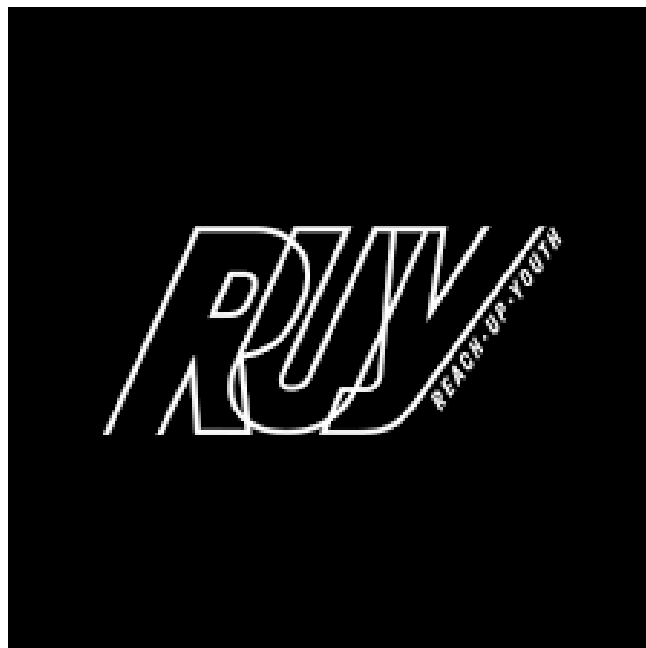




Research report by Reach Up Youth



The Research Team

Shaden Abdullah, Researcher

Shaden is 19 years old. She has been involved with RUY for 5 months. Her role in this project has been to support project development, designing focus group questions, leading a focus group, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. Shaden also led on all matters related to the ethics of the project. She enjoys spending time with her parents and siblings, and volunteering in her community in her spare time.

Shareen Baghdadi, Researcher

Shareen is 17 years old. She has been involved with RUY for 7 years. Her role in this project has been to support project development, designing focus group questions, recording the focus groups, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. She enjoys reading, shopping and watching anime in her spare time.

Mohamed Barre, Researcher

Mohamed is 20 years old. He has been involved with RUY for 7 years. His role in this project has been to support project development, designing focus group questions, leading a focus group, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. He enjoys reading books and enjoying himself in his spare time.

Steph Ejegi-Memeh, Research Consultant

Steph is 38 years old. Her role has involved providing research guidance throughout the project. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family, friends and on her own.

Ola Fagbohun, Project Consultant

Ola is in her 50s. Her role has been general project coordination. She has also contributed to project development, designing focus group questions, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. She enjoys reading and listening to all different types of music in her spare time

Umar Farooq, Researcher

Umar is 24 years old. He has been involved with RUY for 6 years. His role in this project has been to support project development, designing focus group questions, leading a focus group, decisions around outputs and output development. He is a League of Legends fan and enjoys coming to Reach Up Youth.

Yahya Hassan, Researcher

Yahya Hassan is 17 years old. He has been involved with RUY for 1 year. His role in this project has been to support project development and output development. He enjoys football, basketball and experiencing new things.

Zakaria Warsame, Researcher

Zak is 20 years old. He has been involved with RUY for 2 years. His role in this project has been to support project development, designing focus group questions, leading a focus group, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. He enjoys going to university and watching shows on the TED site in his spare time.

Tyrone Yeboah, Reach Up Youth ambassador and leader for Verdon Link Up (a Reach Up Youth initiative)

Tyrone is 24 years old. He has been involved with RUY for 7 years. His role in the project has been general project coordination. He has also contributed to project development, designing focus group questions, analysing the focus group data, decisions around outputs and output development. He loves football, video games and spending time with his family.

Photos: The research team



Background

The South Yorkshire Neighbourhoods and Communities ([SY-NC](#)) project launched in 2023. It takes a community-focused approach, funding activities and supporting Area Hubs in three Sheffield communities to reduce exploitation and build stronger connections between and within communities.

