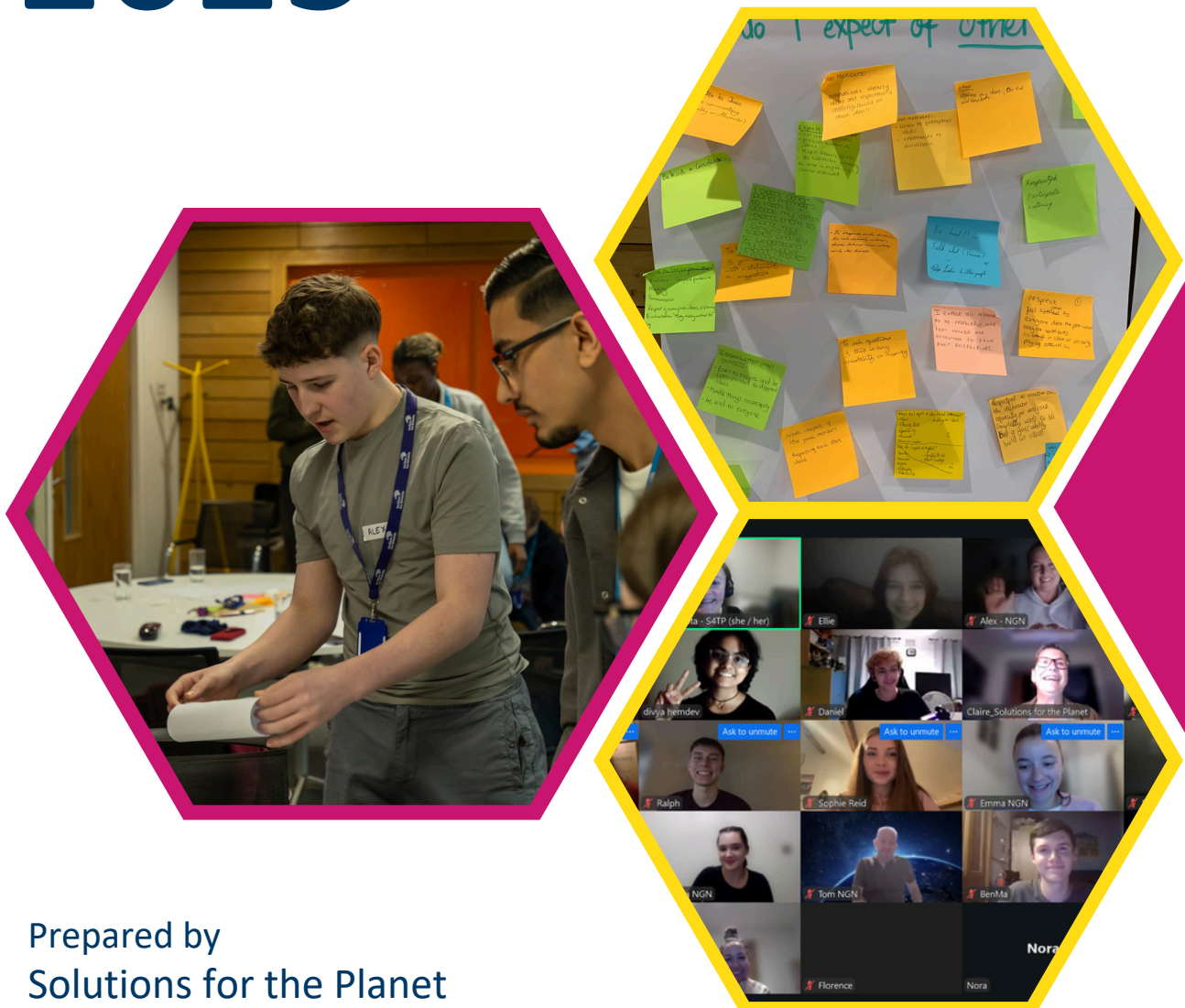


# END OF YEAR REPORT 2025



Prepared by  
Solutions for the Planet



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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 marks five years since the Young Innovators Council (YIC) was established in partnership between Northern Gas Networks (NGN) and Solutions for the Planet (S4TP).

Over that time, 132 young people aged 14–19 have shaped NGN’s approach to inclusion, sustainability, social value and innovation - bringing future-customer insight directly into real business decisions. Their ideas have influenced NGN’s 2026-2031 Business Plan, People & Planet Strategy, and Inclusion Framework, helping the company translate youth perspectives into measurable change.

The partnership has also gained national recognition, being shortlisted for two major awards in 2025:

- *Customer Engagement Awards: Best Use of Innovation in Customer Engagement (Highly Commended)*
- *IGEM Gas Industry Awards: Business Innovation (Runners-Up)*

The YIC continues to set the standard for youth-led innovation in the UK energy sector. The 2025 Council brought together 31 young people aged 14–19, combining new members and returning participants - including one panellist celebrating their fifth consecutive year.

Across five interactive sessions, members explored NGN’s strategic priorities through the lenses of engagement, inclusion, accountability and trust.

