

Devon Youth Service

East Devon Annual Report 2009



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Introduction

**This report covers the work of the
East Devon Team**

Responsible for Youth Work in East
Devon.

The National Context

This year has seen an acceleration of changes being implemented across teenagers' services at a national level. Changes in the 14-19 agenda, in Information Advice and Guidance, Targeted Youth Support, Youth Justice developments to name but a few. These have been coupled with yet more disparate funding streams which are at times, confusing to the workers delivering services yet alone many of the young people those resources are aimed at. Despite the changing environment, and perhaps because of all these significant changes, youth work seems to be coming into its own. With a strengthening of the statutory responsibilities for delivering youth work activities, local authorities are increasingly using youth work methodology in a range of settings and projects, as a means of delivering services to teenagers. Despite the ongoing budget pressures and calls on the work, it seems that the Government are at last getting serious with regard to putting young people in the driving seat. The nationwide success of the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital funds has reinforced the view that where young people are facilitated by able youth workers, they can take on increasing levels of responsibility. Around the country there is evidence that young people are now accountable for the distribution of millions of pounds and for the commissioning of services to them and their peers.

The Ofsted Annual Report 2008/9 emphasises the value and importance of the work a number of times. It states that '...youth work makes a valuable contribution to young people's development'. More tellingly, 'In the best local authorities, managers are well informed about the contribution of youth work to local priorities and communicate this well. The informal but educational role adopted by youth workers is important as part of the broader services for young people.'

Local authorities are also now required to develop and to publicise a 'Youth Offer' for young people, outlining where they can go, what they can do and who they can speak with. Youth work is at the heart of many of the 'positive activities' that local authorities have to have in place as the core part of the Youth Offer. It also continues to play a key role in supporting young people through life's ups and downs, both directly and by signposting to other agencies through ever improving partnerships. Youth work and youth services are as important and as relevant to young people today as they ever have been.....



Setting the scene – general background

Devon Youth Service, East Devon Locality Team – delivers Devon County Council youth work provision across East Devon. The team directly manages and funds five dedicated youth/young person centres, located in Exmouth, Sidmouth, Honiton, Ottery St Mary and Axminster. To reach young people who can not access centre based provision the team also operates a mobile unit and has a small (but effective) street based team. Improving the capacity and stability of the street based team is a priority for the future.

In East Devon - rural land, villages and hamlets surround the semi urban locations, signifying for young people residing rurally associated problems of isolation and inadequate access to affordable transport, public services and employment opportunities. East Devon has a high elderly & retirement population. Agriculture, catering, tradesmen and care work are key areas of employment for many young people.

There are seven secondary schools in the district each with a sixth form. Bicton Agricultural College provides local secondary schools with facilities for alternative curriculum educational programmes. The majority of young people in the district who move into further education go to Exeter College, with a minority choosing to go to either Taunton or Tiverton. During 2009 our youth work team has further developed work with local communities. Currently the team has formal partnership arrangements in Aylesbeare, Otterton and Budleigh. These are managed through service level agreements. A Service level agreement is where the local community (through a committee

structure), manages and provides venues for the delivery of youth work and commissions a lead worker from Devon Youth Service (DYS). The DYS lead youth worker manages the youth work sessions and programmes, supports and is supported by, a team of local volunteers.

Our youth work team through out 2009 has been supporting in Colyton, the development of a new innovative community led youth project. This has been an exciting development where the local community has raised the necessary funding to build a dedicated centre that will cater for early year's provision, uniformed organisations, young person sports groups and youth work provision. The DYS street based youth work team has kept young people involved through out the whole process. In preparation for the opening of the centre, we are delivering initial youth work training, for a group of local dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer youth workers. These are caring community members who have come forward because they believe that if adults are inclusive of young people, then the local young people in return, will respect and value their local community.

The DYS local youth work team also facilitates and supports the quality assurance of much of the voluntary sector work across the district. This is mainly organised through Local Youth Work Network membership, which includes face to face support to the wider youth work voluntary sector. In 2010, the team will continue to develop our partnership arrangements with Colyton and will seek to provide stable provision in the village of Broadclyst. The team will also, seek the capacity

information

to deliver youth work on behalf of the Sidmouth Youth Trust, sea-front youth cafe project.

In Exmouth (East Devon's largest town) our Young Peoples Centre is increasingly popular with young people but there is a real need to expand youth work delivery out side of the town centre, for example in local parks and on housing estates. In order to reach those young people who can not access the centre the street based team will begin a programme of delivery during the spring term in 2010. This will allow the Exmouth Area Youth Worker to continue to progress work at the centre and to develop and support the relatively new Exmouth team of part time youth workers. Due to budget constraints, the second Area Youth Worker post in Exmouth has become a vacancy. This has come about post a period of maternity leave, where the second Exmouth professionally qualified Area Youth Worker, has decided not to return to work. Unfortunately due to the current financial situation the post is unlikely to be re-funded and replaced. This will create an even more restricted and reduced workforce, having a knock effect on developing essential youth work, not only in our largest community but across the district.

Seaton remains a team priority area for development in 2010. A mobile participation and consultation project was very successfully delivered in 2009, to year 6 pupils of Seaton primary school. School year 6 pupils are below the Youth Service priority age range but the local team recognise that there will be no quick fixes or solutions to securing permanent youth provision due to

budget restrictions. Therefore, we have begun to develop relationships with the younger age range, in the hope that by the time they reach thirteen, that funds will have been identified and secured. That those who participated will know their local youth workers, what youth work has to offer them and that they will aspire to be actively involved. In 2009 the youth service also actively supported a local initiative developed by the local library.

In East Devon research and Community profiles – (Exmouth in particular) is noted to have key health areas of concern, which indicate young people at risk. These include a high proportion of teenage pregnancies, young people engaged in the judicial system and young people at risk of alcohol and substance misuse. Addressing these issues is essential within our programmes and when recording the issues that young people raise with us, we can evidence and demonstrate that research finding reflect the actual concerns and experiences of young people themselves.

This report will attempt to illustrate how we engage young people and how through a variety of methods and activities we address need and concern.



Team Leader Overview

The numbers of young people accessing our youth work sessions, in all of our youth centres, has grown significantly this year. This can only mean that we are getting it right and providing environments and programmes that capture young people's imagination. Engaging young people in their free time and offering provision that meets a broad range of needs and interests, is the art and business of the youth work team.

Managing the greater demand from young people, to have safe places to go, something to do, and someone to talk to, has sadly at times not been possible. We have learnt to manage a stand still budget for several years in a row now and have been creative in finding required efficiency savings. But not being able to replace staff due to a vacancy management plan, really impacted this year, on our ability to keep all doors open. Closing clubs and sessions is never easy but unfortunately in difficult times decisions have had to be made and less staff can only ever equate to less provision.

We know not only from young people, but from parents, partners and communities that youth work is valued and important. That an environment, created and designed by young people, is a safer and better option than them meeting in parks and congregating at bus stops or public toilets. In these very difficult times where resources are limited and declining, it requires a leap of faith and a long term commitment to preventative work to achieve collective desired outcomes for young people, in other words - invest now to save later. The preventive agenda is essential to combating escalation for some young people into activities that lead them to make choices that have damaging and long lasting

effects and negative outcomes on their lives and general well being. Young people need opportunities to be engaged, valued and listened to, if we are ever to get the best from them.

One of the exciting things about youth work is that it not only allows young people to discuss and debate many of life issues, but it actively supports their learning and development, enabling them to make sense of the world, through their own experiences. Youth work, encourages independence and interdependence, it creates safe opportunities for young people to take on new challenges and responsibilities, it helps them to develop an understanding of both risk and consequence, and very importantly, especially during a period of recession, it enables them to develop a whole range of new skills.

As with last year we had a growth in the number of young people who wanted to volunteer with the youth service. Annually we offer our regular young people who run provision for younger member an accredited learning experience to support their volunteering activity. This year we could not afford to offer our senior member training as a residential experience. Instead we held the training week at one of youth centres. Although this is not as fulfilling as the residential option, it was a very successful week and those who engaged were committed and enthusiastic. The training programme is intensive and demanding and includes learning about equality and diversity, leadership skills, planning, resourcing, evaluation of activities, and team building. The experience enables the volunteers to gain 3 credits for OCN qualification.

We also this year have seen a rise in the number of adult volunteers helping us deliver our youth work programmes. Volunteers are a very important part of our staffing structure and receive the same induction, supervision and access to training as the paid youth workers. For many volunteering is the route into paid work, either with the youth service or with other organizations working with young people. Therefore, the turn over of volunteers can be higher than the paid workforce. This can create difficulties with sustainability and becoming a good and effective youth worker is dependent on building positive relationships, which takes time

and commitment. Adult volunteers enhance the potential of the experienced youth worker workforce, to undertake group and individual work in busy generic sessions. This increases their capacity to intervene and support young people with more complex needs. Volunteers mean improved quality of delivery not increased quantity of provision.

