

Evaluation of the Our Bright Future programme Baseline and Context Report July 2017



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GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Glossary of terms

Consortium:	The partners governing the Programme.
Green Room:	A secure login website for the Our Bright Future community, providing resources, information and key dates and hosting conversations.
Our Bright Future Team:	The team responsible for programme management at TWT and vInspired.
Policy Function:	This function identified opportunities, engages with policymakers/decision makers and ensures that evidence produced by the Programme is shared to have wider influence.
Share Learn Improve (SLI) Function:	This function works with projects to identify areas of need, provide support and facilitate knowledge sharing and learning across the Programme.
The Fund	The Big Lottery Fund.
The Portfolio:	The 31 projects receiving grants from Our Bright Future.
The Programme:	The collective work of the Portfolio, the functions/activities and Our Bright Future Team.
Youth Function:	This function provides support for youth involvement, and facilitates the Youth Steering Group and Evaluation Panel (coordinated by vInspired).

Acronyms

ADHD:	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CEP:	Collingwood Environmental Planning
CSE:	Centre for Sustainable Energy
EU:	European Union
FSC:	Field Studies Council
LINE:	Learning in the natural environment
NEET:	Not in employment, education or training
NUS:	National Union of Students
ONS:	Office for National Statistics
OWL:	Outdoor & Woodland Learning
SLI:	Share Learn Improve
TCV:	The Conservation Volunteers (formerly British Trust of Conservation Volunteers)
TWT:	Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts
YDMT:	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Our Bright Future is a forward-thinking social movement that supports young people to lead progressive environmental change. The Programme has received £33m from the Big Lottery Fund and comprises 31 individual projects.

ERS Ltd in partnership with Collingwood Environmental Planning (CEP) were commissioned in August 2016 to undertake an evaluation of the Our Bright Future programme. The Programme Evaluation seeks to identify, analyse and assess:

- The collective impact of the portfolio of 31 projects;
- The added value of the Programme i.e. what value has been derived from the collective work of the Share Learn Improve, Policy and Youth Function and from the development of an Our Bright Future network/movement;
- Whether the Programme has achieved its long-term ambitions; and
- Good practice and lessons learnt, and provide evidence and guidance to support Programme learning and improvement.

This Baseline and Context report sets the scene for subsequent evaluation reports: a Mid-term Report in 2019 and Final Report in 2021. The Baseline and Context Report outlines the starting position, both from a Programme perspective and in terms of the portfolio of projects. As such, it provides a baseline (although not in a traditional/quantifiable sense) against which future reports can assess progress and achievement. This report will also reflect on early learning relating to the set-up phase.

The purpose of this 'Setting the Scene' report is to set out:

- The background to and rationale for the Programme;
- The Programme's aims and objectives and how it intends to pursue them;
- The partnership, how it operates, the expertise/experience each partner offers and their expectations of the Programme;
- The nature and scale of the 31 projects and the variety of approaches they are adopting; and
- A baseline position for initial expectations, the policy context and other evidence which can be re-visited in future reports

Conclusions

This Report has outlined a number of **key considerations for the Programme Evaluation**, which have informed the Evaluation Framework (see Appendix D).

In terms of the **background, rationale and operational structure of the Programme** the evaluation will assess:

- How closely the Programme is operating in line with the Big Lottery Fund's initial ambition;
- How the rationale or direction of the Programme is flexing in line with changing context and need;

- The effectiveness of the Consortium approach, and particularly how the anticipated role of each partner is playing out in practice;
- How effective the organisational structure has been in delivering the Programme;
- Lessons learnt in the Portfolio approach and ensure that learning is shared with Big Lottery Fund to shape future programmes of this nature.

In terms of the **strategic context of the Programme**, the evaluation will:

- Assess whether Our Bright Future is demonstrating multiple benefits for young people, the environment and communities;
- Help to evidence the effectiveness (or not) of projects, identifying what has worked well and less well, informing future policy and practice.
- Revisit this evidence base and discuss any relevant theoretical developments over the course of Programme delivery;
- Draw on established theories when presenting evidence from the Programme to indicate where Our Bright Future adds to this evidence base.
- Explore the extent to which the Portfolio approach adds value (demonstrating that it is 'greater than sum of parts');
- Assess whether or not combining activities for young people and environmental objectives is effective and meets multiple objectives;
- Consider the value and importance of the Programme timeframe, notably that funding for projects is available for longer (5-7 years) than under other comparable interventions (typically 2-3 years);
- Review the long-term legacy of such an approach, in terms of the wider landscape of provision of environment-focused initiatives aimed at empowering young people.

The evaluation team has worked closely with projects to develop, as far as possible, a single Evaluation Framework which captures as much evidence of project processes and outcomes across the Portfolio as is feasible. Whilst there are very few commonalities, there are nonetheless opportunities for continual learning about approaches that are most/least effective. Therefore, in addition to looking at evidence of outcomes across the portfolio, the evaluation will explore: successful approaches to partnership working, scaling up successful initiatives, recruiting and engaging young people and involving young people as part of project delivery and management.

Next steps

The evaluation will be undertaken throughout Programme delivery, with a major Mid-term Report due in early 2019, and a Final Report due in late 2021.

Alongside major external reports the evaluation team will provide regular Real-Time Learning Updates to the Our Bright Future Team, Evaluation Panel, Steering Group, Youth Forum and Portfolio to support continual learning and improvement.

In addition, the evaluation will follow the progress of the 13 case studies in detail at three points during the Programme delivering: in late 2017; late 2018 and in 2020.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Our Bright Future is a forward-thinking social movement that supports young people aged 11-24 to lead progressive environmental change. The Big Lottery Fund ('the Fund') has invested £33m to support a Programme of 31 individual projects. The Programme is governed by a consortium of seven organisations¹, led by The Wildlife Trusts (TWT). All seven partners have a key role to play in the delivery of the Programme: linking projects together; providing specialist expertise/experience; being responsible for particular elements of the Programme; and, in some cases, delivering projects.
- 1.2 Each of the 31 projects in the portfolio is of between three and five years' duration and has been allocated up to £1m. Ranging in scale, from a local focus to a national level, projects are based around key themes such as environmental action, environmental campaigning, leadership and influencing, sustainable enterprises and vocational training. Projects were selected on the basis of a successful track record in improving the local environment and/or engaging young people, as well as their ability to scale up, adapt or replicate their activities to reach new beneficiaries or new locations. The Programme aims to develop an understanding of the ways in which organisations are already having an impact, to enable them to share good practice and learning and to replicate their approach in new areas, scale up or adapt successful approaches.

Purpose of this Report

- 1.3 The Programme was launched in April 2016 but a significant amount of work had already taken place from 2014 to establish the Consortium, the Programme and select the portfolio of projects. In August 2016, ERS Ltd and Collingwood Environmental Planning (CEP) were commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the Programme until 2021. This report sets the scene for subsequent evaluation reports: a Mid-term Report in 2019 and Final Report in 2021. The Baseline and Context Report outlines the starting position, both from a Programme perspective and in terms of the portfolio of projects. It is the intention that this report provides a baseline against which future reports can assess progress and achievement (albeit not in a traditional or quantifiable sense as explained below). This report will also reflect on early learning relating to the set-up phase.

Baseline and Context Report methodology

- 1.4 The Our Bright Future programme encompasses a wide variety of projects, each undertaking different activities. The two aspects that unite all 31 projects are that they are working with young people aged 11-24, and that their activities are related to the environment. Beyond this, projects are focusing on a range of subjects, activities, target groups, locations and approaches. As well as resourcing new activities, the funding was also intended to support the development, replication and up-scaling of existing and proven interventions.
- 1.5 Given the diverse and complex range of projects and associated beneficiaries and objectives, it has generally not been possible to identify and establish a 'baseline' in the traditional sense i.e. a set of data or indicators at the start of an intervention against which change can be measured. Instead this report sets out the logic and theoretical context for the Programme, while also describing as far as possible the

¹ The Wildlife Trusts (TWT); Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE); Field Studies Council (FSC); The Conservation Volunteers (TCV); Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT); vInspired; Uprising.

background to and rationale for the Programme and a selection of 13 Case Study projects.

1.6 This report has been compiled from:

- Secondary materials relating to the Programme, including the original Business Plan and other information regarding the set-up phase;
- Secondary materials relating to the projects, including original Business Plans and Application Forms, and any other background information;
- A comprehensive literature and policy review, bringing together all relevant policy and evidence at this time;
- Interviews with members of the Steering Group and Evaluation Panel; and
- Interviews and secondary data analysis for a selection of 13 case study projects.

2. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Background and rationale

- 2.1 In 2012, the Big Lottery Fund UK Funding Committee agreed that there was a need to develop an environment-themed programme. At the time, the Fund had no competitive UK programme focusing exclusively on the environment. England's *Changing Spaces* programme had recently closed to applications, and the *Grow Wild* project led by Kew was focused on a single approach and environmental theme. The UK Funding Committee agreed that the proposed programme would fund a wider variety of approaches and link with other social outcomes, particularly providing opportunities for young people. In addition to supporting social and environmental outcomes, the Programme was intended to contribute to economic outcomes, particularly relating to the green economy. The environment has been a core theme of the Big Lottery Fund, however within the UK at the time, environmental philanthropy still only represented a very small proportion of total UK philanthropy (less than 3%²). The relatively low levels of funding available for environmental initiatives suggested a gap and need for a large-scale funding programme.
- 2.2 In addition to this, there were many other pressing issues which suggested a need for such a programme, namely:
- Environmental concerns including climate change, reduction in biodiversity, and the need to transfer to a low carbon economy.
 - Government support for the green economy³ which had been identified as a growth sector and in respect of which there was a skills gap⁴. It was thought that a new programme could provide much needed opportunities for young people to gain valuable skills and experience that would allow them to take advantage of jobs growth within the green economy.
- 2.3 The Committee recommended the following broad Programme aim:
- More Young People have influence in shaping their local environment and acquire new skills that can contribute to the green economy.***
- 2.4 A broad age range of 11-24 was proposed, in the belief that the Programme could help influence young participants who were yet to make decisions relating to education and work and offer older participants the opportunity to gain vital skills and experience. A wide definition of 'local environment' was suggested, which included any natural or built environment. Similarly, 'contributing to the green economy' included any employment, training or volunteering that combined economic, social and environmental benefits.
- 2.5 However, the Programme was seeking to do more than provide funding for discrete projects. Big Lottery suggested taking a portfolio approach, used previously for its 'Realising Ambition' and 'Rethink Good Health' programmes. This approach brings projects together around shared outcomes, supported by a UK-wide co-ordinator to assist projects and help share knowledge and information. The Fund put the proposal out to open competition, and a consortium led by TWT was successful. Given the Fund's interest in gathering additional evidence of the effectiveness of the portfolio approach, the Programme Evaluation will consider issues such as UK-

² Cracknell et al. (2012)

³ UK Government (2011)

⁴BIS, DECC and DEFRA (2011)

wide reach, influence on UK policy makers, realistic budget setting and level/use of resources.

Aims, objectives, outcomes and proposed legacy

- 2.6 The Our Bright Future programme has four key Programme Outcomes⁵. Projects within the portfolio are all contributing in some way to these outcomes and it is upon these outcomes that the success of the Programme as a whole will be assessed:
- **Outcome 1:** Participation in the Our Bright Future programme has had positive impacts on young people equipping them with the skills, experience and confidence to lead environmental change.
 - **Outcome 2:** The Our Bright Future programme has had positive impacts on the environment and local communities
 - **Outcome 3:** The Our Bright Future programme has influenced change and created a legacy.
 - **Outcome 4:** The Our Bright Future programme utilises an effective partnership working and a youth-led approach, leading to stronger outcomes for young people and the environment.
- 2.7 Under each of the Programme's Outcomes indicators were set. A full list of the Programme indicators is available in Appendix A.
- 2.8 Although at an individual level projects will be able to demonstrate the production of evidence, and may have an influence on policy and practice, Outcome 3 primarily relates to the Programme's ambition to share good practice, with the ultimate aim of influencing longer-term change.
- 2.9 In addition to these outcomes, the Programme has set a set of longer-term intended legacies, these are:
1. Empowered young people
 2. Net gain for the environment
 3. Sustained relationships, networks and delivery
 4. A greener society and sustainable economy
 5. A change in policy and practice.

The Consortium

- 2.10 Our Bright Future is governed by a consortium of organisations comprising:
- The lead organisation;
 - The Wildlife Trusts (TWT)
 - and six partner organisations;
 - Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)
 - Field Studies Council (FSC)

⁵ The Programme originally had three outcomes which were identified during the application phase and before the final list of portfolio projects was agreed. These outcomes formed part of the formal offer agreement between TWT and the Big Lottery Fund. Following finalisation of the project portfolio and development of the Programme evaluation framework it was felt that the original outcomes did not reflect the breadth of Programme ambitions and activities or adequately demonstrate its successes.

- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT)
- vInspired
- Uprising

2.11 A consortium approach was proposed to ensure that the Programme benefitted from a range of skills, expertise and experience. The Consortium also provided greater reach both geographically and in terms of networks and influence in the Third Sector, business sector and with decision making bodies. Initially, The Prince's Trust and Community Service Volunteers had also been included but had to withdraw due to organisational restructuring. Uprising was a later addition to the Consortium to provide additional expertise in respect of the youth sector. The Plunkett Foundation was also initially part of the Consortium, but left the partnership in April 2017. Our Bright Future was, at the time of writing, planning to find a new partner. Synopses of each Consortium member's expertise is summarised in Figure 1 and anticipated roles are described in full in Appendix B.

It is expected that each consortium member will provide the following:



Overall accountability for Portfolio's strategic and operational direction



Strategic expertise and challenge in energy issues and supporting young people and communities to enable change locally



Strategic expertise on educational priorities and school structures and engagement with secondary schools



Strategic expertise and challenge on maximising employability and skills development



Strategic expertise and challenge on engaging with hard-to-reach groups and also ensure Portfolio caters for smaller charities



Strategic expertise and challenge on ensuring young people are at the heart of the portfolio (in governance and project management)



Strategic expertise and challenge in influencing youth policy

Figure 1: Consortium Roles [ERS Ltd]

2.12 In addition, each consortium member contributes a Critical Friend or Specialist Adviser, or will run a particular theme within the Share Learn Improve function (for more information on Share Learn Improve see *Management and governance* section below). They are all represented on the Steering Group with some also present on the Evaluation Panel. In addition, vInspired operates the Youth Function, contracted to TWT, and it was hoped that others would take lead roles in helping to shape the evaluation and policy influence strategy. The roles anticipated of each partner were clearly defined in a partnership agreement but are summarised in Appendix B. Over the course of the evaluation the effectiveness of this partnership will be assessed, particularly how the roles expected of consortium members have played out in practice.

Governance and management

2.13 The diagram overleaf (Figure 2) outlines the governance and operational structure of the Our Bright Future programme. The Programme is governed by a Steering Group and TWT acts as the accountable organisation to the Big Lottery Fund. Input is also provided by consortium members on the Evaluation Panel, which oversees the Programme evaluation.

2.14 The operational structure reflects the Portfolio approach, which is achieved in Our Bright Future through a variety of 'Functions' delivered by TWT and the Consortium which support: sharing, learning, and improvement; youth involvement at programme level; evidence gathering; and collective policy influence.

2.15 The majority of delivery roles sit within TWT. These include:

- **Portfolio Management:** The management of the grants, monitoring and reporting to the Fund is overseen by a Programme Manager. A Communications Officer is responsible for publicity and communications.
- **Share Learn Improve (SLI) Function:** This includes a variety of services to support learning and development across the Portfolio. A dedicated Share Learn Improve Coordinator is in place to broker inter-organisational learning and development via:
 - An online social network and resources library (the Green Room).
 - Regular seminars and webinars.
 - A network of Critical Friends to support projects.
- **Policy Function:** This aspect is overseen by a Policy and Campaigns Manager whose role it is to develop a policy influence and advocacy strategy and liaise with policy and decision makers.

2.16 In addition to these roles, vInspired is contracted to deliver:

- **Youth Function:** This supports the involvement of young people at all levels of the Programme including:
 - Supporting Youth Representatives on the Steering Group (x3) and Evaluation Panel (x2) to be able to fully participate in these groups.
 - Setting up and running a Youth Forum of up to two youth representatives from each of the 31 projects. The Youth Forum meets annually in person but maintains regular contact using an online forum.

