

Youth Natural Environment Board - Progress Update (April 2025)

1. Newsletter Development

Planning is underway for a youth-led newsletter that will serve as a key communication tool to share updates, showcase youth-led projects, highlight opportunities, and build visibility for the Board's work. The format, content themes, and distribution channels are currently being scoped.

2. Schools Sustainability Survey

The Board is developing a comprehensive sustainability survey to be distributed across City of London schools. The survey will gather insights from students, staff, and leadership on environmental awareness, current practices, and areas for development. This data will inform future interventions and support targeted change.

3. Sustainability Curriculum Development

In collaboration with the University of Surrey's Institute for Sustainability, a working group is designing a pilot sustainability curriculum. This will embed systems thinking, green skills, and climate literacy into the learning experience, with the potential for wider rollout following evaluation.

4. Environmental Accreditation Framework

YNEB has proposed the creation of a youth-led environmental accreditation framework for schools and youth organizations within the City of London Corporation's ecosystem. A working group will explore models that celebrate action, encourage progression, and maintain credibility.

5. Worshipful Company of Gardeners Collaboration

A proposal was reviewed for collaborative clean-up events with the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, beginning with a pilot project in Epping Forest. This partnership would offer a tangible opportunity for youth engagement in local environmental stewardship.

6. Schools Engagement Day

Planning is in motion for a City-wide Schools Engagement Day focused on environmental action. The event will encourage student-led initiatives across participating schools, aiming to build momentum, share practice, and promote civic participation.

7. Inter-School "Greenliness" Competition

An inter-school environmental competition is being scoped to inspire friendly competition, innovation, and measurable action among schools. The competition will include clear judging

criteria, a structured timeline, and meaningful recognition.

8. Green Futures Campaign

The Green Futures campaign will be launched as a City-wide sustainability challenge for young people. It aims to equip students with leadership experience, systems thinking, and practical green skills through the development of real-world projects with measurable social or environmental impact.

9. Beyond the Blue Project

Beyond the Blue is an international youth storytelling competition focused on ocean sustainability, developed in partnership with Commonwealth organisations. Youth participants across the Commonwealth will submit powerful images and personal narratives, which will be exhibited at the UN Ocean Conference and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Exhibition structures are being co-designed with Indigenous artists using recycled plastic, blending cultural expression and environmental messaging.

10. International Engagement - Vanuatu Partnership

The Board is fostering a partnership with the Ministry of Climate Change in Vanuatu, creating space for intergenerational dialogue and international solidarity between youth-led environmental movements. This link strengthens the global dimension of YNEB's work and aligns with shared climate justice goals.

11. Research and Academic Partnerships

Efforts are ongoing to establish formal partnerships with research institutions to support monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Embedding academic insight from the outset will help ensure the Board's initiatives are evidence-informed and capable of generating broader policy learning.

This update will be presented by youth representatives at the Natural Environment Board on 1 May 2025.