“The Young Innovators Council has become a genuine voice of the next generation in our decision-making. Their curiosity, challenge and insight continue to raise the bar for engagement across our business.”

Jenny Wilkinson, Stakeholder Engagement Lead, NGN

## 2. MAKE-UP OF PANEL & RECRUITMENT

The recruitment process for the YIC 2025 was the same as in previous years, as it has proven effective. It consisted of a detailed application form followed by a scenario-based problem-solving activity surrounding a gas leak in 'Faketown'. Recruitment was aligned as much as possible to meet the demographic footprint of NGN's network.

Total 31	Male	Female	Non-binary	Not disclosed		
Gender Distribution	13	18	0	0		
	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	1st Year Higher Education
Year Group Distribution	5	3	8	9	3	3
	Global majority	White British and other white groups	Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group			
Ethnicity	14	16	1			
	Yes	No	Prefer not to say			
Considered to have disability	2	28	1			
	Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Not disclosed		
FSM Distribution	7	22	1	1		





### 3. PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Across the year, young people consistently tested NGN's plans against real-world expectations. They interrogated whether processes were clear or confusing, where ambition felt credible, and where intentions needed stronger follow-through. This was particularly evident in the co-creation of a new work experience model, where young people moved beyond critique to design practical alternatives that were later piloted by the business.

A key feature of 2025 was the YIC's ability to engage with complexity. Members demonstrated a strong grasp of trade-offs - between innovation and reliability, environmental ambition and affordability, digital efficiency and human oversight. These perspectives helped NGN establish new sustainability milestones, rethink inclusion as a leadership responsibility rather than a policy exercise, and clarify expectations around the responsible and ethical use of AI.

Importantly, the year also highlighted the value of continuity. Returning members supported new participants to engage confidently and critically, while progression routes - including movement into the Independent Stakeholder Group and early-career pathways - reinforced that youth insight is not treated as one-off consultation, but as part of NGN's wider governance and talent ecosystem.



“

*I have been given the opportunity to voice my opinion and explain my viewpoint on topics, which has helped me be more confident and driven.*

”

YIC member 2025

## 4. SESSION DETAILS

Session Date	Session Subject	Witnesses
Session 1 February 2025	Getting to know you & business priorities	Jenny Wilkinson - Stakeholder Engagement Lead, NGN  Mark Horsley - CEO, NGN
Session 2 March & August 2025	Work experience cocreation & pilot	Roxanne Allen - Talent Development Manager, NGN
Session 3 April 2025	Creating a truly inclusive employer	Claire Allcock - HR Director, NGN  Rob Muranda - Operations Manager, Bristol Future Talent Partnership
Session 4 July 2025	Setting new planet targets	Hannah Jewison - Business Sustainability Manager, NGN
Session 5 October 2025	Responsible use of AI	Tom Pollock - Data Digitalisation Lead, NGN



# 5. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS & NGN RESPONSES

## SESSION 1: Getting To Know You & Business Priorities (February 2025)

### Objectives

- That the YIC understands the basic role of NGN.
- That the YIC and facilitators get to know one another and feel comfortable.
- That continuing YIC members share learnings with the new YIC members.
- To have agreed a set of common guidelines for the council in conversations.
- To gain initial insight into the YIC's priorities for NGN.

### YIC's key reflections (in no particular order)

The YIC helped shape communication and delivery preferences:

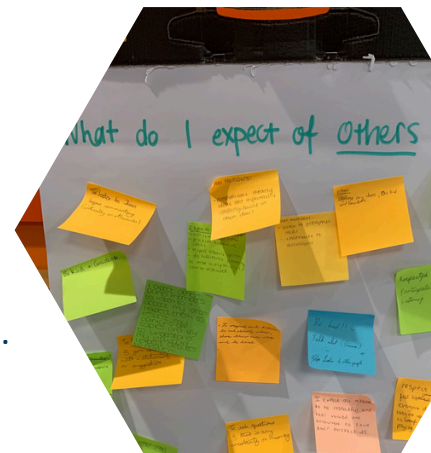
- Email and text are their preferred contact methods.
- Engagement works best after school hours.
- They enjoy small group discussions and debate-style activities.

### Top-ranked business priorities

Using Mentimeter, participants individually ranked NGN's nine business priorities, with the following ranking the highest:

- Safe service
- Fair transition to net zero
- Reliable and resilient supply
- Low bills
- Help for those who need it most

Young people value safety and reliability as core expectations - NGN must maintain "business as usual". There was strong enthusiasm for innovation and the fair transition to net zero, showing understanding of social fairness and environmental urgency. Low bills and help for those in need signal continued concern for affordability and vulnerable customers in the cost-of-living context.



*I enjoyed discussing what NGN should prioritise within their company. I found it very interesting to hear everyone's thoughts on what they found was more important and I loved how we were all able to come to a final decision.*

YIC Member 2025

## SESSION 1: Getting To Know You & Business Priorities (February 2025) continued

.....

After the session we asked the panellists to rate their trust in various social media platforms:

### Highest-trusted platforms

- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Instagram

These are the strongest candidates for NGN communications if the goal is credibility and clarity.