Comment from a senior member, "It's nice to be given responsibility, and to be treated as a young adult whilst being a senior member at Intermediate club. I enjoy spending time communicating with the young people and getting to know them"

Emma 16

Integrated Working

".....is where everyone supporting children and young people, work together effectively to put the child at the centre, to meet their needs and improve their lives.

.... is achieved through collaboration and co-ordination at all levels, across all services.

(Children's Workforce Development Council, 2007)

Devon Youth Service as with all Devon County Council - Children and Young Peoples Services, works towards achieving the goals and targets set out in Devon's Children and Young People's Plan. The plan is the essential document that frames the work of all partners of the Children's Trust. The Children's Trust is inclusive of statutory and non statutory children and young people's services. It creates the platform for services to become integrated and measures how they contribute to five key outcomes, as set out in the governments national document - Every Child Matters (www.dcsf.gov.uk).

The Government aim is for every child and for all young people - from birth to 19, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to: be healthy - stay safe - enjoy and achieve - make a positive contribution - achieve economic well-being.

Devon Children's Trust is the overarching strategic framework which governs and is informed by Local Children's Trusts. Local Children's Trusts are about achieving local needs identification, self assessment processes, joined up strategic planning, accountability and increasingly joint commissioning.

The East Devon Local Children's Trust has a good track record of partner engagement. Its membership is made up from a broad range of local government, charitable and voluntary sector - Children and Young People's services and organisations. The membership also includes representation from Learning Communities (schools), District and County Councillors, the Police and

parents. Devon Youth Service has shown its commitment to the local trust in East Devon by the Team Leader acting as chair over the last year. There have been challenges and successes and there is still much more to do.

A key action for partners in 2010 is to develop meaningfully the voice and participation of Children and Young People. To set us on the right track the local trust undertook a workshop facilitated by Devon Youth Service Participation worker. This has led to the formation of a working group who

will take the objective forward and will ensure that no matter how complex [collectively and creatively] methods and processes will be developed. This will mean for all, new ways of working together which ensure Children and Young People shape our priorities in the future.

In East Devon we can be extremely proud of the commitment of the membership, the ever expanding networking, greatly improved communications and shared vision - all achieved by integrated working.

Working for Devon County Council – Devon Youth Service



A brief overview of how our local youth work can contribute to the Every Child Matters Five Outcomes

Be Healthy

Good health is essential for all. Without physical health and positive mental and emotional wellbeing, no human fully reaches their potential or functions well personally or socially. Youth Work matters because for young people who access our provision there is a multitude of programmes and activities designed to improve health and wellbeing.

Our healthy eating programmes remain popular and associated activities are constantly in demand. Healthy eating enables young people to learn about nutrition, to sample new foods and flavours and very importantly to learn practical cooking skills and to gain essential food hygiene knowledge. Healthy eating also offers cross curricula learning. Experimenting with foods from around the world enables

young people to gain essential new knowledge and understanding of other countries and cultures. Youth workers stimulate discussions that encourage young people to explore their values and attitudes towards others. Our work can evidence that what appears to be a simple cooking activity is actually important work that has the outcome of young people's improved knowledge about global issues and greater understanding of their existing and forming perceptions around equality and diversity. This year we have invested in improved kitchen and cooking facilities in Sidmouth and Ottery will be refurbished in 2010. Games and sports activities are on offer to enable young people to become more physically fit. The service helps contribute to national targets for children and young people; targets aimed to improve access to sport and physical activities out side of school. The aim of most of our activities in this area are about

learning how to work as a team with a focus on participating just for the fun of it. This means that many young people engage in sports and team games that would not otherwise do so.

Some of our Youth Centres are better equipped than others for games and sports. Sidmouth has a hard court area and is adjacent to a playing field. Ottery has portable skate ramps to try to compensate for many skaters who do not have easy access to a skate park. Youth workers are creative, so our less well equipped Centres do what they can to offer activities for the purpose of improving health. A good example of this is Exmouth. The Area Youth Worker, having undertaken consultation with young people and having undertaken a needs assessment exercise, has drawn down sports funding to purchase gym equipment. The service has invested in appropriate training for the Youth Worker to give him the skills to offer gym fitness sessions, again working with young people who would not usually join a gym or participate in physical fitness groups. Government research shows that gym work and physical fitness training is extremely desired by young people aged between 16 and 19. The barrier research has found that stops young people accessing such provision is that of cost. The Youth Service removes this barrier making the activity accessible.

Partnership work is an area where we are growing in experience and as a result of our commitment to working with others we are beginning to offer a broader range of provision. An example of our partnership work around physical engagement is the development of our twilight sessions in Sidmouth. These sessions are co-delivered by specialised sports coaches (arranged by the educational sports development worker) and our local Area Youth Worker. Our pilot was the delivery of young women's

football training. Following on from the success of the pilot, the new twilight project will offer table tennis. Identification and choice of the activities was achieved through consultation with young people, undertaken by the local youth work team.

Stay Safe

Many outcomes achieved in youth work cut across the five outcomes. For example - the work we do with young people around sex and relationships and our drugs and alcohol work contributes significantly to being healthy as well as to staying safe.

We have a poor track record in this country of providing young people with enough effective communication and services that means that those of them who are engaging in sexual activity do it safely. This relates not only to the 'safer sex' health agenda but to uncontrolled behaviors and unpredictable choices. We have found that associated with early sexual experimentation, the transmission of sexual infections and unplanned pregnancies – is the issue of unsafe alcohol use. Getting intoxicated to the point where an individual is no longer in control of their own thoughts and actions can and does result in some taking part in unplanned and sometimes unwanted sexual activity.

As a youth work team we have prioritised this area of work and have been developing our programmes to try to tackle these issues. We have used arts activities, open generic workshops, targeted group work and individual interventions. We provide sexual health services and create environments where young people can at least feel safe enough to be open and honest about their behaviours and attitudes. We also design and deliver activities that address young people's values, self image, self confidence and explore

what is important to them when developing friendships, as well as romantic and sexual relationships. In 2010 we will do more and we will not just accept that things are the way they are because for some young people, underage drinking and associated unplanned sexual behaviours have become the norm within their peer groups. This is an area where we must further develop our partnership work with health providers and young person drugs and alcohol agencies. We must continue to promote early intervention and preventative work to ensure that we are improving work around cause, and are not persistently mopping up the consequences.

When we discuss with young people what staying safe means to them we often hear it means – some where to go and having something to do. You may notice through this report that many of the statements made by young people about why they come to youth club include ‘keeps me out of trouble’. We hope and aspire that when young people become active participants that they gain far more than just staying out of trouble. Yet we can not ignore that having access to youth work proves consistently - that where there is reasonable access that there is a marked reduction in anti social behavior by young people in their local communities. Anti social behavior and low level criminal activity is so often just a symptom of boredom and not having enough to do.

‘I come to youth club because it keeps me off the streets and its fun. I love to come and play pool and use the karaoke. It gives me the chance to be with my friends and to stay in the warmth. It stops me from getting into trouble.’

Emma 15

I come to youth club because it's fun and exciting. I meet up with my friends and coming here keeps us

out of trouble. I really enjoy it at youth club. I had never wanted to go to youth club until I popped into Exmouth youth centre – ever since then I have always come'....

Keeley 16

Enjoy and Achieve

Although many young people may first come to youth club because they are bored and want somewhere to go, once engaged we can clearly evidence that they enjoy and achieve. Our music projects enable young people to develop their musical skills and talents, our sports and games allow young people who would not otherwise do so to become a part of a winning team, our arts projects celebrate their creations and put them on display or use them for wide reaching publications. There is whole range of positive activities that enable them to build their self belief and esteem.

‘I come to youth club because it's better than just sitting at home. It's nice to mix with people my age. My friends told me about youth club. When I first came I found it was fun and I enjoy it'....

Will 13

‘I like it when we draw pictures and I like the staff here'....

Liam 13

‘I like the variety of stuff we have to do but especially taking part in games'....

Danny 13

‘I like comic making'

Jack 15

‘We enjoy coming to fun club because it's a chance to play ping pong and pool with our mates and it's free. It gives us the chance to go somewhere and have things to do'....

Matt 15 & Josh 16

For those young people who wish to record their achievements we have a wide range of formally recognised accreditation schemes. Although

some accreditations are linked to specific skills or projects (ie. music award – baby sitting - volunteering) many schemes are naturally linked to the programmes and activities operating in generic session. The variety of schemes we have on offer means there is something suitable for every one and that there are plenty of opportunities for progression.

