

YOUNG WOMEN'S

5 Year Strategy: Review



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Foreward

The Fylde Coast Five-Year Young Women's Strategy continues to demonstrate what can be achieved when young women are valued, recognised as leaders, and placed at the centre of decision-making. Co-developed by young women and shaped by their lived experiences, the strategy has created a powerful platform for leadership, participation and influence, enabling young women to shape priorities, challenge inequalities and drive meaningful change across the Fylde Coast.

As we reach the halfway point of the strategy, this review provides an important opportunity to reflect on progress, celebrate achievements and ensure that our priorities continue to respond to the realities facing young women today. The issues affecting young women are constantly evolving, and our collective commitment to listening, learning and acting must evolve alongside them.

At UYA, we are proud that the leadership, innovation and impact generated through the Fylde Coast Strategy is now helping to shape the development of WISE (Women, Ireland, Scotland and England), a groundbreaking young women-led initiative spanning Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. WISE is creating a powerful Four Nations network that embeds youth voice at every level, ensuring young women are not only heard, but are recognised as experts in their own lives and influential partners in shaping policy, practice and decision-making. Through WISE, we are creating opportunities for young women to lead conversations, influence key audiences and contribute to solutions that address the issues affecting their communities. By connecting young women across the Four Nations, we are strengthening collective leadership, amplifying diverse voices and building a movement capable of driving lasting social change.

The Fylde Coast Strategy has demonstrated the transformative impact that occurs when young women's leadership is recognised, invested in and acted upon. As we look to the future, our ambition is not only to sustain this momentum locally but to amplify it nationally through WISE, creating a lasting legacy of young women's leadership, participation and influence across Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. Together, we are building a future where young women are shaping decisions, influencing systems and leading the change they want to see



CEO, United Youth Alliance

Summary

The Fylde Coast is all about creating amazing opportunities for young women, helping them move up in life and making it a fantastic place to live, work, learn, and get inspired.

The Five-Year Strategy has been co-developed by young women from the Fylde Coast to be used as a catalyst for change for young people.

The plan aligns with local and national initiatives to tackle issues young women face, encouraging collaboration on exciting projects and finding solutions to create real change.

Purpose of the Review

At the half way point of the 5 Year Strategy, the need to review and refresh the strategy was paramount to the success and longevity of the hard work undertaken by the young women. Whilst the initial framework for championing young women's voices and influencing local action helped to address and highlight many issues facing young women, a refresh is needed to ensure the priorities reflect the current evidence, lived experiences and the emerging challenges facing young women today.

The Review

In October 2025, approximately 50 stakeholders from across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre attended the United Youth Alliance 5-Year Strategy Review Event to reflect on progress against the strategy co-created by young women and to help shape future priorities.

The event provided an opportunity to review and reflect upon the five strategic themes: Happiness, Innovation, This Woman Can, Green, and Rainbow. Attendees were presented with local data and statistics highlighting the challenges faced by young women across the Fylde Coast, creating a shared understanding of the issues that continue to affect their lives.

Participants took part in a structured consultation exercise, with each table assigned a strategic theme to discuss, evaluate and identify opportunities for improvement. Groups rotated through all five themes, ensuring that every participant contributed to each area of the strategy. This approach generated a significant volume of qualitative feedback, providing valuable insight to inform the next phase of strategic planning.

Themes

Happiness

- Lack of after school activities
- Waiting time and access to relevant clinical and non-clinical health and well-being sessions to support pathways into healthy lifestyle
- Lack of access to public amenities and lack of safe lighting in our streets and at bus stops

Rainbow:

- Young women's voices not being heard
- Negative stories in the press/social media about being a young woman and living on the Fylde coast.
- Educating young men, healthy relationships/sexism/misogyny

This Woman Can:

- Lack of sporting opportunities/facilities, accessibility and affordability and variety in and out of school
- Lack of women only spaces
- Limited access for rural areas
- Lack of visibility of positive female TWC role models

Green:

- No Green zones / No clear cycle routes in Blackpool and Wyre
- Need to improve recycling particularly on the beach
- Improve environmental education in schools and communities

Innovation:

- Lack of opportunities for women to access work experience inc STEM
- Lack of innovation space/gaming tech/internet youth zones and lack of digital programmes/enrichment opportunities rather than one-off sessions for young women
- Low tech public transport e.g. No bus stop announcements

What is Going Well?

Stakeholder Engagement and Commitment:

The high attendance from partners, professionals, community members and young people to the review demonstrated the significant interest and commitment from a plethora of individuals from across the Fylde Coast.

Willingness to Listen:

Participants recognised increased opportunities for organisations and decision-makers to engage with and respond to the views, experiences, and priorities of young women.

Breaking Down Stereotypes:

There was positive recognition of the growing number of women pursuing careers and opportunities in traditionally male-dominated sectors, reflecting progress towards greater gender equality and aspiration.

Increased Participation in Sport & Physical Activity

Attendees highlighted a rise in the number of young women taking part in sports and physical activities, particularly with the rise of the Lionesses, contributing to improved health, confidence, and wellbeing.

