

NCS

INDEPENDENT REVIEW FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE

NCS SUBMISSION



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Executive Summary

- Social cohesion is core to the NCS vision of ‘a country of connected, confident, and caring citizens where everyone feels at home’. NCS experiences have been shown to have a positive impact on young people’s wellbeing and perceptions of social cohesion. NCS participants have given over 18 million hours in social action, and almost two-thirds of young people who take part in volunteering and social action through NCS say that they will continue after the programme ends.
- It is clear that despite the term being widely used, there is a lack of agreement and consistency about how ‘social cohesion’ is understood. Social cohesion is multifaceted. It can be conceptualised in a number of different ways and there appears to be no single definition of social cohesion either in the UK or internationally. Similarly, when young people are asked about their views on social cohesion, no single definition tends to emerge — but through discussion they respond positively to words and phrases such as diversity, equality, solidarity and belonging.
- Crucial factors in social cohesion include socioeconomic status and access to opportunity, ethnicity and faith, age, integration and connectedness with a community, and engagement with technology and social media. Evidence suggests all of these can contribute positively or negatively to social cohesion. In many of these areas there are contemporary barriers that are increasing, particularly for young people. For example, there are widening inequalities and fewer opportunities, as well as negative interactions with others via social media.
- National Citizen Service has sought to translate a complex concept like social cohesion into more defined outcomes of improving opportunity and social mobility, supporting social good, promoting social inclusion, and strengthening resilience. NCS experiences therefore aim to support young people to:
 - *Become world ready and work ready.* Young people are able to develop life skills and build employability to support social mobility.
 - *Feel able to have an impact on the world.* Young people are given opportunities for social action and volunteering, connecting them with their community and enabling social good.
 - *Feel a sense of belonging, with respect for difference and diversity.* Young people are offered socially mixed experiences and can engage with a diverse cohort of other young people, providing them with opportunities for meeting and mixing, thereby enhancing social inclusion.
 - *Have greater confidence, life satisfaction and wellbeing.* NCS experiences support young people to build their resilience.

- The way that young people have experienced NCS has changed. Originally young people participated in a three to four week extended residential experience that brought small groups of young people together to meet and mix. Having learned from more than a decade of delivery, adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic, and young people's changing priorities, NCS has developed its 2023–2025 strategy with a new portfolio of away from home, local community, and online experiences. This diverse offering provides a unique opportunity to learn about how social cohesion outcomes are achieved in different contexts.
- We have significant evidence that previous NCS experiences contribute to social cohesion outcomes. Young people who entered NCS with the lowest reported levels of positive interactions with other ethnic groups, or who faced the greatest barriers to social integration, have been found to have shown the greatest improvement. Young people from segregated communities became 19.4% more likely to report positive social contact with other ethnic groups after participating in NCS. Over three quarters of NCS participants reported that they now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds following their NCS experience.
- There is no single consistent approach or definition to social cohesion in the youth sector, but there are a variety of programmes and funding streams that address areas that support social cohesion. These include supporting skills development and enabling social mobility, promoting social action and volunteering, and supporting improved mental health and wellbeing, among others. Less common is an explicit focus on social mix and a universal offer for young people, given the targeted nature of many youth programmes. Based on the evidence of impact of NCS presented in this submission, and our understanding of the most crucial drivers of social cohesion based on wider evidence, it is clear that the provision of socially-mixed universal programmes for young people — with a representative mix of young people from a range of backgrounds — has an important contribution to make to social cohesion.



Introduction

NCS welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Independent Review for Social Cohesion and Resilience.

Social cohesion has been at the core of our work since the foundation of NCS in 2009. Our vision is of a country of connected, confident and caring citizens where everyone feels at home. This is a socially cohesive society. More than 800,000 young people have taken part in NCS over the last decade, completing over 18 million hours of community-based social action, and gaining priceless life experiences.

NCS offers a range of experiences for young people that support them to become world ready and work ready by growing their confidence, independence, and skills; connecting them with people from all walks of life; and empowering them to make a difference in their communities and wider society.

Taking part in NCS experiences at pivotal moments in their lives supports a generation of young people to seize opportunities and face the future with confidence, have an appreciation and tolerance of different views and perspectives, and be more actively engaged in civic life. These are the ingredients of a more socially cohesive society. Historically, we delivered this through a consistent and extended residential experience. But NCS is evolving to give young people more choice about how and when they engage with NCS, with trips away from home, experiences that take place in their community, and through online activities. Whatever type of experience they choose, they will have the opportunity to meet a diverse range of people, build skills for work and life, and get involved in social action and volunteering,

NCS experiences have been shown to have a positive impact on young people's wellbeing and their perceptions of social cohesion.¹ Over three-quarters of young people state that they feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds following the programme (80%), and that they feel more confident meeting new people (80%).² Almost two-thirds of young people who take part in volunteering and social action through NCS say that they will continue after the programme ends.³ Our evidence demonstrates that NCS has a strong positive impact on young people's sense of responsibility towards their local community.⁴

¹ [NCS Key Statistics](#).

² Provisional data, 2022 Impact and Evaluation Findings.

³ [NCS Key Statistics](#).

⁴ 8pp increase. Provisional data. 2022 Impact and Evaluation findings.

Social cohesion - Understanding the Wider Evidence

The 2016 Casey Review⁵ highlighted how, as the diversity of the UK has increased, people from minority ethnic groups have become more dispersed across the country. In some cases this has resulted in the creation of heterogeneous segregated communities. Furthermore, high concentrations of people from ethnic minorities in residential areas — and even greater segregation in schools — has increased the likelihood of children growing up without meeting or better understanding people from different backgrounds (however, the review highlights the successes of NCS in facilitating greater tolerance and understanding).

Many traditional survey measures which look at cohesion show a positive picture for the country. For example, the majority of citizens in England (84%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along. The proportion of people who said that they felt that they belonged to their immediate neighbourhood, whilst lower at 63% is also improving.⁶ However, it is clear that there are opportunities for improvement. In 2021/22, measures for life satisfaction, happiness and self-worth decreased from the previous year and only 27% of respondents agreed that they could personally influence decisions in their local areas.⁷ A reduction was also seen in the number of respondents who agreed that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood — this figure fell seven percentage points from the previous year to 58% in 2021/22).⁸

In responding to the challenge of increasing social cohesion, it is necessary to understand how social cohesion is perceived — both broadly and by key stakeholders and academics. It is clear that despite the term ‘social cohesion’ being widely used, there is a lack of agreement and consistency across the sector on how ‘social cohesion’ is understood.⁹ Social cohesion is multifaceted and can be conceptualised in a

number of different ways. Chan et al describe it as both the ongoing processes that underpin it, and as the ultimate end goal.¹⁰ There appears to be no single definition of social cohesion in use either in the UK or internationally.

