

**GROWING THE  
ON-SIDE MOVEMENT  
ON STRONG  
FOUNDATIONS**

OnSide's 2024–27 Strategy Summary



# INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Potential is everywhere. But not everyone has the opportunity to explore it. At OnSide, we're determined to make sure that all young people have the chance to shine and discover their passion and purpose.**

We fund, build, launch, and support a Network of state-of-the-art, multimillion-pound Youth Zones in the UK's most disadvantaged areas. These incredible spaces are filled with energy, inspiration, and highly skilled youth workers who believe in young people.

This is properly funded youth provision: a partnership between young people, their communities, councils, businesses, and charitable leaders. Together, we believe that all young people need is a chance to discover what they've got and where it could take them.

Over the last 15 years, since OnSide was first established, we have sought to deliver our Mission by growing and supporting a Network of 14 Youth Zones, which this year is expected to collectively invest £30m in young people.

The OnSide Network has become a national movement, supporting over 55,000 young people to flourish in the last year alone. We are proud of our record, but our job has only just begun, with only 9% of young people accessing youth centres, mainly as there are too few of them across the UK. This is why we must continue to harness further investment in young people, and why, thanks to our supporters, we will invest a further £28.6m in seven brand new Youth Zones in 2024/25.

This strategy sets out our focus for the next three years so we sustainably grow the OnSide movement, while also strengthening our foundations. Delivering this strategy over the next three years will ensure we are on track to deliver our goal for 2035 – a flourishing network of 35 Youth Zones.

**Charles Mindenhall, Chair, OnSide**  
**Jamie Masraff, Chief Executive, OnSide**



# OUR VISION

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

# OUR 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 2035 GOAL

By 2035 OnSide will have developed a flourishing Network of 35 Youth Zones, supporting over 150,000 young people per year, while encouraging the wider rebuilding of the youth sector.



# OUR VALUES

Our five values underpin all aspects of our culture, how we work and all that we do as a charity.



## YOUNG PEOPLE FIRST

Young people are at the heart of everything we do inspiring and challenging us to deliver services that exceed their needs and challenge them to be the best they can be.



## RESPECT

We act with honesty and integrity, celebrating diversity across the whole organisation and caring about each other, our young people and the Youth Zone environment.



## AMBITION

We are passionate and driven in taking on new challenges, embracing new ideas and exceeding our ambitions for young people, the Youth Zones and our local community.



## COLLABORATION

We create and nurture strong, creative partnerships, working together to achieve better results and outcomes for young people.



## EXCELLENCE

We encourage ourselves and each other to be the best we can be through continuous learning and improvement, and a focus on finding solutions.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

When we set our previous strategy for 2021-24, we identified six strategic goals which still hold true today and for the next three years. These are set out below, along with a summary of how we plan to achieve them:

## Goal 1. Refine our Youth Zone model and offer by:

- a. Adapting our 'standard' model for new Youth Zones to reflect what's working well in the open Youth Zones.
- b. Developing an alternative smaller Youth Zone model to reach more young people in more areas of the country - retaining the current Youth Zone model for larger towns and cities.

## Goal 2. Grow the OnSide Network by:

- c. Successfully opening eight new Youth Zones by 2026, increasing the reach of the OnSide Network from 55,000 young people per year to 100,000.
- d. Going live with two new Youth Zones every year, proactively targeting new parts of the UK, including in the devolved nations.

## Goal 3. Strengthen the OnSide Network by:

Building on and strengthening the honest, respectful and mutually beneficial relationships that have been built between OnSide and Youth Zones, as independent charities within the same family. We will continue to develop and provide transparent, capability-building support to Youth Zones, while focusing increased efforts on:

- e. Developing talent across the Network, particularly in: youth work, fundraising, management/leadership development, and volunteering.
- f. Income generation for Youth Zones, boosting and supporting the Youth Zones' fundraising functions by raising more funds for Youth Zones'.
- g. Supporting effective governance, by establishing and amplifying best practice across the Network.
- h. Exploring new Network and Youth Zone organisational structures, including single charities to operate multiple Youth Zones, shared CEOs, and shared fundraising teams.
- i. Investing in youth participation, by amplifying the voice of young people and providing opportunities for them to be heard and actively involved in our decision-making processes, working with partners like the National Youth Agency (NYA).

- j. Rebuild young people's engagement in Youth Zones, following the pandemic and the increasing physical isolation this has caused. We will work with the Network and support all Youth Zones to meet their own ambitions for young people's engagement, including support for boosting underrepresented groups of young people like female members attending senior sessions.

- k. Continue other Network support, including systems, communications, safeguarding, Network forum groups, facilities, and more through an empowering, capability-building approach, underpinned by regular sharing of Network data, further encouraging transparency and visibility. This will be aided by the development of a new Network intranet, enabling better sharing of learnings and best practice.

