

TOWARDS A LOCAL YOUTH PARTNERSHIP IN COVENTRY

May 2020



STRATEGIC AND DELIVERY PARTNERS

Strategic Partners



Delivery Partners



KARE ADENEGAN

100m European Champion, Paralympic Silver Medallist and BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year 2018. Former T34 100m World Record Holder.

It is an honour to support the Coventry Youth Partnership, and more broadly, to be able to influence a generation of young people in the city. As a young person from Coventry, I always strive to make this city proud and this gives me that extra push to work hard – on and off the track.

As an athlete I'm motivated by my goals. I set out what I'd like to achieve and that drives me to keep pushing until I hit my targets.

It's important that the young people of Coventry stay engaged with the world around them, whether that be through sport, politics or education. There is a danger of becoming too immersed in the virtual world. I hope that younger generations become more active and are able to experience the life-changing effects that positive activities can have both physically and mentally.

As a city we are united and reflect Coventry as a city of peace and reconciliation. I hope that the

young people will continue to carry that torch. I know that youth work provision can help young people who may be living in challenging circumstances and help them to never give up. I always try to remember the phrase, 'This too will pass', to remind myself that the challenges I face today won't last forever. It's about getting through each day looking forward to a new day.

Our city is on the up and there have never been more opportunities for young people in Coventry. The whole city is being encouraged to get active, while Coventry 2021 will provide a platform to present the city's talent in the arts and creative world.

It's something for everyone to be proud of and get excited about – it's an exciting time to be a young person here in Coventry, which this partnership helps to bring together.



COUNCILLOR PAT SEAMAN

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Coventry City Council

I believe in the young people of this city. I believe in their creativity and their resilience. Our young people have so much to offer and it is incumbent on us to support them.

But we are living in hugely challenging times and we must make sure we don't leave our children behind. We can't always do things the way we have in the past, so we must look to the future and be prepared to innovate and share our resources to make sure this generation gets the opportunities they deserve.

Youth work programmes are a really important part of this. They provide activities and programmes that begin with young people's needs and build up the personal and social skills rather than academic ones. More and more these skills are being recognised as important for jobs, education and training, family life and relationships. It is great to see so many organisations coming together across Coventry to support this work.

INTRODUCTION

The Coventry Youth Partnership (CYP) is a model of local youth work collaboration that has sparked interest not just within Coventry but across the UK.

This summary brings together the key elements of Coventry's partnership model and sets out priorities for its future. At a time when Government is considering a wider roll out of local youth partnerships, we hope this overview document will raise the profile of our work and contribute to a wider discussion about the value of this approach.



JOHN GREGG

Director of Children's Services,
Coventry City Council

The events over the past few months relating to Cov-id 19 have taught us many things, in particular, just how important partnership working is as we seek positive outcomes for our children, young people and families in Coventry. Young people, like others, will need a great deal of support as we work through this period. We will need to be very mindful of the needs of young people and their families as we work towards getting back to a 'normal' way of living post lockdown. The voluntary sector, alongside the local authority have a key role to play in supporting our communities to succeed in the period ahead as we go forward under the umbrella of **One Coventry**.

The Coventry Youth Partnership was established through the Connecting Communities programme, which in itself, was designed to bring people together to find innovative solutions to some of our challenges. This is an exciting time to be growing up in Coventry. Next year we become the City of Culture and there are lots of plans in the pipeline so young people can be at the heart of celebrations in our city. We need to make sure Coventry has something to offer all our young

people, whatever their circumstances and this opportunity leaves a legacy for our young people. Some face significant challenges in their lives, often because of things outside their control like poverty and family income, unequal access to resources and opportunities, or their mental and physical well-being.

Coventry City Council are committed to supporting all young people in the city and are pleased to support The Coventry Youth Partnership. The partnership makes a really important contribution to the City's youth offer - a rich network of organisations working across the area and with very diverse groups of young people. Some are specialist organisations working with particular groups, others open their doors to whoever wants to step inside. What they all have in common is a focus on building young people's personal skills, their self-confidence and belief in what's possible for the future. At a time when the future is so uncertain, this can only be a good thing and we look forward to working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for our young people.



HOW WE STARTED...

The Coventry Youth Partnership acts as a central hub, bringing together experienced youth organisations and professionals from across the city.

The partnership aims to build on the strengths of each individual organisation, developing shared goals and agreeing a common approach to youth work, not only amongst operational partners but also the local authority and other statutory bodies.