The three community areas and SY-NC Area Hubs are:

- Darnall & Tinsley - Darnall Wellbeing & Partners
- Manor & Arbourthorne - Manor & Castle Development Trust
- Burngreave & Firth Park - Reach Up Youth

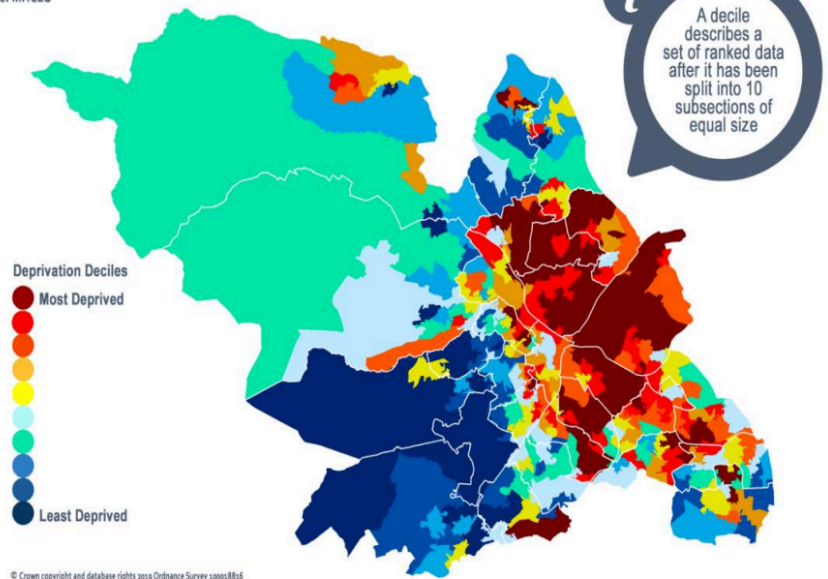
This report is based on the experiences of youths attending:

- Burngreave & Firth Park - Reach Up Youth.

Burngreave & Firth Park

Burngreave & Firth Park are located in the North East of Sheffield. They are two of the most deprived wards in the city. Their non-white populations are 64.3% and 32.3%, respectively. See [Local Insight England Summary Report \(Sheffield City Council\)](#) for more information

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 in Sheffield LSOAs
Source: MHCLG



Reach Up Youth

Reach Up Youth is a community organisation established by Safiya Saeed in the Burngreave area in 2013. They build bridges between the community, residents, youth, and services. They engage at-risk young people from the local area in sport, physical activity, day trips and skill building sessions, reducing the risk of them becoming involved in crime.

The Reach Up Youth Research project

The Reach Up Youth research project was developed to address three key outcomes from the SY-NC project. These were to:

- engage young people and community members in the co-production of meaningful and relevant projects and activities
- carry out participatory action research to evaluate and measure the impact of activities
- Provide training and development to the community-based workforce and young people involved in the project

Research training programme

Three one hour training sessions were held over a period of six weeks (see Appendix 1 for Training and Research design session outlines). Seven young people from RUY took part in the training and research design process. The training involved Steph bringing research examples for the group to discuss. The research design process involved discussion and collaborative decision making around what the aim of our project was, which research methods we would use to achieve these aims and how we wanted to present our work at the end.

Aim of the RUY research project

The following aims were developed through discussion

- To explore the impact of RUY on young people attending activities
- To evaluate the effectiveness of RUY's activities, identifying successes and areas for improvement

Research methodology

This community-based participatory research (CBPR) project (Jacquez et al., 2013) prioritised youth leadership and action. CBPR emphasizes collaborative partnerships between community members and researchers to address locally relevant issues, leveraging the unique knowledge and skills of all participants to develop solutions. Building on this foundation, we aimed to empower the young people involved in this project by ensuring they led the research process and that the project itself generated tangible benefits for them throughout their involvement (Ejegi-Memeh et al., 2025).

Research methods

We discussed how we wanted to capture information about RUY, and the ethical implications around our proposed methods. Our discussions included who we wanted to speak to, what we wanted to ask them, and how we wanted to capture the information.

Who we wanted to speak to (or “Sample”)

When discussing who we wanted to speak to, ideas included the people distributing the funding (e.g Lloyd Samuels, Rob Furniss), people who ran the activities (e.g. Tyrone Yeboah, Safiya Saeed), young people involved in the activities, and people not involved in the activities but who have seen the impacts (e.g parents and teachers). We decided that it was key to capture information from people involved in the activities as they would likely have the most to say about what was working well and what could be done better at RUY.

How we wanted to collect information (or “Data collection”)

We discussed using qualitative methods (interviews/focus groups), quantitative methods (questionnaires) or a mix of both. Through discussion we reached a consensus that young people may be more honest and open about their experiences of the SY-NC project if we used individual interviews or focus groups. We decided a group discussion on a Wednesday evening (the usual day when young people attended RUY) would work well. Group discussions were chosen over individual interviews as the young people felt their peers would enjoy the experience more and feel better able to share experiences in a group.

