



# The Airplay Annual Review

2025



Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund

**YMCA**

The Fund's flagship programme supporting young people in the RAF Family



# Contents

Welcome .....	4
About Airplay .....	6
Pledge .....	7
Locations .....	8
Key Stats .....	10
Pledge 1 – Belong .....	12
Pledge 2 – Contribute .....	16
Pledge 3 – Thrive .....	20
Pledge 4 – Connect .....	24
Youth Voice .....	28
Young Leaders .....	30
Airfest .....	32
Special Action and Special Projects .....	34
Airplay Connect .....	36
Thank You .....	38

# Welcome from Simon



**Last year, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Fund's Airplay and Ben Club youth support programmes – an important milestone that speaks volumes about their enduring value and the positive difference they continue to make. I am incredibly proud of the lasting impact they have had on young people and RAF families.**

As the Royal Air Force remains as operationally committed as ever, both at home and overseas, the Fund continues to evolve its support for serving families, recognising the changing challenges they face. Airplay remains a vital and uplifting lifeline for parents, children, and young people across the RAF Family.

Our Station Youth Workers continue to deliver exceptional support across 23 RAF stations. Airplay is far more than a programme; it is a welcoming, and energetic space where young people can connect, discover their strengths, build confidence, and feel part of the strong RAF community spirit that surrounds them.

In 2025, Airplay delivered over 6,944 hours of sessions for young people. We invested over £1.3 million to ensure consistent, high-quality delivery of Airplay activities throughout the year. These investments remain essential in keeping our support vibrant, relevant, and truly impactful.

I am very grateful for the passionate, energetic, and inspiring delivery of our YMCA partner and for the support of the Wimbledon Foundation, The MacRobert Trust, Mr and Mrs Blowers, Riding on Air and RAF People & Families Support, as well as our other funders and partners without whom we simply couldn't offer this vital support. The collective success of Airplay, the value it delivers and the positive impact it has on our young people and families are truly significant and continue to strengthen wellbeing, resilience, and connection across our community.

**Air Commodore Simon Harper**

Director Operations  
RAF Benevolent Fund



# Welcome

# from Guy



Here for young people  
Here for communities  
Here for you

**As I reflect on the past year, I am struck by the consistency, care and commitment that define Airplay. The importance of stability, belonging and connection for RAF children and young people has never been greater. Airplay continues to meet this need with warmth, professionalism and impact.**

In 2025, almost 2,000 children and young people were supported across 23 RAF stations, engaging in thousands of hours of high quality youth work. Young people and parents tell us that Airplay is not just a club, but a community.

One of the standout moments of the year was AirFest, which brought together young people from across RAF stations for several unforgettable days of connection, creativity and fun. With live music, workshops, shared experiences and moments of pure joy, AirFest captured the very essence of what Airplay is about.

I am especially proud of the Young Leaders programme, which shows how sustained engagement nurtures confidence, leadership and aspiration. Seeing young people who joined Airplay as children now leading and inspiring others is a powerful reminder of the long term value of trusted youth work.

None of this would be possible without strong partnership. Airplay is fully funded by the RAF Benevolent Fund and delivered through close collaboration with RAF People and Families Support, alongside YMCA partners across England, Wales and Scotland. I extend my sincere thanks to the youth workers, managers and volunteers who bring Airplay to life on every station, as well as to the funders and supporters who continue to invest in this vital programme.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains clear: to keep listening to young people, to respond to change and to ensure Airplay remains a vibrant, inclusive and high quality offer wherever RAF families are based.

**Guy Foxell**

Chief Executive Officer  
One YMCA



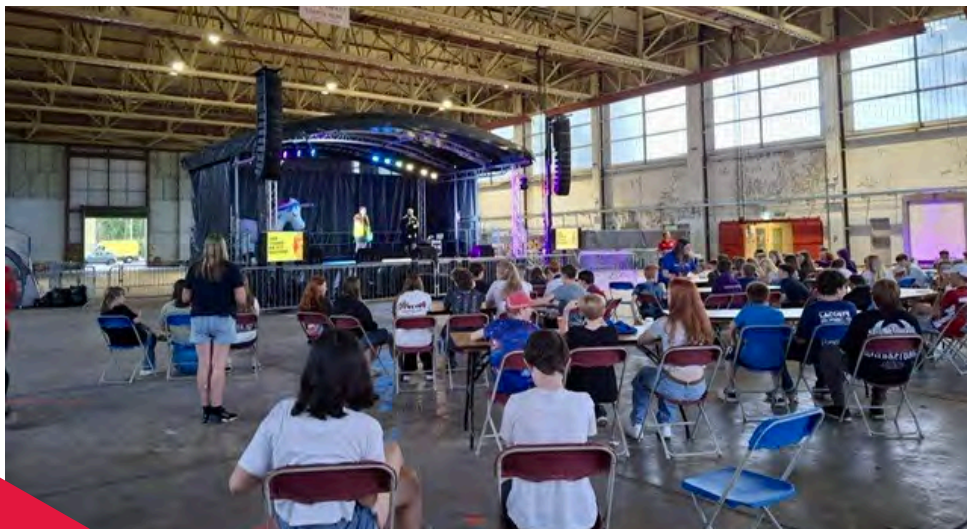
# About Airplay

**Airplay is the RAF Benevolent Fund's flagship youth support programme for children and young people in RAF families. The programme is delivered by a consortium of YMCA across England, Wales and Scotland, in conjunction with RAF People and Families Support at each site.**

Airplay sets out to fulfil the vision of the RAF Benevolent Fund that everyone in the RAF Family gets support in their hour of need. It does this by creating a community where young people can belong, contribute, and thrive and develop their full potential in body, mind, and spirit.

