

Introduction and Policy Context

The [Strategic Plan](#) commits the council to *build relationships and trust with young people and create conditions and opportunities for young people to develop and thrive*. In line with this commitment, the council is developing a Youth Engagement Strategy to ensure that young people are empowered to be part of decision making processes, and to embed lived experience and youth voice in city policy.

The Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI) have been leading on a number of projects and initiatives which support this agenda as part of the overall [Citizen Power](#) programme, such as the Including Young People's Voices project with the Village Storytelling Centre. The Citizen Power programme focuses on amplifying the voice of citizens in decision making by working with communities across the city and with young people to co-design the city they want to live in. [This work was recognised](#) in the Inspirational Reforms category for innovative and sector-leading engagement with citizens at the 2023 Global Open Government Awards.

The Chief Executive has set out a strategy to deliver meaningful Public Sector Reform, highlighting the CCI's work around Citizen Power as a model process for re-designing services and creating a citizen-centered culture where the council listens to and collaborates with people, empowering them to be part of decision-making process in their communities. Young people are an essential part of this work on citizen voice, as they bring their own unique perspectives and represent the future of Glasgow.



Additional Work With Young People

In addition to the Citizen Power work, the CCI are also delivering different projects with young people specifically...

Play Sufficiency Assessment

The CCI was approached by colleagues in Planning and Development to co-create a youth engagement model that involved young people in ways not previously achieved nationally.

The team co-created, developed, and piloted a model to facilitate the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) in 18 secondary schools in Glasgow. This model to embed youth voice in decision-making resulted in a 1,714% increase in responses to the PSA in comparison to traditional methods.

Through this work, the CCI...

- Developed an approach to engage meaningfully with secondary school pupils, including principles, values, and tools
- Gathered data on young people's priorities to inform decision-making beyond the PSA
- Learned how young people want to be involved in decision-making

Notably, this pioneering approach was recognised nationally, winning the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Scotland's Overall Excellence in Planning Award.

This accolade reflects the PSA's innovative methodology, cross-sectoral impact, and its role in championing equitable, inclusive access to play as a cornerstone of urban life.