The CYP partners contribute towards the local Children and Young People's Plan through programmes focused on employability, health and wellbeing, alternative education, arts, culture and social action. Our aim is to ensure high quality youth provision is available across the city and we support voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) groups as well as local authority provision.

CYP emerged in 2017 as the city council's universal youth services were placed under review. As reductions in local authority funding became more severe, discussions took place about the voluntary youth sector's capacity and willingness to work more collaboratively to keep youth provision going.

With support from the innovative Connecting Communities Programme led by Coventry City Council, the Positive Youth Foundation has acted as convenor of the partnership. Work has begun to create a youth work plan for the city. It takes into

account the local authority's 'Vision for children, young people and families 2019-22', as well as an audit of existing youth provision across the city and wider regional and national initiatives such as the outcomes framework and quality service models from the Centre for Youth Impact (www.youthimpact.uk).

CYP also reviewed the city council's 2018 survey of young people (available on the Partnership's website (www.coventryyouthpartnership.org)), ran a series of workshops for partners, and began dialogue with senior local officials and elected members to pull together their views for the long-term development of the partnership.

In response, a wide range of organisations came together and established the Coventry Youth Partnership in December 2017. It worked closely with Coventry City Council and other strategic partners to align its work to the Coventry Children and Young People Plan, developing a voluntary youth sector response for young people in the city. This has become a working agenda for the partners, allowing them to address the issues affecting the lives of the city's young people as well as highlighting the positive impact young people have in the city.

The CYP audit identified a number of issues facing the youth sector in Coventry and why there is value in bringing organisations together in a more co-ordinated way.

For example:

- There was a lack of regular networking opportunities where organisations could come together to share their knowledge, skills, good practice and the unique contributions each organisation made.
- Partner organisations held a range of skills and experience that could be shared with others.
- There was a notable need to develop the sector to support young people from 'at risk' groups.
- Organisations with similar goals often saw each other as competitors rather than collaborators.
- There was a lack of shared information, evaluation and celebration about the impact of youth work across the city.
- Young people were not always aware of the range of youth work services available to them across the city.

Based on these findings, our aim is to develop a set of recommendations and delivery priorities that CYP stakeholders can work towards. However, it is important to recognise that this plan has no financial resource attached. It relies upon the partners to attract and sustain city-wide investment in youth provision in the city.

Further details about the partnership and findings from relevant reports, including the 2018 youth survey can be found on the partnership's website.



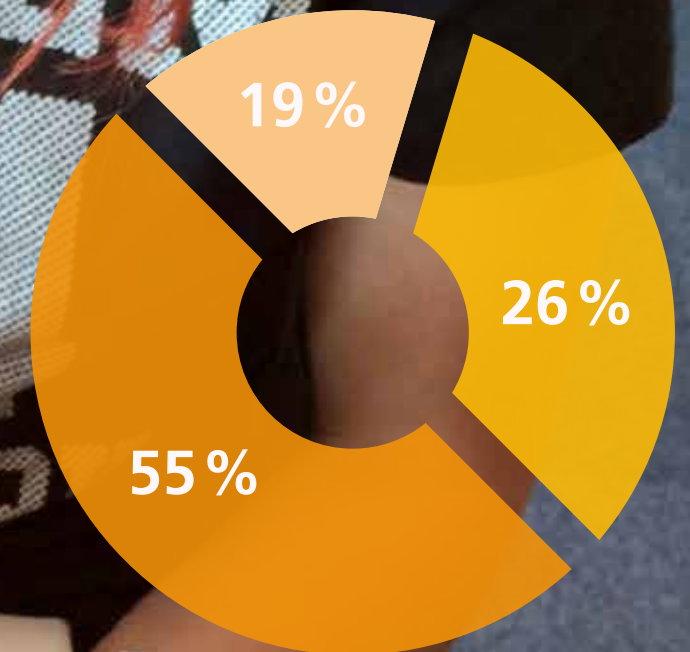
The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is exploring the potential of **Local Youth Partnerships** to provide a more coherent open access youth offer across England. According to the DCMS open access youth work has been hindered by issues such as poor relationships between local statutory and civil society partners, piecemeal funding and 'destructive' local competition for funds.

However, some of the most effective local delivery is in areas where partners come together across sectors to provide youth services. They are inclusive, led locally and have credibility and trust in their leadership; they involve young people in decision making and reach out to wider civil society and business partners.