Young people in RAF families face a unique set of challenges, often experiencing frequent changes of home, school, and friendship groups. Additionally, there is the challenge that comes with having parents out of area for long periods of time or on overseas deployment.

2025 was Airplay's fifteenth year, supporting young people through these challenges by providing safe, consistent, and exciting play and youth work activities across 24 RAF stations and online through Airplay Connect. Wherever a member's journey takes them, Airplay is there to provide much needed continuity and a trained team of supportive and fun youth workers.





# airplay

## Pledge

**We pledge to provide:**

**Groups** where you feel you **BELONG**

**Opportunities** for you to **CONTRIBUTE**

**Support** that empowers you to **THRIVE**

**Activities** that enable you to **CONNECT**



**YMCA**

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**  
People & Families  
Support

The Fund's flagship programme supporting young people in the RAF Family



# Locations

## ONE YMCA

RAF Benson  
RAF Brize Norton  
MOD Boscombe Down  
MOD Cosford  
RAF High Wycombe  
(including Medmenham)  
RAF Halton  
RAF Henlow  
RAF Odiham  
RAF Valley  
RAF Shawbury  
RAF St Mawgan

## YMCA TRINITY

RAF Honington  
RAF Wittering  
RAF Wyton

## YMCA LINCOLNSHIRE

RAF Coningsby  
RAF Cranwell  
RAF Digby  
RAF Waddington  
(including Scampton)

## YMCA NORTHUMBERLAND

RAF Boulmer

## YMCA NORTH TYNESIDE

RAF Leeming

## YMCA SCOTLAND

RAF Lossiemouth

## YMCA NORFOLK

RAF Marham

## YMCA ST PAUL'S GROUP

RAF Northolt



# 2025 Key Stats



**35,145**

attendances at  
Airplay activities



**3,758**

sessions delivered



**6,944**

hours of activities



**630**

attendances at  
Airplay youth forums



**1,965**

**Airplay members**



**27**

**young leaders graduated  
our Young Leader Programme**



**60+**

**young people  
nominated for  
an award**

## Pledge 1

# Belong

In 2025, Airplay provided groups where young people could belong. Our teams worked hard to ensure over 1,900 members had a space where they could be themselves and had dedicated youth workers who they felt safe to talk to.

### Key Achievements

**94%** of parents feel that Airplay takes into account their child's individual preferences and needs.

**96%** of parents feel that Airplay gives their child somewhere they belong.

Members rated Airplay

**4.7** out of **5**.

“The continuity and consistency Airplay provides between units; young people know what Airplay is and feel at home when they go to sessions at a new unit quickly.”

– Station Community Support Officer,  
Henlow



## Be myself

### Airplay supports young people to be themselves and develop their understanding of others.

#### Local examples

Shawbury Airplay members enjoyed themed nights celebrating Burns Night, Chinese New Year, and a Mexican week with cooking, piñatas, and games. These activities fostered creativity, cultural awareness, and engagement, giving young people fun opportunities to connect and share experiences.

Northolt Airplay celebrated Heritage Day, exploring members' cultural backgrounds and countries including Nepal, Scotland, South Africa, and Canada. Through discussions on traditions, foods, and symbols, the activity encouraged curiosity, cultural awareness, and connections, helping young people appreciate diversity and one another.

**99%** of members agree that at Airplay they feel accepted and can be themselves.

**“ Staff are friendly and I know they have a safe space to have fun in! I love my children's bonds with the staff! I love how excited [they are] every week to go, they count down to youth club every week and even get clothes out ready before school on the day. ”**

*- Parent, RAF Boulmer*



## Young people feel safe

### Airplay provides a safe space for members to attend, and delivers activities that help young people to keep themselves safe.

#### Local examples

Airplay Odiham supported young people in maintaining positive mental health and staying safe online through engaging activities. Members created practical resources to take home, reinforcing their learning. The sessions built confidence, encouraged open conversations, and promoted safer, healthier behaviours both online and offline.

Airplay Benson Inters and Juniors participated in a session with a First Responder, learning CPR, defibrillator use, and the recovery position. Practising chest compressions helped build confidence, awareness, and understanding of how to respond effectively in emergencies.

**99%** of members feel that Airplay is a safe space for them.

**“ My dad came back on Saturday and I am really happy. It's been difficult but my friends and youth club have helped me to get through it! Thank you for helping me and making me laugh.”**

*- Airplay member, Boulmer*



## Belong Case Study

# Waddington

## Mya

**Mya has been attending Airplay for several years, originally joining at RAF Leeming. In 2025, Mya moved to RAF Waddington. Knowing that Airplay was available at her new station too provided an important sense of continuity during a time of change. Once Mya began attending at Waddington, it soon felt as though she had always been part of the group.**



Over time, it has been clear to see how much Mya has grown in confidence. The consistency and familiarity that Airplay offers has helped her feel comfortable and secure in her surroundings, allowing her full potential and infectious personality to truly shine.

