



# Volunteern Voice Final Report 1st June 2023 – 30th June 2024



Volunteern Voice, East Riding Voluntary Action Services (ERVAS)

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## The story of our project this year

Now in its third and final year, funding from The National Lottery Community Fund has enabled the ERVAS Volunteen Voice project to engage with **6,238** young people.

A large part of our work between September 2023 through to March 2024, was focused on the East Riding elections being held across February for **2** new Members and **2** Deputy Members to continue representing young people from East Riding on the UK Youth Parliament, and to play an active role in the East Riding, as well as regionally and nationally, in regard to raising the profile of youth voice in our county and leading on the development of the East Riding Youth Council and priority issues that are important to young people.

ERVAS has been actively involved in a range of local strategic developments, working in partnership with organisations such as the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Humber and North Yorkshire Health Care Partnership and the NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB), on issues such as mental health and emotional wellbeing, keeping young people safe, anti-bullying, employment and apprenticeships, rural issues and tackling climate change to ensure that the voice of our young people is heard and young people continue to be involved in shaping services, as well as co-producing strategies and resources.

ERVAS is now working closely with the newly appointed Executive Director of Children, Families and Schools, and members of the revised East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board regarding the future sustainability of the East Riding Youth Council and elected Members of Youth Parliament after our funding from The National Lottery Community Fund has finished in June 2024. This is to ensure we are able to support the next cohort of young people who are elected to Youth Parliament in February 2024 to complete their 2-year term of office. Funding has primarily been agreed for 12 months, with the hope that this will be extended for an additional 2 years, utilising resources from other directorates based within the council, which benefit from youth voice.

### East Riding Members and Deputy Members of Youth Parliament 2022 - 2024

During the last 12 months, our East Riding Members and Deputy Members of Youth Parliament (D/MYPs) have undertaken a number of pieces of work across East Riding relating to the youth voice priorities in the East Riding, which are described in more detail further on, as well as carrying out their duties as part of their role with UK Youth Parliament. These included the following:

Annual 2 Day Conference at Leeds, which was organised and facilitated by the UK Youth Parliament with a range of guest speakers and workshops.

During these events the young people were involved in discussing and debating topics such as food poverty, environment, health & well-being, exploitation, violence against women and girls, keeping safe, tackling bullying, tackling hate crime, transport and local youth provisions.

On Friday 4th November 2022, the two elected East Riding members of the UK Youth Parliament, Freya Edwards and Aonpreeya Petchatchua attended the The annual sitting at the House of Commons to debate with the rest of the UK Youth Parliament members. The focus of the debate was food poverty and free school meals. We were very proud that both our East Riding MYPs stood and spoke on the subject of the debate.

To watch a short film made by the 2 MYPs about their trip to Westminster, please click the following link: [copy 9764E4B4-2B5D-48F3-BE4E-1FD65A66981C.mov - Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/file/d/9764E4B4-2B5D-48F3-BE4E-1FD65A66981C/view)

All of these trips and opportunities have helped the MYPs to build in confidence and improve their communication skills. The MYPs have really excelled and have grown in confidence, building many networks and opportunities locally and nationally.

#### Case study 1

Aonpreeya Petchatchua, former MYP 2022 – 2024, current Volunteering Voice Support Officer (mental health and emotional wellbeing)

*Working for ERVAS is a lot different from being an MYP. Both roles that I'm privileged to have and take up a lot of responsibility.*

*During my time as an MYP, I was also a student, so there needed to be a good balance between student life and MYP responsibilities, however since I was introduced to being an MYP because of my politics teacher, balancing both roles was relatively easy, as I was actively learning about politics, campaigning and legislation which helped develop a sturdy understanding for my activities for being an MYP. Which is very different from working within ERVAS as I'm working through a gap year before I go off into university, so I have more time and energy dedicated to working.*

*Being an MYP is like being in an internship. I did many things and focused on a large array of subjects to campaign on and contribute to within my constituency. For example, working on projects related to food poverty, which was a national campaign, climate change, period poverty and education. Therefore, there was a broader and less precise agenda for me to be working towards. This is different from being in ERVAS, as my main role is centred around mental health as my role is the mental health and emotional wellbeing support officer. Most of the events and activities I take part in revolve around mental health and emotional wellbeing, for example, writing up the anti-bullying strategy, and conducting a Boys and young men's mental health survey.*

*Getting to work with ERVAS has been such a great opportunity for me, as I've built up many connections and have gained a lot of valuable experience that can prepare me for adult life. Working with ERVAS has greatly improved my confidence and skills with dealing with people and handling meetings and projects. I love working for ERVAS as it's very flexible and it's such a positive work environment. Being an MYP was quite similar as the role also developed my confidence and helped me develop networking skills and well as skills suited for collaboration in projects. I really loved my time as an MYP, I think it was a once in a lifetime opportunity as it made me experience so many different things, for example speaking in the houses of parliament and working with people all over the UK. That is also a difference to notice, as working within ERVAS, I am often surrounded by like minded people who want to achieve the same goals as each other, whilst MPS, who also want similar goals, are more often not very likeminded, and have very different life experiences, views, and tactics to achieve those goals. I'm sure it's the same within ERVAS however as an MYP the personal differences were more pronounced.*

