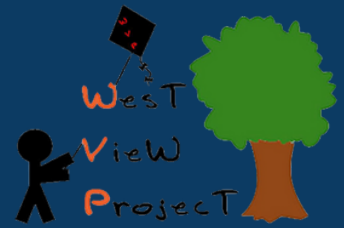




HARTLEPOOL
SPORT



Young Person's Social Prescribing Report

1st September 2025



Written by:
Calvin George and the Hartlepool sport team

01

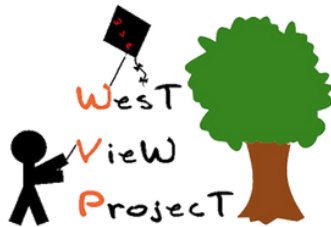
Executive Summary

The Young Person Social Prescriber (YPSP) Project, re-launched in December 2024, provides preventative, non-clinical, community-based support for young people 11- 19 (25 if SEN), aligning with the NHS Fit for the Future plan.



Impact to date (first nine months):

- Engaged 400+ young people, surpassing targets.
- Delivered 60+ tailored case interventions.
- Established regular peer and activity groups in community venues.
- Built relationships with GPs, schools, voluntary organisations, and Social Services/Early help teams



Early outcomes show improved wellbeing, reduced isolation, and greater self-confidence among participants, with signs of easing pressure on hospital services. Remaining priorities include tackling digital exclusion, strengthening evaluation, and planning for sustainability as the project nears its conclusion.

The idea for the Young Person Social Prescriber project came from recognising a clear gap in local support for young people. At present, GP referrals typically lead either to CAMHS or, in some areas, to Children's Wellbeing Practitioners (CWPs). While both are valuable, they are therapeutic in nature with CAMHS having a long waiting list and high rejection rate. What was missing was a preventative, community-based approach that could strengthen young people's support networks before problems reached crisis point.

To guide this work, the original steering group (pre-commencement of project) has since developed into a scrutiny group, responsible for reviewing cases that fall outside the project's remit. This group brings together key local partners, including Hartlepool Sport, The Haven, Hartlepool Community Trust, West View Project, and the Hartlepool Health Primary Care Network (PCN).

The YPSP project created clear referral pathways, open to both parents and professionals. All referrals were assessed against defined thresholds (CORE 34 and CORE 10) to ensure they were suitable for preventative, non-clinical support rather than therapeutic intervention. The West View Project supported this process by helping to set and review these thresholds, manage administration, and oversee referrals.

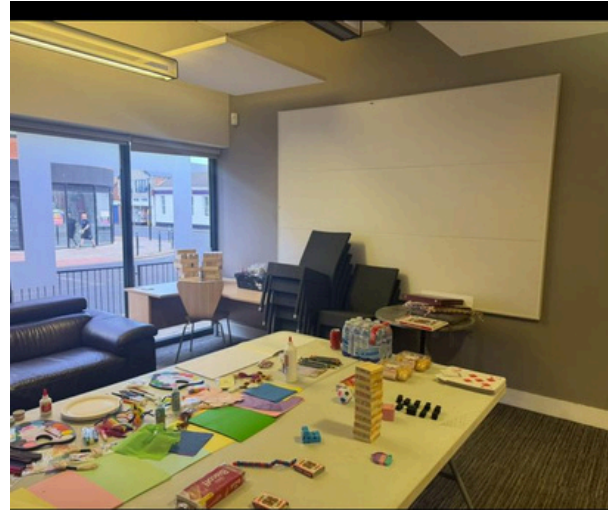
Hartlepool Sport provided clinical supervision and led work on mapping local support networks. This highlighted not only sports opportunities but also others in other areas such as art, dance, use of parks and green spaces, and the need for girls-only activity groups. Together, these partnerships ensured referrals were appropriate and that young people had access to a wide, inclusive range of activities.

Step 1. Identification and Referral

The first stage is identifying young people whose lives are being impacted in various ways — whether through anxiety, social isolation, excessive worrying, low self-confidence, or a combination of these challenges.

Referrals typically come from schools, parents, social workers, Early Help teams, or directly from young people themselves. In addition to these formal routes, many young people are identified through group sessions, wellness programmes, and community activities, which act as entry points into the project.

This wide referral network ensures that those who might not ordinarily seek help are still reached.