Mya is a joy to be around and plays a positive role in helping all Airplay members feel welcomed and included. She has even supported the new Station Youth Worker, helping them to understand what Airplay is about and contributing to a smooth transition into the role. Her confidence, kindness and leadership reflect the lasting impact that Airplay can have on young people.

“ Airplay is a fantastic place for my child to meet other kids and feel comfortable, especially when their dad is away on deployment. He can speak with other kids who are dealing with the same things. It gives him confidence, especially during a time of uncertainty.”

- Parent, RAF Leeming



## Pledge 2

# Contribute

In 2025, Airplay provided opportunities for young people to contribute. Airplay members took on responsibility and shaped the project and their community. This was demonstrated through youth forums, consultations, community initiatives, thematic projects and more.

### Key Achievements

**630** attendances at Airplay youth forums, empowering members to have their say and influence the project.

**87%** of members feel that Airplay has helped them to take action on the things that are important to them.

**//** The fact it brings out the best in children... My child had attended since he was 8 and finished at 17 as a [Young] Leader. He has had an amazing 8 years with Airplay Scampton, winning awards and helping him with his DofE Bronze, Silver and Gold. Thank you Airplay for being there for service and veteran families."

- Parent, RAF Scampton



---

## Airplay members have responsibilities

**Airplay empowers young people to take the lead and get involved in decision-making around the things that matter most to them.**

### Local examples

Airplay Waddington young people completed a social action project on homelessness, creating 125 toiletry welcome packs for YMCA Lincs' Nomad residents. The project developed budgeting, decision-making, teamwork, and empathy, while promoting community responsibility and pride in their contribution.

Young leaders at Wyton organised a bake sale, applying their Level 2 Food Hygiene skills and raising £150.20 for a residential trip. The activity demonstrated their resilience, teamwork, and dedication, supported by strong community involvement.

**81%** of members feel that Airplay has helped them to grow their leadership skills.

**“What I value most about Airplay is the way it creates meaningful activities and opportunities that truly engage young people. It's not just about keeping them busy, it's about helping them grow, connect, and feel part of something bigger. Airplay provides a safe and supportive space where confidence and friendships can flourish, and that makes a real difference.”**

*- Station Commander, RAF Wittering*

---

## Young people feel able to speak

**Airplay encourages young people to share their opinion, respect the voice of others, and have their say on the things that matter to them.**

### Local examples

Airplay Brize Norton and Henlow hosted a Young Leaders Extravaganza during February half term, where 22 young people completed training. The event, which included a sleepover, movie, pizza, and public speaking workshop, supported confidence, personal development, and leadership skills.

Young people at Odiham used counters in a new interactive evaluation activity to provide feedback. This engaging approach encouraged reflection, active participation, and thoughtful input, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the Airplay programmes.

**94%** of members agree they have a direct say in what happens at their Airplay project.

**“It feels like I am making a small difference.”**

*- Airplay member, Cosford*



## Contribute Case Study

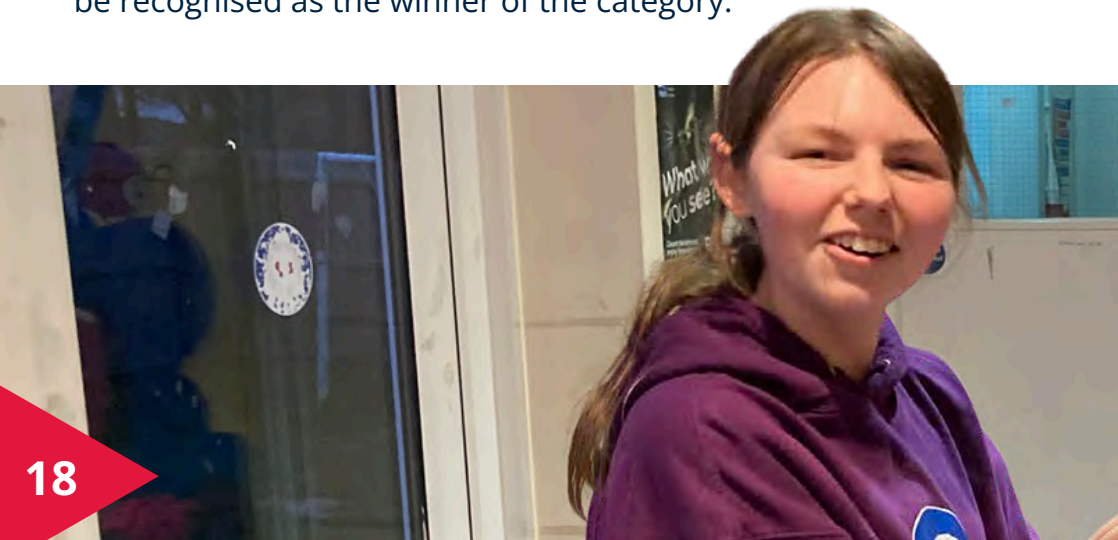
# Wyton

## Heidi

### Winner of Young Leader 2025

**Heidi has been a member of Airplay Wyton since she was five, starting out in Ben Club. Ten years on, she has been a Young Leader since 2024. As part of her Young Leader role, Heidi plans and leads engaging activities, supports and motivates others, and creates an inclusive environment. Heidi has been described as a mature and resilient role model, who is an inspiration to those around her.**

Heidi's commitment, leadership and passion for Airplay and her community was recognised when she received a prestigious Station Commander's Coin in 2024. The impact Heidi has made on her club and other members has been recognised with a Young Leader of the Year award for 2025. Staff members and young people sent in nominations for this strongly contested category in the annual Airplay Young People's awards and Heidi was proud to be recognised as the winner of the category.



