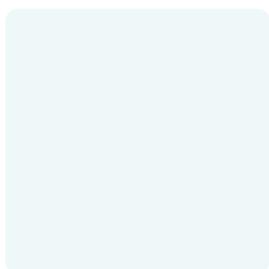


Youth Borders



Strategic Plan 2023-26



www.youthborders.org.uk

Welcome

YouthBorders is pleased to be introducing its updated 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. The updates reflect the many changes which have impacted the organisation over this last year including a re-brand, new members and wider changes impacting the national landscape. YouthBorders will continue to review this plan annually and this update is due to take YouthBorders through to September, 2026.

YouthBorders like many other sector provisions, has over the past three years adapted through adversity and uncertainty, especially in relation to the COVID pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. There have been transformations in our management with the new appointment of a Chief Officer and additional capacity secured through new funding opportunities and partnerships to support these changes. Additionally, with the social and economic challenges facing both national and regional policy and our local communities this new plan demonstrates the commitment from YouthBorders to represent the best interests of young people and youth work practices and advocate for our members.

The plan communicates who we are and what we do. It describes our vision, aims and key priorities for the next three years. It serves as a framework of organisational business planning and self-evaluation. It will adopt the monitoring and evaluation cycle model of **plan – do – review – improve** whilst focusing on all priorities.

Members, partners and stakeholders will be updated on an annual basis assessing how well YouthBorders is achieving this plan. Regular communication and evidence of practice occurs on a frequent basis through our weekly newsletter, digital media platforms and direct contact with members partners and young people.

We would like to thank all who have contributed to the formation of this strategic plan, and we look forward to working together with you to ensure youth work continues to improve the lives of young people in the Scottish Borders.

Haylis Smith
Chairperson, YouthBorders

David Calver
Chief Officer, YouthBorders

Strategic Plan 2023-26



YouthBorders is the network of voluntary and community-based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders, supporting and promoting good quality youth work.

Our organisation is a facilitative leader—working alongside our members, partners, stakeholders, to advance outcomes for young people and our community.

Vision

Our vision is of a voluntary and community-based youth work sector which is connected, collaborative, responsive, and recognised; working together to improve the lives of young people in the Scottish Borders

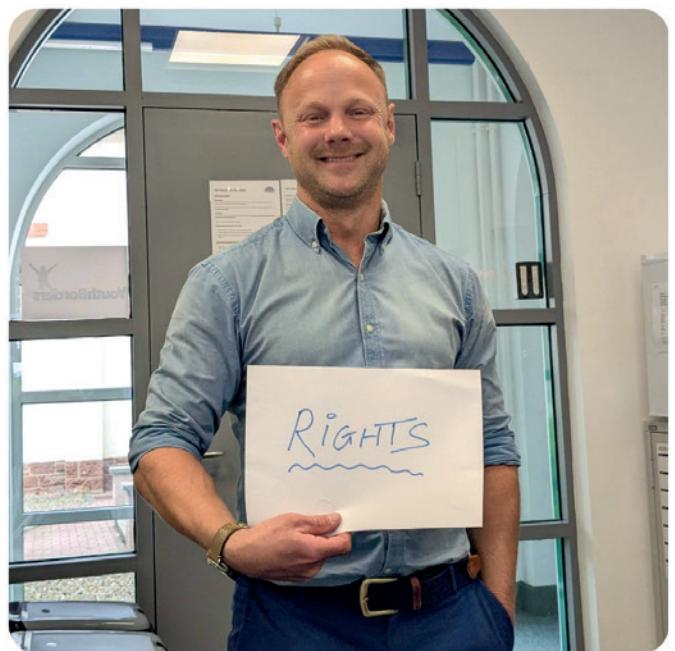
Aim

Young people in the Scottish Borders's lives are improved through participation in good quality youth work.

