



# Strategy Development with The Young Lives Foundation

The Young Lives Foundation (YLF) is an award-winning independent children's charity in Kent, with expertise in advocacy, mentoring, befriending and activity programmes. Founded in 2007, YLF provides statutory support services to Kent & Medway Social Services as well as providing preventative support services to troubled families and young people. Supporting 1200-1500 young people annually, their aim is to provide access to inspirational volunteers and resources for young people to lead fulfilling lives.

## The Issue

Les Hutchinson, the CEO of the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) and a trustee of YLF, referred the charity to Cranfield Trust for support, as part of the strategic partnership between Cranfield Trust and MCF

As such, YLF contacted Cranfield Trust, expressing a need for help in developing a 5-year business plan that could help them reduce their dependence on the local authority, with a large proportion of their income coming from this source. They required support in agreeing at board level what the priorities of the charity would be and deciding which model, out of the many options available, they would like to use to achieve their goals.



## Solution

Following their initial application for support, Cranfield Trust Regional Manager, Roger Watkins, got in touch with YLF and had an initial meeting with the charity to understand their situation and what they were hoping to achieve from this project.

From there, Roger matched YLF with Cranfield Trust volunteer Michael Lofthouse, an experienced volunteer who has worked on over 30 projects since joining the trust over 20 years ago.

Michael worked together with CEO of YLF Stephen Gray and Youth Services Director Neil Vickery and Director of Youth Programmes & Safeguarding, Kristy Tidey.

During their time together, Michael and the team at YLF set measurable goals and create a coherent plan for how they will achieve these goals, with practical actions the charity can take to achieve this. Out of this, the charity were able to finish the project taking away a robust strategy and a clear understanding of how best to implement this.

## Impact

By working with Michael, the charity created sound plan that outlines their goals and provides them with a model to follow to achieve these.

The charity described clearer measurables as something they had gained from this project which would ultimately benefit their beneficiaries, as it will mean their work is more strategic and targeted, which will ultimately provide better services.

Cranfield Trust led YLF through the process of developing their new strategic plan, with Michael giving guidance along the way. Doing this has resulted in YLF taking away with a strong and practical strategy that they can go on and implement within their organisation.



*Michael was extremely engaging. He both challenged and supported our ways of thinking and the approaches we take. I would recommend Cranfield to any organisation like our own that needs a helping hand in moving forward.*

Neil Vickery - The Young Lives Foundation

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***This Project has enabled us to achieve progress that we would not have been able to achieve alone***


***We have a saying now 'what would Michael say?' when we need a sense-check, so your legacy at YLF lives on!***

Neil Vickery - The Young Lives Foundation

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