Heidi loves Airplay. She believes it has given her many opportunities to try and learn new things. She has learned skills that could help her to overcome life's challenges. Heidi says that without Airplay she wouldn't have all the achievements, skills and knowledge she has today.

Heidi's contribution to Airplay and RAF Wyton deserves great applause and pride.

Heidi's parents speak highly of Airplay Wyton, and the support Airplay provides. Her mother said: "My three children have been coming since the age of seven and the Airplay youth club has been a very big part of their lives, helping them to build friendships, confidence and skills. Airplay is run very well - it's my children's second family. The trips and opportunities have been great and such a blessing. Thank you, my children's personalities have been shaped by the experiences they have had and the happy memories they hold. As a mum I am totally grateful for Airplay."



## Pledge 3

# Thrive

In 2025, Airplay provided support that enabled young people to thrive. Through youth-led programmes and initiatives, Airplay supported members to fulfil their potential and step out of their comfort zone.



### Key Achievements

**88%** of members say Airplay helps them feel more confident.

**87%** of members say Airplay helps them learn new skills.

**“ I like having the chance to lead games. It helps me feel confident and able to get others to listen to what I have to say.”**

*- Airplay member, Scampton*



---

## Young people feel more confident

**Airplay accepts young people where they are at, and actively builds their self-esteem and supports them to grow in confidence.**

### Local example

Over Easter, Airplay Cosford hosted a workshop by Loud Speaker. Young people enjoyed a fun, creative time, building confidence and self-esteem. The session's success was evident, with participants requesting a return visit!

Airplay Lossiemouth enjoyed a summer holiday full of adventure, including team-building, tubing, paddleboarding, Laser Tag, Landmark Forest Adventure Park, Cadonas, AirFest, and meeting the HRH King Charles at RAF Lossiemouth. The holiday promoted confidence, friendship, and lasting, memorable experiences.

**96%** of parents feel that Airplay is helping their child to be more confident.

**“The friendly staff, different activities in weekly sessions and longer, fun activities in the holidays are great. I particularly like the option for various away days or residential to help encourage independence and confidence outside of the home in a safe way. My children always look forward to Airplay weekly sessions and school holiday events.”**

*– Parent, RAF Brize Norton*

---

## Young people grow and develop skills for the future

**Airplay provides opportunities for young people to learn and develop both practical and interpersonal skills.**

### Local example

During October half term, Shawbury young people participated in a songwriting workshop, developing lyrics, creating a backing track, and learning basic sound engineering. The day ended with a performance of “Sparkles in the Dark,” showcasing creativity, teamwork, and growing confidence.

Airplay Cranwell members participated in a mindfulness session, creating personalised posters with breathing techniques and practising gentle yoga. The activity promoted wellbeing, self-awareness, and reflection, with young people reporting increased confidence in managing anxiety and applying these strategies at school.

**88%** of members feel that Airplay has helped them to do things outside of their comfort zone.

**“My children love coming and it's a safe space for them to socialise with other children in the community outside of school. The staff are so friendly and it's evident they really care for the children. My children love the activities and trips like the residential really build their confidence.”**

*– Parent, RAF Wyton*

## Thrive Case Study

# Songwriting at

# Shawbury

**In 2025, music played an inspiring role in engaging with young people across Airplay, sparking their creativity and offering avenues of self-expression. From songwriting workshops delivered by Never Such Innocence and live bands at AirFest, to karaoke nights and youth-led talent shows in youth clubs, our young people have used music as a medium to have fun, express themselves and thrive.**

Airplay Shawbury embraced a music and songwriting experience, funded by the High Sheriff of Shropshire's Youth Fund, where they spent a day with a music practitioner writing and producing a song that young people could perform at the end of the day. Young people had a go on musical instruments, wrote their own lyrics, worked on engineering the song and formed their final song collaboratively.

They worked together, starting from scratch. One young person said: "Just when you think it won't work, then it turns out good!" The group performed the song to their parents and Airplay staff and even the shyest members of the group sang with pride and gusto. This inclusive opportunity was met with great feedback from young people, and they hope to build on this experience in future sessions.

## Shawbury's Station Youth Worker said:

// The day was a fantastic opportunity for our young people, from across all age groups, to work with a professional musician (James) and learn the songwriting process from start to finish. It enabled everyone to play to their strengths or interests and learn new skills, either writing the songs, playing instruments, or trying something completely new to them such as being involved in the production using the computer technology. Either way, the collaboration between the young people, and the excitement on their faces when it all came together, was a joy to behold."



