



**NFYFC Development Plan**  
**Looking to the Future**  
**Consultation Document**

## Where are we now?

### Introduction:

The National Young Farmers' Clubs of England and Wales (NFYFC) and its affiliated clubs are actively engaged in supporting young people who live, work and/or have an interest in agriculture, rural communities and rural enterprises.

It is one of the largest voluntary rural youth organisations in England and Wales dedicated to young people who have a love for agriculture and rural life. With a wide network of 624 self governing Young Farmers Clubs located in 46 counties across England and Wales, it supports over 24,000 people aged between 10 and 26, from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests.

"Fun, learning and achievement" are at the core of all activities run by NFYFC and are at the heart of the organisation. With this in mind, the NFYFC offer a wide range and variety of programmes through competitions, personal development, travel and agricultural and rural issues. Members are afforded the opportunity to travel and experience other cultures in order to broaden their life experiences. Programmes are designed to promote and enhance personal development along with skills which are transferable to the workplace. Members are encouraged to work as a part of team while having fun and being active participants in their community.

NFYFC is both an agricultural and youth organisation. Both elements are equally important to YFC, as it's the unique selling point (USP) of the organisation. People join their local club because they have an interest in their rural and/or farming community. It is what joins the members together. However, YFC needs to ensure that it is inclusive of all people and promote the organisation in a way that entices young people to join their local YFC, regardless of a knowledge or background.

This development plan, written by the NFYFC Board of Management, is aimed at developing the organisation towards 2020. It will be measured and reviewed annually in order to ensure the progression of the plan and the continuous development of the organisation.

### Limiting factors

With a federation of 25,000 members, there are always going to be challenges and limiting factors, which hinder progress.

#### Structure

The structure of the federation can result in implementation of changes being slow and ad hoc, often with clubs and county federation having their own priorities. In order to ensure the success of the federation it is imperative that all involved in YFC work together and commit to a strong identity.

#### Resources

Varying resources within county federations mean that implementation can be difficult. This challenge must be overcome to ensure the success of the federation for years to come. Those involved in YFC need to recognise the resources that are available and seek to increase those resources or challenge their expectations.

### Structure

The NFYFC is a registered friendly society with Special Authority (Registered with the Financial Services Authority [Reg No: 52SA]). Most county federation's are charities in their own right and as a result, must submit returns to the Charity Commission.

YFC clubs are affiliated to NFYFC and pay a national levy each year. This base levy is divided by the number of members of 'Open' YFC clubs. The associate levy is calculated on a per head basis for associate members only (those

over 26). The base levy system is designed to encourage YFC clubs to recruit and retain members, as the more members registered with NFYFC the less each member will have to pay in levy fees. The role of the county federations is to divide the bill amongst its clubs using their own formula, which could be on a per capita basis or in some other way to encourage the expansion of membership. Counties act as collecting agents only.

The current overview of the federation is outlined in the below diagrams.

