



Changing childhoods.  
Changing lives.

# Our Approach to Voice and Lived Experience **2024-27**

How we listen and respond to the voices  
and lived experiences of children and  
young people across Barnardo's

For external publication



# Introduction from Lynn, our CEO

At Barnardo's, our core purpose is ***changing childhoods, changing lives***, so that children and young people are ***safe, happy, healthy and hopeful***, whatever their background or circumstances.

The charity has a long, rich history of centring the voices and lived experiences of children and young people to achieve meaningful change in their lives, and **I am proud that this continues to be one of the foundations** of our [2024-27 Strategy](#) to deliver change for children and young people across the UK.

As CEO, and a former UK director of children's services within the charity, **I have seen firsthand the value, power and influence children and young people's voices and experiences can have** over how we deliver services to those who need us most, how we influence policy-making and legislation for children and young people, and how we drive change in public attitudes toward childhood.

**This refreshed approach and framework will enable us to better listen and respond to the voices and experiences of children and young people**, and I'm looking forward to seeing it in action, consistently and comprehensively, right across the charity.

*~ Lynn Perry MBE, Chief Executive*



# Alignment to our 2024-27 Barnardo's Strategy

Establishing a core **foundation**:

**We listen and respond to the voices and experiences of children and young people**

The ways **we will deliver this**:

**We speak out alongside children and young people**

**Create opportunities for children and young people to shape the future**

**Our purpose**

**Changing Childhoods.  
Changing Lives.**

So children and young people are safe, happy, healthy and hopeful, whatever their background or circumstances

**What we do**

Run excellent, inclusive services that improve the lives of children and young people

Improve practice, policy-making and systems so that they can really work for all children and young people

Drive change in attitudes towards childhood, working closely with partners and supporters

**How we do it**

Develop and/or adopt innovative, future-proof delivery models

Collaborate with partners and communities

Speak out alongside children and young people

Build trusted relationships with decision-makers

Create opportunities for children and young people to shape the future

Inspire more people to join Barnardo's: to donate, volunteer, shop and advocate

Become the nation's favourite pre-loved charity retailer

Build a strong portfolio of commissioned work

Develop a strong evidence base

Develop a distinctive voice, brand and reputation

Improve how we measure and describe our impact

**Our foundations**

Optimise our use of data and tech

Listen and respond to the voice and experience of children and young people

Grow a culture where everyone feels they belong

Manage our resources effectively and sustainably

**Our belief, vision and  
high-level objectives**



# The **belief** and **vision** at the centre of our approach

## We believe

...that children and young people should have opportunities to have **their voices heard** and be **taken seriously** in decisions that affect them.

...that this leads to better decision-making, which means children and young people are better off.