It was thus important for NCS to determine a clear and succinct view of our own position on social cohesion. In 2020, we undertook the Social Cohesion Evidence Review. This review proposes a set of high-level recommendations to ensure that social cohesion is incorporated into everything we do, both within NCS Trust and with our network partners.

This literature review identifies the characteristics and barriers that are linked to social cohesion — socioeconomic status, geography, ethnicity, faith, age, plus some other factors — and the role of social mixing in overcoming these barriers. Note that since this review was completed we have a new strategy that has significantly evolved, and so not every framing or definition used in this review is still applicable. The full review is attached as an appendix.

Key findings from the literature on the drivers are discussed alongside additional research exploring the contemporary barriers to social cohesion.

a. Socioeconomic Status & Geography

Definitions of social cohesion have increasingly considered socioeconomic divides.

Socioeconomic status can predict the levels of trust of individuals as well as the sense of social cohesion in an area in general.¹¹ The Joseph Rowntree Foundation¹² found that neighbours living in mixed-income areas developed levels of trust with each other on practical issues and *“did not feel that they were surrounded by people who were significantly different from themselves”*.

⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (December 2016). [The Casey Review](#).

⁶ Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (Feb 2023) [Community Life Survey 2021-22](#)

^{7/8} *ibid*

⁹ NCS Trust: Social Cohesion Evidence Review. 2020.

¹⁰ Chan, J., To, H-P and Chan, E. (2006) [‘Reconsidering Social Cohesion: Developing a Definition and Analytical Framework for Empirical Research.’](#) Social Indicators Research, 75, pp. 273 – 3-2

¹¹ Bright Blue,(2019). [Distant neighbours? Understanding and measuring social integration in England](#)

¹² Joseph Rowntree Foundation [2006], [Mixed Communities, Success and Sustainability](#)

The Casey Review¹³ recommended that there should be a focus on ‘[reducing] economic exclusion, inequality and segregation in our most isolated and deprived communities and schools’. Research by the Department for Education indicates that deprivation levels and socioeconomic status play an important role in people’s feelings of cohesion at a local level.¹⁴ Local issues and circumstances determine the importance and influence of specific dynamics. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic a sense of community was created as people reached out to their neighbours and sought to support each other.

The cost of living crisis risks increasing the levels of inequality in socioeconomic status with the latest ONS data showing that while the prices of most goods and services are increasing, not all households will be affected by inflation in the same way. As a result of rising food and energy prices, low-income households are experiencing greater levels of inflation¹⁵ as are those in social housing.¹⁶ There is also a strong socioeconomic gradient in mental health, with people of lower socioeconomic status having a higher likelihood of developing and experiencing mental health problems.¹⁷ Children and adults living in households in the lowest 20% income bracket in the UK are two to three times more likely to develop mental health problems than those in the highest.¹⁸

b. Ethnicity & Faith

Social cohesion can refer to shared connections across ethnicity and faith differences. Faith can be a dividing line across which tensions are expressed. Between 2016–17 there were 155,841 hate crimes of which 70% were racially or religiously motivated.¹⁹ The ethnicity and faith of individuals is correlated with the level of social cohesion they report — white individuals more likely to trust most of their neighbours

relative to ethnic minorities.²⁰ The level of ethnic and religious diversity in communities can drive the level of cohesion in an area and, when segregated, may generate greater perceived-threat and interethnic tensions.²¹

In general, ethnicity has a smaller relationship with social cohesion than in the past.²² However, the level of importance is dependent on the context.²³ This requires a targeted and place-based approach to areas where ethnicity is likely to be in sharper focus.

The Casey Review²⁴ argues that a lack of social mixing between different ethnic and faith groups is a critical barrier to greater social cohesion. However, in order to successfully reduce prejudice and improve relationships a structured approach to social mixing is required.²⁵

George Floyd’s death in 2020 galvanised the global Black Lives Matter movement and led to activism in the UK, as well as a polarisation in public discourse and media coverage on the topic of racism. This in turn has led to the opening up of conversations about institutional racism and debates on the way that racist behaviour should be defined. Recent data from the Community Security Trust (CST) have identified that although the number of antisemitic incidents fell in 2022 compared to previous years (-27%), in recent years a growing number of young people have been identified as victims of antisemitic abuse.²⁶

¹³ Department for Communities and Local Government, (2016). [The Casey Review](#)

¹⁴ Department for Education, (September 2010). [Young People and Community Cohesion: Analysis from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England](#)

¹⁵ Consumer Prices Index (CPI) annual inflation was 11.9% for low-income households (those in the second income decile) and 10.5% for high-income households (those in the ninth income decile) in the year to October 2022, compared with an all-households rate of 11.1%. [ONS](#), October, 2022.

¹⁶ CPI annual inflation for subsidised renters was 12.2% in October 2022, which was higher than for owner occupiers (11.5%) and private renters (9.1%). *Ibid.*

¹⁷ WHO, & Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. (2014). [Social determinants of mental health. WHO Geneva.](#)

¹⁸ Marmot, M., Allen, J., Goldblatt, P., Boyce, T., McNeish, D., Grady, M., & Geddes, I. (2010). [Fair society, healthy lives: Strategic review of health inequalities in England post 2010](#)

¹⁹ Home Office. [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022.](#)

²⁰ Bright Blue (2019). [Distant neighbours? Understanding and measuring social integration in England](#)

²¹ J. Laurence, (2019) Cohesion through participation? Youth engagement, interethnic attitudes, and pathways of positive and negative intergroup contact among adolescents: a quasi-experimental field study. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ J. Laurence, (2020). Youth Engagement, Positive Interethnic Contact, and ‘Associational Bridges’: A Quasi-Experimental Investigation of a UK National Youth Engagement Scheme. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* p. 1264-1280

²⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government, (2016). [The Casey Review](#)

²⁵ LSE, (2017). [The key to a more integrated society: Understanding the impact and limits of social mixing](#)

²⁶ CST. (2022). *Incidents Report.*

c. Age

Age is a dividing line across many of key challenges facing society and is often aligned with contemporary issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and differences in political positions. For example, 27% of 18–24 year olds voted for Brexit compared to 60% of over 65s. However, although there are significant generational divides between attitudes, neither the literature or expert interviews have pointed to a significant breakdown in trust or cohesion between generations. Indeed, focus groups conducted by the Nuffield Trust have highlighted the role that young people played in supporting the older generation during the pandemic. Others noted how the pandemic had brought different generations within families closer together, both as a result of being locked down together and as a result of greater connection through videoconferencing.²⁷

Mixing between generations can yield benefits to social trust. As well as improving relationships between groups, the Interfaith Network argues that intergenerational relationships can enable communities to keep an eye on growing conflict.²⁸

