



# Countryside Challenge

## Final Evaluation Report



**Fun, Learning  
and Achievement**



Cabinet Office

**Pears**  
Foundation

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Evaluation Methodology</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Evaluation Findings</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Overview	6
3.2 Intended outcomes	7
<b>Outcome 1</b>	<b>7</b>
Projects are of a high standard	8
Young people have a sense of ownership of the projects	10
Increased awareness of project planning including risk assessments etc.	11
Members take up training opportunities	11
Fundraising targets are met (where applicable)	12
Young people indicate they would like to continue to engage in YSA activity	13
<b>Outcome 2</b>	<b>15</b>
Improved local environment	15
Case study 1	15
Increased awareness of the positive contributions young farmers make to their local communities	16
Case study 2	18
Case study 3	19
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	<b>23</b>
Appendix 1: Young Farmers' Clubs that participated in the Countryside Challenge	24
Appendix 2: Location of clubs	26



# The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

**The National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs' (NFYFC)** is one of the largest voluntary rural youth organisations in the UK dedicated to young people who have a love for agriculture and rural life. Led by young people, for young people, our 619 Young Farmers' Clubs in England and Wales, run by thousands of volunteers, provide 23,500 members aged 10 to 26 with a unique opportunity to develop skills and work with their local communities on food, farming, rural and environmental issues. NFYFC's core objectives include:

- To advance the education of its members and their knowledge of agriculture, crafts, life skills, rural affairs and country life
- To develop their self-reliance and individual responsibility
- To train members to play their full part in the life of the Young Farmers' Clubs organisation and the community.

The national council, consisting of elected YFC members, is organised into five steering groups to help ensure that YFCs meet these objectives. The steering groups are: competitions; personal development; agriculture and rural affairs; events and marketing; and the youth forum.

The National Federation is a gateway for young farmers to network with key industry players as well as providing a platform for them to get their voices heard at a national level. YFC members are given the opportunity to attend key agriculture and rural affairs events, learn sector skills through agricultural training and speak with ministers to give their views on the future of the industry.

YFCs also provide recreation and other leisure time pursuits which help to tackle rural isolation and social exclusion. Their community engagement programmes encourage good citizenship, so that members can reach their full potential. Clubs, County Federations, Area Committees and NFYFC all collaborate to co-ordinate a range of activities to achieve this.

For more information please visit our website:

**[www.nfyfc.org.uk](http://www.nfyfc.org.uk)**

# 1 Introduction

In January 2016 the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) was awarded £81,000 through the National Youth Social Action Fund to support YFCs from across England to get involved in social action projects. The funding was used to establish the Countryside Challenge and a proportion of that funding was used as an enabling fund that Young Farmers' Clubs could apply to in order to undertake social action projects within their local communities. The premise of the funding was that projects would address an identified local community need and would be owned and driven by the group members. Through their engagement in the projects, participants were provided with opportunities to develop new skills, build confidence and were encouraged to become more active citizens.

The project aimed to engage 250 young people aged 10-20 years from rural areas across England directly in the social action projects themselves and a further 100 young people (20-25 years) in the wider Countryside Challenge project. In addition, the project aimed that 15,750 YFC members would learn about the project and the benefits of being involved.

The project had a specific focus on the engagement of younger NFYFC members as a means of building skills and capacity within the membership base. By involving younger members of the club it was hoped that the clubs would benefit from their engagement throughout the duration of their relationship with their local club.

In addition to funding local social action activity, the project intended to provide the training, tools and support that would enable young people to successfully design and deliver their own projects.

The grant scheme was also supported by a youth development officer employed by NFYFC.

**“Through their engagement in the projects, participants were provided with opportunities to develop new skills, build confidence and were encouraged to become more active citizens.”**

# 1 Evaluation Methodology

The methods that were used to assess the extent to which the project met intended outcomes were:

- An interview with the Countryside Challenge Project Manager
- An assessment of each project folder
- Analysis of the Community Questionnaire distributed by each club following completion of their project. The questionnaire was completed by 83 people
- Analysis of the project participant data collated by the Cabinet Office – each participant was asked to complete a form about their experience. Forms were completed by 394 participants.

Three case studies were selected from among the range of projects to further illustrate the aims of the project and how they met the wider intended outcomes of the Countryside Challenge programme.



## 3 Evaluation Findings

### 3.1 Overview

Between January 2016 and August 2017, 38 NFYFC projects were supported and 36 were awarded grants<sup>1</sup> totaling £14,400 to enable them to run social action projects. The projects ranged from conservation-based projects within the local community to fundraising activities to raise money and awareness for causes that members had a particular interest in.