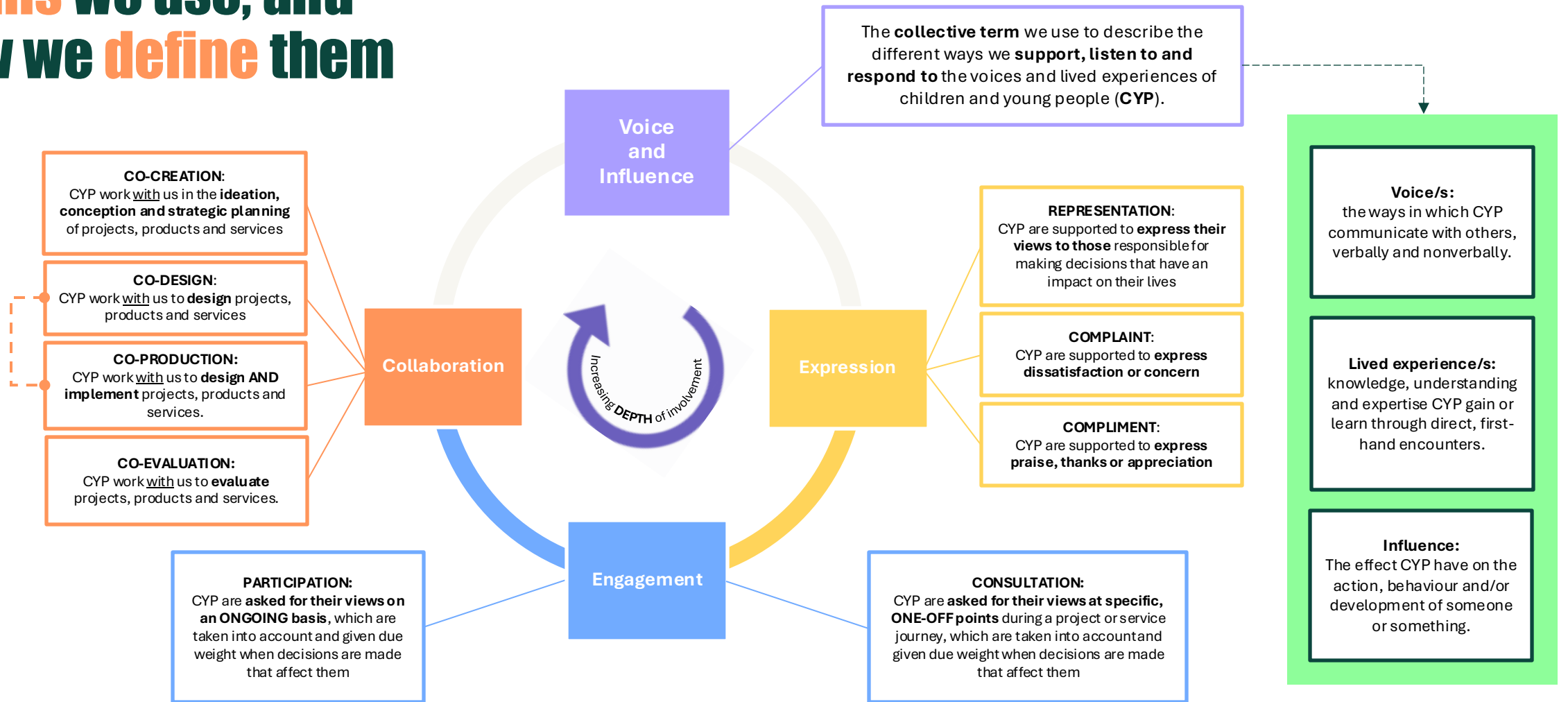
## Our vision

is that the **voices and lived experiences of children and young people routinely inform and influence** what we say, how we work and the decisions we make and those we want to influence externally.

We recognise **this is their right** under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 12 & 13).



# Terms we use, and how we define them



# High-level objectives



1. **Strengthen** the ways in which we listen and respond to the voices and lived experiences of a diverse range of children and young people across the charity.
2. **Fully realise** our aspiration of speaking out alongside children and young people, centring their voices and lived experiences in all we do.
3. **Expand** the number of opportunities we create and facilitate for a diverse range of children and young people to inform, shape and influence our work, and beyond.

\* drawn and adapted from the 2024-27 Barnardo's Strategy (specifically, the Jigsaw)

# Practice Framework

How we *plan, do and review* voice and influence practice with children and young people across the charity





# Introduction from Josh, our Head of Voice and Influence

**Listening and responding to the voices and lived experiences children and young people is ingrained in the DNA of Barnardo's**, and has been since Thomas Barnardo conceived the charity.

Over the last 3 years, we've stepped up our work to really strengthen our voice and influence practice across the charity – **at local level** in our children's services, **at national level** in our corporate teams and departments, and **at corporate level** with our senior leaders and Trustees.

We've made real progress which we can be proud of, and which has been reflected back to us from children and young people we support – so **we know we're on the right track**.

Our **Voice and Influence Practice Framework** provides exactly that – a framework to guide and support us to further build, develop and strengthen how we plan, deliver and support, and evaluate our voice and influence work with children and young people across the charity.

