



BUSINESS PLAN April 2014 to 2017

Lewisham Youth Theatre believes that participation in theatre leads to the development and empowerment of young people.

We commit to ensuring that this opportunity is available to all young people in Lewisham and that no-one should be excluded because of economic or social background.

SUMMARY

Introduction

We aim:

- **to create high quality, innovative theatre projects with and for young people**
- **to enable young people to reach their creative and personal potential,**
- **to increase access to the theatre for vulnerable, 'at risk' young people,**

Lewisham Youth Theatre (LYT) has been working with young people for over 25 years. In 2002, when we began a residency at the Broadway Theatre, Catford, LYT worked with 20 young people a year and had an annual income of £10,000. Since then, LYT has grown steadily. Each year, we now work with over 150 young people in sustained theatre projects, reach over 700 children and young people through outreach workshops and perform to over 400 community members. LYT's annual turn-over now exceeds £130,000. We have created a thriving centre where young people participate in theatre at every level.

- LYT is run by professional theatre practitioners creating high quality performance work with young people.
- We have a reputation for producing challenging and innovative work to a professional standard.
- At the heart of every project is our belief that theatre is for everyone and we target and successfully attract those who might otherwise be excluded.
- We place young people at the centre of our work through our Members Committee, who consult on the running of the youth theatre.
- The youth theatre and workshops are free to those who take part.
- The demand for our work has led us to develop a range of theatre activities for children, young people and their families.
- Our programme includes our core youth theatre projects, creative life-skills and employability training and mentoring and work with under 8's and families.

Our on going consultation with our workers, Council of Management, stakeholders and members has fed directly into the creation of this strategic plan.

WHAT WE ACHIEVE

As a young person in care LYT was a life line, it provided stability, discipline, team work, motivation and accountability without which I would have definitely gone off the rails. I made some life-long friends through LYT. My self-esteem and confidence came back and I truly believe I would not be where I am today without the support that I got through being a member of LYT. It is much more than just a Youth theatre.

Former LYT Member

Our Ultimate Goal:

All young people who interact with LYT will have improved well-being and life chances.

The young people who work with LYT gain:

Creative Skills, including:

- Theatre and performance skills
- Opportunities to work with theatre professionals and perform in a professional theatre environment.
- Increased understanding of the range of theatre employment possibilities
- Lifelong interest in the arts.

Social and Emotional Skills, including:

- Increased confidence and resilience
- Improved communication.
- Improved teamwork
- Broader emotional literacy – empathy and understanding of other people.
- New friendships with different young people from all over their borough.
- A sense of belonging

Renewed and Increased Ambition, including:

- An understanding of their own value and importance of their contribution.
- Improved literacy and oral skills.
- Increased awareness of further education and employment opportunities.

