

Pewsey Area Board

May 2022

Rural Youth Project – Year 1 report

1. Purpose of the Report

- I. To update the area board on progress made with the project since July 2021
- II. To propose where the focus should be for year 2 of the project
- III. To consider how the project may be funded and developed

2. Introduction

A community led model that works with our local communities and organisations to develop locally developed and delivered youth provision for 13 – 19 years (up to 25 for SEND) has been in place since 2014. Whilst it is the responsibility of Area Boards to fund and support this work, Pewsey, Southern, Stonehenge, Tidworth and Warminster recognised that the model operating in many parts of Wiltshire was not working in more rural locations.

It was decided to work together and pilot a new model that would look to support young people in accessing positive activities, whilst recognising the unique barriers and challenges that are faced in rural communities, including the deficit of youth providers.

In July 2021, Community First were appointed as the lead organisation on an initial 1-year contract. The agreed desired outcomes for the project were:

- Improved level of engagement with young people and their families in rural areas
- Increase the availability and access to positive activities
- Reduce the isolation and loneliness of young people in the rural areas.
- Ensure that those who are from minority groups, young people with mental health, educational or physical health challenges are included
- Develop a sustainable model in collaboration with local stakeholders

Community First were asked to deliver their work in 2 parts. Phase 1 being a limited period of consultation and research to ensure that the programme complements and strengthens what already exists, has local ownership and makes a difference. Phase 2 is to start delivering change by working alongside local partners, clubs and organisations in order to design and execute a programme of activities in each community area

It is recognised that it will take longer than 12 months to achieve these outcomes and it has always been envisaged that the project should ideally run for a much longer period. However, as it is a new approach, it was decided to start the project, evaluate it after a year and then decide how best to move it forward in the longer term. This report summarises the progress made so far, and the recommended way forward.

3. Phase 1 – Consultation and research

All Area Boards involved in this work share the common goal of wanting to see projects delivered and the lives of young people improved. To achieve this, it was acknowledged that this preliminary phase was essential to ensure what is subsequently delivered meets what is required and wanted. Community First undertook began work in August 2021 undertaking outreach and door knocking backed up with additional meetings and desk research.

The findings for Pewsey community area can be found in Appendix A. These were shared and discussed at a project event held on March 24th attended by about 80 people. In the 5 community areas, Community First had by Feb 2022

- Engaged directly with approximately 700 people
- Referred 25 young people to Splash
- Referred 7 young people to Building Bridges

4. Phase 2 - Delivery

The consultation and research phase identified the main gaps in provision in each area. Since the start of 2022, Community First have been working with the Community Engagement Manager and local partners to begin to address them. The work has included drop in events, identifying and training of leaders and volunteers, helping establish new groups and networking stakeholders

The focus for Community First's remaining time up until July 2022 in the Pewsey community area is:

- Promotion, recruitment and support for youth group setup in Pewsey
- Work with Open Blue as well as stakeholders in Burbage and Upavon to explore if an offer can be provided now that the Blue Bus is stopping

5. Where should the focus be in year 2?

It is essential that as the project evolves, there should be increasing emphasis upon delivering tangible outcomes. Three areas of work have been identified:

- I. To finish addressing already identified lack of key provision in each community area.
- II. To work with existing organisations, clubs and providers of positive activities to support them to provide a greater and more inclusive offer for young people.
- III. To work with other Area Boards on common concerns where this would be advantageous. One of the key parts of this project was to work collaboratively across community areas

An important element for all the work is to ensure that provision is open and accessible to all. Special attention should be given to understand and address the needs of minority groups and those who have barriers to provision.

6. Future Funding and ensuring sustainability

The Rural Youth Project was always envisaged as needing to be run for more than 1 year to make the difference we all hope for. Year 1 was financed by each Area Board awarding £5k to the project and this will end in July 2022.

For year 2, Area Boards are invited to again award £5k each and to agree what they wish to be delivered in return for the funding. Pewsey area board have already awarded funding for year 2 but the area boards is asked to agree what outcomes they would like to see. The CEM's recommendations are:

- To support the new outback venue (rear of school) as it moves forward to ensure it is safe and sustainable
- To explore alternatives to Open Blue in Burbage and Upavon so that provision is set up for the young people who have been attending the Blue Bus
- To work on joint projects with other community areas including pop up events and publicity so that we can maximise our resources locally
- To continue to support the Parish Council to develop their offer in Pewsey with the goal of creating a sustainable and regular youth provision and a place where young people can simply be.
- To build up the network of local providers and stakeholders in order that we work closer together and support one another
- To recruit and train volunteers and young leaders who can help run the provision
- To work with existing organisations and providers of positive activities to increase their offer to all young people and start to develop a referral process

Now that the project has been established, it is the intention to apply to external funders to bring in additional money. This will make the project less reliant upon the area boards as well as increase the scope of work that can be undertaken.