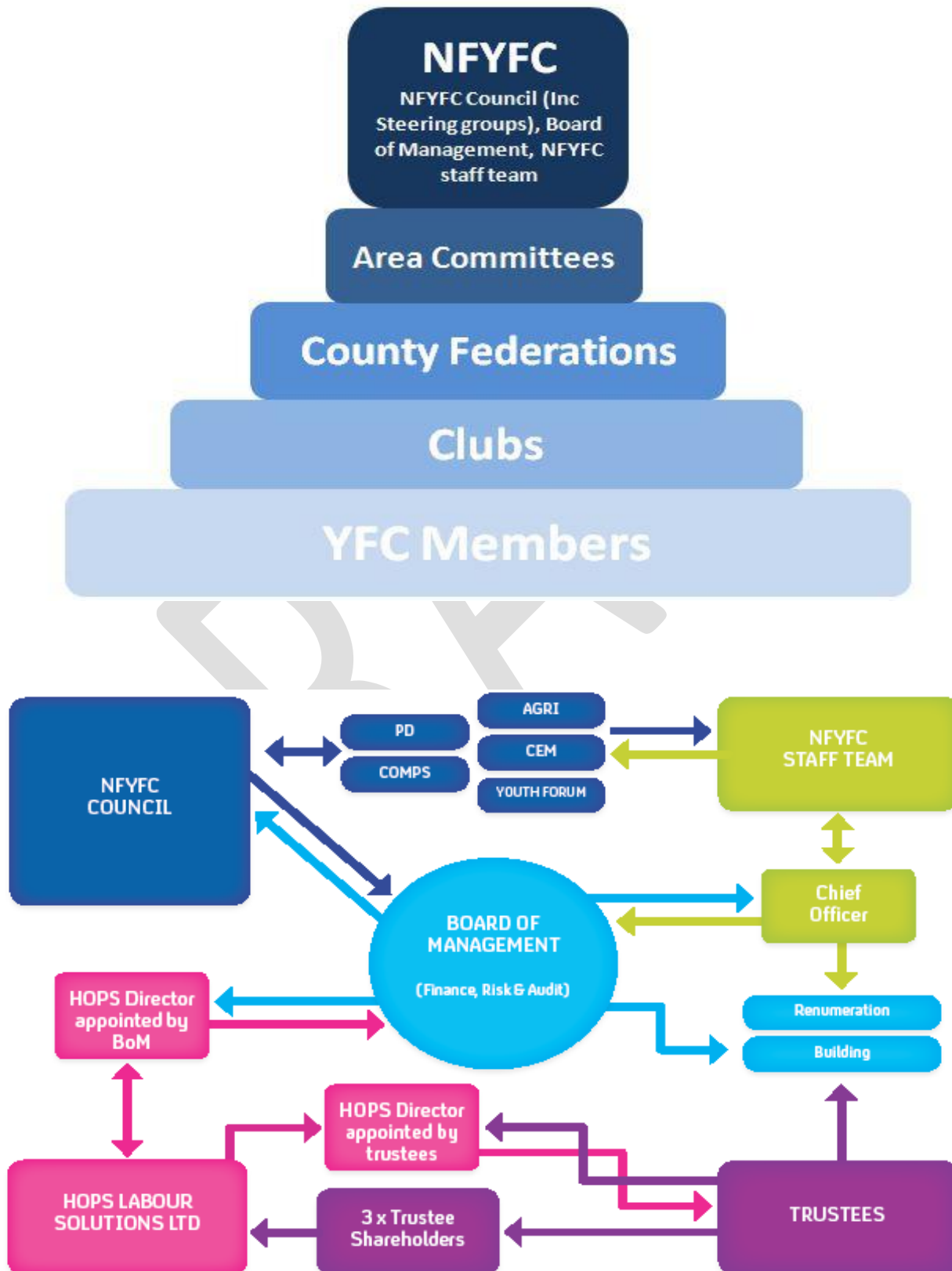


Figure 1: Overview of NFYFC



Figure 2: County and area map of NFYFC

## Clubs

There are over 600 YFC clubs in England and Wales. They are all self-run clubs, and are supported by county federation staff. Clubs seek to recruit new members and retain members already registered through effective club programming and providing a fulfilling experience for its members. They enable members to have fun in a safe environment, learn new skills, achieve a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood and connect with young people in rural areas through a democratic structure. Club members are encouraged to take part in the wide range of activities and training opportunities that are available to them through NFYFC.

## County Federations

County Federations are a key component in the structure of NFYFC. They are the glue that holds the clubs together providing resources and support to ensure the safe and effective running of clubs. County Federations are an important link between clubs and NFYFC, as well as a natural link between the NFYFC council and grassroots members to ensure that messages are being transmitted effectively for the benefit of members. County Federations also provide very valuable support to members in their voluntary roles to ensure they have a positive learning experience. As well as supporting clubs to run effectively, the county federations are also responsible for the facilitation of competitions at a county level.

The pressures of legislation, finances, and loss of local authority funding has meant county federations have had to undertake a bigger work load. With a lack of resources, this is becoming harder for staff to accomplish. County federation offices need to be adequately resourced to allow staff members time to strategically plan and evaluate performance.