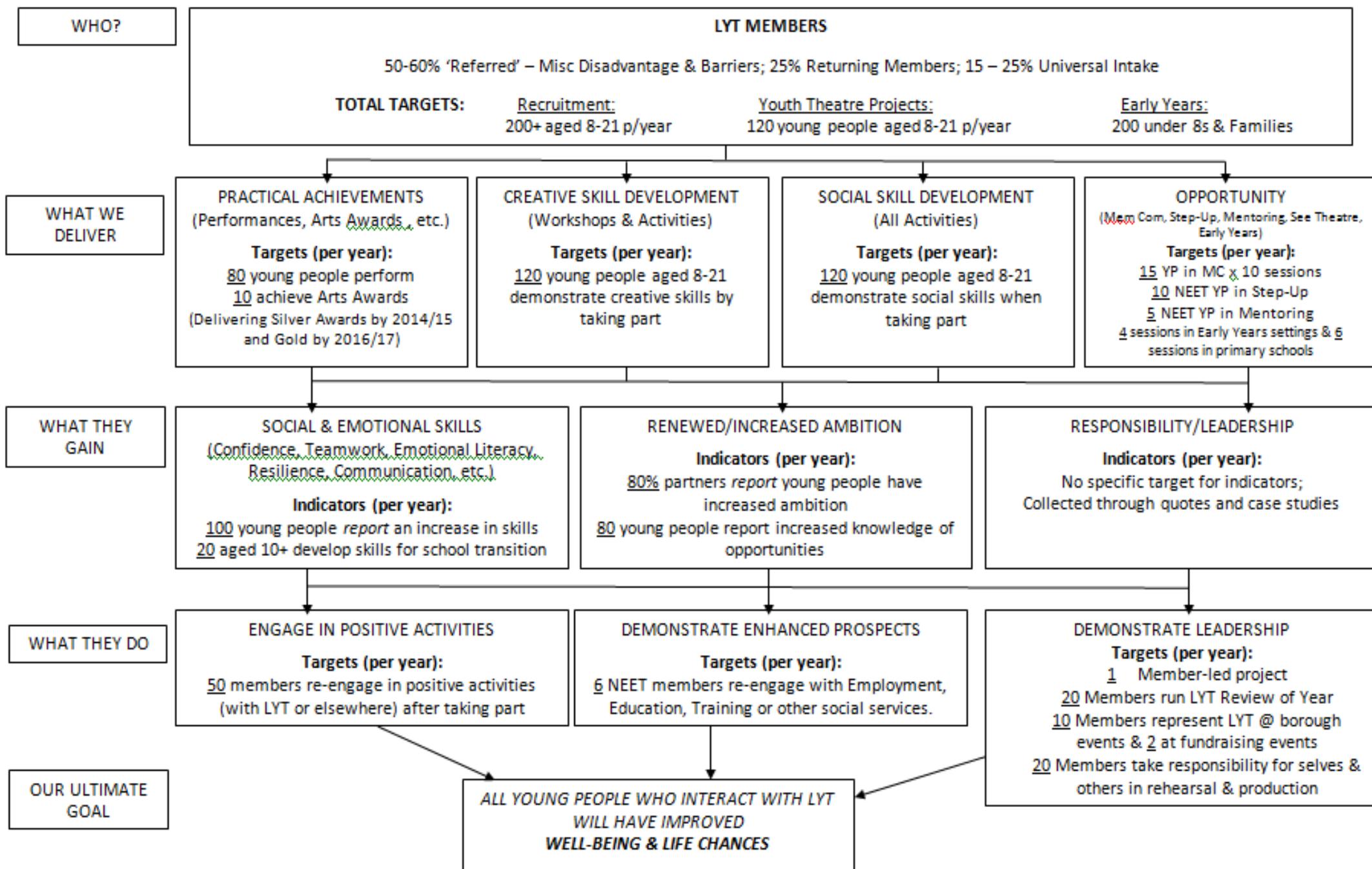
Responsibility and Leadership Skills, including:

- Increased commitment
- Increased ability to take on positive leadership within a group.

“At LYT it’s fun and it makes me happy. People are more accepting. Schools can be a bit cliquey. It also helps with a career – because of LYT I have a future.”

Senior Youth Theatre member, aged 16.

OUR OUTCOMES & TARGETS



LYT's History

Lewisham Youth Theatre (LYT) was founded as ETC Productions LTD in 1987 and has been trading as Lewisham Youth Theatre since the late 1980s. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Throughout its history LYT has had clear guiding aims of creating high quality theatre with young people and being accessible to young people of all social and economic backgrounds. These aims have always directed the organisation in its development. Over 50% of LYT's members face significant disadvantage, including:

- coming from low-income families,
- having statement special educational needs,
- being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET, and
- being engaged with or known to local social services

From 1987 to 2002 LYT operated on a project basis run by professional theatre practitioners when projects and funding came together. In 2002 LYT secured its position by becoming a Lewisham borough regularly funded organisation, resident at the Broadway Theatre in Catford and with a broader remit to operate all year round and include delivery for younger children. In 2004 Lewisham Council increased its financial commitment to LYT from £30,000 to £42,000 per annum and has renewed this commitment until 2014.