WHAT THE YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US

Coventry City Council Youth Survey 2018

- 79%** believed they can achieve their goals whilst living in Coventry.
- 80%** would talk to somebody about their own mental health problems, depending on who it is.
- 72%** say they, or someone they know, have experienced mental health problems.
- 80%** gave a positive response when asked to rate their local area.
- 58%** of young people in Coventry would like to volunteer.
- 58%** Take part in some sort of physical activity each week.



Are you proud to live in Coventry?

- Yes – 26%
- Sometimes – 55%
- No – 19%

SUPPORTING THE GROWTH AND IMPACT OF YOUTH WORK...

By focusing on the impact of youth work CYP members are better able to demonstrate the contribution they make to the health and well-being of Coventry's young people.

The challenges young people face and the potential for youth organisations to support them are set out in the 2019 Coventry Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This is a data rich analysis of challenges and opportunities in the city.

For example:

- A third of the city population's growth is concentrated on one-tenth of the city. How well does the youth sector reflect this demographic profile?
- The city's population is growing, changing and increasingly diverse. In the past ten years Coventry was the second-fastest growing local authority outside of London. How well does the youth sector reach out to new migrants and bring communities together?
- How can the CYP broaden its base and involve the public sector, universities, colleges, schools and others to share volunteers, resources and venues? How can it increase the number of activities available for young people and increase awareness of what's available for young people across the city?

YMCA Coventry and Warwickshire, one of the CYP's network partners, worked with the Centre for Youth Impact to develop a new approach to measuring outcomes in youth work. The YMCA is one of 86 local projects supported under the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) Youth Investment Fund to trial a common evaluation framework for youth work. The framework is based on a theory of change in young people's behaviour and personal and social skills (summary available in Appendix 2). Sport's (DCMS) Youth Investment Fund to trial a common evaluation framework for youth work. The framework is based on a theory of change in young people's behaviour and personal and social skills (summary available on page 11).

In recent years Coventry and other local authorities across England have responded to incidents of serious youth violence. Often a small group of young people create significant demands on social services, schools, health services, police and other public bodies as well as fear in communities related to physical violence. Our experience suggests that CYP members are often in touch with these young people and can engage with them differently to statutory bodies and formal institutions. A new approach to addressing these challenges is required that strengthens partnerships between schools and youth workers, bringing together a wide range of organisations including non-statutory youth organisations where appropriate.

DCMS has also announced a new commitment to investing in youth work. As well as the Youth Investment Fund mentioned above, the department is working with the National Youth Agency to provide approximately 450 bursaries for professional youth work training. In October 2019 it also launched a review of the statutory guidance on youth services with a view to beginning 'an open conversation' on what is working well, and what government can do to strengthen it further.

Using local needs assessment information, performance data and feedback from professionals and young people the 2018 Children and Young People's Plan identified four areas where it could make the biggest difference to children and young people.

KEY AREAS



EARLY HELP:

Making sure as a city we reach children, young people and families when the need first emerges, and intervene when we can have the most impact.



BE HEALTHY:

Children and young people's health is improved by giving them the best start in life, tackling health inequality and encouraging positive lifestyle choices.



STAY SAFE:

Children and young people have a framework of support in place to protect them from harm.



EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT:

Children and young people's level of attainment, education progress and employability are maximised.



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

In its 2 years of existence the Coventry Youth Partnership has begun to have an impact on how youth work is delivered across the city.

- It has brought together over 20 organisations working with young people from across the city to meet regularly and share information about their work. This has increased contacts between organisations and an awareness of each other's work.
- It has helped to identify strengths and gaps in provision across the city through an audit of youth work provision, identifying areas where organisations can extend services and complement each rather than duplicating.
- It helped to raise awareness among partners of the city council's priorities.
- It has generated financial investment in to the city for programme delivery and sector training provision.
- It has increased skills and knowledge of partners through attendance at training opportunities, themed workshops and events. The partnership ran training sessions on a wide range of topics including Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries, First Aid, Equality and Diversity, Delivering Quality Youth Work and Managing Challenging Behaviour. Where possible, network partners were funded to lead and deliver on these courses.
- It funded consultancy support for five partner organisations to help them identify organisational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to organisational stability and how they wished to address these.
- It launched a website (www.coventryyouthpartnership.org) and mobile app which highlights youth work activity in the city. This is used by young people, families and professionals seeking more information about what's on in Coventry.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The Coventry Youth Partnership is ambitious for young people in the city. It has a particular focus on supporting young people with the greatest needs and for whom early intervention can make a significant difference. By encouraging youth organisations in the city to work more closely and efficiently, we can reach more young people.