'I come to youth club to make new friends and I help out. I got awards for helping in the tuck shop, for being part of a group that painted the Centre and for designing a health awareness canvas which is now on display'....

Charlotte 15

Achievement and participation at youth club is especially valued by young people who do not necessarily flourish in formal education settings.

'I met my youth worker (Barry) when he came to help out with the alternative curriculum group at my school. I now come to youth club and enjoy playing with my friends. It gives me something to do. If I did not come here I would be sitting in my bedroom on my own playing X Box'....

Jesse 15

'I found out about the youth centre from my youth worker (Karin) when I was in year 9. I have been coming every week ever since. I like playing pool, the nice youth workers and getting awards. I like the trips out like Alton Towers. I would never be able to do these things without the support of youth club'....

Chris 16

Make a Positive Contribution

There are many ways that young people make a positive contribution through engaging in youth work. There are the senior members who volunteer their time to organise and facilitate programmes on behalf of younger members. There are those young people who are community

focused and participate in youth councils and action groups. Those who provide learning work shops to pass on their skills – for example, a group of young people in Sidmouth who provided workshops to enable young people from other Youth Centre's and clubs to build Go-karts; and there is the group of young people from Exmouth who have organised several gigs across a range of venues this has enabled up and coming bands the experience of getting on stage and putting on a live performance.

Here is a report from Jack in Axminster, who made a positive contribution by taking a leadership role in the organisation and running of a Funday at his local Youth Centre. Jack was nominated for a young people's achievement award for his efforts. Here is what he had to say about the event.

Young people's achievement award ceremony – Thursday 25th June 2009
Jack Price 14 years.

It was a normal lunch time and I was sat with some friends in the library at school all of a sudden I saw Penny my youth worker come over to me and hand me an envelope. I didn't know what it was. I opened the envelope and it said you have been invited to Devon County Hall achievement ceremony for the young people's achievement award. The reason I got this award was for my hard work at the centre and organising and attending a fun day for the youth centre which rose over £200. The feeling was fantastic I really couldn't believe it that I had been picked out of 100 other people. We met Penny and my other youth worker Harriet there they were stood waiting for me outside the tent we went in and saw a huge chocolate fountain it was amazing the ceremony started and my category was first I was presented my certificate by Andrei Burton a professional mountain bike rider in the UK. Then there was a buffet and

The Voice and Influence of Young People

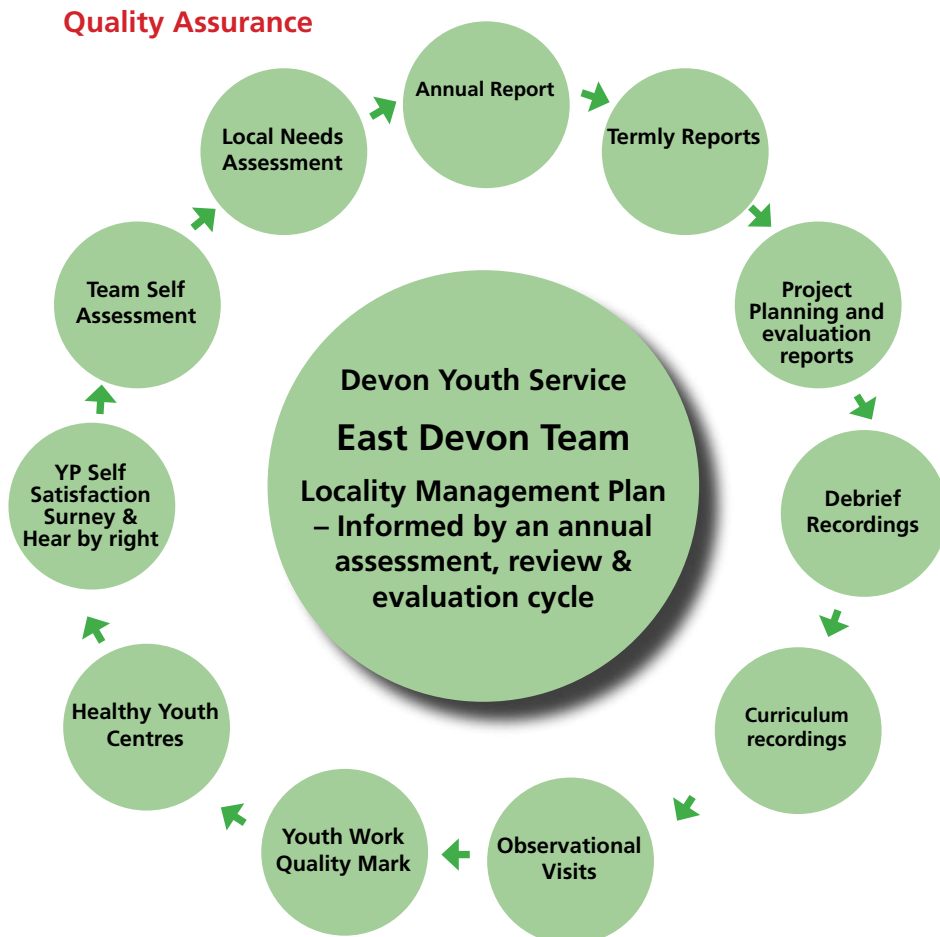
live music which was really good I had a great time and I want to say thank you to Penny for nominating me for this award.

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

There are many activities built into youth work programmes that enable young people to learn about independent living and how to prepare for the future. We have activities that challenge young people to try to plan and budget for things like accommodation, bills and food. There are also opportunities for them to learn about handling money, for example running the tuck shop and taking responsibility for deciding how local curriculum resource budgets are spent. Many young people become involved with applying for external funds for projects, this requires undertake costing exercises and understanding accountability – for example, ensuring that monies received are spent appropriately. In the same way young people take part in the planning of trips and

residential – ensuring that they are accurately costed, so that they know how many young people can participate at the lowest possible price.

We advertise local jobs and training opportunities so that we can encourage young people to access employment. For young people who have been proactive in the youth work environment, especially those who have taken on volunteering roles and responsibilities we are able to write character or skill based, work and further education references. Having portfolios and certificates from our accredited schemes can also assist young people in demonstrating knowledge, experience and a wide range skills that are highly desired in the work place. These may include health and safety awareness, team work, handling money, planning recording and report writing, safeguarding policy and practice, motivation, time keeping – to name just a few.



Youth Work

= positive activities within a framework of informal learning - personal and social education

Somewhere to go and something to do – inclusion

Possibly one of the most difficult things for those who are not trained as youth workers to understand is how youth workers maintain acceptable levels of behaviour in youth work settings. How can informal education and settings maintain order without authoritarian rules and regulations?

After all, it is known and widely accepted that a small percentage of the young people who attend youth service provision are those perceived by many as being troublesome or problematic. Falling in this category would be young people excluded or on the verge of exclusion from school, some maybe known to the police and youth offending teams or they may simply have negative reputations in their communities. Our interpretation is that such young people are more vulnerable and are in need of additional support. It is true that the youth service does engage successfully with young people who are the most difficult to engage - those who kick against the system. It is also true that in most of our provision young people integrate no matter their social and economic backgrounds. It is not true however and is a myth, that when those who make up the minority as outlined above mix with young people who do not fall into such groups, that they corrupt them and make Youth Centre's unsafe and undesirable places to go.

So why do the more vulnerable often thrive in a youth work environment and learn to self manage their behaviours and actions. The answer is

simple – they engage and participate because they want to. Core youth work is based on voluntary engagement and respect. Youth clubs are not a free for all - there are boundaries, acceptable levels of behaviour and expectations that frame each youth work session and project.

The difference is that in a youth work environment acceptable behaviour and how it is dealt with is decided by young people. For each centre or individual project, the young people will agree among themselves a code of conduct. Once agreed and signed by the young people, it is the youth workers job to ensure that it is widely publicised and fully explained to new members as soon as they engage with the service. Young people set and abide by the social norms – set and agreed amongst themselves.

The ability to adjust and change comes from a young person's confidence to face up to, and to reflect upon, their actions, attitudes and behaviours. The desire to be accepted and respected, are the key drivers that bring and keep all types of young people, including the most vulnerable, engaged with the youth work process.

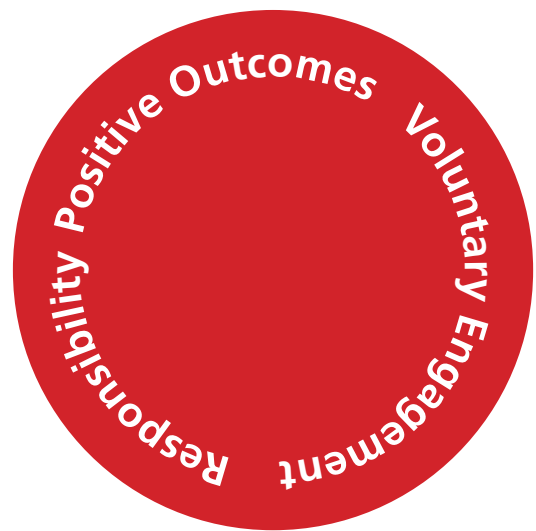
Having the opportunity to engage in a broad range of positive activities is important, but in Youth Work, the activities on offer are only the backdrop to the work we do – they are not the tapestry. The interwoven skills of creating the right environment, encouraging participation and successful relationship building, are what makes the work of art, known as – Youth Work.