*~ Josh Harsant, Head of Voice and Influence*



# Why a practice framework?

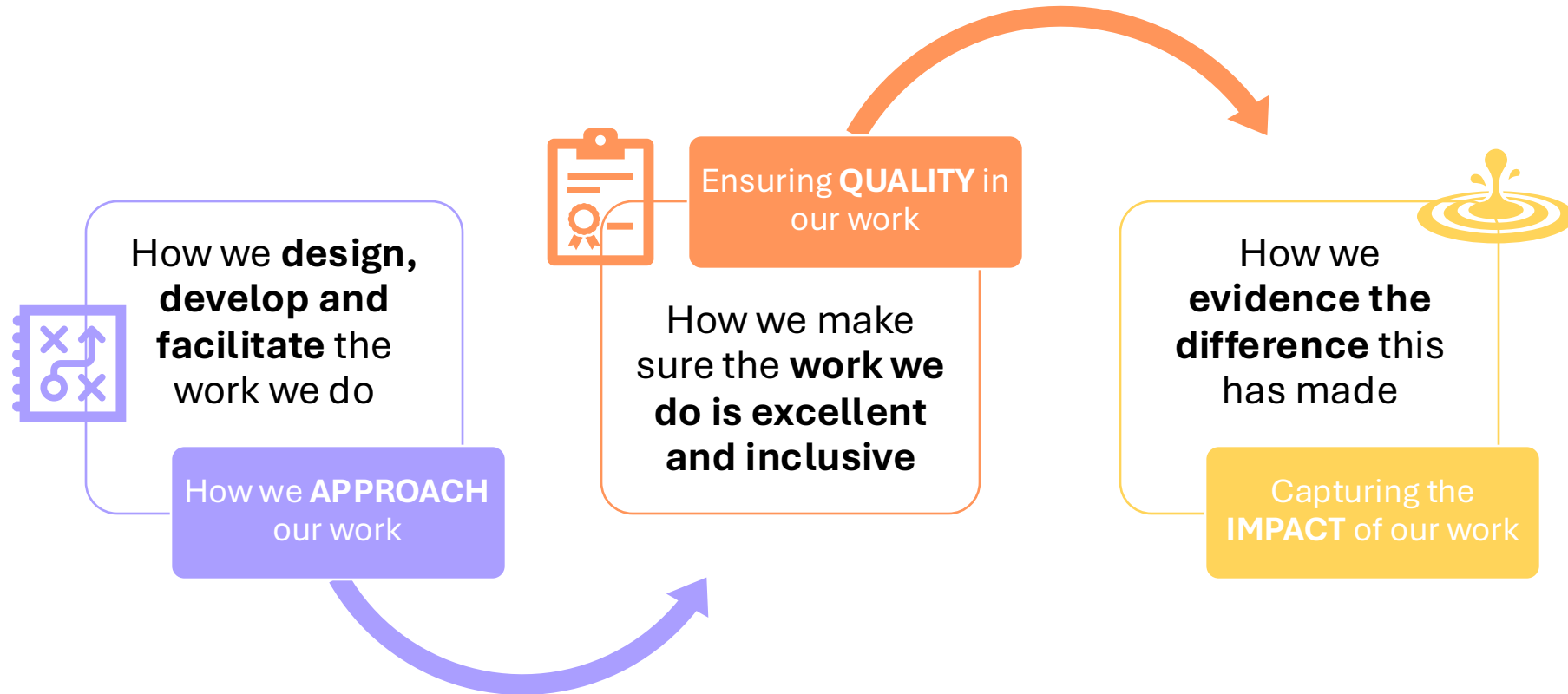
Our work at Barnardo's is vast and varied – from delivering local children's services, to influencing UK government policy, to recruiting supporters to donate to us, to our entire retail operation. We recognise that **the ways and means by which the voices and lived experiences of children and young people inform, shape and influence our work will look different** in each of these contexts.

Our Voice and Influence Practice Framework **draws on our existing experiential knowledge, practice theories, ethical principles and research in this field**, and lays out the **three components of excellent voice and lived experience practice** and which – importantly – can be applied in all the contexts within which we work. This means we can ensure, and be assured, our work is both consistently high quality and getting better all the time.

The Practice Framework has three components:

1. Our **approach**, based on an internationally-endorsed children's rights-centred model for participation.
2. Our **quality standards**, co-designed by children and young people.
3. Capturing our **impact**, to ensure we consistently evidence how things have changed.