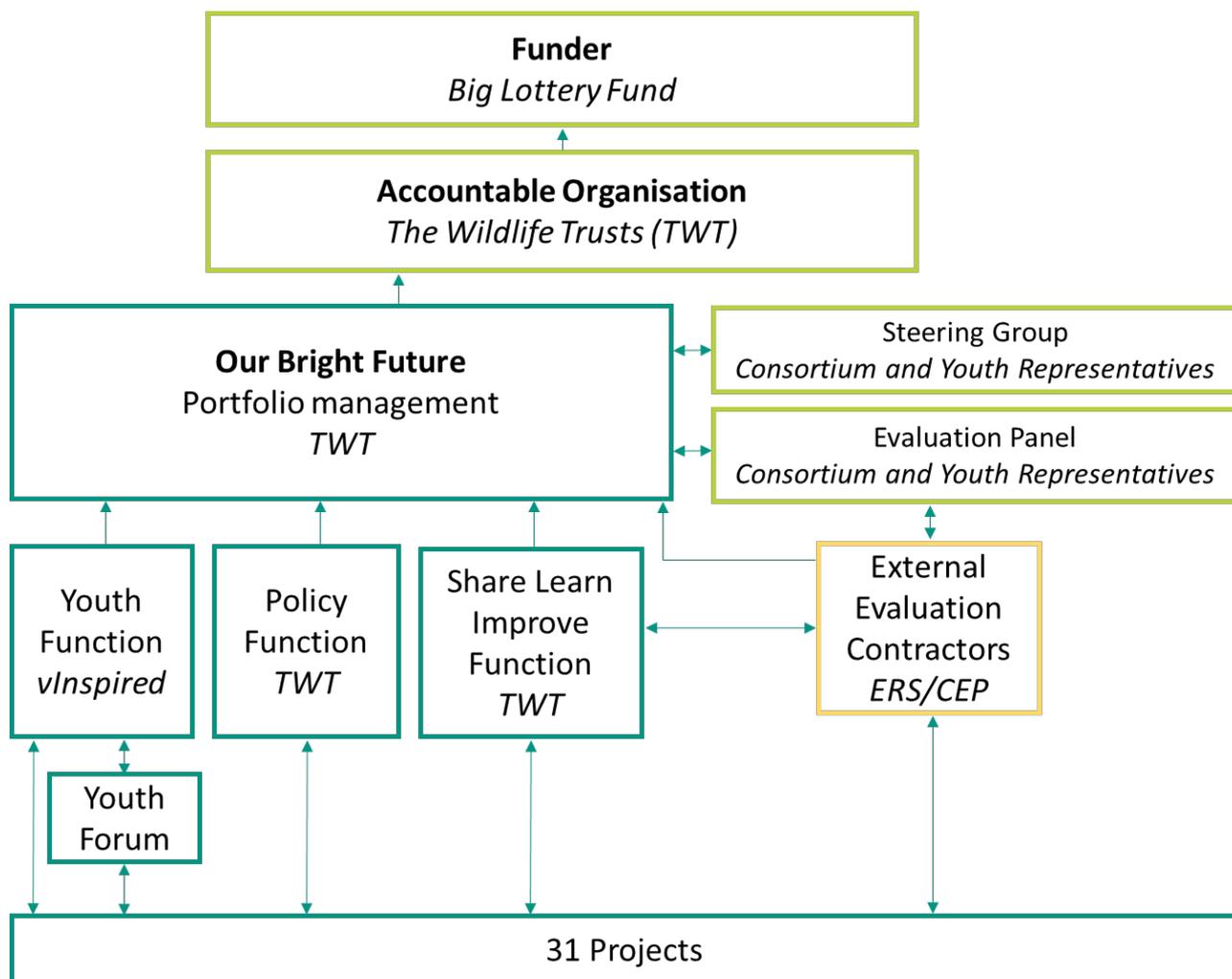


Figure 2: Our Bright Future Governance and Management Structure [ERS Ltd]

2.17 Throughout the Programme Evaluation scoping phase, the intention that Our Bright Future would be 'greater than the sum of its parts' (a reflection of the Portfolio approach) was emphasised as a key aim by consortium members. Assessing the effectiveness of the governance and management structure, and particularly whether this approach has helped to broker knowledge sharing, learning and collective influence will be a key focus for the Programme Evaluation.

Set-up phase

2.18 A programme timeline (Appendix C) shows some of the key milestones in the development and delivery of the Programme. The Consortium first met in early 2014 and it took two years for the Programme to be developed and funding to be approved. Projects commenced in 2016 and are expected to complete by mid-2021, although some have received funding for 3 years and will complete in 2018.

Youth participation in programme set-up

2.19 The participation of young people, and youth leadership is at the heart of Our Bright Future. Throughout the development of the Programme, young people were supported to play a leadership role in the development of the portfolio. Prior to selecting the projects, TWT ran a youth focus group session where a number of young people fed back on what they wanted to see as part of the portfolio. A youth representative also attended and presented the final selection of projects to the Big Lottery Fund.

Assessment and selection process

2.20 An initial working group developed a set of assessment criteria for project proposals. Beyond basic eligibility criteria and the quality of applications, the projects were scored on fit with the Programme aims including: whether young people were at the heart of the project; strength of environmental outcomes; whether young people were leading communities; and whether communities would be actively involved in the delivery of the project. One of the key selection criteria in refining the portfolio was that projects needed to be scaled-up or replicating existing proven approaches. This was defined as:

“increasing the number of beneficiaries or area covered or delivering a proven intervention into new geographical areas and/or to new/different audiences.”

(Our Bright Future Revised Business Plan, 2015)

2.21 A Selection Panel was chosen to make the final project assessment and selection. This comprised members of the Consortium, but the majority were young people. They considered projects in the context of the overall portfolio as well as the different themes, approaches and outcomes presented. 3 outlines the assessment and selection process, including the number of applications received.

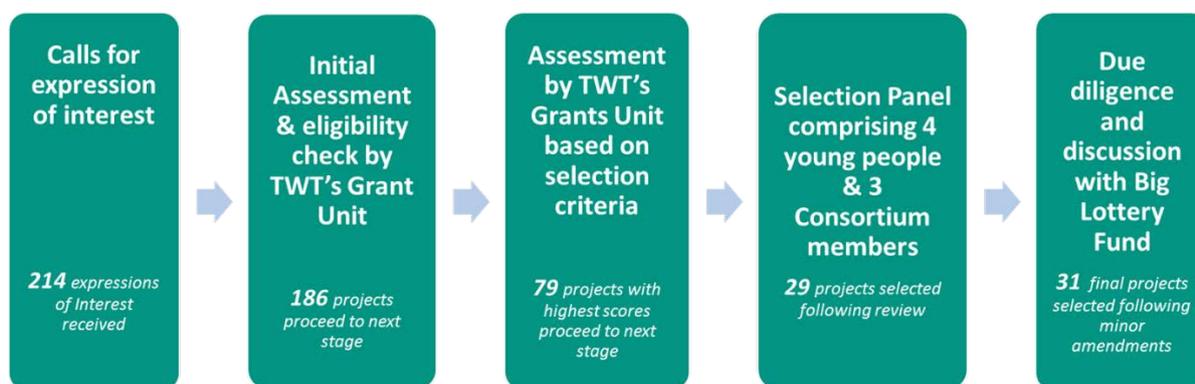


Figure 3: Project assessment and selection process [ERS Ltd]

Programme budget

2.22 Table 1 shows a simple breakdown of costs for the Programme. The majority of the budget is allocated to project grants (88%), and up to £1m was allocated to each of the 31 projects. Our Bright Future is unlike many other Big Lottery Fund Programmes in the sense that the management of the Portfolio lies with the Our Bright Future Team at TWT, which accounts for 10% of the total costs.

Table 1: Our Bright Future programme Cost Breakdown (2016 – 2022)		
	Expenditure	Percentage of total Programme Costs
Portfolio management (see Table 2)	£3,181,977	10%
Programme evaluation and dissemination	£667,387	2%
Total Portfolio grants	£29,405,139	88%
Total	£33,254,502	

2.23 Within the total cost of Portfolio Management (Table 2), 71% has been allocated towards staff costs, 9% for Share Learn Improve and 8% for the Youth Function. Throughout the Programme evaluation the budget allocation and breakdown across certain activities will be assessed, considering whether it has been appropriate, or whether alternative budgeting arrangements could improve the effectiveness of this and any future Programmes of a similar scale or approach.

Table 2: Portfolio Management Cost Breakdown (2016-2022)		
	Expenditure	Percentage of total Portfolio Management Costs
Staff costs	£2,271,162	71%
Share Learn Improve Function	£284,383	9%
Youth Function	£251,803	8%
Publicity, website and social media	£185,728	6%
Travel and subsistence, office costs	£155,431	5%
Steering Group meetings (travel, room hire etc.)	£33,470	1%
Total	£3,181,977	

Learning and reflection from the set-up Phase

2.24 In June 2016, The Our Bright Future Team convened to discuss if any lessons could be learnt from the set-up phase of the Programme. They asked specifically what might the team do differently (or hope for, given factors outside their control in relation to Our Bright Future) if setting up a similar large-scale portfolio programme, as well as what had proved effective. Key learning and suggestions included:

- **Lead-in time:** Ensuring that processes and systems were in place before projects began with delivery, such as a Programme database, evaluation contractor (evaluation framework and data collection processes), staff induction and training.
- **Communication:** Ensuring that projects are fully aware of timescales, reasons for delays and managing expectations accordingly, as well as testing communications and branding in all devolved administrations.
- **Project budgeting guidance:** Making projects fully aware of the additional activities and time required to engage and take full advantage of these, e.g. Share Learn Improve seminars and project exchanges. These should be included in project budgets.
- **Flexibility:** Re-evaluating the business plan and making changes where necessary as the Programme progresses, in dialogue with the funder (which has proved to be a very effective approach).

2.25 Overall, the Programme and portfolio set-up phase had been a steep learning curve but had been helped by the flexibility of the Big Lottery Fund to allow the Programme to develop and refine its approach in line with any challenges.

Conclusion: Considerations for the Programme Evaluation

2.26 Against the background of the rationale, need and operational structure of the Programme, the evaluation will:

- Assess how closely the Programme is operating in line with the Big Lottery Fund's initial ambition, and how the rationale or direction of the Programme is flexing in line with changing context and need.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of the Consortium approach, and particularly how the anticipated role of each partner is playing out in practice.
- Collect information on the function of the Programme, and explore how effective the organisational structure (Figure 2) has been in delivering the Programme, particularly in terms of learning and collective impact across the Portfolio.
- Consider the resources used by the Programme, including how effective Programme management has been, and how funding for each element of the Programme compares with planned expenditure.
- Continually identify lessons learnt in the Portfolio approach and ensure that learning is shared with Big Lottery Fund to shape future programmes of this nature.

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 3.1 This section sets out the context for the Programme, including: the key issues and opportunities suggesting a need for a programme of this type; the current theoretical context and how Our Bright Future could contribute to this evidence base; the current policy context across the UK and its relevance to Our Bright Future; and an assessment of where Our Bright Future sits in relation to similar projects and programmes at present, and over the past ten years.

Key issues and opportunities

- 3.2 At the time of programme development in 2014-15, the issues facing both young people and the environment were significant and these were evidenced in the Our Bright Future original Business Plan. Since this time, there have been some shifts in the strategic context. The following section summarises some of the key issues and opportunities relating to Our Bright Future from the original Business Plan and references relevant issues that have emerged since it was drafted. In the Mid-term and Final Evaluation reports, we shall revisit/update the Programme's strategic context.

The environment

- 3.3 In terms of the environment, there are both global and local issues now and prospectively in the future. Current headline environmental concerns include:
- Since 2000, the world has experienced 14 out of the 15 hottest years on record, due to climate change⁶.
 - In 2016, CO₂ levels were at their highest ever recorded and Arctic Sea ice was at its lowest ever winter level⁷.
 - 53% of species in the UK declined between 2002 and 2013⁸; it is now one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world.
 - A decline in the quality of parks and green spaces is expected across the UK following public sector funding cuts⁹; 95% of park managers expect cuts to continue over the next three years and 55% expect them to be by as much as 10-20%.
 - Air pollution is estimated to shorten around 40,000 people's lives in the UK per year¹⁰
 - Investment in renewable energy in the UK is predicted to fall by 95% between 2017 and 2020 following public sector funding cuts¹¹.
 - There is still uncertainty around what the UK's environmental targets and policies will be after its exit from the EU¹² and as much as this can be seen as an issue, it may also be an opportunity to advocate even more stringent standards.

Young people

⁶ Committee on Climate Change (2017)

⁷ World Meteorological Organization (2017)

⁸ Hayhow et al. (2016)

⁹ Heritage Lottery Fund (2016)

¹⁰ Royal College of Physicians & Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2016)

¹¹ Green Alliance (2016)

¹² Committee on Climate Change (2016)

3.4 Some key issues specifically affecting young people in the UK in 2017, as highlighted in recent studies, include:

- Historically, approximately 1 in 10 children and young people are affected by mental health issues¹³.
- Young people's mental well-being is reported to be at its lowest ever recorded level¹⁴.
- Those aged 16-24 years old are the age group most active on social media (91%) and links have been made between social media use and depression and anxiety issues for young people¹⁵.
- Obesity is an increasingly common health issue amongst children and young people¹⁶.
- 80,000 young people were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in May 2017¹⁷.
- Over a third of young people have debt of £3000 on average, not including student loans or mortgages¹⁸.
- Since 2010, almost all Local Authorities have had to make cuts to youth services due to a lack of funding¹⁹.

Young people and the environment

3.5 In respect of young people's relationship with the environment, some recent studies have identified a number of concerning issues and trends:

- Concern has been expressed that young people spend less time in nature compared to previous generations and thus feel disconnected with the environment - a 2016 survey found that 12% of children had not spent any time in the natural environment in the last year²⁰.
- There are widespread concerns that young people and children now lack basic knowledge about nature²¹, compared to previous generations.
- 62% of young people in the UK said climate change made them fearful for the future, in a recent attitudes survey²².
- Some studies have shown that older people are more likely to report pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours than younger people²³.
- Other studies suggest that young people are concerned about environmental issues but do not know what actions to take²⁴, and that young people do not feel empowered to lead or make change around climate change issues²⁵.

3.6 Although the Our Bright Future programme is by no means exclusively an outdoor environmental programme, there is now growing evidence of the benefits of young people spending time in the natural environment:

¹³ ONS on behalf of Department of Health & Scottish Executive (2004)

¹⁴ Prince's Trust (2017). Note: well-being recorded since 2009

¹⁵ Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) & Youth Health Movement (2017)

¹⁶ Public Health England (2017)

¹⁷ Office for National Statistics (2017a)

¹⁸ National Debtline and Money Advice Trust (2016)

¹⁹ Unison (2016)

²⁰ Natural England (2016a)

²¹ National Trust (2008)

²² Broadbent et al. (2017)

²³ University of Essex. Institute for Social and Economic Research, NatCen Social Research and Kantar Public (2011)

²⁴ Ajaps et al. (2015)

²⁵ Hibberd, M. and Nguyen, A. (2013)

- When school lessons were held outside, the Natural Connections Demonstration project found that 89% of pupils agreed that they felt happy and healthy learning outdoors, with evidence of increased resilience amongst disadvantaged children²⁶.
 - Symptoms of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are reported to improve when they are exposed to nature and outdoor activities²⁷.
 - Nature-based interventions (such as conservation, gardening or care farming) are increasingly used to help those with mental health issues²⁸.
- 3.7 There are also other indicators that there may be an appetite amongst young people for a Programme such as Our Bright Future, which offers opportunities for activities, volunteering and careers that contribute to a greener economy:
- Young people are the age group most engaged with voluntary activity, both in terms of frequency and participation length; more than half of 16-24 year olds in the UK in 2015 were involved in volunteering²⁹.
 - Employers with a positive environmental agenda are valued by young people, whereby two thirds of university students would accept a lower starting salary to work for a company with a record of ethical and green activity³⁰.
 - A recent survey of over 1000 young people in Scotland found that 63 per cent of respondents want to learn more about nature and how they can protect it. There were a variety of things which would encourage more young people to engage with nature: “particularly sport and exercise, activities and events they can do with their friends, and things involving animals and wildlife”³¹.
- 3.8 Although there have been changes in the strategic context in which Our Bright Future is operating since delivery first started, core issues and concerns pertain and the Programme continues to offer opportunities relevant to both the development of young people and environmental needs/opportunities.