*Both positions and roles have definitely inspired me to continue helping and advocating for young people and many causes such as Climate change, LGBTQ+ and Women's Rights, Youth Voice and mental health. Being an MYP has shown me how small my world is and to open my mind a bit more and working for ERVAS has shown me there are a lot of things that are happening in the background that massively impact everyone's lives and are vital for a functioning society. Even after my term as an MYP has ended, I continue to work on similar issues that I had campaigned for, and even after I leave ERVAS I will continue to advocate for youth voice and mental health as I've become more invested in work surrounding those topics and I think it's vital for people and young people in the future.*





## East Riding Youth Parliament elections 2024

The biggest piece of work that was undertaken during this year was the county wide elections of 2 East Riding Members of the national UK Youth Parliament (MYP), along with 2 Deputies (DMYP).

Between September 2023 and February 2024, ERVAS worked with our colleagues in the Local Authority as well as our schools and education providers to gain their support with promoting the opportunities to young people, including standing or election, voting, understanding democracy and why it is important, and developing associated skills including assisting with the election process itself. This has helped us to build on our work with schools, colleges and young people after the initial elections in February, helping us to establish a robust East Riding Youth Council structure and ensure that many more opportunities are open for young people in East Riding so they can work together and with others to represent their peers and communities effectively.

Provision was made to ensure that young people who were not in school, such as those who are electively home educated or who are in post-16 education, were able to fully participate by having the opportunity to stand for election, and to vote via post or online.

A media campaign was developed with and coordinated by the Local Authority's Public Relations Team. This included all aspects of media such as press, social media and radio. Promotional materials were developed for circulation far and wide across all educational establishments, voluntary and community groups, statutory services working with young people and local communities. This ensured that as many young people as possible had the opportunity to stand for election in East Riding.

There were **9** young people who stood as candidates for election to the UK Youth Parliament. You can view their manifesto pledges here:

<https://www.volunteenvoice.org.uk/index.php/2024/01/03/east-riding-candidates-for-uk-youth-parliament-2024/>

There were also postal votes for electively home-educated young people and online votes for young people in post-16 education who lived in the East Riding.

All Secondary Schools received enough printed ballot papers for their students from ERVAS, along with explanatory paperwork. Many of them still had the ballot box and polling booth provided by the Local Authority Democratic Services Team at the last elections in 2022, enabling them to make the elections as true to life as possible.

**5,721** young people participated in electing their East Riding candidates for the UK Youth Parliament and the winning results are as follows:

- Member of Youth Parliament - Candidate 5 – **George Jackson: Vote for me if you want better quality food and better prices with more varied choices.**
- Member of Youth Parliament - Candidate 7 - **Sophia Osborne: Lessons in life skills, such as independent living. Lessons on basic First Aid and how to spot common illnesses, i.e cancer.**
- Deputy Member of Youth Parliament - Candidate 1 – **Poppy Pacy: I will try to improve and change the lack of mental health support as well as more community engagement groups.**
- Deputy Member of Youth Parliament - Candidate 6 - **Charlotte Rogers: I would help East Riding cut down on paper but help kids get learning at the same time.**

You can read more about the Declaration Evening held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 here: <https://www.volunteenvoice.org.uk/index.php/2024/03/22/uk-youth-parliament-elections-result-2024/>

All of the newly elected young people will work together across the whole of East Riding to deliver their manifestos with support from ERVAS, East Riding Youth Council, the Youth Voice Steering Group, student councils, East Riding young people and key leaders and decision makers, locally and nationally.

Our former and new East Riding MYPs, DMYPs, as well as another young person called Matthew Fisher-Gill who represented East Riding young people on the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Steering Group and was elected to Chair the East Riding Youth Council for the last 12 months, participated in a number of induction days and youth voice activities with the British Youth Council and the Yorkshire and Humber Youth Work Unit to ensure they have the support and skills to carry out the work within their manifestos as well as the top Make Your Mark priorities in East Riding. The members will now start to work on their manifestos and other issues in the East Riding to make a difference for all young people. They will also attend and support the work of The East Riding Youth Council, which is made up of young people from across the East Riding who come together on a regular basis, in person and online, to discuss and work on current issues in the East Riding that affect them and other young people.