Developments Since 2011

The current document takes into account and follows on from several developments arising from the successful delivery of our plans laid out in 2011. These developments include:

Staff Capacity

- Securing funding for the organisation's first full-time post through a 3 year commitment from Children in Need for the Outreach & Participation Coordinator
- Raising the Administrator from .6 to a full-time Administration & Programmes Manager, and adapting this role to include more project management and delivery responsibilities.
- Increasing Artistic Director hours in line with project delivery needs
- Transitioning from a Company Manager to an Executive Director role

Funding & Finance

- Diversifying funding portfolio to include a mixture of statutory grants/commissions, trust/foundation grants, philanthropic donations from individuals/ businesses and earned income streams
- Decreasing reliance on statutory funding (both LBL Main Grant and funding from other LBL statutory sources) from 66% to 32% of annual turnover
- Securing multi-year grants to allow for sustainable planning.
- Securing funding for projects that are responsive to the needs of the young people, rather than creating projects in response to funder priorities.

- Budgeting annually to meet the needs of the programme year, rather than project to project.

Programming:

- Development of the Step-Up programme to include an annual programme of life-skills projects, creative traineeship project and ongoing mentoring.
- Development of annual programme for Members Committee
- Development of income generating scheme through under-8s storytelling project
- Development of standardized programme of youth theatre work
- Development of standardized evaluation systems and procedures
- Development of standardized volunteering and work experience practices and procedures

Marketing & Communication:

- Creating standard marketing materials (posters and flyers) that are disseminated for display in schools, youth clubs and youth services.
- Launching new website on an open-source content management system that allows regular updating of information
- Developing social media outlets, including outward facing facebook page and twitter account

LONG TERM GOALS

LYT has considered the long-term organizational goals on a 5-15 year time scale in order to ensure that current programmes and organizational development are operating towards defined achievements.

The organisation's long term goals include:

- Securing permanent space with office, rehearsal and performance capabilities, potentially becoming the youth provision for an arts centre
- Continuing to secure funding for sustainable full-time posts
- Developing exchanges with national and international youth theatres

Organisational Structure:

LYT is governed by the Council of Management. Each Council of Management member is also a trustee of the charity and director of the company limited by guarantee.

The Council of Management currently includes 7 members, with expertise in:

- local government,
- finance,
- charity administration,
- professional theatre,
- education, youth arts practice and
- technology

The Council of Management represents the local community and our stakeholders.

Members include:

- Two former youth members of LYT
- A parent of an LYT youth member

As of 2014, LYT's staff team includes:

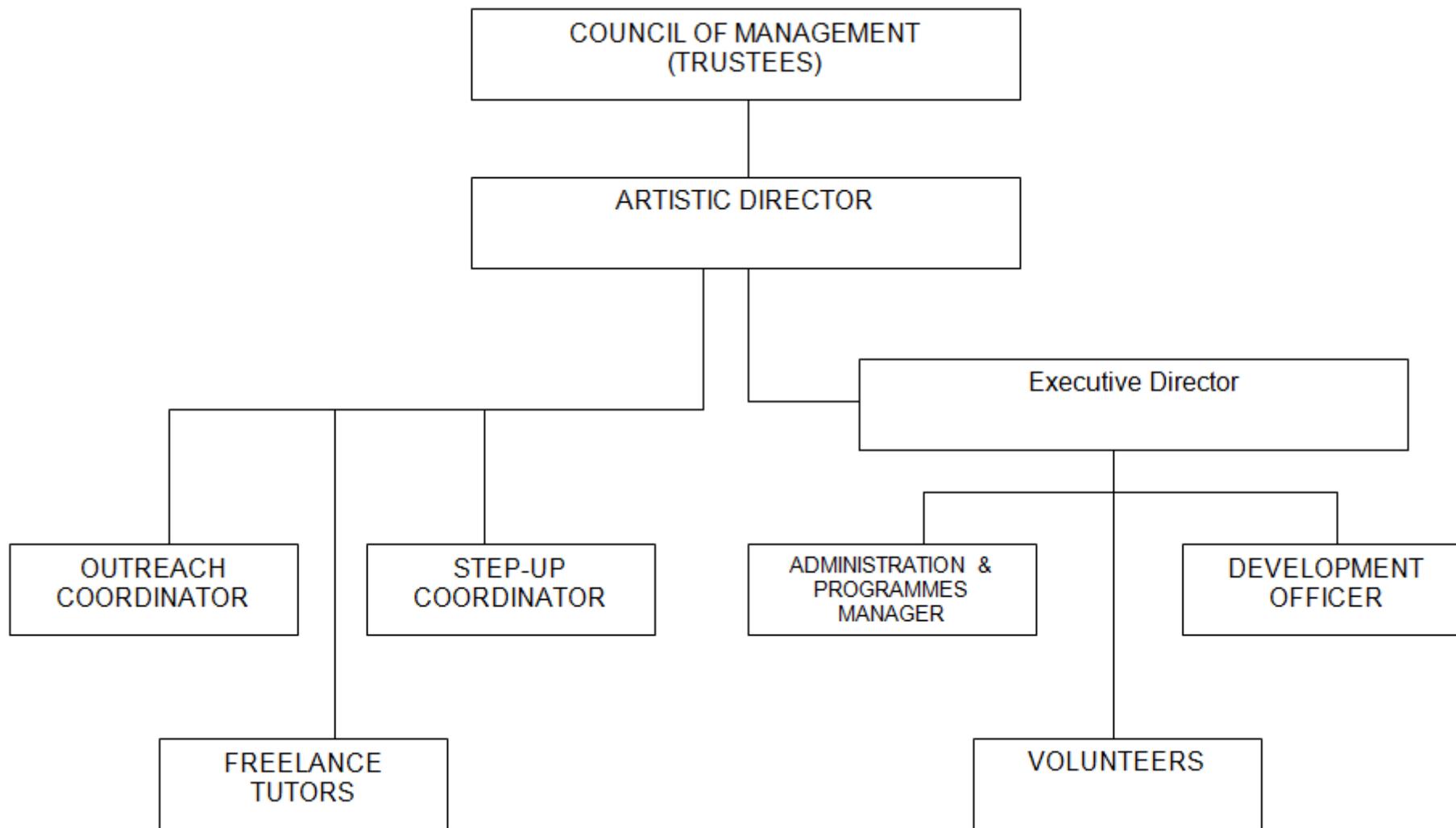
- Artistic Director (.8 time);
- Executive Director (.6 time);
- Administration & Programmes Manager (full time)
- Outreach & Participation Coordinator (Full time, focusing on 8-13 year olds)
- Step-Up Coordinator (.5 time, focusing on 14+ age group and NEETs)
- Development Officer (.2 time)

Additional project delivery capacity is provided by:

- Freelance project tutors, including professional directors, stage manager and designers
- 25-30 volunteer, work experience and trainee placements per year

LYT's Members Committee is made up of young people of all ages from across our youth theatre projects. In order to be a part of the Members Committee, members must have completed one project with LYT, be willing to commit to attending committee meetings, and be able to positively represent LYT in the borough. Committee meetings are conducted and minuted by a rolling youth chair and secretary, supported by LYT staff. The Members Committee take responsibility for:

- Consulting on plans for the youth theatre
- Planning and running events for members and stakeholders
- Representing LYT at fundraising events, conferences and local profile-raising events



Our Plan for the next Three Years

In the period 2014 – 2017, LYT aims to sustain the development the organization has undergone over the last 3 years. We want to maintain levels of youth participation and community engagement, while laying the groundwork for further organizational development. The 2011-14 Business Plan focused on developing access for hard-to-reach young people and deepening the experience of all participants through opportunities to take on more responsibility in the organization. We have successfully achieved these goals through the Step Up programme and our Members Committee.