Someone to talk to and someone to trust - involvement

An important part of establishing positive relationships with young people is that of building significant levels of trust. Securing trust can enable young people to talk honestly about their thoughts and feelings. In a busy youth work session you may see young people mixing with their friends, smiling and chatting freely - but some of these young people will be hiding their true emotional self from their peers. If you watch closely you will notice some quiet and seemingly unimportant conversations between youth workers and young people taking place. Some of these quiet conversations will be moments where an individual young person is opening up and confiding in a youth worker.

What may look like a simple game of pool is quite likely to be the youth workers intervention tool. A youth work method for creating an opportunity for the young person to

have a safe space to discuss pertinent and personal issues. It is the skill of the youth worker that enables the troubled young person to talk freely and to be honest about their emotional self. Hidden emotions vary but in general, pent up emotions if not expressed, can lead to anxiety, lack of esteem, and at times - unpredictable behaviours. Having someone to talk to and someone to trust, is how youth workers build their credibility as key professionals with young people.



East Devon Youth Bank

For the past 3 years East Devon Youth Bank has been responsible for allocating the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Fund. This year saw a central government consultation exercise (through the Department for Schools, Children and Families) to ascertain the relevance of the funds and to look at any changes that could be made to the existing system. They selected representatives from each region of England, what follows is an excerpt from Lacey, report from the DSCF National Advisory Panel for YOF/YCF - (Lacey 16, is a Member of East Devon Youth Bank) and attended the advisory panel.

'Throughout the discussions during our stay in York, there was a very strong thing that the group really felt should be changed. This was the way government has chosen to label young people as being disadvantaged. As people should be able to say whether they think they

are disadvantaged or not. As most of the groups total disagrees with saying that some one is disadvantaged, the DCFS will see if they can take this out of their application. Does this money reach young people who often miss out and who need more opportunities? As we believe this is much more friendly to young people who are applying for money. We feel that if the government has got to label people, the person should also understand how they are being disadvantaged.

Many of us did not feel that some of the criteria for being disadvantaged were all right. The ones that we disagreed with, was young lesbian and gay men and also young black & minority ethnic people. Many of us couldn't see these as being automatically disadvantaged; there were lots of 'disadvantaged' young people represented at the conference, including young careers, people in care, young gay people



and also many young BEM people – not many thought they were disadvantaged.'

Here are some more priorities we identified and some further findingreport by Youth Bank member Lacey.

We have all decided that we need to start advertising YOFIYCF. We are looking in to doing this by opening a new web site.

We found that the YOFIYCF is having a large impact in improving Youth Centre's.

We feel that people do not know enough about the YOFIYCF. So we should start promoting ourselves, it was decided that the National YOFIYCF advisory group needs a logo that will be recognized and remembered.

The conference really showed the challenges we will face in working with young people in 2010, with many models of disadvantage, discrimination and inclusion being thought outdated by the very people we are working with. The DCSF were clearly impressed with the refreshing nature of the young people and their obvious understanding of their communities and the problems faced and as a result the importance of ensuring that young people feel like they are active participants in the shaping of the policies and services that they will be receiving.



The above photo shows Youth Bank members delivering a road show information evening to young people in Sidmouth.

Green Devon

Forest school activity

The East Devon team piloted a successful forest school programme supporting Honiton Community College alternative learning pathway. Following on from the success of the pilot we have run a range of Forest School and Conservation programmes and activities. We have delivered two residential Camps at Caddihoe in the Ashclyst Forest during school holidays. Young people from Axminster and Ottery took part and from the feedback we have received from the young people, it is our intention to build these events into our annual planning cycle.

Senior Members from our youth clubs across East Devon participated in a team building day as part of their accredited programme. The day consisted of them clearing and building a fire pit and cooking area, as well as creating seating for fifteen people. The day was warmly received and concluded with young people gaining great satisfaction from cooking dough twists over the fire. Part of the senior members activity programme is to provide activities for junior members. The forest school programme enabled them to be creative and to use the natural environment to provide games and exercises that needed just motivation and imagination, to make exciting and fun.

Caddihoe Camps is based at the Scout camp site in Ashclyst Forest, it is a great site although very basic. On our visit there we really did head back to nature and the weather really tested everyone's survival skills. The young people from Axminster Youth Centre faced torrential rain. The foul weather started at 7am and was still raining when folks were being picked up back at Axminster 6 hours later.

The young people were amazing and although the rain dampened their tents they did not allow it to dampen their spirits.

On the forest school programmes young people take part in a range of fun sports and games. We also find time for some bush craft activities, shelter building out in the forest and lots of open fire cooking, having the chance to have a go at fire lighting with a firesteel.

Over the summer a group of young people returned to The Glen in Honiton, for the second year working with the staff from East Devon District Council and our local youth workers. The young people who volunteered on this project supported and completed a wide range of conservation tasks benefiting the wider community.

In sometimes torrential rain the young people helped rebuild the second flight of woodland steps (building on the work we did last summer) as well as clearing more Laurel undergrowth. We moved two trailer loads and a chipper load of trunks, tops and chippings (60 wheelbarrow loads). These were taken back to the youth club to use in the autumn as part of the Forest School.

One of our aspirations is to make more use of the land behind Honiton Youth Centre – which is ideal for forest school activities. October Half term was especially busy, as we also ran two Conservation and Bushcraft afternoon sessions, open to young people from Exmouth, Sidmouth and Honiton. The young people learnt a range of new skills.

Over the two days both groups started to build some steps to make the site more accessible.

Plans for the site continue, and we are currently looking to recruit

a small group of dedicated and hardworking young people to develop a 'Conservation Hit Squad'. The aim is to let the group loose after Easter across other youth clubs and centres to promote the green agenda. We have also talked about running events like 'I'm a Celebrity get me out of here' –

many young people are attracted to the idea of bush trials! What we are sure is that when young people are offered the opportunity to learn about nature and conservation they really want to get involved. We are looking forward to the spring and summer to take this exciting work forward.



Senior member Training

Enabling young people to participate and take an active role within their youth centres is a very important part of the work we do. Many young people participate at a high level within their own session taking on a variety of roles and responsibilities. Some young people take the next step and give their free time to run provision for other young people. The senior members include youth club members to have a voice in the programmes and projects on offer and facilitate activities on their behalf. They also, run tuck shops, design and maintain information boards, complete required paper work and generally

take a lead. Once senior members have demonstrated ongoing commitment and have gained a level of experience, they are offered the opportunity to take part in our senior member accredited training programme.

During October half term, ten young people from within the East Devon Team spent the whole of their half term at Honiton Youth Centre. The aim of Senior Member Training is to accredit the learning of young people who volunteer their time to support the delivery of Youth Work provision. The course is split into 10 sessions with a wide range of learning outcomes.

- **Awareness of self and others** – To begin to have an understanding of their own needs and that of others.
- **Communication** – To introduce listening skills and learning to be an active listener.
- **Understanding how teams work** – To recognise the aspects of teamwork, to gain an understanding of the importance of teamwork and to begin to recognise roles within a team.
- **What is Youth work - What is Devon Youth Service** – To develop an understanding of the aims of youth work, to consider the twin purposes of the Devon Youth Service and to consider how the youth service meet the needs of young people.
- **My role as a Senior Member** – To learn more about the roles of a Senior member, what skills & qualities are needed, to identify learner's own strength, skills, knowledge, experience and attitude and then to identify gaps.
- **Mid evaluation** – to enable senior members to reflect on their learning so far,
- **Discrimination & Diversity** – To begin to gain an understanding of the issues involved, to think about how discrimination and diversity affects the needs of young people.
- **Programme planning for senior member role** – To plan and implement a youth club session, putting into practice what they have learn.
- **Assertiveness & confidence** – To explore the meaning of assertiveness and what confidence means to them, to begin making links between self awareness, confidence and assertiveness.
- **Final evaluation** – to evaluate the learning and enjoyment of the course.

Statements From Young People:

I really enjoyed the SM Training, it gave me a good opportunity to meet new people and improve my confidence, I enjoy volunteering at the youth club because I get to see my friends and it gives me opportunities to try new things.