Policy context

- 3.9 Appendix E presents a review of the policy context for the Our Bright Future programme which was produced by the Our Bright Future team in October 2016. As part of the Baseline and Context Report this list of relevant policies has been structure in terms of six key policy topics: (1) environment; (2) employment and enterprise; (3) education, skills and training; (4) social action and volunteering; (5) communities and civic engagement and (6) health and wellbeing. It has been further organised in terms of whether the policy is relevant across the UK or specific devolved administrations only. The table outlines the main objectives of the policy and presents a summary analysis of its relevance to the Our Bright Future programme (e.g. in terms of key areas of support, conflict, synergy etc.). Although the policy review is not exhaustive and may be partially biased towards policies / policy areas that are more familiar to the Our Bright Future team, the analysis would suggest a reasonably even distribution of policies across the UK and devolved administrations. It appears that the category with the least policies is *environment*

²⁶ Waite et al. (2016)

²⁷ Bird, W on behalf of RSPB (2007)

²⁸ Bragg, R., Atkins, G., (2016)

²⁹ ONS (2017b)

³⁰ Higher Education Academy (2015)

³¹ ReRoute (2016)

while a large number of relevant policies relate to the communities and civic engagement category.

- 3.10 The table of policies, and particularly the 'Relevance to Our Bright Future' column suggests that Our Bright Future has the potential to help deliver various aspects of policy at the UK and devolved administration level. In general, the direct impact on policy objectives is likely to be small given the ambitious nature of the policies (e.g. "growing a green economy" in the UK-wide NEWP, "offering a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old young person classified as NEET" in the Scottish Government's Opportunities for All Strategy) and the relatively small scale of the Our Bright Future programme. However, the key opportunity, in terms of the programme's support for the various policy objectives identified, is arguably its potential to demonstrate projects, activities, measures and investments that have the potential to be scaled-up, thereby supporting delivery at the national level. The evaluation of Our Bright Future will help to evidence the effectiveness (or not) of projects, identifying what has worked well and less well, informing future policy and practice.

Theoretical context

- 3.11 There is a growing body of evidence and theory relating to Our Bright Future's key themes and activities. These are summarised below.

The importance of engaging young people in the natural environment and allowing them to lead environmental activities

- 3.12 The sub-section on *key issues and opportunities* above highlights several problems that some young people currently face, including: low levels of mental well-being; obesity; high numbers with "NEET" status; and high debt levels. Despite these challenges, there is a wealth of evidence showing how a preventative approach (e.g. to mental health and well-being issues) can lead to positive social outcomes and reduced costs to the public sector (e.g. health services)³². Furthermore, there is compelling evidence showing that participation in social action at a young age is likely to lead to benefits in adult life³³. A recent study compared young people who had participated in social action projects with those who had not and found consistent benefits in the "with intervention" group in terms of: psychological constructs (e.g. attitudes to education, community, grit); well-being levels (e.g. life satisfaction, happiness / anxiety yesterday); and social trust scores³⁴. A recent survey of young people involved in the #iwill youth social action campaign showed how participants seemed largely more willing to donate their time in the future than those that were not involved (80% compared to 19%)³⁵.

- 3.13 The above evidence suggests that Our Bright Future participants should benefit in the future (e.g. in terms of well-being) and be more willing to contribute to future social and environmental activities.

- 3.14 An important aspect of participation in youth social action is leadership and empowerment. There has been much research undertaken to articulate "levels" of youth participation including Hart's "ladder" which provides a framework for understanding different forms of participation that might be more/less appropriate in

³² Action for Children and nef (2009)

³³ Pye *et al.* (2014)

³⁴ Kirkman *et al.* (2015)

³⁵ Pye *et al.* (2014)

different contexts^{36,37}. Equally, many frameworks have been proposed to conceptualise empowerment in terms of the processes/steps involved (e.g. personal development, capacity building) and the outcomes that might be expected (e.g. increased understanding of the socio-political environment, development of organisational networks)^{38,39}.

- 3.15 Our Bright Future has placed a strong emphasis on youth leadership and the empowerment of young people to lead future environmental change. It will be important to consider whether and to what extent the Programme has encouraged the former and had an impact on the latter.
- 3.16 Established theories on the complex life stages experienced by young people in their transition to independence can help to identify opportunities for positive behaviour change. This has implications for engagement in environmental activities (such as those promoted under Our Bright Future) and for addressing the types of issue outlined above. Most theories suggest that transitions to independence are non-linear: there are many forms of independence (e.g. moral, economic, social) that may be reached at different times⁴⁰; and the concept of 'emerging adulthood' relates to a life stage that is fluid in terms of its age range, defined by several key characteristics (e.g. instability, identity exploration, possibilities)⁴¹. Crucially, the choices young people make during transition periods are instrumental in influencing their future beliefs, behaviours and outcomes. Indeed, such life course transitions may provide a window of opportunity within which interventions are likely to have a greater impact on changing to more sustainable behaviours⁴². Significant attention has also been given to the values and motivations behind pro-environmental behaviours exhibited by young people⁴³ including the importance of engagement with nature influencing positive responses^{44,45}.
- 3.17 This suggests that young people participating in Our Bright Future could develop longer-term sustainable behaviours given the transitional life stage(s) being experienced and the nature of project activities.
- 3.18 A key aspect of young peoples' development is education; combining learning and engagement with the natural environment can be a powerful tool for developmental outcomes. A recent (2016) review of evidence produced as part of the Natural England-led Natural Connections Demonstration Project highlights the substantial body of evidence demonstrating a positive association between learning which takes place in the natural environment or "LINE" and the delivery of a diverse range of learning processes and outcomes⁴⁶. Specific example benefits of LINE include: higher educational attainment^{47,48}; improved concentration⁴⁹; developing

³⁶ Hart (2008)

³⁷ McCready and Dilworth (2014)

³⁸ Zimmerman (1995)

³⁹ Jennings *et al.* (2006)

⁴⁰ Jones, G. (2005)

⁴¹ Arnett, J. (2000)

⁴² Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group (2016)

⁴³ Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002)

⁴⁴ O'Brien *et al.* (2008)

⁴⁵ Ralston and Rhoden (2005)

⁴⁶ Lovell (2016)

⁴⁷ Dillon and Dickie (2012)

⁴⁸ Fiennes *et al.* (2015)

⁴⁹ O'Brien (2009)

social capital, pride, belonging and community connection^{50,51,52}; improved school attendance⁵³; and improved confidence and motivation^{54,55}. Different forms of interaction with the natural environment (intentional, incidental and indirect) can result in educational and learning benefits. For example, intentional and incidental interactions can support childhood development, especially in terms of cognitive and motor skills⁵⁶. Practical learning in the natural environment can also benefit children who might struggle with mainstream learning environments/processes, helping to boost their confidence and self-esteem and also helping to “level the playing field” for pupils with different learning needs⁵⁷. Many of these concepts have been tested and evaluated in a UK context via the Natural Connections Demonstration Project (2012-2016)⁵⁸.

- 3.19 The joint environment-education (i.e. LINE) focus of Our Bright Future means that there are likely to be wider educational and other benefits for the participating young people.
- 3.20 There are important interrelationships between young peoples’ connectedness to nature, levels of environmental awareness and the adoption of pro-environmental behaviours. A study for BTCV Cymru identified two key findings in this regard: (1) environmental volunteering led to increased feeling of nature connectedness, environmental awareness and pro-environmental behaviours; and (2) participants reporting high levels of nature connectedness were likely to be highly environmentally aware and already practicing several pro-environmental behaviours⁵⁹. Nature connectedness is also particularly important for young people as the frequency of childhood visits to natural environments has been identified as a strong precursor of visits in later life^{60,61}. Furthermore, the links between nature connectedness and well-being are well established (if not fully understood)⁶² and the rarity of direct experiences of nature by urban populations has been demonstrated in the UK⁶³.
- 3.21 Our Bright Future will place its participants in natural environment contexts often involving environmental projects; in line with the evidence and aspects of theory set out here, this could result in increased nature connectedness, environmental awareness, pro-environmental behaviours and well-being.
- 3.22 Further information on well-being as a concept and its various components are included in the sub-section below on *relationships between engagement in environmental improvement activities and social networks/well-being of young people*.

The relationships between engagement in environmental activities, volunteering and employment

⁵⁰ Lovell *et al.* (2010)

⁵¹ Fiennes *et al.* (2015)

⁵² Ohly *et al.* (2016)

⁵³ Price (2015)

⁵⁴ O’Brien (2009)

⁵⁵ Ohly *et al.* (2016)

⁵⁶ nef(2012)

⁵⁷ Dickie *et al.* (2011)

⁵⁸ Dillon and Dickie (2012)

⁵⁹ Hine *et al.* (2008)

⁶⁰ Thompson *et al.* (2007)

⁶¹ Ash *et al.* (2012)

⁶² Cleary *et al.* (2017)

⁶³ Cox *et al.* (2017)

3.23 Volunteering is often associated with skills development and increased employability, particularly for young people and as a step into first time employment. This relationship has been a recurrent feature of Government strategy⁶⁴ though it has a limited empirical basis. Studies tend to rely on subjective assessments of employability benefits with limited follow-up. Various studies suggest that participation in social action, like volunteering, contributes to the development of meta-cognitive, work and life skills (e.g. leadership, team-working, time management). These are transferable skills that will increase employability. For young people, gaining confidence, commitment and motivation through volunteering can also result in a better understanding of their capabilities and how to realise their potential⁶⁵. Published evaluations of youth volunteering initiatives are another source of empirical data on the impact of volunteering on skills development⁶⁶. For example, an evaluation of the UK Government supported Millennium Volunteers Programme found that participation in volunteering developed vocational skills (e.g. conservation) and softer transferable skills (e.g. public speaking)⁶⁷. Similarly, there is some evidence that undertaking environment specific volunteering activities can help develop skills and knowledge and deliver other important health and well-being outcomes (e.g. improvements in attention and physical/mental health)^{68,69}. Following on from the skills and knowledge development aspects of volunteering, empirical research (longitudinal studies) from the US and France have demonstrated a link between volunteering and enhanced employability^{70,71}. In terms of theory of change, this is related back to increased social and human (knowledge, skills etc.) capital because of volunteering. Research published by Lantra⁷² in 2011 and 2016 assessed the availability of environmental conservation skills in England, Scotland and Wales (2011) and Northern Ireland (2016). Whilst some of the results differ between the two studies, both identified certain skills gaps among the workforce⁷³. Softer/transferable skills (e.g. communication, IT) were identified as a particular gap in Northern Ireland whereas technical/practical skills were gaps in both studies.

3.24 Volunteering in environmental projects, including through initiatives like Our Bright Future, has the potential to develop vocational (practical) and softer/transferable skills that could help to plug some of the identified skills gaps in the UK and support employability.

3.25 One issue concerning the efficacy of youth volunteering programmes (including environmentally focused initiatives like Our Bright Future) is the question of how to "value" participation. This is challenging as benefits can be valued in monetary (e.g. calculation of volunteer hours equating to a notional wage⁷⁴) or non-monetary

⁶⁴ Such as DWP (2015)

⁶⁵ Newton *et al.* (2011)

⁶⁶ The National Youth Agency (2007)

⁶⁷ Davis *et al.* (undated)

⁶⁸ O'Brien *et al.* (2008)

⁶⁹ Malone (2008)

⁷⁰ Birdwell *et al.* (2013)

⁷¹ Spera *et al.* (2013)

⁷² Lantra is the leading UK awarding body for land-based and environmental training courses and qualifications: <http://www.lantra.co.uk/>

⁷³ Lantra (2016). Northern Ireland Environmental Conservation Skills Survey 2016: A skills need assessment of environmental conservation businesses in Northern Ireland.

⁷⁴ For example see suggestions in [WCVA \(2014\) Using Volunteer Time for Match Funding](#), which outlines guidance of accepted rates for match funding for European Commission projects [Accessed 21st December 2016].

(e.g. well-being⁷⁵ and other personal and wider social benefits⁷⁶) terms. Another important concept relating to youth engagement in social action is the “double benefit”, whereby a large proportion of those engaged (e.g. 93% in a study on the #iwill Campaign) identify their involvement as benefitting not only themselves but others as well^{77,78}.

3.26 From an evaluation perspective, this concept may be interesting to explore in the evaluation of Our Bright Future in terms of who else benefits from the activities undertaken, how and to what extent.

3.27 Recent research for the Department for Education has developed a framework of outcomes (e.g. managing feelings, confidence and agency, creativity) to guide monitoring and evaluation of youth initiatives, including social action projects like environmental volunteering. This includes suggestions for research tools that could be used to help measure the achievement of these outcomes (e.g. surveys, specific metrics)⁷⁹.

3.28 This framework and the tools therein provides part of the methodological and theoretical basis for evaluation of the Our Bright Future programme.

The relationships between engagement in environmental improvement activities, social networks and well-being among young people

3.29 Social networks and well-being are important concepts for engagement in environmental improvement activities among young people; participating in these types of activity can help to deliver social network (capital) and well-being related outcomes, not least due to issues around nature connectedness (see above). We define social networks in terms of the social capital concept, i.e. the strength of bonds between different actors/groups of actors (bonded, bridging and linking social capital⁸⁰) and in terms of benefits (personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement and trust and cooperative norms⁸¹). Social capital is measured by the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS)⁸² using measures structured around the four benefits of social capital listed above. For example, measures under the ‘personal relationships’ category include: meet socially with friends, relatives or work colleagues at least once a week; have at least one close friend; and regularly stop and talk with people in the neighbourhood. However, work undertaken by ONS looking at social capital in the context of young people (16-24) identified challenges with the standard quantitative measures of social capital so they will need to be used with caution in the context of Our Bright Future⁸³. In terms of the ‘civic engagement’ category for example, it has been found that young people are less likely to vote or to be involved with their community⁸⁴, so these measures are potentially less relevant as indicators of social capital development.

3.30 Aspects of these measures could potentially be used in the evaluation of Our Bright Future to understand potential changes in social capital among participating young people.

⁷⁵ Fujiwara *et al.* (2013)

⁷⁶ Kirkman *et al.* (2013)

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Pye *et al.* (2014)

⁷⁹ McNeil *et al.* (2012)

⁸⁰ Putnam (1995)

⁸¹ Siegler (2014)

⁸² ONS (2017c)

⁸³ ONS (2003)

⁸⁴ Ibid.

- 3.31 There is good evidence for the health benefits of interaction with the natural environment and recent UK research suggests that there are two main categories of benefit: (1) direct positive effects – mental and physical health; and (2) indirect positive effects – facilitating nature based activity/social engagement and providing a catalyst for behaviour change in terms of adopting healthier lifestyles⁸⁵. Direct aspects relate to the physical benefits of exercise in the natural environment; these can be extended through interventions that encourage intentional interactions (e.g. green⁸⁶ and blue⁸⁷ gyms). A recent review considered human-environment interactions in the context of urban greenspace; the review identified structural factors (e.g. proximity and density of urban greenspaces) as determining health and well-being benefits, including in relation to childhood obesity⁸⁸.
- 3.32 Although not all projects in the Our Bright Future Portfolio will lead to increased interaction with the natural environment, some may provide the opportunity to evidence and further understand how physical/mental health can be improved through greater interaction with the natural environment.
- 3.33 In addition to physical health benefits, there is compelling evidence of the benefits of engagement with the natural environment^{89,90} and in volunteering on well-being⁹¹. Well-being is a key concept within UK Government policy crossing health, welfare, sustainable development and local government policies^{92,93,94}. Given the activities undertaken through Our Bright Future projects, this is likely to be a key benefit for participants and which the Programme should seek to evidence. Similarly to social capital, ONS has been developing indicators of well-being. ONS' resultant "National Wheel of Well-being" identifies ten domains of well-being, each of which is comprised of a number of indicators, which are used to monitor the state of national well-being in the UK⁹⁵. These domains have been clustered into different groupings with a core of "individual well-being", a wider grouping of factors that "directly affect individual well-being" (e.g. physical and mental health, where we live, what we do) and a final grouping of "more contextual domains" (governance, the economy and the natural environment)⁹⁶. This is summarised in Figure 4 overleaf.