Step 2. Building Trust and Understanding

Once a young person is referred, the focus shifts to establishing rapport and trust. The Social Prescriber works closely with the young person to understand their interests, strengths, and perceived barriers to leading a more active and fulfilling life.

This involves one-to-one conversations with the young person directly but also, where appropriate, with their referrer, school, and family or carers.

These conversations help to paint a full picture of the young person's circumstances, ensuring that support is holistic and sensitive to their unique context.

Building this foundation of trust is essential, as many young people may be hesitant to engage due to past experiences or low confidence.



Step 3. Tailored Navigation and Support

The next step is to connect the young person with meaningful, nurturing activities and experiences that are matched to their needs and aspirations.

This process is highly personalised, positioning the Social Prescriber as an “enabler” who opens doors to opportunities that may otherwise remain closed.

Activities are drawn from a wide range of local clubs, community organisations, and voluntary groups — from sports and creative arts to outdoor pursuits and social action projects.

At the same time, the Social Prescriber identifies gaps in local provision and feeds this back to the steering group, contributing to longer-term capacity building and ensuring that the offer evolves to meet emerging needs.

This step is not just about immediate engagement, but about helping young people develop the confidence and networks that will support their wellbeing well beyond their time in the project.



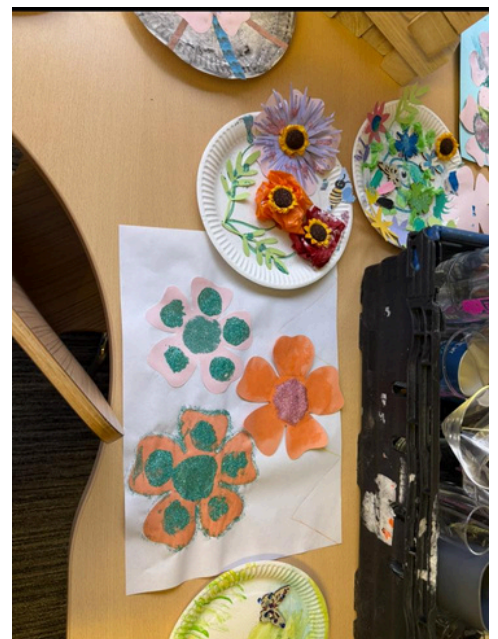
Step 4. Removing Practical Barriers

Finally, the project recognises that enthusiasm and willingness alone are not enough; practical barriers often stand in the way of participation.

To address this, financial and practical support is available where appropriate. For clothing in particular, we have worked with local partners like Reloved clothing to make sure the young people look and feel like they are ready for success. This may include covering the cost of activity fees, transport, clothing, or footwear, ensuring no young person is excluded due to their circumstances.

In some cases, additional assistance is provided — for example, arranging safe travel to and from sessions or supporting with equipment — so that young people can engage fully and confidently.

By removing these obstacles, the project ensures equality of access and reinforces its preventative ethos.



03 Growing Our Reach

From the outset, the YPSP project recognised that young people access support in different ways, so we developed multiple access points to ensure the widest possible reach.

- **One-to-One Work:** Direct referrals from schools, parents, and professionals allowed us to provide tailored, individual support to young people with more complex needs. These personalised interventions built trust and created a safe space to explore challenges and opportunities.
- **Group Work:** Regular peer support and activity groups created welcoming environments where young people could connect, share experiences, and build resilience together. These groups often acted as stepping stones into further support.
- **Larger-Scale Events:** Community events, school-based workshops/information days, and wellbeing campaigns helped raise awareness of the project, reaching those who might not otherwise have engaged. These events showcased the range of opportunities available and encouraged self-referrals as well as parental involvement.

This blended approach meant the project could engage over 400 young people, from those seeking individualised guidance to those who preferred collective or informal routes into support.