Principles

YouthBorders is an organisation built on the following foundations:

- Recognition of youth work as a distinct educative practice with professional standards, competences, values, and ethics
- Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusive practice
- Our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of young people
- Our commitment to developing the workforce
- Our commitment to governance being open and transparent



Values

- **Honesty:** we will be open, truthful, and trustworthy
- **Empathy:** we will be understanding, compassionate and kind
- **Accountable:** we will try our best and take responsibility for our actions
- **Supportive:** we will be informed, knowledgeable, responsive, and proactive
- **Forward Thinking:** we will seek opportunities to advance our network, be prepared to take risks, and to invest in our people and communities for the longer term



Priorities

1. **Collaboration & Partnership** – A youth work sector which collaborates and works in partnership
2. **Voice & Community** – To have a membership which is connected, empowered and represented
3. **Workforce Development** – A membership, which is supported, confident and competent

Outcomes

- a) Our network is confident, resilient, and optimistic for the future
- b) Our members connect and collaborate within and beyond our network and communities
- c) Young people's perspectives are broadened through youth work experiences
- d) Our work is informed and contributes to the wider strategic policy landscape in Scotland

Collaboration and Partnerships

A youth work sector which collaborates and works in partnership

PLAN: What will the difference be?

1.1 The youth work sector will be supported to work in **strategic partnerships** to innovate and improve how youth work services are funded, planned, and delivered in the Scottish Borders.

DO: What will we do?

- Be the lead organisation within the Scottish Borders Youth Work Partnership
- Be the lead organisation coordinating the Stepping Stones project
- Engage with national and regional funders on behalf of our sector and place-based community
- Develop a collective fundraising strategy
- Record learning from and evaluate the locality youth work model and Youth Work Partnership

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Security of funding for YouthBorders and our members
- Membership feedback

PLAN: What will the difference be?

1.2 The youth work sector will be **actively engaged** in local and regional forums for planning and delivery of youth work opportunities.

DO: What will we do?

- Establish relationships with non-member youth work partners such as uniformed organisations
- Promote awareness of Local Area Partnerships and Learning Community Partnerships as forums for local planning and decision-making
- Support members to connect with Community Learning and Development Services locally
- Promote the value of Youth Awards and remove barriers to utilising them
- Promote community and voluntary based youth work within the LEAD Youth Award programme

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Participation rates in forums (self-reported by members/partners)



PLAN: What will the difference be?

1.3 The youth work sector will **work together** to ensure we are contributing to and benefitting from significant developments and policy drivers.

DO: What will we do?

- Continue to feed into National Strategies, in partnership with YouthScotland, such as the 2026 Youth Work Manifesto
- Maximise opportunities which emerge from Scottish Government policy, e.g. UNCRC & children's rights
- Work with members and partners to identify and incubate new project ideas which meet the local need or respond to national or regional policy

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Investment into new project ideas



Voice and Community

To have a membership which is connected, empowered and represented

PLAN: What will the difference be?

2.1 Our members **connect with each other** and with YouthBorders to share their work, experiences, and ideas.

DO: What will we do?

- Facilitate regular networking meetings of the Locality Youth Work Managers Network
- Introduce new members to other organisations within their locality
- Invite members to share their practice in response to thematic / issue specific 'call outs' initiated by YouthBorders
- Establish a new Specialist Managers Network, Youth worker network breakfast events, UNCRC Roundtable Network, Trustees Network to ensure voices from across all of our membership are heard and connected

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Participation rates in networks and events
- Event evaluation and feedback
- Engagement rates from members
- Self-evaluation

PLAN: What will the difference be?

2.2 Our membership is **empowered by receipt of relevant and timely information**, their news is shared and amplified, and members are routinely asked to provide feedback to YouthBorders.

DO: What will we do?

- Develop and implement a communications strategy
- Review and improve our e-bulletin
- Update our website and grow a more significant presence on social media channels which reflect our members' work and interests
- Conduct a membership insight survey to enable us to target our communications and better meet members' needs
- Develop opportunities where member achievements can be celebrated

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Membership feedback
- Online audience figures



PLAN: What will the difference be?