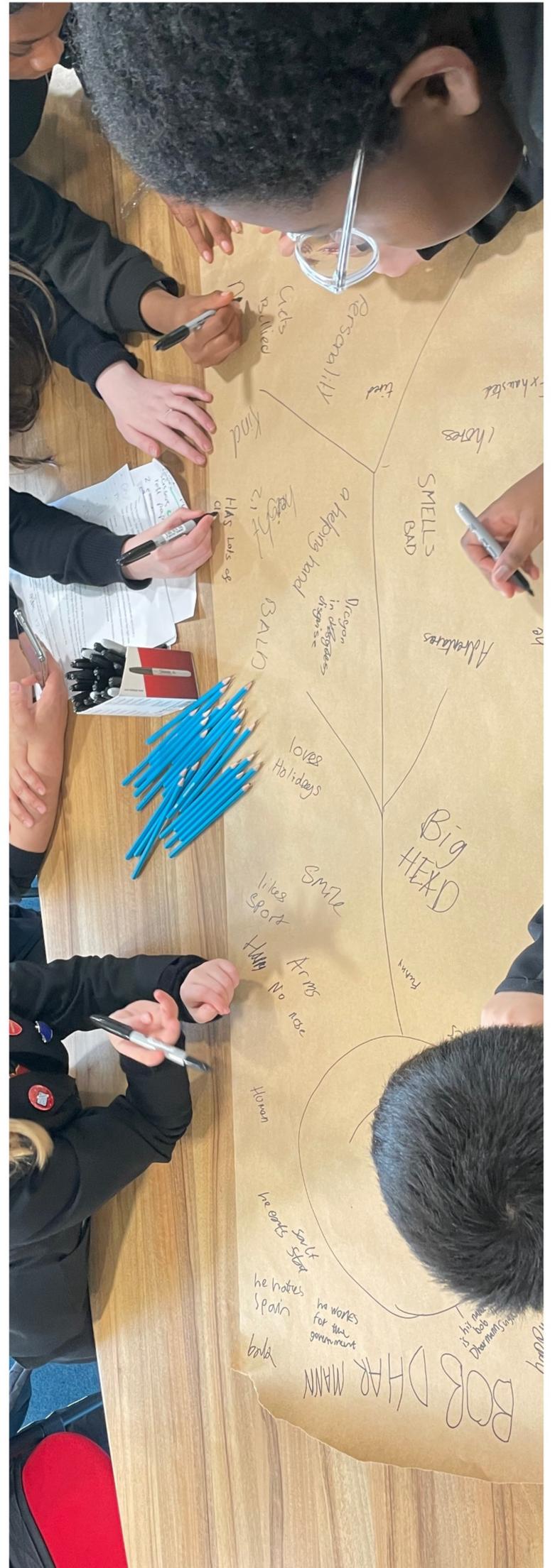
Places for Play Handbook

The CCI have developed a Places for Play Handbook as a practical guide for planners, developers and the council's Parks team to support the creation of play spaces and developments in Glasgow that reflect the needs and voices of young people, particularly girls. Drawing on recent co-design and participatory projects, including engagement carried out through the PSA, it combines learning from practice, case studies, and research to propose design and engagement principles that prioritise equalities, wellbeing, sustainability, and place-based solutions.

Youth Climate Action Fund

The [Youth Climate Action Fund](#) (YCAF) is a Bloomberg funded programme supporting young people aged 15-24 to design and deliver their own environmental projects across Glasgow. In addition to focusing on climate change, the YCAF also has a strong focus on health and wellbeing, youth voice, confidence building, skills development and future pathways for young people.

Engagement carried out during the programme has focused on supporting young people to come up with solutions to challenges they see in their communities while giving them the opportunity to develop skills in design thinking, problem solving, leadership, collaboration and communication.