### Make Your Mark ballot 2024

The election of our East Riding MYPs and DMYPs also coincided with the Make Your Mark ballot, a national consultation that enables all young people to have a say about a UK wide topic they feel is important to them. This will help us to find out more about what young people in East Riding are prioritising and can be broken down into school area. It will help us to shape our work and priorities as part of the commitment from the revised East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board to youth voice, as well as the East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Make Your Mark results that were voted on by **5,086** young people across East Riding are shown below. These have now been fed into the national results table and we came 4<sup>th</sup> in the Yorkshire & Humber region with an 18% turnout:

#### Make your Mark

Topic	Tally
Health & Wellbeing	1139
Culture, Media & Sport	982
Jobs, Economy & Benefits	727
Crime & Safety	628
Education & Learning	417
Climate Change & Environment	414
Right, Equality & Democracy	262
Transport	232
Youth Work & Youth Services	172
International Relations	135



Knowing what young people have voted on as their top topic in East Riding, enables us to work with our partners on the East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership, as well as members of the recently refreshed East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board to find out more about what the exact issues are that young people in East Riding want to improve.

### East Riding Youth Council

Over the last 12 months, the East Riding Youth Council has continued to meet quarterly, alternating meetings in person and online.

21 young people attended the last meeting with approximately 50/50 ratio of males and females, representing the following youth voice groups:

- East Riding Members/Deputy Members of Youth Parliament
- Yorkshire and Humber Regional Steering Group
- Lollipop (LGBTQIA+)
- The Young Leaders of East Riding (TYLER)
- Humber and North Yorkshire Health Care Partnership
- Humber Youth Action Group
- Different VCSE Youth Groups

Young people also attend as individuals and not to necessarily represent groups of other young people.

You can find out more about their meetings here:

<https://www.volunteenvoice.org.uk/index.php/create-a-campaign/>

There are also other young people who have participated in a number of workshops and activities focused on the following key themes:

- Improving young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Keeping young people safe
- Developing Healthy Relationships and tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls
- Tackling bullying in East Riding
- Improving the economic prospects of young people in East Riding
- Tackling Climate Change and Helping the Environment
- Rural Youth Issues including transport
- Red Box project in schools

These themes are then linked in with the key strategic leads from the East Riding Local Authority, East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership, NHS Foundation Trust, Integrated Commissioning Boards (ICB) and Humber and North Yorkshire Health Care Partnership (HCP) to move forward on all areas of work highlighted above and below. This then feeds into the following strategic Boards:

- East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board (recently refreshed)
- East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- East Riding ICB
- Humber and North Yorkshire HCP
- And a range of relevant subgroups.

The East Riding Youth Council members have continued working on the following priorities over the last 12 months.

#### Improving young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing

The Young Healthy Minds website has continued to develop based on feedback from young people taken at workshops with East Riding College and other youth groups, including Lollipop. You can view the current website via this link:

<https://www.eastridinghealthandwellbeing.co.uk/healthy-minds/young-healthy-minds/> A Youth Mental Health Online Resource Partnership has now been formed to ensure that all local websites/online resources are coordinated and work together, contain quality information on services available, listen to the voice of young people and signpost to each other appropriately.

Volunteer Voice is working with the youth voice officers from Humber and North Yorkshire Health Care Partnership, Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Healthwatch East Riding to run workshops on youth mental health and emotional wellbeing across the different localities of East Riding to engage with more young people and find out what local issues are. They will then support young people in their area to make a positive change by influencing the right strategic bodies and providing resources and training needed to sustain this work with young people in the individual localities. This will start in Goole over the summer holidays.

Volunteer Voice developed a survey for boys and young men to complete in regard to finding out more about their mental health and emotional wellbeing and what they do to support it. Out of the **42** responses, 26% were aged 17-18, 15% were 14-16, 11% were 19-25 and 7% were 11-13. We also held several workshops with boys from the Beverley Grammar School to discuss this in more detail with **59** participants with an age range of 13-15. The findings from both the survey and workshops will now be shared with key services across all sectors of East Riding that support young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in order to further develop support services for boys and young men.

#### Keeping young people safe

**2** young people attended a national webinar for Young Scrutineers in January run by The Association of Safeguarding Partners (TASP) to explore young people's thoughts about local safeguarding children partnerships (LSCPs) and how they can engage better with young people. 11 young people attended from 7 Local Authority areas, with 2 from East Riding of Yorkshire. These young people participated in a number of workshops and then a report was produced. The 2 young people from East Riding were then supported to attend the East Riding Safeguarding Children

Partnership six-monthly meeting for wider partners to feedback on the webinar workshops and present their recommendations. This was well received and a small steering group of professionals from the ERSCP and young people are now working together to move this forward.

Two key areas of focus are to create a team of East Riding Young Scrutineers to work with members of the ERSCP and make sure young people are included and involved appropriately in key areas that affect them and ensure that communication channels are expanded and appropriate. Another key role is to develop a team across our educational and youth establishments of Young Safeguarding Champions, who will support other young people to access support and services, find out what safeguarding issues there are for young people and to provide basic information on keeping safe. These will start to be promoted and recruited to in August 2024.

#### Developing healthy relationships for young people

ERVAS have been working with **14** young people from the Humber Youth Action Group to further explore work around tackling domestic abuse in young relationships and helping them to share the resources they have created via youth settings and establishments across East Riding. This has also been linked in with the East Riding Domestic Abuse strategy that is currently being developed under the new strand around young people and domestic abuse in their relationships.

#### Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

Following on from the work around domestic abuse and healthy relationships for young people, ERVAS has worked with the Violence Prevention Partnership and the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) subgroup to engage young people in discussions around this topic. This led to young people creating a VAWG survey for young people to complete, alongside the adults' survey. This has had **82** responses and is now being analysed by the data team to find out more about what young people this is important in keeping them safe from VAWG in East Riding. 2 workshops have also been planned for 14<sup>th</sup> August and 28<sup>th</sup> October for young people to participate in the Active Bystander training, which is aimed at calling out VAWG, as well as other issues such as bullying.

#### Tackling bullying in East Riding

Volunteer Voice have now written the East Riding Anti-bullying strategy based on the workshops and engagement sessions undertaken with young people throughout last year. This has now been approved by the Emotional Health and Wellbeing subgroup and will be accountable to the new East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board. A steering group is being set up with professionals and young people to create an action plan based on key recommendations around training for all staff in youth/educational settings, policies in all youth/educational settings and good practice sharing around resources to tackle bullying in all our communities.

### Improving the economic prospects of young people in East Riding

Volunteer Voice continues to engage with young people and businesses to explore digital access to employment and education opportunities, speaking with 10 companies at the Driffield show in July 2023 and with **33** young people about the development of an app to support Logon Moveon.

Future plans are to get more responses from young people and companies and arrange a follow up meeting with agencies involved to discuss all data gathered to evidence the need for an app.

The general response so far from everyone is that it would be a great idea for an app to be produced.

### Tackling Climate Change and Helping the Environment

Volunteer Voice attended a deep dive workshop in April with **2** young people as part of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Actions to come out of this are to work more closely with our schools and education providers in order to engage with young people and involve them more in the development of the East Riding Climate Change strategy and action plan.

### Rural Youth Issues



Volunteer Voice continue working with young people and the East Riding Rural Partnership to highlight issues that impact on young people living in a rural area. These are then fed into the quarterly Rural Partnership meetings via the Volunteer Voice Officer.

In June, the Member of Youth Parliament, George Jackson, attended a workshop organised by the Rural Partnership to highlight the importance of locally grown food and affordability including healthy school meals. This is something that he will also be working on with the East Riding Food Poverty Alliance in the future.

### Lollipop group

The Volunteer Voice project supports a group of young people from the LGBTQIA+ community through the 'Lollipop' group, which meets every Monday and Wednesday evening in person in Beverley for different age ranges, where we have a regular turnout of **10** young people attending.

Over the last year, the Lollipop group have been extremely creative, creating anti-bullying posters to support the new Anti-bullying strategy they have helped to co-produce, Christmas decorations for the annual Christmas Tree event at Beverley Minster, pumpkin carving, making sharks from recyclable cardboard, drawing, crafting, creating videos, creating a lollipop playlist, participating in music workshops, painting, making badges and so much more. All of this helps to raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ among young people's communities of East Riding, enabling them to feel confident and safe to be themselves and have their say about things they may be experiencing.

The Lollipop group have also been involved in a lot of youth voice workshops/meetings. They have worked collaboratively with partner agencies such as Humberside Police, Health services, Local Authority, Barnardo's, travel and transport companies, Beverley Town Council and both East Riding Youth Parliament and East Riding Youth Council. The group have helped make decisions on several things that effect young people in the East Riding. We have supported the group to talk about issues such as physical health, sexual health mental health, family issues, keeping safe, bullying, employment searches/CV writing, and much more. Young people from the group have said that they feel part of something and can be themselves whilst feeling safe and supported at all times.





**Lollipop group Icons**

Lady Gaga  
Freddie Mercury  
Billie Eilish  
Renee Rapp  
Golda Rosheuvel  
Chappell Roan

**Lollipop group Gay anthems**

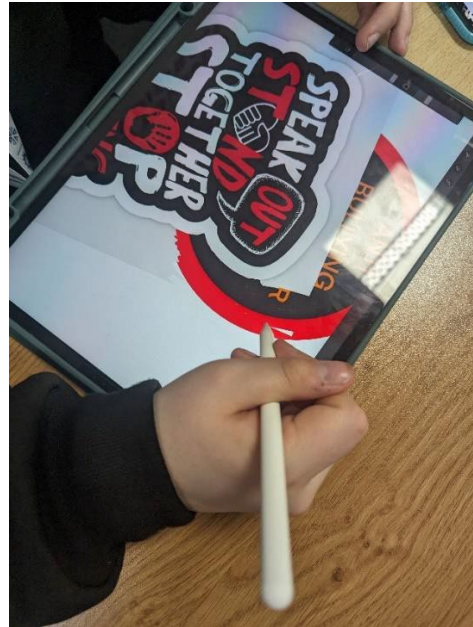
Good luck babe- Chappell Roan  
Uptown Girl- Billy Joel  
Tainted love- Soft Cell  
Dancing Queen- ABBA  
Espresso- Sabrina Carpenter  
With or without you- U2  
Material Girl- Madonna