There is growing public discourse around intergenerational inequality in the UK, tied to issues around social mobility and opportunities for home ownership. A recent report noted the changes in levels of homeownership and social (not for profit) renting across generations. At age 30, 7% of people born 1956–1960 were renting privately, compared with 37% of those born 1986–1990.²⁹ There is also evidence to suggest that age can represent a prevalent barrier to social cohesion within rural communities, with the LGA noting that “*the most significant differences within a rural community are more likely to be socioeconomic and age-related*”.

d. Integration

Alongside social cohesion there is extensive literature on ‘integration’. This literature focuses on ‘marginalised groups’ — such as those with a disability or who have migrated — and how they interact with society. These groups often have lower levels of social cohesion and trust.^{30 31}

Mixing is not always the primary mechanism to support these groups. Integration programmes are built with a wide range of interventions, such as building the language skills of participants. However, cohesion programmes that bring together people from different backgrounds do play a role and they can help build a level of trust between a marginalised community and others to foster greater cohesion.³²

In 2021/22, hate crimes targeting people’s sexual orientation increased by 42%, to 26,152. The largest increase in hate crimes were those against transgender people, with 4,355 reports, up 56% from the previous year which is the largest annual percentage increase in these offences since the series began.³³ The Home Office stated that, “*Transgender issues have been heavily discussed on social media over the last year, which may have led to an increase in related hate crimes.*”³⁴ A recent example can be seen in the online discourse following the murder of Brianna Ghey and the homophobic and transphobic comments that disrupted a Birmingham vigil held in her memory.

²⁷ Nuffield Foundation. [Beyond Us and Them - Societal Cohesion in Britain Through Eighteen Months of COVID-19](#) (p.108).

²⁸ Interfaith Network (2016). [Faith and Cohesive Communities](#).

²⁹ Anderson. (2022). [The Future is Bright – or is it? Comparing Opportunities across the Generations in the UK](#).

³⁰ Jump x Mime (2020), In the Mix

³¹ M. Hifz U. Rahman, A. Singh, (2019) Disability and social cohesion among older adults: a multi-country study. *International Journal of Social Economics*

³² Bright Blue, (2016). [A sense of belonging](#)

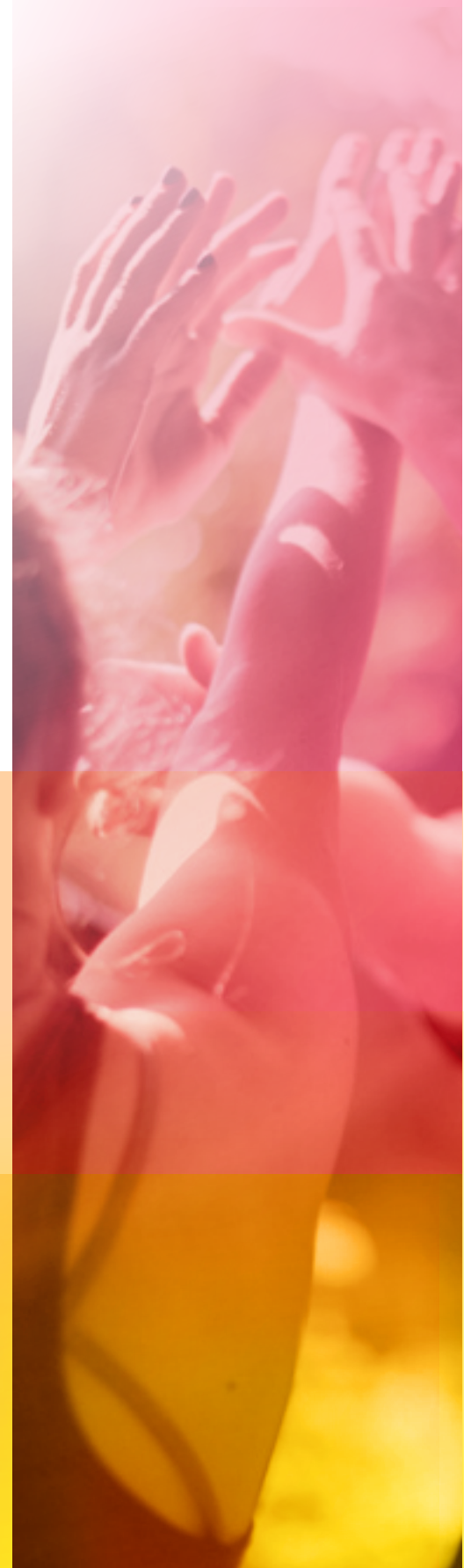
³³ Home Office (2022). [Hate Crime England and Wales 2021-2022](#).

³⁴ *ibid*

e. Increasing Use of Technology and Social Media

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Instagram, and WhatsApp are used by the majority of the population and have had a large impact on communication and social cohesion. Social media can help to foster communication among young people and reinforce shared feelings of identity. It can also enable young people to meet people they would not otherwise engage with, and create opportunities to share ideas and ideologies. Some social media platforms have been created with a local focus (e.g. NextDoor) with the intention to facilitate communication between neighbours, whilst others are creating opportunities to learn new skills, be creative and meet new people (e.g. Roblox, TikTok). The online landscape is rapidly changing, and many of the platforms that are currently popular did not exist when NCS was founded.

Whilst social media can facilitate communication it also creates opportunity for malicious actors to spread hate or disinformation. The three key ways that social media can represent a barrier to social cohesion are through: information (the spreading of disinformation), networks (the creation of echo chambers that reduce the opportunity for participants to encounter different beliefs and ideologies), and norms (the enforcement, promotion, or censorship of certain forms of behaviour).³⁵



³⁵ Sandra González-Bailón, Yphtach Lelkes. 2022. Do social media undermine social cohesion? A critical review. Social Issues and Policy Review.

Young People's Views on Social Cohesion

We believe that young people bring new perspectives to our work, provide valuable insight, generate new ideas, and challenge ways of thinking. Young people therefore play a key role in the governance and decision making process at NCS, and we ensure that we continue to listen to the voices of the young people that we exist to serve as a youth organisation.

The following section explores the views of young people, drawing on focus group research that suggests that social cohesion is not a term used or easily recognised by young people. Despite this, there is a clear appreciation and understanding of the implications of the issues outlined in the previous section.

As part of our internal Social Cohesion Review³⁶, NCS conducted six online focus groups with a mix of young people across rural and urban areas of York, Birmingham, and Bristol. We then conducted a separate discussion with members of our own Youth Board, following a similar line of questioning.

When asked about their initial thoughts towards social cohesion, there were participants in all groups who were not familiar with the term. When provided with an opportunity for reflection, no single clear definition emerged and it was noted that young people understood social cohesion in a number of ways.

The most dominant association with the term 'social cohesion' was 'working together or coming together as a community'.

"For me it means community or lots of different social backgrounds being able to mix and work together."