The ultimate aim is to build up the youth offer so that it can be sustained once the project ends without the need for continued funding from the Area Boards. To achieve this,

volunteers and young leaders will continue to be identified and trained, existing providers strengthened to extend their offer, and funding identified to resource the work.

7. Recommendations

- I. That the Area Board acknowledges this report
 - II. That the area board agrees to the deliverables identified in Paragraph 6 to be the basis of Community First's work if funding is agreed.
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APPENDIX A – Findings from Phase 1

Pewsey Area

Young People engaged with	60
Total people engaged with	135
Number of Areas/locations	10
Referrals to Splash	4
Referrals to Building Bridges	3
Potential volunteers	4

Pewsey- near school	Young people here would love somewhere they could hang out, they don't even need 'activities' put on if they can't be, but they don't want to go home straight from school, as they like hanging around together – they would go into a café, but they know (think) they wouldn't be welcome. They suggested a 'Youth Café'. If activities were available, they would like a pool table or tennis table. They think that Pop up activity days would be a great idea through the summer as it is such a long time off and with not much to do. They suggested Archery, trampolining and bubble football days.
Pewsey Vale Leisure Centre	It was clear here that young people here would like somewhere to hang out and somewhere that's warm and dry in the winter. The boys also like playing football, riding their mountain bikes, and going on scooters. They think pop up days would be a good idea in any school holidays and would like anything active.
Bus stops around the area	The common theme was for somewhere they can hang out and relax without people moaning at them not to 'gather' and cause trouble (even though they don't!) some said how much they would like like an art/crafts club/space, with the freedom express yourself or to create something would be good.
Pewsey football pitches x2	Youths were engaged with that were chilling on the bank but said that people do not like them hanging out there. These youths just want somewhere that is out of the way to hang and not be bothered, also some place they will not be asked to move on.

<p>Woods next to tennis courts</p>	<p>Many people spoke about the woods where some young people were hanging out- this was also mentioned in a couple of other areas in Pewsey. When Community Organisers visited the woods, they were unable to engage with any young people at the time.</p>
<p>Housing estate by Bouvier Hall</p>	<p>Lots of people had children at the age of the project range and below. There were lots of young people that had heard about the shack when it was running and wished they had something like that now. There was also an appetite for a mixture of activities. Young people talked about things ranging from sports, outdoor activities such as archery and climbing and</p>
	<p>cookery. Really the thirst was to have somewhere to go that was safe and interesting. Parents here also spoke fondly of the previous youth club and did say if something like that was around, they would like a further discussion around them potentially volunteering.</p>
<p>Town Centre</p>	<p>Some young people said that transport was an issue and that they needed better ways of getting out to socialise outside of Pewsey. Some felt 11year olds were missed out. Several adults wanted the anti-social behaviour tackled and young people would like somewhere just to hang out and be safe and dry.</p>
<p>Little lunch box cafe</p>	<p>Parish councillors were engaged with in the café and were able to extend that engagement to speak to a handful of young people there too who happily answered the questions. Some felt that it would be nice to have the youth club back in the area. Some felt that young people were all viewed as having the same reputation as some of the ones who were considered troublemakers. This made them step back from getting involved. Two young people supported the engagement team by volunteering to ask other young people in the area what they wanted. Mental health focus activities came up as a high priority. Another thing mentioned was they wanted to be sure that there were groups of more than one age group available.</p>
<p>Youth Football club area and surrounding streets</p>	<p>This was a divided area; some adults were frustrated by the cars and noise that the green space attracted and felt that young people would bring antisocial behaviour. Others felt that young people in the area needed nurturing and support having grown up their themselves and experienced a lot of barriers for not being considered a local person. One of these people said that they would consider volunteering.</p>

Pewsey- Other	When door knocking the Organisers met with one of the Parish Councillors and spent time talking about the dispute over the skatepark. The Shack being closed was a real disappointment and it felt there is a need for somewhere for the teenagers to hangout. The Pewsey Carnival got mentioned and what a big event it is and how great it would be to enlist the involvement of some of Pewsey's Teenagers. Swimming facilities catered for young people with disabilities, but wheelchair basketball had been stopped at Tidworth Leisure centre and this was really missed.

There was a definite need for something for young people in this area; with the local council also fully supportive and taking action. It is important to mention that young people did not want it to be called a youth club and would prefer the term 'Youth Café'. The overall desire is to have somewhere to hang out safely, warmly, and securely without so much emphasis on activities. If there were activities young people would like to be separate age groups and would enjoy cookery, pool, and darts. Young people said they are happy to travel from surrounding areas of Pewsey to go to café. Funding has been agreed for a skate park but there is an ongoing battle around location. Support with this could link up with supporting safe spaces for young people to hang out