## Pledge 4

# Connect

In 2025, Airplay delivered activities for young people to connect with others. Airplay provided its members opportunities to meet with their peers, build their networks, make new friends, and connect with those from other stations.

### Key Achievements

**80%** said that through Airplay they were able to keep in touch with friends from other RAF stations.

**97%** of parents agree Airplay staff are friendly and welcoming.

Parents rated Airplay

**4.6** out of **5**.

**“I like knowing that while I'm having fun I'm actually helping out in a space that helps other people feel better and have better wellbeing.”**  
– Airplay member, Scampton



---

## Young people meet new people and make new friends

**Airplay brings opportunities for young people to build new friendships and connect with others from their community in a positive way.**

### Local examples

Airplay Scampton and Waddington joined Cranwell and Digby at YMCA Lincs' Showroom for parkour, wall climbing, sports, and STEM activities. The event encouraged social connections, friendly competition, and teamwork, fostering confidence, engagement, and lasting friendships among young people.

This year's Airplay vs RAF Leeming event brought together Airplay members, RAF personnel, and YMCA staff for games, competitions, and laughter. Activities included giant Jenga, foosball, dancing, cake decorating, and a Mummy challenge, highlighting Airplay's role in supporting and connecting young people.

**92%** of members feel that Airplay has helped them to make new friends and connect with others.

**“ Airplay is absolutely brilliant – I have four children who attend, one who has additional needs, and she loves it. Without Airplay she would not socialise. It gives her an amazing opportunity to do something, and the staff support her.”**

*- Parent, MOD Boscombe Down*

---

## Young people feel comfortable and supported

**Airplay provides a community that is supportive of its members and does all it can to make sure everyone feels comfortable to get involved.**

### Local examples

Airplay Juniors at Boscombe created and performed ALIEN JAM, a 15-minute production showcasing creativity, teamwork, and fun. Presented to parents and staff, it highlighted the young people's confidence, initiative, and dedication, celebrating their imagination and enthusiasm on stage.

During May half term, Wittering Airplay worked with street artist Kilo from Splash and Dash Creations to create a Youth House mural. Part of their Peer2Peer mental health project, it encouraged creativity, teamwork, self-expression, and confidence within the community.

**96%** of members agree that Airplay has helped them to settle in when they have moved to a new Station.

**“ Fantastic place for my child to meet other kids and feel comfortable especially when their dad is away on deployment. He can speak to other kids who are dealing with the same. Gives him confidence especially during a time of uncertainty.”**

*- Parent, RAF Leeming*

## Connect Case Study

# Our Future

# Then and Now

**Airplay Digby took part in a collaborative national project run by the Our Freedom; Then and Now (OFTAN) project. The project's aim is to celebrate the concept of freedom 80 years on from the Second World War. This project was government and arts council funded, with events in over 60 venues around the country and multiple communities involved. The project was displayed at Lincoln Arts Centre and is still available on OFTAN's website.**

OFTAN visited Airplay Digby and created an opportunity for the young people to voice their experiences and views around concepts of emotions, personal freedoms and human rights through drama games and discussions. This included conversations around global current affairs and what it meant to them to be children of serving members of the armed forces. The young people were encouraged to examine the space they occupy in a positive and constructive way which promoted the value of their community and the country they live in.

Digby is an isolated station and completely "behind the wire" which adds a different dimension to the concept of community to these young people and how they engage with the world. The opportunity for the young people to be involved in a national project helped provide a feeling of participation and citizenship that can often be lost through living in an isolated area while building new ideas for the future. The young people felt valued through being listened to by outside people and artists that wanted their perspective and creative input. As an isolated community this was an incredibly useful project for feelings of participation, inclusion, personal voice and citizenship.

“ It was exciting to have new people on camp and feel listened to about what it's like to be a military kid.”  
– Young person

“ I loved getting involved and it was really fun to help come up with ideas for the photoshoot.”  
– Young person

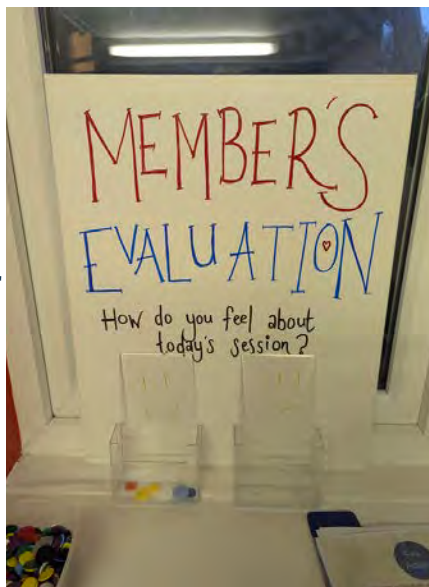
“ The kids really did enjoy being listened to by adults that wanted their perspective and their creative input. As an isolated community I think it was really useful for feelings of inclusion, personal voice and citizenship.”  
– Station Youth Worker



## Spotlight On

# Youth Voice

**Youth voice and self-expression are fundamental parts of Airplay. We have pledged to offer young people opportunities to have their say and be heard at their youth clubs, regionally and nationally. Influencing activities and making a difference to themselves and their communities, young people have been heard across the project during 2025.**