What did we want to ask (or “Data collection tools”)

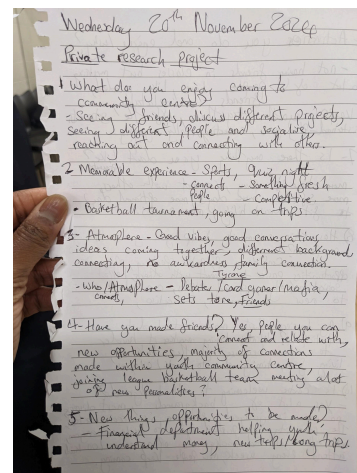
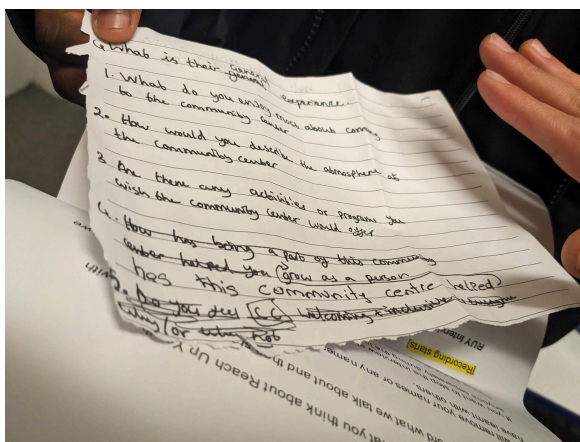
The researchers felt comfortable having group research discussions with their peers from RUY. The group decided that Mohamed and Umar would be the two focus group facilitators. Shareen was responsible for recording the focus group. Shaden was responsible for ethics. Zak was in charge of taking notes.

Before the focus group took place, we brainstormed questions together and practiced facilitating the focus group. However, it was decided that the focus group facilitators should be able to ask questions flexibly during the focus group and that they did not need to stick to the questions we had brainstormed.

Questions we asked young people from RUY about their experiences of RUY included.

- What does RUY do?
- How has RUY benefited you?
- What have you learnt?
- How has it changed you?
- Can you think of any memorable moments?
- What could be done better?

Additional questions and prompts were added by Umar and Mohamed on the day and Zak took notes during the session (see *Photos: Umar's questions and Zak's notes*).



Who did we collect information from (or “Sample”)?

Ten young people from Reach Up Youth attended the focus group. There were eight young men and two young women. All had prior involvement in Reach Up Youth activities. The focus group was recorded and lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Ethics

Ethics were discussed throughout the research training through case studies, reading and discussing existing ethics documents and designing our ethics processes together.

We discussed the importance of protecting research participants and the information they share. We also discussed informed consent.

Specific concerns discussed were around the young people’s existing knowledge of each other and maintaining professional boundaries around the research process.

We discussed the importance of balancing 'long and boring' information sheets with ensuring that research participants knew what they were consenting to. We designed our Information Sheet and consent form accordingly. See 'Information Sheet and consent form' in Appendix 2.

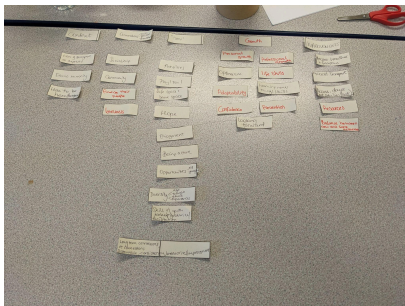
Shaden explained the project to participants. Then all focus group participants read the information sheet and signed the consent form before taking part.

Analysis

Two research analysis meetings took place. All researchers were invited to take part in a 3 hour initial research analysis session at Reach Up Youth.

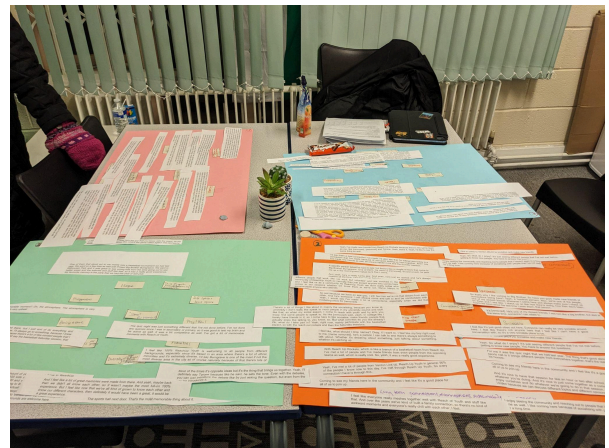
The first session (3 hours) involved the following stages:

- each researcher reading through the transcripts individually and making notes in the margins
- then discussing our thoughts with each other and writing down key words and phrases
- we then cut out the key words and phrases and grouped them into similar themes



The second session (1 hour) involved:

- sharing our themes from the first session with other researchers
- reordering the words and phrases around the themes based on the feedback from the other researchers
- Discussing/debating/changing theme names



Photos: Various stages of analysis

What did young people think about Reach Up Youth? (or “Findings”)

We developed four themes in relation to our research which aimed to explore the impacts of RUY and which activities undertaken by RUY have worked well and what could have been done better. The four themes were Reach Up Youth moments; growth; connections and improvements

Theme: Reach Up Youth moments

People discussed the range of activities that were done at RUY. This included quiz nights, parties, basketball, debates, training sessions and days out in different areas of Sheffield and sometimes the UK.

“The quiz night was just something different that I've not done before. I've not done any quizzes since I was in secondary or primary, so it was good to test my brain and be active as well.”

“One of them [the activities] that stood out to me mainly was a basketball tournament we had last year. We went on a few trips as well with Project Big Brother Burngreave.”

While activities were important, socialising with a large and diverse group of people was considered a key benefit of attending RUY.

“...there's an average of like around 100 kids a week that associate ourselves with ReachUp Youth [...] so there's a lot of kids that actually come and I feel like out of that many people there must be at least one or two people that you can relate to so that's why I feel like it's very diverse. When I come into Verdon Link-Up I see many new people showing that people from different backgrounds are welcome here.”

The diversity of Burngreave was also seen as a strength of RUY and the reason why there were so many people invested in RUY as a locally led initiative.

“I'd say Burngreave is one of the most if not the most diverse area in the city so of course naturally because of that there's lots of different people that work, volunteer and are involved in the community of RUY so naturally they just accept anyone who comes here”

As well as the location and having local people involved, part of making the space welcoming was dependent on the skill of the youth workers. The role of the youth workers in making it a safe and nurturing space was mentioned by several participants.

“I would say Tyrone first [makes attending RUY enjoyable] because he's the guy that you know, sets the mood.”

RUY's “fun” and engaging activities, diverse community, local grounding, and skillful youth workers provided young people with a wealth of positive and memorable experiences.

Photo: Tyrone leading a basketball session at RUY



Theme: Growth

Some people in the focus group had been attending RUY for many years and shared experiences of how attending had led to personal growth and improved communication skills.

“I started RUY a long time ago when I was a little kid. I was 11 years old when I started RUY and I'm 19 now. I wasn't a very outgoing kid and never used to go outside and play, I used to stay at home and watch Disney, so I never used to get to speak to any people and my confidence was very low. When I started RUY, it helped me with my confidence and pushed me to do a lot of public speaking in front of people and conferences and stuff like that. Acting opportunities, mock job interviews and stuff like that so I've gotten a lot of confidence from them.”

“I've been here for five years now and I think you can kind of see how it's helped me to become more confident and get to meet so many new people and get more opportunities. I would say that it's helped my confidence and it's helped me reach similar goals that I don't think I would have achieved if I didn't attend and I feel like the people here are very helpful and understanding.”

Both of these quotes provide examples of how creating an environment that young people felt comfortable and supported over a long period of time led to growth in confidence and self-belief. Coupled with formative activities, such as mock job interviews and debates, this led to learning new skills and professional growth too.

RUY was a space for socialising for some people that didn't feel they fit in in other social contexts. For example, one person discussed how at university, they did not have many friends and that RUY provided opportunities to socialise that they would not otherwise have had.

“At university I don't really like speak to much people in my university course so for my social aspect, I come to RUY”

RUY also improved young people's mental health and adaptability, potentially improving their ability to confidently navigate contexts outside of RUY and their local area, a lifelong skill.

“I had social anxiety but now that I've been doing this [coming to RUY] for over a year, I feel like it's definitely turned down a bit and I can go in public and just talk to people if I want to. I've gained a lot of skills in lots of different aspects. Even just the fact that now I know if I step into an environment where I don't know what's going on, I'm confident I can learn and basically, what's the word? Adapt”

Theme: Connections

The relationships formed between those who attended RUY were strong, as demonstrated in the quotes below. This atmosphere formed through frequent activities (see RUY moments) and caring leadership

“I feel like everyone really meshes together well with Reach Up Youth and stuff like that. And over the years we've kind of built a family connection, so there's no kind of awkward moments and everyone's really chill with each other, I feel”

“...there's lots of different people that work, like not work but volunteer and are involved in the community of ReachUp Youth so naturally they just accept anyone who comes here and I feel like us as a community as ReachUp Youth we don't really judge who comes to our sessions whether we know them or we're not. We're happy to accommodate anyone who attends.”