(Young person, Birmingham, Urban)

"Togetherness, like that saying, a village raising a child. It's a whole community coming together to be better. Melting pots, different communities, ethnicities and races getting along together."

(Young person Bristol, Rural)

Many of the issues outlined in this review also resonated with young people, particularly the risk of demographic differences impacting how people view and treat each other.

"Trying to bridge the gap between different divides. Generations, or races or sexualities."
(Young person, York, Rural)

"[The term] makes me think of equality and everyone being equal."
(Young person, Bristol, Urban)

"Being able to act as one country. Being able to put differences aside in terms of characteristics. You are all human regardless of who you are."
(NCS Leader)

When thinking about what kind of differences might exist, participants thought these were based on age, ethnicities, location or socioeconomic background. Young people believed that these are factors that can impact how people view and treat each other. There were no notable differences in the participant's opinions based on location or demographics.

Young people were less positive about definitions of social cohesion that seemed vague or lacked detail, and they responded positively to words and phrases that mentioned diversity, equality, solidarity, and belonging.

³⁶ NCS Trust: Social Cohesion Evidence Review. 2020.

National Citizen Service and Social Cohesion

The analysis outlined so far, together with the generous engagement of sector experts, our board and young people, has informed our Theory of Change and places social cohesion at the heart of our work at NCS.

Our Definition of Social Cohesion

The way in which NCS interprets and translates social cohesion is outlined below which derives from our Theory of Change.



NCS DEFINITION OF SOCIAL COHESION

We have sought to translate a complex concept like social cohesion into more defined outcomes for young people that we understand contribute to social cohesion: improving opportunity and social mobility, supporting social good, promoting social inclusion, and strengthening resilience.

As per our Theory of Change, the NCS experiences therefore aim to support young people to:

- *Become world ready and work ready.* Young people are able to develop life skills and build employability to support social mobility.

- *Feel able to have an impact on the world.* Young people are given opportunities for social action and volunteering, connecting them with their community and enabling social good.
- *Feel a sense of belonging, with respect for difference and diversity.* Young people are offered socially mixed experiences and can engage with a diverse cohort of other young people, providing them with opportunities for meeting and mixing, thereby enhancing social inclusion.
- *Have greater confidence, life satisfaction and wellbeing.* NCS experiences support young people to build their resilience.

Our Theory of Change underpins everything we do and has been developed collaboratively with DCMS and the Evaluation Taskforce (which sits across Cabinet Office and HMT). Our new Theory of Change was developed in 2022, building on our experience from 14 years of delivering impact and driving social cohesion (see appendix for the full Theory of Change).

NCS Strategic Objectives in Delivering Social Cohesion

To achieve the outcomes outlined in this review, we commission away from home, online, and local community experiences for young people that have the following objectives:

- Enable social mixing of young people from all backgrounds
- Provide opportunities for volunteering and social action
- Develop life skills and support independent living
- Build employability and work readiness

These objectives inform the shape and focus of our commissioned experiences, and they represent how young people experience NCS on the ground. These objectives drive social cohesion in multiple ways.

Social mix is an evidence-based method of building tolerance for difference and diversity.

Social mix in an NCS context refers to the levels of diversity within a cohort of young people participating in NCS, and the opportunities for interaction within that group. This relates particularly to the outcomes of *feeling a sense of belonging*, and *having respect and tolerance for difference and diversity* which we believe are crucial components of achieving social cohesion. This belief is supported by the literature.

The Casey Review³⁷ notes that a lack of social mixing is a critical barrier to greater social cohesion. However, social mixing must be meaningful, and opportunities for reflection and guidance are necessary in order to impact social cohesion.³⁸ Our research has identified that less frequent positive mixing with other ethnic groups, and more frequent negative mixing, are key barriers to forming a positive social integration attitude.³⁹

In practical terms, there are two steps for our partners to achieve social mix:

1. Engaging a diverse cohort of young people.

We require NCS experiences to reach and support the full participation of a cohort of young people who are broadly reflective of the diversity of the local area (e.g. as measured through metrics such as ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals).

- ### **2. Meeting and mixing, opportunities for interaction.**
- We require partners to create opportunities for young people to interact with and build relationships with new people, particularly with those who have had different life experiences. This can be achieved through broadening social networks by mixing young people into small groups with others they haven't met before; purposeful and structured activities that enable meaningful relationships to be built; and development being underpinned by guided reflection.

Key to the NCS approach is a focus on young people mixing in smaller groups (12-15 people in a team) within a wider group of no more than 100. Small group mixing is primarily facilitated by ensuring that groups have a mix of genders and young people from different schools (school segregation has been highlighted as an increasingly important factor in declining cohesion).

Structured volunteering and social action builds young people's understanding of — and investment — in their communities, and their capacity to deliver social good.

NCS experiences related to this objective involve teams of young people working together to help enact change in their local communities through a variety of social action projects. Young people are involved in devising, planning, and delivering these projects where they are able to learn useful life skills and navigate challenges together, whilst meeting people with different backgrounds and experiences. This relates particularly to our outcomes of feeling able to have an impact on the world, and feeling a sense of belonging.

By taking part in social action, young people are given the opportunity to discover more about themselves, their peers, their communities, and the world around them while giving something back to their local areas. Social action brings communities together, fosters greater understanding between young people from different backgrounds and gives young people a stake in society.

When young people engage in meaningful acts of service there is a 'double benefit' as it contributes to the individual's own sense of self as well as to wider society. Volunteering helps young people develop social capital and it can challenge the way they think about other people and the world around them. It can also change their attitudes towards people who are different to them and encourage new ways of learning from each other, which can in turn help foster social cohesion.

³⁷ Department for Communities and Local Government, (December 2016). [The Casey Review](#)

³⁸ LSE, (2017). [The key to a more integrated society: Understanding the impact and limits of social mixing](#)

³⁹ James Laurence, (February 2018). [Meeting Mixing Mending - How NCS Impacts Young People's social integration](#)

NCS DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ACTION

NCS aligns with the *#iwill* movement's definition of high quality social action.⁴⁰ Social action projects are shaped around the following key principles:

- They are youth-led, giving young people a high degree of control over shaping their solutions to issues.
- They are challenging and stretching for young people.
- They engage young people in activities that have a clear social impact.
- They allow progression to other volunteering and social action activities.
- They support young people to embed ongoing engagement in social action and volunteering in their everyday lives.
- They enable reflection on both the value and impact of the activity on others, and on the young person's development.

Developing life skills and building employability and work readiness supports social mobility.

Our Evidence Review⁴¹ also demonstrates how social mobility is seen as a key mechanism in driving social cohesion. Opportunities for upward mobility are seen as vital to cohesive societies, and a range of evidence notes a strong relationship between cohesion and opportunities for social mobility (for example, LGA, [Building Cohesive Communities](#)).⁴²

Our outcomes of *feeling world ready and work ready, having self confidence and resilience, and experiencing positive wellbeing* particularly relate to experiences that develop young people's life skills, and build their employability and work readiness.

