but also to build personal relationships with your group, allowing us to better understand your organisation and therefore provide informed assistance. You will have access to support over the phone, via email, through virtual meetings and in one-to-one conversations

Your membership includes access to **tailored consultations** and **personalised support** from our expert team. Whether you need guidance on a specific project or long-term strategic planning, we are here to help.

## Organisational Directory

A directory of members was introduced as part of the 22/23 Changemaker Network. It contains information about all the organisations that wanted to be included, along with a brief overview of their work. The directory conveniently provides members with a comprehensive list of contacts, making it easier to connect with other organisations. During registration, you will be offered the option of inclusion in the directory.

Public sector providers often prefer working with organizations they already fund due to completed due diligence. By joining the Changemaker Network, you affirm having key policies and safeguards (and we can help if you don't).

This year, we're advocating to public sector bodies that all Changemakers meet governance standards, opening opportunities for those not yet publicly funded.

With increased investment coming, we want to ensure you're ready to access it.





# Pricing

We aim to make the Changemaker Network accessible to all organisations working with young people.

- Full Membership: **£80 annually**

Any community group\* engaging with young people in their setting can join the Changemaker Network. The annual fee is £80 (we have retained this cost as a sign of our commitment to supporting organisations through the current financial landscape) and this entitles you to all of the support offered in this information pack.

- Youth Club Membership: **£50 annually**

Youth clubs offering universal, or open access provision have faced exceptional challenges over recent years. Oxfordshire Youth is committing extra time and resources to helping youth clubs overcome the complex issues they face.

Our first act is to offer those organisations who deliver solely or predominantly open-access\*\* services to young people a reduced membership fee of £50.

- New Organisations: **free**

Enjoy your **first year's membership free**, with full access to all our services and support.

\*We do not strictly define what a community group is. Any organisation, community partnership, enterprise etc. providing services that can be accessed by young people would be considered a community group and able to access the benefits of the Changemaker Network.

**If you would like to discuss which membership bracket your organisation is in, please contact us using the details on the next page.**

**Membership to the Changemaker Network runs from  
May 1st 2025 through to May 1st 2026.**

# Connect

We're here to support you every step of the way.

Email: [members@oxfordshireyouth.org](mailto:members@oxfordshireyouth.org)

Call: 01865 767 899

Follow us: Stay updated on our socials, and keep an eye on our website.



## Ready to Join the 2025-2026 Changemaker Network?

Sign up today and we can create a brighter, more equitable future for Oxfordshire's youth.

Scan or go to the link below to become a Changemaker now!



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CMN25-26/>



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