Research of county federation staff recently showed that although job title and hours of work varied hugely, most county federation staff were expected to undertake the same work tasks with varying levels of resources. This is something that has not changed in many years. It is important that YFC's recognise the volume of work that county federation staff undertake and have the resources they require to carry out their role effectively. There is a culture of overwhelming workloads and high expectations which needs to change in order for job roles to be challenging yet rewarding.

Staff need to be empowered to inspire and support the elected office holders. To guarantee that the NFYFC development plan can be implemented at a county federation level, YFC must ensure that the people employed have enough resources to be able to carry out the job role to the best of their ability and for the progression of the YFC. This in turn will reduce staff turnover, which has increased in recent years, ensure YFC keeps the knowledgeable staff that it has and increase job satisfaction. This is something that needs to be addressed by county federations in every area if YFC wants to achieve its goals and fulfil its vision.

## Area Committees

NFYFC consists of Wales and six area committees. Although there seems to be some confusion about the role of the area committee, they are often seen as an administration clearing house and the organiser of area rounds of competitions.

Area committees join up the county federations with NFYFC and are another route to ensure that members' voices are heard. It is also an opening for staff within the area to share ideas, and support each other. Area meetings are an opportunity to share good practice and ideas for the advancement of the area and the counties within the area.

Area committees should ensure that accurate information is transmitted to and from the steering groups. This ensures that members' views are represented correctly and democracy is followed.

## National Council

National council consists of 62 YFC members, elected through their county and area committees. It is their role to influence policy, make decisions as a committee, influence the work of the NFYFC staff team, assist with and ratify some decisions of Board of Management and steering groups of council and assist in the running of NFYFC events. Along with influencing policy of NFYFC, council also ought assist in the implementation of policy at a local level and communicate the decisions of the NFYFC council so that they are disseminated throughout the organisation and the voice of the membership is heard and represented at council.

National NFYFC council is made up of five sub groups known as steering groups. It is the responsibility of council to ratify steering group decisions and ensure that the work they do is in keeping with the voice of the membership and the future goals of the organisation. National council also own have a duty to help shape and implement the strategy in order to progress it through the different levels of YFC.

## Steering groups

There are five (5) steering groups which each focus on a particular aspect of the organisation.

**The Agriculture and Rural Issues (AGRI) steering group** ensures that the voices of young people within agriculture are represented on relevant industry and governmental bodies. While some people feel disconnected from AGRI, it is a vital part of an organisation that prides itself on its agricultural and rural roots and elements.

**The Competitions steering group** organises and runs 35 national competitions on a yearly basis. Competitions are used as a vehicle for learning and help members learn valuable transferable skills. The members of this steering group ensure that the competitions programme is fit for purpose for members to enjoy and learn.

**Events and Marketing** assist with the marketing direction for the organisation. Members of the steering group work with the marketing and events team at the NFYFC office to contribute ideas for the content of YFC events. The steering group could be more proactive in the running and stewarding of all NFYFC events.

**The Youth Forum** is a group of young members (Under 20 years of age) who help shape the direction of the organisation from a young person's point of view. While this steering group has its own programme of work it feeds in to all the other steering groups and assists with various programmes of work.

**The Personal Development steering group** help to ensure that clubs run effectively, develop the training programme for members as well as shape the travel programme. They also help to influence policy and resources for club and county officers to use for the benefit and safe running of clubs.

## NFYFC staff team

The staff team provide continuity and experience in guiding members and national officers during their year in office. They also provide support for county federation staff and run a national programme of events in conjunction with industry professionals and steering groups. As well as the running of events and working directly with the steering groups the staff team also provide expertise in areas such as Agriculture and Rural Issues, communications, safeguarding and youth work, marketing, IT, and fundraising. This enables county federations and NFYFC to provide the best possible service to its members.

## Board of management

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the organisation is compliant with legislation, ensuring legal requirements are met and correct financial decisions are made. The Board of Management is also responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation, the implementation of policy, and management and guidance of the organisation.

## National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) Mission Statement (Purpose)

As a youth focused organisation, we empower and enable our members to make positive contributions to and be active citizens in their YFC, agricultural and rural communities. As a result, members become informed and articulate champions of rural life, and develop a strong sense of individual and collective responsibility along with the skills and resilience required for their transition into adulthood.