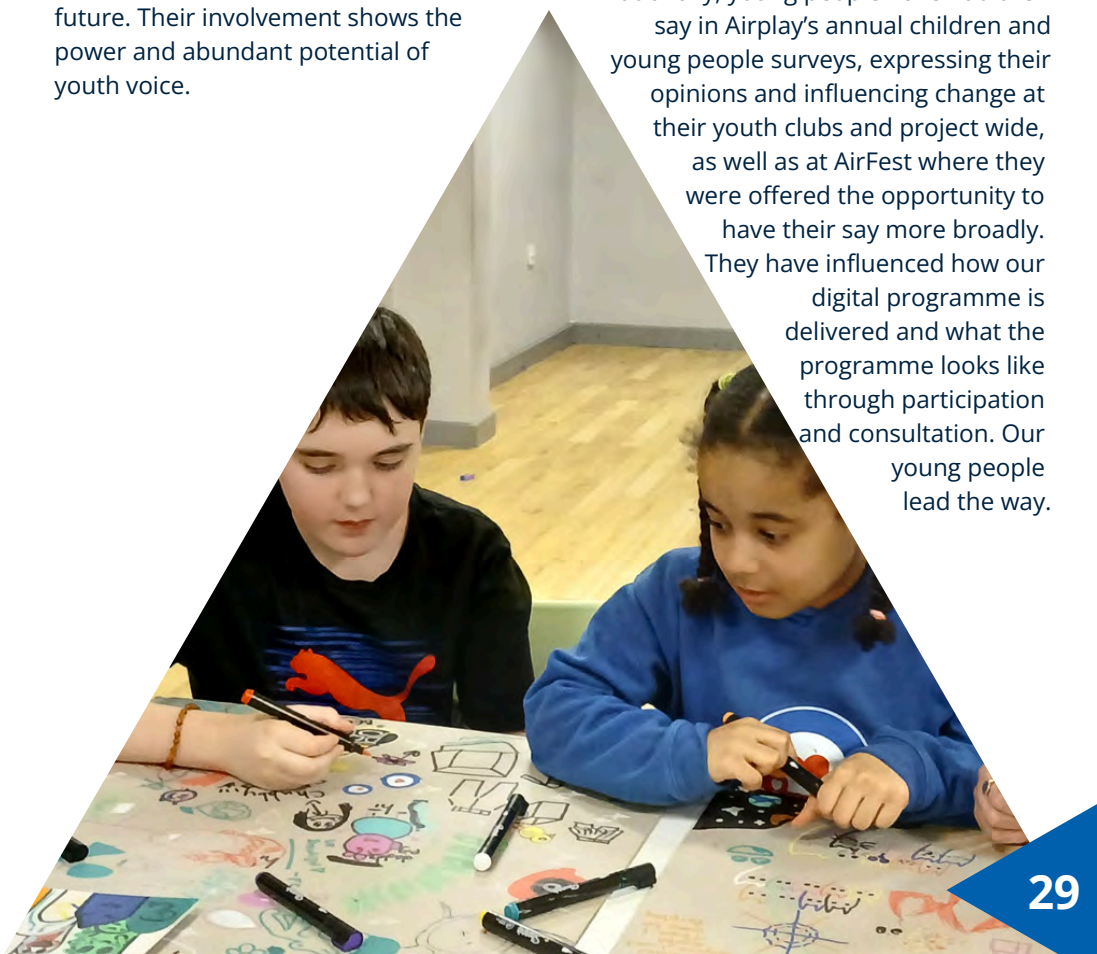
Our youth workers embrace youth voice at their stations through the delivery of regular Youth Forums and gathering evaluation and feedback from young people at every opportunity. In big and small ways, young people have impacted delivery across Airplay, from choosing what games to play at a session to changing their session programmes, like the introduction of a very successful Project Night at Cranwell and the addition of respect themed Q&A discussions at Boscombe Down. Young people have chosen to learn to use their voices through monthly debate sessions at Cosford, building confidence in public speaking and learning to express their views in a way that will be heard and engaged with.



Young people at Airplay Wittering jumped in with both feet when they identified a gap in the provision of accessible sporting activities in their community. Partnering with Living Sport they conducted a community survey, gathering insights and opinions from local youth and sport organisations. This work highlighted key challenges, and more importantly, sparked conversations about shaping a healthier, more active future for Wittering. Young people attended community meetings, and presented their findings to funders, advocating for change and investment in Wittering's future. Their involvement shows the power and abundant potential of youth voice.



Nationally, young people have had their say in Airplay's annual children and young people surveys, expressing their opinions and influencing change at their youth clubs and project wide, as well as at AirFest where they were offered the opportunity to have their say more broadly. They have influenced how our digital programme is delivered and what the programme looks like through participation and consultation. Our young people lead the way.



## Spotlight On

# Young Leaders

**The Young Leaders Training event took place in February 2025 at RAF Brize Norton, bringing together 28 young people aged 11–17 from different RAF stations.**

**The aim of the event was to develop skills in volunteering, leadership, teamwork, confidence, and personal development, while encouraging participants to think about their future aspirations.**

The training was organised in response to a request for support, with the Airplay team providing guidance and facilitation to support Station Youth Workers from Brize Norton and Henlow in delivering the Young Leaders course.