Max 16

As a senior member I am now more confident talking and working with



young people that attend our club. At senior member training I learnt a lot in the week how to work with young people run a session and learnt about the youth service and its purpose. I thought that the training was well worth it I meet some new people and will be looking forward to working with some of them again in the future.

Jack 14

I learnt that I play an important part in the team and have many responsibilities.

Kyle 16

I am now more confident and more able to interact and co-operate with young people, because before I was a bit shy at first.

Abi 15

I would say to other young people about the course that it is well worth it and you learn more than you would expect.

Connor 16

Annual Reports from our East Devon Youth Centres

Exmouth Youth Centre

BLOCK CLUB Emily Hobson – SYSW EXMOUTH

For young people with specific needs, the Block Club has recently celebrated another year of growth and has achieved positive outcomes. Its supportive and caring approach to individuals has created opportunities for young people with specific learning or physical needs to apply themselves to sessions in fun and educational ways. The Block Club is a session within Exmouth Young People's Centre. The young people who attend the session take part in a number of different activities such as karaoke, cooking and craft which all contribute to the development of the young peoples' life skills. These kinds of activities are similar to those run in generic sessions but we also offer other activities such as communication games and team building in order to target some of the specific needs that the young people who attend Block club have. An example of the more targeted activities that has taken place within Block club is the 'germ awareness' project. This activity was designed

when Swine Flu became a serious concern within the UK and there seemed to be a real chance of catching the virus. We wanted to show the young people how easy it is to spread germs and also how this can be prevented by washing your hands properly. The activity involved one of our volunteers painting their hands with red paint and going into the toilets. We gathered the young people around the toilet door and explained to them that the volunteer had been to the loo without washing their hands afterwards. The young people then followed the volunteer around the building, noting all of the red marks on the door handles and walls.

As some of the young people who come to Block club would not be able to read leaflets about Swine Flu or perhaps not have a great deal of awareness around hygiene, this activity was designed to be very clear and inclusive to all young people regardless of their ability. Another positive outcome to this activity was the fact that some of the young people are more vulnerable

to becoming seriously ill if an illness is picked up and we hope that with some clear information the young people would be better able to protect themselves, and each other, from spreading infection. One of the most important aspects of activities like this is the fact that the young people had fun, meaning that the activity and the messages within it, would be learnt through participation and activity – methods more appropriate to their learning styles.

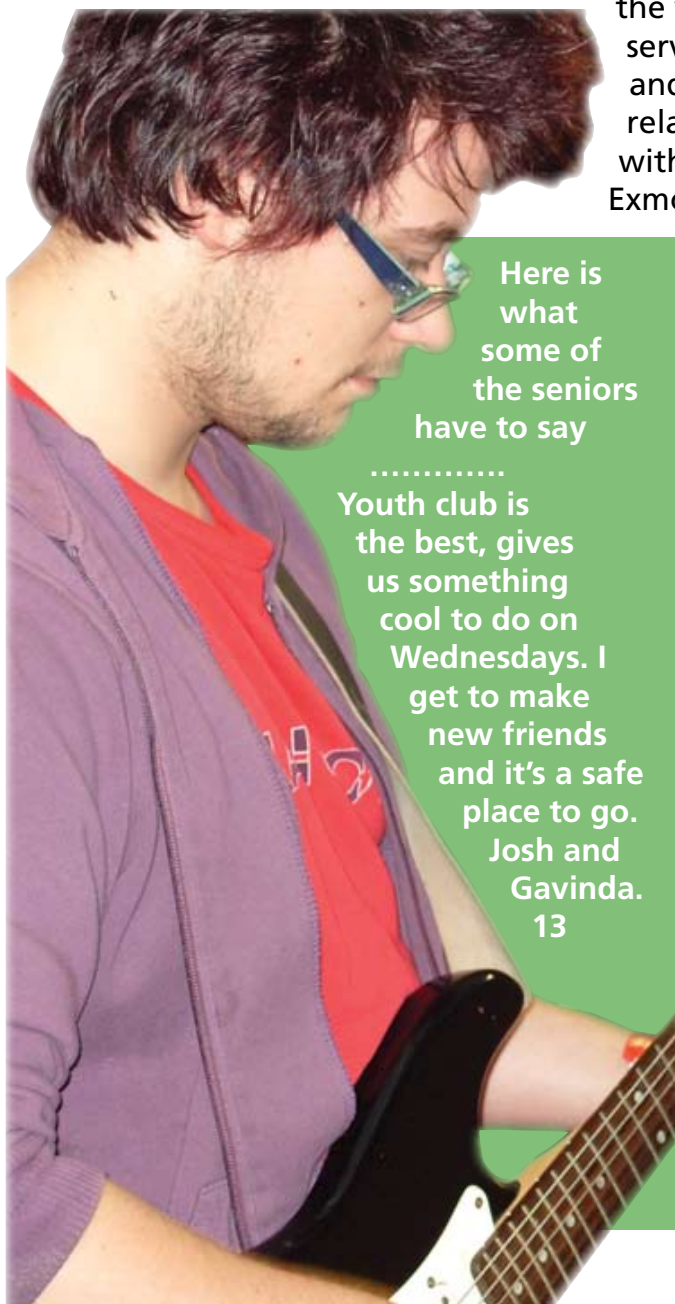
Off site activities this year have included a trip to woodlands park, Dartmouth and a BBQ and games day on the beach at Exmouth.

ALTERNATIVE CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

– supporting schools

This has been a productive year for the youth service and its relationship with Exmouth

Community College. We have been able to offer a supporting role within the College’s alternative curriculum programme through supporting the practical and outward bound sessions. The alternative curriculum programme works with students on the fringes of formal education. This project has enabled the youth work team to make contact and develop relationships with young people not already accessing the youth service provision. The programme looks specifically at social skills, confidence and self esteem. Some of the activities undertaken included navigation and moorland walking, kayaking, rock climbing and ice skating. As a result of the youth service involvement in this project many of the young people began attending the Exmouth Young Peoples Centre senior generic session. This work has then been continued within the youth centre where the young people have taken responsibility for supporting activities within sessions. They have accessed



Here is what some of the seniors have to say

.....
Youth club is the best, gives us something cool to do on Wednesdays. I get to make new friends and it’s a safe place to go.
Josh and Gavinda.
13



music workshops and helped on the centre improvement activity which looked at the delivery of the youth service curriculum programme. Twenty Four young people also received a Duke of Edinburgh skills access award for their commitment to the programme and personal development over the year.

MUSIC SESSION DEVELOPMENT

Exmouth hosts an independent youth group named the Exmouth Liberation. It is a constituted group of young people that was established five years ago around the common interest of music. There is a management committee and members making up the group. These young people have the responsibility of developing music opportunities within the weekly session. They look to develop community involvement through fundraising and annual events such as gigs. The group is proactive and is always looking to move forward. The Exmouth music session has benefited this term after appointing a music technician to support the technical growth of the session. The centre has been offering out 4 rehearsal opportunities and two recording slots per week. This has become very popular amongst the musically interested young people in Exmouth, Woodbury, Budleigh, Lypstone and even as far as Newton Abbot.

This year we also introduced alternative music workshops including DJing, studio education and singer song writing. Several Devon Music Awards and V-Involve Awards have been achieved by young people through taking part and leading on these workshops. The most recent venture is an extension of the group across East Devon, working closely with Honiton Youth Centre and their young people to create further opportunities in the music industry for local young people.

JUNIORS – young people aged 11 and 12 years.

Exmouth Juniors has been steadily growing over the last two years. Within this session we encourage young volunteers to take a lead in the frontline delivery of youth work activities. We have a team of five senior members who have undertaken the SMT programme organising and delivering activities such as hockey, pool competitions, Djing, craft, parachute games, talent shows, cooking and environmental projects. The Senior Members have shown commitment and drive to take the session forward which has resulted in a safe and fun environment for juniors to get their first taste of what Devon Youth Service can offer in the future. All senior members enrolled on and achieved accreditation from the Duke of Edinburgh and V-Involve as well as



their OCN accredited award for the Senior Member Training. Unfortunately at the end of 2009 the junior session was closed due staff shortages. The posts have not been filled due to Devon County Councils - vacancy management policy. This has left our newly trained senior members with no provision to facilitate and although they have put their commitment and skills into other projects, the junior work is much missed. Staff, junior members and our senior member volunteers look forward in the hope that this important session can be reopened in the not too distant future.

SENIOR – 13 years plus

This year senior session has been a growing success with an average of 55 young people attending each session. Many of the newer members are those with whom we have built relationship with by supporting Exmouth Community Colleges alternative curriculum programme. Programme activities have included curriculum work on bullying, drugs and alcohol awareness, sexual health and personal safety. Other activities have included cooking, drama/ film projects, art projects, talent shows, music, lads and ladies nights. One of the highlights of the senior work this year has been the painting projects where young people gave up their weekends to re-decorate the interior walls of the centre in refreshing and funky colours. For this activity several young people received accreditation and recorded outcomes. Three young people took it upon themselves to design and display new notice boards to direct young people to services they may require. 2009 has been an opportunity to grow the senior provision and with the club now as busy as ever and the programme planned for 2010 we are all looking forward to the fun times ahead.



