



Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund

The green paper Youth Matters proposed that a discrete amount of resource should be provided through a Youth Opportunity Fund which young people could control, deciding how to spend the money in their area.

Youth Matters also proposed a Youth Capital Fund aimed at enabling local authorities to develop new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods. The involvement of young people, especially disadvantaged young people, is central to this initiative.

The extra resource for the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund was launched in the Chancellor's pre-budget report in December 2005. There is a total of £115m available for both funds over 2006-08:

£31m per year for the Youth Opportunity Fund
£26.5m per year for the Youth Capital Fund

The aim of the Youth Opportunity Fund is to involve young people, especially those who are hard to reach, in identifying positive activities and things to do, and to support their role as decision makers, grant givers and project leaders. They should be encouraged to consider local needs and circumstances as a part of their role in shaping provision for young people beyond their immediate group.

The aim of the Youth Capital Fund is to provide a discrete capital budget for a two year period to be spent on what young people want. It is designed to work in tandem with the Youth Opportunity Fund. Arrangements for implementing the Youth Capital Fund should allow for the active involvement of young people in decisions about how the money will be spent, with particular emphasis on those who are disadvantaged. They should be involved in all aspects of planning, delivery, monitoring and the evaluation of the Youth Capital Fund.

Both funds aim to:

- Give a voice to young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, in relation to things to do and places to go, conveying a powerful message to young people that their needs and aspirations are important
- Change the way that local authorities and their partners provide activities and facilities for young people, especially in deprived neighbourhoods, increasing the responsiveness of providers to what young people want
- Improve things to do and places to go in line with what young people want in their neighbourhoods
- Provide opportunities for young people to develop their confidence, knowledge, skills and abilities, gaining recognition and accreditation
- Increase the well-being of young people
- Increase young people's engagement with services and with the democratic process at local level