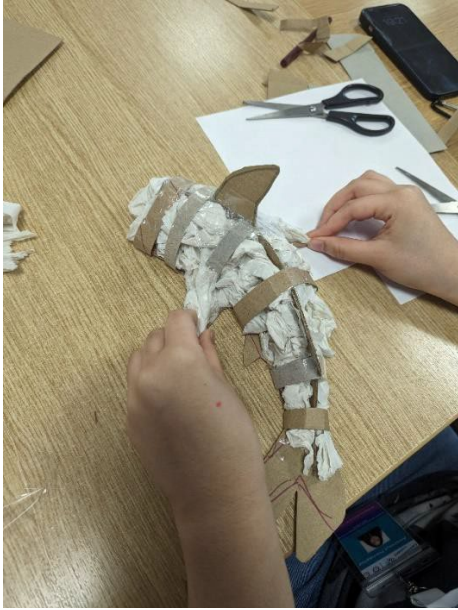
**Lollipop group films**

I am a cheerleader  
White chicks  
Money heist  
Brooklyn 99  
Pitch perfect  
Bottoms  
Billy Elliott  
The Fosters

**Lollipop group books**

Gender accelerationist  
History of sexuality  
Pride  
The transgender studies  
wilder girls  
Circe







### Withernsea Young Creatives and Withernsea Youth Action Group

Volunteer Voice worked closely with our Volunteer Withernsea project to enable young people to have a say about what youth activities they wanted to have in the Withernsea area. This has led to **50** young people being involved in co-producing two new projects – Withernsea Young Creatives and Withernsea Youth Action Group, both of which are now independent and providing a range of youth projects and activities based on what young people are telling them they would like in the area. This has included establishing a rock band, running music workshops, a weekly youth group, youth festivals, creating art sculptures and discos.

### Work with educational settings

ERVAS have worked with over **200** young people from a range of secondary school and college settings in the East Riding around different topics, as well as those who are electively home-educated. This has given a lot of young people the opportunity to have their say. The topics we have discussed and worked on are online mental health access to services, boys & young men's mental health and emotional wellbeing, the environment, anti-bullying, keeping safe, domestic abuse, hate crime and much more.

We have worked with the Beverley Grammar School to run workshops in regard to exploring boys and young men's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Firstly, we created a survey to get a better understanding of what boys and young men are saying about mental health, which went out across the area via different services. We then went into Beverley Grammar School and did some workshops for the whole of year 10 and year 7. We heard from a lot of young males about their experiences of mental health and making sure they are aware of what support is out there if they are struggling. This information will now be shared with key leads from mental health and emotional wellbeing services in our area.

East Riding Rural partnership: ERVAS sit on many partnerships and boards so that we make sure that our young people in the East riding have their say on matters that affect them or will affect them in the future. We have worked with the rural partnership on transport, environment & the climate change strategy, food, employment and other rural issues in the East riding. They have met with young people to discuss transport issues and a change was made in regard to an additional rural bus route being put on.

We have also worked with our schools to make sure that the UK Youth Parliament election voting ran smoothly and that every young person in the East Riding had the opportunity to vote, including those who are electively home-educated and in post-16 provision. 10 secondary schools participated in these, and a number of primary schools participated by post, however we don't have the exact number of how many.

To view a newsletter covering the UK YP elections provided by Longcroft School, please visit the following link: [download.asp \(longcroftschoo.co.uk\)](https://www.longcroftschoo.co.uk/download.asp)

## Training

Volunteer Voice worked with the Youth Work Unit to put on more training around understanding effective youth participation for 15 attendees from a variety of youth services across East Riding. This was delivered on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023.

Volunteer Voice continues to work with young people to co-produce training in regard to tackling bullying in schools and youth settings as part of the East Riding Anti-bullying strategy action plan.

Volunteer Voice is working with the East Riding Youth Voice steering group members, as well as other partners across the Humber sub-region and young people to lead on an event to inform wider services about the four key principles of the Lundy Model, which is recognised as good practice in youth voice and engagement. This was held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and 60 people attended from across the area and different sectors and services, with a waiting list for those who would like to attend future events.

## Partnership working

### East Riding Youth Voice steering group

Volunteer Voice meets regularly with the members of our Youth Voice steering group, making sure that they are kept informed of the youth voice work we are delivering and providing opportunities for them to work with us and each other collaboratively, as well as share with the young people they support to avoid unnecessary duplication and provide more reach for the youth voice work that all our young people are doing across the area.

As well as the quarterly steering group meetings, Volunteer Voice often works with our partners on joint pieces of work such as supporting young people from the LGBTQIA+ community, those who are care experienced, those who are involved with youth offending/anti-social behaviour, those with SEND, or those who want to focus on young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. This ensures we have regular contact with a wide range of practitioners and agencies from all sectors, as well as the wider community and most importantly young people, enabling them to shape our Volunteer Voice work as it evolves.