This non-judgemental and accommodating atmosphere was also created by the RUY leadership team and volunteers. When speaking about the youth workers and volunteers, they used phrases like “sets the tone” and “amazing ideas” underscoring the crucial role of these individuals in creating this positive environment..

Young people were very clear that space to socialise and do physical activities with each other in a way that felt physically, psychologically and emotionally safe was key to ensuring that good social connections could be made.

“I feel like it's just good vibes out here. Everyone can really be very sociable around here. I feel like there's not anyone here that I feel like I can't have a good conversation with, so it's a very sociable place to be.”

These relationships were characterised by mutual care.

“One of my closest friends [is here] whenever I come here and always make sure I check up on them. I check up on like how they're doing, how their day's been, how's life been since the last time I seen them”

“He's [fellow RUY attendee] one of my closest friends. I see him like a big brother, but also at the same time, someone I can relate to.”

A final important point was that RUY provided a physical space of safety potentially preventing exposure to crime.

“I feel like it brings all the boys in the community together and it keeps them off the streets, so not only does it allow us to have fun, but also prevents us from leading down a dangerous path.”

Theme: Improvements

Young people shared areas that they thought could build on the existing RUY provision. Key suggestions are listed below.

- An increase in hours that RUY was open

“We need to have more hours in the day and maybe get more days to come here to socialise.”

“[For one particular activity] I feel like there should be multiple days, you know, optional days, because I feel like not everybody can do every Sunday.”

- A larger physical space

“Sometimes the space isn't big enough [for the activities]. It's not very easy to get a bigger space, there's not like an extra hall attached”

- Activities that take place further afield, that are more varied and for longer duration e.g weekends away, Alton Towers

“A couple of years ago we went on a canoeing adventure, a canoeing trip, and it was very, very interesting. I think that we should bring that back.”

- More activities aimed at life skills and professional skills

“...definitely something to do with employment, finances, education, all those aspects.”

Challenges around accessing the evening sessions when it is dark and transport may be an issue were also raised.

Conclusion

Our research aimed to explore the impact of RUY on young people attending activities and to evaluate the effectiveness of RUY's activities, identifying successes and areas for improvement. Below, we present four key takeaways and discuss their implications for RUY, other youth clubs, funders, and supporters of youth services.

Rather than focusing on what communities lack, we must recognize their inherent strengths. Our research participants identified a range of assets within RUY and the surrounding area, including the power of diversity, the importance of peer support and mentoring, and the ability to proactively identify and build solutions. **RUY, as a community-imagined and developed initiative, stands as a powerful and emancipatory example of community empowerment. Support for these initiatives, whether from neighbours, organisations, or statutory services, is crucial for their continued success.**

Research shows the importance of youth clubs as physical spaces where young people can come together to experience safety and belonging (Eriksen et al., 2020). **Places like RUY make young people feel valued, cared for and loved. This can reduce social isolation, which is linked to gang involvement (Public Health England, 2015). Social support and confidence building are crucial for protecting young people from exploitation.**

Despite the well established need for youth clubs and youth services more broadly, a recent report by the YMCA showed that spending on youth services by councils in England has dropped by 73% over the past 14 years (YMCA, 2025). **There is a need to increase funding into youth clubs and services across the UK, particularly in financially deprived areas where youths may be more vulnerable to exploitation.**

Our research participants reported that RUY built their confidence, professional skills, and social connections over several years. This long-term engagement highlights the importance of sustained support for organisations like RUY. Furthermore, participants also identified the need for increased operating hours and expanded space, underscoring the demand for RUY's services. Multi-year funding is crucial for ensuring the long-term sustainability of these vital youth programs. Short-term initiatives that abruptly end due to funding shortfalls can be detrimental to young people, creating gaps in social provision. **The answer is sustainable funding that empowers locally-based youth organisations to develop comprehensive, dependable activities that young people can rely on year after year (Institute for Voluntary Action Research, 2024).**

How we applied the “Working Together in Research” Guiding Principles

In this section we provide examples of how the seven principles from the [Working Together in Research Guiding Principles](#) document were applied throughout the development and delivery of the Reach Up Youth Research training and evaluation project. The Working Together in Research programme began in October 2023 and aimed to develop a shared understanding of the barriers to research inclusion and participation and collectively identifying solutions and actions to overcome these.