These should not be core information-delivery channels.

### Lowest-trusted platforms

- Twitter/X
- Facebook
- Snapchat / TikTok (trust low even if use is high)

### Platforms young people mostly don't know

- Bluesky
- Threads
- Pinterest
- Reddit

Not viable for meaningful communication.

### NGN's response

- Sessions redesigned to suit young people's preferred communication styles.
- Future customer priorities inform ongoing investment and engagement planning.
- Feedback shaped NGN's Inclusion Strategy and April YIC session.
- Sustainability recommendations shape 2040 environmental targets.
- Continued "You Said / We Did" reporting ensures transparency.



## Session 2: Ideal Work Experience (March & August 2025)

### Objectives

- To gather the YIC's perspective on valuable work experience elements.
- To explore an ideal work experience placement including structure, knowledge areas, and skill development.
- To identify ways that NGN can offer a work experience programme that is engaging, practical, and beneficial for both the business and young people.

### YIC's key reflections (in no particular order)

The YIC's Ideal Work Experience session became one of 2025's most innovative outcomes. Members co-designed NGN's new work-experience model, which was later trialled by nine YIC members both in-person and online, and received the silver accreditation from the Industrial Cadets.

There was significant diversity of thought across the Council. While all valued teamwork and practical learning, members agreed that one size does not fit all. Flexibility and variety are essential to meet different learning styles and accessibility needs.



### A Focus on Engineering

5 days

10 people

June / July

#### What will it consist of?

The week will begin with introductions, a tour of the NGN facilities and a briefing on the 'challenge' that the participants must work on in groups of 5. The challenge should be based on a REAL problem that NGN are currently facing or looking into. The participants will shadow engineers, asking them questions and gathering information to help them with their challenge! By the end of the week, they'll be ready to present their solutions to their peers and to the relevant NGN staff.

#### What make it stand out?

In their challenge, the students will be encouraged to use Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence. The challenge should be designed to really stretch the groups!

#### Benefits for young people?

They'll learn technical skills, presentation skills, and teamwork skills. It will look good on their CV and help inform their decisions on future job prospects

GET STARTED →



### Design a new energy source!

7 days

Groups of 3/4

Technical Focus

#### What will it consist of?

The work experience will kick off with an introduction to the company and a tour of the building, then the students will be told about their challenge - to come up with a new energy source. Throughout the week, they'll work in their groups on the task - speaking to engineers, using physical props, and using Virtual Reality and modelling to test their ideas. A 'curveball' should be thrown in to make it more challenging! And ideas will be presented at the end.

#### What make it stand out?

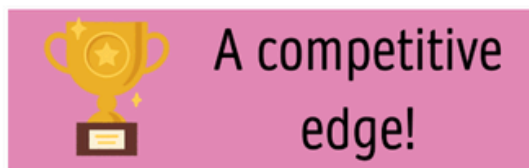
Incorporating VR and modelling will make it unique. The participants will use a mixture of VR headsets as well as modelling programmes e.g., Blender.

#### Benefits for young people?

This programme will give them a range of experiences, so there is plenty to learn and use for future applications, interviews and roles!

GET STARTED →

## Session 2: Ideal Work Experience (March & August 2025) continued



7-10 days

Summer holidays

Groups of 5

### What will it consist of?

The experience will begin with introductions, teambuilding, a tour, and some demonstrations of NGN work. On Day 2, the participants will be set a task relevant to the business. Throughout the week or two, they will meet people from across the business, they will practice debating, and they will shadow someone for day. Each day, there will be time to work on their task ready for a presentation on the final day! So, they build skills over the week to aid their success.

### What make it stand out?

The use of AI and competitions will make this experience stand out. Plus, a useful prize e.g., money towards university or further education would be a huge benefit.

### Benefits for young people?

This will be a really interesting work experience programme that will build their skills and also offer them financial support for their next steps.

GET STARTED →



2 blocks of 5 days

Split across Summer and Winter

2-4 students

### What will it consist of?

The crucial part of this work experience is that it will give a genuine insight into what it's like to work at NGN. With a small group, they can spend time with different team - with a mixture of shadowing and actually being able to get involved with tasks e.g., supporting with customer service. Students will feel like they are actually at work, and will therefore gain a realistic expectations of what it would be like to join NGN.

### What make it stand out?

the basic WOW factor will be that this experience will give a realistic sense of what work is like at the business. It doesn't need to be exciting, it needs to be real.

### Benefits for young people?

They will learn communication skills - especially in this new environment and with adults - networking, confidence, listening, and absorbing new information.

GET STARTED →

## NGN's response

Two formats were developed:

Model A - In-Person: Week-long rotation across HQ and regional sites with live projects and control-room observation.

Model B - Hybrid/Online: Three-day digital placement featuring live Q&As, human factors team challenge and renewable-energy project.

This dual approach widens access to NGN's work experience, particularly for rural students or those with travel and caring responsibilities. This ensures that all participants can engage meaningfully.

