

YPAS wins Gamechanger award for their inspiring work to make Merseyside a safer, fairer place

- In partnership with Co-op, the Gamechanger Awards are a celebration of the inspiring work of the Peer Action Collective (PAC), a ground-breaking network of young people, working to conduct research and use it to make change in their local communities.
- Young researchers have come together at an event held in Liverpool to share what they've learned so far about violence – and about what needs to change to make their communities fairer places. A full report will be launched in March 2023.
- Ten inspiring young people and projects won Gamechanger awards for their incredible commitment to ending violence. This includes peer researchers working with YPAS from Merseyside.

We're proud to announce that YPAS has won one of the first ever Gamechanger Awards, for **Most Determined Team** in recognition of their work as part of the Peer Action Collective (PAC).

Gamechanger Awards celebrate the work of ten incredible young people and projects, who are part of PAC, a ground-breaking new youth-led network, which is funded by the Youth Endowment Fund, the #iwill Fund (a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and Co-op. Through the programme, over 120 peer researchers have listened to young people, recording their experiences of violence and finding out what needs to happen to make their area a better place to live. They've also been working with local partners to turn what they've learned into action.

YPAS and Merseyside PAC was presented with the award for Most Determined Team which was in partnership with Co-op at the PAC Conference in Liverpool on 8 December 2022, in front of an audience of local leaders and other young researchers.

PAC Merseyside has been working with partners MYA, LFC Foundation, LCC Targeted Services, LSCP & MVRP alongside stakeholders to turn our youth violence research findings into meaningful social action. We have provided several existing groups of young people with grant funding from Co-op to increase the impact of our social action, from educational resources to diversionary activities to a youth-led outdoor village market.

We are planning an event in Liverpool One to engage with young people and their families over February half-term and are also in the process of setting up a regional youth violence forum for young people.

From working to improve police-youth relations, setting up a youth centre or campaigning for changes in the education system – PAC has been creating opportunities for young people to make their community a safer, fairer place.

Award winner Dean Leake, a peer researcher from Merseyside PAC, said: *"I am incredibly proud of all of our team for winning this award- each of us are united in our passion for creating positive changes for young people across Merseyside, and to see our work recognised at such a fantastic celebration of PAC's work nationally is an absolute honour."*

Peter Babudu, Assistant Director of Research and Youth Understanding at the Youth Endowment Fund said: *"A massive congratulations to YPAS for winning their much-deserved Gamechanger award. Their team of PAC peer researchers have shown real passion, creativity and determination to change their community for the better. What's more, they're making a difference. From contributing to the*

Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership's strategy to being involved in Labour's Party Conference. They're a credit to Merseyside and everyone involved in the project should be rightly proud of what they've achieved."

Rebecca Birkbeck, Director of Community and Shared Value at Co-op said: *"All too often, young people's voices aren't heard, and this has to change. But change won't happen if young people aren't at the heart of it.*

Co-op is hugely proud of the achievements of PAC, congratulations to YPAS and Merseyside PAC having been recognised for embracing an innovative way of researching, giving young people the chance to take the lead, shaping the solutions they want to see to create a safer, fairer world for not only themselves, but for future generations.

Thank you to our members who enable this work through shopping with Co-op."

Phil Chamberlain, England Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement at The National Lottery Community Fund, said: *"The work of the #iwill Fund has had an incredible impact on young people, supporting them to speak up and have their voices heard about the things that matter most to them.*

"By placing young people at the forefront of this initiative we are providing them with a platform to share their experiences to help inspire positive, lasting change in their communities. The National Lottery Community Fund is committed to youth voice and the Peer Action Collective is enabling us to build on our ongoing work with young people to further understand and inform how to best support them now and in the future."

To find out more about Merseyside PAC, visit <https://ypas.org.uk/pacproject/>

To find out more about the project, visit the [Peer Action Collective website](#).

To find out more about Co-op's work with young people, please visit coop.co.uk/gamechangers

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About Merseyside PAC:

YPAS Communications lead: Communications@ypas.org.uk

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Both leads would be happy to facilitate interviews with award winners.

About the Youth Endowment Fund

- The Youth Endowment Fund is an independent charitable trust. It was founded with a £200 million Home Office endowment by [Impetus](#), a charity focused on transforming the lives of disadvantaged young people.
- Find out more at www.youthendowmentfund.org.uk .
- Follow us on Twitter: [@YouthEndowFund](https://twitter.com/YouthEndowFund)

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About the #iwill Fund

The #iwill Fund is made possible thanks to £66 million joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support young people to access high quality social action opportunities.

The #iwill Fund brings together a group of organisations who all contribute funding to embed meaningful social action into the lives of young people.

The #iwill Fund supports the aims of the #iwill movement- to make involvement in social action a part of life for young people, by recognising the benefit for both young people and their communities.

By bringing together funders from across different sectors and by making sure that young people have a say in where the funding goes – the #iwill Fund is taking a collaborative approach.

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About the #iwill movement

The #iwill movement is a collaboration of over 1,000 organisations and 300 young #iwill Ambassadors from across the UK. They are united by a shared belief that all children and young people should be supported and empowered to make a positive difference on the issues that affect their lives, their communities, and broader society.

#iwill was launched in November 2013 after an independent review into how different sectors could help more young people to make a positive difference.

The #iwill movement is supported by an independent coordination hub, hosted by Volunteering Matters & UK Youth.

Take the lead by signing up to the Power of Youth Charter at www.iwill.org.uk or follow us @iwill_movement on twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

About The National Lottery Community Fund

We are the largest funder of community activity in the UK – we support people and communities to prosper and thrive.

We're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to work closely with Government to distribute vital grants and funding from key Government programmes and initiatives.

Our funding has a positive impact and makes a difference to people's lives. We support projects focused on things that matter, including economic prosperity, employment, young people, mental health, loneliness and helping the UK reach net zero by 2050.

Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, our funding is open to everyone. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

National Lottery players raise over £30 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, £43 billion has been raised for good causes. National Lottery funding has been used to support over 635,000 projects - 255 projects per postcode area.

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About Co-op

The Co-op is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives with interests across food, funerals, insurance, legal services and health. Owned by millions of UK consumers, the Co-op operates 2,500 food stores, over 800 funeral homes and provides products to over 5,100 other stores, including those run by independent co-operative societies and through its wholesale business, Nisa Retail Limited.

Employing over 62,000 people, the Co-op has an annual turnover of £11.5 billion. As well as having clear financial and operational objectives, the Co-op is a recognised leader for its social goals and community-led programmes. The Co-op exists to meet members' needs and stand up for the things they believe in.