Guiding principle 1: Be community-centred

Through Reach Up Youth Research training and evaluation project, a group of young people attending Reach Up Youth have co-produced a meaningful and relevant project. The training, project planning, data collection and analysis have ensured development of the young people’s research capacity. Moreover, data collected from and by young people can be utilised by other community organisations and groups, and statutory services, to create targeted support and vital services for young people and families in the community.

Tyrone Yeboah, Reach Up Youth ambassador and leader for Verdon Link Up, has been visiting, volunteering and working at RUY for seven years. He is a trusted and central member of the RUY team. He was key to ensuring that the young people were engaged throughout the research process. Young people’s engagement was crucial to ensuring that community issues that were important to them were brought to light. If they did not feel safe, they may not have felt able to share their experiences, concerns and joys within the SYNC research project.

The research element of this project began with Ola Fagbohun, project consultant, undertaking a series of informal consultations with young people from June - September 2024. These sessions established the young people’s understanding and feelings around ‘research’, ‘community’ and ‘community research’. These early consultation activities involved open discussions and post-its, and fed into the research training programme that was subsequently developed. It also permitted an opportunity for young people to test the waters to decide whether they wanted to be involved in the project or not. Seven young people showed interest in being involved in the SY-NC research project.

Guiding Principle 2: Be respectful and practice cultural humility

Steph Ejegi-Memeh, research consultant, met the young people involved in this project in September 2024. Steph and Ola do not live in Burngreave and are not Muslim. The majority of the young people lived locally and were Muslims. Steph and Ola are also not young. Coming from a different geographical, faith and generational background meant that consideration of how to work with the young people was

important. The research training was developed for this specific cohort of young people. Each context is different and if this project were developed and delivered with a different group of young people, decisions made may have been different.

We attempted to practice general humility, cultural included. For example, all researchers involved were studying, working or training. RUY is also a healing space where young people came to relax and socialise. It was important that the research training did not encroach upon this. Given their other responsibilities, while Steph planned the research training as a six hour course delivered in two hour sessions over a period of one month, one hour every two weeks suited them better. All too often research training and delivery that endeavours to include community members, forces participants to adapt to a rigorous schedule. This often leads to disengagement with the research process. Working according to their timetable and respecting their needs meant that the young people were more likely to engage with the research training process.

Output development took place over Ramadan. We decided to stop meeting in person and not to plan any events until after Eid. We communicated via Whats app instead.

Guiding Principle 6: Make research processes accessible, acceptable, and available

Before meeting the young people, Steph outlined four research training sessions. These were:

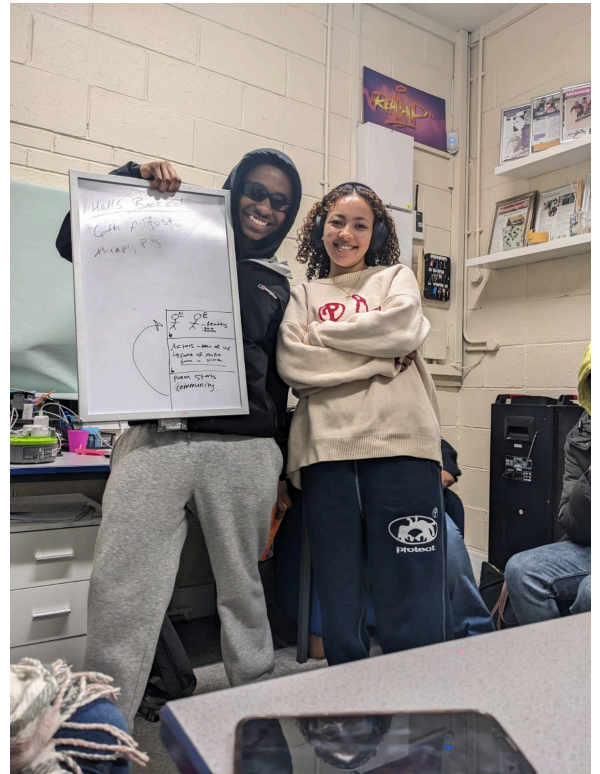
- How can research respond to what communities need?
- What do we want to know and why?
- Research practice session
- Finalising the research plan

She sought approval from Lloyd Samuels and Rob Furniss (SY-NC project coordinators/administrators) . She was explicit that these were subject to change and that every step of the research process would be subject to the young people's approval. The reasons for working in this flexible and emergent way were two-fold.