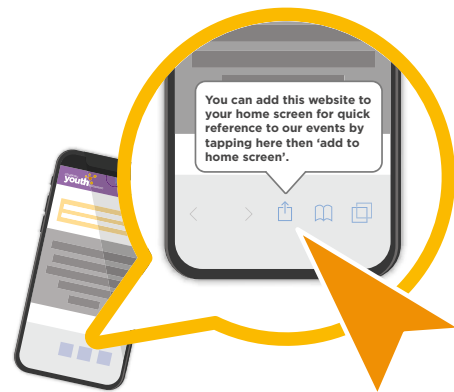
Potential next steps for the CYP are:

1. To be governed by a representative group of strategic partners, including VCSE representatives and relevant Coventry City Council Executive Boards as well as operational partners. Both will continue to meet on a regular basis and contribute to key local policy objectives in line with the City Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Children and Young People's Plan. The Partnership will also work closely with the City Council's education team, individual schools and alternative education providers to find ways to address youth violence in the city, and to continue working to advance the Coventry Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the principles established in the influential Marmot Review.
2. Establish a clear set of strategic aims for its work and encourage partner organisations to demonstrate the contribution that youth work makes to the lives of young people in the city by reporting on the impact of their work to strategic partners and funders.
3. Build on the 2018 Coventry Youth Survey so it becomes a biennial event allowing comparative data analysis and helping to shape the priorities for youth provision in the city. The survey could be extended to focus on local stakeholders' priorities and themes such as public health, through care, migration services, arts and culture, education or policing.
4. Create a stronger model for youth engagement under the CYP including an annual youth summit to bring young people together to be a voice of young people in Coventry.
5. Establish 'Youth Voice' groups which feed into a city-wide youth forum which will meet on a quarterly basis and facilitate young people's contribution into the policy and decision making of key strategic partner such as the Police, NHS, Coventry City Council and Commissioning Groups.
6. Investigate the feasibility of an on-line support platform for youth work offering remote information, advice and guidance and providing support at the time of need.
7. Respond to the need expressed by partners to support staff and volunteers professional development (CPD) throughout the organisation (from young volunteers through to senior management and Board members).
8. Support the increased capacity to pool communications resources and skills and the development of a more effective city-wide youth focused online presence.
9. Seek to secure investment for the continuation of youth work in Coventry including greater capacity to administer the network and meet the ambitious programme of work set out above.
10. To work towards a headline Youth Strategy for Coventry, in line with national developments of Local Youth Partnerships.

GET THE APP

Find out what's going on for young people in Coventry by checking out www.coventryyouthpartnership.org

Now it's even easier, just follow these simple steps to get the App and all the latest events will be just a tap away!



STEP ONE

Visit www.coventryyouthpartnership.org on your mobile. A notification will appear at the bottom of the screen giving you the option to add a quick link icon to your home screen for instant access.



STEP TWO

Tap the share icon and then tap the 'Add to Home Screen' button and the App icon will appear on your home screen.



STEP THREE

Tap the Coventry Youth Partnership quick link icon on your home screen to open the App and gain access to the full events listings, any time and place!



COVENTRY
youth PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Coventry Youth Partnership is a central hub which supports deliverers of young people's services in the city. We bring together a partnership of young people centred practitioners, all committed to meeting the aims of the Coventry Children and Young People's Plan.

By aligning policy to practice, we provide a strategic platform for stakeholders to engage with young people in high priority neighbourhoods.

We are committed to ensuring credible provision is available across the city. We act as a capacity building and innovation body for organisations to align positive activities and personal development opportunities for young people.

The network brings together skilled professionals and quality facilities to employability, health and wellbeing, alternative education, arts, culture and social action programmes.

The network has been active since December 2017, since when, over twenty organisations have joined the group on an associate basis.