### Elected Members – East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Volunteer Voice works closely with elected members of East Riding of Yorkshire Council, including Cllr. Aitken - the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Education and Wellbeing, and Cllr. Whittle – the former Leader of the Council, who both attend the East Riding Youth Council meetings when possible, as well as various youth voice workshops, events and conferences, providing an important link to the young people and the East Riding Cabinet in regard to the issues young people are raising.

Volunteer Voice has attended several meetings with a number of East Riding Councillors and Senior Local Authority Leaders in regard to the future development

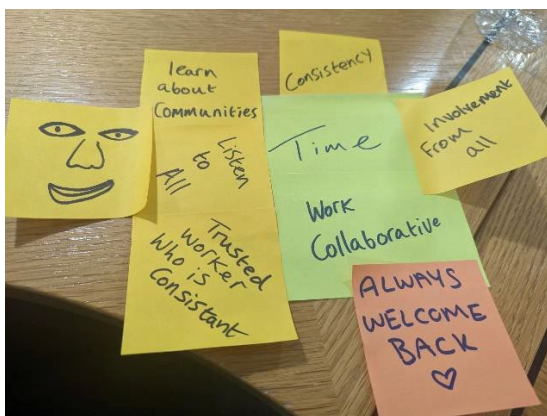
and sustainability of the Volunteer Voice project, particularly the elections of the East Riding Members of Youth Parliament and Deputies, and the growth of the East Riding Youth Council. This has provided some success, with funding for 12 months being secured from the new Executive Director for Children, Families and Schools from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2024, who is also seeking a further 2 years funding from other directorates within the local authority as youth voice covers a number of wider issues that are outside of children's services.

#### Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

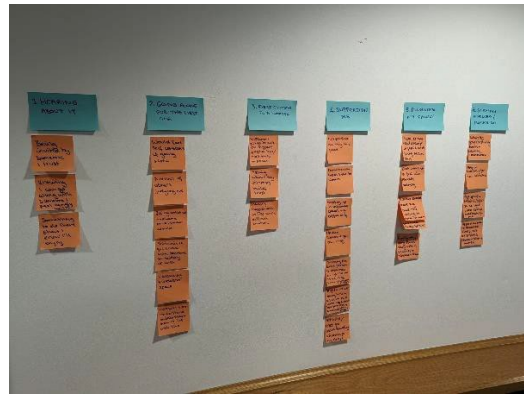
Volunteer Voice participate in a number of steering groups and subgroup meetings focused on young people who have SEND, including neurodiversity, in the East Riding. We currently sit on the Local Offer working group, The SEND Employment Forum and we make sure that young people we work with who have SEND, have their say on anything that may affect them currently or in the future. We ensure that young people are part of decision-making processes within the local authority. We have worked with 25 young people with SEND in East Riding to shape local policies and strategies that affect them, as well as make improvements to the education health care plans (EHCP) and developing the Local Offer website in East Riding.

#### East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Barnardo's partnership project - Voices Means Choices

ERVAS and some of the young people we work with have worked alongside a lot of partner agencies, as a part of a collaborative project with Barnardos and East Riding Council. We attended several workshops and from that it was decided on two concepts 1. A community Hub/space and what would that look like. 2. Training around exploitation for all – what would that look like. We worked with CSC, education, health, safeguarding partnership, fire, police, Voluntary organisations, young people/families and Barnardos to come up with the two concepts and then looked at how we could achieve them.







Volunteer Voice also attends a number of other partnership meetings to update on youth voice and influence work of relevance, such as the Corporate Parenting Board for East Riding and subgroups, the Healthy Young People in Education (children from military service families), Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Virtual Academy, East Riding Universal Youth Offer group being established, East Riding Youth Justice Board, East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Volunteer Voice continues to work closely with the Children and Young People's Engagement and Coproduction Manager - Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, particularly in regard to supporting young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in East Riding. Next steps are to co-deliver the Nothing About Us Without Us youth forum in East Riding, taking out across the different localities to engage with more young people around this topic, which is still a priority for young people.

Volunteer Voice continues to be an active member of the East Riding Libraries Service to engage with young people across the areas to find out more from them about how they would like their libraries to run and what they would like to see in them in the future to encourage more young people to use them.

Volunteer Voice has continued working with the British Youth Council and Youth Work Unit to provide wider opportunities for young people in East Riding to get involved with, including Youth Conferences, Youth Conventions, Regional Youth Climate Assembly. Due to the unforeseen closure of the British Youth Council in April 2024, we will continue to do this with the new central provider, which is the National Youth Agency.

## How we've involved people from our community in the work we do

### Volunteer Voice Awards Evening – October 2023

On Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023, Volunteer Voice held its first awards evening at Lazaat Hotel to celebrate the amazing young people from across East Riding who participate in youth voice work. We were joined by partner agencies to celebrate and show case all the great work young people have done and continue to do both locally and nationally, and present them with certificates, as well as award those organisations and individuals who empower young people to speak out about issues they feel passionate about.