## Next steps

The YIC's feedback has informed a blended programme, launching in 2026, that will:

- Combine in-person and online learning.
- Add female-focused STEM activities.
- Offer accessibility and travel support.
- Align with NGN's new Business Plan (2026-2031).

## Session 3: Creating a Truly Inclusive Business (April 2025)

### Objectives

- To understand what an inclusive employer looks like to the YIC
- To understand how NGN can better reflect the diversity of the communities it serves.
- To understand what actions the YIC thinks NGN could take to make underrepresented groups feel welcomed and supported.
- To understand the YIC's perspective on how NGN should measure success in DEI - what would it look like, how would it feel?

### YIC's key reflections (in no particular order)

This session explored what inclusion means in practice at NGN - and how policies, leadership and culture can create belonging for all. YIC members discussed how to remove barriers, increase representation, and measure real progress, agreeing that inclusion must be led from the top and lived across the business.

- **Leadership and accountability:** ensuring all company policies are inclusive and creating an inclusive workplace culture ranked as the YIC's top priorities.
- **Representation and opportunity:** members saw diverse leadership and closing inequalities, such as the gender pay gap, as essential for genuine inclusion.
- **Measuring inclusivity:** the YIC suggested seeking formal accreditation (e.g., Best Place to Work) to benchmark progress.
- **Inclusive work placements:** panellists called for inclusive early-careers schemes to attract diverse future talent.
- **Allyship:** emphasised visible, active allyship from leaders, not passive support.

### NGN's response

- Inclusion & Belonging Strategy - a new strategy and action plan, shaped by YIC input, identifies barriers across protected characteristics and is being launched in the business in early 2026.
- Inclusive work placements - the YIC's proposal informed NGN's new Work Experience Trials, now aligned with recruitment pathways to strengthen diversity in early careers.
- Allyship - senior leaders are raising visibility through internal comms and embedding allyship into NGN's draft DEI strategy and leadership development.



*If inclusion exists at the top, it filters down to the whole organisation.*



*YIC Member 2025*

## Session 4: Setting New Planet Targets in the Sustainability Strategy (July 2025)

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### Objectives

- For the YIC to propose new interim target date(s) for NGN's Planet Commitments.
- With the proposed interim target date(s) in mind, for the YIC to put forward new targets for four existing commitments and present new target areas where relevant.
- For the YIC to create priority action plans for four key environmental areas.
- For the YIC to understand how their input will shape NGN's wider sustainability strategy.

### YIC's key reflections (in no particular order)

Northern Gas Networks worked with the Young Innovators Council to shape and refine their sustainability strategy, targets, and commitments. In particular, the YIC provided valuable insights into the business's approach to established environmental commitments.

Members confirmed strong consensus on environmental priorities:

- Set three interim milestones at 2035, 2040 and 2045 to track progress toward 2050 goals.
- Focus waste reduction beyond offices - include operational waste and replace plastic spoil boards.
- Source local reusable/recyclable materials and introduce a recycling incentive scheme.
- Make fair pay and anti-slavery standards non-negotiable; provide audits, not self-declarations.
- Create a supplier league table and support smaller partners to improve sustainability.
- Map and monitor natural capital across NGN land, including small habitat pockets.
- Explore green roofs, land expansion and partnerships (e.g. Wild CIC) to boost biodiversity and wellbeing.
- Review the 100% electric fleet by 2030 target - adjust timelines; focus on innovation partnerships.
- Offset unavoidable emissions and introduce emissions tracking for offices and fleet.
- Balance ambition with realism - be bold on what NGN can control, pragmatic where external factors apply.

## Session 4: Setting New Planet Targets in the Sustainability Strategy (July 2025) continued

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### NGN's response

#### Offsetting as a last resort:

NGN has aligned with Ofgem's refreshed guidance, committing to use carbon offsetting only when all other direct reduction routes have been exhausted. The focus is now firmly on reducing emissions at source - through infrastructure innovation, leakage reduction, and behavioural change - rather than relying on external compensation.

#### Whole-emissions reporting for transparency:

NGN has introduced a new approach aligned with the GHG Protocol, reporting all emissions together rather than separating them into categories like shrinkage and BCF (Business Carbon Footprint). This ensures a clearer, more transparent picture of total greenhouse gas output and supports evidence-based decision making across the business.

#### Nature-based and biodiversity initiatives:

Practical, low-cost actions continue to demonstrate NGN's belief that meaningful environmental change doesn't always require major investment. For example, the ongoing "No Mow May" campaign encourages local biodiversity by reducing mowing across NGN's sites - supporting pollinators, reducing emissions and saving costs.

#### Balancing environmental and financial sustainability:

NGN is prioritising projects that deliver visible environmental impact while remaining financially responsible to customers. Future work will focus on community-led biodiversity projects, habitat restoration, and carbon reduction initiatives that can be co-delivered with schools, local groups and volunteers. This approach ensures environmental benefit goes hand-in-hand with social value and affordability.



