



Launching the next Generation

Future Youth Zone Strategy

2026-2029

FUTURE
An **OnSide** Youth Zone

Our Vision

Future: positively transforming young people's lives.

For Future to inspire young people to lead healthier, more positive lives, raising their aspirations to become happy, caring and responsible citizens with more to offer themselves, their families, the community and employers.

Meeting young people's needs, whatever they are

As described by Maslow's Hierachy, Future meets the needs of young people on multiple levels.

Self-

Actualisation

Creative expression, arts access, personal goals, future pathways

Esteem

Developing skills and confidence, leadership roles, celebrating achievement

Belonging and Connection

Positive in-person relationships with youth workers and peers, inclusive culture

Safety

Safeguarding, being consistent for young people, providing stability and emotional safety.

Physiological Needs

Hot meals in a warm, safe space

Our Mission

We give young people somewhere safe and inspiring to go in their leisure time. A 21st century youth provision, open 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year, with at least 20 activities per night, for £5 per year membership and 50p a session, delivered with an outstanding staff team who support, engage, challenge, encourage and listen to them.

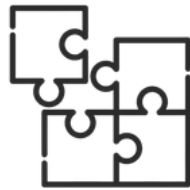
Our Values



Ambition



**Young people
first**



Collaboration



Respect



Excellence

Our Local Needs

The demand for a Youth Zone is urgent.

As OnSide's Generation Isolation report shows, 1.3 million young people spend more time online than on any other activity.

Many wish to reduce screen time but lack safe, affordable alternatives. Future aims to address this need. Community consultations identified three key areas where we can make a significant impact.

Health and Wellbeing

The Need: Barking & Dagenham faces high health inequalities, with the highest child obesity rate and premature morbidity in London. In addition, young people across the country are facing a mental health crisis; our 15 year olds report lowest life satisfaction in Europe.

29.3%

Year 6 obesity rate
Barking & Dagenham:
highest in London

Anti-Poverty

The Need: Barking & Dagenham has the highest child poverty rate in London, with even those in working families facing the pinnacle of the cost of living crisis. Without intervention poverty can impact aspirations, educational attainment and sense of security.

40%

Child poverty rate in Barking & Dagenham (highest in London)

Access to the Arts

The Need: Access to creative opportunities has declined sharply, particularly for girls. Concerns around safety, mental health, self-confidence, and social media pressures have all contributed to falling participation. Meanwhile, arts provision in state schools has diminished, leaving many young people without access to creative or performing arts unless they can afford private lessons.



42%

fall in expressive arts
GCSE 2010-2025

How we will meet these needs



Health and Wellbeing

- Physical health – Facilitating active lifestyles and nutrition education.
- Engaging with NHS services and pathways.
- Mental health first aiders and professional counsellors.
- Developing offer for those with additional needs.

Anti-Poverty

- Meeting basic needs - providing a warm safe place to go, and hot meal.
- Building aspirations through partnerships with employers.
- Workforce readiness and career pathways with accreditation.

Access to the Arts

- Developing our arts offer to providing high quality provision
- Partnership working with other arts organisations and artists to bring wide range of arts to young people

How we will make the impact possible

These are the core principles that we will focus on to effectively meet the needs.

Young People First – reaching those who need us most

1. Growing youth voice across our three sessions
2. Targeting specific needs and codesigning programmes to tackle them
3. Developing leadership pathways within the Youth Zone



Our Network, Our Borough – Community & OnSide Partnership

1. Investing in our people: attracting and nurturing exceptional staff, volunteers and trustees who share our values.
2. Developing external partnerships with organisations who share our values, from schools, health the arts and other charities.
3. Working with OnSide and the growing network of youth zones to learn best practise and maximise opportunities for young people and funding.

Sustainability – Social Value & Long-Term Impact

1. Continue the diversification of our fundraising to create long term stable, renewable income.
2. Be a data led organisation: using insight to make informed decisions about our delivery.
3. By combining strong financial management with clear evaluation, evidence lasting social value and impact with funders, partners and our community.
4. Environmentally sustainable.

Testimonials

Arts

Kayla has become somewhat of a leader in the dance troop. It has been beautiful to see her journey unfold to someone who was once shy to now being to excited and happy to take the lead. She is always supportive of her peers and works hard at ensuring she performs at every performance to the best of her ability. She regularly helps the youth workers to choreograph routines and her passion is inspiring to her team mates.





Aspirations

Macario has been a member of the Youth Zone for a few years now. We have seen him transition from Juniors to Seniors and in that time have seen so much development in Macario. He is an avid footballer who can be found outside in all weathers! Macario can be found all over the youth zone engaging in activities whether it's music or table tennis Macario puts his all into everything he does. He encourages others and always comes with a positive attitude. He has had an incredible journey at Future so far and has great relationships with the staff and his peers.

Health

When Aizen first attended Juniors, he was always bored and often had to take time out to recalibrate himself. Since then he has grown so much and is able to articulate himself so well, when he feels happy, sad or annoyed. Most recently he has been taking part in the session challenges, whereby he has to take part in 8 activities for a minimum of 30 mins. If he does this he wins a prize. Last week he completed the session challenge the quickest he has ever done and continued to engage in more activities after winning his prize. Aizen is such a bubbly character and is a pleasure to have on session.



What success looks like by 2028

- 5,000 paid members of the Youth Zone - 60% actively engaged. 1,200 young people attending each week by the end of Year 3.
- 40 hours+ of universal provision available weekly, with all rooms open and in active use.
- Youth Voice groups for Juniors, Seniors, and Inclusion meeting quarterly and well attended.
- More young people engaging in sports - especially females and those currently not active
- Developing our try, train, team offer, ensuring young people have opportunity to compete or showcase their work
- Young people gaining access to arts and culture, through horizon broadening trips to collaborations with partners.
- Working with at least 20 partner organisations annually
- Stronger community connections - number of new delivery partners
- 85% of employees reporting they are happy or very happy at work. At least 300 volunteer hours recorded each month, with 20 active volunteers.
- Positive feedback from stakeholders, partners, and funders on visibility, transparency, and outcomes.

Share our Vision?

Become a Corporate Partner

Change the lives of the next generation whilst involving your team with our volunteering opportunities, team away days, and chance to showcase careers in your sector

Volunteer

Share your passions, hobbies and experiences with young people and broaden their horizons to new experiences

Donate

As a charity, 75% of our budget is through donations and we rely on the generous support of our community to achieve our goals.

Partner

We are excited to develop and grow partnerships with organisations who share our values. If you're an arts, sports or youth organisation, talk to us about how we can collaborate.

Join the team

If you'd like to change young people's lives whilst working in a fun, supportive environment, why not join our team. Check out our vacancies at futureyouthzone.org/vacancies.

Get in Touch

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