44 Awards were given to **41** young people who were involved in 15 different youth voice projects across the communities of East Riding, including keeping safe, mental health, LGBTQIA+, environmental, shaping local services for children and young people, East Riding UK Youth Parliament and East Riding Youth Council.

To find out more about the evening and see the young people who received their Volunteer Voice Awards and listen to some online interviews, please visit our website: <https://www.volunteervoice.org.uk/index.php/2023/10/11/volunteer-voice-awards-evening/>



The East Riding Youth Voice steering group has members who work with children, young people and families from across all communities of East Riding, including different localities, as well as young people of all ages who may be care experienced, young carers, be from the LGBTQ+ community, have SEND, have additional needs in regard to neurodiversity, have needs relating to their mental health and emotional wellbeing, be involved with youth justice services, have experience of safeguarding, including exploitation, be from rurally isolated communities, be from military service families or be from black and minority ethnic communities, including the traveller community. This group of professionals across the sectors, enables us to engage with more diverse groups of young people to explore their specific needs and support them to have a say about things that are important to them.

### The differences we're making (both big and small)

Volunteer Voice is making differences to young people and communities across the East Riding and beyond.

We are supporting young people to work with our partners from all sectors on the various topics and issues highlighted on pp4-10 to improve things locally, such as improving access to mental health support for young people, accessing information on employment and apprenticeships opportunities, tackling bullying, tackling climate change, all of which are now beginning to produce some excellent results that will help many young people and others living in our communities in a sustainable way.

Volunteer Voice has also helped many young people to have a say about the things that matter to them and to do something positive to make a difference. This has resulted in young people benefiting from the following outcomes:

- increased confidence and self-esteem
- increased friendships and help them develop their social skills
- increased opportunities for them to try new things and participate in positive activities
- increased their practical skills and knowledge in regard to their topics and interests
- increased their aspirations for their future and help them realise their potential
- increased their knowledge and understanding of the world they live in
- increased their attainment levels
- improved their time management and employment related skills, thereby improving their employability prospects
- increased community cohesion between young people, adults and the communities they live in, thus increase their understanding and respect for others
- increased youth voice work within a wider range of agencies and services, locally and nationally

- reduced loneliness and isolation, improving their mental health and widening their support network
- reduced anti-social behaviour and offending/re-offending
- reduced their participation in risk-taking behaviours

For organisations, services and communities, Volunteer Voice has made the following differences:

- Continued to support and develop an inclusive East Riding Youth Council to represent individual young people and groups of young people
- Continued to support and develop a robust East Riding Youth Voice steering group of organisations and services across the sectors that is supported by the Children and Families Partnership Board
- Established an East Riding Young People's Mental Health - online resource partnership to ensure coordination of websites and other online resources providing quality information that are co-produced with young people
- Increased their knowledge of what youth voice and influence work is happening in their area and how it can benefit them and the young people they support
- increased their understanding of the benefits that meaningful youth voice and influence brings to their service and young people
- increased communications and connectivity between agencies, services, schools, colleges and communities and young people they support
- increased the understanding within agencies, services, schools, colleges and communities about effectively supporting young people to participate in meaningful youth voice and influence, such as putting on an event for youth staff focused on the Lundy Model of excellence in youth voice
- increased partnership working to deliver collaborative and sustainable youth voice and influence activities

"They all really enjoyed it, me too. 😊


Immensely proud of them all!!

I am pretty new to youth work and this is my first youth voice group and we are all learning together.

Thank you for all your support."

(Youth Worker after attending the East Riding Youth Council with young people)





*"I've been grateful of the invite and warm welcome I received to take part in meetings and discussions with young people. I have found it to be such a supportive space for young people to have discussions about things that matter to them and their peers. These discussions have created an arena for the young people taking part to develop skills such as effective communicating, debating, sharing of ideas and collaborating, how to structure meetings, assign roles and actions giving accountability and so much more. Staff within these meetings prompt and support in such a considerate and empowering way. It has been evident that the young people have enjoyed talking part as they talk open and confidently about their aspirations both in this during attendance and beyond. On a personal note, I wish that Community Vision operated in my home area as I know this would be a huge benefit for my children and that it would set them on the path to having an advantage when applying for work in the future, or simply knowing how to express and advocate for themselves along with having the confidence to do this in front of any audience."* Professional, Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire.



**I'm more openly confident with expressing my views, vision, and active speaking. A sense of achievement as well'**  
**(Young person)**

**Volunteer Voice has helped me to build confidence and knowledge, it is good for CVs and keeps you active good mentally and physically depending on what projects you do.**  
**(Young person)**

"Thank you so much for sharing these resources. It was a fantastic afternoon and I took a lot away from it."