Here is what some of the seniors have to say

Youth club is the best, gives us something cool to do on Wednesdays. I get to make new friends and it's a safe place to go.

Josh and Gavinda. 13

Youth club is great fun and you get to see all of your friends. Gives us somewhere to go and get advice about stuff from the workers.

Mikey 13

This place offers good activities and games to take part in. I look forward to coming to club every week.

Tony 14

Axminster Young People's Centre

This has been a year of increased membership and the number of attendances in our senior provision. The atmosphere is vibrant, with many of the participants getting involved in the decision making processes and running of the programmes. We have also this year broadened the range of projects and programmes enabling members to develop new skills.

Closure - unfortunately we had to stop the intermediate session due to staff shortages. We have the staffing ratio to operate a project night instead of the open door session but look forward to when we can recruit and reopen our doors to our intermediate age range (12 and 13 year olds). To keep the senior provision operational we have had to redeploy a member of street based team and although this is good for Axminster Youth Centre; it does however mean the East Devon Team will have less provision operational in our local communities.

Here is what a young person had to say about coming to the senior session

I come to club because I like to meet new people and after loosing my mum this year it helps to take my mind off everything, and it helps build my confidence and makes me realise all the support I have. Come to our youth club, its free to get in and it's a chance to meet new people also it's a place to relax and have fun.

AB 15

Music - This year the Wren Trust visited the senior session at the young people's centre for six weeks and provided musical workshops. The music specialist helped young people explore playing musical instruments and facilitated workshops on writing and performing skills. Having the opportunity to explore a whole range of musical experiences had a lasting

effect for the club. As a result of the keen interest and participation of our members they were invited to be the hub for the Mix4six project. Mix4six is a multi agency collaboration promoting music to all children and young people in the area. From these workshops young people from the centre attended two different events, one of our male members performed his beat boxing skills, another gave a guitar solo performance and two girls sang for the audience. The response was really positive and now after fund raising we have musical equipment at the centre which is used on a regular basis. This demonstrates how partnership work can enhance our curriculum and can lead to more sustainable opportunities.

Camping - Twelve young people from the Intermediate group over the May half term went on a camping residential. Although the weather let us down even the rain could not put a damper on the fun and enjoyment experienced. For some this was their first time camping and they developed their skills including, decision making, communication and cooking. They also had the opportunity to develop individual independence and confidence, alongside team work and interdependence.

Fundays - At the beginning of the year Jack, a member of the intermediate group took a leadership role in planning and organising an open Funday. He worked hard together with a small group of young helpers to make this event a success. He was nominated for the Devon County Council Youth Achievement Award. The award recognises the achievements of young people from a variety of groups - Jack's nomination fell within the community group. It was fantastic to hear that he had become a finalist alongside one of our members from Sidmouth Youth

Centre. Two members of the youth work team spent an enjoyable evening at County Hall to witness Jack get his award.

After the success of our Funday in February this year we decided to hold another one in July. The aim of Fundays is to provide fun activities and to promote the youth centre to young people living in the Axe Valley area. Both days attracted visits from families. Young people who attend the centre were excited to bring along their siblings and parents to show them the centre. These open, community focused events, give the youth workers the opportunity to explain the work we do and to demonstrate how youth work operates in practice.

Here are just a few of the activities that were on offer on Fundays

DJ Mixing & Beatboxing - This was aimed at the older young people and went down particularly well. These activities are popular at the centre and are now accessible to young people during our generic session.



Those who wish to further develop their skills can also join project sessions designed around their level of interest and skill base.

Graffiti Boards - We purchased some ply boards so that one of our older members could work with others to produce boards which would be on display at the centre.

Arts & Crafts - We ensured there was variety of activities available for all ages, so nearly everyone went home with a little reminder of their day.

Visit by Local Police – As with previous events we invited the local police to participate, they spent five hours pulling either young people from the sumo suits or untangling them from the bungee run. Both police officer's who helped with the event said they enjoyed the day. Local police getting involved in these community events is really positive, as it enables both them and the young people, to engage in positive communication and to get to know each other in a friendly setting.



The Voice and Influence of Young People

Summer activities - A group of our regular members participated in a range of activities on offer over the summer holidays. We put on trips to Alton Towers and Mount Hawke, these are popular places with young people but are not easily accessible. These trips are not only designed to have fun - they offer young people the chance to plan, organise and to work together cooperatively.

Some of our members also participated in the annual East Devon Team Youth Work, local sports and activities tournament as well as, a team building go-karting event - held in Honiton and Sidmouth. The young people really enjoyed these 'team' activities and had great fun. The team events showed once again that it does not matter what position you come, it is the taking part that counts. Although we did not lift the winning trophy our members gained noted respect from the other teams, as a result of their enthusiasm and sense of fun.

Five young people visited Honiton Centre to make use of their recording suite. The young people enjoyed the experience and learnt a lot. They now have a CD which showcases their individual talents together with a group performance.

Seaton Library - Devon Youth Service supported Devon Libraries in a pilot project to create a drop-in for young people aged 13+ living in Seaton, situated in the local Library. It is intended that the pilot will lead onto young person consultation around the

refurbishment of the library and their ideas on a new teenage appropriate space.

As part of the pilot we took twelve young people to Exeter with £1000 to spend on teenage books to compliment the refurbishment. The group had a great time and came away with over 120 books by using their budgeting skills. It was a great opportunity for the local youth work team to work in partnership with local librarians and although finances and staff constraints mean we could only be involved in the first phase of the project; it is hoped that we will be able to further support the development of this innovative work in the future.

Partnership work and Curriculum development - Although youth workers engage in a wide and broad range of training, it is the contribution of specialist support that really enables us to enhance the quality of our curriculum delivery. This year to improve our Every Child Matters outcomes we have been supported by health partners in our delivery of 'being healthy' (smoking - nurse). The local police supported 'stay safe' by delivering workshops on self defence and stop and search. Connexions staff visited the centre to give additional support and advice around employment and training options. We thank all professional who support our programmes and projects but especially those who go the extra mile by attending youth club session outside of their normal working hours.



Ottery Youth Centre

The Station Youth Centre – ‘Drop in’

The Station Youth Club in Ottery St Mary, has seen its numbers swell this year with the drop-in sessions attracting up to 85 young people on Thursday nights. This popularity has meant that the club has had a vibrant feel and dynamic atmosphere.

One of the challenges around such high attendance is our ability to continue to deliver a high quality curriculum. Informal personal and social education is more than the positive activities we have on offer - it is the processes involved in youth work, especially relationships building.

We have been lucky at the youth centre to have new volunteers join the team this year. Their enthusiasm and commitment has enabled us to keep delivering youth work within sessions that are bursting at the seams. Alongside a team of motivated and dedicated youth workers, the support of the volunteers and senior members means that we can keep the quality and diversity of our programmes - whilst still having the capacity to deliver issue based work and individual support and interventions. Working together we offer a broad range of skills, interests and experiences and programmes that are full of exciting things to do.

Activities this year have centred on the Arts, including a range of graffiti workshops, t-shirt design and decoration and the making of musical instruments from recycled materials - which led to young people creating their very own junk band.

Members have also been involved in organising activities, discos and parties with many achieving Devon Awards and Youth Achievement Awards due to their involvement. Some of the activities that worked well this year included.

DJ Workshops - some of the more experienced DJ's showed the others what to do (a peer led approach to skills development). A renewed interest in developing DJ and music skills has led to a group forming, who plan to build a DJ booth next year. Go Karting - every young person took part in the time trial around the car park. This project enabled the young people to learn that health and safety considerations and appliance, does not need to get in the way of having fun. It also created the interest for members to form a team and participate in the summer programme cross-club team event.

Cardboard City - young people built a cardboard city in the youth club to highlight homelessness. This enabled them to begin to develop empathy and to consider a broad range of reasons why people become homeless.

Cooking Nights - first Thursday every month was cooking night, everything from BBQ's to Japanese Cooking. The mounting interest from young people to learn independent living skills like 'cooking and food nutrition' has led to club plans to refurbish the youth club with a new kitchen. Bike Safety - young



people tested each other's bikes for safety using official safety guidelines.

Every Child Matters – Statements by members

Enjoying and achieving

I have enjoyed working here as a senior member, it has been very rewarding and I have enjoyed learning new leadership skills.

Tilly Symonds

Economic well being

Since coming to youth club I have gained the confidence and skills to go and do discos on my own. I have learnt how to get everyone dancing from what I say over the microphone or the type of music I play. This confidence helps me now when I'm hired for the public discos.