## National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) Vision Statement (Long term goal of the organisation)

Our vision is to empower members to realise their full potential.

## Values of NFYFC

<b>Citizenship</b>	We encourage our members to play active and inclusive roles within their YFC, agricultural and rural communities and to collaborate with other groups for the benefit of those communities.
<b>Enjoyment</b>	We provide an outlet for enjoying life and connecting with other young people, while making the most of learning opportunities. It is important to remember the individuality of members and respect people's enjoyment of YFC.
<b>Personal Development</b>	We value learning, feedback, and mentoring. It encourages members to make the best of all opportunities for learning and growth, both professionally and personally and to aid others in doing the same while working as a team.
<b>Respect</b>	We encourage and promote respectful behaviour at all times. We respect all NFYFC members, members of the public and all those who help and support Young Farmers' Clubs while embracing diverse opinions.
<b>Responsibility</b>	We encourage members to understand and act with collaborative and individual responsibility, for their benefit and the benefit of their fellow members, as well as the YFC, agricultural and rural communities.

## Approach

Training and recreation through personal experience, based on the values of NFYFC and aiding YFC members with their transition into adulthood

YFC members work together to grow and develop to become active citizens through

- **Fun:** Enjoy what they are doing
- **Learning:** Learning through participation
- **Achievement:** Gaining a sense of achievement and purposeful use of leisure time

## The Future Direction of NFYFC

Through various discussions and workshops at NFYFC Board of Management meetings, many themes have become apparent. This, along with previous research has led to the identification of six core themes. These can be used as tools to progress the organisation, set plans and KPIs and monitor the progress of the organisation. The six themes of development are as follows:

1. **Membership**
2. **A voice for young people**
3. **Digitalisation**
4. **Financial stability**
5. **Governance**
6. **Learning and development**

## Themes of Development:

### 1. Membership

*To support membership development and create a strong base of YFC clubs in each county, in order to aid learning and democracy.*

Members are YFC's most valuable resource. To encourage members to join and continue as members YFC must provide services and activities that are fit for purpose, varied and relevant to the clubs demographics. Club programming and forward planning are vital to ensure that members continue to engage with YFC.

Membership services must also be developed in line with the rest of the organisation. The membership journey must be as simple as possible for members to encourage them to join and renew every year while also making the process manageable for county staff.

YFC must provide good value for money and ensure that members get a benefit from belonging to the organisation. This involves marketing the organisation in a manner that is inviting and inclusive for potential members, and ensuring that they will want to rejoin in subsequent years.

Points of importance:

- Improved club programming
- Clubs being fit for purpose and age appropriate
- Providing varied competitions programme
- Ensuring all members have a voice throughout the organisation and improving democracy
- Marketing the organisation
- Increased value of membership
- Membership services development i.e. improved membership journey

### 2. A voice for young people

*To give young people living, working and interested in the rural community an opportunity for their opinions to be heard for the benefit of agricultural and rural communities and YFC at each level.*

As one of the largest rural youth organisations in England and Wales it is imperative that YFCs facilitate and encourage young people to have a voice in their local communities.

NFYFC believe it is essential that members be given the opportunity to make positive contributions to their local communities and to have their opinions on important issues heard. YFC clubs are run for members by members who shape their club programme and activities. They have the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to achieve this through contributing to and running their own club meetings, organising events and taking part in various NFYFC programmes such as competitions, and the travel programme.

NFYFC also facilitates involvement with other youth, agricultural and rural organisations. YFC members have the opportunity to contribute to wider policy and promote the work that is carried out by NFYFC for the benefit of our members.

At a local level YFC clubs should take the opportunity to be involved in their local community by helping local charities, and being active citizens in their local community. A strong YFC club is an asset to any community and provides a platform for local young people to make their contribution to that community.



The structure of YFC allows club members to have their say at a national level through electing representatives to national council and through the many communication channels available. Members of council are there to represent the members' voice and to make decisions that best fit the needs of the membership.