(Attendee at the Lundy Model event from the Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust)

## What we've learned

### What's gone well?

The work we're doing with young people regarding the co-production of the Healthy Young Minds website is progressing well. We now have a basic site to show them that is based within the East Riding Council's Public Health team, which will ensure sustainability of the project and will sit alongside their general Healthy Minds website, which is aimed more at adults. This is such an important piece of work as supporting positive youth mental health and emotional wellbeing is a priority across the East Riding and the country, particularly as we come out of the pandemic and are now having to deal with the cost of living crisis.

The creative youth voice work we've done with our young people has also gone really well, enabling us to engage with different groups of young people to raise awareness of topics such as LGBTQIA+, keeping safe, healthy relationships and what young people are really like. This changes the perspective of youth voice, which is sometimes viewed as 'professional' young people sitting in meetings with decision makers, and not reflecting local demographics. Volunteer Voice wants to provide many different opportunities for young people to participate in youth voice, which includes participating in meetings, (online and in person), creative activities, surveys and consultations, youth events and conferences.

The engagement with our partners is also an area that is expanded and we have now developed some excellent joined up work with agencies such as Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, helping us to support young people to work together on topics related to emotional health and wellbeing across the wider area.

The East Riding Youth Council itself is progressing well, with 21 young people attending the May meeting. However, we are hoping to continue growing this in the future by taking the meetings on tour across the different East Riding localities and working with our partners, particularly those in the VCSE as well as statutory services, including children who are care-experienced, young carers and young people involved with Youth Justice Services.

We are also hoping to do much more work with other strategic groups including the East Riding Food Poverty Alliance, Health & Wellbeing Board, Financial Inclusion Working Group to provide more support to our young people in regard to the topics they are focusing on.

The work that our MYPs, DMYPs and Regional Steering Group representative have undertaken since being elected in March 2022 is considerable and it's great to see how much they have developed personally in that time and what they have achieved.

## Sharing our learning

Volunteer Voice shares its learning with members of the East Riding Youth Voice steering group, East Riding Children and Families Partnership Board and subgroups, East Riding Safeguarding Children Board and subgroups, the Health & Wellbeing Board and our partners across a range of health services and providers.

We often meet with individual services and professionals to discuss the work of Volunteer Voice and how they can get involved with it or support their young people to participate.

We also share our learning via the Yorkshire and Humber Youth Work Unit's regional Strategic Youth Leads group, Youth Voice and Engagement Officers group and Voluntary Youth Organisation Network. We also attend British Youth Council events, conferences and residentials, where we share learning with other youth voice workers.

ERVAS has now merged with Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire to form Community VISION (Voluntary Infrastructure Support Involving Organisations and Networks) CIO and continues to work closely with North Lincolnshire Council and partners across the sectors to develop the local youth volunteering and social action offer, employing a Volunteer Youth Volunteering and Social Action Officer across the area, who is actively engaging with youth voice groups including the North Lincolnshire Youth Council and Children in Care Council to develop closer partnerships and promote their work to other young people.

ERVAS have led on establishing a Humber wide Youth Voice and Influence Partnership in partnership with key services covering the four authorities. This led to a successful learning event on 25<sup>th</sup> June with over 60 attendees across the different services and sectors in regard to the Lundy Model of youth voice and participation. This will now develop further by introducing a Community of Practice for the sub-region.





“Thank you so much for sharing these resources. It was a fantastic afternoon and I took a lot away from it.”  
(Attendee at the Lundy Model event from the Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust)

## How we're changing what we do

As Volunteer Voice completes its third year, we will be focusing more on completing all the projects that our young people have been working on to ensure that they are sustainable and can continue to make a difference into the future.

We will also be working closely with our strategic partners, particularly those at East Riding of Yorkshire to secure funding for the future to ensure the East Riding continues to elect our Members and Deputy Members of Youth Parliament into the future, as well as undertake the Make Your Mark vote, and that this supports the wider East Riding Youth Council to continue growing and developing its work based on the priorities that young people choose locally.

These priorities will regularly feed into the Children and Young People's Plan and related subgroups for East Riding, as well as the Health & Wellbeing Board and the East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership's Strategic Delivery Group and subgroups. They will also feed into the joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) for East Riding.

We will continue to work collaboratively with all of our partners who support youth voice and influence, including across the wider Humber subregion, and we will be exploring additional support that can be provided to our young people to continue their engagement in youth voice and influence after the Volunteer Voice project comes to the end of its current funding.

We will also be exploring other funding sources to continue with elements of the youth voice work being undertaken by our young people such as tackling climate change, tackling bullying, improving mental health and emotional wellbeing for young people in our area.

We will focus on more training in understanding effective youth engagement and participation to practitioners from all sectors working with young people, as well as strategic leads and decision-makers, which will support future successful youth voice work to be undertaken across agencies and services in East Riding.

We have developed an ambitious action plan for Volunteer Voice and future work to engage more young people in youth voice and influence, as well as partner agencies and communities, including education providers.

All of this forms part of our exit strategy as we come to the end of the Volunteer Voice project in June 2024.