Overall 546 young people (336 10-20 year olds and 210 21-26 year olds) took part in projects funded through the Countryside Challenge scheme. On average volunteers contributed 10 hours of volunteer time to the projects, which equates to an economic value of £30,303<sup>2</sup>. Projects were delivered in 24 counties across England with most parts of the country being well represented.

The types of projects funded were diverse from hosting 'lambing days' to refurbishment of a local play area to highlighting issues around mental health and setting up a peer support network. However all projects aimed to engage with the local community, raise awareness of the local Young Farmers' Club and highlight a good cause or of food and farming more generally. The majority of the hands-on "doing" part of the project took place over a condensed period of time, e.g. a weekend rather than the group coming together on a regular basis over a longer period. This was largely due to the nature of the projects which tended to be event- or short-term project-based.

36

NFYFC projects were  
awarded grants totaling

£14,400

546

young  
people took  
part in projects funded  
through the Countryside  
Challenge scheme.

<sup>1</sup> A list of clubs that were awarded grants is attached as Appendix A and a map showing the location of clubs is attached as Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> Based on national average wage for 18-20 year old of £5.55

## 3.2 Intended Outcomes

Countryside Challenge had two primary outcomes:

(1) For young people to increase their skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver high quality social action projects.



(2) For young people to have a positive impact on their local communities.



The following explores the extent to which these outcomes were met.

### Outcome 1

Young people increase their skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver high quality social action projects.

The following are the indicators of success when considering the extent to which this outcome has been achieved:

- Projects are of a high standard
- Young people have a sense of ownership of the projects
- Members have an increased awareness of project planning
- Members take up training opportunities
- Fundraising targets are met
- Members indicate that they would like to continue to engage in YSA activity.

Each of these indicators are now considered to demonstrate the extent to which the programme met Outcome 1.



## • Projects are of a high standard

**In order to support the implementation of the social action projects, the grant funded the production of a range of tools and resources that were made available online via the NFYFC website. These resources included:**

- Skills Bank register – to enable young people to record the skills they had gained as a result of being involved in the social action project
- Health & Safety checklist
- Community Questionnaire template
- Planning a community project guidance
- Project Planning Gannt chart
- Press release template.

Each of the projects was required to produce a project folder which contained completed versions of these resources along with any additional supporting documentation evidencing the project, e.g. photographs/press articles. Analysis of these project folders shows that clubs consistently used the resources (with the exception of the Skills Bank register) provided by NFYFC and were proficient in recording and documenting the progress of their projects. Use of these resources ensured that projects were well-planned and publicised, had been properly risk assessed and captured feedback from project beneficiaries to demonstrate the impact of their actions. All of these elements contributed to ensuring that the projects undertaken were of a high and consistent quality. The provision of these tools should also mean that the grant funding leaves behind a legacy of resources that can be accessed by any group planning a community project.

Whilst the Skills Bank register was not widely used by group members, evidence about the skills that were gained through organising and implementing the projects was collected through the Cabinet Office survey and participant feedback.

The majority of clubs were able to generate publicity for their project. This was often through the use of Facebook and Twitter but in numerous cases there was evidence that the project gained coverage from the local press. In addition some of the projects received national press coverage and one project was featured on Countryfile. Analysis of this coverage equates to an advertorial value of approximately £32,000.

**“Use of these resources ensured that projects were well-planned and publicised, had been properly risk assessed and captured feedback from project beneficiaries to demonstrate the impact of their actions.”**

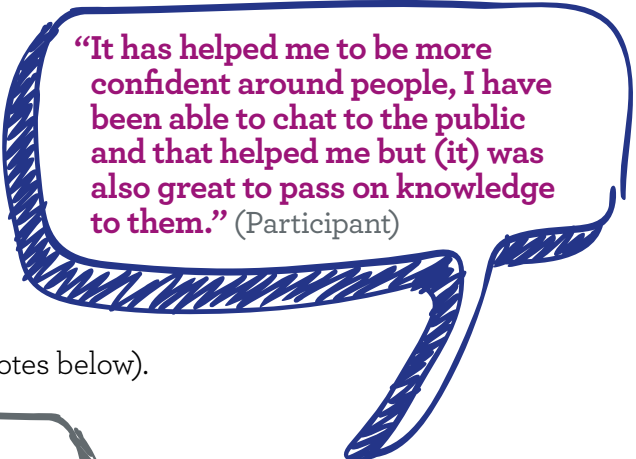


Where feedback was provided by the wider community it was overwhelmingly positive and complimentary about both the approach and attitude of the young people involved in the projects.