2.3 Our membership is **represented strategically by YouthBorders** in relevant forums, where we will advocate in our members' best interests.

DO: What will we do?

- Build relationships and position ourselves as the 'go to' organisation for strategic representation of third sector youth organisations
- Actively engage in regional strategic planning forums including the CLD Strategic Partnership and the Children and Young People's Leadership Group
- Listen to members via our networks to ensure we are informed
- Seek members' views on specific issues or topics to ensure we are informed
- Support opportunities for members with particular interest / knowledge areas to represent themselves strategically

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Participation rates and attendance at forums
- Engagement rates from members



Workforce Development

A membership which is supported, confident and competent

PLAN: What will the difference be?

3.1 Our membership feels **supported and included** by YouthBorders.

DO: What will we do?

- New members will receive an inclusive welcome and induction to YouthBorders
- All members will experience tailored support and a responsive service to their policy and practice needs
- All members will be offered an on-site visit from the YouthBorders staff team annually
- Provide access to practical support services including insurance and PVG scheme membership
- Provide access to youth work governance and policy templates; and signpost to TSI partners for organisational governance

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Membership engagement tracking

PLAN: What will the difference be?

3.2 Our membership is **confident and competent** in their youth work practice.

DO: What will we do?

- Plan and coordinate an annual programme of training which is reflective of members' needs and priorities
- Promote training delivered by partners which is relevant to our membership
- Work alongside members to develop toolkits and resources
- Participate in regional and national forums related to workforce development and standards of practice
- With partners develop a pathway to grow our own youth workers
- Develop and deliver youth work induction training
- Grow our relationship with the CLD Standards Council for Scotland

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation
- Training participation rates



PLAN: What will the difference be?

3.3 Our membership can **demonstrate the impact** that they make on young people's lives.

DO: What will we do?

- Support members to use relevant and proportionate evaluation frameworks
- Raise awareness and understanding of Scotland's Youth Work Outcomes
- Seek opportunities for our members to be engaged in quality research related to youth work and young people
- Use our communications strategy to share the impact that our members have made on young people's lives

REVIEW: How will we know?

- Self-evaluation



Policy Connections

YouthBorders is informed by and contributes to the wider strategic policy landscape in Scotland adopting national and regional frameworks. These address keeping children and young people safe, quality standards and performance, improving health and wellbeing and reducing isolation, rights and inclusion for young people, youth work outcomes, equality, engagement and participation.

Key Actions

- Strategic partnerships and Projects
- Networks and events
- Representation and sectoral advocacy
- Provision of information and support
- Workforce development and training
- Creation of regional and national opportunities for young people and their communities



Charitable Purpose

YouthBorders will support the advancement of citizenship and community development by supporting voluntary and community-based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders.

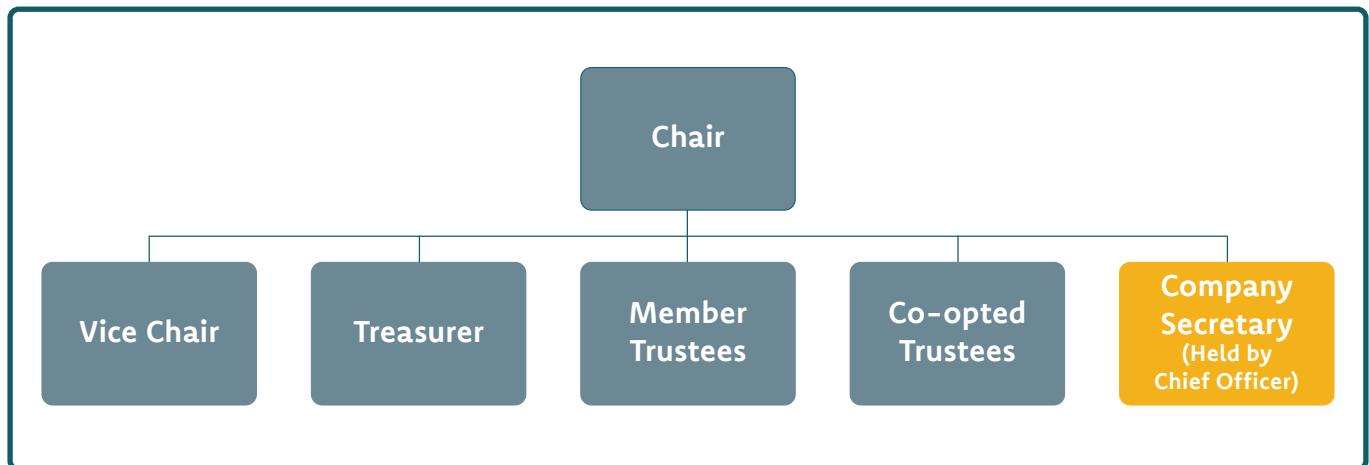
YouthBorders will support the advancement of education of adults and young people in the Scottish Borders through providing support and training for adults who work with young people; and providing opportunities for young people to develop themselves as youth workers or in other leadership roles.