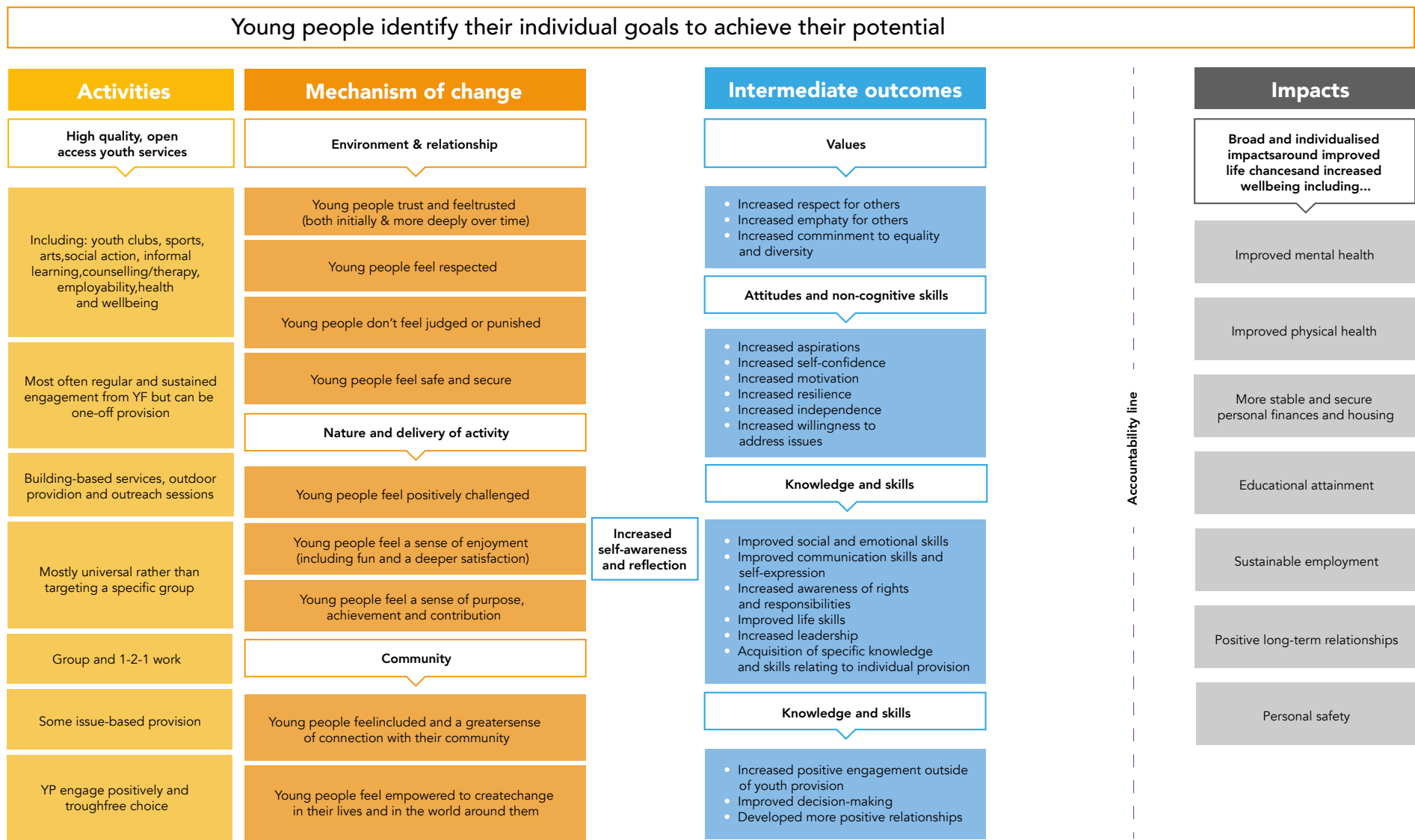
Since August 2019, the group has set its core objectives to meet the following aims:

- Enhanced partnership working opportunities between organisations to be naturally developed based on specialisms and need.
- Training and development opportunities to be shared across partners, to maximise reach, range and experiences.
- Resource sharing where appropriate, defined by need and scope of opportunity.
- Progression routes for young people to be promoted through use of the CYP Events Mobile App (coventryyouthpartnership.org/whats-on).
- Impact Measurement – to share collective impact to key partners beyond our immediate sector.



THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change model below is a useful starting point for measuring outcomes and impacts from our work. It has been used widely as a structure to understand youth work’s contribution to a wider world.



The Theory of Change has been developed by Centre for Youth Impact for the Youth Investment Fund.
For further details see: yiflearning.org/resources/theory-of-change

Image Credit: Grapevine Coventry & Warwickshire



GET IN TOUCH

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This document has been produced by
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of the Coventry Youth Partnership