⁸⁵ Pretty *et al.* (2011)

⁸⁶ nef (2012)

⁸⁷ Depledge and Bird (2009)

⁸⁸ Kabisch *et al.* (2015)

⁸⁹ Bragg *et al.* (2015)

⁹⁰ For a variety of evidence papers relating to health, well-being and the environment visit:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/127020>

⁹¹ Big Lottery Fund (2011)

⁹² Cabinet Office and Prime Minister's Office (2010)

⁹³ Harper and Price (2011)

⁹⁴ Natural Capital Committee (2012)

⁹⁵ ONS (2014)

⁹⁶ Beaumont (2011)

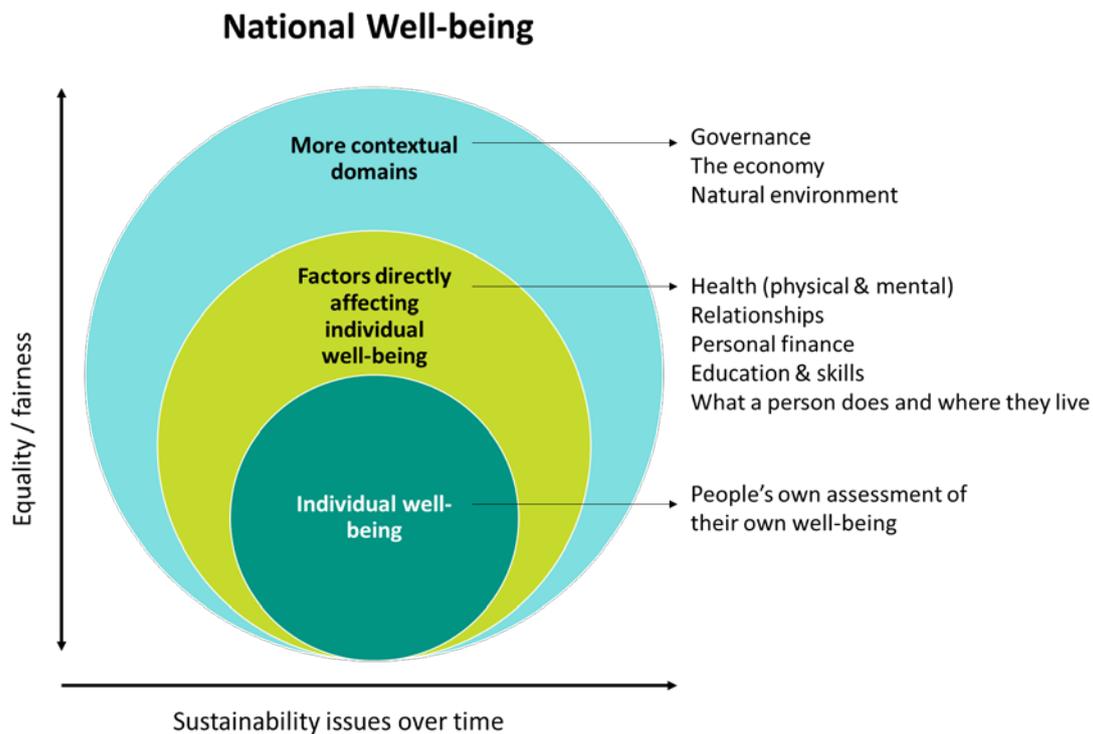


Figure 4: National Well-Being [adapted by ERS from ONS National Well-being Framework⁹⁷]

- 3.34 ONS has developed measures for each of these domains and, specifically, has considered measures that could be used to assess individual well-being among children and young people. These measures are found to be suitable for children >11 and include scale based questions (0-10) such as *overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?* There are a range of other tools that could be used to measure other aspects of well-being including: objective lists; preference satisfaction; flourishing accounts; and subjective well-being^{98,99}.
- 3.35 There are various existing tools (with different strengths and weaknesses) that could be used to help measure changes in well-being as a result of participation in environmental improvement activities, such as Our Bright Future.
- 3.36 Engagement in environmental improvement activities/volunteering has been shown to contribute to increased social capital (in line with the definition above) at the individual^{100,101} and community level in terms of enhanced community cohesion¹⁰². One mechanism for fostering social inclusion and cohesion in this regard is the (often) group based nature of the activity which enables participants to meet new people; e.g. a survey of volunteers completed for the National Trust in 2004 identified that 94% of volunteers agreed that it allowed them to meet new people¹⁰³. Engagement with nature in volunteering contexts can also be a potentially effective way to enable some marginalised people to reintegrate into society via

⁹⁷ Ibid

⁹⁸ Dolan *et al.* (2006)

⁹⁹ O'Brien *et al.* (2009)

¹⁰⁰ Forest Research (2010)

¹⁰¹ nef (2012)

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ockenden (2007)

development of the various skills and knowledge that participation in these activities can bring (as explained above)¹⁰⁴.

- 3.37 This indicates that beyond the direct benefits to Our Bright Future participants, there may be opportunities for projects to foster community cohesion.

Summary of provision of youth-focused environmental initiatives in the UK

- 3.38 Recent years have seen a diverse range of environment-focused initiatives designed to engage and support young people, varying in aim, scale and activity. These are summarised below to provide an overview of where Our Bright Future fits in relation to the variety of current and recent initiatives.

National programmes

- 3.39 A number of large scale programmes have adopted a similar model of operation to Our Bright Future; supporting a range of local projects that are in line with the broader programme aims. For example, **Communities Living Sustainably**¹⁰⁵ has developed and supported 30 community-led sustainability projects based across the UK during its five years of funding since 2012. The learning from this programme revealed that practical and intensive approaches had worked as effective ways to engage vulnerable and harder to reach groups¹⁰⁶.
- 3.40 **Realising Ambition**¹⁰⁷ adopts a similar approach in its aim to support vulnerable young people to avoid pathways into offending, whereby a consortium supports a spread of 25 different projects for 3 to 5 years, through a £25 million investment. To support delivery organisations to reflect on their own replication of projects and identify areas for development in the future, the programme has developed an 'Evidence-Confidence Framework'¹⁰⁸. This framework will be used to help commissioners assess the strengths of an organisation and the effectiveness of its service, while identifying areas for refinement and the adaptation of organisations and services. This suggests the evidence gathered from this framework might be used to influence the development of youth leadership programmes in the future, along with influencing wider policy.
- 3.41 The **Access to Nature**¹⁰⁹ programme distributed almost £30 million to 115 projects in England, during its five-year delivery to 2014, to provide educational opportunities for those who face barriers to visiting the countryside. This programme has revealed that the ability for projects to adapt and respond to participants' needs and ambitions has been crucial for building relationships between young people and nature¹¹⁰. In addition, providing basic but essential resources to overcome practical barriers, such as a lack of transport or suitable clothing, had also made it easier for young people involved in the projects to engage with nature. Forming good working collaborations with partners and organisations already on the ground in communities was also key to good engagement and creating resilient local structures and relationships.
- 3.42 The **Young Activists** programme¹¹¹ undertook a range of projects to raise youth awareness of sustainable development from 2008 to 2010. Four partner organisations

¹⁰⁴ O'Brien et al. (2011)

¹⁰⁵ Communities Living Sustainably (2016)

¹⁰⁶ Groundwork UK Learning Partnership Communities Living Sustainably (2014)

¹⁰⁷ Catch 22 (2012)

¹⁰⁸ Realising Ambition (2017)

¹⁰⁹ Icarus (2014)

¹¹⁰ Icarus (2015)

¹¹¹ Department for Children School and Families (2009)

were involved. However, it has been very difficult to find any further information or evaluation of the programme.

Environmental learning

- 3.43 As a means to engage a significant number of young people, a range of organisations are working to improve how the environment is included in classroom learning. For example, the **Countryside Classroom**¹¹² initiative provides accessible and evolving online resources and advice for schools on environmental learning. Similarly, the Woodland Trust¹¹³ and RSPB¹¹⁴ both offer resources to facilitate teaching the school curriculum outdoors. The **Eco-Schools**¹¹⁵ programme -active for more than 20 years globally- also works through schools, promoting sustainable development and empowering learners to influence their school's environmental policies.
- 3.44 Other schemes make use of learning environments outside of schools, delivering through existing youth organisations. For example, the **Green Ambassadors**¹¹⁶ scheme has set up new environmental-based badges for youth groups to raise awareness of environmental issues. Alternatively, from 2009 to 2014, the **TREE Programme**¹¹⁷ encouraged young people to get involved in the Woodcraft Folk and to improve their experience and support their understanding of influencing policy. The learning from the programme suggested that a series of regional training events for established leaders could highlight the value of enabling more involvement by young people in shaping Woodcraft at regional and district/group levels¹¹⁸. An evaluation of the programme also suggested that the TREE steering group should consider setting up a working group to identify means of encouraging Districts/Groups to embrace the new ways of working and systems emerging as a result of the programme.
- 3.45 Until 2016, **Roots of Success**¹¹⁹ also provided a curriculum to promote environmental awareness and job skills for use within UK schools, youth clubs and training programmes.

Youth environmental employment initiatives

- 3.46 A number of programmes are engaging young people through qualifications or vocational training; providing environmental education alongside employment or education readiness. For example, the Conservation Volunteers Youth Programme¹²⁰ and the Employment Skills Programme¹²¹ in Scotland have both been delivering training and experience to young people for a number of years. These activities aim to help them find employment, with an emphasis on the environment sector. Also in Scotland, Green Action¹²² has been engaging young marginalised people since 2009, giving them practical work experience through conservation and maintenance tasks.

¹¹² Countryside Classroom (2017)

¹¹³ Woodland Trust Scotland (2016)

¹¹⁴ RSPB (2016)

¹¹⁵ Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (2015)

¹¹⁶ World Wildlife Federation (2016)

¹¹⁷ Woodcraft Folk (2014)

¹¹⁸ Cadence Works and LandE (2010)

¹¹⁹ Roots to Success (2017)

¹²⁰ The Conservation Volunteers (2016)

¹²¹ Forestry Commission Scotland (2015)

¹²² Central Scotland Green Network (2013)

- 3.47 Within England, the Wildlife Trusts also offer a range of local opportunities for young people, linked to conservation activity. For example: Sussex Wildlife Trust provides the **Youth Rangers Scheme**¹²³, working with young people to improve and conserve wildlife areas; and **Wildlife Skills Traineeships**¹²⁴ in Wiltshire are on offer to those hoping to pursue a career in community engagement.
- 3.48 Now completed, **Conservation Skills**¹²⁵ (2010 to 2015) and **Skills for Wildlife**¹²⁶ (2014) provided local training for young people looking to work in the environment sector. The programme revealed certain activities which had been particularly beneficial for young people¹²⁷. Firstly, the opportunity for trainees to gain a long and continuous period of ‘on the job’ experience worked well. This combination of extensive work-based training and specialist qualifications has been proven to equip individuals with the skills required to enter and succeed in the conservation sector. Secondly, the offer of a bursary supported individuals who could not access the industry through a long-term volunteering route due to lack of financial support. The bursary enabled them to gain the practical experience they needed. Moreover, self-confidence was commonly the biggest barrier for trainees, and the extensive time investment in soft skills, such as job applications, presentations and personal effectiveness, had supported trainees to secure paid roles.

Youth environmental networks

- 3.49 As an accessible forum for young people, several on-going programmes have created and developed online networks for learning, communication and collaboration. For example, the international **Young Reporters for the Environment**¹²⁸ network encourages and supports young people to get involved in environmental journalism, investigating and reporting on local issues. Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, **Young Friends of the Earth**¹²⁹ has also developed a digital network of young people passionate about environmental issues to facilitate learning and support campaigning on sustainability.

Wider community environmental initiatives

- 3.50 Engaging young people in environmentally-focused activities is often an aim within wider community schemes. For example, the **Grow Wild**¹³⁰ programme has been funding community groups across the UK since 2013 to transform communal spaces and promote the importance of wild flowers. The programme aimed to bring people together and inspire young people to get involved. This is also the case for **It’s Your Neighbourhood**¹³¹ and **Stalled Spaces Scotland**¹³², which encourage community participation in environmental improvement in Scotland. Similarly, **Community Spaces**¹³³ funded community groups across England to improve their local spaces (completed 2016), and the **Tidy Towns** initiative¹³⁴ in Wales aims to support people to take responsibility for their local environment.

¹²³ Sussex Wildlife Trust (2016)

¹²⁴ Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (2016)

¹²⁵ Dorset Wildlife Trust (2016)

¹²⁶ Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (2014)

¹²⁷ Dorset Wildlife Trust (2016)

¹²⁸ Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (2016)

¹²⁹ Young Friends of the Earth UK (2016)

¹³⁰ Grow Wild (2015)

¹³¹ Keep Scotland Beautiful (2016)

¹³² Architecture & Design Scotland (2017)

¹³³ Groundwork (2016)

¹³⁴ Keep Wales Tidy (2016)

3.51 In London, the food growing network **Capital Growth**¹³⁵ is open to all age groups, providing networking events, advice, discounts and other development and volunteering programmes. With a learning focus, **Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland**¹³⁶ works to provide environmental learning for local groups across the UK through grants, resources and training, as well as running long-term developmental programmes such as **Forest School**, supporting learning at all ages. Although some of these projects involved young people to a certain extent, they tended not to be specifically focused on young people.

Wider youth initiatives

3.52 There are programmes working more generally to make young people aware of social issues and social action, which can include environmental projects. This includes the UK charity **Generation Change**¹³⁷, which is a partnership between 17 organisations collaboratively championing youth social action, and the **#iwill**¹³⁸ campaign (launched in 2013), which promotes social action through enabling and evidencing campaigning, fundraising and volunteering. A recent survey in 2016 commissioned by Step up to Serve and the Office for Civil Society¹³⁹ found that 15% of young people that engaged in social action undertook an activity to help to improve their local area.

3.53 Wider youth programmes supporting personal and skill development have also included elements/activities that might bring in environmental learning. An example is the **Princes Trust Team Community Project**¹⁴⁰, which has run for more than 25 years and provides a personal development course accessible for young people across the UK. This has often focused on renovation of indoor and outdoor spaces. While an impact evaluation of the programme hadn't directly reflected on lessons learnt from programme delivery, it was revealed that the Team Community Project created positive, tangible changes¹⁴¹. As well as creating environmental improvements, the project contributed to longer-term wellbeing and social changes for those that use the space, while increasing the quality and use of local assets.

3.54 Similarly The **National Citizen Service (NCS)**¹⁴², delivered by a series of public, private and third sector organisations across England since 2009, offers young people skill development opportunities including via projects in their local community. An evaluation of the National Citizen Service focused on drivers of positive experiences to explore what had most influence on participants' perceptions of NCS¹⁴³. The most important drivers were views of the time spent in staying away from home, the time spent learning new skills, and the time spent planning and doing the project in their local area. Key drivers also included a sense of achievement, increased confidence about getting a job and feeling that they have developed useful skills.

Lessons learnt about engaging young people in environmental activities?

3.55 These programmes revealed a number of key lessons for engaging young people in environmental activities. Importantly, those activities which allowed young people to actively engage with the environment had proved much more effective than the

¹³⁵ Capital Growth (2016)

¹³⁶ Outdoor and Woodland Learning (2016)

¹³⁷ Generation Change (2016)

¹³⁸ Step up to serve (2016)

¹³⁹ Michelmore & Pye (2016)

¹⁴⁰ Prince's Trust (2015)

¹⁴¹ Prince's Trust (2015)

¹⁴² National Citizen Service (2016)

¹⁴³ Cameron et al (2017)

delivery of information or awareness events. For some programmes, tackling practical barriers to do with travel, costs and suitable clothing, or offering bursaries had proved essential to helping young people engage with these activities. Projects that were tailored, responsive and adaptable to the needs and interest of young people were particularly valuable. Moreover, good working collaborations with partners and organisations already on the ground in communities were also important in ensuring engagement activities were appropriate and tailored to young people, while creating resilient local structures and relationships.

What makes Our Bright Future different?