# Framework on a page



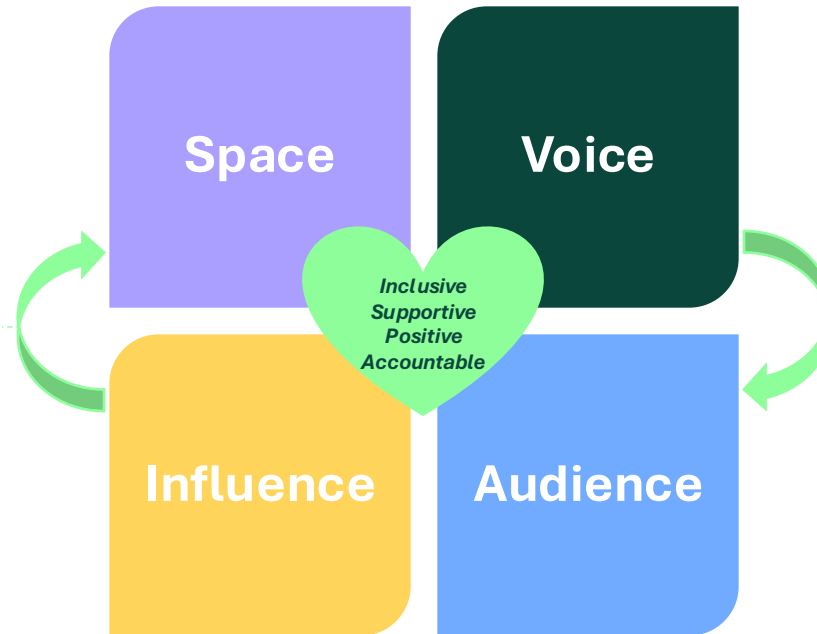
# How we approach what we do

Our approach to voice and lived experience **centres** children's rights, using the Lundy Model<sup>1</sup>, which is built on and around four dimensions, **each which are necessary components** of great voice and influence practice.

At the heart of our use of the Lundy Model, are our charity's core values: **inclusive, supportive, positive, accountable**.

**1. Designing and providing safe, ethical, inclusive and meaningful opportunities** for children and young people to give their views and share their lived experience.

**4. The views and lived experiences of children and young people are responded to and/or acted upon, and feedback is provided** to those involved.



**2. Supporting and enabling** children and young people to **form and give their views** and share their lived experience, **in their way, on their terms**, to get the best out of them.

**3. The views and lived experiences of children and young people are heard by the people who can act or make a real difference.**

# How we ensure **quality** in what we do

<b>1</b>	<b>Inform you</b>		Be clear and upfront
<b>2</b>	<b>Safe space for you</b>		Help you feel safe to give your views if you want to
<b>3</b>	<b>Support you</b>		Let you be in control of how you want to be heard
<b>4</b>	<b>Include you</b>		Treat you fairly, don't judge you and give you an equal opportunity
<b>5</b>	<b>Relevant to you</b>		Include you in issues about you and are of interest to you
<b>6</b>	<b>Value you</b>		Your opinion matters, treat you with respect
<b>7</b>	<b>Makes a difference to you</b>		Listen to what you say and tell you what's happened as a result

## 7 Quality Standards

Our voice and influence practice should be **excellent, inclusive** and **high quality**.

To evidence this, it should **meet our seven quality standards**, which were developed with young people themselves.

These standards enable children and young people to **hold us to account** for the way we work with them in amplifying their voice and influence.

# Capturing the **impact** of what we do

The impact of children and young people's voice and influence can be seen and **evidenced in different ways** but is always **context dependent** and rarely 'one size fits all'.

Impact, outcome and/or output measures should always be **rooted in the purpose and objective** of the activity undertaken, and so may be different depending on the piece of work being undertaken.

## Individual

The impact on an individual child or young person's **safety, happiness, health** and **hope** - e.g. their health, wellbeing, care, education or living arrangements, or their individual knowledge, skills or abilities (such as improved confidence).

Measured through our Outcomes Framework

## Service

The impact on the way we deliver **excellent and inclusive services** to children and young people - including design, development, delivery, quality assurance, and monitoring and evaluation.

Measured through the quarterly CS Quality Conversation

## Strategic

The impact on Barnardo's as a charity - from strategic decisions taken by our senior leaders and Board of Trustees - and what we seek to influence externally (e.g. through **improving policy, practice and systems**).

Measured through the Performance Dashboard ('attached' to our new Strategy)

# Measuring and describing impact

How we monitor and evaluate *how well* we support children's and young people's voice and influence, and *what difference* this makes





# Measuring and describing impact

There are a range of measures that can evidence the impact of children and young people's voice and influence. **Consideration needs to be given to each component of our practice framework – as illustrated below.**



# What's been done – recording outputs

**OUTPUT MEASURES** can vary depending on the nature of the piece of work but are helpful measures to establish to continually monitor and evaluate **what** voice and influence work we're doing and **with whom**.