*We're focusing on actions that are meaningful, measurable and responsible - making sure every initiative delivers both environmental and community benefit.*

NGN Sustainability Team





## Session 5: Responsible AI (October 2025)

### Objectives

- To explore young people's perceptions of AI (trust, risks, opportunities).
- To build an understanding of NGN's current AI strategy.
- To identify potential benefits, challenges, and risk areas for AI use at NGN and gain insight into young people's perspectives on NGN's plan to adopt AI.
- To gather youth views to help shape the governance and assurance around NGN's use of AI, particularly the AI impact assessment form.
- To consider the ethical and sustainable impacts of AI and help NGN assess the customer impact and benefits of its adoption of AI framework.

### YIC's key reflections (in no particular order)

The young people felt that responsible AI depends on companies being open and honest about where AI is used, why it is used, and how risks are managed. They said trust relies on:

- clear and accessible messaging and policy.
- human oversight at all times.
- protecting privacy and avoiding bias.
- ensuring AI does not replace real people in decision-making.

Members also raised concerns about the environmental impact of AI systems, including energy use, and discussed how this connects with NGN's wider sustainability commitments. Overall, the Council agreed that AI should only be used when it genuinely adds value and should always support, not replace, human judgement.

This session demonstrated the young people's thoughtful and balanced perspectives on AI. While interested in its potential, they emphasised the importance of transparency, responsibility and keeping people in control. Their insights provide a strong foundation for NGN as it continues to explore AI as part of its future digital work.

### NGN's response

The YIC told Northern Gas Networks that that being open about how AI is used would help build trust and understanding. NGN will publish information on all new AI initiatives every six months as part of its Digitalisation Action Plan, which is publicly available on their website.

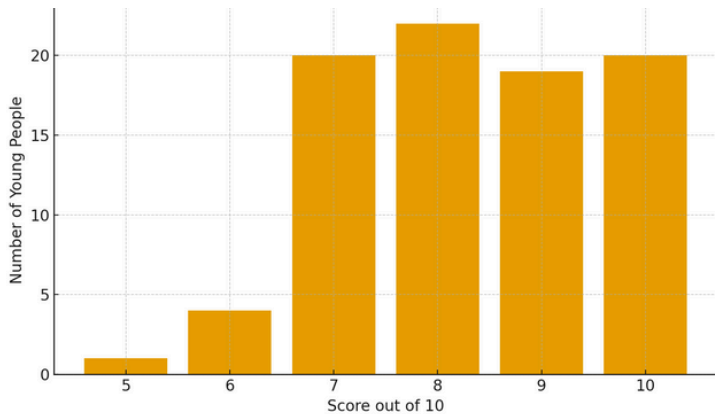
The YIC also raised concerns about the environmental impact of AI. Their insights on concerns and risk management have been used to inform an AI Impact Assessment tool that will also be used as part of NGN's AI strategy, and will be included in the Digitalisation Action Plan.

# 6. IMPACT

## Overall Business Feedback

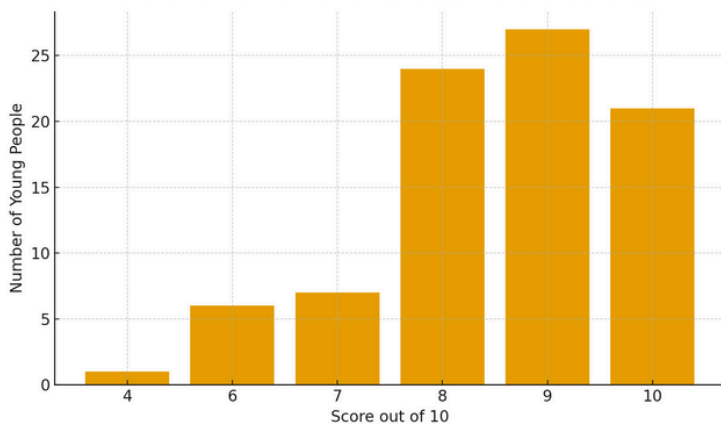
This is out of a total of 86 responses to the surveys covering Sessions 1-5.

### NGN provides me with clear information about its business performance



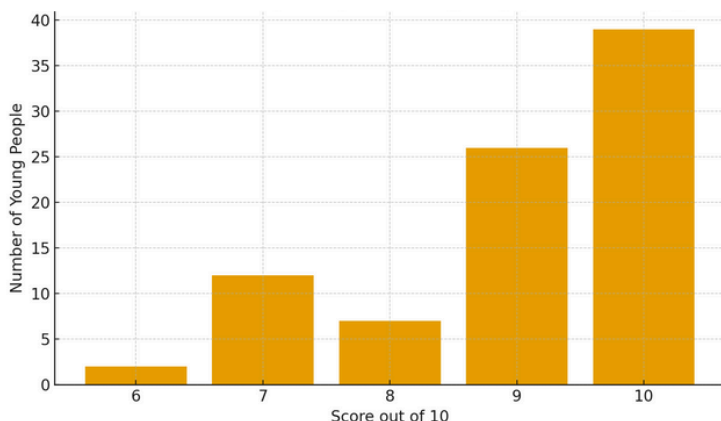
With an average score of 8/10, the panel feels they are receiving clear, accessible and well-pitched information from NGN that enables them to offer informed views. The consistently high number of 8, 9 and 10 ratings shows that young people feel well supported in understanding NGN's performance.

