



STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-24



onsideyouthzones.org

INTRODUCTION

OnSide is a growing national youth charity which believes in providing all young people with the opportunity to shine.

The charity establishes and supports Youth Zones - local youth charities that change thousands of young lives for the better, supporting them to become happier, healthier more aspirational young adults with more to offer themselves, their family and their community.

OnSide leads a growing network of Youth Zones currently providing 50,000 young people in some of our most disadvantaged communities with the support, opportunities, connections and experiences they deserve to help them thrive.

CONTEXT

OnSide's national profile has evolved significantly over the last three years. The successful London expansion means we now have national charity status and are seen as one of the largest organisations delivering open access, universal youth work to young people in their leisure time, especially those from deprived communities. Our reputation has only been enhanced by the response of the whole Network to the challenges posed by Covid-19, and the way we continue to do everything possible to support young people through these desperately tough times.

Covid, and the combined impact of isolation and school closures, has seen young people's circumstances worsen. Many of the gains made to close the learning gap in recent years were lost during the pandemic and there is growing inequality of education. Combine this with the economic impact of Covid, the loss of jobs at entry level and in sectors that employ a high number of young people, and the picture is very bleak indeed.

There has never been a more critical time for youth provision to be championed and invested in, for the proven OnSide Youth Zone model to be employed to support thousands more young people in their communities nationwide, and for the existing Youth Zones to grow and develop their programmes.

The formal creation of the OnSide Network brings a renewed shared purpose and opportunity to maximise the benefits of a federated group with a strong identity. Covid has also driven greater collaboration across the Network. By removing the barrier of distance, we have used technology to create innovative ways of working and sharing knowledge as a Network to meet the shared challenges we have faced. We now have the

opportunity to strengthen our focus on the existing Youth Zones, and to work with them to enhance their sustainability, broaden and strengthen their income generation, and to have an ever-greater impact on the lives of young people.

In line with our aspiration for the highest standards of delivery and sustainability in each Youth Zone, OnSide's level of support to both new and existing Youth Zones has been enhanced and refined in recent years. Our overall goal is to create and support a network of strong, successful youth charities that are much loved fixtures of their communities for generations to come, following in the footsteps of the original club, Bolton Lads and Girls Club, and that thrive through being part of the OnSide Network. This has inevitably increased OnSide's costs as we proactively invest in skilled experts in areas such as safeguarding and fundraising to support high standards right across the Network.

The OnSide funding model is moving to a situation where the fees we charge on new Youth Zone projects are fully recovered, so that our charitable fundraising income requirement will focus on the development and support of the open Network of existing Youth Zones. We expect this shift to be fully in place by the end of the period of this strategic plan.



OUR VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND SHARED STANDARDS

Through this work, and working with the OnSide Network of Youth Zones, we have also refined our vision, mission, values and shared standards for the Network.

Our Network Vision

Every young person across the UK is happy, healthy and able to thrive.

Our Network Mission

To empower young people to lead positive, fulfilling lives by providing access to incredible spaces and excellent youth work, delivered by outstanding people, where they are needed the most.

Our Network Values

Young People First, Ambitious, Excellence, Collaborative and Respect

Our Network Shared Standards

OnSide and the growing network of Youth Zones seek jointly to:

- Deliver excellent youth work and activities.
- Deliver from incredible spaces that inspire young people.
- Draw on our unique private sector input and a diverse range of funding to provide opportunities and sustain delivery for the long term.
- Continually improve and innovate to meet young people's evolving needs.
- Be ambitious in widening and broadening young people's access to excellent youth work.
- Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what we do; for young people, employees and local communities.
- Champion the power of young people and youth work.
- Work with and learn from the strengths within the Network and the wider sector.

One of our Strategic Goals is to take these Network Values and Shared Standards and fully embed them within how everyone at OnSide works, so they become at the heart of everything we do.

An emphasis on 'excellent youth work' is a key theme that runs throughout this strategy and is a crucial shared standard we commit to.

Our commitment to Excellent Youth Work within Youth Zones

Like all good youth work, our approach is based on young people voluntarily developing relationships with caring adults that help them to develop personally and socially as they transition to adulthood, to pursue their talents with confidence, and to engage in their community, society and the wider world.

In Youth Zones, the inclusive, exciting and high-quality activities and facilities are used as tools to attract large numbers of young people from the widest possible range of backgrounds, including the most vulnerable. Through the opportunities the incredible facilities, our supportive teams, our links with local businesses, and our dedicated local partners facilitate, we work to deliver excellent youth provision underpinned by excellent youth work - something we think all young people deserve.



WHAT ARE OUR STRATEGIC GOALS?

We have set the following Strategic Goals as our focus over the next three years, in order to make the best possible progress against our Vision, Mission, Values and Shared Standards:

Goal 1. To refine our Youth Zone model and offer while remaining focused on our core universal youth work offer by:

- a. Opening Youth Zones with the best possible offer.
- b. Strengthening new Youth Zones' sustainability.
- c. Ensuring new Youth Zones are running smoothly after opening.