## Outputs relating to C&YP

### Examples:

Number of C&YP engaging in voice and influence activity (or XYZ-specific activity)

Number of hours contributed by C&YP in voice and influence work

Number of C&YP engaging directly with decision/policy-makers

## Outputs relating to the charity

### Examples:

Number of opportunities we provide for C&YP

Number of colleagues trained in voice and influence practice

Number of 'you said, we did' publications produced

# What's happened as a result – capturing **impact**

**IMPACT MEASURES** themselves should consider those that relate to **children and young people (C&YP) themselves** (personal impacts), as well as the **external impacts** achieved (at a service, Barnardo's or policy level).

## Personal impacts

### Examples:

% C&YP who know they have a right to be heard and their views are taken seriously

% of C&YP who feel safe and respected having their views heard

% C&YP who feel confident and enabled to express their opinions

## External impacts

### Examples:

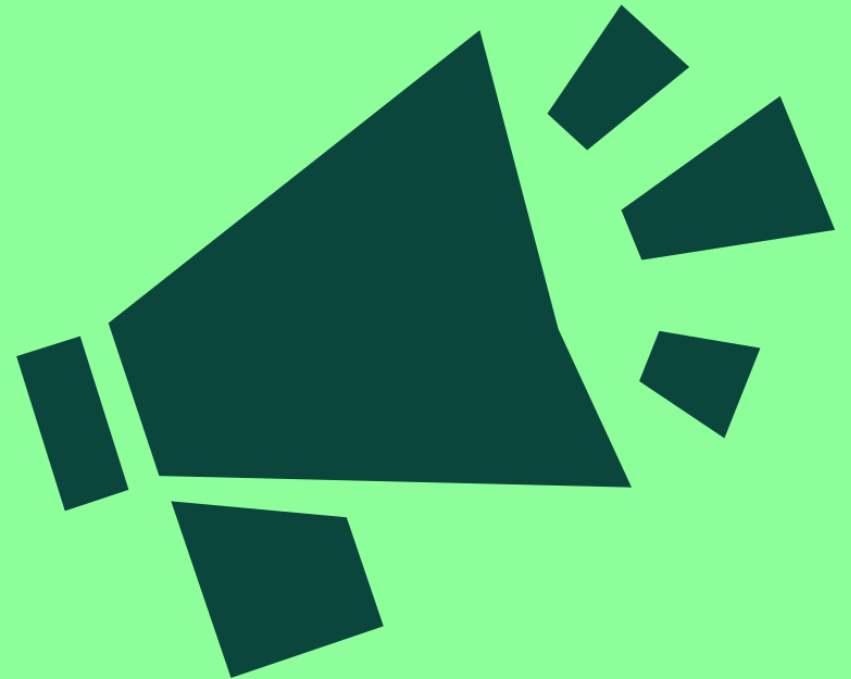
% of colleagues who have been trained in voice and influence

% of trained colleagues reporting confidence in supporting voice and influence work

% C&YP who feel professionals will take them seriously

# Creating opportunities for children and young people to shape the future

How we work directly with young people across the charity, including our 'enabling' teams and business services



# What young people themselves have told us

*"I feel it's **important for every young person to have a voice**, no matter how big or small. Barnardo's make sure that **everyone has a voice...** and to make those that feel like they don't have a voice aware that they do!"*