Community

New young person's social prescriber ready to make a difference in Hartlepool

By Paul Fraser Contributor

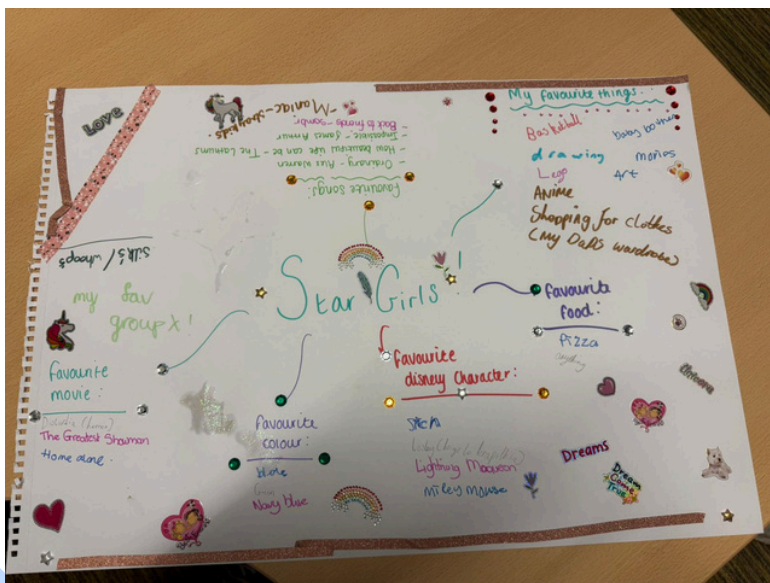


Published 16th Jan 2025, 20:45 BST | Updated 17th Jan 2025, 12:26 BST



Want to see what planning applications have been placed in your area?
publicnoticeportal.uk

Sophie Bainbridge is passionate about making a positive impact on the lives of young people in Hartlepool.



Her Game Too Hartlepool, Paul Fraser and 35 others 5 comments 10 shares

New Young Person's Social Prescriber ready to make a difference in Hartlepool

Sophie Bainbridge is passionate about making a positive impact on the lives of young people in Hartlepool.



1/ WVP chairman Dave Wise, programme manager Claire Blanchard, Young Person's Social Prescriber Sophie Bainbridge, youth worker Sophie Gibson, outdoor instructor Tom Dyer and Hartlepool Sport's COO Calvin George. Picture: Tom Banks/Rephrase.



STAR GIRLS

Led by a specialist Young Person's Social Prescriber

LILYANNE'S

Titan House, Park Road, TS26 9HL
Every Monday 4.30-5.30pm
NO NEED TO BOOK
sophie.bainbridge@hartlepoolssport.co.uk

 Lifelong Friendships

 Crafting Fun

 Building Support Network

 Group Activities

www.hartlepoolssport.co.uk

Future Reflections 04

As the project looks ahead, one of the key priorities is broadening our reach and strengthening collaboration with local Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and GP practices.

While progress has been made, this has been a significant hurdle, with many young people still only being referred through limited pathways. To address this, we are actively exploring how the project can be better integrated into existing systems.

In particular, discussions are underway about the use of **SystemOne** and the integration of our electronic referral form. Embedding this within GP systems would make referrals smoother, more consistent, and more visible to frontline practitioners.

This remains an ongoing conversation and is a central development goal for future of the project.



At the same time, we recognise the importance of early and accessible routes into support. Building closer relationships with schools and parent committees has been a key step in raising awareness of the service. By working alongside these networks, we ensure that families, educators, and young people themselves are better informed about how and when they can access support.

Another important reflection has been the recognition of barriers faced by ethnic minority groups in accessing our service. We are developing plans to work more closely with these communities, listening to their needs, addressing cultural and language barriers, and ensuring that the activities we offer feel inclusive and relevant. This work will run alongside our wider outreach, making sure YPSP is accessible to all young people across Hartlepool.

Looking forward, we will also continue to invest in growing the number and diversity of groups offered, while increasing visibility through social media and community channels. This combination of clinical integration, educational partnerships, targeted work with ethnic minority groups, and grassroots outreach will be vital to ensuring the project continues to expand its reach and impact.

05 Case Studies



- **14-year-old male**
- **Lives with his grandmother after family trauma**
- **Diagnosed with ADHD, history of bullying and isolation**

Challenges:

Before joining YPSP, he spent most of his time gaming alone, struggled with sleep, and had little motivation to engage with others. Despite previous service involvement, he remained socially isolated and vulnerable.

Support through YPSP:

From July 2025, YPSP worked with him to build trust, explore his interests, and introduce tailored activities. He began kickboxing classes, where he reconnected with a school friend, and later joined a youth football team, quickly welcomed by former classmates. Confidence-building sessions helped him manage anxiety and build self-esteem, enabling him to attend these activities independently.