Steph has significant experience of Community Based Participatory Research within academic settings. However, it is rare that communities actually *lead* research agendas and project decision-making, especially in projects involving young people (Aresi et al., 2023). This was an opportunity to pilot a novel approach. The second, more important reason was to empower young people to tell their own stories through research, and to make their own choices and decisions. All too often researchers speak for research participants rather than allowing them to tell their own stories in their own ways.

However, it is important to note that this process was iterative and we didn't always get it right the first time. Steph turned up in the first week with a Powerpoint presentation and worksheets. The Powerpoint did not work well for the young people. The worksheets did. We continued using worksheets rather than Powerpoint.

Another example lies in that originally the plan was for each young person to develop an individual report. Finally, we decided that one collaborative research would be developed that Steph would lead on writing with input from Ola and the young people, throughout. This was because the focus was on young people building research capacity and skills in collaborative working practices. It also meant that the researchers could focus on developing more creative outputs in 'their own voices'. The idea for 'speaking the data' was inspired by Dr Martin Glynn (2019). Slam poetry, based on the research findings, was developed and performed at the end of the project. Ola, Shareen and Yahya led on creative direction. *Photo: Yahya poses with a mind map for the creative direction of the poetry performance.*



Many conversations were had around what issues we wanted to explore, what research methods we would use, what it was important to include in the ethics form, who we wanted to collect information from, and how we wanted to present the information to others. Young people were not only meaningfully involved in the research design and delivery, but actually led on all decisions.

All researchers were paid for their time.

Guiding Principle 3: Recognise strengths and opportunities for mutual benefit

Through the consultation activities and research training, we found that the young people had many strengths. A worksheet was designed with all activities listed and in session 3, we discussed who wanted to be involved with which activities (see below).

Planning our first focus group

When will it take place? _____

Where will it take place? _____

Who will invite people to the focus group? _____

Who will facilitate (asking most of the questions)? _____

Who will co-facilitate (asking questions and prompts)? _____

Who will support (if anyone gets upset)? _____

Who is responsible for ethics?

Who will take notes? _____

Who is responsible for recording the sessions and uploading to our shared folder? _____

Shaden had an aptitude for attention to detail and engaged well with the ethics session, so we decided she would be responsible for ethical approval.

Mohamed and Umar were confident and articulate so we decided they would be focus group facilitators. As group leader, Tyrone was nominated as the right person to be available in case anyone got upset. Zak took notes. He was meticulous with note taking throughout the research training process so we decided this would be a good role for him. Shareen wanted to be involved and was a key member of the research team. However, she acknowledged that her college work was a significant responsibility. Therefore, she was responsible for recording the focus groups.

Ola supported the creative output development. Yahya and Shareen directed the performance. Shaden and Shareen wrote poetry for the poetry performance. Tyrone, Umar, Mohamed, Shaden and Yahya took on central roles in the performance. Each chose a role that they were comfortable with.

Shaden has added research to her LinkedIn profile, strengthening her CV and professional prospects.

Guiding Principle 4: Build lasting partnerships

Shaden was new to the RUY. Through the research training project she has become familiarised with the other young people attending RUY on a regular basis.

Through making the research training a 'relationship-based research activity', according to the Guiding Principles, this partnership is more likely to endure through challenges and evolve over time. Although it is important to note that there were already extensive and long-lasting relationships between young people and community workers at RUY.

Guiding Principle 5: Be aware of and anticipate the difference in each other's calendars

See '**Guiding Principle 2 Be respectful and practice cultural humility**' for an explanation of how we worked the research training around what worked for young people and their calendars

Guiding Principle 7: Protect communities from harm

In research training sessions, ethics case studies were used to explore potential for causing each other and our participants harm. Given that young people would be interviewing their friends, it was important to ensure that they had a shared and clear understanding of ethical principles around confidentiality and protection from harm.

We also explored previous examples of research that adopted poor research principles.

As a group, we discussed examples of ethics forms from previous and existing projects and then developed appropriate ethics forms for our project based on [Social Research Association Research Ethics Guidance](#).

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Appendix 1: Training session outline

Session 1: How can research respond to what communities need?

- Intros
- Plan for the project from now until the end
- They give me an update and what they have been up to with Ola
- Academic research/community research (differences – Steph to present examples)
- What is the end point? (Outputs discussion)
- Background to SY-NC project
- Start putting aims and questions together
- End with 'Are we missing anything' discussion? Blindspots e.g accessibility

Session 2: What do we want to know and why?

