



Youth Sector Welcome Pack

Making Staffordshire a place where young people are connected to and inspired by the changes research can make for a more equal, safe and sustainable future.



UK Research
and Innovation



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Introduction

Know Your Place (KYP) is a five year project that will build a young people's community research network across Staffordshire. This Welcome Pack is designed to provide professionals and youth work sector organisations across the county with the information they need to get involved in the project and to support young people to get involved.

The Team

Know Your Place is led by Staffordshire County Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS). It will be delivered in partnership with:

- The Know Your Place Young People's Steering Group. The steering group will ensure the project is young person led and places their interests at the heart of the project.
- University of Staffordshire. The university are our research partners for the project. They will, alongside the Young People's Steering group, lead the research that underpins the project, supporting young people to deliver research, understand their places and influence academic researchers' agendas.
- Staffordshire County Council. The Council will ensure the local authority are responsive to the young people's research findings and help implement the changes young people would like to see.



**Know Your Place Young
People's Steering Group**



The core delivery staff team are:



Rhia Taylor-Tipton is the Know Your Place Youth work Coordinator. Rhia works full time on Know Your Place coordinating the project and supporting the Young People's Steering group.



Cathryn Rayner is the Know Your Place Project Manager and oversees this project as part of role at SCVYS as Youth Engagement and Service Impact Manager.



Ryan Fox is the Know Your Place Research Coordinator and is employed by University of Staffordshire to be part of the Know Your Place team. He is responsible for gathering and making sense of all the research data collected and evaluating the project.



Phil Pusey is the CEO of SCVYS and is the overall lead for the project.



Nic Gratton is the Know Your Place Senior Researcher. She was part of the team who developed the idea for Know Your Place and is a Participatory Action Research specialist. She is responsible for embedding participatory action research into the project, training the Young People Steering Group and Know Your Place Innovator Organisations as community researchers.



Our funders: The Community Research Networks Fund



**UK Research
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Know Your Place is funded by UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Community Research Network's Fund. UKRI launched their Community Research Network funding programme in two phases. In 2022 and SCVYS were successful in receiving a small pot of funding to work with University of Staffordshire to develop this project. The project has therefore been in the making for two years. In 2024 we applied for phase two and were notified that we were successful in October last year.

UKRI have commissioned the Young Foundation to administer the grant.



**The Young
Foundation**

The Community Research Networks Fund aims to "to strengthen the capacity, capability and connectivity required to support sustainable and equitable community engagement with research". This means they have provided funding to help communities to be more connected with research and ensure the lived experiences of communities are valued in understanding place-based concerns.

They will do this by:

- Providing resources
- Offering training, sharing knowledge and developing skills
- Strengthening relationships between communities and researchers
- Building long term relationships through fair engagement.



**We have been
awarded a
Community
Research
Networks Fund
grant**



**UK Research
and Innovation**



**The Young
Foundation**

We are one of nine projects in the UK that have been funded, the only primarily young people focused project, and the one project based in the Midlands.

The Young Foundation is supporting all projects with a national learning programme. This means we will be able to share our learning from Know Your Place with national partners and take learning from them to help develop and grow KYP.

Know Your Place has secured approximately £1,000,000 over five years. The funds will be spent on staff time, subgrants for youth sector partners and supporting young people's engagement.



Network Name	Region	Community of focus
Belfast Community Research & Innovation Network	Northern Ireland	Six inner-Belfast communities
Collaboration for Mental Wealth in Moray	Scotland	The rural community of Moray
Dolennu	Wales	The people of Eryri (Snowdonia), a tourist hotspot
East Marsh Community Research Network	East Midlands, England	The former fishing community of East Marsh in Grimsby
Isles of Scilly Community Research Network	South West, England	The remote island community of the Isles of Scilly
Know Your Place Network	North West, England	Young people in Staffordshire
Newham Citizen Research Network	London, England	Marginalised communities in Newham
Rural Durham Community Research Network	North East, England	The rural community of County Durham
South West Race Equality Research Network	South West, England	Black and minoritised communities in the South West

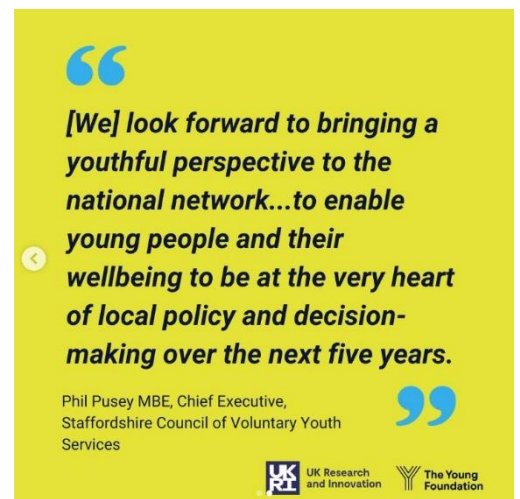
The project

Know Your Place will make Staffordshire a county where young people are connected to and inspired by the changes research can make for a more equal, safe and sustainable future.