Throughout the evaluation, there was a strong sense of ownership of the projects by the young people. In many cases this was reflected in the ways that decisions were made about the projects they undertook. Often this was in response to a cause that members felt strongly about or an identified local need. This sense of ownership is reflected in the survey responses. Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being “not at all” and 10 being “completely”) the extent to which they felt that they had the chance to lead, own and share the activities they were involved in. The average score was 7.81, which indicates a high level of ownership of projects.

Interestingly, for some participants there also appeared to be a clear sense of ownership of their particular role in the project. For some this led to increases in both confidence and knowledge (see pull quote right).


This sense of ownership may also have been achieved as a result of team working. Team working was something which was clearly conveyed by the project folders and participants also commented positively about team working (see pull quotes below).



**“It has helped me to be more confident around people, I have been able to chat to the public and that helped me but (it) was also great to pass on knowledge to them.”** (Participant)



**“I felt I was part of a team and encouraged and helped to do things that would help our community.”** (Participant)



**“We worked well as a team and got a lot of work done for the amount of time it was completed in.”** (Participant)

- **Young people have a sense of ownership of the projects**

**The application of the project planning tools and successful implementation of the projects demonstrates that the project was effective in increasing awareness of the various elements required to effectively organise and deliver a social action project.**

In addition to raising awareness of project planning, clubs also specifically mention members learning additional skills, for example:

- Organisational skills
- How to work as part of a team
- ICT
- Practical skills relating to the task
- Marketing and PR
- Co-ordinating volunteers
- Leadership skills.

In the survey circulated to participants they were asked to indicate the extent to which the project challenged or stretched them by, for example, learning a new skill. They were asked to rank their answer on a scale of 0 (“not at all challenging”) to 10 (“most challenging”). The average score was 7.52, which suggests that a high proportion of participants developed new skills through being involved in the project/activity or used the projects as an opportunity to engage in activity that was new or extended their skills in some capacity.

Project documentation also demonstrates that in addition to developing knowledge and skills relating to project planning and delivery, participants also increased their knowledge of practical topics, for example tractor driving, coppicing, stone walling, British agriculture, re-seeding and re-surfacing.

**“...a high proportion of participants developed new skills through being involved in the project/activity or used the projects as an opportunity to engage in activity that was new or extended their skills in some capacity.**

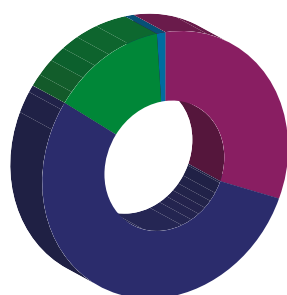
- **Increased awareness of project planning including risk assessments etc.**

Evidence gathered through the evaluation demonstrates that many of the young people involved in the projects increased their confidence as a result of their engagement. This is most commonly referenced in connection with directly engaging with the wider community, e.g. speaking to members of the public or attending parish council meetings. It is also linked in some cases with providing opportunities for people to take up leadership roles and people seeing themselves as part of a team.

The fact that the project was beneficial to participants is further corroborated by the response received to the survey question which asked participants to indicate the extent to which they had personally benefited from the project: 31% of participants said that they had benefited “a lot” and 53% said that they had benefited a “fair amount”. A further 14% said that they had benefited “a little” and only 1% said that they had not benefited at all.

**“Since the challenge we have seen a big change in the junior members, they are now a lot more confident with the older members of the club and are more willing and likely to join in and participate in any events or competitions on offer.”**

(Participant)



**31%**

31% of participants said that they had benefited “a lot” and 53% said that they had benefited a “fair amount”.

**53%**

- **Members take up training opportunities**

The project planned to deliver four training sessions to YFC members, which would help them to plan and deliver their projects and would provide the young people with transferable skills, e.g. leadership, communication skills and project planning. The training was supported by the suite of online resources described above that were accessible to all grant recipients to help them with the implementation of their projects. The resources were also intended to support any future social action projects that clubs may undertake and as such provide a valuable legacy of the project.

During the early phase of the project a training partnership was established with the Canal and River Trust with the intention of creating a bespoke one-day session on how to develop and deliver a social action project. The workshop introduced participants to the principles of youth social action, how to plan a project and the benefits of undertaking a project on an individual, club and community level.