Key objectives included promoting positive leadership and role model behaviour, developing volunteering skills, encouraging reflection on future pathways, and providing opportunities for social connection.

The programme featured interactive and engaging activities focused on confidence building, teamwork, leadership styles, and planning sessions for younger age groups, including evaluation and resource planning.

**“ I think this Young Leaders group was practical which gave everyone the chance to meet new people and collaborate ideas effectively. I have never done any training like this and I have found it interesting and didn't get bored once! Ayleila and Julia were great at delivering and I am looking forward to doing it again to enhance my learning. Maybe next time we could do some new activities so the people who have done it before have something new to look forward to, as well as them helping the people who are just learning.”**  
- Young person



A highlight was a public speaking and confidence workshop delivered by Loud Speaker, which significantly boosted participants' confidence and communication skills.

The event also included team-building and social activities, an overnight stay, shared meals, and a group movie night, helping to build strong relationships and a sense of community.

Overall, the event was highly successful, with participants showing increased confidence, improved teamwork, and a clearer understanding of effective leadership and role modelling.

The collaboration between facilitators created a strong foundation for future Young Leaders programmes, making the event a positive and impactful experience for all involved.

**“The Young Leaders training was an incredible experience. It was an amazing opportunity to develop my leadership skills and make friends from another base. Also the Loud Speaker workshop really increased my confidence with public speaking through engaging, interactive activities with a range of different prizes. The training was very insightful and taught us key skills a Young Leader needs in order to be effective such as communication and leadership.”**

*- Young person*

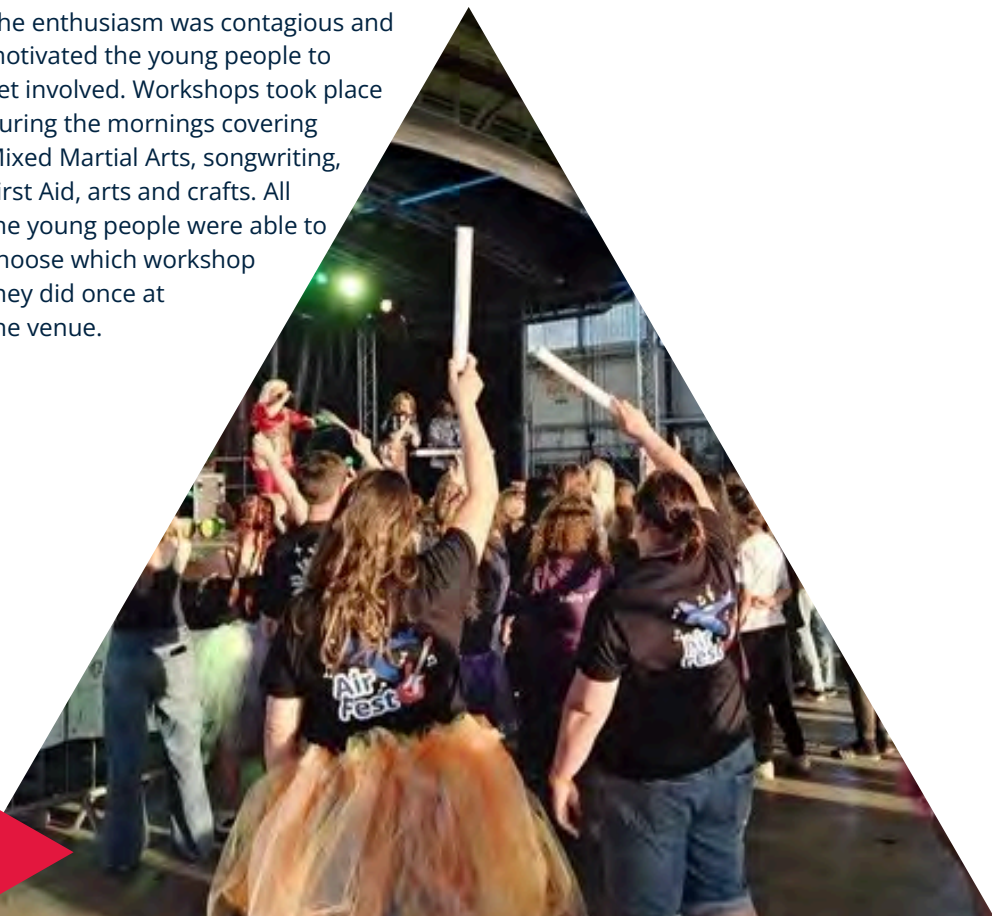


## Spotlight On

# AirFest

**AirFest took place at RAF Wyton during the summer holidays between 29 July - 1 August. Approximately 150 young people attended the event, which included camping and taking part in workshops, fairground activities and listening to live music. The whole event was supported and commented by Loud Speaker, a partner that works with young people to provide unique, high-energy workshops. These give learners the tools to speak professionally and leaves them confident to take up new opportunities.**

The enthusiasm was contagious and motivated the young people to get involved. Workshops took place during the mornings covering Mixed Martial Arts, songwriting, First Aid, arts and crafts. All the young people were able to choose which workshop they did once at the venue.