Programme Development Goals

In the coming three years, our programme development goals include:

- Increasing our reach to those most in need through expanded partnership working and clearer referral procedures.
- Increasing our ability to evaluate the impact of our programmes through more cohesive monitoring and evaluation tools and procedures.
- Expanding opportunities for young people to take on leadership roles through the Members Committee and peer mentorship roles.
- Expanding opportunities for young people to gain accreditation and qualifications for their participation, i.e. through the Arts Award Qualification and AQA Unit Award Scheme.
- Better integrating our under-8s provision with the overall organizational work

Organisational Development Goals

In order lay the ground work towards achieve our long-term goals, LYT will work towards the following organizational developments over the next three years:

- **Staff Capacity:** Continuing to build staff capacity towards full-time roles.
- **Office and Delivery Space:** Continuing to identify opportunities for office & delivery space with more security.
- **Quality Assurance:** Achieving a quality assurance mark, for instance through London Youth.
- **Growth/Change Management:** Ensuring the foundations of the organization are strong and can withstand growth as well as fluctuations in funding environment.
- **Organisational Profile:** Building organizational profile across the borough and outside the borough on a strategic level.

ANNUAL ARTISTIC GOALS

LYT aims to remain flexible to the needs of our young people and community, and eclectic in the work that we produce. Building on the successes of previous project, we aim to deliver at least one project per year that meets at least one element of the following objectives:

1. Working in Partnership, including with:
 - a. Professional Theatre Companies
 - b. Youth Organisations and Services
 - c. Community Organisations and Services
 - d. Schools and Educational Institutions

2. Experimenting with the Form of our Productions, including producing work that is:
 - a. Site-Specific
 - b. Devised
 - c. Scripted
 - d. New Writing
 - e. Promenade
 - f. Etc.

3. Experimenting with the Style of our Productions, including producing work that incorporates:
 - a. Film
 - b. Music
 - c. Dance
 - d. Physical Theatre
 - e. Etc.

4. Engaging with the Lewisham Community, including through:
 - a. Intergenerational Activities
 - b. Projects for all ages of the youth theatre
 - c. Engaging different community sectors (ie groups with disabilities)
 - d. Etc.

5. Providing Opportunities for Volunteers, Work Experience and Training through:
 - a. Year 10 Work Experience Placements
 - b. Further Education and Higher Education Placements
 - c. Job Centre Placements
 - d. Community Volunteer opportunities
 - e. Trainee Positions (paid apprenticeships)

What We Will Deliver

LYT will deliver annual projects that engage with children and young people from early years to 23 years old, providing a progression pathway for increased engagement and leadership in the arts.

Annual Project Goals

Youth Theatres

All Youth Theatre projects are free and we do not hold auditions. 50% of our members are vulnerable, at risk or financially in need young people referred to us through schools and other agencies. Working with experienced theatre practitioners in a professional theatre, we encourage commitment, responsibility and self esteem. We provide a safe environment to develop skills, explore ideas and produce full-scale theatre performances of which participants can be proud to have created.

Many of our members go on to pursue careers in theatre and the arts. The loyalty and sense of identity that develops and the relationships formed accompany the young people throughout their lives whatever their chosen future may be. A high percentage of members stay with the group for many years.