87

young people participated  
in the training

**It was anticipated that the course would be delivered in areas where there was a concentration of successful project applicants.**

Unfortunately, take-up of the training was low due to issues of young people being able to access the training independently. As such a decision was made to deliver training at events where NFYFC members were already coming together e.g. National Chairman's weekend.

Clubs participating in the training were encouraged to disseminate the learning from the training through producing videos.

Three training sessions were delivered through the project and 87 young people participated in the training. Not all of those that attended the training went on to access Countryside Challenge funding.

This highlights the challenges of engaging young people in activities outside of their local communities due to competing demands on time and is further compounded by their rurality and lack of access to public transport. In future the NFYFC may wish to consider how it can make best use of online training content to engage young people. Not only would this overcome issues regarding accessibility but it is also a format that many young people will be familiar/comfortable with.

#### • **Fundraising targets are met (where applicable)**

The majority of projects included an element of fundraising and a review of the project folders show that where fundraising targets were set they were achieved. Most of the projects included fundraising at the actual event either through charging to enter the event – for example the lambing days – or through a 'bucket collection' at the event. However some projects involved sponsored activity and these were consequently successful at raising larger amounts of money.

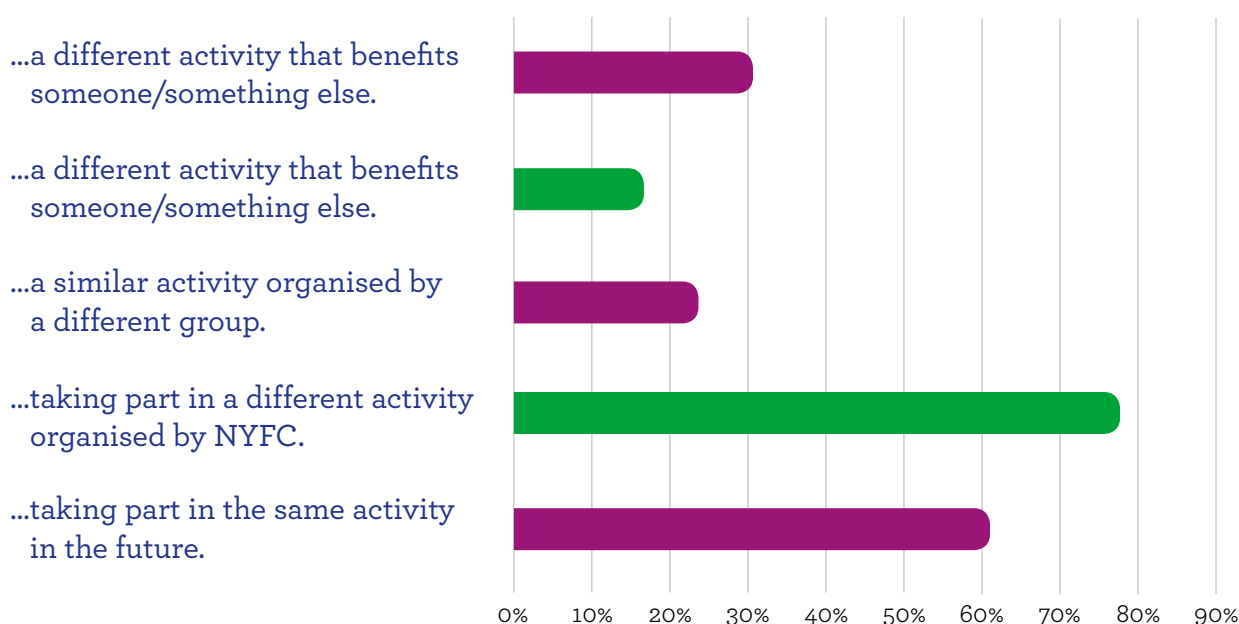
Taking the opportunity through their projects to raise funds for external causes is further evidence of the wider contribution that the Young Farmers' Clubs make to society through their roles as 'active citizens'.



## • Young people indicate they would like to continue to engage in YSA activity

Analysis of the questionnaires completed by young people following their involvement with the project shows that a high percentage of young people expressed an interest in becoming engaged with YSA activity in the future.

### Young people said that they would be interested in...



It is interesting that far fewer young people said that they would be interested in doing a similar activity organised by a school/college. This contradicts national research<sup>2</sup> that identifies these more formal routes as being by far the most common routes into social action. It would be interesting to explore whether this is linked to perceptions by young people around levels of ownership and a sense that participation in activity delivered through formal institutions would be less likely to be owned and driven by the young people themselves.

