



# Putting Young People in the Lead

A summary of findings from the Our Bright Future programme. Research carried out by ERS and Collingwood Environmental Planning



Young people are

# Leading the Way

'Young people from across the projects have the opportunity to be involved in programme governance'

## Youth Forum

Through this role, young people have the chance to create

- networks,
- share ideas,
- develop skills.

The programme's Youth Forum consists of young representatives from across the projects.

Youth Forum members are able to attend programme-wide events and take part in campaign and policy related opportunities.



## Organisational Changes

Many projects have started their own Youth Forums or Councils, as a direct result of the programme.

Of the 31 lead project organisations, one third have already made a change to their governance structure or working practices.

Five of these include the recruitment of young trustees.

"Our Bright Future has led to changes across the consortium... in terms of how young people are involved in organisational decision-making"

## Steering Group

**"It's quite unusual for someone as young as we are to be given all these papers and read them and analyse them and think of the impact they'll have. Can't think of anything else in my life where I've been given the same opportunity."**

Youth Representative Interview

Three young representatives sit on the Our Bright Future Steering Group; meeting quarterly to steer the delivery of the programme.

## Evaluation Panel

Two young representatives sit on the Evaluation Panel; meeting quarterly with the contracted evaluator.

The young representatives participate in providing feedback to evaluation reports, making suggestions on the processes, format and ongoing findings, with a different perspective of how they are relevant and beneficial to the programme's youthful audience.



## Peer to Peer

There are examples of young people who have participated in a project taking an active role in recruiting the next cohort.

The approach of 'youth leading youth' has been found to be positive for engagement, whether sharing a campaign or passing on knowledge of a practical task. This is in part due to hearing from like-minded young people and having the opportunity to see the difference made.



## Positive Impact

As well as new skills, projects have sought to develop more positive attitudes towards young people.

These new attitudes and approaches have improved the engagement of young people and wider communities, most specifically working towards challenging the 'society norm of negative views of young people'.

## Youth-Led

Evidence suggests that enabling young people to design and drive campaigns provides them with a greater sense of ownership and engagement.

This in turn leads to more positive outcomes, for example, more community-focussed campaigns and increased sustainability and longevity of initiatives.

## Young people are **Empowered**

*“Giving young people a voice has helped them to realise that they deserve to be heard. Skills, knowledge and confidence appear to be an important contributor to empowerment, a prerequisite to young people taking further action, responsibility and developing their own projects.”* .....

*“Traditionally conservation charities are not that diverse and it’s allowing us to be a bit more reflective; for example, our board of trustees has invited two reps from the project onto the board to give the view of young people.”*

Project Manager

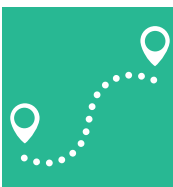
*“Involving young people at a strategic level in the programme has been particularly beneficial for the programme, according to stakeholders, because it provides a vital youth perspective. The youth representatives generally feel comfortable contributing to the Steering Group and Evaluation Panel meetings, especially if they can provide advice and ideas for aspects which are familiar to them, i.e. issues affecting young people.”*

# Achieving

**3,932** environmental  
qualifications or awards  
have been gained



**1,239** of these  
were John Muir Awards



**758** young people have gone  
on to internships, work experience,  
apprenticeships or employment



**214** entrepreneurial projects  
(businesses and enterprises) have  
been started by young people



# Evaluation

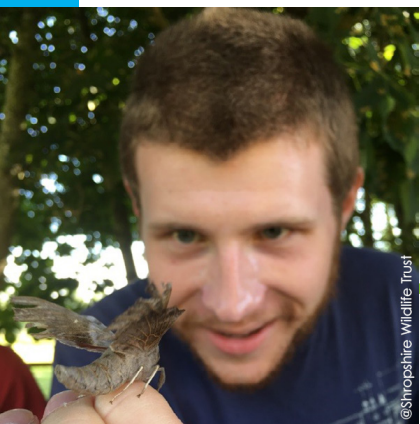
One key aspect of the Our Bright Future programme is the ongoing external evaluation which began in August 2016 and is being undertaken by ERS and Collingwood Environmental Planning. The programme evaluation seeks to identify, analyse and assess:

- The collective impact of the 31 projects
- The added value of the programme i.e. what has been derived from bringing 31 projects together under the Our Bright Future umbrella
- Whether the programme has achieved its long-term ambitions; and
- Evidence to demonstrate impacts, good practice and lessons learnt to support programme learning and improvement, and to inform wider policy and practice.

In order to provide evidence to improve the effectiveness of the programme over time, our evaluators are collecting data and sharing findings on an ongoing basis. The methods of data collection comprise primary and secondary data collection.

Findings included in this document were included in the mid-term evaluation report which was published in July 2019. The purpose of the mid-term report was to state what had been achieved since the beginning of the programme and to identify key lessons to drive improved performance. The report was intended to promote

learning and to support the future delivery of the programme, as well as allowing the programme to share findings with others. It is hoped that the collective evidence base can inform similar programmes in the future and provide evidence on how young people can improve their local environment, which can be used to inform wider policy and practice.



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A copy of the mid-term evaluation report is available on the Our Bright Future website [ourbrightfuture.co.uk/about/our-impact/](https://ourbrightfuture.co.uk/about/our-impact/)





*"It's good because if you see other young people taking a stand, you can feel like in yourself, I have ideas about the environment too. (If) this person can stand up and say something, I can stand up too. it gets more people involved"*

**Project Participant Interview**

## Get in touch

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