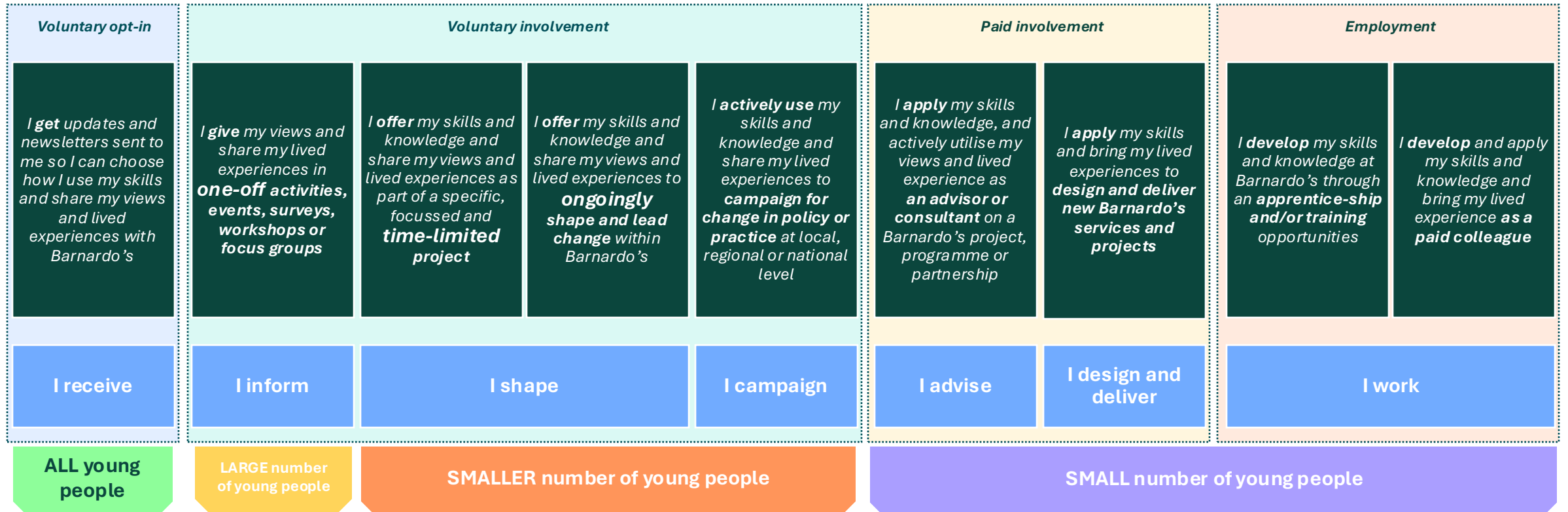
*"It's important to me **having the opportunity to share my views and opinions**, knowing they will **make a difference**"*

*"It's **important to hear young people's voices** because they are going to grow into the world that everyone else is leaving behind. Barnardo's want to **take that input from them to make that world a place that they want to be in**"*

*"Young people sitting on interview panels **helps to include us in the process** and **bring the focus of the charity back to young people**"*

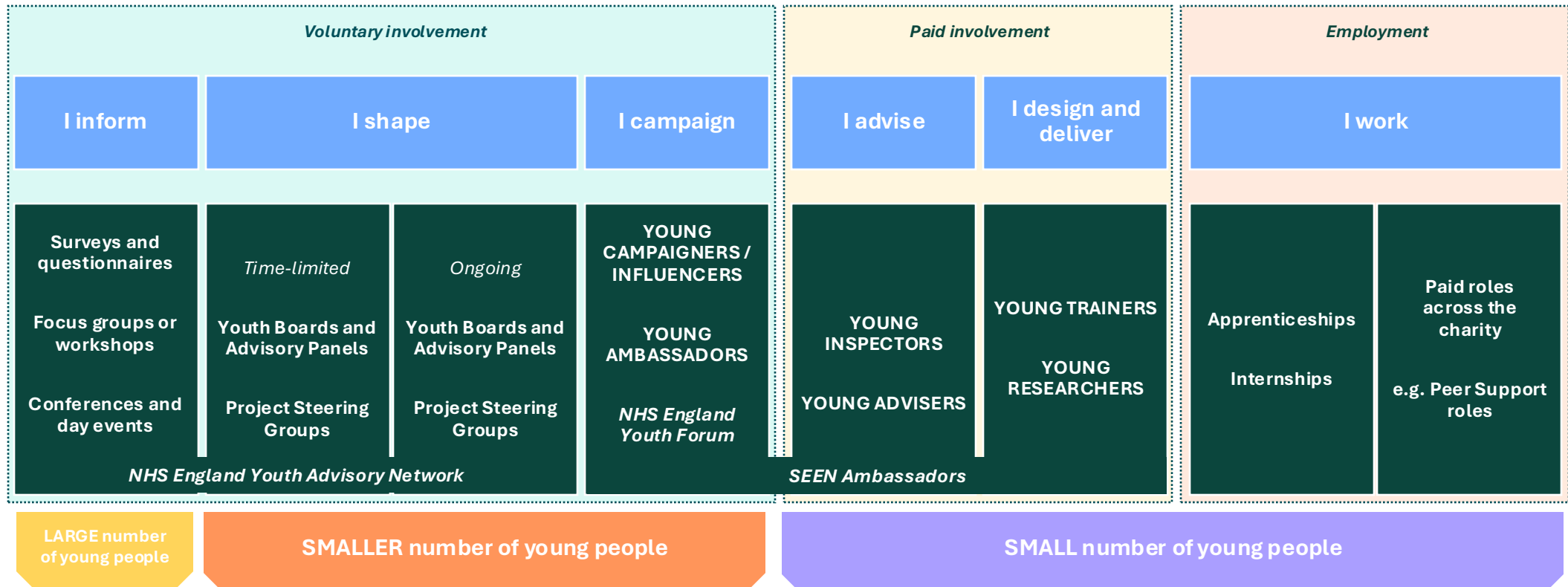
# Spectrum of opportunities for young people