Mitch Hayes 16

Being Safe

I enjoy volunteering as a senior member as it gives me something to do on a Friday night and keeps me out of trouble.

Vickie Moore 15

Being Healthy

Cooking activities help me learn about cooking healthy meals.

Making a Positive contribution

As a senior member I think I have a lot more opportunities than I used to have, such as working with the juniors and starting my Devon Award. This has also given me confidence to take more of a leadership role in organising the up and coming DJ booth build.

Ethen Paddon 13

Curriculum themes

Bullying and cyber Bullying - Over the autumn term the young people took part in questionnaire's and quizzes and helped design and put up displays on cyber bullying. This got them thinking about the impact it has on emotional well being and just how wide spread it is. The youth service also worked with The Kings School during anti-bullying week. The mobile youth bus was parked on school grounds during lunch times and offered a range of activities on the subject.

Providing an environment that matches need - Big Plans For the Little club

The young people have big plans for developing the club. These include creating an Internet café style environment by bringing the computers into the main coffee bar and the building of a brand new kitchen. These improvements will mean that the young people will be able to build on the already successful healthy eating nights and introduce sourcing the recipes from the Internet and budgeting into the activity.

Recently we have been successful in a bid for £2000 from the community safety partnership, which has enabled us to purchase four state of the art laptops ready for our Internet café. Plans and funding for our new kitchen are in place but progress has been slow due to the need for further risk assessments and surveying.

Two young male members have also been working hard to create a DJ booth in the club. They have been applying for support from local businesses to supply materials to protect equipment that they acquired through the Youth Opportunity Fund. They submitted their plans to Councillor Roger Giles who has donated £500 towards the build. The DJ booth is now due to be designed and built by a group of young people giving them the opportunity to learn skills such as teamwork, construction, health and safety and budgeting.

Junior Sessions and Senior Members

As well as contributing to the development of the clubs resources we also had members of the drop in session lining up to take on responsibility within the junior sessions as senior members. This meant we had a group of very committed young people giving up their Friday nights to take a lead role in facilitating activities and the running of the junior club. Currently, the junior session is closed due to the DCC vacancy management plan.

Sidmouth Youth Centre

Generic sessions

At Sidmouth Youth Centre we currently have 300 young people signed up as members. We open four nights a week, three nights are open door generic provision catering for different age ranges. Our fourth night is a project night and is funded by Sidmouth Town Council. At the moment our busiest night is our intermediate session (young people in school years 8 and 9) with an average of 80 members attending per session. Sadly part way through the year we saw for the first time in our history the closure of our Friday junior night (catering for young people aged 10 to 12 years). As with other youth centres across the team, we have been hit hard by staff vacancies and can not recruit at the moment. The decision to close the younger session was very difficult as Sidmouth in particular, has a good history of keeping many young people engaged from the ages of 10 to 19 years. As a service, our funding is aimed at 13 to 19 year olds, but the early engagement of young people at our centre has always been an important part of our work. It not only allows young people to get to know the youth workers and youth work environment prior to them facing personal and social challenges that arise in their teenage years but it also allows our senior members to facilitate programmes and manage sessions - developing skills and work experience which enhances their future employment prospects and develops in them confidence and self belief. Our youth work sessions and programmes offer a broad range of positive activities for young people to get involved in. Alongside activities that are designed to engage and

interest young people we provide issue based learning and support. The key curriculum areas this year where we have focused our efforts and interventions on are in line with identified needs. These needs are around the issues of sex and relationships and drugs and alcohol. There is nothing new or surprising about these areas of concern and activity but we are seeing an increase in certain behaviours that are becoming the norm with some groups of young people, rather than the exception.

Alcohol remains our main concern and we continue to strive to develop our programmes so that young people will want to engage and learn. The young people we engage with are usually going through experimental phases and tend to mirror and adapt whatever is prevalent in their peer groups. This is why we need to increase our capacity to deliver more group orientated sessions – on the understanding that we 'know what we know' through the engagement and positive relationships built through our generic work.

In tackling drugs misuse we have been supported by YSmart (Drug and Alcohol awareness service for



young people), who have visited the generic youth work sessions providing workshops and professional support. Healthy eating and cooking activities also remain high on the agenda for young people. As much as providing young people with the opportunity to learn new and vital skills, the staff team have become increasingly concerned about a number of young people who appear to present at the Youth Centre hungry and unfed. In the coming months we hope to have a new look kitchen, which will mean that we can facilitate more cooking activities and target those who are either skipping meals or are not being provided with the nourishment they need to grow and develop. This year has seen a rise in youth work interventions around housing issues for young people. We have supported several individuals in getting emergency housing or a place to stay after they have become made homeless.

Project Night (funded by Sidmouth Youth Council)

This gives us the opportunity to work with targeted groups of young people and offer them more structured sessions with specific themes or focus. Project programmes we have run this year have included doing some young men's only work, a Young First Aider course, a fire skills course and a looking after children course.

The young men we had during the single gender work had been identified as those young men currently at risk of offending and anti social behaviour, particularly through drug and alcohol misuse. The mobile team had done some preliminary street based work in the area, which was followed up by some outreach work undertaken by the Youth Centre team of workers. This led to a core group of targeted young men attending sessions that were specifically designed to address their needs and behaviours. This led to some good discussions of their

lives and their risk taking behaviour. Further research led to the effects of the drugs they had been taking and a reduction of its use in the future. This is also a really good example of partnership and joined up work. The youth work team were able to undertake the initial street base work through funding from community safety as the area had been highlighted as an area of concern by the local action group.

Karting Event

At last years East Devon youth work team self assessment evening, the idea to facilitate a day event for a karting event was formed. The Station Youth Centre team from Ottery St Mary, demonstrated how they had engaged young people in the building of go karts. We work as a whole team in East Devon, sharing good practice and the development of skills.

Recognising that in Sidmouth we had an ideal workshop space and the skills and experience to support others - the Sidmouth team went to work to plan the August event. Together with young people from the senior youth work sessions, youth worker Steve (senior members Tom and Chris) designed and built a flat pack kart. Teams of young people from our East Devon youth centres, and from our voluntary sector partnerships in Aylesbeare and Budleigh, came on different evenings to Sidmouth Youth Club to build their karts. The young people engaged in the project not only learnt about using a range of tools and materials but also about the many safety features that needed to be incorporated.

In the summer all the clubs involved came together for an event which included driving tasks for the kart, teambuilding activities, observational tasks and a timed speed section. The winners were 'The Arches' young peoples management team from Sidmouth, with Axminster Young People's Centre coming a close second.

Carnival

This year's carnival turned out to be a follow on from the karts. We entered as Sidmouth's Wacky Races. Thirty young people took part in the procession – several members from our senior session worked on the choreography and taught it to the younger members. The Friday night juniors undertook the bulk of the float decoration and design. Great fun was had by all as young people and staff weaved their way through the streets of Sidmouth. The young people danced their hearts out on the night and achieved 2nd place. Thanks go out to the help we received from Station Garage – who supported the building of the karts and carnival on the night.

Youth Council

This year has seen the youth council continuing its involvement with the Sidmouth Youth Trust and the young people involved in the council have a really meaningful working relationship with Sidmouth Town Council. The development of 'The Arches' youth café project for the seafront has really been brought to the forefront of the work they have been doing this year.

The youth council has also been looking to the viability of floodlights for the skate park, an issue brought to the youth council by regular users of the park and the local PCSO. Consultation of the local residents has been conducted. The hard work and dedication to community development of Chair of the youth council (Caitlin) has also been recognised by Devon County Council at this year's Young Peoples Achievement Awards.

External Agencies

The Community of Sidmouth has shown to be really keen in supporting the young people of the area. The Sidmouth Youth Trust (made up of business people, current and retired, police support, chamber of commerce) have been openly looking at increasing the opportunities for young people. The first piece of work they hope to achieve is the opening of a youth café for young people sited at Sidmouth seafront - 'The Arches'. Fundraising, designing and shaping of the project has had full young people involvement through the youth directors and from the management team made up of young people. They are now looking as to how to support those they recognise as NEET (young people not in education, employment or training). Working with East Devon's schools sports coordinator we ran twilight girl's football sessions in partnership with coaches from the Devon FA. As a result of this first pilot held at the youth centre, the Sidmouth Vikings are now looking to take this forward into a girls/womens team to complete their move to a Charter status club. This year we are working with Exmouth Table Tennis club who will be providing a coach to develop the skills of some of our young people.



Honiton Young People's Centre

In many ways Honiton youth club has been all about 'back to basics' in 2009. We have focused as a staff team (including our young helpers, senior members, young volunteers and adult volunteers) on providing an environment that celebrates all the different aspects of being a teenager in the noughties.

