

TELFORD AND WREKIN

Youth Strategy



youthoffer.telford.gov.uk



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.





What do we mean by ‘youth’?

In the context of this strategy, ‘youth’ means every young person in Telford and Wrekin aged between 10-19 years and those aged up to 25 years of age with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or other additional needs that require further support.

What’s it like to live in Telford and Wrekin as a young person?

Telford and Wrekin is home to **191,915 people**, and around **56,000 are aged 0–24**. It’s a growing and diverse Borough, with **nearly 24% of under-16s from minority ethnic backgrounds**. But life isn’t equal everywhere – **18 areas (17%) are among the most deprived in England**, and some communities face big challenges like low income, poor health, and fewer opportunities.

For young people, this means experiences can vary a lot depending on where they live. Some areas have great facilities and activities, while others have very little. **9.7% of young people have a disability**, and many told us they want more accessible spaces and support for mental health and wellbeing.

Why does this matter?

Not all young people can travel easily or afford activities, so having **centralised youth provision** and **local hubs in the areas that need it most** is vital. This ensures:

- * **Equal access** for young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- * **Safe spaces** in communities where young people feel most at risk.
- * **Opportunities for everyone**, no matter their background or postcode.

By creating a strong, inclusive youth offer, we can make sure every young person in Telford and Wrekin has the chance to feel safe, supported, and connected.

Where does this information come from?

This is based on the **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** – a big piece of research that looks at what life is like for people in Telford and Wrekin. It helps the Council and partners understand what young people need so they can plan and deliver better services.

Why do we need to have a Youth Strategy

Young people spend the majority of their time outside of school and what happens during those hours really matters. Having access to fun, safe, and meaningful activities, like sports, arts, youth clubs, volunteering, or just somewhere to hang out, can make a big difference to how young people feel, grow, and succeed.

Getting involved in youth activities can help with:

- * Feeling better mentally and emotionally
- * Building confidence and resilience
- * Doing better in education
- * Making friends and feeling part of a community
- * Staying safe and out of trouble
- * Preparing for future jobs and opportunities

It’s not just good for individuals – it helps whole communities thrive.

Telford and Wrekin Council is committed to making sure there are enough good-quality activities and places for young people to go in their free time. This strategy helps make that happen.



Introduction

At the Council we have a commitment to make sure that young people in Telford and Wrekin have a range of educational and recreational activities on offer to them.

Our vision

We want our young people to know that we hear them and we will be at the heart of bringing together the Telford and Wrekin's youth sector to collaborate and work alongside them to understand and respond effectively to their needs.

The voices of young people are at the heart of everything we do together to bring about positive change. Therefore, we want to ensure that the youth sector and young people can work closely together to shape communities and to create opportunities.

We are working together with young people, youth organisations, schools, health services, and lots of others to create and deliver something important: **our Telford and Wrekin Youth Strategy**.

It's a plan that sets out how together we will all help make life better for young people across our Borough between now and 2029.

We want Telford and Wrekin to be a Child Friendly Borough where every child and young person is healthy, safe and can achieve their potential. In writing our Telford and Wrekin Youth Strategy, we have listened to what young people have to say, what they've told us about what matters to them, what they need, and what they want to see change. We also looked at what's happening in our communities and what the law says we should be doing to support our young people.

As part of this we have undertaken what's called a **Local Needs Assessment** which has allowed us to look at what is currently available to young people and identify where there may be gaps in provision.

Local Needs Assessment – What does this mean for young people in Telford and Wrekin?

The Local Needs Assessment shows that while there are some great activities and youth clubs in the Borough, not everyone can access them easily. Young people told us they want more local, affordable, and varied activities like sports, gaming, music, and creative sessions. Mental health support is a big priority, as well as feeling safe in the community. Many young people also said they don't always know what's available, so better advertising and communication are needed. The report highlights that some areas, including areas where young people have the most needs have very little youth provision, and more safe spaces are needed too.

Youth Partnership Board – what is its purpose?