We create, identify and support offer a **range of different types of opportunities** for young people at different ‘levels’ – which are summarised **below**. These ‘levels’ are aimed to support colleagues consider what might fit best for both their piece of work and young people themselves.



# At a national level: B-Amplified

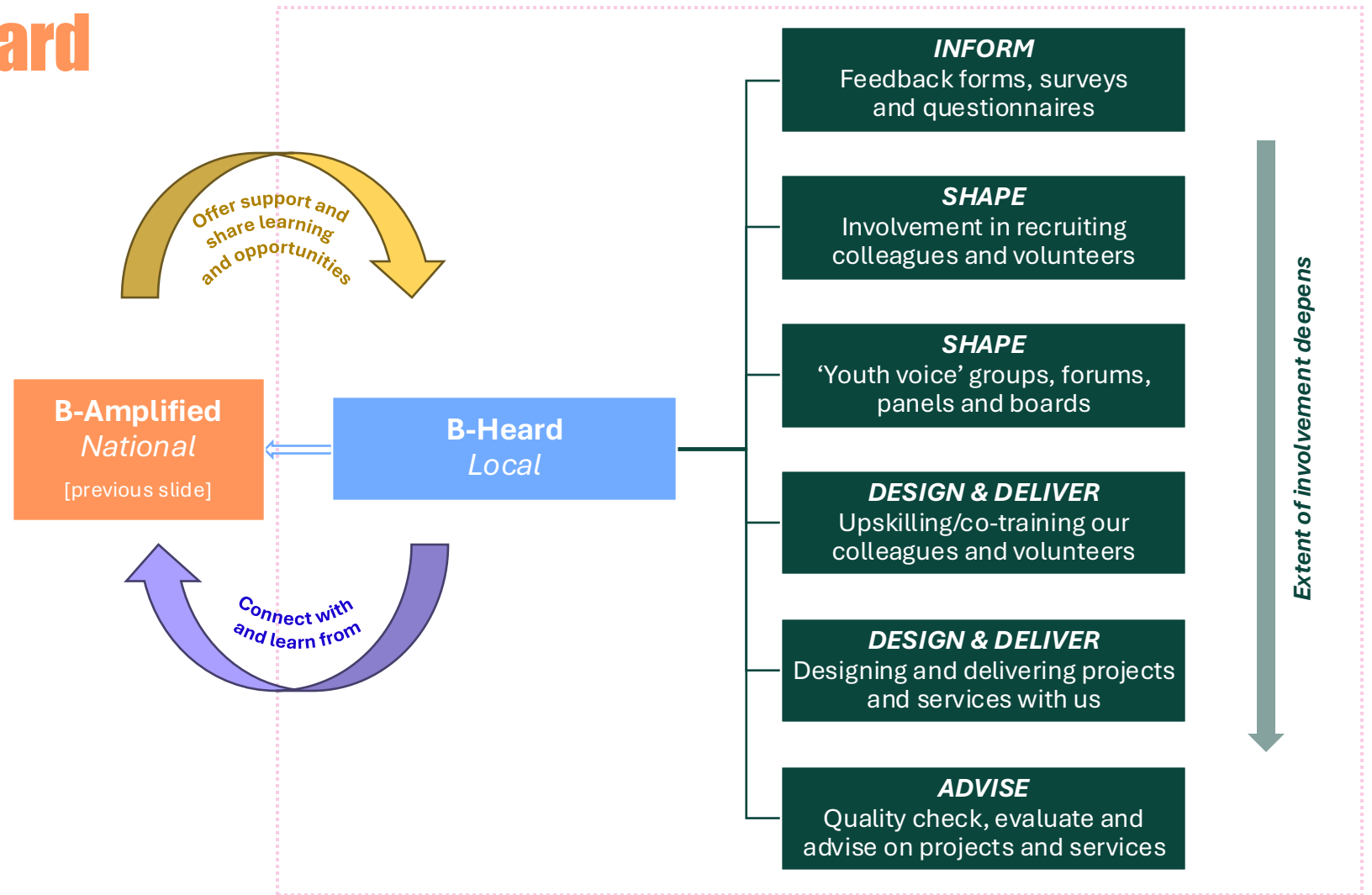
In real terms, **these are the opportunities** we offer young people at a national level (which collectively we call our **B-Amplified offer**).