Experiences shaped around independent living are primarily about young people understanding how to make a difference to their lives through effective self-management and the development of practical life skills as they transition to adulthood. Experiences focused on employability are primarily about young people experiencing and navigating challenges as they develop and apply their skills to projects that reflect real-world business or enterprise challenges.

There is significant evidence that increasing opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to develop skills for life and work can be a catalyst for social mobility.⁴³ Investing in young people's skills for life and work can address both challenges of youth mental health and unemployment — which have been increasing in recent years and pose threats to social cohesion.⁴⁴



⁴⁰ <https://www.iwill.org.uk/the-movement/youth-social-action/>

⁴¹ NCS Trust: Social Cohesion Evidence Review. 2020.

⁴² LGA (2019). [Building Cohesive Communities: an LGA Guide](#).

⁴³ [Social Mobility 2017, The Sutton Trust](#)

⁴⁴ The Learning and Work Institute and The Prince's Trust (2022) [The Power of Potential](#)

The Evolution of NCS

Many of the approaches outlined in this review have been core to NCS experiences since our foundation. However, how young people experience NCS has evolved significantly since our inception over a decade ago. NCS previously offered a three to four week part-residential programme that was delivered during the summer holidays. Years of delivering this approach provided significant learning around how best to achieve social cohesion outcomes, particularly around social mix mechanisms.

Our strategy for 2023–2025 builds on this learning — social mix remains at the heart of our offer — but we have evolved how the programme will be delivered. From 2023 onwards, NCS will offer a new **away from home experience** which will consist of a five day stay away from home where young people will take part in activities that centre around one of three themes; employability, independent living, or social action. With a mix of fun adventurous activities and skills for life, young people will have the opportunity to make new friends from many different locations and backgrounds.

More young people will be able to take part in NCS closer to home this year with regular or one-off activities where they can gain new skills, and learn more about their local community and how they can help to improve it. To support this, and working closely with the National Youth Agency and Street Games, NCS will award grants to local organisations to deliver **local community experiences**.

New to NCS, and to unlock the benefits that the programme can offer to as many young people as possible, a new range of **online experiences** will be launched in 2023. These experiences will be presented in a range of different formats, from content that young people can consume at their own pace, to live group sessions where they can discuss or debate an interesting topic and hear from experts. Each online experience has the purpose of allowing young people to gain new skills and meet new people. The focus on an online offer has drawn on our learning of delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic (see figure 5).

NCS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In response to COVID-19, lockdowns, and national restrictions, NCS was required to adapt how we deliver our experiences and change our approach to achieving social mix.

For the first time in the history of NCS, changes were made to the organisational understanding and application of social mix, shifting the focus from new connections to reconnecting. Providing opportunities for young people to reconnect after the lockdowns was prioritised in place of meeting new people, and a focus was placed on exploring how others might have experienced the pandemic.

The nature of the NCS experience also required adaptation, and led to the introduction of digital content to create opportunities for young people from different parts of the country — with very different life stories — to connect with each other.

We believe this new approach to delivering NCS outcomes offers an exciting opportunity to learn more about what drives social cohesion in different contexts — including a more regular, community-based model — and foster understanding about whether social cohesion can be built in a digital environment.

Our Impact

NCS participants are more likely to be democratically active, engaged in volunteering, and have higher levels of trust in others than those that have not taken part.⁴⁵

Young people who started NCS with the lowest reported levels of positive interactions with other ethnic groups, or who faced the greatest barriers to social integration have been found to have shown the greatest improvement. Young people from segregated communities became 19.4% more likely to report positive social contact with other ethnic groups after participating in NCS.⁴⁶ Our Meeting, Mixing, Mending report identified that NCS had the most positive impact on young people who joined reporting less frequent positive mixing with other ethnic groups, or more frequent negative encounters, in their daily lives. This result is consistent across other similar measures, such as warmth towards other ethnic groups and measures on community cohesion and positive mixing.⁴⁷

NCS both raises average levels of social integration among participants and helps close the 'integration gaps' between more and less integrated young people and communities. The programme achieves this by raising the social integration of those young people who join reporting less social integration — or who face greater barriers to integration — while at the same time maintaining the integration of those young people who join reporting more social integration, or who face fewer barriers.

This finding was supported in our 2020 In the Mix report⁴⁸ which identified particularly large impacts on young people from vulnerable backgrounds and some specific minority groups. Here is the summary of the key relevant findings of this report:

- There were significant improvements in tolerance towards others as a result of attending the programme, including tolerance towards people who are gay or lesbian, people with disabilities, people from a different ethnicity or religious background, or from a richer or poorer background to themselves.
- Young people from Asian backgrounds saw a significant increase in levels of comfort with people of a different religion, and tolerance around a friend or family member going out with someone who was gay or lesbian.
- NCS participation had positive associations with participants' perceptions of their own ability to get along with others, particularly for those from more deprived areas.
- Young people with special educational needs had disproportionately high increases in the belief that people in their community got along with each other.
- There were sizable improvements in confidence in meeting new people (as much as +10 to +15 percentage points across all subgroups examined).

⁴⁵ Kantar, (2020). *Exploratory Wave Analysis*

⁴⁶ James Laurence, (February 2018). [Meeting Mixing Mending - How NCS Impacts Young People's social integration](#)

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Jump x Mime (July 2020). [In the Mix](#)

Further, research conducted by Kantar in 2018⁴⁹ and 2019⁵⁰ has shown that doing NCS has a statistically significant positive impact across many of the social cohesion measures examined (greater recognition and respect of people from other backgrounds, increased comfort with a friend or relative going out with someone who is different to them, tolerance towards others, and positive experiences with someone of a different race or ethnicity). In both 2018 and 2019, participants' comfort with a friend or relative going out with someone who is different to them saw a statistically significant positive impact. The impact survey conducted with participants suggested that the programme is helping to improve tolerance towards others, with over three quarters of participants reporting that they now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds to themselves when reflecting on their NCS experience.

Provisional analysis of our 2022 summer programme⁵¹ shows that after taking part in NCS, a large majority (80%) of young people feel more confident in meeting new people and feel more positive about diversity. The largest positive impact was seen in young people reporting that they feel more confident meeting new people following the programme (13% increase between pre- and post-survey responses). The programme was particularly effective in increasing social integration amongst young people with SEN support, seeing the largest increases in confidence in meeting new people (10% increase between pre- and post-survey responses) and in their ability to build relationships with people from different backgrounds (9% increase between pre- and post-survey responses). Again, the greatest impact was seen in young people who started NCS reporting lower on indicators relating to confidence and social cohesion.