Enhanced Platforms For Sharing Experiences

Initiatives such as podcasting were recognised as valuable tools for empowering young women to share their lived experiences, express their views, and influence conversations within their communities, as well as sharing dialogues with those leading on initiatives across the Fylde Coast.

‘What does the Fylde Coast do well?’



What the Evidence Tells Us...

Safety, Wellbeing and Mental Health

Participants highlighted the need for safer communities, especially for young women, including:

- Improved street lighting
- Greater access to mental health support
- Increased understanding of the challenges young women face.

There was also recognition of the importance of developing more allies and advocates who can support young women and help create safer, more inclusive environments.

Access to Opportunities and Participation

Attendees identified the need for more women-only spaces, particularly in rural and underserved areas, alongside increased access to volunteering opportunities and activities that enable young women to develop skills, confidence and community connections.

Education, Representation and Gender Equality

A recurring theme was the need to challenge gender stereotypes from an early age. This included greater representation of women in STEM, earlier introduction of STEM opportunities, more gender-neutral toys and learning environments, and increased education around the experiences and barriers faced by young women.

What the Evidence Tells Us...

Sport, Physical Activity and Inclusion

Participants called for more inclusive and accessible sporting opportunities, particularly for young women aged 16 and over. Feedback highlighted the need for more comfortable PE kit options and a move away from practices that reinforce gender stereotypes, such as separating sporting activities by gender where unnecessary.

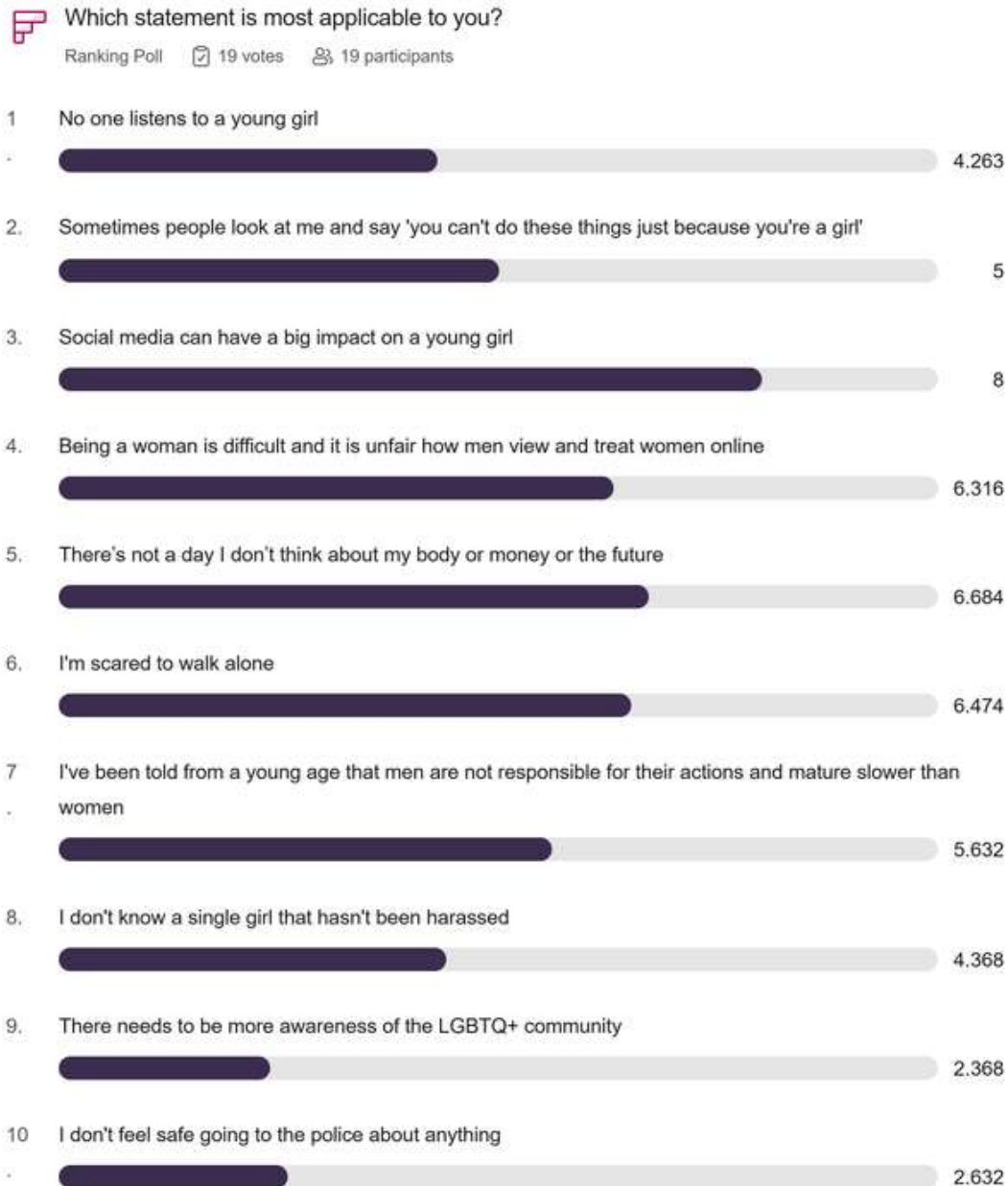
Environmental Sustainability and Community Action

There was strong support for expanding environmental initiatives through ongoing, meaningful activities rather than one-off events. Participants also expressed interest in promoting locally sourced food and increasing opportunities for young people to engage in sustainable community projects.