YouthBorders Organisational Structure

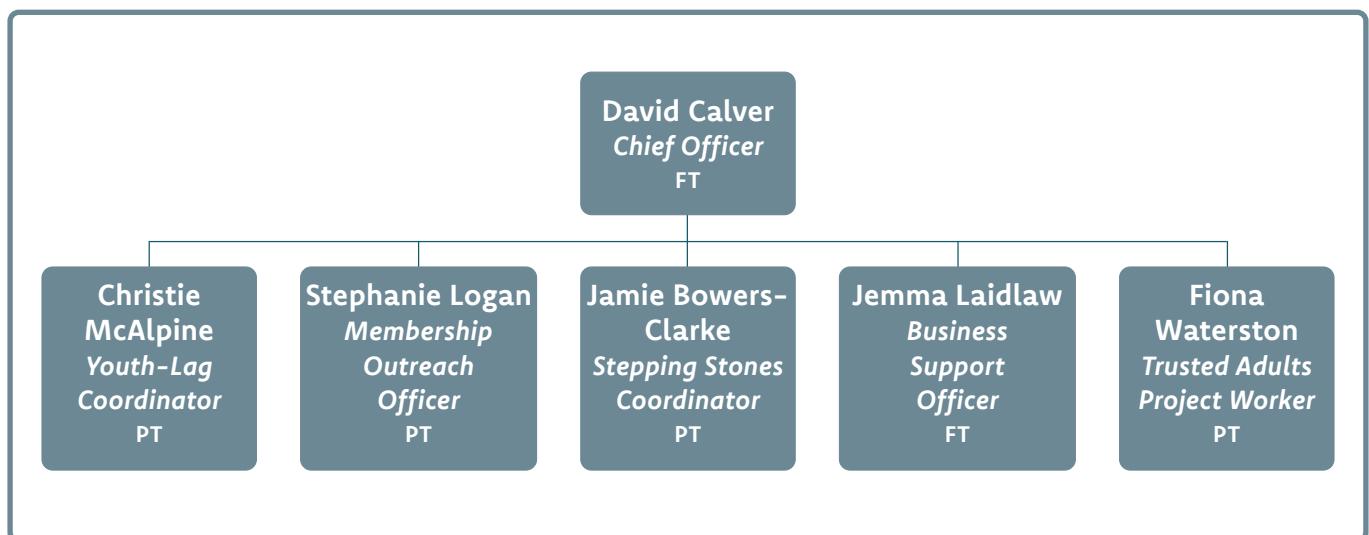
Board of Trustees

YouthBorders is a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status, governed by a dedicated Board of Trustees:



Staff Team

YouthBorders has a small staff team of core and project staff, working together to deliver this plan:







YouthBorders is a Company Ltd by Guarantee with Charitable Status: SC313338.
Scottish Charity Number: SC037680

Email: info@youthborders.org.uk Twitter: @YouthBorders

www.youthborders.org.uk