Goal 2. Strengthen the OnSide Network by:

- a. Expanding the Talent Academy and OnSide shared services to support the delivery of excellent youth work across our growing network of Youth Zones.
- b. Working with the Network to develop a high performance environment and evolving our relationship so OnSide plays a 'Coaching' role to the Youth Zones.
- c. Working with the Youth Zones to enhance and strengthen the culture of youth participation across our Network.

Goal 3. Grow the OnSide Network by:

Continuing to target opening four further Youth Zones a year, given the life-changing impact each new Youth Zones has on thousands more young people, and also, given the positive impact opening new Youth Zones has on delivery quality across the Network.

Goal 4. Strengthen OnSide's financial sustainability by:

- a. Launching an ambitious £100m endowment campaign.
- b. Expanding Major Donor funding to OnSide.

Goal 5. Strengthen OnSide's partnerships and external profile by:

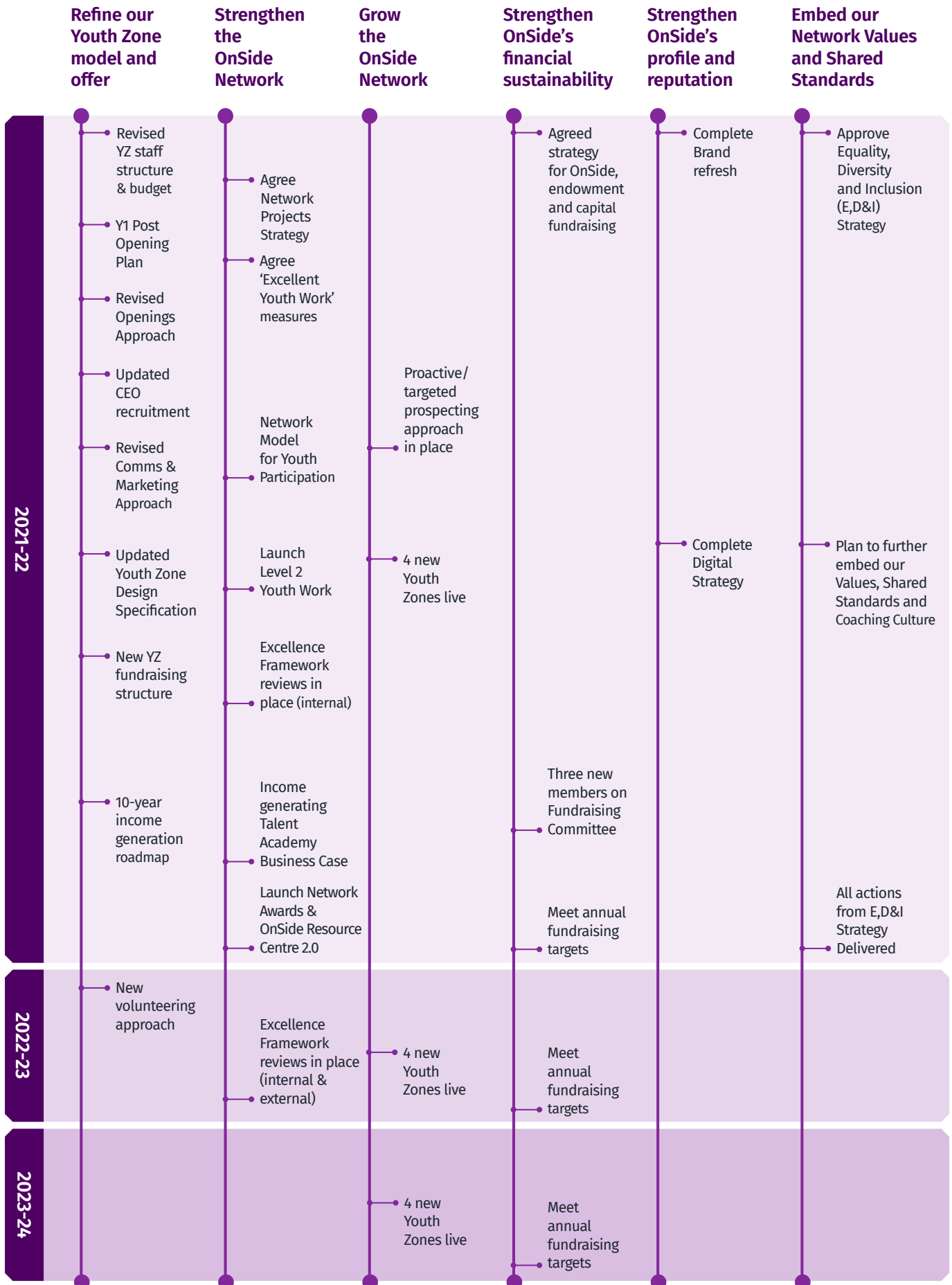
Developing our partnerships to expand opportunities and support for young people, strengthen our Network and enhance our profile and reputation with key audiences.

Goal 6. Embed our Network Values and Shared Standards by:

Continuing to review how we measure up to our Network Values and Shared Standards, and make improvements in areas in which we can do better.



HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC GOALS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?





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OnSide
Here for young people



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