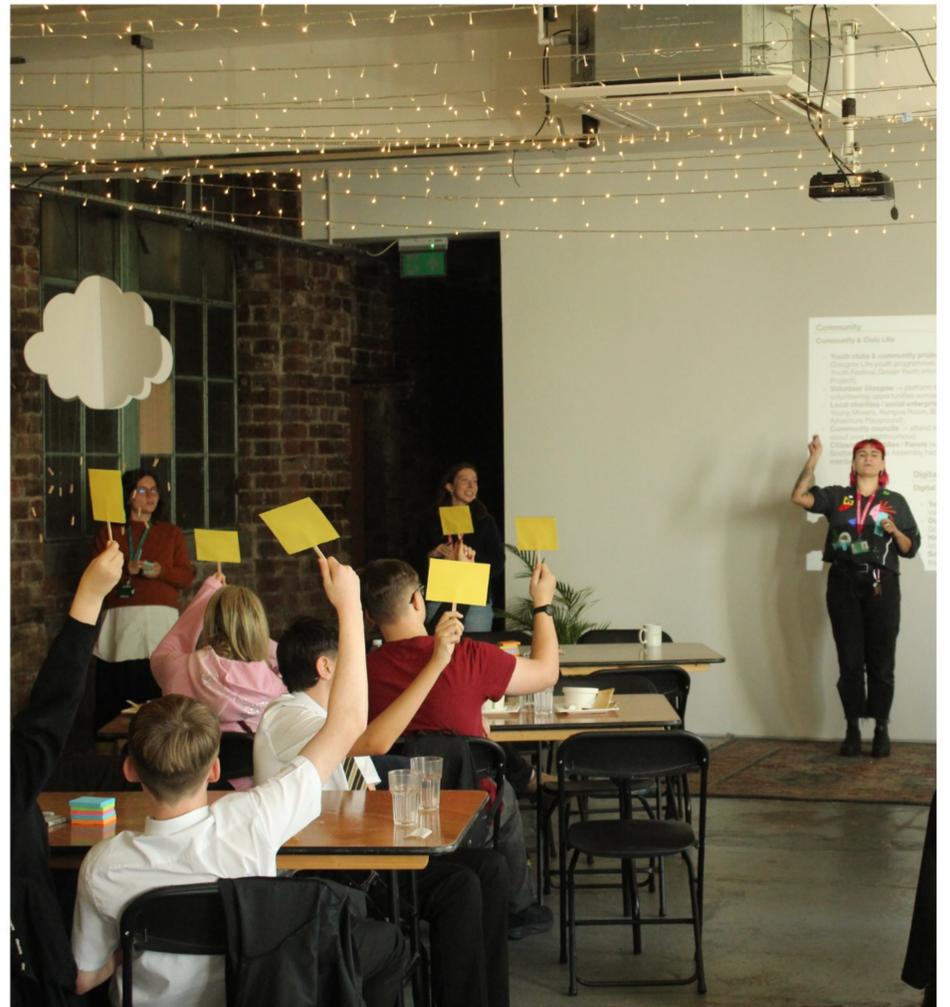
Youth Voice Design Jam

In September 2025, the CCI team hosted a Youth Voice Design Jam that brought together 15 young people from 6 schools in Glasgow, and 6 members of the Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement (WECCE) Committee. The event focused on building relationships between young people and policymakers, and exploring how young people can become more involved in decision making and shaping the city.

Activities on the day included...

- Young people identifying their key areas of interest—thriving communities, homelessness, poverty and inequality, diversity and inclusion, health, wellbeing and sports
- Members of the WECCE Committee mapping out opportunities for youth participation across all Wards of the city
- Group discussions amongst young people and policymakers to begin developing ideas for youth participation in Glasgow

The event fostered collaboration between young people and city policymakers which will be progressed to create opportunities to embed youth participation in civic and community life in Glasgow.



Recommendations

Biannual forums with young people

The Youth Voice Design Jam revealed there is an appetite for young people to be more involved in decision making on matters that interest them. It also trialled how the WECCE Committee and young people could collaborate in a shared space, showing that the groups can work together well to form shared concepts.

We propose two sessions be held annually for young people to participate in the WECCE Committee's decision making processes. This will seek to represent youth voice in local and city matters, connect young people to initiatives going on around them and link them to opportunities to develop these further.

Co-design of forums

Prior to launching the forums, we recommend hosting one or two co-design workshops to shape what the forums will look like with young people and WECCE Committee members.

The workshops will look at...

- Developing a joint decision making mechanism
- Building an understanding of WECCE Committee topics of discussion and how young people's interests can be embedded
- Creating an informal, engaging and collaborative setting for both groups to come together
- How young people can get involved

Developing the strategy with upcoming work

We have identified opportunities that align with the Youth Engagement Strategy that could be used to continue its development. They range from programmes that will develop our understanding of how to effectively engage young people in council work, to outputs that can be used by the WECCE Committee to learn what young people want to see in relation to play and urban space in Glasgow.

These are...

- Youth Climate Action Fund: 2026 Programme
- Designing for Social Good Toolkit: Youth Voice Edition
- Places for Play Handbook
- Use of child poverty data to evaluate areas of need