### NGN is honest about its future choices



With an average score of 9/10, the panel feels that NGN is being open and transparent about the choices it faces and how young people's input will shape those decisions. The strong cluster of 8, 9 and 10 ratings shows that young people trust the honesty of the conversations and feel their views are taken seriously.

### NGN allows me to participate through my preferred engagement



With an average score of 9/10, the panel feels that NGN offers a flexible and accessible range of ways to take part, allowing young people to contribute in the style that suits them best. The very high number of 9s and 10s shows that participants feel comfortable, included and able to express their views confidently, whether that's through speaking, writing or group discussion.



*I think we have created a really safe space where they feel comfortable.*

NGN Facilitator

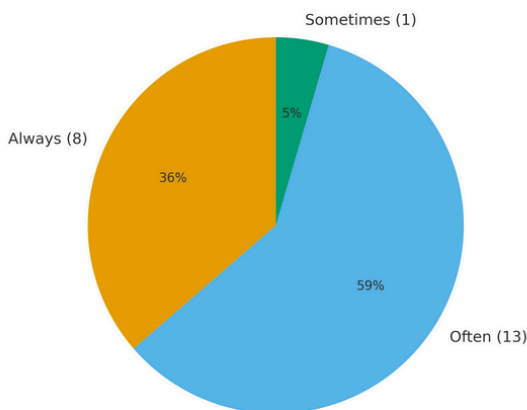


S4TP uses the Skills Builder Framework to assess the types and levels of skills that the young people are developing by being on the YIC. The Youth Insights Programme is helping young people develop their skills at Impact Level 3 (of 4). In the workplace, the Skills Builder Universal Framework can be used to support personal and professional development as well as improve leadership skills of both individuals and their teams. Businesses can also use the Framework in their recruitment practices, as well as in outreach and work experience programmes.

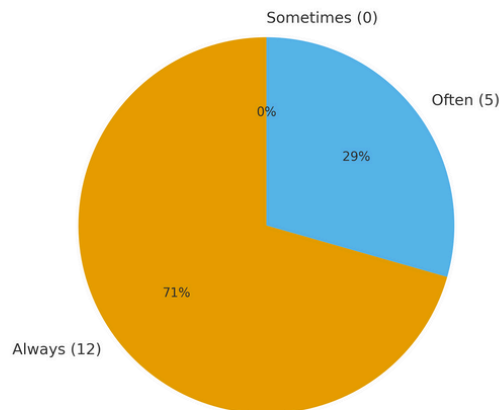
In our surveys this year, we asked the YIC how often they demonstrated certain skills. We asked them at the beginning of the year, and then again after Session 5.



BEFORE: I listen to others and can ask questions



AFTER: I listen to others and can ask questions

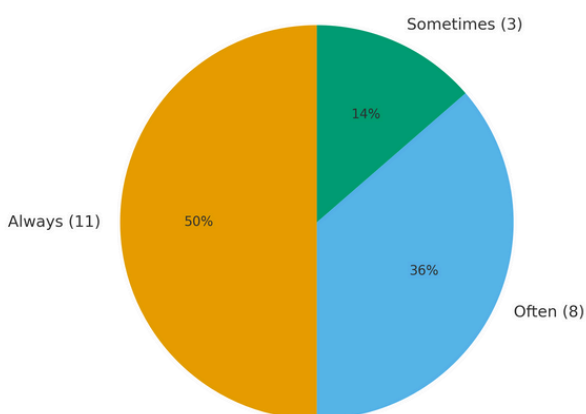


### Listening:

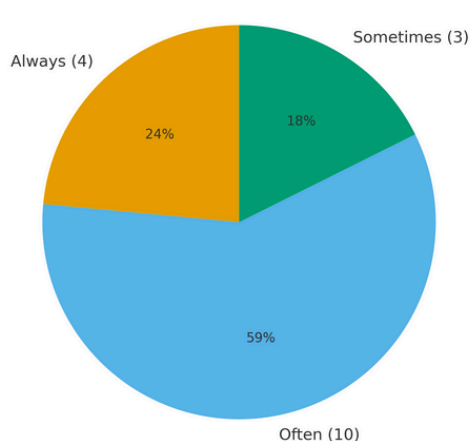
There is a clear improvement. Before the sessions, most young people selected 'Often', with a smaller group choosing 'Always'. After the sessions, 'Always' becomes the dominant response, rising to over 70%, and 'Sometimes' disappears completely. This suggests that confidence in listening and asking questions has strengthened, supported by breakouts and plenary discussions.

disappears completely. This suggests that confidence in listening and asking questions has strengthened, supported by breakouts and plenary discussions.

