



# Cricklade Youth Project Report – August and September 2017

## SUMMARY:

August and September have seen us having irregular numbers of young people; a factor in this was some sessions being “blessed” with wet, rainy weather. Inevitably in detached work this means there are less young people out and about as they understandably prefer not to come outside and get wet!

However, engagement with the young people has led to an increase in trusting relationships with some individuals and an increase in our “reach” of young people we work with regularly. Youth workers have engaged in positive activities with the young people that have included:

- drugs awareness
- positive use of social media
- sexual health (including condom distribution and chlamydia testing)
- exam result support
- art activities including henna art

Youth workers have become aware of a friendship break up within the large group of young people who we have been most in contact with (we believe these are the young people largely responsible for the anti-social behaviour in Cricklade).

Youth workers have started to have conversations and challenge the young people regarding anti-social behaviour and their place in the community. Young people have continued to be polite and open with the youth workers. The next stage for the youth workers is to continue building relationships with the young people but recognise that it is going to take some time, however, the young people have expressed they would be willing to venture indoors if they could have access in the hall adjacent to the skate park.

**TWO MONTHS SESSIONS** (with number of young people engaged with):

02/08/17- 18 young people  
07/08/17- 24 young people  
09/08/17- 9 young people  
14/08/17- 4 young people  
16/08/17- 5 young people  
21/08/17- 3 young people  
23/08/17- 23 young people  
30/08/17- 6 young people  
06/09/17- 18 young people  
11/09/17- 4 young people  
13/09/17- 15 young people  
19/09/17- 14 young people  
21/09/17- 9 young people  
26/09/17- 9 young people  
28/09/17- 16 young people

## ISSUES FACED:

Rainy weather made street based youth work more challenging.

Young people have been generally unreliable in attendance; also the young people have had use of a parent/guardian house to smoke cannabis which has impacted on attendance.

On two occasions youth workers found young people directly behind leisure centre with older males in cars allegedly from north Swindon

## **DETACHED v CENTRE BASED?**

Doing detached youth work has benefits. There are no issues of “policing” young people to protect the venue, often an issue in shared use buildings. It is also completely on the young peoples’ terms as they can choose to engage or not completely freely.

It also has its drawbacks. It is totally reliant on the weather and a couple of wet weeks mean that we may not see the same young person for three or four weeks. This makes building up trusting relationships difficult.

Due to the reach we have in Cricklade we would like to bring the group together and launch a centre based session, one evening a week. Our staff have produced flyers that they are distributing in a push to get a regular, detached meeting space for the young people. We would like this to lead to a centre based session over the winter.

We have viewed various halls and locations and believe the best spot to be the annexe to the leisure centre. Young people naturally congregate in this area and it is self-sufficient enough to not mean introducing a horde of young people to mixed use areas. We will work with the Town Council to try and realise this ambition over the summer.

### **CMAS behind the scenes:**

CMAS is increasingly involved in working in alternative education for young people who are not attending school. This brings with it many challenges and the last three months have been marked by a self-auditing process to ensure that we are ready for any inspection that may come our way.

We are even mulling over the idea of forming a free-school. This is an arduous and paper-heavy task but, as CMAS grows and works with more and more young people in creative ways, one which may be of benefit to the organisation.