As previously noted, in response to the pandemic, NCS was required to adapt how we deliver experiences. We identified the impact that the lockdown and national restrictions would have on young people, and so we sought to create opportunities for young people to reconnect with each other and their communities after the lockdown. Almost three quarters of participants (73%) felt that NCS helped them reconnect with people after the lockdown. Seven in 10 reported having a better understanding of the challenges others have faced and they were more motivated to help others in their community after taking part (both 71%).

Since NCS was established, our programmes have successfully engaged a diverse cohort of young people nationally. NCS participation has historically been successful at reaching a diverse cohort of young people. NCS has consistently over-indexed participation from SEND and ethnically diverse young people, and those receiving free school meals. In our 2021–22 Annual Report, we identified that 22% of those in the summer and autumn programmes were eligible for free school meals compared to 16% of state secondary school pupils. 33% of participants were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 25% of state school secondary pupils, and 13% had special educational needs compared to 2% of state school secondary pupils.⁵² Further, 29% of NCS participants were from 'Priority Areas' compared to 25% of state secondary school pupils.⁵³



⁴⁹ Kantar. National Citizen Service Evaluation (2017)

⁵⁰ Kantar. Exploratory Wave Analysis (2020)

⁵¹ Provisional data. 2022 Impact and Evaluation findings.

⁵² NCS 2021/22. [Annual Report](#).

⁵³ *ibid*

Case Studies

These case studies illustrate approaches — and progress — of addressing the barriers to social cohesion which are outlined in this submission. The case studies are drawn from work undertaken throughout 2020.

Case Study 1: Crossing Divides in Rotherham

By doing NCS, Casey and Waj forged a rare and deep friendship that cuts across Rotherham's ethnic divides.

In 2018, Professor Ted Cante published 'Parallel Lives', a government-commissioned inquiry that detailed the segregation between communities in towns of Northern England. Cante warned of the possibility of violence unless the polarisation could be broken and cross-cultural contact encouraged. These recommendations were tested out in Rotherham, where schools and neighbourhoods appeared to be becoming increasingly divided on ethnic lines, and following reports of violence against Muslim residents. On this backdrop, 17-year-olds Casey and Waj met through NCS and formed a new friendship.

"It was the first day when we had team-building games and Casey was on my side. We were helping each other and we thought we make a really good team."
— Waj.

"Where I come from there are not many people from different ethnic minorities, so with Waj it is something new and something I have not experienced before, so our friendship is special."
— Casey.

Without NCS, it is unlikely the two girls would ever have spoken to each other, even though they are the same age and live in the same town.

Case Study 2: Working with Prevent in Leicestershire

An organisation delivering NCS in Leicestershire (LEBC, Leicestershire Education Business Company) chose to team up with the Counter Terrorism Policing East Midlands (CTP EM) Prevent team. A recent independent review had identified a concerted campaign to undermine and delegitimise Prevent⁵⁴, and this project aimed to counteract this.

During an intense five days, young people came up with a new logo, launched a 'Twitter takeover', created social media content, and produced a 'We are Prevent' video showcasing statistics and signposting support.

An NCS participant reflected on their time on the project, *"We are really proud of our work, getting a project done in such a short time, meeting new people and getting up early in the morning for the first time in months. The icing on the cake has been seeing the feedback from the Prevent team, it has made us feel our work was really appreciated and we can see the impact it will have for months to come too. It's been an amazing week, it's been rewarding, fun and memorable. I just wish it was longer!"*



Casey & Waj

⁵⁴ William Shawcross CVO. [Independent Review of Prevent](#).

Rachel Sheppard, Prevent Engagement Officer at Leicestershire Police said, *“Every year we are blown away by the hard work and innovation shown by the young people. It’s a fantastic opportunity for us to get an insight into the latest social media trends and hear from one of the demographics we are trying to reach — we gain just as much from it as they do. Despite having only just done their GCSEs, the professionalism shown was extremely impressive and their messaging really encompassed who we are and what we aim to do.”*

Alongside the work with CTP EM, young people spent the summer working within their local communities to support local charities and organisations that were hit hard by the pandemic. Between them, 120 young people carried out 4,496 hours of social action in just two weeks. Over 120 care packages and gifts were delivered to residents in local care homes; 50 handmade face masks were donated to vulnerable individuals; over 200 happy postcards were sent to the elderly; 40 bags of donations were sorted on behalf of a charity shop; 50 wellbeing packages were made and distributed to the homeless; £300 worth of food was donated to a local food bank; 2 youth centre gardens were revamped; 10 air quality sensors were set up across Coventry; Over £1,799 was raised for local charities in the region.

Case Study 3: Democratic Engagement in Manchester

In Manchester, teams of young people on NCS partnered with the People’s History Museum to take part in their Vital Voters project. The project aimed to empower young people — who are not yet 18 years old and are too young to vote — to become active citizens and engage in the power of democracy through a digital and creative lens.

Using the digital equipment provided by the People’s History Museum team, the team of young people filmed and edited their own videos to speak up about issues that they felt strongly about. They produced content covering a range of issues that affect their local community including racial discrimination, violence and sexual harassment against women, access to clean drinking water, knife crime, and supporting people in need. The videos are available to be viewed on the People’s History Museum website [here](#).

Video produced by young people taking part in NCS and the Vital Voters project



Petra Wilcockson, Project Manager of the Vital Voters scheme said, *“The films that young people have produced, all of which will go to form part of the museum’s Vital Voters collection, show just how socially aware this generation is and how passionately they believe in a better world.”*

Omotolani, 16, from Manchester, was excited to be involved with Vital Voters. She said, *“My favourite part of NCS was being able to do a project around something I was passionate about. Seeing the videos added to the People’s History Museum is something I am very proud of.”*

Gili, 16, also from Manchester, added, *“It’s probably been the best thing I’ve done this holiday. It’s been so great doing new things, meeting new people, learning things about them and about myself.”*

Case Study 4: Connecting Generations in Salford and Trafford

After lockdown and facing a summer of cancelled GCSEs, a number of young people in Salford took part in the NCS Keep Doing Good programme, and got involved in Digital Buddies which is a COVID-19 response initiative set up by Salford Foundation.

Young people taking part in Digital Buddies have been helping the older generation across Salford and Trafford who are struggling to use their phone, tablet or computer, to stay connected with friends and family. By linking these people with a younger person who is more familiar with current technology, they are provided with one-to-one support to help them solve their digital challenges and help to combat feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Lucy was paired with Sue, also from Trafford, who needed help with her laptop. They have continued to speak regularly on the phone and developed a close friendship.