To really make a difference for young people, the Youth Partnership Board is working to engage with a wider, diverse range of youth sector organisations.

The Youth Partnership Board will oversee the strategy delivery over the coming years. The Board will meet four times a year to look at what's happening in the youth provisions across Telford and Wrekin and shape



any future priorities. It will be made up of representatives from across the young sections; everyone who has a vested interest in getting our youth provision right, including young people like you.

The Council has also supported the development of a local youth provider network so that people from lots of different youth groups and organisations can give their unique perspectives and views – and this goes back up to the Partnership Board.

We will strive for a shared youth sector approach with participation and coproduction at the heart of what we all do, taking a “you said, we did” approach.

We've re-established the **Youth Partnership board** which will enable young people together with those from the youth sector to regularly review how well the strategy is being implemented and what needs to be done next.

As a Council we want all of our young people in Telford and Wrekin to know that we are committed to doing our very best for them and have embedded our youth priorities into the Council's wider **Children and Young People's Strategy** (2025–2028). <https://democracy.telford.gov.uk/documents/s25137/Appendix+A+-+Children+and+Young+People+Strategy+2025-2028.pdf>

We have done this because we recognise that youth provision is not only something we must do by law, but an investment in 'you', our Borough's future and it contributes to safer communities, improved health outcomes, and greater educational and economic opportunities.

So, what's this strategy all about?

It's about making sure young people:

- * Feel **safe, healthy**, and **happy**
- * Have **places to go, things to do**, and **people to talk to**
- * Have **voices that are heard** and make a difference
- * **Get support** when its needed, especially if life's been a bit tough or if an individual has some extra needs

To do this, we have had to develop a clear plan that shows how the things we do will lead to positive changes for young people in Telford and Wrekin and we have considered what we do, why we do it and what success looks like.



What we are doing	We know these activities will make a difference because	What success will look like
Bringing people and partners in the youth sector together: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Youth Partnership Board* Family Hubs, including youth and community support* Safeguarding and community boards	We involve young people in shaping services.	Young people help lead decisions.
Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Youth clubs and activities* A network of youth providers* A process for ensuring the quality of youth provision	We work together across different organisations.	Their emotional wellbeing improves
Develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* A plan to train and grow the youth workforce	We have skilled staff who understand young people.	Services work better together to make a positive difference to the lives of young people.
	We follow youth work values like trust, respect, and inclusion.	Youth workers are well-trained and supported.
		Young people feel safer.
		More young people can access good quality youth services.

What have young people told us?

This strategy will not make a difference to young people if it doesn't address the things they say are important, so lots of time has been spent capturing the viewpoints of young people which has shaped our plan and established some top priorities.

This is what some of the young people in Telford and Wrekin are saying:

- * You want more places where you feel welcome and safe.
- * You'd like quicker access to mental health support.
- * You want adults to listen and actually act on what you say.
- * You'd love more chances to try new things, like sports, arts, volunteering, and work experience.

What are our big goals?

We have taken note of the key things. Young people want us to know that these are important, and we want to make sure they are our priorities too:

- * **Your voice matters** – we want you to speak up and help shape decisions.
- * **Great youth clubs and activities** – we're making sure they're fun, safe, and easy to get to.
- * **Support for your wellbeing** – whether you're feeling stressed, anxious, or just need someone to talk to.
- * **Feeling safe in your community** – we want you to feel confident walking around your neighbourhood.



How are we making this happen?

Your Voice Matters

We believe young voices should be heard loud and clear and we're working with youth clubs, schools, and other organisations to make sure everyone's on the same page.



We want as many young people as possible to help lead the way by:

- * Joining youth forums and school councils
- * Helping to plan events and activities
- * Telling adults what's working and what's not

Whether it's through a school council, youth group, or just by sharing your ideas, we want to hear from as many young people as possible.

We've set up a dedicated **Voices in Unity** network which will ensure young people can have a say in how well the youth strategy is working. It will explore, what could be done to improve things and celebrate where it is making a real difference to young people in Telford and Wrekin. The Voices in Unity network will work directly alongside other youth representative groups. It'll be a place to speak directly to decision-makers and make real change happen.

