

## Young People's Introduction

We, the young people of Telford and Wrekin, want this strategy to focus on the issues that matter most to us. We have spoken openly about the pressures we face and the changes we want to see. Mental health, safety, bullying, discrimination, poverty and inequality all affect our lives, and we believe these challenges must be tackled alongside creating more opportunities, positive activities and safe spaces for young people.

We want every young person to feel included, respected and supported. This means being able to get help earlier, from professionals who are trained to listen, understand and respond in ways that are safe and respectful. It also means making sure that young people across all communities have fair access to places where they can learn, be creative, take part in sport and enjoy themselves.

We want our voices to count in every decision that affects us. Young people from all backgrounds and experiences, including those whose voices are not often heard, must be included so that no one is left out. Adults should work with us, not just for us. We want Telford and Wrekin to be a place where young people feel proud to grow up, a Borough that celebrates us, invests in us and gives every young person the chance to succeed. Tackling inequality, improving mental health and creating opportunities are all connected, and together they will shape a better future for us, helping us to be the best versions of ourselves.

At the same time, we know that young people bring energy, resilience and creativity to our communities. This strategy should build on our strengths, not only respond to the challenges we face.

Above all, we want a future that feels hopeful, fair and full of opportunities. We want to live in a Borough where young people's voices are valued, where support is always there when we need it, and where we can thrive and reach our potential. This strategy is our chance to make that happen, together.

***Co-produced with young people of Telford and Wrekin from a range of our youth clubs including the Shout Out Young people's group (SEND youth club) and the young carers youth club. Young people from several of our schools and Telford College...their voices shaped this strategy.***