Points of importance:

- A voice on topical rural, youth and agricultural issues
- Connecting with other youth organisations
- Encouraging young people to be a voice in their local communities
- Democracy of council

### **3. Digitalisation**

*To ensure that the services that NFYFC provide are in keeping with the current digital age and supported by relevant IT expertise.*

Improvements in technology have had a huge impact on our daily lives in recent years. YFC members are at the forefront of that technology and clubs must continue to modernise their digital systems in order to be more efficient. This can be a difficult task but one which YFC must strive to make improvements and ensure the services provided are up to date and fit for purpose, cost effective and easy to use for staff and members.

Points of importance:

- Ensure services are fit for purpose
- Cost effective modernisation of services
- Provide appropriate services for the advancement, progression, and daily operating of NFYFC at all levels

### **4. Financial stability**

*To ensure that the NFYFC has a secure financial base in order for the organisation to function on an everyday basis and from which the organisation can grow and develop.*

In order for YFC to function on all levels, it must have a stable financial base. In recent years there have been a lot of funding cuts for county federations as well as NFYFC; however, YFC must overcome this by providing more value for money for sponsors, looking after current sponsors and continuously working to ensure that the organisation is financially stable.

YFC must not rely on one event to provide income, but must instead look to expand opportunities for other new income sources. The organisation has had huge successes in raising money for various charities, and while this is vital for the running of those charities, it must not forget that YFC clubs and county federations are charities also and members need to look after their clubs in order to ensure the future remains bright.

At all levels of YFC, resources are limited. The organisation must manage its expectations to match these resources and provide a high quality service for members and supporters within the resources it has.

Points of importance:

- Required to ensure NFYFC can function on an everyday level
- All areas to continue to examine costs
- Investments
- Fundraising income
- Membership income

### **5. Governance**

*To review and change if necessary, the governance structure of NFYFC, to keep it relevant and in keeping with today's society and the needs of the organisation.*

Governance of YFC needs to be reviewed at all levels in order for it to be fit for purpose and relevant to today's members. It must not follow tradition for the sake of following tradition. Decision-making should be based on studied evidence and current best practice.

Points of importance:

- Governance is fit for purpose and accessible to all members
- Ensure the structure is fit for purpose across all levels of NFYFC

## **6. Learning and Development**

*To increase the opportunity for YFC members to learn and develop both professionally and personally, while contributing in a positive way to the YFC, rural and farming communities.*

It is important that YFC members feel a sense of achievement and learn valuable skills which they can then use in other parts of their lives. YFC members have a range of opportunities, to learn and improve their personal development. YFC must continue to provide members with valuable learning opportunities which benefit YFC, rural and farming communities as well as their own personal lives.

YFC must also be aware that while in-house training from YFC members, and/or staff can be valuable, industry professionals can add to that learning process and ensure that the training received is recognised by those outside of YFC. Therefore, it is important that partnerships are created which may improve the opportunities for learning as well as encourage county federations to network local organisations and professionals.

Competitions are one of the organisations most important vehicles for learning. Taking part in competitions provides valuable skills both personally and professionally. Competitions also encourage people to participate in club activities and provide a common base where people make friends through shared experiences.

While it is important that YFC members receive the best training possible, it is also vital that staff have the opportunity to continue their professional development. Facilitating staff learning and development will lead to greater job satisfaction, less staff turnover and increased opportunities for club and county development.

Points of importance:

- Professional training delivered by industry professionals
- In house training in relation to effective governance and running of YFC for both YFC members and County Federation Staff
- Competitions – used as a vehicle for learning and development
- Experiencing life outside YFC i.e. transferable skills, travel

### **Consultation**

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs has achieved so much in its' 80-year history, but it can achieve even more. This is your opportunity to move together as an organisation.

To help the Board of Management further define the plan, please consult with your club, county federations and area committees in order to ensure that this plan is the right way forward.

- Consultation process –
  - Feedback to NFYFC through
    - Chairman's Weekend
    - Staff conference

- Area meetings –Board of Management members to facilitate discussions at area meetings.
- [Click here](#) the complete the online consultation survey.
- February Council meeting

DRAFT