Of course 'basics' in 2009 is a challenge for a building that was built in the 1960's. We have tried to develop young people's learning and experience of technology. We experimented with a video-linked Christmas Disco/party with Exmouth's youth centre - a modern means of communication that we would like to expand on in the future. We also piloted a chat-room and have video linked YouthBank meetings in East Devon. In 2010 is our intention to further develop technology and means of creative communication, not only as this helps deliver the 'green' agenda in Devon but also because young people are learning vital new skills and can use their new skills to add a bit of 'spice' to proceedings.

For us, and our members, the basics (even in 2009!) are about providing a safe place to try new things and find common ground with appropriately well-trained adults and peers. It is essential in the work that we do that our programmes grow and change inline with the needs and interests of our members. This means that we have to remain adaptable and need to be ready to respond as different groups of young people enter into different stages of their development or become susceptible to peer influences. We have found this year that many of our members are sharing with the youth work team in ever greater depth issues that affects their emotional wellbeing.

A real challenge for us this year has been working with a group of older teenagers who collectively

demonstrated that they had very little respect for anyone not inclusive in their group. Bullying and intimidation are not acceptable in any environment and one of the key challenges we face in a youth work setting, is that of bringing about changes of attitude and behaviour. When dominant individuals or groups present themselves our priority is to ensure that they do not intimidate others but it is also essential that we do this in a way that keeps the offending group in contact with the workers. This year we managed the situation by offering additional support for the group outside of the generic session. To ensure that all of our members were clear about our ethos of respect we made diversity a key theme within our curriculum.

Putting our training into practice, we used a local diversity-training course for staff members, as a basis to structure a 2-day learning event for young people. We opened up the event to senior members from all of our Youth Centre's in East Devon. The theme the young people asked for was 'I'm a Teenager....Let me out of here', they were locked in to the centre for 2 days and asked to perform all manner of tasks to emulate the TV program. The focus on diversity helped make the event both a lot of fun for those present but also invaluable to our centre, as the senior members who took part are quite often the first faces that a new member may see when they try out youth club for the first time. The importance of an understanding of respect and a respectful first impression cannot be underestimated.

This highlights the emphasis we have placed this year on participation from our members in all manner of decision-making. Both in the centre, organising fundraisers, and planning events for the wider community. We have looked at the programme

and worked more intensely with a few individuals to provide a balanced amount of sexual health, relationship and alcohol awareness and ensured that our programmes were developmental. The young people responded well and enjoyed their 'weekly workshops' facilitated by the staff team. The outcomes from our work are evidenced by the responses we have received from partners. Both the police and NHS staff have reported back to us that the previous alcohol-related incidents on the local playing fields and park areas had dropped notably. The number of young people in Honiton who are either on Anti Social Behaviour Contract or Orders, or variations of youth offending orders, has dropped to almost zero in the past year. Members of the Local Community Safety Partnership have acknowledged our contribution to this trend.

We have been running a later night session that allows young school leavers aged 16 – 19 access to the centre until 11.00pm. This has created an opportunity to talk to this age range about important issues they face such as seeking work, relationships, independent living and criminality through driving.

As previous years there has emerged a 'core group' of young people who really grasp the youth work process and strive to work in their communities to improve facilities and the image of young people. In 2009 these young people made a positive contribution to their community in many ways. Such as, developing a local green area, accompanying the area youth worker to meetings acting as ambassadors



to the centre and securing funds for a newly developed recording studio. The new recording studio will be 3 times the size of the one that has been used for the past 2 years. This is really exciting news not only for the young people of Honiton but for young people across East Devon. The young people involved in the recording studio are looking to develop strong links with a group of young people based at our Exmouth Centre, who have also developed strong music programmes and projects. It is hoped in the future that the recording studio will be accessible to young people from across the district and will be a real asset to those looking to make a career in music.

The focus on providing the diversely aware, and 'back to basics' approach mentioned before, has helped see an increased use of the building and a great feeling of affiliation for the centre by the young people this year. The relationships we have built with our members and their willingness to open up and talk, has highlighted a need for us to develop our support for young people around mental health, housing, substance misuse and alcohol issues.

Young people in Honiton and surrounding areas and communities are discovering their peers from all around the world through Facebook, Bebo, MySpace and shaping their own language and experiences, although sometimes in a very isolated way. We believe that the 'real' connection and relationships they build with the youth workers in their local youth centres will become more and more important in ensuring they navigate what is clearly going to be a unique transition into adulthood.

Non Centre Based Youth Work – Street Based Team

...Youth work that operates outside of a centre to either outreach to young people...

- to build relationships and inform of existing provision and support
- as a mechanism to undertake consultation
need assessment
community profiling
access and entitlement

... or it is **detached** ... a method of working with young people in their own environments, to learn about their local culture, to support individual and group needs, and to help understand and improve community cohesion.

Access to youth service provision can at times for some young people be problematic...or limited...or not an option...

... nowhere to go, money or transport to get there!

To work with young people who are not accessing provision the mobile and street based team strategically map and plan youth work delivery over short to long term periods of time. Often this work is in partnership with the local community.

The Mobile offers an individual programme for each area it visits, designed around the needs and interests of the young people.

Activities and themes include -

- sports and team games
- music and technology
- health and wellbeing support and services
- arts and craft activities
- social evenings where the mobile acts as a Drop-In centre
- movie nights
- educational workshops
- consultation and involvement

Street based youth work.

Over the past year the street team has been involved in a variety of projects in several localities across East Devon. The team has predominantly used the mobile to deliver the majority of this work although small pockets of detached and outreach work on foot have taken place. The work that takes place varies according to the needs of the young people. It has included a variety of recreation and education activities as well as the delivery of more specific issue based work, for example, around drugs and alcohol and sexual health.

Supporting work in local

communities... here are a few short example that demonstrate the work that we do as a team.

Newton Poppleford - Due to a fire, the young people of this village lost access to their youth club. Therefore, the mobile was in the village for several weeks and was attended by a regular group of young people. They participated in a wide range of activities from arts to sports and team building. This enabled the young people to stay involved and to meet as a group. The mobile unit has been deployed in Newton Poppleford on several occasions and supported the set up of the voluntary sector youth club. When the replacement Porta cabin arrived for the youth club to operate from, the team mobile departed to embark on work elsewhere.

Branscombe - Although this was a relatively small group of young people they were particularly enthusiastic to engage in any of the activities that the team were able to provide. Many of the young people involved in this group had not accessed a youth centre before and

indicated strongly that they would welcome a return of the mobile next year. It is essential as a service that we reach out to our smaller communities and try to provide access to personal and social educational opportunities to those who can not reach youth centres.

Colyton - There is a currently a centre under construction which will provide the young people of this town with some dedicated youth space. Until the centre opens the mobile has been located here with the aim of building relationships with young people so that they can have a real input into what they have in their space and how it will operate. Devon youth service will support the opening of the new centre by providing training for a team of volunteers.

Community Safety Partnership

Earlier in the year the team secured some additional funding from the Mid and East Community Safety Partnership to develop additional streetbased sessions. To date, the team have worked in Sidmouth where the main consensus of the young people has been that if the youth centre was open more, then they would use it! Also following on from the work of the street team the youth centre is offering some specific project work with young people in the area.

The team have also delivered some work in Exmouth, where again the main consensus from young people is that they need places to go and things to do. We will continue to build on our work in this area over the next year and look to strengthen our relationship with young people to develop further projects.

This year the team will continue with its work in Colyton and Exmouth but will also be moving into Rockbeare to support the work of members in the community who are striving to secure a youth club evening for young people in the village hall.

It has been a productive year for

the street team with us being able to deliver youth work to a number of young people who have not had access to, or limited access to, it before. Many of the young people have also found it particularly useful to have access to information and support that they would struggle to get elsewhere out in some of our more rural locations.

Work with the voluntary Sector

There are currently 30 members of the Local Youth Work Network (LYWN). The network provides a range of support and services to mainly small voluntary and community sector groups. This can vary from information and support about getting your group started to advice about specific youth work issues. The LYWN also has a small pot of money which is allocated by the youth bank to its members. We currently have a part time youth worker who keeps in regular contact with each of the groups both for the purposes of providing information and support but also to carry out quality assurance visits to those groups who have received funding from the network

There are currently 3 service level agreements in place, Otterton, Budleigh and Aylesbeare. These youth groups have elected to enter into a partnership with Devon Youth Service and in effect, buy in youth work. We are also currently working with the local community in Broadclyst who are very keen to re-establish their local youth club.

Our links with those out in the local communities are vital. As the local authority provided youth service, there is only a limited amount of resource available to develop work across a relatively large geographical area. Therefore, through fostering these partnerships together we can endeavour to provide young people with vital services that they are entitled to.

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