BEFORE: Problem solving



AFTER: Problem solving



### Problem solving:

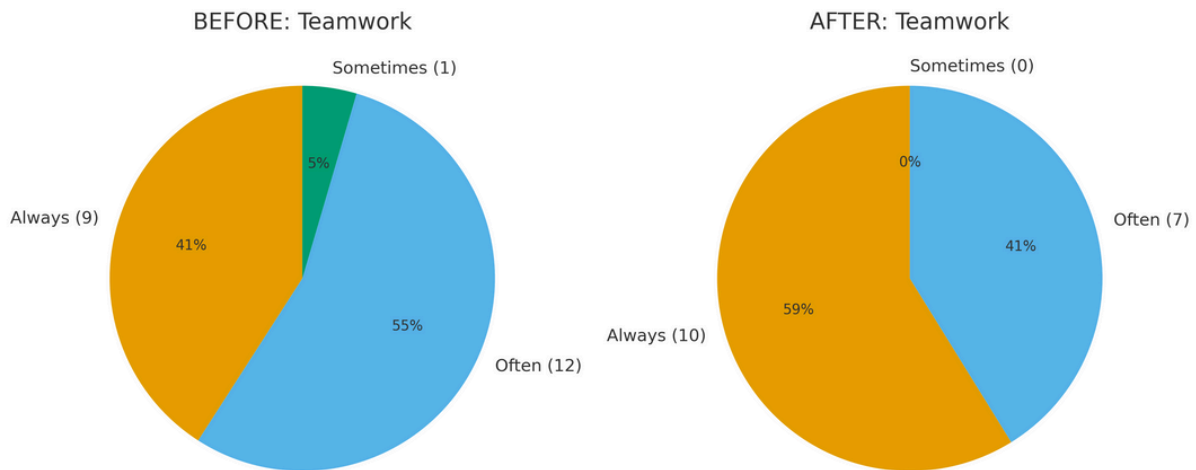
There has been a shift from young people saying they 'Always' explore multiple solutions to saying they 'Often' do so. This suggests they have grown more realistic and reflective about their problem-solving process or feel more aware of the steps involved.



*I learned how to actively listen, build on others' ideas, and adapt my communication style to make sure everyone felt included.*

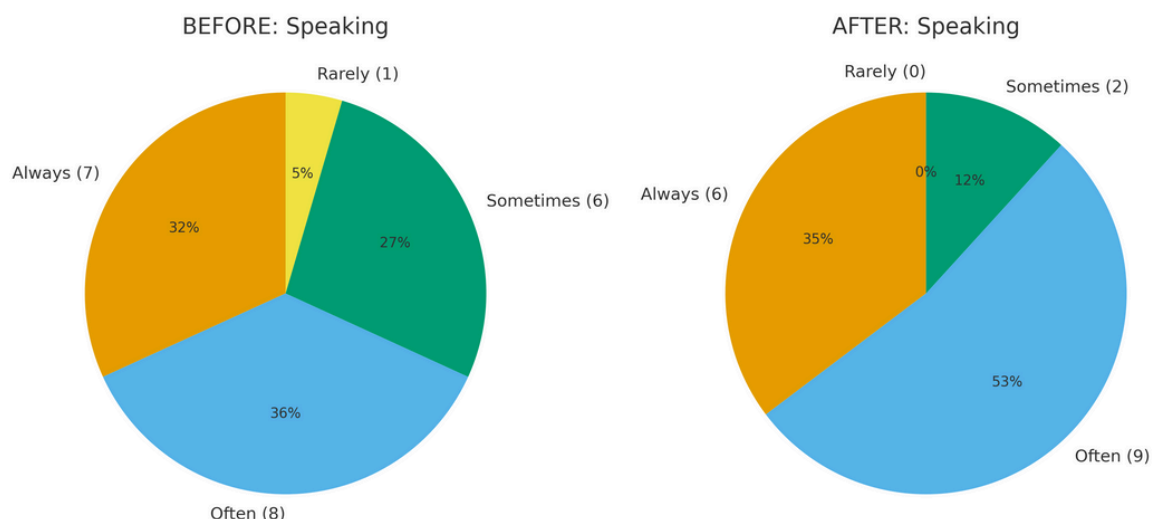


YIC Member 2025



### Teamwork:

There has been a clear improvement in confidence. Before the sessions, most young people selected 'Often', with a smaller proportion choosing 'Always' and a very small share selecting 'Sometimes'. After the sessions, 'Always' becomes the dominant response at nearly 60%, and 'Sometimes' disappears entirely. This suggests that the collaborative activities, discussions and group decision-making tasks used across the sessions have strengthened young people's confidence in contributing and encouraging others.



### Speaking:

There has been a noticeable improvement. Before the sessions, responses ranged from Rarely to Always, with a large number sitting at Often or Sometimes. After the sessions, there is a strong shift towards Always and Often, and Rarely disappears completely. This suggests that the structured discussions, facilitation prompts and opportunities to practise speaking in different formats have strengthened young people's confidence in communicating clearly and effectively.

# How would you summarise your YIC 2025 experience?

"It's been great having the opportunity to contribute on a range of group discussions on diverse topics."

"Extremely beneficial, I have learned how to develop many skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving and much more. I have also really enjoyed it."

"GREAT!"