Reflecting on her experience, Lucy said, *"I loved having contact with a member of my local community who I would never have spoken to before. As much as the point of Digital Buddies is to help with technology, I have loved the weekly conversations. Lockdown was difficult for everyone but especially for people who do not know how to stay connected online. Just having the skills to use technology to keep in touch with friends and family makes such a difference."*

Case Study 5: Support for Victims of Discrimination

The team of young people doing NCS at Charlton Athletic Community Trust wanted to raise awareness about organisations that are on hand to support people who are being affected by negative attitudes to diversity and racism.

The projects included collecting stories from friends and family who have been adversely affected due to their race, sexuality or heritage, and creating a fingerprint mural with references to stories they collected.

They also created an Instagram page (@fingerprints.cact) to signpost people to charities and organisations that can provide support around these issues. They undertook community outreach to share the account and build a following.

Case Study 6: Fighting Discrimination in Brighton

A group of 15 young people taking part in NCS, all originally from different countries, chose to celebrate the diversity of Brighton by taking a positive stance on the topic of diversity. Bringing together their creative skills, they developed and launched a website and Instagram page, 'Generation Z on the sea', where they shared their own stories and invited others in their community to contribute.

They also held an exhibition at St. Augustine's Centre in Brighton to highlight the diversity of the city and the power of young people's voices.



Social cohesion within the youth sector

As part of our Social Cohesion Evidence Review, we undertook analysis of organisations that operate in the not-for-profit space in England and that have a social cohesion remit, in order to establish the key funders and programmes operating in England. The results of this exercise have fed into the information presented within this review.

There is no single consistent approach or definition to social cohesion in the youth sector, but there are a variety of programmes and funding streams which align to social cohesion outcomes, barriers, and drivers.

We note that the youth sector overall is successful at addressing issues relating to social mobility, and that social action has become mainstream in many areas (particularly through the #iwill campaign). However, our research suggests that the sector would benefit from more programmes with a greater focus on social mix — and in order for this to be most effective, there is a need for experiences to be genuinely universal and provide opportunities for young people to mix with others from all backgrounds.

Analysis of the sector

Our research suggests government and non-governmental bodies each play an important role in providing funding to support social cohesion. We have identified 27 non-governmental funders of social cohesion activity (see Appendix, table 1). These funders typically view social cohesion through either a 'place-making' lens or as an issue centred around particular vulnerable groups. They fall roughly into three groups.

i. **Large funders that address social cohesion indirectly.** This group provides the majority of funding. The key organisations in this group are the National Lottery Community Fund (which funds £500m each year), and Comic Relief (which funds £75m).

ii. **Large funders with a dedicated focus on social cohesion.** They have an explicit focus on social cohesion as a funding aim, though normally alongside other funding objectives.

iii. **Small local funders.** They are small local organisations, and include organisations such as the Leeds Community Foundation, which tackles a wide range problems such as male suicide prevention (£95,000)⁵⁵ and summer activity provision for young adults around a geographically specific area (£875,000)⁵⁶. These organisations do not usually talk about social cohesion directly, but we consider them to address it by building capacity and community in the area in general.

Our research has identified 57 programmes that receive funding from those listed in table 1 and have a focus on outcomes related to social cohesion (see Appendix, table 2). These programmes define social cohesion in a variety of ways resulting in them targeting a range of ages — from adults to young people — and a range of target characteristics. Each organisation hopes to achieve social cohesion through a different set of activities. Of the programmes analysed, the following categories have been identified: arts, education, or sports, although there is also a long tail of programmes categorised as 'other', such as gardening, knowledge sharing, and multicultural celebration events. Of the programmes analysed, arts is the most common delivery method, followed by education. However, when analysing programmes that solely target young people, educational⁵⁷ programmes are most common followed by sports programmes.

A breakdown of the programmes is displayed in the table on the next page.

⁵⁵ Funding for 2022. More details: <https://www.leedscf.org.uk/mens-suicide-prevention-grants-2022/>

⁵⁶ Funding for 2022. More details: <https://www.leedscf.org.uk/healthy-holidays-2022/>

⁵⁷ Programmes set in a school setting and focus on teaching the importance of cohesion or educational integration programmes that teach English, for example

Scale									
	National		Regional			Local			
Number of programmes	5		15			37			
Group Targeted									
	General	Age	Faith	Ethnicity	Disability	Migrants	Socioeconomic	Other	
Number of programmes ⁵⁸	11	6	24	15	10	5	1	3	
Age range									
	Adults		Young people			All ages			
Number of programmes	13		28			16			
Young people social cohesion programmes by target age									
	Primary school		Secondary school		Young adults		All young people		
Number of programmes	6		8		7		7		
Young people social cohesion programmes by number of ages targeted⁵⁹									
	Age target: 1-5		Age target: 6-10		Age target: 11-15		Age target: 16-20		
Number of programmes	4		9		8		2		
Young people social cohesion programmes by activity									
	Arts		Education			Sports		Sports & Arts	
Number of programmes	6		13			6		3	

⁵⁸ Note - programmes can target more than one characteristic

⁵⁹ Five programmes fall under N/A where number of ages targeted unidentified

Appendices

Appendix 1. Funders List

Organisation	Government / Charity	Active	Geographic Location	Funding pots
Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)	Government	Yes	Northern Ireland/Ireland Border	PEACE IV FUND (Peace Plus)
MHCLG	Government	Yes	UK	Integrated Communities Innovation Fund
Home Office	Government	Yes	England & Wales	Bringing a Stronger Britain Together (BSBT)
London Mayor (Strategy for Integration)	Government	Yes	London	London Together
	Government	Yes	London	London Family Fund
Trust for London	Charity	Yes	London	The Citizenship and Integration Initiative
Unbound Philanthropy	Charity	Yes	UK & US	The Citizenship and Integration Initiative
Spirit of 2012	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
Pears Foundation	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
City Bridge Trust	Charity	Yes	London	N/A
Northern Ireland Integrated Education Fund	Government	Yes	Northern Ireland	N/A
Trafford Partnership	Government (Mayor of Manchester)	Yes	Manchester (Trafford)	N/A
The UK Shared Prosperity Fund	Government	No	UK	N/A