Annual Main Youth Theatre Projects will normally include:

- **Junior Youth Theatre 1 (JYT 1)** – Working with 40 young people aged 8-13, this project introduces participants to theatre and performance (including learning lines) and helps members build confidence and key skills. The project is delivered in two weekly sessions between January and June, culminating in a performance.
- **Junior Youth Theatre 2 (JYT 2)** – Working with 30 young people aged 12-14, this project focuses on introducing participants to a variety of theatrical/performance styles and forms (ie physical theatre, mask work, improvisation, etc) and challenges participant to consider what areas of theatre and performance most interest them. The project is usually delivered through at least two short-term workshop projects that focus on theatre skills (Autumn & Summer), and an Arts Award project delivered in the Summer Term in which members work towards a final performance and develop leadership skills as part of a Bronze-level Arts Award qualification.
- **Senior Youth Theatre – Workshop Group (SYT-W)** – Working with 20 young people, usually aged 14-17, this project equips participants to use different styles and forms in a performance. The Workshop Group focuses on developing performance skills rather than the product of the performance. The project is ideal member in the younger range of the 14+ age group, those who are newer to LYT, and those who need extra support to take part. The project is usually delivered October through April, culminating in a performance.

- **Senior Youth Theatre –Acting Company (SYT-A)** -- Working with 15 young people, usually aged 15-21, this project aims to introduce participants to company-based and performance-focused activities. The project is ideal for members in the older range of the 14+ age group, who have taken part in previous performance projects, and willing to take on a higher level of commitment. The project is delivered October through April, culminating in a performance.

Step Up Programme

The Step Up Programme aims to integrate young people who are not in full-time education, employment or training (NEET) or are otherwise at risk into LYT's core youth theatre programme. Focusing on young people aged 16-24, the programme includes:

- **Daytime Life Skills Project:** A short course using drama exercises and techniques to help participants develop skills linked to success in employment and further education. Project focuses on verbal and physical communication skills, ambition and goal setting, and overcoming barriers.
- **Young Touring Company:** A training opportunity in which 5 members create and tour a short piece of forum theatre to schools and youth settings in Lewisham. Company members are paid for the final performances.
- **Outreach Project:** Drama sessions delivered at a partners' base in order to support hard-to-reach young people to access LYT's services. LYT currently delivers this project with Lewisham CAMHS.
- **Mentoring:** One-to-one advice and guidance mentoring supports young people aged 16-24 in achieving their goals. Mentoring is tailored to individual need. Session might include goal setting, support with applications, interview preparation, support with accessing local services and advocacy.

Early Years Creativity

Recognising a local need for creative provision for under-8s and LYT's experience in this area, we are committed to expanding our offer for 3-8 year olds in the coming three years. Opportunities to expand this offer include:

- Storytelling sessions linked to the curriculum and local well-being outcomes delivered in primary schools and early years centres.
- Parent and child storytelling workshops and courses for ages 3-5. We aim to explore how we may be able to link our Step Up programme with this strand of work by training Step Up participants, particularly young parents, to deliver session.
- Storytelling projects in primary schools that develop mental health protective factors.

Although LYT is free to young people, we aim for sessions delivered to other organisations to generate funding towards the costs of these projects.

Graduate Company

LYT continues to explore options for members who are 19+ to work together on semi-professional projects. Having piloted this programme in 2011-14, during which time members created and produced a radio play with Rerezent Radio, we recognize that the programme requires a clearer structure in order to carry on. LYT will continue to seek funding and capacity to support the development of this project.

Members' Committee

The Members' Committee aims to put young people at the centre of LYT's operations by providing opportunities for them to contribute to decision making and take on responsibility in the organization. Members currently plan and run LYT's Review of the Year at the Annual General Meeting, a Christmas Event for members of all ages, participate in interview panels and represent LYT at local events. Members' Committee meetings are led by members, who nominate a chair and secretary at each meeting. In 2014-17, LYT aims to develop this project by formalizing peer mentorship opportunities on youth theatre projects and developing an exchange project with other youth theatres.

Volunteering & Training

LYT will continue to provide 25-30 volunteer and work experience placements on our programmes each year. Placements usually take the form of project-based Workshop Assistants, Design Assistants and Stage Management Assistants. In 2014, LYT has begun to offer paid work experience placements in partnership with the Lewisham Mayor's Office. We aim to continue to strengthen and formalize our volunteer & work experience practice to ensure that placements have a meaningful experience through which they can gain skills and understanding of working in a professional environment that will support them in their future employment.