## Goal 4. Maintain OnSide's financial sustainability by:

- l. Continuing to grow our family of OnSide supporters, by inspiring existing supporters to extend and deepen their relationship and continue to grow the number of major supporters. We will also maintain our growth into corporate fundraising, through multiyear strategic partnerships that support both OnSide and our Network fundraising goals, and a small number of suitable charity partnerships of the year.



**Goal 5. Strengthen OnSide's profile and reputation by:**

**m. Investing in our in-house public affairs resource.**

We will boost our relationships with key policy makers working as a committed partner of the Back Youth Alliance (BYA) to deliver a collective campaign to further engage key decision-makers.

**n. Further developing and profiling our monitoring & evaluation expertise,** through embedding data-led decision-making and use of data insights across the Network, and joining sector-wide data initiatives to create a stronger case for greater investment into the sector. We will contribute to the youth work evidence base, through new research on Youth Zones' impact on formal education outcomes and the social value created by Youth Zones. We will also continue to prioritise demonstrating the impact created by universal, open access youth work across the Network.

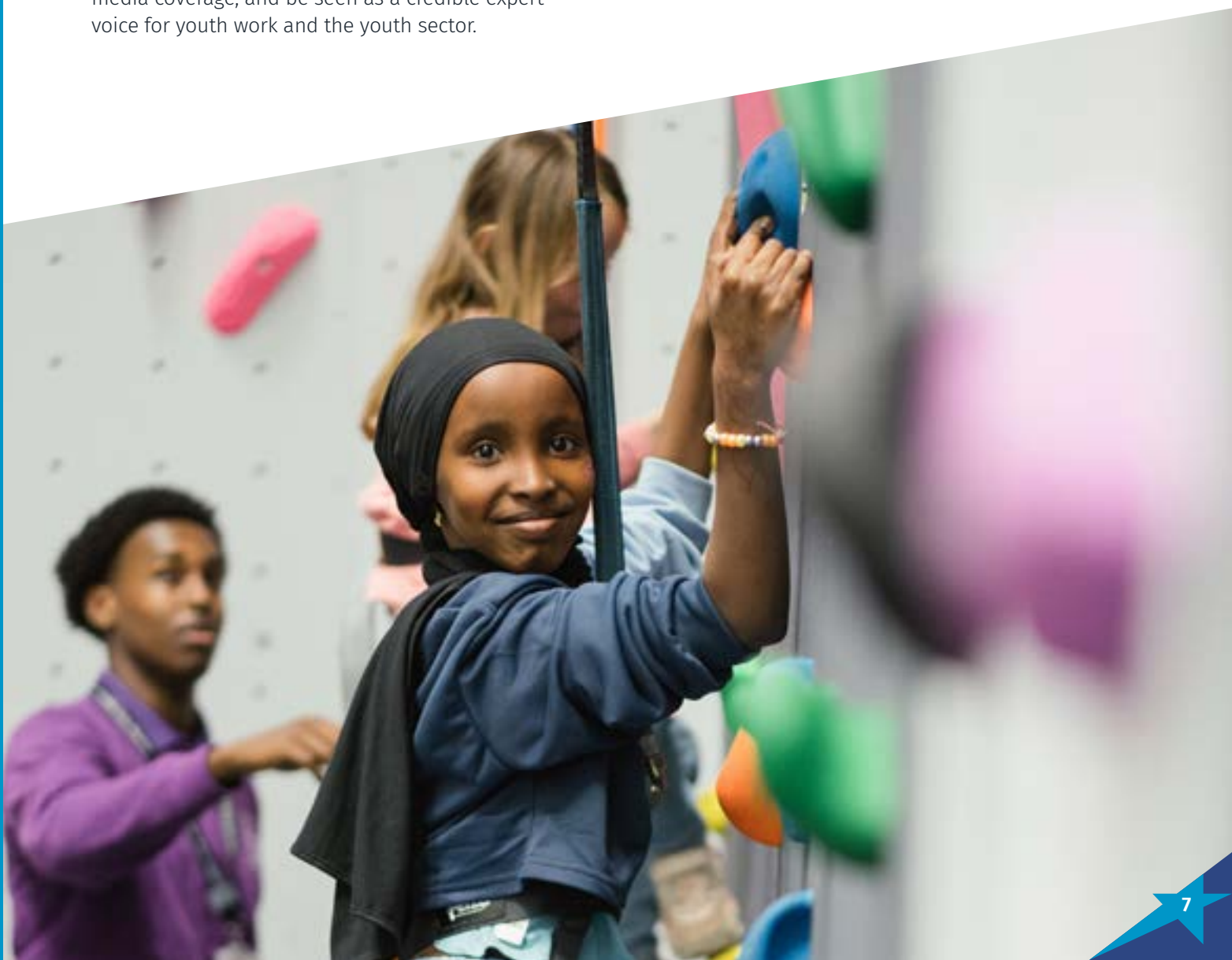
**o. Further strengthening our external profile,** continuing the positive progress made over the last three years to strengthen our brand, increase our media coverage, and be seen as a credible expert voice for youth work and the youth sector.

