

Why a Youth Zone in South Bristol - supporting information

Bristol's population is relatively young, with 1 in 5 people in Bristol aged under 16. Wards where more than a quarter of the population is aged under 16 include **Hartcliffe and Withywood** (27%), Lawrence Hill (26%), and **Filwood** (26%). The number of children is projected to continue to increase, with 9,900 more children in 2043 than in 2018 representing an increase of 12%. The age profile of the BAME population is much younger than the age profile of the Bristol population as a whole. The proportion of children (aged 0-15) who belong to a BAME group is 28%.

The 2011 Census shows that over the previous decade Bristol had become increasingly diverse, this has continued. The proportion of the population who are not 'White British' has increased from 12% to 22% of the total population. The proportion of people living in Bristol who were not born in the UK has increased from 8% to 15% of the total population. In Bristol, there are now at least 45 religions, at least 187 countries of birth represented and at least 91 main languages spoken by people living in Bristol.

Some of the highest rates of poverty and child poverty are in South Wards and this is also where highest rates of children live (on par with Lawrence Hill and amongst the poorest in the country). The South has fewer community assets than some other areas of the city and long standing intergenerational unemployment. Public Health indicators are poor: smoking, drug and alcohol related hospital admissions and elevated mortality rates; childhood obesity is high with the long term implications for health. Emergency hospital admissions for childhood injuries are highest from the South, and children in South Bristol are more likely to grow up with 4 or more ACEs that will go onto significantly impact their health and ability to achieve their potential in later life.

The South of Bristol has the highest rates of serious violence and antisocial behaviour in the city. Reduction in serious youth violence was set as a top priority for the One City Plan at last year's One City Gathering. Delivery of a youth Zone continues our commitment to delivering on this priority by building the strengths of the city's young people. South Bristol also evidences the highest rates of child criminal and sexual exploitation with hot spots in certain areas. Risks are high, with one young person losing their life in a motorbike crash when an obstacle was thrown into its path by another young person from a rival group.

Schools in south Bristol have the highest rates of school exclusion and absence in the city (directly contributing to young people's vulnerability in the community); and the South has the highest rates of Children in Need, Child Protection and Children in Care of all areas of the city along with high rates of DV, drug and alcohol and serious mental health problems.

The Youth Zones can make a significant difference to the overall wellbeing and life chances of the young people participating in activities at the Centre or being reached through the centre. An

independent study published in May 2015¹ and a further independent study in 2020 evidenced that YouthZones:

- provide a safe environment with access to sports, arts and music activities where young people can develop personal and social skills
- raise aspirations, build confidence and resilience and provide information that will assist them in making good lifestyle choices – particularly avoiding substance misuse and crime and anti-social behaviour;
- improve young people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing;
- assist young people at risk of dropping out of learning to engage in activities that will enable them to reach their full potential;
- have the capacity to make a significant impact in their local communities, through improved community cohesion, a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, improved perceptions of the area; and
- provide a real 'community' asset, which promotes and facilitates close partnership working.

The delivery of a Youth Zone in South Bristol will make a real contribution to reducing the demand for a range of public services as well as significantly improving the life chances of those young people engaged through the offer. The 2015 Social Value study concludes that these benefits in turn will lead to significant cost savings in the future for local authorities and other public agencies in the areas served by a Youth Zone. Cost benefit ratio to the Local authority of 6.66.

Investment in a Youth Zone in South Bristol will communicate clearly to young people in the city that they are valued. The targeted offer through the centre allows us to build networks within the community alongside authentic community organisations who know their children and neighbourhoods best, engaging and supporting those most vulnerable children and beginning to equalising outcomes.

¹ <http://www.socialvalueuk.org/app/uploads/2016/03/OnSide-Defining-the-Impact-of-a-Youth-Zone-Final-with-exec-summary-M....pdf>