- 3.56 There have been a wide variety of environmentally-focused programmes organised across the UK over the past ten years, some of which have been designed to engage young people on a range of environmental issues. The individual projects which make up the Our Bright Future portfolio are not new – several programmes and projects have in the past worked to engage young people in the environment and support young people to improve local spaces. However, many of these activities have been occurring in isolation. There has not been a programme funded on the scale of Our Bright Future, or implemented over such a long time-frame, which brings together both environmental and youth sectors, as a consortium and portfolio of projects. This is where the Our Bright Future programme offers new opportunities for the two sectors to develop and refine approaches and opportunities to empower young people to lead future environmental change.

Conclusion: Considerations for the Programme Evaluation

- 3.57 It is clear that there are a number of pressing issues facing young people and the environment that point to a need for a programme of this type. There are also significant opportunities on which Our Bright Future could capitalise to help address some of these issues. These are in addition to the rationale presented by the Big Lottery Fund in the previous section, making it clear that no other equivalent funding is currently available for this type of programme. Evidence and current theory show clearly how a programme such as Our Bright Future, with its emphasis on: youth leadership; volunteering, social action and vocational training; and greater engagement and learning in the natural environment could tackle multiple issues and have significant benefits for young people, the environment and communities. According to the evidence, these are likely to include:
- Skills and knowledge;
 - Pro-environmental behaviour change;
 - Employability;
 - Health and well-being;
 - Youth empowerment; and
 - Social capital and community cohesion.
- 3.58 The evaluation will need to pay specific attention to each one of these potential benefits, drawing on available evidence to demonstrate how Our Bright Future is tackling particular issues. The current evidence base has been used to inform an Our Bright Future Logic Model and Evaluation Framework which will shape the evaluation over the next five years (further details, including the Logic Model and Evaluation Framework are available in Appendix D). In subsequent reports, we shall revisit this evidence base and discuss any relevant theoretical developments over the course of Programme delivery. We will also draw on these theories when presenting

evidence from the Programme to indicate where Our Bright Future adds to this evidence base.

- 3.59 In terms of the Policy Context, there is a key opportunity for Our Bright Future to demonstrate projects, activities, measures and investments that have the potential to be scaled-up, thereby supporting delivery at the national level. The evaluation will be able to help evidence the effectiveness (or not) of projects, identifying what has worked well and less well, informing future policy and practice.
- 3.60 As noted, Our Bright Future is different in many respects to the variety of similar programmes and projects that have been delivered in the past ten years. The Portfolio approach has not before been used to deliver such an ambitious, long-term, UK-wide programme bringing together the youth and environmental sectors. Therefore, in terms of the evaluation we will explore what this has meant, particularly:
- Exploring the extent to which the Portfolio approach adds value (demonstrating that it is 'greater than sum of parts');
 - Assessing whether or not combining activities for young people and environmental objectives is effective and meets multiple objectives;
 - Considering the value and importance of the Programme timeframe, notably that funding for projects is available for longer (5-7 years) than under other comparable interventions (typically 2-3 years);
 - Reviewing the long-term legacy of such an approach, in terms of the wider landscape of provision of environment-focused initiatives aimed at empowering young people.

4. THE PORTFOLIO

Overview of projects in the Our Bright Future portfolio

- 4.1 Table 3 provides a list of the 31 Our Bright Future projects, the Lead Organisation and location of project activities. Further information on each project can be found on the [Our Bright Future Website](#).

Table 3: Project and Lead Organisation List		
PROJECT NAME	LEAD ORGANISATION	PROJECT LOCATION
Building Sustainable Communities	Down to Earth Project	Swansea Rhondda Cynon Taff
Youth In Nature	Probe (Hull) Limited	East Yorkshire (City of Hull)
Belfast Hills Partnership	Belfast Hills Partnership Trust	Co Antrim & Down
Your Shore Beach Rangers	<u>Cornwall Trust for Nature Conservation Trading As Cornwall Wildlife Trust</u>	Cornwall
Wild Welsh Coasts*	North Wales Wildlife Trust	Gwynedd, Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire
Vision England*	RNIB	England-wide
Growing confidence	Shropshire Wildlife Trust	Shropshire
Bright Green Future*	Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)	UK
Green Leaders	Groundwork UK	Northamptonshire, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and North East
Green Academies Project 2	The National Trust	West Midlands, Cheshire, Greater London, Tyne & Wear, Clwyd
Grassroots Challenge Programme*	Ulster Wildlife	Antrim, Down, Armagh, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Derry, Londonderry
From Farm to Fork*	<u>Global Feedback Limited</u>	UK
Next generation of Fife's environmental champions and workforce*	Falkland Stewardship Trust on behalf of the Fife Rural Skills Partnership	Fife
Spaces 4 Change	Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs t/a UnLtd	England-wide
Green Futures	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust	North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Lancashire
One Planet Pioneers*	Middlesbrough Environment City Trust Ltd	Middlesbrough
Growing Up Green	Hill Holt Wood	Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire
Natural Estates	Avon Wildlife Trust	Bristol, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset, Bath and

		North East Somerset, Gloucestershire
Creative Pathways Environmental Design	Impact Arts (Projects) Ltd	Glasgow, North Ayrshire, Edinburgh, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire
BEE YOU!	Blackburne House	Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire
MyPlace: Motivated Younger People Looking After Community Environments	The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside	Lancashire
My World, My Home*	Friends of the Earth Trust	London, Nottinghamshire, Glamorgan
Environmental Leadership Programme*	UpRising	England-wide
Fruit-full Communities	<u>The Learning through Landscapes Trust</u>	England-wide
Tomorrow's Natural Leaders	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	All traditional counties of Yorkshire
The Environment Now	The National Youth Agency	UK
vInspired Eco-Talent	<u>vInspired</u>	London
Milestones*	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Limited	Wiltshire, Swindon Borough Council
Welcome to the Green Economy*	Groundwork London	Greater London
Putting Down Roots (PDR) for Young People*	St Mungo Community Housing Association (known as St Mungo's)	London, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Bristol
Student Eats	<u>NUS Students' Union Charitable Services</u>	UK

* Case Study Projects

Project characteristics

- 4.2 The evaluation team undertook a scoping phase to better understand the diversity of projects, and if possible group projects into distinct categories based on: target group of young people; subject area; activity type; and location. Although categorising projects is difficult, given that many have overlapping activities and subject areas, the following gives an indication of the focus of the Our Bright Future Portfolio. It is worth noting that the figures given below are indicative of what was proposed in the project business plans and explained during scoping interviews. It is likely that some of these may change slightly as projects adapt during the course of delivery.

Location

- 4.3 Figure 5 demonstrates the geographical spread of the Portfolio. A map with details of all project locations is available on the [Our Bright Future Website](#). Overall, the Programme has managed to select projects which provide a good geographical spread across the UK.
- 4.4 Of the total of 31 projects:
- 6 projects are UK-wide, although two of these are operating in England and Wales only rather than in all devolved administrations;
 - 19 are operating within England – 3 are England-wide, 14 working regionally or in multiple locations, and 2 in a single location.
 - 2 projects are operating within Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland respectively.

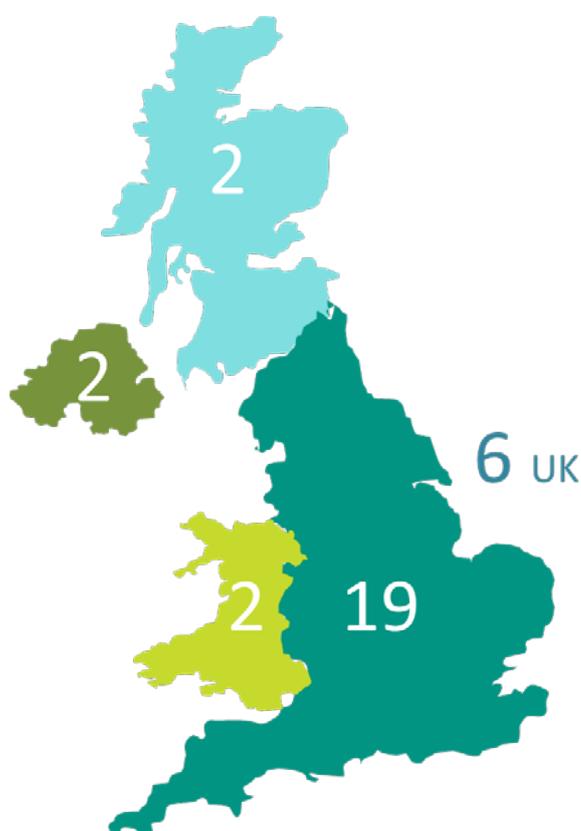


Figure 5: Map of project distribution of the 31 projects

Target groups

- 4.5 Table 4 demonstrates the split of projects by age range and target group. In terms of age range, just under half the projects are covering the entire age range of 11-24. No projects are exclusively on school aged children (11-16) and around 13 projects are exclusively targeting those aged 16-24. The target age group is influenced in many cases by the referral routes e.g. through schools, colleges or universities. Whilst all projects target young people within the Programme bracket of 11-24, it is common to split this into two or more age groups in order to target specific activities at those of a similar age (e.g. over and under 16s or 18s). One project also indicated

that dividing young people for their activity was a requirement of safeguarding legislation.

- 4.6 Just under half the projects are specifically targeting disadvantaged, vulnerable and/or marginalised young people including young people that are NEET, that have mental health problems or learning difficulties, that were homeless or at risk of homelessness and that have drug and alcohol misuse problems. One project, Vision England, is specifically working with young people with disabilities.
- 4.7 Many projects emphasised that they were keen to be inclusive and for some this was due to anticipated difficulties with recruitment. Projects that are more specific about the target group tend to have direct referral agency routes e.g. from schools, job centres, homeless shelters etc. Further evidence about the referral routes used by projects and extent to which these have been effective or not will be captured during the evaluation.

Table 4: Target age and group of projects	
Age range	Number of projects
All ages (11-24)	14
16-24 only	13
Other (e.g. 14-17, 15-19, 14-21 etc.)	4
Target group	Number of projects
All young people (no eligibility criteria)	19
Disadvantaged, vulnerable and/or marginalised young people (including those who are unemployed or have a disability)	14

Subject area and activities

- 4.8 Our Bright Future has adopted a wide-ranging definition of the 'environment' and therefore the projects in the portfolio cover a variety of subject areas. Table 5 below shows a breakdown of the number of projects focusing either entirely or to some extent on different subject areas. Some projects are focusing on multiple subjects. It is clear that physical environmental improvement (most of this being practical conservation activities) accounts for the focus of the majority of projects, but there are also other areas of interest which demonstrate the breadth of projects. These include sustainability, behaviour change, influencing or campaigning, sustainable enterprises and other more specific subjects.

Table 5: Subject Areas of Projects	
Subject area	Number of projects
Physical environmental improvement (e.g. conservation)	20
Sustainability (e.g. resource efficiency) and behaviour change (e.g. recycling, travel behaviour)	5
Influencing policy or campaigning	5

Food (e.g. sustainable production and food waste)	4
Sustainable enterprises (e.g. social enterprises)	5
Other (including environmental arts, sustainable construction, technological innovation)	3

4.9 Table 6 below shows the type of activities undertaken across the portfolio. More so than subject area, the activity types overlap within projects. Many are offering almost all of the activities listed in some form. However, volunteering and training are the most common activities undertaken across the Portfolio. In many cases the offer is tailored to suit different levels of commitment (e.g. taster sessions through to long-term volunteering) and age range (e.g. short term opportunities/ events for school aged children to apprenticeships for over 16 year olds). There is a strong emphasis from all projects on enhancing skills and knowledge, particularly allowing young people to gain hands-on experience. This will be a key area of focus for the evaluation, and particularly how gaining experience, improved skills and knowledge have led to increased confidence, empowerment, employment or access to further education and training.

Table 6: Activity type of projects	
Activity types	Number of projects
Volunteering	20
Informal training/ environmental education	23
Formal training or award (accredited)	16
Apprenticeship	5
Grant scheme	3
Work placements or work experience	2

Project rationale and need

4.10 Overall the Our Bright Future project business plans (written as part of the application process) demonstrate a general need for intervention in the environment and with young people, evidenced widely by national and UK statistics and reports. However, there is less evidence of local or target group specific need in most cases. Global and UK-wide environmental problems and challenges for young people are frequently cited e.g. prevalence of mental health problems in young people and the related benefits of engagement with the natural environment. The rationale presented for each project is also supported by references to previous similar projects and organisational experience e.g. of engaging with young people. The success of previous projects was largely noted in anecdotal comments, reinforced by a minority of organisations with statistical evidence and evaluation reports.

Scaling up activities

4.11 In order to be successful in their application to Our Bright Future, projects were required to demonstrate that they were scaling up or replicating existing activity. Therefore, all projects had some previous experience working either in the environmental field and / or with young people. For some organisations, such as the

National Youth Agency and UnLtd, Our Bright Future provided an opportunity to enter the environmental field, providing a new context for existing work previously undertaken with young people.

"We have not had the environmental focus before. This programme allowed us to try a new angle of engaging with young people whilst within the remit of what we know and understand." Project Manager

- 4.12 Meanwhile for a small number of organisations for whom the environment was their main focus (e.g. local Wildlife Trusts), the Programme has led them to engage young people (particularly those of secondary school age) for the first time. Indeed, a project manager at one of the Wildlife Trusts felt that the Programme was a prime opportunity to *"expose the trust to a new membership base and make it relevant to a new demographic who can be involved in the future"*.
- 4.13 The up-scaling of existing projects took a number of different forms. Some organisations chose to widen their geographic coverage (both locally, and in some cases nationally), some to broaden their target group of young people (e.g. age, circumstances) while others chose to devote greater resources to the youth strand of their organisation. The funding has also enabled a number of organisations to continue their existing work and accommodate greater demand. For example, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust have been able to cater for a wider audience and extend services which were previously oversubscribed.

Project partnerships

- 4.14 Approximately a fifth of Our Bright Future projects enabled the establishment of new partnerships while others were based on existing partnerships or allowed organisations to formalise existing informal relationships and referral processes. A number of new partnerships brought together separate young people and environmental agendas, for example North Wales Wildlife Trust which had not before engaged with the youth networks and organisations of North Wales such as the Scouts, Young Farmers, the Urdd (Welsh youth organisation). Other partnerships have enabled environmental organisations to engage with wider agendas such as health, for example the My Place project run by The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside which has partnered with the Lancashire Care Foundation Trust. Other projects, such as From Farm to Fork (a partnership between Feedback Ltd and FoodCycle), have enabled organisations to continue their separate strands of existing work while presenting a new combined offer to participants which brings both partner activities together.
- 4.15 Some projects reported that the Programme had led them to gain new experiences too. This included experimenting with new approaches, for example the My Place project has allowed Lancashire Wildlife Trust to begin a formalised way of working therapeutically with young people using eco therapy. Another project manager commented that the Programme had allowed them the *"opportunity to push boundaries"*, in reference to the funding supporting them to scale up a previous project and take it out into communities. Meanwhile others, such as Hill Holt Wood have been able to accredit their training and offer qualifications to participants through their Our Bright Future project, as well as test approaches with new audiences which might one day allow them to be self-sustaining.
- 4.16 In providing funding for projects of up to 5 years, the Our Bright Future programme offered most organisations a new and valuable opportunity to plan long-term. Organisations emphasised the benefit of being able to establish long term

partnerships and invest in the same young people over a longer time period, which had not been possible previously due to the short-term nature of most funding.

Involvement of young people in project delivery and management

- 4.17 The extent to which young people were considered to be involved in project delivery varies widely between different projects. In part, this is influenced by the nature of each project and the length of time young people are able to participate in it (e.g. one-off engagement, weeks or years). Despite most projects emphasising that activities would be 'youth-led', there appears to be no common definition or understanding of what this means in practice. The formality of such approaches varies between projects, with some organisations hoping to establish panels of young people to inform long-term delivery (for example Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust's Green Futures' Youth Forum), others inviting representative young people onto the project steering group and some simply convening one-off focus groups. Several projects were also involving young people in various stages of delivering and coordinating events for other young people and wider communities, including designing, promoting and hosting activities. For one project, young people were expected to be involved in a panel deciding on the selection of activities to be funded.
- 4.18 Some projects, such as Spaces for Change (Unltd.), The Environment Now (National Youth Agency) and Student Eats (NUS) are putting young people in a significant position of responsibility by offering grants to manage a particular project, invention or enterprise. Other organisations were intending to involve a subset of young people in delivery of their project. For example, BEE YOU! (Blackburne House) indicated that if young people expressed an interest in delivering the project and becoming a tutor or peer mentor then they would provide support to increase their qualification level in order to do so. Several other projects have indicated an interest in using 'graduates' of their projects as peer mentors or ambassadors for new or younger participants.