We will create a Young People's Community Researcher Network across Staffordshire that will gather young people's views about where they live, any concerns they have and the changes they want to see, to inform decision making locally and regionally.

Know your Place is a Participatory Action Research project. This means that young people, their lived experience and their voices will be at the heart of the project. They will be trained and supported to be community researchers which will involve:

- Planning the project
- Mapping who we want to involve and who we need to speak to
- Deciding what questions they are curious about
- Designing creative ways of asking their peers about what is important to them
- Making sense of the consultation findings together
- Deciding what their priorities for action are in their local areas, across the county and nationally.



As well as being led by young people, Know Your Place will work closely with Youth Sector partners in Staffordshire. **We will subcontract 10 Innovator Organisations a year for three years to:**

1. **Understand Your Place** though delivering consultations with young people
2. **Change Your Place** by delivering social action projects based on the young people's priorities to create the changes young people want to see.

The young people, with support from the team, will connect with Change Makers, people who influence policy and services, to outline their priorities for action based on the research they have conducted. They will also connect with researchers to help influence research agendas and ensure research is responding to real world concerns.

What is Participatory Action Research?

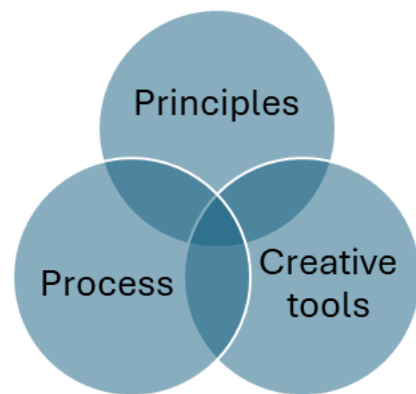
Participatory Action Research (or PAR for short) is an approach to research that is distinctive from more traditional forms of research because:

- It is driven by communities, rather than academics or funders.
- It accepts that knowledge can be created, owned and used by anyone, not just a privileged few.
- It accepts that lived expertise is as important as learned expertise.
- It is collaborative at all stages, rather than led by one research (or a small team of researchers).
- It results in action and changes that benefit the communities leading the research and is not research for research sake.

Having Participatory Action Research as our foundation ensures Know Your Place:

- Creates knowledge about Staffordshire from a young people's perspective
- Supports young people to be community researchers to get as many young people in Staffordshire contributing to their findings as possible.
- Takes young people's views and opinions seriously, and helps to create the changes they want to see in Staffordshire.

Know Your Place reflects the principles, process and creative approaches used in PAR.



Know Your Place reflects the PAR principles of:

- **Participation:** young people will work with Know Your Place as Community Researchers. We will also support youth sector partners from across the county to conduct small research and social action projects.
- **Inclusion:** Know Your Place will actively work with young people who have fewer opportunities to get involved with research or social action projects. This will include working with youth sector partners to reach young people who are least likely to engage. We will use creative and visual tools to help young people engage with the programme.
- **Flexibility:** Know Your Place will be flexible and adapt to the needs of the young people and organisations involved.

- **Honesty and transparency:** Know Your Place is ambitious, but transparent about what we can achieve and how we will achieve it. We will build a culture of open communication and learning between all partners.
- **Action focused:** Know Your Place is supporting young people to deliver research in Staffordshire to create sustainable and lasting change. We will do this through partnering with organisations, decision makers and other researchers to ensure the programme creates the changes young people want to see in their county.

The Know Your Place Young People's Steering Group share ownership of Know Your Place with Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Service, University of Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Council. They will work on the project as Community Researchers. This means they will be trained and supported to understand the views and opinions of young people from across the county. To do this they will be involved in:

- **Planning:** deciding the focus of their research, designing the research questions.
- **Involving:** Deciding who will be involved, understanding which young people or groups are missing from the conversations and reaching out to young people who are typically missed out.
- **Listening and learning:** designing creative tools to help Innovator Organisations have county wide and localised conversations with young people, interviewing or holding focus groups, making sense of the research findings.
- **Cross Checking:** Ensuring their understanding of the findings is accurate by checking it with young people from across the districts.
- **Action:** making recommendations for action, sharing the findings and recommendations with relevant change makers from across the county and beyond, including Staffordshire County Council.