This also suggests a high level of commitment and loyalty to NFYFC but also that friendships are key in encouraging young people to take part in social action activity. For example young people are probably more likely to get involved in social action activity if their friends from an established club which they choose to attend regularly are also involved. This is reflected in national research<sup>3</sup> on social action and is further supported by the fact that when participants were asked via the survey what had encouraged them to become involved, 64% said that it was because their friends were doing it (this was the highest scoring answer). The other two high scoring responses to this question were: 57% “an opportunity to help others” and 47% “it looked fun”.

These are obviously all important aspects for young people and likely to influence a young person's decision to engage in a social action project. The opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge is also seen as important by participants although this is likely to be more fully appreciated by the young person retrospectively rather than be key in their decision making to engage in social action.

The commitment and enjoyment that participants obviously felt as a result of participating in the projects is reflected in the comments made:

**“Thoroughly enjoyed it and found it very rewarding.”**

(Participant)

**“It was mega fun – we met new people and made new friends.”**

(Participant)

**“It was an amazing and incredible opportunity.”**

(Participant)

Participants were also asked to rate their enjoyment of being involved in the activity on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being “not enjoyable” and 10 being “most enjoyable”). The average score to this question was 9.32 which clearly demonstrates the high level of enjoyment experienced by participants.



<sup>1</sup>Ipsos Mori National Youth Action Survey 2016 (Julia Pye and Olivia Michelmore)

<sup>2</sup>Ipsos Mori National Youth Action Survey 2016 highlighted that the most common motivational factor for engaging in social action mentioned by young people was if they could do it with their friends

## **Outcome 2**

**Young people have a positive impact on their local communities.**

**The following are the indicators of success when considering the extent to which the project achieved this outcome:**

- Improved local environment
- Increased awareness of the positive contributions young farmers make to their local communities

### **• Improved local environment**

The projects carried out by participating clubs were quite diverse, from improving play parks to increasing the awareness of British agriculture to a sponsored bed push. Approximately two-thirds of projects were focused on aesthetically improving an area or making an environmental improvement, for example through increasing biodiversity.

The three case studies on the following pages are examples of the different projects undertaken.

## **CASE STUDY**

### **Dorrington YFC – Dorrington Village Play Park Restoration and Resurfacing**

#### **Introduction**

Following a consultation held between Dorrington YFC and the local village hall committee, the village playground was identified as an area that was in need of restoration in order to tidy the area up and make it safer. The project involved resurfacing the play area and replacing the bark surface with a permanent surface. The project also involved replacing the kickboards around the perimeter of the area and trimming back an overgrown hedge. Nine club members aged between 17 and 24 were involved with the project.

#### **Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver high quality social action project**

Preparation for the project involved project planning, health and safety assessments and communication skills. There were also practical skills needed for the re-surfacing and restoring. The re-surfacing involved digging out the existing surface using a tractor and taking away the old surface in a trailer. The surface was then re-seeded and a new surface laid. Participants felt that their skills were improved through their engagement with the project and that they benefited personally from their involvement

case study continued >>

with it. Participants also seemed to really appreciate the practical nature of the project and the fact that this led to a tangible impact. One participant said (right):

**“It was a great day with the village committee keeping us fed and watered and, although it was hard work, there was a great feeling of accomplishment.”**

(Participant)

### **A positive impact on the local community**

The group worked with the Dorrington Village Hall Committee to prepare and organise the project. This in itself helped to build closer links with the local community. The re-surfacing of the play area meant that it would be used by more local children and become a valued community facility.

**“It was an enormous challenge that involved careful planning and fundraising as well as a big physical effort on the day. In all these matters, you and the Young Farmers did a brilliant job and we are hugely grateful. I also know that in due course your efforts will be much appreciated by all the youngsters and families that use the facilities.”**

(Village Hall Committee Member)

### **• Increased awareness of the positive contributions young farmers make to their local communities**

The questionnaire circulated to community members following events and projects illustrates that projects changed external perceptions of YFCs and also increased awareness of the positive contributions that they make to local communities.