Conclusion: Considerations for the Programme Evaluation

- 4.19 The evaluation team has worked closely with projects to develop, as far as possible, a single Evaluation Framework which captures as much evidence of project processes and outcomes across the Portfolio as is feasible. Whilst there are very few commonalities, there are nonetheless opportunities for continual learning about approaches that are most/least effective. Therefore, in addition to looking at evidence of outcomes across the portfolio the evaluation will collect evidence to assess:
- What have been the challenges around engaging different groups/ages?
 - How effective are different recruitment and referral routes?
 - What is more or less successful in terms of scaling up projects?
 - Which partnership approaches work best?
 - How successfully have projects involved young people? What are the benefits, drawbacks and lessons from this?

5. CASE STUDY PROJECTS

- 5.1 The case study sampling framework was based on identifying projects of varying characteristics including location, target group, subject area and activity type. The finalised list of case studies is provided below.

Project Name	Lead Organisation
Wild Welsh Coasts	North Wales Wildlife Trust
Vision England	RNIB
Bright Green Future	Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)
Grassroots Challenge Programme	Ulster Wildlife
From Farm to Fork: Training young volunteers to reduce food waste and address social isolation.	Global Feedback Limited
Next generation of Fife's environmental champions and workforce	Falkland Stewardship Trust on behalf of the Fife Rural Skills Partnership
One Planet Pioneers	Middlesbrough Environment City Trust Ltd
My World, My Home	Friends of the Earth Trust
Environmental Leadership Programme	UpRising
The Environment Now	The National Youth Agency
Milestones	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Limited
Welcome to the Green Economy	Groundwork London
Putting Down Roots for Young People	St Mungo Community Housing Association (known as St Mungo's)

- 5.2 As part of the Baseline and Context Report, representatives of the lead organisations for each of the case study projects were interviewed in May 2017 and asked to retrospectively consider the baseline of their projects at the outset of the Our Bright Future programme. It became very clear that for most of the projects, there was little traditional baseline data for a variety of reasons. These included:
- No prior engagement with the target group, and therefore very little data relating to the target group.
 - Loss of information regarding the rationale and background to the project, as a result of staff turnover or the recruitment of whole new staff teams to deliver the project. In many cases, the business plan had been written by development/fundraising staff rather than those who were delivering the project.
- 5.3 As a general rule, however, most projects are collecting baseline data from project participants which will enable them to measure distance travelled at a participant level. This data will be available for analysis in subsequent case studies completed in summer 2017 and 2018, which will contribute to the Mid-term Report in early 2019.
- 5.4 The Baseline Case Studies therefore focused on: background and rationale for the project; the extent to which projects were scaled up; planned activities (aims, outcomes, targets); the partnership; what opportunities the funding is likely to bring to the project/organisation; and hopes in terms of the Programme and longer-term.

The case studies are available as separate documents accompanying this report. These case studies will provide the context for each project and opportunity to compare the outcomes with anticipated outcomes.

- 5.5 At this point, it is difficult to find much to summarise from the case studies collectively, given the wide variety of projects, however a common question asked of all was about their hopes and aspirations for participation in the Programme. This will be assessed during the subsequent case studies to provide an indication of the added value of being part of the programme, and whether there is evidence that it is 'greater than the sum of its parts'.
- 5.6 One of the most widely reported benefits of, and aspirations for being part of the Our Bright Future programme was the opportunity to network with other projects with potential for sharing knowledge, experiences, good practice and ideas with others managing similar projects. For some, just knowing that others were undertaking similar projects provided them with reassurance. Others also noted that making connections with organisations different to their own was beneficial as they were able to learn about new areas and approaches e.g. working with young people. Overall, developing connections and contacts was perceived as a valuable element of participation in the Programme.
- 5.7 In addition to exchanging knowledge with other projects, a number of organisations suggested that the Programme may allow for referral of participants between projects, with links between some projects identified as allowing for progression. Enabling wider partnerships to form was identified as a further aspiration for the Programme and a small number of projects cited collaborative working as a benefit of the Programme and the contacts they had developed with other projects as a result. For example, a couple of projects had collaborated to deliver a webinar for young people.
- 5.8 Another widely reported aspiration was for the Programme to provide a collective voice for young people across the UK. This was felt particularly valuable for young people from geographically isolated areas, enabling them to feel connected with others from across the UK. The Youth Forum was identified as having a particularly important role in providing a voice for young people. It was hoped that this collective voice would provide leverage, lobbying and influencing power and create opportunities to influence wider policy and practice and raise young people up the agenda. Noted potential areas for influence included increasing the number of young people accessing employment in the environment sector, increasing investment in similar interventions and raising awareness of the health and well-being benefits of engaging with the natural environment.

6. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Baseline and Context Report has set out the background, rationale, and strategic context to the Our Bright Future programme. It also provides an overview of the operational structure of the Programme and composition of the Portfolio of 31 projects including presenting 13 Case Study projects in further detail. These Case Studies will be followed over the next five years to allow for deeper understanding about the variety of interventions that are covered by the Programme.
- 6.2 This Report has outlined a number of **key considerations for the Programme Evaluation**, which have informed the Evaluation Framework (see Appendix D).
- 6.3 In terms of the background, rationale and operational structure of the Programme the evaluation will assess:
- How closely the Programme is operating in line with the Big Lottery Fund's initial ambition;
 - How the rationale or direction of the Programme is flexing in line with changing context and need;
 - The effectiveness of the Consortium approach, and particularly how the anticipated role of each partner is playing out in practice;
 - How effective the organisational structure has been in delivering the Programme;
 - Lessons learnt in the Portfolio approach and ensure that learning is shared with Big Lottery Fund to shape future programmes of this nature.
- 6.4 In terms of the **strategic context of the Programme**, the evaluation will:
- Assess whether Our Bright Future is demonstrating multiple benefits for young people, the environment and communities;
 - Help to evidence the effectiveness (or not) of projects, identifying what has worked well and less well, informing future policy and practice.
 - Revisit this evidence base and discuss any relevant theoretical developments over the course of Programme delivery;
 - Draw on established theories when presenting evidence from the Programme to indicate where Our Bright Future adds to this evidence base.
 - Explore the extent to which the Portfolio approach adds value (demonstrating that it is 'greater than sum of parts');
 - Assess whether or not combining activities for young people and environmental objectives is effective and meets multiple objectives;
 - Consider the value and importance of the Programme timeframe, notably that funding for projects is available for longer (5-7 years) than under other comparable interventions (typically 2-3 years);
 - Review the long-term legacy of such an approach, in terms of the wider landscape of provision of environment-focused initiatives aimed at empowering young people.
- 6.5 The evaluation team has worked closely with projects to develop, as far as possible, a single Evaluation Framework which captures as much evidence of project processes and outcomes across the Portfolio as is feasible. Whilst there are very few commonalities, there are nonetheless opportunities for continual learning about

approaches that are most/least effective. Therefore, in addition to looking at evidence of outcomes across the portfolio, the evaluation will explore: successful approaches to partnership working, scaling up successful initiatives, recruiting and engaging young people and involving young people as part of project delivery and management.

Next steps

- 6.6 This Baseline and Context Report sets the scene for the Our Bright Future programme and provides a reference point upon which to assess the success of the Programme against its stated aims, outcomes and longer-term ambitions. The evaluation will be undertaken throughout Programme delivery, with a major Mid-term Report due in early 2019, and a final report due in late 2021.
- 6.7 However, alongside major external reports the evaluation team will provide regular Real-Time Learning Updates to the Our Bright Future Team, Evaluation Panel, Steering Group, Youth Forum and Portfolio to support continual learning and improvement. These will be based on data collected through quarterly and annual project reporting (which have been designed in line with the Evaluation Framework) and annual interviews with project leads and stakeholders. In addition, the evaluation will follow the progress of the 13 case studies in detail at three points during the Programme delivery: in late 2017; late 2018 and in 2020.

APPENDIX A: PROGRAMME INDICATORS

Outcome one - Participation in the Our Bright Future programme has had positive impacts on young people equipping them with the skills, experience and confidence to lead environmental change	
Indicator	Timescale
60,000 (59,945) young people have participated in Our Bright Future activities	End of project
26,000 (26,190) young people have increased environmental skills and knowledge	End of project
4,000 young people have gained environmental qualifications or awards e.g. OCN, NVQs, John Muir, DofE Award, academic qualifications	End of project
900 (894) young people have entered into internships, work experience, work placements or apprenticeships	End of project
400 young people have started entrepreneurial projects as part of the programme	End of project
Young people participating in the programme have improved their health and wellbeing	End of project
Young people participating in the programme feel more engaged and empowered to lead change in their local communities	End of project

Outcome two - The Our Bright Future programme has had positive impacts on the environment and local communities	
Indicator	Timescale
450 (468) community spaces have been improved	End of project
Local communities have improved community cohesion	End of project
Local communities have increased awareness of and engagement in the environment	End of project

Outcome three - The Our Bright Future programme has influenced change and created a legacy	
Indicator	Timescale
Policy and decision makers, businesses, NGOs have been engaged and informed about the programme	End of project
The programme has created evidence that has been used to influence policy and decision making locally, regionally and nationally	End of project
The programme has stimulated new thinking and dialogue about young people and the environment and led to a change in policy and practice	End of project

Outcome four - The Our Bright Future programme utilises an effective partnership working and a youth-led approach, leading to stronger outcomes for young people and the environment

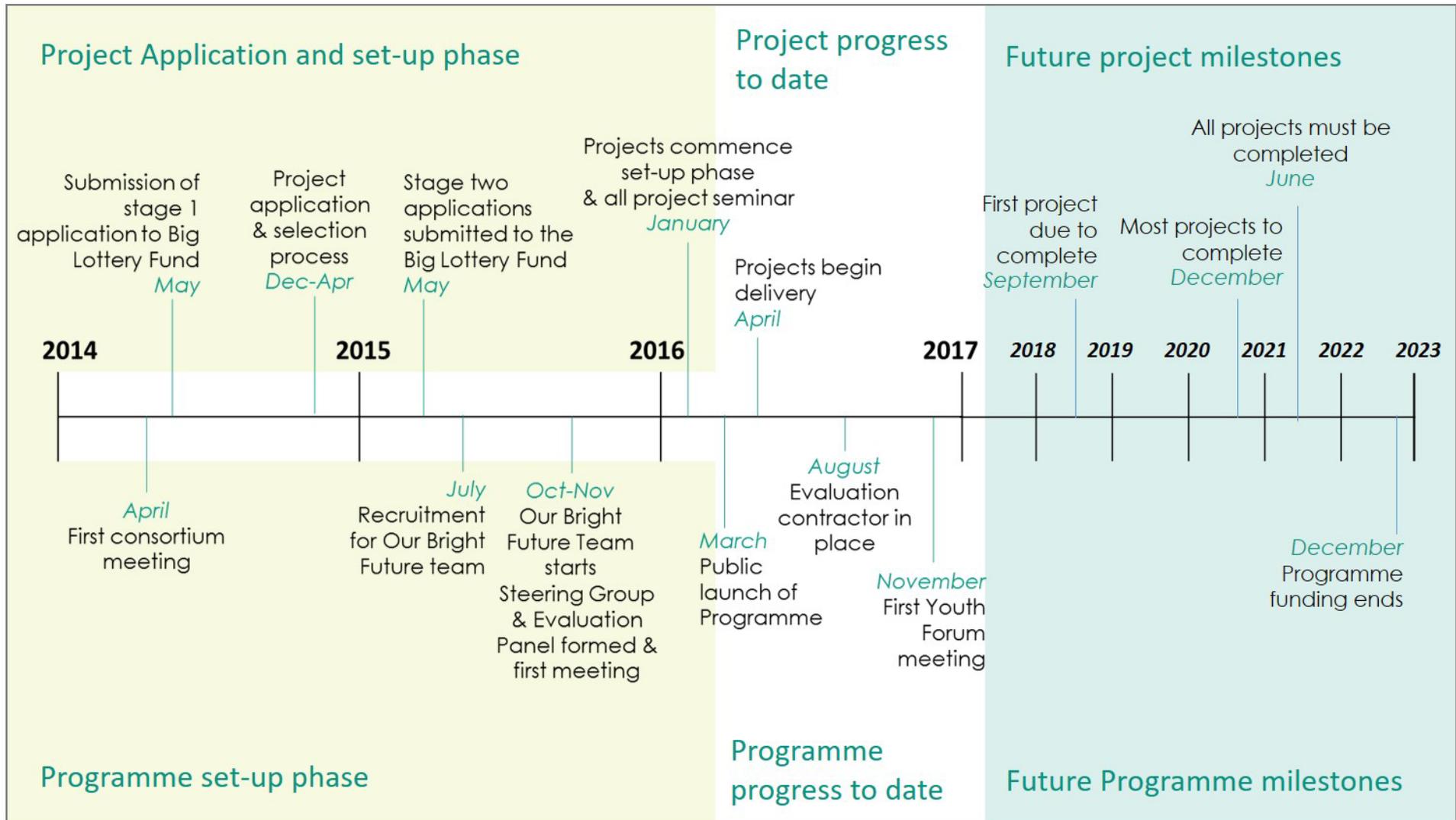
Indicator	Timescale
At least 80% projects have utilised the Share Learn Improve function to share best practice, collaborate and develop relationships with organisations that they may not previously have worked with	End of project
Third sector organisations have increased collaboration, awareness and sharing of knowledge and experience across the youth and environmental sector	End of project
The youth function enables young people to influence the management and direction of the programme which is acted upon by the Steering Group, partnership and Big Lottery Fund	End of project
Good practice on how to work best with young people is shared both within and outside of Our Bright Future	End of project

APPENDIX B: CONSORTIUM ROLES

	Overall portfolio <i>(NB consortium members bring a broader range of expertise/knowledge to the table)</i>	Share Learn Improve <i>(NB all providing 1-to-1 critical friend support and potentially specialist advisers)</i>	Evaluation & policy formulation	Youth Function
TWT	Overall accountability for Portfolio's strategic and operational direction	Lead overall SLI function, with other consortium members leading specific strands.	Lead on evaluation but could move across to another partner	To ensure youth function effectively linked into other portfolio functions
CSE	To provide strategic expertise and challenge in energy issues and supporting young people and communities to enable change locally	Lead a thread of support on influencing policy and decision making;	To provide steer on ensuring impacts against enabling local change/decision making And To support the formulation of policy around climate change and energy	To provide support in enabling young people to engage in local decision making
FSC	To provide strategic expertise on educational priorities and school structures and engagement with secondary schools	To lead a thread of support on outdoor education' and 'environmental understanding'	To support the formulation of policy around formal and informal environmental education	To support effective environmental understanding
TCV	to provide strategic expertise and challenge on maximising employability and skills development	To lead a thread of support on boosting employability and skills	To support measuring employability outcomes	To support developing employability
YDMT	To provide strategic expertise and challenge on engaging with hard-to-reach groups. To also ensure Portfolio caters for smaller charities	To lead a thread of support on engaging hard-to-reach communities	To provide expertise in evaluation with disadvantaged / hard to reach groups	To provide expertise and challenge on env/rural apprenticeships and environmental education with young people. To provide expertise on engaging disadvantaged young people in env activities.
vInspired	to provide strategic expertise and challenge on ensuring young	To lead a thread of support on ensuring young	To ensure young people are at the centre of the	Lead organisation on youth support function (the offer

	people are at the heart of the portfolio (in governance and project management)	people are at the heart of project decision making.	evaluation and policy formulation	the Portfolio provides to young people). Manage the youth forum
UpRising	To provide strategic expertise and challenge in influencing youth policy	To lead a thread on empowering young people to influence policy and supporting project leads to shape and campaign for policy change	Youth lead on evaluation Support the development of policy around young people	To lead a thread on empowering young people to influence policy

APPENDIX C: PROGRAMME AND PROJECT TIMELINE (2014-2023)



APPENDIX D: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Programme Evaluation Methodology

It is the intention that the Programme will have an impact that is 'greater than the sum of its parts', which means that the impact and legacy of bringing together the 31 projects under the Our Bright Future umbrella will be greater than the collective impacts of the individual projects operating in isolation. The evaluation reflects this need. Each project will be undertaking their own evaluation activities to collect evidence about the impact of the project, and to inform learning and development. The Programme Evaluation meanwhile will assess the collective impact of the portfolio, as well as the impact of the wider Programme, particularly in terms of: cross sector learning; development of an Our Bright Future movement/network; influencing policy and practice; and legacy.