We even have an **annual Youth Summit** planned as part of the strategy where young people take the lead and show what is being achieved.

Voices in Unity Network – Who make up this group?

Voices in Unity is your chance to make a difference in Telford and Wrekin.

It's a youth board where young people aged 13 – 19 (or up to 24 if you have additional needs) work together with professionals to shape services, activities, and opportunities that matter to you. Whether it's improving mental health support, creating fun things to do, or making sure everyone feels included your voice counts.

How to get involved:

Visit the [Telford Youth Offer](#) website to find out more.

Email youthoffer@telford.gov.uk to register your interest.

Or You can also join through your school, college, or local youth group.

We'll know this is having positive outcomes in this area because:

- * Young people will tell us that they have an improved sense of wellbeing by being involved in decisions that impact on their lives.
- * Services and decisions are increasingly led by the involvement of young people through coproduction, participation, and consultation.
- * Services are more inclusive and accessible due to young people's influence.
- * Individuals are more in control of their own lives and things that affect them personally.
- * A greater number of young people are involved in decision making.



Great youth clubs and activities

What's available in Telford and Wrekin?

We've got a strong youth sector here, which means there are loads of people and places working together to support young people. Here's how it works:

- * **Youth activities** – these are open to everyone! Think sports, games, arts, and fun stuff happening all across Telford and Wrekin.
- * **Youth clubs** – we are working to make sure that there are youth clubs in as many areas of Telford and Wrekin as possible that will offer safe spaces to go where there are things for young people to do and get some help if its needed and they're run by trained youth workers.
- * **Youth support** – if there are some individual extra needs or things going on in life that are making it a little difficult, there are special services that can help. These are often based in places called Family Hubs.

Telford and Wrekin really do have so many things on offer for young people. There are 6 leisure centres offering a range of activities run by both the council and private and voluntary organisations. During the holiday periods specialist and discounted sessions are available to young people with information available at [Holiday Activity Programme – Telford and Wrekin Leisure Services](#). Also running during the holiday periods are out Urban Games [Telford & Wrekin Council | Urban games](#) and Happy Healthy Active Holiday clubs [Happy Healthy Active Holidays](#)

Our local facilities also include the Madeley Ski Slope and the Dawley National BMX track.

We also want you to be able to unlock your own potential and the Leader and Cabinet members of the Council have set up a Young Person Grant Scheme which young people can apply for up to £500 to help with:



- * education, employment, and training
- * starting up their own business
- * additional help to pursue extracurricular activities to support their learning and development.

Information about the applying for the grant can be found at [Telford & Wrekin Council | Bursaries, funds or grants](#)

What's a Family Hub and how can it help young people?

Family Hubs – support for you and your family

Family Hubs are friendly spaces in your community (and online) where you and your family can get advice, support, and information. They're not just for little kids – they're here for young people aged 0 – 19 (and up to 25 if you have SEND). Whether you need help with mental health, education, careers advice, or just want to know what's out there for you, Family Hubs can point you in the right direction.

How to access a Family Hub:

Drop in to your local hub during opening times.

Call 01952 385465 for advice.

Visit online at telfordfamilyhubs.co.uk

Talk to A teacher, youth worker, or another professional can also refer you if you need extra support.

Wherever you live in Telford and Wrekin, there's a Family Hub ready to help you and your family.

We're also working with health teams to make sure help is available for things like:

- * Mental health
- * Healthy eating
- * Staying away from harmful stuff like drugs and alcohol

Supporting your wellbeing

Young people told us they *“want to talk to someone who listens without judging, who has time for them and who supports them before things get too hard.”*

We know that life can feel overwhelming sometimes. Whether it's stress from school, managing friendships, or just feeling low; emotional wellbeing really matters.

Although we know that there are times when young people will need to access statutory services for mental health and wellbeing, we're also aware that sometimes needs are linked to things such as natural stress and challenges of growing up which is why having access to trusted and trained adults around is key to this strategy.