**“I wasn’t sure what young farmers do other than have weekly meetings. From them doing the project the whole social club committee members and trustees have been told about YFC and the things they get up to. A couple of our committee members thought that they just went to the pub.”** (Community member)



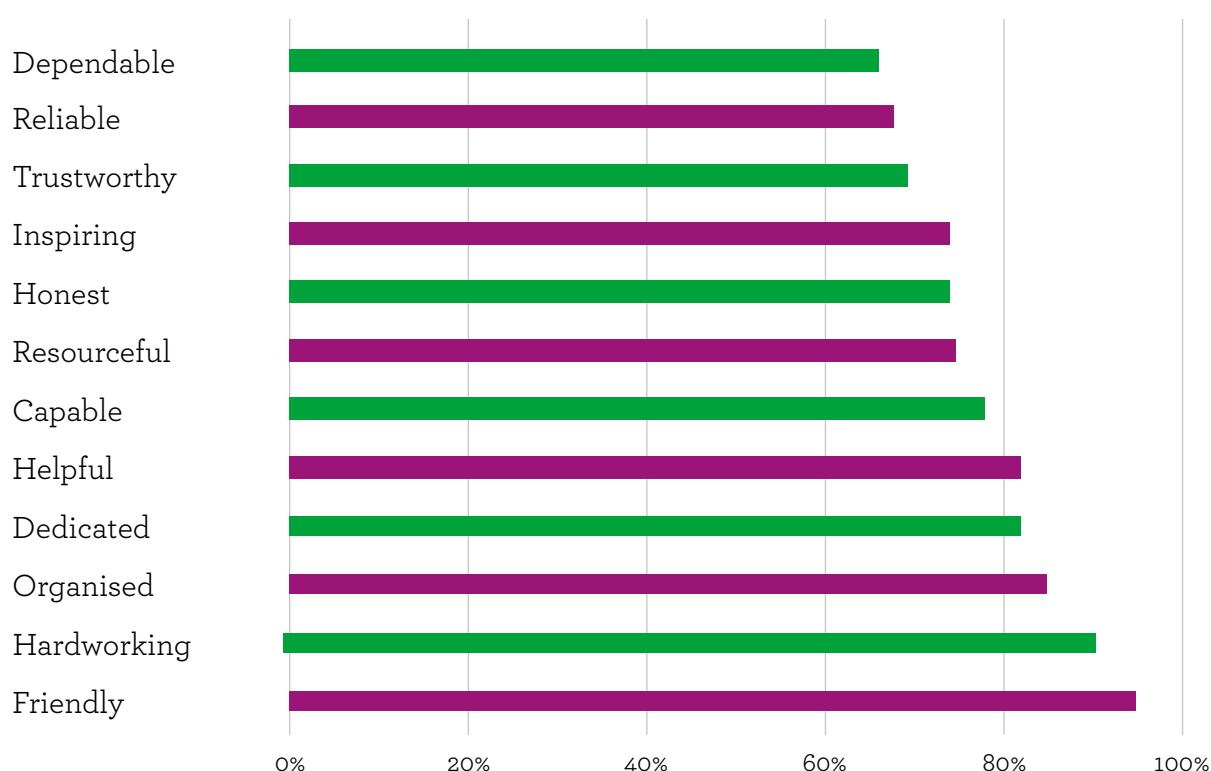
**“Before attending these events I had not realised how much hard work and dedication had been put into these clubs by their members. They are clearly a group of hardworking individuals.”** (Community member)

**“A kind and friendly bunch of young people willing to help and support the community.**

**They were all willing to talk to the public and spend time explaining what it is they do and why they do it.”**

(Community member)

**Positive perceptions of YFCs are also illustrated by responses to the question that asked people about the qualities of YFCs. The following responses were received:**



This demonstrates that the social action projects provided the YFC with a valuable platform through which to showcase not only their capabilities to deliver high quality projects but also the important contribution they make to wider society.

## CASE STUDY

### Hampshire YFC – Lambing Day

#### Introduction

Hampshire YFC hosted a lambing day on a local farm which involved the following activities: seeing ewes lamb, listening to a talk given by the farmer, tractor and trailer rides to the lambing fields, fete games, tug of war demo and stock judging demo. The event also included a number of fun competitions that attendees could enter, for example ‘the best sheep photo’ and ‘the best vegetable animal’. The event was intended to give children and other members of the public the opportunity to meet farm animals on a working farm, educate people about food growing and also educate the local community about sheep farming which would hopefully lessen the chance of dogs worrying livestock. The event was planned for Mothering Sunday so it was also intended to be fun and an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate Mothering Sunday. Eleven club members were involved in the project ranging in age from 13 to 24.

#### Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver a high quality social action project

Participants used and developed the following skills: health and safety, promotion and PR, communicating with the public. There were two planning meetings held prior to the event where different tasks were allocated to members. The event was successful at raising £600. Overall the participants enjoyed organising and hosting the event and felt that they had learned new skills.