*"Everyone involved was incredibly impressed with the young people's engagement and inquisitiveness, myself included."*  
NGN Witness

"It was a very insightful and informative experience being able to have a deeper understanding of NGN and being able to contribute to its growth."

"I have really enjoyed my time on the YIC this year. It has given me an insight into how businesses function and further appreciate the work that goes into considering public/customer opinion."

"I think it's helped me grow as a person through improving my communication, teamwork and organisation skills. I honestly think it's just helped me with personal growth and social awareness. "

"It has been a brilliant opportunity that has developed skills such as presentation skills and conveying my thoughts in a group discussion. "

"I made a lot of friends and I had lots of fun talking to new people. I also overcame my fear in speaking up to an audience."

*"It was amazing! The young people were inspirational! "*  
NGN Witness



## 7. ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES

### Lizzie

I joined the YIC in Year 12 and left at the end of Year 13 to attend The University of Glasgow and study Civil Engineering. I have known for a very long time I wanted to be an engineer and have done work experience with a variety of companies. When my careers advisor told me about the YIC I jumped at the opportunity. I saw the YIC as a way to not only get experience with a company in the sector I want to work in, but as a way to develop my personal skills.



The YIC developed my confidence and teamworking skills. Working alongside such a wide range of ages is such a rare thing to do and opened my eyes to a lot of different opinions and ways of thinking. Being able to develop others ideas and have my own ideas developed and thought about in a different way was so refreshing. Through the YIC I was given the opportunity to interview for the Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG), which I got a position for. The YIC gave me the confidence to speak up in a meeting where everyone is older and more experienced than me, knowing my voice will be valued and heard.

Currently in the ISG I am using my voice to speak for future customers, challenging NGN's ideas with things they possibly haven't considered before, or what concerns me as a young person. I've also asked questions for clarity, there is so much to understand in this industry, so making the knowledge of certain processes more accessible is important to me.

If I could give one piece of advice to new and current members of the YIC it would be not to be afraid to speak up. There is no silly question, there is no "simple" idea, your voice matters and could be the new perspective needed.

# Imogen

I first joined the Young Innovators Council in sixth form after seeing that Northern Gas Networks were looking for young people to share their views on the future of energy. It was the first time I had experienced a company genuinely wanting to hear from people my age, and especially during the Covid pandemic, it felt like a rare opportunity to be involved in something impactful whilst also gaining an early insight into the utilities sector. Being part of the YIC helped me build confidence, develop my interest in engineering, and gain unique experiences such as visiting the Hydrogen Home and taking part in media coverage for COP26. It has also helped me connect what I was learning during my Electrical Engineering degree to real operational challenges and provided me with a clearer understanding of how a large utility business manages projects whilst keeping customers at the centre of their focus.

When I reached the YIC age limit, I was invited to join NGN's Adult Stakeholder Panel, which gave me a completely different perspective on how the business works and how customer feedback shapes decisions. This eventually led to a two-week work placement with the Capital Projects team and Network Control, which strengthened my understanding of the network and confirmed my desire to work within the utilities sector. I've since taken on roles in mentoring and STEM outreach alongside my studies, and I'm now preparing to start as a Hydrogen Graduate Engineer at NGN. My role will involve supporting work on the East Coast Hydrogen programme through modelling, network planning and safety considerations. It feels like a full-circle opportunity returning to the organisation where my interest in hydrogen first began.



**I have accepted a position as Hydrogen Graduate Engineer at Northern Gas Networks so it is a full circle from joining them on the young innovators council in 2019!**

## 8. CONCLUSION

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The 2025 Young Innovators Council demonstrated clear and measurable influence across Northern Gas Networks' strategic, operational and cultural work. Evidence from the five sessions shows that young people consistently provided insight on NGN's business priorities, work experience design, inclusion strategy, environmental commitments and early thinking on AI. NGN's responses confirm that these insights informed concrete actions, including revisions to the Inclusion & Belonging Strategy, a dual-format work experience model, new interim environmental milestones and transparency measures in the Digitalisation Action Plan and new AI strategy.

Survey data demonstrates consistently high trust, clarity and accessibility ratings, with average scores of 8-9 out of 10 across indicators of information quality, transparency and ability to contribute. Skills Builder data evidences gains in key skill areas, particularly listening, teamwork and speaking, with 'Always' becoming the dominant response in multiple domains by the end of the programme. Young people's written reflections reinforce the developmental impact, referencing increased confidence, communication skills, and understanding of NGN's work.

The programme also created progression pathways: nine young people completed pilot work experience placements, two joined NGN's ISG, and a former YIC member secured a Hydrogen Graduate Engineer role at NGN, demonstrating longer-term impact on early-career participation. Members' feedback across the year confirms that they saw their ideas being taken seriously and shaping decision-making processes, fulfilling the programme's core aim of embedding youth voice in business planning and strategy.

Taken together, the documented insights, NGN's responses and the evidenced skill development show that the YIC continues to provide meaningful value to both young people and the organisation. The Young Innovators Council's contributions have resulted in tangible changes within NGN, while the programme has demonstrably strengthened young people's skills, confidence and opportunities.

