



# Annual Review & Impact Story

July 2024 – March 2026



What happens when community leaders are trusted, connected and backed: **they become stronger together.**

From a WhatsApp group of **18 graduates** in May 2024 to a network of **50+ community leaders** across all five West Yorkshire districts. **Community Leader training** delivered by **Jones Consulting** · Commissioned by the **West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)**

## 1 The network in action

Real lives, real change, reaching communities across West Yorkshire

- Virtual Decisions VR programme**  
126 immersive VR workshops reached over 1,100 children across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds in ten months, with five films exploring knives, gangs, identity, influence and anti-social behaviour.
- Youth voice through music**  
Two youth-led knife-crime awareness songs, written and performed by young people in Bradford, with radio and press coverage.
- Food & cost-of-living support**  
A weekly community food project supporting 70-110 people, and holiday clubs serving ~1,500 meals in a single week.
- Community voice, into policy**  
Residents' safety priorities, captured at events, fed directly into the **West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Strategy**.



5 VR films: Knives · Gangs · Identity · Influence · Anti-social behaviour

**VIRTUAL DECISIONS VR, IN THEIR WORDS**

*Workshops like these are game-changers. They build empathy, challenge dangerous beliefs, and create safe spaces for young people to open up.*  
STAFF MEMBER

*Just because something seems good doesn't mean it is good for you. Do not be influenced by what is on social media.*  
CHILD PARTICIPANT

## 2 Building local leadership capacity

The network doesn't just connect leaders, it grows them

- 1-to-1 coaching for community leaders**  
16 leaders coached over the year, rated 9-10 / 10 and described as 'invaluable', a rare reflective space for people working on the frontline.
- Confidence that changes what's possible**  
One member went from **dreading public speaking to presenting to 67 people** at a university; another worked through imposter syndrome in just three sessions.
- From front line delivery to strategic impact**  
Leaders moved beyond day-to-day delivery to long-term sustainability. Starting with a clear Theory of Change and training and signposting to funding pots has led to targeted community safety projects, with some even launching new community hubs.
- Fostering collective leadership**  
Beyond formal projects, members share advice and guidance day to day, building trust and helping the VRP and the network see which areas are well served and which aren't. This shapes how and where the network responds to local need, creating an impetus to act, knowing no one is leading alone.
- The ripple effect**  
More confident leaders create more inclusive, trusting spaces. At network meetings and in coaching, CLWY members discuss how they support friends and neighbours through the aftermath of knife-crime and domestic violence incidents.



- + Diverse membership
- + "Each other's cheerleaders"
- + Shared values
- + Knowledge-sharing
- + Funded training
- + Rotating, shared leadership

## 3 Funds Awarded to CLWY Members

Members winning funding to deliver in their communities

CLWY members have secured over **£121,000** in grants and contracts to deliver violence-prevention, arts and community safety projects across West Yorkshire.

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| <b>Music Box Inspiring Voices CIC</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>£20,000</b></span><br><b>Cut Music:</b> young people, police and professional artists writing and recording music to tackle violence against women and girls. Awarded the Mayor's People's Fund in both 2025 and 2026.  | <b>Yorkshire Youth &amp; Music</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>£9,846</b></span><br><b>Youth Music &amp; Mentoring:</b> music-based intervention and peer mentoring for vulnerable young people referred by youth justice, schools and CAMHS.   |
| <b>Reflections Yorkshire CIC</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>£20,860</b></span><br>with Dance United Yorkshire & Castleford Boxing Academy<br><b>Rise Through Sport:</b> boxing, movement and mentoring for young people and adults at risk of serious violence.  | <b>Goshukan Karate</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>£70,000</b></span><br>in partnership with Bradford Youth Development Partnership<br><b>Virtual Decisions VR Programme:</b> awarded the strategic VRP contract to deliver immersive knife-crime and violence-prevention sessions to young people in community settings across West Yorkshire. |
| <b>CJ Johnson</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>£500</b></span><br>professional musician & CLWY member<br><b>Community Music Workshops:</b> lottery funding secured to run accessible community music sessions, developed from his Community Leadership Programme pitch, alongside a new freelance facilitator role and bookings. |  |



Music Box, awarded the Mayor's People's Fund in 2025 and 2026



Yorkshire Youth & Music among the People's Fund winners

## 4 How the network has grown

From a graduation celebration to a region-wide network

- May 2024**  
18 graduates start a WhatsApp group, reluctant to lose the connection.
- Jul-Aug 2024**  
CLWY founded by 9 members. Network mobilises during the far-right disorder.
- Jan 2025**  
Cohort 2 joins, doubling the network in size.
- Jun 2025**  
A paid Chair role and development of a website & members directory with VRP investment.
- Jan 2026**  
Cohort 3 joins, now 50+ leaders, every major theme covered.
- 2026 & on**  
Funded for a further 12 months, with district events in all five areas.

## 5 Impact at a glance

Two years of CLWY, in numbers

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>50+</b><br>Community Leaders<br>across 3 cohorts         | <b>5</b><br>Districts<br>Bradford · Leeds · Calderdale · Kirklees · Wakefield | <b>15+</b><br>Collaborations<br>member-to-member partnerships | <b>10+</b><br>Public Events<br>delivered across the region              |
| <b>7+</b><br>Network Meetings<br>in-person, hybrid & online | <b>£33k</b><br>VRP Investment<br>grew from a £2k pilot grant                  | <b>£121k</b><br>Funds Won by Members<br>in grants & contracts | <b>2025</b><br>Website Launched<br>clwy.org.uk · members directory live |

West Yorkshire has so many challenges, but the members of this group have the potential to be the key that unlocks the changes that are needed.

**RICHARD LANGFORD, CLWY MEMBER**