#### A positive impact on the local community

Contact was made with the local school to advertise the event and posters were also put up around the local community. Community members attending the event appreciated the opportunity to learn more about farming and thoroughly enjoyed the event.

**“What a fun and friendly group of young people! So well organised and made my family and I feel very welcome. We asked lots of questions whilst we watched a lamb being born; living in the city none of us had ever seen this and it was fascinating. We were not made to feel stupid and we really enjoyed our day!”**

**“Thank you for such a great day out, teaching us all so much and inspiring my children (I would be ecstatic if they were to turn out like the young people we met that day).”**

**“My friends who are not in young farmers or have anything to do with farming brought their children and learnt a lot during the day. They really enjoyed it.”**

(Community members)

## CASE STUDY

### Beverley YFC – Muck Chuck

#### Introduction

Following a consultation with members, Beverley YFC decided to organise a Muck Chuck to raise money for Yorkshire Air Ambulance. Posters and social media were used to advertise the day and pre-orders were taken so that the group knew how many bags of manure they required. The manure, which was donated by local farmers, was collected by a group of the young farmers, bagged up and delivered to the homes of those that had ordered it at an affordable cost. As a result of their involvement in organising the muck chuck, some of the group felt confident enough to go on to plan their first Tractor Run. Ten club members were involved in the project, ranging in age from 16 to 20.

#### Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver a high quality social action project

The project involved members using and developing a number of skills: communication, organisation, IT and team working. They successfully used social media to promote the project. Participants completed a health and safety risk assessment prior to the event.

Participants indicated that they enjoyed the event and all indicated that they would be willing to become involved in a similar project in the future. A total of £1500 was raised for Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

The success of the muck chuck gave participants the confidence to then organise their first tractor run.

#### A positive impact on the local community

The group communicated and co-ordinated the activity through the local allotment committee to ensure that as many local people as possible were able to benefit from the muck chuck.

**“People such as myself appreciate manure for our allotments, which can often be hard to come by and it is so good to be supporting a good cause at the same time... Many people locally commented that it was good to see young people working for a good cause.”**

**“Many of the members show maturity beyond their years. The main young farmer who organised the event, I discovered was only 16 years old.”**

**“As well as the involvement of many tractor enthusiasts, it was good to see members of the local area coming out to watch and support – enjoying the spectacle of 72 tractors.”**

(Community members)

At the end of the project each club circulated a community questionnaire to gain feedback about the community's perception of the project. The questionnaire included a question about whether or not the project was of benefit to the local community. Overwhelmingly, there were very positive answers given by respondents. Benefits could be categorised as follows:

**Projects made a difference to the physical appearance of a community (for example by repairing a wall or clearing a patch of land).**

**"Yes it helps to make the environment look the way it should."**

(Community member)

**"Our area is one of beauty and often let down by very dirty and often illegible road signs. As we have holiday cottages and have non-locals staying signs are therefore important. Tidy hedges, verges and clean signs give the area a lift."**

(Community member)

**Projects resulted in improved facilities for the local community to use (for example by improving a play area).**

**"The clean-up and planting done in the school improves the area in the school playground so the children at the school can enjoy the area."**

(Community member)

**"The work they have done up there is incredible. The garden now looks twice the size! This will benefit local community events that are held on the garden such as flower festivals by providing them a much larger area to use."**

(Community member)

**"**

**"Very positive benefits to the local community. We always struggle at church to get people to help keep the churchyard tidy, and our volunteers are getting older. It was fantastic to have the young enthusiastic group of young farmers with us. They were great company and worked really hard. It was very much appreciated and commented on by all the regular churchyard team and church congregation. We are delighted with what they did. The churchyard is for the whole community, whether churchgoers or not. The whole community benefited from the work undertaken."**

(Community member)



Community engagement with the project meant that people felt more connected to their local community and it had helped to engender a sense of community spirit.



“Definitely brought more people out of their houses to watch and meet their neighbours.”

“Bringing our community together, which doesn’t happen often.”

“Most definitely bringing the community together. I met people today I hadn’t seen for a while and we all had lots of fun.”

(Community members)

Projects had led to people having more of an understanding about farming and agriculture.

“Introduced YFC to the public and gave an insight into countryside activities which may have influenced attitudes in a positive way.” (Community member)

“My friends who are not in young farmers or have anything to do with farming brought their children and learnt a lot during the day. They really enjoyed it.” (Community member)

The positive impact that projects had on the local community also reinforced the participants’ sense that they were making a difference and putting something back into the local area.