That's why we're working hard to make sure:

- * You get help **before things feel too big** to handle.
- * There are **trusted adults**—like youth workers or mentors—who are there for you.
- * You **have places to go, things to do, and someone to talk to**.

We're also making sure that support is easy to find through **Family Hubs**, which are places where you and your family can get advice, help, and join in with activities. If a young person has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), we are making sure that there's support up to the age of 25.

What we're doing

- * Making sure youth workers and clubs are ready to support young people.
- * Creating more chances to have someone to talk to who listens.
- * Working with schools, health services, and Family Hubs to make sure support is joined up and easy to access.

What are youth workers?

Youth workers are professional who are all about helping you grow into the amazing person you're meant to be. Youth workers are adults who are trained to support young people like you. They're here to:

- * Help you learn new skills.
- * Encourage you to follow your passions.
- * Give you a safe space to be yourself.
- * Support you when life gets tricky.

They don't judge you. They listen, they care, and they're here to help you figure things out, whether that's dealing with stress, finding your confidence, or just having fun and making friends. Youth workers are really important people when it comes to rolling out our youth strategy.

We'll know this is having positive outcomes in this area because:

- * More young people will have improved emotional well-being
- * Young people will report that they feel **better emotionally** and know how to cope with tough times because of the improved support around them
- * There will be a decrease in the need for young people to access acute mental health and other statutory service

Feeling safe in your community

“I just want to feel safe. I shouldn’t have to worry when I’m out with friends or walking home.” Is what a young person told us.

Feeling safe is super important. Young people told us that sometimes they don’t feel safe in their community, and that’s not okay. We want to work together to ensure that you:



- * Feel **safe wherever you go**.
- * Know how to **stay safe** and help others do the same.
- * Be able to **speak up** about things that aren’t right and be listened to.

What we’re doing

Lots of adults are working together already to improve our communities and ensure that everyone feels safe and this includes:

- * Working with police, schools, and community leaders to fix problems.
- * Giving young people the opportunities to **share ideas** and help make our communities better.
- * Helping build **confidence**, **life skills**, and emotional strength so young people can stand up for what matters.

We’ll know this is having positive outcomes in this area because:

- * Young people feel safe and know how to be safe
- * Young people report a decrease in community issues
- * Young people feel empowered to report and safely challenge community concerns

How we’ll know it’s working

We don’t just want to talk about making things better, we want to prove it’s happening. So, here’s how we’ll keep track:

- * We’ll use a digital system to see how many young people are joining in, where they live, and what’s working best.
- * Youth clubs and organisations will report back every few months to show what they’ve done.
- * We’ll check every year to make sure there are enough activities and that they’re good quality.
- * We’ll do safety checks to make sure everything is running properly.
- * We’ll be talking to partners in health, community, police and schools about services young people are accessing.
- * We’ll be reviewing what is on offer and working well locally with town and parish councils.
- * And most importantly, **young people** will help us evaluate things through the **Voices in Unity network** and the **Youth Summit**.



A new online hub just for you

One of the most important things that we need to do is ensure that all young people know what is on offer, when and where, so we are improving our digital communication to help young people:

- * Find youth clubs and activities near you
- * Get advice and support
- * Use maps and filters to find what you need
- * Share feedback and ideas

It’ll be easy to use and updated regularly, find out all the information at <https://youthoffer.telford.gov.uk/>

The Youth Matters national Youth Strategy **DCMS Youth Strategy accessible final** has been launched and our local Youth Strategy is clearly aligned to the priorities that have been identified. We believe our strategy it goes beyond the expectations laid out and will enable delivery of sustainable youth provision in our Borough, underpinned by partnership and co-production with young people.



Final message to you

This strategy is **your strategy. It's here to help you grow, feel safe, be heard and reach your full potential. Whether you want to join a youth club, speak up in a forum, or just have someone to talk to, we're here for you.**

You're not just the future – **you're the present. Together, we're building a Telford and Wrekin where every young person can achieve and succeed in a welcoming community that supports you.**