Innovator Organisations

Are you a youth organisation, charity, or community group that's passionate about youth voice and social change? You can become a **Know Your Place Innovator Organisation** – and play a key role in driving youth-led research and action across Staffordshire.

What does it mean to be an Innovator organisation?

As a subcontracted Innovator Organisation, **you'll receive funding to lead a creative consultation with young people aged 11+** in your district, community, or area of interest. This is called an **Understand Your Place Consultation**.

You'll receive full support to plan and deliver this process, including:

- **Training and guidance on Participatory Action Research (PAR)**
- Help identifying the right questions to ask
- Creative tools and techniques to explore issues with young people
- Support in understanding the findings and what they mean for your community

Once your Understand Your Place Consultation is complete, your organisation will use the insights gathered and **be funded to co-design a youth-led social action project** — also known as a **Change Your Place Project**.

This could take many forms depending on the topic your group explores, for example:

- A community garden project
- A mental health awareness campaign
- An initiative focused on safer housing
- A creative showcase of youth perspectives

The key is that the project is **youth-powered**, evidence-based, and rooted in what young people have said they care about.

How we will support you:

Each Innovator Organisation will receive up to **£5000** to carry out the Understand Your Place Consultation and a Change Your Place Project over a year. We know this might be new territory — so we're here to support you every step of the way.

As an Innovator Organisation, you'll have access to:

- **Group support sessions with one of the project's researchers**
- A chance to co-develop creative tools and consultation methods
- Step-by-step guidance in turning findings into meaningful action
- **PAR training workshops** available to all staff involved

In some cases, **trained young people from our Young People's Steering Group (YPSG)** will also be able to support your consultation and project — helping you facilitate conversations, build trust, and share their experience of youth-led research.

Innovator Organisation Key Dates

Expression of interest forms open for Organisations	Friday 23rd May
Online Information sessions	Friday 13th June 10am Wednesday 18th June 2pm Thursday 26th June 6pm
Expression of interest forms closed for Organisations	Friday 11th July
Innovator Organisation launch event	Monday 22nd September
Know Your Place Festival	Thursday 23rd October
Innovator Project delivery	November 2025 – August 2026

How to get involved

To find out more or ask any questions you may have or book your place on one of our online information sessions above please contact rhia@staffscvys.org.uk

Register your interest in becoming an Innovator organisation by [completing this form](#)

The Young People's Steering Group

Are you aged **13–19** (or 25 with additional needs) and passionate about making a difference in your community?

Do you have ideas about what needs to change in Staffordshire — and want to be part of the team leading that change?

Then the **Know Your Place Young People's Steering Group (YPSG)** is for YOU.



(Young People's Steering Group 2024 – Alton Towers)



(Young People's Steering Group 2024)

The YPSG is the **driving force** behind the Know Your Place project.

This is where young people take the lead — deciding what matters, shaping research, planning action, and making sure the voices of young people are heard at every level.

As a member, you'll help:

- Decide what issues the project should focus on (like mental health, climate change, housing, or discrimination)
- Learn about research and how to use it to create change
- Get creative with how we gather and share young people's stories
- Influence local decision-makers, councils, services and more
- Be part of something big — with the power to shape Staffordshire

Why join us?

- Receive free training in research and leadership (including Participatory Action Research)
- Be part of exciting events and workshops throughout the year
- Work alongside other passionate young people
- Gain new skills and experiences that look amazing on CVs, college applications, and job interviews
- Have your voice heard by adults who make decisions about your community
- Most importantly: make a real difference

And don't worry — no previous experience is needed. We'll support you every step of the way!

What does being a member of the Young People's Steering Group involve?

Attend approximately 50 hours of Know Your Place activity over the year (June–June) for which we will pay you up to 50 hours at **£12.50 per hour in the form of vouchers** for your time spent working with the Steering Group.

The activities will include:

- Approximately 15 hours of Young People's Steering Group meetings (evening, weekend or school holidays)
- An annual residential (two full days, including an overnight stay)
- Two full days training
- An event to share our findings with decision makers and researchers
- A day to discuss the findings of the research
- Other sessions as agreed (for example delivering consultations with young people in youth work settings).



(YPSG Launch Day – April 2025)

For more information and to hear more about the project including from young people see: www.staffscvys.org.uk/knowyourplace

To see more details please see full role description for the YPSG - <https://staffscvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/YPSG-role-descripton.pdf>

Key Dates

YPSG Residential

Saturday 28th – Sunday 29th June

Know Your Place Festival

Thursday 23rd October

Want to get involved?

Complete the form below to join us on this exciting project or email **rhia@staffscvys.org.uk** to ask any questions

[CLICK HERE](#) to apply to join the Young People's Steering Group