# At a local level: B-Heard

Outlined here are some tangible examples of ways a **local B-Heard offer** could be facilitated, and how it can connect with, and get support and opportunities from, the national **B-Amplified** offer (as on the previous slide).



# The ways we show appreciation and say thank you

As with colleagues and volunteers, it's important for us to **acknowledge the contributions of children and young people** to the success of the charity – showing appreciation and saying thank you. How we do this appropriately and ethically is critical, and these are the **four ways** we do this at Barnardo's.

## Recognition

Something that shows young people that their engagement is valued and taken seriously.

*E.g. a certificate, or a handwritten note of thanks*

## Reward

Something tangible that is of value to a child or young person.

*E.g. a new experience, or a cash-equivalent voucher*

## Payment

Payment received by a person for their engagement, usually at a pre-agreed rate.

## Accreditation

Something that formally certifies or accredits the skills and contribution of a child or young person following an activity.

# Delivering on our vision and high-level objectives

*Who's responsible for what?*



# Roles and responsibilities across the charity



## Children and young people

*Share their views and lived experiences to help us deliver excellent, inclusive services, improve practice, systems and policymaking, and drive attitudes toward childhood.*



## All colleagues

Work within our **practice framework**, creating and facilitating opportunities for children and young people to share their views and lived experiences, to inform, shape and influence our work.



## Line managers // Service Managers

Role model, encourage, and support teams to work within our **strategic framework** and access or create opportunities for sharing learning, good practice and reflection.



## Senior Managers // Heads & Assistant Directors

**Lead by example**, enabling teams to deliver on the ambition of **this strategic framework**, collecting evidence to demonstrate the impact children and young people have on our work, and beyond.



## Corporate Leadership (CLG / CLT)

Providing **vocal and visible leadership**, undertaking their **accountability** for listening and responding to the views and lived experiences of children and young people.

# Roles and responsibilities across the charity

## >> Our UK Voice & Influence Team

Role / purpose:

To play a central, leading role in enabling the charity to listen and respond to voices and lived experiences of children and young people.

### Delivering excellent, inclusive services

- Training, learning and practice development
- Communities of Practice
- Regional/departmental V&I Forums & Networks
- Developing/appraising/sourcing tools & resources
- Supporting new service modelling and development
- As/when advice, guidance, support & consultancy

### Improving practice, systems and policymaking

- Training and supporting colleagues in business and corporate services
- Developing tools & resources for colleagues
- Designing and facilitating opportunities for C&YP to influence decision-makers and the public
- Supporting/coordinating sector-wide engagements and opportunities for C&YP to influence policymakers

### Driving public attitudes toward childhood

Enabling the charity to centre C&YP's voices and lived experiences in all our work across the charity, so that they inform, shape and influence our work and decision-making at all levels.

# Facilitating and sharing learning and good practice

The picture across our region/nation children's services

3 x thematic *Communities of Practice* (charity-wide, thematic, year-long) - Facilitated by the UK V&I Team

Corporate V&I Forum  
(for non-children's services colleagues)



Children's Rights  
Reps Network

North Region Voice &  
Influence Forum

Northern Ireland Voice &  
Influence Forum

Central Region Voice &  
Influence Forum

Cymru & South West Region  
Voice & Influence Forum

South East Region Voice &  
Influence Forum

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