**Goal 6. Become an employer of choice, by:**

**p. Embedding our Network Values** and developing a strong Employee Value Proposition (EVP), ensuring OnSide is seen as an attractive employer, offering competitive employee benefits and a supportive internal development culture.

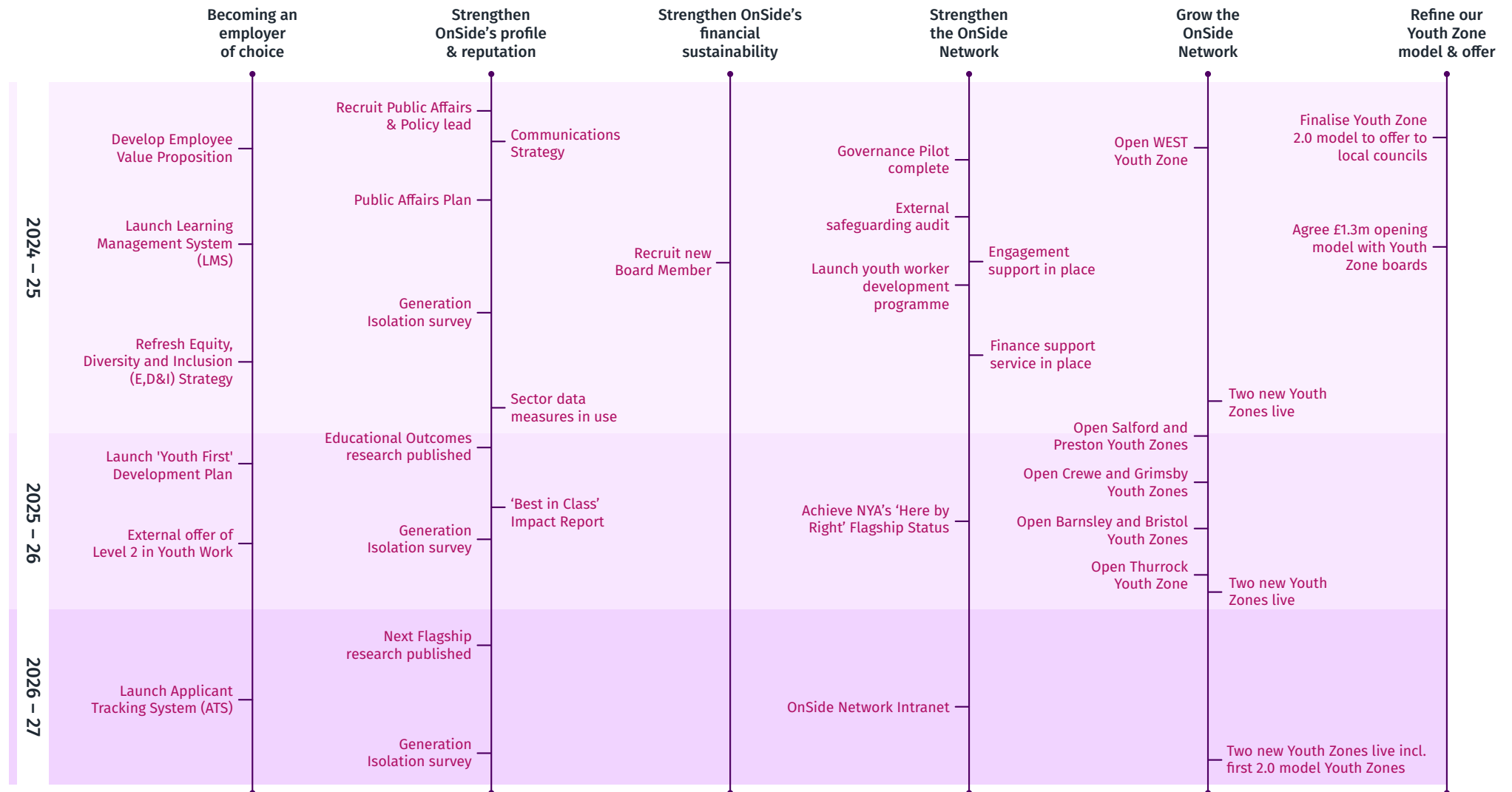
**q. Refreshing and revising OnSide's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** with a key focus on the Race at Work Charter.

**r. Investing in OnSide's systems infrastructure and data management,** including an HR Information System, new Learning Management System (LMS) and Applicant Tracking System (ATS).



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

The final section of the Strategy shows the Strategic Milestones we will target over the next three years.





# THANK YOU

Thank you to the OnSide team, Board, Youth Zone CEOs, OnSide Network members, partners and funders for helping us develop a robust strategy that sets out our roadmap to achieve our ambitious goals for young people over the next three years.





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Here for young people



[onsideyouthzones.org](https://onsideyouthzones.org)