Collaboration, Youth Voice and Community Cohesion

Attendees emphasised the importance of stronger partnership working between organisations, greater attendance from frontline agencies, and more opportunities for professionals to listen directly to young people. Improving collaboration across communities and services was identified as key to creating lasting change for all young people across the Fylde Coast.

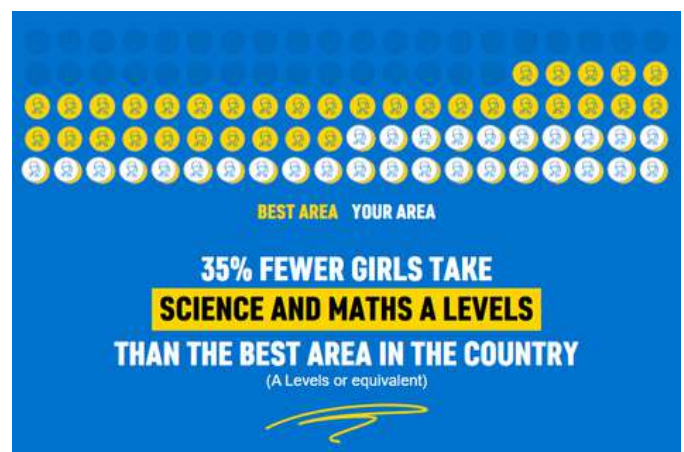
What the Evidence Tells Us...



Plan International & UYA

The UYA worked alongside Plan International to explore the ‘State of Girl’s Rights’ in the UK.

- The 2024 State of Girls' Rights Report by Plan International highlights ongoing challenges and progress in girls' rights globally, focusing on key areas such as education, health, and safety.
- For girls in places like Blackpool, the report reveals a mixed picture. While education is accessible, many girls face issues related to mental health due to socioeconomic pressures.
- Bullying and harassment continue to be significant concerns, impacting their sense of safety and wellbeing.
- The report emphasises the importance of community support and resources to empower girls, especially in areas with high deprivation.
- Overall, the report urges for sustained efforts to improve girls' rights, ensuring they have the opportunity to thrive in environments that promote equality and safety.



Recommendations

Strengthen Young Women's Voice and Influence

Young people should remain at the heart of strategy development, delivery and evaluation. The review demonstrated a growing willingness from organisations to listen, but participants highlighted the need for more meaningful engagement and greater attendance from frontline agencies.

Improve Safety, Wellbeing and Mental Health Support

Concerns around personal safety, body image, social media pressures and mental health remain significant. Survey responses highlighted that many participants regularly worry about their appearance, finances, future prospects and personal safety.

Expand Access to Opportunities for Young Women

Despite progress, barriers remain to employment, volunteering, leadership and enrichment opportunities, particularly in rural communities.



Recommendations

Champion Gender Equality in Education and Employment

The review recognised positive progress in women entering traditionally male-dominated sectors, but stakeholders identified the need for earlier intervention and greater visibility of role models.

Create More Inclusive Sport and Physical Activity Opportunities

While participation in sport among young women is increasing, access remains limited for older teenagers and some activities continue to reinforce traditional gender expectations.

Embed Environmental Sustainability Across the Strategy

Participants expressed a desire for environmental action to move beyond one-off events and become a consistent part of community life.





Pledges

Organisations were then asked

*‘What are you pledging or promising to, to make life better
for young women on the Fylde Coast?’*

CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
safe spaces
FOR YOUNG WOMEN

WILL COMMIT TO PROMOTING
STEM SUBJECTS
WOMEN INTO TECHNOLOGY
AND TO POSITIVELY CHANGE
THE CULTURE

championing the
**VOICES OF YOUNG
WOMEN AND GIRLS**
across the Fylde borough

making the fylde coast a
safer place
for young women

continue to
OPPOSE
misogynist outlooks

Conclusion

The review identified encouraging progress across several areas, including stronger engagement with young women's voices, increased participation in sport, growing representation of women in traditionally male-dominated fields, and the development of innovative platforms that enable young women to share their experiences and shape positive change.

Despite this, the review demonstrated that while important progress has been made, many of the challenges identified at the outset of the strategy remain relevant. The next phase should focus on deepening participation, improving safety and wellbeing, expanding opportunities, challenging inequality, and strengthening collaboration to ensure all young women across the Fylde Coast can thrive. By securing pledges from partners, alongside the young women at the event, it shows the ongoing dedication to foster a cohesive community whereby young women feel heard and valued.

As we approach 2027 and the end of the strategy

Gallery



YOUNG WOMEN'S

5 Year Strategy: Review

The logo graphic consists of a dark purple trapezoidal shape that tapers to the right. The letters 'uya' are written in white, lowercase, sans-serif font within this shape.

uya

united youth alliance