Organisation	Government / Charity	Active	Geographic Location	Funding pots
Faith Based Regeneration Network	Government	No (2013 - 2016)	UK	Together in Service
Wandsworth Community Fund	Government	Yes	Wandsworth	N/A
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	Charity	Yes	UK	Grant Making, Social Investment, Arts Fund
Allen Lane Foundation	Charity	Yes	UK (not London)	Social Cohesion Programme + General
Comic Relief	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
Sports England	Charity	Yes	England	N/A
Lincolnshire Community Foundation	Charity	Yes	Lincolnshire	N/A
VINCI Foundation UK	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
East End Community Foundation	Charity	Yes	London	N/A
Camden Communities Together Fund	Charity	Yes	Camden	N/A
Lewisham Community Cohesion Grant	Charity	Yes	Lewisham	N/A
London Community Foundation (London Sport)	Charity	Yes	London	N/A
Provident Social Impact Fund	Charity	Yes	Scotland	N/A
Leeds Community Foundation	Charity	Yes	Leeds	N/A
New Heights	Charity	Yes	Kingstanding (Birmingham)	N/A
Wharfedale Foundation	Charity	Yes	Yorkshire and the Humber	N/A
Tim Parry/Jonathan Ball Peace foundation	Charity	Yes	Northern Ireland	We Stand Together
Young Foundation	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
Better Community Business Network (BCBN)	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
Maple Trust	Charity	Yes	Scotland	N/A
The Tudor Trust	Charity	Yes	UK	N/A
National Lottery Community Fund	Charity	Yes	UK	Awards for All
	Charity		UK	Community Led Activity Fund
	Charity		UK	#iwill Fund
Thamesmead Community Fund	Charity	Yes	Thamesmead	N/A

Appendix 2. Programme List

Name of programme	Scope	Target audience	Activities
14	National	All ages	Sports & Arts
Active Across Ages	Local	Youth & Elderly	Sports
Aik Saath	Local	Youth	Educational
Art Pop-up (Langdyke Nature Reserves)	Local	Adults	Arts
Bainton and Parish Council	Local	All ages	Other
Basketball Vytis	Local	Youth	Sports
Belfast Breakfast Club	Local	All ages	Arts
Believing in Bradford	Local	All ages	Other
Birmingham Connect	Local	All ages	Sports
Blame and Belonging	Local	Youth	Arts
Breaking Boundaries	National	All ages	Sports
Breakthrough	Regional	Youth	Sports & Arts
Cambridge Chinese Community Centre	Local	Adults	Educational
Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum	Local	Adults	Educational
Carry My Story	Local	Youth	Educational
Collaboration and Sharing Education (CASE)	Regional	Youth	Educational
Celebrating the Man Den	Local	Youth	Educational
Circle (Groundwork)	Local	All ages	Other
Circus Aurora	Local	Adults	Arts
Coram's Youth Citizen Ambassador Programme	Local	Youth	Other
Creative Directions	Local	Adults	Arts
Creative: Connection under Creative Arts	Regional	Youth	Arts
Discover the song	Local	Adults	Arts
Evergreen	Local	Adults	Arts
Everybody Dance	Local	Adults	Arts
Fabric of Society	Local	Adults	Arts
Get out Get active	National	All ages	Sports
Integrate UK	Local	Youth	Arts
Liverpool Community Spirit	Local	Youth	Educational
Magic Me	Local	Youth	Arts
Make A Difference (M.A.D)	Local	Youth	Sports & Arts
Making Equals	Regional	Youth	Sports

Name of programme	Scope	Target audience	Activities
Making the Future	Regional	All ages	Arts
More in Common	Regional	All ages	Other
Network of International Women	Local	Adults	Arts
Our Community, Our Future	Local	Youth	Educational
Play Unified	National	Youth	Sports
Project Polish	Regional	Youth	Educational
Refugee Allies	Local	Adults	Arts
Remember Together	Regional	Youth	Educational
Richmond Ethnic Minorities Group	Local	All ages	Other
Salaam Peace	Local	Youth	Sports
Shared from the Start	Regional	Youth	Educational
Sport Uniting Communities	Regional	Youth	Sports
Strive	Regional	Youth	Educational
The Cares Family	Regional	Adults	Arts
The Indian Community and Culture Association	Local	All ages	Other
The National Linking Network	National	Youth	Educational
The Mosaic Community Trust	Local	All ages	Arts
Theatre Peace Building Academy	Regional	All ages	Arts
Trafford Community Cohesion Forum	Local	All ages	Other
Uniting Communities	Regional	Youth	Sports & Arts
Verde de Gris	Local	All ages	Arts
Waltham Forest Young Feel Good Programme	Local	Youth	Educational
Who is Your Neighbour?	Local	Adults	Other
Xenia	Local	All ages	Educational
Youth Network for Peace	Regional	Youth	Arts

Appendix 3: NCS Theory of Change

Starting with our SMART objectives, our Theory of Change provides more detail about how we intend to meet these objectives, and how we expect this will lead to change and impact. The Theory of Change outlines what needs to be in place in order for us to deliver ('inputs'), details our planned interventions ('activities'), lists the specific results that we expect as a result of these activities ('outputs'), and shows how this will lead to short-term outcomes and longer-term impact.

SMART objectives

SMART OBJECTIVES	Provide a new programme offer for young people that builds employability, promotes independent living and life skills, provides opportunities for volunteering and social action, and promotes social mixing	Deliver the National Youth Guarantee through improving access to a choice of trios away from home, regular community-based activities and digital experiences for a diverse range of young people	Promote partnership and collaboration with and across the youth sector, government and community-based organisations	Transform the Trust through improving efficiency and diversify sources of income to build a platform for future growth
INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Funding and income generation	Provide residential experiences (4 nights, 5 days; socially mixed; priority focus one of three themes) for young people	261,000 experiences offered through mix of services	Young people feel more optimistic about the future and more capable of managing difficult situations	Young people have greater confidence, resilience and wellbeing
Strategy and insight	Provide community-based and lead-in offers year-round, minimum once/month, socially mixed, lead in to target key groups)	Over-recruitment of participants on FSM, SEND, ethnic diversity (based on local population)	Young people have increased confidence in their essential skills and are optimistic about future employment.	Young people are world ready and work ready - better prepared for employment and independent living
Commissioning	Provide digital (self-learning; live workshops and keynotes; immersive experiences)	Increased participation of young people from priority geographical areas	Young people have a greater understanding of the challenges facing their community and how to make a difference	Young people feel better able to have an impact on the world and are more likely to volunteer
Youth voice	Actively engage the youth sector through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market engagement and flexible outcomes-based commissioning Convening youth sector with DCMS and other govt depts 	Engagements convened between youth sector, DCMS and OGDs	Young people develop a greater understanding and awareness of others from diverse backgrounds	Young people feel a stronger sense of belonging - with greater tolerance and respect for a diversity of people and views
Monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation	Actively engage the youth sector through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market engagement and flexible outcomes-based commissioning Convening youth sector with DCMS and other govt depts 	Increased proportion of NCS funding going to youth and community organisations and direct delivery, max 14% on admin	Improved coordination, collaboration, partnerships and alignment with the youth sector and across government	Youth and voluntary sectors better equipped to deliver NCS objectives
Innovation in data and technology	Increase income through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating new revenue streams Building match-funding partnerships Setting new service user contributions 	Sources of income diversified (mid-range income growth scenario of £20.8m over two years)	NCS Trust delivers better value for money for the taxpayer through delivering impact at lower cost	A higher rate of social return for investing in young people through NCS



2020