Evaluation Tools

In late 2016 and early 2017 the evaluation team consulted widely with the Our Bright Future Team, Evaluation Panel and projects in order to develop a simple Programme Logic Model. This Logic Model and Evaluation Framework were also informed by the current theoretical context, as summarised in Section 3 above. The use of the Logic Model is to provide a framework for reporting and collecting evidence throughout the Programme, both a Portfolio and Programme level.

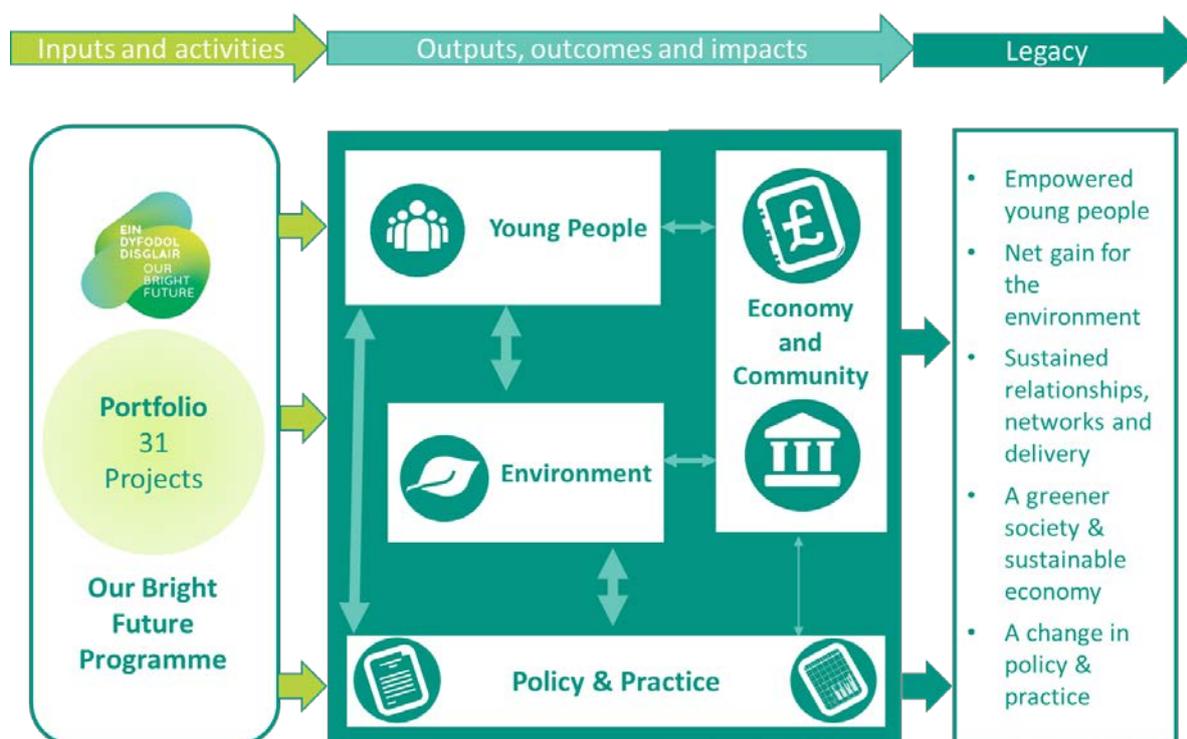


Figure 6: Programme Evaluation Logic Model

In light of this simple model, the team developed a set of 'evaluation themes' to structure data collection and analysis. These are:

- Young people
- Environment

- Communities
- A greener economy
- Programme influence and legacy.

Evaluation Framework

The following evaluation research questions were developed in accordance with the evaluation themes, and to capture learning about Portfolio and Programme processes. A more detailed version of this framework including sub-questions and indicative data sources was also produced to guide the evaluation and is available upon request from the Evaluation Team. The high level research questions that will guide the Programme Evaluation are provided below.

Evaluation Framework – High Level Questions

Evaluation process questions
Programme processes
<i>How effective is...</i>
Programme management – budget allocations, communication, marketing, monitoring, grants management?
Programme governance – including Steering Group and Evaluation Panel?
Partnership working – partnership roles and responsibilities, communication and attendance at meetings, skills/expertise offered and shared, what works/doesn't?
the Youth Function – engagement, feedback, what works/doesn't?
the SLI Function – what works/doesn't?
the Policy Function – what works/doesn't?
Portfolio processes
<i>How effective are...</i>
Project management e.g. recruitment, marketing
Project governance e.g. steering groups
Project partnership working e.g. level of engagement from partners, what works/doesn't?
Project monitoring and evaluation
Evaluation activities, outputs, outcomes and impact questions
1. What are the outcomes of the Our Bright Future programme for young people?
<i>In what ways has participation in Our Bright Future led to...</i>
the engagement of young people in environmental projects?
improvements in the skills & knowledge of young people?

a change in young people's attitudes and behaviours towards the environment?
young people entering into education, training or employment?
improvements in the health and well-being of young people?
the empowerment of young people?
strengthened social networks? (i.e. friendships, professional networks, local networks)
2. What are the outcomes of the Our Bright Future programme for the environment?
<i>In what ways has the portfolio led to...</i>
improvements to the natural environment? (<i>biodiversity/habitats, quality</i>)
improvements to community spaces?
enhanced resource efficiency e.g. CO2e, waste reductions?
environmental behaviour change?
3. What are the outcomes of the Our Bright Future programme for communities?
<i>In what ways has the portfolio...</i>
increased community cohesion?
increased community awareness of and engagement in the environment?
4. What are the outcomes of the Our Bright Future programme for a greener economy?
<i>In what ways has the portfolio led to...</i>
employment or entrepreneurial activity which will lead to a greener economy?
increased knowledge of career opportunities and how to take action for a greener economy?
5. Has the Our Bright Future programme influenced change? What is its legacy? How has it benefitted projects and partners?
<i>In what ways has being part of the Our Bright Future programme...</i>
led to a sense of collective identity?
added value? i.e. benefitted projects more than if they had been operating in isolation
helped to raise the profile or reach of those involved?
enabled cross-sectoral/ inter-organisational learning? E.g. between projects, amongst partners
supported development opportunities for those involved? E.g. funding leveraged, new projects
Has the Programme influenced policy & practice?

<i>In what ways has the Our Bright Future programme and portfolio...</i>
engaged policy makers?
led to campaigns and communications focused on young people and the environment?
created evidence to influence policy and decision making locally, regionally and nationally?
Is the Our Bright Future programme <i>sustainable</i> and <i>what will its legacy be?</i>
<i>In what ways has the Our Bright Future programme...</i>
led to lasting relationships/collaborations?
resulted in a net gain for the environment?
empowered young people to become active in civic life/ leaders for environmental change?
led to self-sustaining projects which will continue to engage young people in environmental activities?
led to a change in policy and practice?
Measuring the <i>counterfactual</i>
What difference has the Our Bright Future programme made over and above what would have happened anyway?

Primary and Secondary Data Sources

The evaluation research questions will be answered using the following primary and secondary data sources/ methods:

- **Quarterly and Annual Reporting Forms** completed by all projects focusing on processes and evidence of outcomes;
- **Project Evaluation Reports** – produced by projects;
- **Participant Case Studies** – produced by projects;
- **Annual Telephone Interviews with Project Managers** conducted by a member of the evaluation team;
- **Other Project Outputs** e.g. newsletters, websites, and social media;
- **Project Case Studies** - 13 projects have been selected to act as case studies. Project managers will be interviewed every 6 months and up to 3 site visits will be undertaken by the evaluation team over the course of each project;
- **Annual Telephone Interviews with Programme Stakeholders** – including the Our Bright Future team, Consortium members and wider stakeholders;
- **Programme Monitoring Data** – collected by the Our Bright Future Team;
- **Interviews with unsuccessful Project Applicants** – to assess the counterfactual.

APPENDIX E: SUMMARY OF RELEVANT UK POLICY

The table below highlights relevant policy. This was compiled in October 2016. The following list is a summary of the analysis against each of the six main policy topics / categories:

- **Environment:** seven policies have been identified in this category, two each at the UK, Scotland and Wales levels and one in Northern Ireland. Policy has a key focus towards delivering environmental protection and enhancement (e.g. in relation to biodiversity and ecosystem services, on land and sea) in conjunction with green growth / development of the green economy, sustainable employment opportunities and encouraging people to engage more / reconnect with the natural environment. These are all key purposes of Our Bright Future.
- **Employment and enterprise:** 11 policies have been identified in this category, particularly in Wales (five policies). A key objective across the policies is making the most of synergies between growth / increased employment and environmental objectives. In Scotland, for example, there is a focus on climate change mitigation / the low carbon economy and growing jobs in this sector (e.g. a target of 26,000 jobs in the renewables sector by 2020). Our Bright Future can support the learning / training / volunteering related objectives of these policies in the context of young people, however, projects are generally somewhat less focussed on renewables and the low carbon sector.
- **Education, skills and training:** six policies have been identified in this category, particularly in Wales (three policies). There is a strong focus on skills development and vocational learning, particularly among young people considered NEET (not in education, employment or training). Policy in Scotland and Wales includes particularly ambitious targets / commitments: the Scottish Government's 2012 *Opportunities for all Strategy* has committed to providing a learning or training place for 16-19 year old NEETs; and the Welsh Government's 2013 *Youth Engagement and Progression Framework* includes a commitment that all young people will have access to a place in education or learning at age 16. Our Bright Future will support this policy agenda by providing vocational training in key areas / sectors (e.g. land, rural, environment). This will help meet ambitious targets and identify / demonstrate successful (and potentially less successful) delivery models to inform future policy and practice.
- **Social action and volunteering:** 5 policies have been identified in this category, five each at the UK, Scotland and Wales and three in Northern Ireland. The policies in this category focus on the critical role of volunteering as a mechanism for youth development and social action. Our Bright Future provides opportunities for volunteering and environmental activities that can support social action among young people and the key benefits that this can help deliver (see Theoretical Context section). It could also help to empower participating young people to participate in local planning decisions.
- **Communities and civic engagement:** 13 policies have been identified in this category, 4 each in the UK and Wales, 3 in Scotland and 2 in Northern Ireland. The focus of the majority is on planning / other local territorial development policies to help enable sustainable communities at various levels – national to local (e.g. environmental regeneration projects).

- Health and wellbeing:** 10 policies have been identified in this category, particularly at the UK level (four policies). UK and Northern Ireland policies include a specific focus on the needs of young people: Northern Ireland policy includes consideration of wider outcomes (as well as health); and UK policy has a specific focus on health. There is a strong focus on mental health at the UK level and across all three devolved administrations. Scotland has specific policy on the role of place-making and design as a factor determining health outcomes. In terms of Our Bright Future, evidence shows that participation in volunteering and environmental activities are good for mental and physical health (see Theoretical Context section). These positive effects can be more pronounced when learning and activity takes place in natural environments (nature connectedness).

Plan / policy / strategy (PPS)	PPS owner / author	Time-frame	Summary / main objectives	Relevance to Our Bright Future
Environment related PPS				
<i>UK PPS</i>				
Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)	DEFRA	2011-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting and improving our natural environment Growing a green economy Reconnecting people with nature 	<i>Relevant across objectives.</i>
Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	DEFRA	2011-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and at sea putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy reducing environmental pressures improving our knowledge 	<i>Particular relevance to engaging more people in the environment, including volunteering, and getting more children learning outdoors. Whilst this broadly bridges the relationship between people and the environment there is scope for Our Bright Future to demonstrate a more strategic approach to youth engagement across all environmental initiatives.</i>
Scotland specific PPS				
National Outcomes Framework	The Scottish Government	2007-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment opportunities Young people Sustainable places Environment Environment impact Strong, resilient and supportive communities 	<i>Many of the agreed outcomes have synergies with the outcomes being delivered through Our Bright Future projects in Scotland.</i>

Programme for Government	The Scottish Government	2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making our education system world class, with equal opportunities for all • Growing a productive sustainable economy with more jobs and fair work • Putting people in charge and creating opportunities 	<i>Identifying and demonstrating how Our Bright Future projects being delivered in Scotland are delivering the outcomes set by the Scottish Government may pave the way for support for the Our Bright Future programme, and longer term investment in initiatives that support young people, communities and the environment through a single model of investment.</i>
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				
The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Welsh Government	2015-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prosperous Wales • A resilient Wales • A healthier Wales • A more equal Wales • A Wales of cohesive communities • A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language 	<i>Identifying and demonstrating how projects being delivered in Wales are delivering the outcomes set by the Act will be especially important. The Welsh Government and others are looking at ways of delivering initiatives which contribute towards the 6 headline goals, and Our Bright Future projects align closely, particularly in supporting community cohesiveness, and contributing to a prosperous and resilient Wales through developing the green economy.</i>
Programme for Government	Welsh Government	2016-2021	Sets out how this Government will deliver more and better jobs through a stronger, fairer economy, improve and reform our public services, and build a united, connected and sustainable Wales in the face of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.	<i>Includes the objective to invest in the skills required for the green economy, and promote green growth and innovation.</i>
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
Programme for Government	Northern Ireland Executive	2016-2021	There are a number of outcomes stipulated in the draft programme that are reflective of outcomes being achieved through the Our Bright Future programme.	<i>The outcomes cover a cross section of ambitions for communities and environments in Northern Ireland. As the Programme for Government has not yet been finalised, it will be important to review how the Our Bright Future programme is working towards delivering the finalised</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment • We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential • We have more people working in better jobs • We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other • We give our children and young people the best start in life 	<p><i>outcomes when the programme has been completed. There is also the opportunity to engage in consultations and shape the development of the programme.</i></p>
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Employment and Enterprise related PPS				
UK PPS				
Plan for Growth	UK Government	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up a Skills for a Green Economy group from across government departments to identify and support businesses to understand the changing skills requirements that the emerging green economy would bring The introduction of the 'Green deal' aimed at supporting energy improvements to homes with a subsequent commitment to developing 1,000 new apprenticeships to support this Information on the growing career opportunities available in the green economy through the National Careers Service. 	<p><i>Establishes the green economy as a central priority for cross departmental policy. Current Government commitment to green economy initiatives has not yet been established.</i></p> <p><i>In light of this there is an opportunity to demonstrate how localised youth initiatives in the Our Bright Future portfolio are successfully supporting young people to access sustainable employment within the green economy sector by delivering relevant training and skills programmes, and creating job opportunities in the sector.</i></p>
Scotland specific PPS				
Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy	The Scottish Government	2014-2021	<p>Set a target of reducing 2014 levels of youth unemployment by 40 per cent by 2021. The strategy outlines an implementation plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Curriculum for Excellence, A regionalised college system, A significantly expanded Modern Apprenticeship Programme Purposeful employer engagement 	<p><i>There are environmental themes weaved through the implementation of the strategy namely the inclusion of environmental education in the Curriculum for Excellence and vocational training qualifications related to the green economy sector. These are key areas where Our Bright Future can play a role helping to deliver the strategy and providing evidence of what works well, why and in what situations, in terms of measures to empower young people to participate in the green economy etc.</i></p>
The Low Carbon Economic Strategy	The Scottish Government	2010	<p>Outlined targets to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonise electricity generation by 2030 Largely decarbonise heat sector by 2050 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost complete decarbonisation of road transport by 2050 • Significant decarbonisation of rail by 2050 • Establish a comprehensive approach to ensure that carbon is fully factored into strategic and local decisions about rural and urban land use. 	
Scotland's Economic Strategy	The Scottish Government	2015	<p>Identified the potential opportunities for employment, suggesting that implementation could increase low carbon employment in Scotland by at least 60,000 by 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26,000 jobs in renewable energy and the services that support them, including renewables consultancy • 26,000 jobs in low carbon technologies, • 8,000 jobs in environmental management, as well as the service industries that support environmental management. 	<i>With an already widespread recognition of how green economy opportunities can support sustainable employment and a focused strategy on reducing youth unemployment, Our Bright Future is in a strong position to demonstrate how the programme is delivering outcomes by developing the environmental knowledge, pro-environmental behaviours and supporting relevant skills development in young people.</i>
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				
Learning Pathways Policy	Welsh Government	2004	Aimed to increase the number of learners who are fully engaged in learning and also progress into post-16 opportunities.	<i>Programmes aimed at reducing rising youth unemployment.</i> <i>Whilst there is no specific focus on the opportunities to support young people into green economy jobs, the number of environmental jobs that are being created through the programme is being monitored. Learning and evaluation data captured through the Our Bright Future programme creates an opportunity to demonstrate how the programme is providing skills training and supporting young people into employment specifically within the green economy.</i>
Young Recruits Programme	Welsh Government	2009	Set up to create additional opportunities for young people to access quality apprenticeship places.	
Pathways to Apprenticeship Programme in Wales	Welsh Government	2009-2014	Set up to ensure that young people are able to access high quality skills training in the absence of apprenticeship opportunities being offered through employment traineeship Programme for those aged 16-18 and Steps to Employment for those aged 18-plus who are not in employment, education or training.	

