

Integrated Youth Services
Youth Advisory Group update and
Youth Work Update for Westbury
Youth Work team, Wiltshire Council

YAG update (Youth Advisory Group)

YAG-Youth Advisory Group is a Wiltshire Council initiative and is a forum for young people to plan with adults, professionals, committees and the community, activities and events for young people, as well as help to take and or initiate action or change to improve where they live. The YAG is part of Wiltshire Councils policies and Business Plan and is a vital process for young people to have a voice and influence. The YAG is chaired by a young person and involves professionals/adults to support the process and help take action/make change, with young people, in response to their needs. The YAG will update at each area board, the intention of it being a young person reporting and the YAG will be the partner, as opposed to Youth Service/Integrated Youth Service. The YAG used to be referred to as the CAYPIG and the processes are very similar. Westbury CAYPIG was very successful and instrumental. The YAG is open for all young people to engage with, they do not have to be youth centre members. Invitations to participate have recently been sent to volunteer and community sector organisations, church's and other young people's clubs. These included local church's, community run youth clubs, swimming club, cadets, young carers and Matravers school council. Young people do not have to attend either, they can feed their input in via other young people or youth development workers.

YAG issues to date-

Westbury campus-young people wish to have more involvement in the campus development group and 2 Youth Advisory Group young people have recently been successfully elected to the shadow Campus Operations Board. They are very pleased and looking forward to the new role. They have already compiled a survey to ascertain what children and young people want from a 'space' within the campus and will be feeding this into the group.

Review of open access youth work-open access youth work has recently been reviewed, young people from Westbury took part in consultation. The outcome has been reached by cabinet and it is hoped that an officer from Integrated Youth Service will update Westbury Area Board shortly. Further information can be found on Wiltshire Councils website. The council has adopted a community led model approach to providing future youth services/positive activities for young people. This will involve a lot of change and young people will be fully involved in this process. It will be implemented from October 2014 and in place by May 2015.

Lighting-young people are concerned about lighting in certain areas of Westbury, specifically the pathways leading to the youth centre and local parks. It makes them feel very unsafe and vulnerable. This issue has been fed to local councillors and the police.

Input from young people who don't attend the youth development centre-Young people are being engaged with, who do not currently attend the Youth Development Centre. They have been speaking with the police NPT and this has been brought to Youth Development Workers attention. The young people wish to be listened too and have their opinions and ideas raised. They will be incorporated into the YAG and are very valued. Opportunities for them to engage with the service, through activities initially, will be planned shortly so that they can benefit from the service. Street Based Youth Workers have committed to engage with young people within the community, which has previously been carried out for a number of years. The Youth Development Centre will work closely with the police and Area Board over the coming 6 months to ensure positive outcomes for young people.

Youth Work Celebration Evening-we hosted an evening on May 13th 2014 to highlight and celebrate youth work participation and achievements over the past year. This was a truly amazing evening, enjoyed by all that attended. Young people were given Awards and Certificates, as well as lots of recognition, for their achievements through youth work since July 2013. Young people also sang, played instruments and spoke readings. An array of young people produced films, photo slides and other media were shown too. Most of this media is on www.sparksite.co.uk and a review of the evening will be on there shortly.

Youth Work update

Sessions that run in the Youth Development Centre and within the community as of May 2014 are as follows:

Tuesdays 6.30-9.15pm-Girls Night, as there was a need for single gender work, this includes ASDAN Award Scheme & trampoline coaching with qualifications from BAGA, as well as building self-esteem and confidence, developing new skills and interests.

From November 2013, a new project Virtual Landscapes commenced, this is Heritage lottery funded and focuses on young people learning about their local chalk hill figures, so for Westbury this will be Westbury White Horse and Fovant military badges. They will be exploring what they learn through film production/photography/visual art art from on Tuesdays and achieving Arts Awards, nationally recognised qualifications. Young people will attend Salisbury Festival on May 28th to show their film and also this will be shown at the celebration event on May 13th. This project has concluded now and was successful, with 6 young people achieving their Bronze Arts Award through Trinity College and other 25 participating throughout, since last September.

Wednesdays 5-7pm- Junior Club & Young Leaders at the centre, for younger 'young people', years 6-7 and older 'young people' aged 13 plus to train as Young Leaders. Young leaders engage juniors in the Heritage Project called Virtual Landscapes, in partnership with Salisbury Arts Festival. This caters for a Universal Youth Work offer for all young people, as well as some focused projects. The young leaders have completed ASDAN Leadership/Peer Mentoring Awards and Activities Awards.

6.30-9.15pm- Universal mixed gender open night & focused projects. The universal aspect allows young people to turn up, socialise, develop new skills and interests and have fun, as well as talk with qualified youth workers and receive any support needed. This session is now getting busy, engaging lots of new young males, as we have had a high proportion of females recently.

Thursdays-Street Based Youth Work within the community whereby youth workers walk around targeted areas (after community, professional/police requests) meeting young people, talking to them and promoting our service, as well as signposting them.

Targeted 1:1 work, as and when required, requested from other agencies, for intensive support and guidance/intervention work (as and when required, or through referrals from other panels). Contact Sally Willox to make referrals.

Our overarching aims of the service are to engage young people in positive developmental activities to help them reach their full potential. This is all done with an informal approach and is on a voluntary basis. Young people take part in a diverse range of activities which they plan with Youth Developmental Workers. They can achieve a range of accreditations with us, including Food Safety, First Aid, ASDAN, Arts Award, BAGA Trampoline Awards and Duke of Edinburgh Award. Young people will also have a safe, welcoming, non-judgmental place to come, that is purely for them.

The youth work team provides a high quality Universal Service encompassing early intervention and Safeguarding. Young people can be referred to the service for engagement and intervention and we can make referrals to other specialist services as needed.

If anyone would like Youth Workers to engage with young people in their community/village/estate/establishment including any voluntary sector organisations-as one off sessions or regular ones, please contact Sally Willox on sally.willox@wiltshire.gov.uk

Young people's issues will from time to time be brought to the Area Board to be discussed and young people will present this. The YAG, Youth Advisory Group is the method for achieving this (as detailed above) where Young People can help shape services and activities for them within their community and to make improvements to these, as well as raise, debate and take action on issues that affect them and or are important to them. We also strive to empower young people to participate in local forums and community groups, like the BA13 Community Partnership, so that they can be involved and represent young people.

Either myself or a member of staff and young people will attend Area Boards to present a verbal update and participate.

We offer a busy programme of activities during school holidays too.

Regards, Sally Willox and Westbury YAG, April 2014

Locality Team Leader Youth Work for Westbury & Warminster, Integrated Youth Services

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