During the afternoon everyone was able to take part in the fair activities with a climbing wall, bungee trampolines and many more fun things to do. Hair braiding, tutu making and face painting were all on offer. The evenings were filled with fun activities and live music.

The highlight of Wednesday was the Falcons team landing at the event with an amazing parachute show. This fantastic event remains in the memories of not only the young people, who are still talking about it, but the staff and vendors who helped to run the event.



## Spotlight On

# Social Action and

# Special Projects

**2025 has been another year filled with inspirational community impact for Airplay through Social Action and Special Projects.**

**Airplay's Special Projects grants were awarded to some brilliant projects once again. They created a lasting and positive impact through funding for a much-needed sensory space and new musical instruments to spark creativity.**

Grants supported two valuable residential experiences young people will remember for years to come. Some young people's commitment and hard work to helping their community have also been rewarded with an exhilarating trip to a theme park.

Young people led and shaped social action initiatives in their communities in many creative ways outside of Special Projects grants. They fundraised and created awareness for unhoused young people, an animal sanctuary, a paediatric tumour charity and many more. They advocated for the environment, got stuck in with colouring everything blue for a High Sheriff, created a Remembrance Garden, collected food for food banks, and made gifts for a women's refuge.



Young people got creative through a painted pebble trail, designing Christmas cards for veterans and the elderly, building festive snowmen and painting plant pots. They got involved in community events like a fun day, pantomimes, carol services, scarecrow trails and Remembrance Day services, spreading cheer and awareness along the way, showing that Airplay youth groups play vital roles within their communities.

170 young people were involved in Special Projects in 2025, and 15 Social Action projects were completed. Our young people's passion and creativity have delivered another year of positive and fulfilling impact across Airplay. They have certainly demonstrated how we Belong, Contribute, Thrive and Connect! What will they do next?



**Our kids love it there, and love making friends with other military children. It is great for them to make friends that don't go to their school"**  
– Parent at RAF St Mawgan

## Spotlight On

# Airplay Connect

**During 2025 we contracted Loud Speaker to deliver online Airplay Connect Digital Sessions.**

In 2025, Loud Speaker delivered over 45 Airplay Connect Digital Sessions for our young people. This included Minecraft, various group challenges such as photography, cooking, and design. This allowed young people from different stations to connect and take part in joint activities.

Young people also attended sessions where they learned about politics, how to look after their own mental health and of course public speaking.



# Under Construction

Guided by the insights shared by our parents, members, and Station Youth Workers, we have embarked on the creation of a brand new online platform to replace our Airplay Connect website. Our goal is to deliver a dedicated, brand new experience that serves the unique requirements of the entire Airplay network.

Innovation is a collaborative process, and over the coming months, we will be seeking direct input from all stakeholders to ensure the final product exceeds expectations. With a scheduled launch for late 2026, we are excited by the potential of this project and look forward to sharing our progress with you soon.



# Thank you

- ▶ **to the RAF Benevolent Fund** for their enduring support and commitment to the wellbeing of children and young people across the RAF serving community.
- ▶ **to the Wimbledon Foundation, the MacRobert Trust, and Mr and Mrs Blower** who all contribute to the RAF Benevolent Fund directly to support the Airplay programme.
- ▶ **to the RAF People and Families Support Teams** whose dedication and support enable Airplay to operate successfully at each base.
- ▶ **to the 8 YMCAs** whose staff and volunteers work tirelessly to deliver the projects day in day out across the UK.
- ▶ **to the hundreds of parents and carers** who get involved, provide feedback, and support their children to access Airplay.
- ▶ **to the thousands of children and young people** who make Airplay such a wonderful place to be.

## FUNDED BY



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**

## SUPPORTED BY



THE MACROBERT TRUST

## DELIVERED BY

**One YMCA**  
HERTS|BEDS|BUCKS

**YMCA LINCOLNSHIRE**

**YMCA NORFOLK**

**YMCA NORTH TYNESIDE**

**YMCA NORTHUMBERLAND**



**YMCA ST PAUL'S GROUP**

**YMCA TRINITY GROUP**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE / PETERBOROUGH / SUFFOLK

## ENABLED BY

**ROYAL  
AIRFORCE**  
**People & Families  
Support**



## Find out more

[airplay.connect.org](http://airplay.connect.org)

## Contact Us

[airplay@oneymca.org](mailto:airplay@oneymca.org)

## Follow us



[@ymcaairplay](https://www.instagram.com/ymcaairplay)



## Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund

The RAF Benevolent Fund is proud to have invested over £40 million into the Children and Young People of the Royal Air Force over the past 20 years. From childcare centres, play parks, our listening and counselling service and of course the youth work of Airplay. The Fund is loyal, generous, and always there for the RAF Family.

Please contact us today if you know a member of the RAF Family who is in need of support or to request help for yourself.

[welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk](mailto:welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk)

**0300 102 1919**

[rafbf.org](http://rafbf.org)

ONE YMCA

Reg Office: Charter House,  
Charter Place, Watford,  
Hertfordshire, WD17 2RT

Reg Charity: 1102301

Reg. Company: 4430743

Reg. Social Housing

Provider: H4418

VAT number:

190 3566 03



Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund

**YMCA**

The Fund's flagship programme supporting young people in the RAF Family