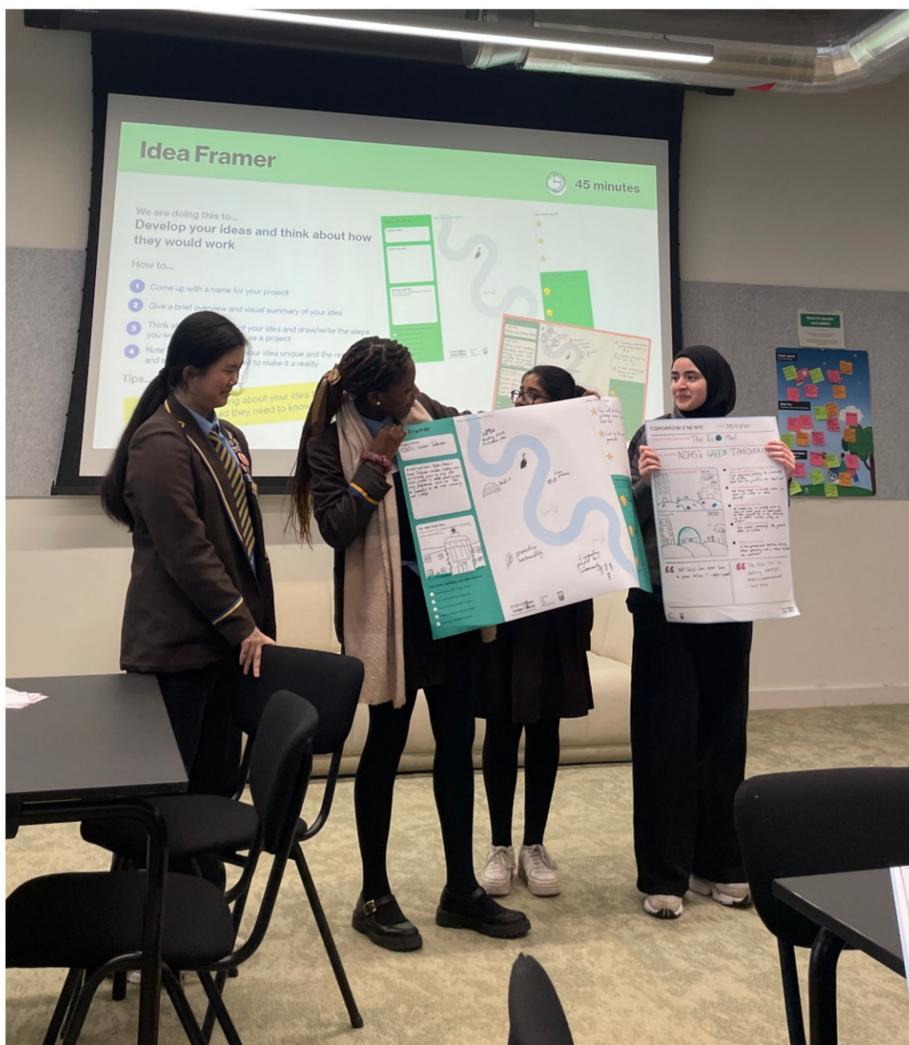
Participatory budgeting collaboration

We will be applying for a third round of funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies to run the Youth Climate Action Fund programme in 2026. Our previous programmes included a funding panel of multi-departmental council colleagues who evaluated funding applications.

There is potential for a joint participatory budgeting process that invites young people to vote on projects to receive micro-grants. This would mean projects are created, selected and developed by young people themselves.

Communications strategy

To raise the profile of young people's involvement in council structures and processes, we suggest CCI develops a communications plan that complements the proposed recommendations, showcases what young people have been involved in alongside the WECCE Committee and raises awareness of how young people can get involved across Glasgow.



Next Steps

YCAF Celebration Event

We are hosting a Celebration Event on the 11th December to bring all of this year's YCAF projects together to showcase and reflect on their work. As part of the event, we will be gathering feedback from young people on the programme and asking what they would like to see going forward.

The event will also include a Future Pathways Fair where young people will hear from guest speakers with expertise in different areas, have the chance to interact with a range of organisations, including the [Service Design Academy](#), [Eco Drama](#) and [Generation](#), and explore opportunities relating to skills development and training, employment, arts and cultural activity, activism and community-based projects.

Developing future youth programmes

Our aim is to continue building on the YCAF programme with a focus on youth voice, skills development and linking young people to future pathways and things they are passionate about.

We will host a development session in January to begin shaping the next iteration of the programme. This will include reflecting on what has worked well, what could be better and young people's feedback on what they would like and think they could benefit from in the future.

We will host a second development session in February with colleagues in the Council's Employability team and the Chamber of Commerce's Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme to explore how this work can complement and connect with other city priorities and policies, including the [Just Transition Skills Action Plan](#) and linking young people to employers and education opportunities.

Places for Play Handbook

The Places for Play Handbook has been developed by CCI to inform planners, developers and others on how play spaces can be developed to reflect the needs and interests of young people. Launching next year, the handbook can serve as a resource for the WECCE Committee to help support decision making and prioritisation in relation to play and recreation spaces.

Youth Voice Toolkit

We have developed the [Designing for Social Good Toolkit](#), that supports their framework for applying design and innovation methodologies to modern challenges. To complement the overall toolkit, we will be developing topical editions including a Youth Voice pack.

The edition will bring together key learnings, principles and mindsets for working with young people as well as tools and methods.