Communities for Work Programme	Welsh Government	2015	has a strand to support young people and is supported by Jobcentre Plus. The project will invest £11.2 million with the aim of supporting 6,000 people aged 16–24 in Wales' most disadvantaged communities into work.	
Job Growth Wales Programme	Welsh Government	2012-	aims to support the creation of 8,955 new job opportunities for 16-24 year olds before 2018.	
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
Skills to Succeed Campaign (supports the Skills Strategy 'Success through Skills - Transforming Futures')	Northern Ireland Government	2014	<p>Training for Success Programme: Designed for young people aged 16 - 17, with extended age eligibility for young people with a disability up to age 22 and up to age 24 for those from an in-care background. Guarantees training up to 104 weeks (156 weeks for those with a disability) to help young people gain the recognised skills and qualifications to help them progress in their chosen career.</p> <p>Youth Employment Scheme: Aimed at 18 - 24-year olds on job seekers allowance, provides short term work experience placement.</p>	<i>Demonstrates the Government's commitment to support young people into sustained employment. The strategy and campaign have no reference to environmental or conservation skills. Our Bright Future fills this gap by equipping young people of a similar age in NI with practical skills, experience and knowledge relating to the environment, providing further opportunities to access training.</i>
Together: Building a United Community Strategy	Northern Ireland Executive	2013	<p>Based on co-production methods, centred around young people and was designed to support good relations, citizenship, personal development as well as deliver employment outcomes.</p> <p>The Strategy outlines how Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities:</p> <p>1. Our children and young people;</p>	<i>This programme demonstrates an increasing recognition that initiatives like this are able to deliver a series of outcomes for young people and broader social themes through a single model of investment. Similarly, Our Bright Future will be able to utilise impact and evaluation data to demonstrate the opportunities available to deliver outcomes for young people and the environment.</i>

			2. Our shared community; 3. Our safe community; and 4. Our cultural expression.	
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Education, skills and training related PPS				
UK PPS				
Education Excellence Everywhere Whitepaper	Department for Education – UK Government (only applies to England)	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school-led system with every school an academy, empowered pupils, parents and communities and a clearly defined role of local Government • Continue to equip schools to embed a knowledge-based curriculum as the cornerstone of an excellent, academically rigorous education to age 16 • Ensure a knowledge-based curriculum is complemented by the development of the character traits and fundamental British values that will help children succeed. 	<p><i>Core curriculum subjects are being slimmed down and responsibility for shaping curriculums is moving away from the Department of Education into the control of individual academies and multiple academy trusts. After sustainability was removed from the national curriculum, geography and science are the only core curricula subjects that touch on environmental education in key stage 3 and 4, through climate change.</i></p> <p><i>As the education policy landscape continues to change there is also an opportunity to demonstrate the far reaching impacts of using environmental education and green economy skills, training and accreditation to engage and support young people who are in alternative education provision. Our Bright Future will help to realise this opportunity through providing evidence to indicate the effectiveness of such interventions in supporting transitions into employment.</i></p>
Scotland specific PPS				
Opportunities for All Strategy	Scottish Government	2012	Brings together a range of existing national and local policies and strategies as a single focus to improve young people's participation in post 16 learning or training, and ultimately into employment. The Government is making a commitment to offer a place in learning or training to every 16-19-year-old who is not currently in employment, education or training.	<p><i>With the Government's broad commitment to education for sustainable development and its focus on supporting the pathway for all young people through education into sustained training and/ or employment, Our Bright Future is in a position to demonstrate a best practice model for supporting the personal and professional development of</i></p>

				young people through engaging with the green economy.
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				
Qualified for Life Plan	Welsh Government	2014-2020	Details the four strategic objectives within education reform that aims to support all Welsh learners to 'to benefit from excellent teaching and learning.	<i>Impact data and evidence collated through the Our Bright Future programme will be able to demonstrate how green economy initiatives are supporting skills development in young people focusing on training and employment outcomes within one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK.</i>
Skills Implementation Plan	Welsh Government	2014	The implementation plan lists four underlying principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for jobs and growth: • Skills that respond to local needs: • Skills that employers value: • Skills for employment: 	
Youth Engagement and Progression Framework	Welsh Government	2013	Provides a structured approach to reducing the number of NEET young people. As a part of the framework the Government has committed to a Youth Guarantee, a commitment that all young people will have access to a place in education and learning at 16.	
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
Generating our Success: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Youth Training.	Department for Employment and Learning	2015	Developed on the basis that a strong vocational educational and training system is a key enabler of successful transitions for young people from education into employment.	<i>With a strong commitment to practical and vocational approaches to skills development Our Bright Future demonstrates how skills development and training in green economy sectors can support the personal and professional development of young people.</i>

Social action and volunteering related PPS				
<i>UK PPS</i>				
	Department for Education (UK Government)	2010	Brings together for the first time all of the government's policies for young people aged 13 to 19. Promotes youth involvement in civic engagement and decision making through support for the UK Youth Parliament and associated activities including the British Youth Council and Youth select Committee.	<i>Since the closure of the committee there has been seemingly limited promotion of these Government recommendations. As such the benefits of environmental engagement and action for young people and environment have not to date been fully explored or understood within the youth policy context. This creates an opportunity for evaluation and impact data collected through the Our Bright Future to help shape and influence policy within this area.</i>
<i>Scotland specific PPS</i>				
No limits – Volunteering as a model for youth development	Scottish Government	2008	Produced as part of the Government's broader volunteering action plan and developed a series of principles on developing young people as volunteers.	<i>Our Bright Future impact data and evaluation is well positioned to demonstrate the role that environmental engagement volunteering initiatives can have on the personal and professional development of the young people that participate.</i>
Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland	Scottish Government Youth Link Scotland and Education Scotland	2014-2019	The youth work strategy sets out the key priorities for youth work in Scotland for the following five years. Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Scotland is the best place to be young and grow up in • Put young people at the heart of Government policy • Recognize the value of youth work • Build the workforce capacity • Measure the impact of youth work 	
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				

Supporting communities, changing lives	Welsh Government	2015	Identified the importance of volunteering initiatives, and the impact they have on individuals and communities.	<i>Though there is broad support for volunteering initiatives there is limited evidence of impact that environmental volunteering initiatives can have on both the personal and professional development of young people engaged, and the environment. Impact data and evidence collected through the delivery of Our Bright Future will support the evidence base in this area.</i>
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
National Youth Work Strategy			Sets the framework for delivering services that aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to raising standards for all and closing the performance gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people by providing access to enjoyable, non-formal learning opportunities that help them to develop enhanced social and cognitive skills and overcome barriers to learning • Continue to improve the non-formal learning environment by creating inclusive, participative settings in which the voice and influence of young people are championed, supported and evident in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes. 	<i>The impact and evaluation data collected through the delivery of Our Bright Future provides an opportunity to demonstrate how interventions like those being delivered through the programme can support the personal and professional development of young people, whilst also delivering positive outcomes for the communities they are happening in and the broader environment.</i>

Communities and civic engagement related PPS				
UK PPS				
Localism Act	Department for Communities and Local Government (UK Government)	2011	<p>The Localism Act has four key measures that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New freedoms and flexibilities for local Government • New rights and powers for communities and individuals • Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective • Reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally <p>The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act demonstrates this ongoing commitment to continue to devolve power away from central government.</p>	<i>This is significant to the Our Bright Future programme as it supports increased youth engagement and opportunities for young people to influence decision making in their local contexts.</i>
Sustainable Communities Act	Department for Communities and Local Government (UK Government)	2007	<p>Provided an opportunity for communities and local authorities to identify legislative barriers that prevent them from improving the economic or environmental sustainability of their local areas</p>	<i>There is limited focus on how such initiatives can target young people specifically. Through the impact and evaluation data Our Bright Future has the opportunity to identify and promote models of best practice in relation to this and use this information to develop specific national and local policy recommendations of how to maximise youth engagement and impact.</i>
The National Planning Policy Framework	Department for Communities and Local Government (UK Government)	2012	<p>Sets out the government's guidance for planning and puts sustainable development at the heart of the framework</p>	
Positive for Youth Strategy	Department for Education (UK Government)	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to ensuring young voices are represented in local and national decision making through continued support for initiatives such as UK Youth Parliament and Youth Select Committees 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting local authorities to engage young people in decisions being made about local services 	
<i>Scotland specific PPS</i>				
Local Government in Scotland Act	Scottish Government	2003	Reflects moves to encourage wider engagement and ownership in decision-making in both national and local contexts	<p><i>There is clearly, recognition from Scottish policy makers of the need to engage communities in activities that benefit their local communities. These initiatives also have the capacity to deliver a broad range of opportunities to foster skills development and training programmes that support the creation of green economy jobs. Our Bright Future has the opportunity to identify and promote models of best practice in relation to this and use this information to develop specific national and local policy recommendations of how to maximise youth engagement and impact in this area.</i></p>
Community Empowerment Act	Scottish Government	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local democratic participation Increased confidence and skills among local people Higher numbers of people volunteering in their communities More satisfaction with quality of life in a local neighbourhood 	
The National Planning Framework (NPF) for Scotland	Scottish Government	(3) 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A successful sustainable place – supporting economic growth, regeneration and the creation of well-designed places A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change A natural resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural cultural assets and facilitating their sustainable use A connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity 	
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				
Local Government (Wales) Measure	Welsh Government	2009	Local authorities in Wales are required to lead and develop Community Plans, engaging community-planning partners. Community plans are established to deliver local priorities for improving local citizen and community wellbeing.	<p><i>With evidence highlighting the need to engage communities in activities that impact their local communities and environments and the Government's broader commitment to supporting youth participation, Our Bright Future has the opportunity to identify and promote models of best practice in</i></p>
The People, Places, Futures,	Welsh Government	2004 - 2024, update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making sure that decisions are taken with regard to their impact beyond the immediate sectoral or administrative boundaries and that the core values of sustainable development govern everything we do 	

The Wales Spatial Plan		ed 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the context for local and community planning • Influencing where money is spent by the Welsh Assembly Government through an understanding of the roles of and interactions between places • Providing a clear evidence base for the public, private and third sectors to develop policy and action. 	<i>relation to this and use this information to develop specific national and local policy recommendations of how to maximise youth engagement and impact.</i>
National Youth Work Strategy	Welsh Government	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people enjoy and achieve • Young people make a positive contribution • Young people have a voice 	
Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure	Welsh Government	2011	Strengthening the existing rights-based approach of the Welsh Government policy for children and young. The measure is also designed to strengthen the position of children and young people in Welsh society.	
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
Statutory Community Planning Guidance			Makes specific reference to encouraging and enabling young people to participate in the process.	<i>There is increased evidence that highlights the need to engage communities in activities that benefit their local environments. These initiatives also create a broad range of opportunities to deliver skills development and training programmes and supports the creation of the green economy jobs. Through the impact and evaluation data Our Bright Future has the opportunity to identify and promote models of best practice in relation to this and use this to demonstrate how engagement in local environmental initiatives can work to support community cohesion.</i>
'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy	The Executive Office (Northern Ireland)	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our children and young people • Shared community • Safe community • Cultural expression 	

Health and wellbeing related PPS				
UK PPS				
Children's and Young People's Health Outcomes strategy		2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying health outcomes that matter most for children and young people Consider how well these are supported by the NHS and Public Health Outcomes Frameworks, and make recommendations Set out the contributions that each part of the new health system needs to make in order that these health outcomes are achieved. 	<i>Building on the growing body of research the Our Bright Future evaluation data will allow us to demonstrate how environmental based interventions, and wider community engagement and volunteering initiatives are positioned to support the mental health and wellbeing agendas through developing character traits such 'resilience' and fostering connections between young people and their local environments.</i>
No Health Without Mental Health: Implementation Framework		2011	A cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages was subsequently developed to assist local organizations with the implementation of the Mental Health Strategy	
Children and Young People's Mental Health Taskforce		2014	The Taskforce set a national ambition that by 2020 a series of actions would be implemented to improve the mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young people. One of the key priorities it identified to achieving the vision was to 'Concentrate on ways for children and young people to bounce back following setbacks (building resilience), promoting good mental health, treating problems early before they get worse.'	
Future in Mind	NHS England	2015	Department for Health and NHS England report sets out the whole system approach needed to address this growing crisis. The report made no specific connection between mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young people and the role that environmental interventions can play in supporting them.	
Scotland specific PPS				

Mental Health Strategy 2012 - 2015 for Scotland	Scottish Government	2012	The strategy aligns mental health and wellbeing support across a number of policy areas in line the National performance framework. The objectives of which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier • Wealthier and fairer • Safer and stronger • Smarter • Greener 	<i>With an increased recognition and support structures aimed to support wellbeing amongst young people, Our Bright Future evaluation data will allow us to demonstrate how environmental based interventions, and wider community engagement and volunteering initiatives are positioned to support the mental health and wellbeing agendas; specifically, through developing character traits such 'resilience' and fostering connections between young people and their local environments.</i>
Good Places, Better Health (GPBH)	Scottish Government	2008	The strategy aimed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider, plan and deliver new and more effective ways of considering place and health, in order to identify what is needed to create places that nurture health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities; • Identify the characteristics of place which will nurture healthy childhood weight and positive mental health and wellbeing in childhood and reduce asthma and levels of unintentional injuries in children. 	
<i>Wales specific PPS</i>				
The Wellbeing of Future Generations' Act	Welsh Government	2015	One of the goals established in the Act is to create: 'A healthier Wales. A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.' One of the proposed national indicators for success in relation to this is assessing the mean mental wellbeing score for individuals across society	<i>Whilst the 2015 review provides a comprehensive overview of all policy relating to supporting the broader wellbeing agenda for young people, there is limited evidence that connects environmental engagement with delivering wellbeing outcomes for young people. Impact and evaluation data collected through Our Bright Future will support this developing evidence base in this area.</i>
Together for Mental Health strategy	Welsh Government	2015	The strategy was launched with a commitment of £7.6 million to be invested every year in mental health services for children and young people in Wales. Since 2008 The Children and Young People Wellbeing Monitor for Wales has produced three reports to review the multi-dimensional picture of children and young people's wellbeing (aged 0	

			<p>to 25) in Wales, using a variety of wellbeing indicators and other statistical and research sources.</p> <p>The 2015 reviews focus on seven distinct areas that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years • Education and learning opportunities • Health • Access to play, sport, leisure and culture • Participation in decision-making • A safe home and community • Not disadvantaged by poverty 	
<i>Northern Ireland specific PPS</i>				
Making Life Better Strategy	The Northern Ireland Executive	2012-2023	<p>The strategy is framed around six themes, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving every child the best start • Equipped throughout life • Empowering healthy living • Creating the conditions • Empowering communities • Developing collaboration. 	<i>Our Bright Future evaluation data will allow us to demonstrate how environmental based interventions, and wider community engagement and volunteering initiatives are positioned to support the mental health and wellbeing agendas through developing character traits such 'resilience' and fostering connections between young people and their local environments.</i>
Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge	Northern Ireland Government	2006 - 2016	<p>Sets an outcomes framework for the following ten years for delivering outcomes for children and young people in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Enjoying, learning and achieving • Living in safety and with stability • Experiencing economic and environmental wellbeing • Contributing positively to community and society • Living in a society which respects their rights 	

APPENDIX F: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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