Our SWOT Analysis

Lewisham Youth Theatre carried out a SWOT analysis with our board in July 2014, using a previous SWOT analysis from 2011 as a starting point. The discussion highlighted:

STRENGTHS

- The quality of our work
- The offer of a comprehensive programme that is joined up across age ranges
- Our leadership and the culture of LYT which leads to long-term associations, loyalty and a sense of 'family'
- A core staff team that are able to deliver on every project, reducing project costs and 'back office' costs
- The contributions of our members
- Strong track record and reputation with funders
- Ability to secure funding that meets young people's needs (rather than being responsive to funder priorities)
- Ability to fundraise creatively, particularly for existing work
- Accessible location
- LYT is embedded in local community and has an excellent local reputation.

WEAKNESSES

- Challenge of maintaining current funding level
- Dependence on one contact (Mike Wilson) for philanthropic funding connections
- Limited staff time for fundraising
- Profile of Organisation – need to raise profile at Marketing & Communications level (not just through personal reputation in Borough)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Identifying another individual advocate for funding
- Using 'Catford Tales' to raise the profile of the organization
- Expanded funding and space as part of Lewisham's redevelopment
- LYT's ability to leverage outside funding for Lewisham
- Increase in marketing leading up to funding decisions

THREATS

- Residency in the Broadway uncertain in the future
- Reduction of LBL funding post 2015

THE TEAM

Staff

Artistic Director:	Helen Stanley
Executive Director:	Victoria Shaskan
Administration & Programmes Manager:	Jennifer Taillefer
Outreach & Participation Coordinator:	Sheryl Malcolm
Step-Up Coordinator:	Jen Camillin
Development Officer:	Elizabeth Downie

Council of Management

Emma Chalk (Chair) joined the Council of Management in 2013. Having graduated with a BA in Arts Management Emma worked for Lewisham Youth Theatre in 2002-2003 as an administrator and is now the Business Manager for Lewisham Music Hub. She has worked at Lewisham Council for 12 years in various roles across cultural services and Lewisham's School Improvement Team.

Danielle Moseley (Secretary) joined the Council of Management in 2008, after participating as an LYT member since the age of 14. Danielle has a degree in Film Production and has worked in the post production field as well as in acting. Her experience and knowledge as a former LYT member is invaluable and a great voice for young people. Danielle also enjoys volunteering when possible to help LYT move forward successfully.

Thomas Toomse-Smith (Treasurer) joined the Council of Management in 2012. He is a project director with the Financial Reporting Council's disclosure Lab. Before this he was Senior External Reporting Manager at Aviva plc, and Senior Audit Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers in the UK and the US.

Dawn Rowe joined the Council of Management since 2008 and is the parent of two LYT members. Dawn works at the London School of Fashion and has helped with costume on many LYT productions.

Julia Fletcher joined the Council of Management in 2010. For 12 years, she served as a local councillor for Downham ward in Lewisham, and was chair of the Children and Young People Select Committee for four years. Julia has an MA in local history from Goldsmiths' College. She works part-time as a legal librarian and has previously worked in university administration and as a children's librarian.

Rena Sodhi joined the Council of Management in 2014. Professionally, she provides strategic directorship to organisations in the charity sector. Most recently, she served as CEO of Safer London Foundation. Prior to this, she held Programme Director roles with the National Young Volunteers Service, The Prince's Trust and Big Lottery Fund.

Jamiel Thomas joined the Council of Management in 2012. He is an actor and IT consultant, and a former LYT member.

Advisory Board

Jane Wilson is a Senior Systemic Family Psychotherapist with ACAN Greenwich CAMHS. She is an experienced and committed social worker, systemic and family psychotherapist and supervisor who works with young people and their families with severe and enduring mental health issues

Sarah Ricca is a civil liberties solicitor at the firm of Deighton Guedalla, where she is a partner. She advises LYT on policy and legal issues.