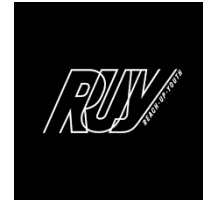
- Steph/Ola to share summary of last session/plan so far with our research project
- Planning who we are going to speak to
- How do we want to capture information
- How do we want to use/analyse the data
- Ethics
- End with 'Are we missing anything' discussion? Blindspots e.g accessibility

Session 3: Research practice session

- Steph/Ola to share a summary of last session/final research proposal (including any ethics forms)
- Practicing interview/focus groups
- Discussing/practicing data usage/analysis (Steph to bring examples; Draw on Martin's data verbalization book; Steph's recent research outputs; DeepEnd Network work etc.)
- Focus group planning: Identifying who wants to do what
- End with 'Are we missing anything' discussion? Blindspots e.g accessibility

Appendix 2 Information Sheet and Consent form

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM



The purpose of this document is to inform you of the research we are undertaking as part of the Sheffield Youth Neighbourhood and Communities (SY-NC) project and how your contribution will fit into this project. Please read carefully and direct any questions to Steph Ejegi-Memeh (steph.ejegi@gmail.com).

1. What is this research about?

In 2023 SY-NC funded activities which aimed to reduce exploitation and brought communities together. The SY-NC project aimed to develop skills and capacity through supporting Area Hubs in key areas of Sheffield. Reach Up Youth is one of the three Area Hubs funded by the SY-NC project.

The aim of this research project is to evaluate and measure the impact of the SY-NC project funding in Reach Up Youth (RUY). We want to hear about the experiences of young people involved in RUY and their parents.

2. What happens if I take part in this research?

You have been invited to a focus group for this project as you have been identified as someone with experience of activities that Reach Up Youth deliver. Questions will focus on your experience of RUY activities, whether they have been beneficial to you in any way and what could have been done better. The findings of these focus groups will inform a publicly available report and other outputs to improve services delivered for and by Youth Clubs and to provide recommendations for funders. Focus groups will take up to 60 minutes, be conducted online or in person as agreed in advance and will be recorded for transcription purposes. Your participation will be anonymous.

3. Do I have to take part in this research, and can I change my mind?

Your participation in this research is wholly voluntary. If you choose to take part, you can withdraw your participation any time before 1st March 2025. If you decide that you would prefer we do not use anything you said in our research then you can contact us by email (steph.ejegi@gmail.com) and we will remove your data from the project report.

4. Are there any costs/risks to taking part in this research?

Interviews will occur either online or in person at the discretion of the researcher and interviewee, as mutually agreed. Interviews will take place at a time agreeable to both the participant and the researcher, led by the participants' preferences and availability. Our methodology poses no further risk to participants. If you are uncomfortable with anything before, during or after the interview, please contact Steph.

We hope that this will be an enjoyable research project to be involved in. It is an opportunity to share your experiences and help us think about what RUY does well and how services and funding structures can be improved. The researchers will make the interviews as comfortable and welcoming as possible, and you only need to share as much as you feel happy to share. The interviewers are trained in facilitating research sensitively to protect participants from harm or discomfort.

5. What happens to my information?

What we discuss at the interview and focus groups will be used to inform the development of this research. What you say during the interview or focus group will be audio recorded, transcribed, and stored on a secure IT system. Information you share will be kept anonymous, which will be discussed and agreed before your interview commences. If you decide to withdraw from the project during or after the interview, we will remove your data. Our purposes for collecting your personal information are:

- to assist with research
- to share findings from research with you, if you want us to do this
- to maintain a record that you have consented to this research

The legal basis we rely on for processing your personal data is your explicit consent. We will keep your name, audio recording, contact details (if you give us them) and consent form on our records until the end of the project (1st May 2025) when we will securely destroy them, unless you have told us that you want to be sent information about our research, in which case we will keep any relevant data for two years before either asking you if you want to renew your consent, or destroying the data.

6. Informed consent to participate in research

Please tick if you agree:

- I have read the information sheet, or it was read to me, and I understand the contents
- I voluntarily agree to participate in the study
- I wish to remain anonymous
- I agree that the interview can be recorded
- I understand that any data will be stored securely
- I understand that I can withdraw my consent up until 1st March 2025
- I would like to be kept up to date on the progress of this report, and am willing to be contacted for information on developments, or invitations to events and further opportunities related to this work

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Email address: _____



AI generated image

This project was completed as part of the South Yorkshire Neighbourhoods and Communities (SY-NC) project. For more information contact Lloyd Samuels, Head of the SYNC Programme at l.samuels@vas.org.uk.

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