Impact

- Now takes part in football and kickboxing every week and trains at home.
- Social circle has expanded, giving him a sense of belonging.
- Improved daily routines: earlier bedtimes, healthier eating, less reliance on gaming.
- Travels independently, showing greater confidence and independence.

Human Impact

His grandmother described the transformation:

- “He’s in bed before me now!”
- “He normally doesn’t eat, but he eats really well now.”
- “He brought his Xbox to his nana’s last week, but didn’t even take it out of the bag.”

These small but significant shifts illustrate how Young person social prescribing has turned isolation into opportunity, helping him rebuild confidence, improve wellbeing, and find a new sense of purpose in his community.

Case Studies



Profile

- **18-year-old female**
- **Recently moved to Hartlepool**
- **Diagnosed with Autism and ADHD**
- **Struggled with social anxiety and isolation, previously supported by CAMHS**

Challenges

When referred to YPSP in May 2025, she was experiencing loneliness, low confidence, and difficulty settling into a new community. She also faced ongoing harassment linked to her previous hometown, which had further impacted her wellbeing.

Support through YPSP

The YPSP worked with her to build confidence and connect her to meaningful opportunities:

- Supported her interest in youth work by arranging volunteering at a Girls Empowerment Group and at public community events, where she helped engage more than 200 families.
- Encouraged her to report harassment to the police, resulting in ongoing protection and support.
- Introduced her to a diamond art group, an autism and ADHD support group, and upcoming opportunities like a ladies' dodgeball team.
- Linked her with the West View Project, where she has started formal training and certification in youth work, alongside further volunteering with junior youth sessions.

Impact

- Now regularly volunteering, gaining experience and qualifications to pursue a career in youth work.
- Feels safer and more confident after taking steps to address harassment.
- Expanded her social networks through support groups and community activities.
- Actively seeking new opportunities to build friendships and strengthen her wellbeing.

Human Impact

This young person's journey shows how youth social prescribing can turn isolation into empowerment. She moved from feeling anxious and disconnected to becoming an active volunteer and trainee youth worker, with a growing support system and a clear sense of purpose.

06 Conclusion & Next steps

Over its first nine months, the Young Person Social Prescriber (YPSP) project has shown that a community-centred, preventative approach can make a real difference in young people's lives. With 400+ young people engaged, 60+ personalised interventions delivered, and multiple sustainable peer / activity groups established, the project has exceeded early expectations. Participants report greater confidence, more social connections, healthier routines, and reduced isolation. Family members, schools, and referrers have observed tangible changes in behaviour, wellbeing, and engagement. There is also early indication that YPSP's work is helping to mitigate pressure on clinical and crisis services by intervening earlier.

What makes these outcomes especially significant is how deliberately the project has been designed to reflect the three transformational shifts at the heart of **Fit for the Future: 10-Year Health Plan for England**:

From hospital to community: YPSP is rooted in local spaces—schools, youth centres, community venues—bringing support closer to where young people live. This mirrors the Plan's vision of the "Neighbourhood Health Service" that delivers more care outside hospitals.

From analogue to digital: The project is actively exploring integration with GP systems (e.g. SystmOne), embedding electronic referral forms, and improving connectivity so that young people and practitioners can engage via digital tools. These align with the NHS ambition to liberate staff from admin and allow people to manage their care digitally.

From sickness to prevention: Rather than waiting for crisis, YPSP intervenes earlier, emphasising wellbeing, resilience, and social connection. This preventive ethos is central to the Plan's aim to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Conclusion & Next steps

Looking forward, the project's next phase must build on collaboration, scalability, and inclusivity.

Key priorities include:

- Deepening integration with PCNs and GP practices through embedded referral pathways, so that YPSP is a visible, accessible option in primary care.
- Implementing electronic referral systems and SystemOne integration to smooth workflows, increase visibility to clinicians, and reduce barriers.
- Expanding engagement with schools, parent committees, and community networks to raise awareness and ensure earlier access for young people.
- Targeted outreach to ethnic minority groups to address unique barriers and to ensure the project is equitable and appropriately responsive.
- Growing diversity and visibility of group offerings, and leveraging social media and community channels to reach more young people.

By combining these strategic moves with a strong operational foundation and the early success we have already achieved, YPSP is well placed to continue advancing its mission in Next year and beyond.

In doing so, it will not only serve individual young people more effectively, but will also contribute concretely to the NHS's long-term goal of being more community-based, digitally enabled, and prevention-focused.