When participants were asked whether they felt other people or the environment had benefited from the project, 47% felt that it had benefited “a lot” and a further 43% felt that it had benefited a “fair amount”. Only 10% felt there has been no wider benefit outside of the group in undertaking the project.

“It was brilliant. Enjoyed helping others in community.” (Participant)

“It was nice to be able to do something for the community and give back after all their generosity in constantly supporting the club in our fundraising events.” (Participant)

# 47%

felt that it had benefitted “a lot” and 43% felt that it had benefitted a “fair amount”.





**“The evaluation serves as a reminder that in designing these programmes it is important to give young people opportunities to self-determine the types of projects they participate in and how this in turn instills a strong sense of ownership of the projects.”**



## 4 Conclusion

Countryside Challenge successfully achieved the intended outcomes of increasing young people's skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver social action projects and having a positive impact on their local communities. Through its well-established network of Young Farmers' Clubs, Countryside Challenge was able to engage over double the original target number of young people directly in projects that benefitted the environment or the local community. This clearly demonstrates the valuable role that organisations such as NFYFC play in being able to effectively mobilise, reach and engage groups of young people from rural areas and plug the gaps left by more urban-centric national youth social action programmes.

The evaluation serves as a reminder that in designing these programmes it is important to give young people opportunities to self-determine the types of projects they participate in and how this in turn instills a strong sense of ownership of the projects. Of equal importance is for young people to have access to the right guidance and resources they require to successfully plan and manage high quality projects. It also illustrates how important being with their friends or peers is as a driver to engagement and shows that young people are also motivated by altruistic opportunities.

**“The evaluation has reaffirmed the important and valuable role that social action plays in providing young people with opportunities to learn new skills, take up leadership roles, challenge themselves and build confidence.”**

The evaluation has reaffirmed the important and valuable role that social action plays in providing young people with opportunities – outside of formal education – to learn new skills, take up leadership roles, challenge themselves and build confidence. The role of youth social action in strengthening communities and consequently building more resilient rural communities is also demonstrated. Overall the programme has demonstrated positive benefits for both young people and their communities through a national programme delivered by a well-established network in a timely, cost effective and efficient way. The evaluation provides valuable evidence to support the development and delivery of any future programmes and that NYFVC should seek opportunities to deliver youth social action activity across the network.

## Appendix 2:

### Young Farmers' Clubs that participated in the Countryside Challenge

Young Farmers' Club	County	Region
Abingdon YFC	Oxfordshire	South East
Ashford and District YFC	Kent	South East
Aspatria YFC	Cumbria	North
Beverley YFC	East Riding	North
Caunton YFC	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands
Chumleigh YFC	Devon	South West
Comberton YFC	Cambridgeshire	Eastern
Dorrington YFC	Shropshire	West Midlands
Elwick YFC	County Durham	North
Escrick YFC	Yorkshire	North
Essex FYFC	Essex	Eastern
Hampshire FYFC	Hampshire	South East
Hermitage and Hilfield YFC	Dorset	South West
Holderness Trio Cluster	East Riding	North
Kingsbrompton YFC	Somerset	South West
Launceston YFC	Cornwall	South West
Longridge YFC	Lancashire	North
March YFC	Cambridgeshire	Eastern
Market Bosworth YFC	Leicestershire	East Midlands
Market Weighton YFC	East Riding	North



Young Farmers' Club	County	Region
Much Wenlock YFC	Shropshire	West Midlands
NFYFC Youth Forum	England	England
Norfolk Countrysiders YFC	Norfolk	Eastern
Pailton YFC	Warwickshire	West Midlands
Patrington YFC	East Riding	North
Princes Risborough YFC	Buckinghamshire	South East
Royston & Buntingford YFC	Hertfordshire	Eastern
Sedgefield YFC	County Durham	North
Selby YFC	Yorkshire	North
Shropshire FYFC	Shropshire	West Midlands
Silsden with Skipton YFC	Yorkshire	North
Skirlaugh and District YFC, ER	East Riding	North
St Albans YFC	Hertfordshire	Eastern
St Columb YFC	Cornwall	South West
Suffolk FYFC	Suffolk	Eastern
Upton-upon-Severn YFC	Worcestershire	West Midlands
Warleggan YFC	Cornwall	South West
Wymeswold YFC	Leicestershire	East Midlands

## Appendix 2: Location of clubs









**Fun, Learning  
and Achievement**