

Local Youth Network update for November 2014

Via Community Youth Officer for Devizes Community Area

The Community-led model for the provision of positive activities for young people was officially launched at the previous Area Board, on 29th September 2014 and this report highlights developments to date.

At the last Area Board there were a number of questions and comments in relation to this new model. The responses have been placed in the minutes and are also available in this agenda pack.

What has been happening in the Devizes Community Area?

- Informing the community about the new model, especially young people, through visiting clubs/organisations after school and evenings. Speaking with young people through local secondary schools too.
- Placing posters up throughout the community, town and villages, promoting the LYN, Local Youth Network and distributing flyers via schools and youth clubs/organisations.
- Engaging and consulting with young people to identify their needs and establish priorities, drawing on existing needs analysis including the JSA-Joint Strategic Assessment and Community Plan. Consultation achieved through visiting tutor groups/young people at secondary schools and through local clubs/organisations. Have collated comments and currently circulating questionnaires.
- Community mapping exercise to confirm what positive activities and opportunities are available to young people across the community area, updating Wiltshire Council's young people's website, Sparksite.co.uk.
- Developing the Local Youth Network (LYN) and the LYN task and management group, this sub group will receive, assess and make recommendations off funding applications for the positive activities for young people grant fund. The LYN will collate consultative information and develop a plan of young people's priorities for the Devizes Community Area.
- Developing a young people's LYN awareness event, planned for mid December or early January. The purpose being to fully engage young people so that they are central to identifying priorities and building on the opportunities available to them in their community.
- Introducing the Community Youth Officer role, new model and LYN to community organisations and Town/Parish, to raise awareness and develop positive partnerships.

- Being involved in developing a Facebook media site that the community can use to their benefit.

Throughout this first month, the main focus has been introducing the new model, my role and the Local Youth Network, as well as engaging with the community, especially young people, so that they are aware and their ideas/opinions are collated. This can then be fed into a plan that will identify priorities for young people across the Devizes Community Area, so that existing opportunities can be enhanced and/or new positive activities be developed. The Local Youth Network is the fundamental mechanism to achieve this and young people are central to this.

It will take considerable time to develop this but there has been a lot of positive support from the community, engagement and a desire to make it work for the best outcomes possible for young people.

The key themes coming through that young people wish to develop into positive activities are: art and music opportunities, as well as a drop in zone or youth café where they can socialise and talk with trusting adults, a 'gaming' youth club, weekend and school holiday positive activities specifically outdoor opportunities and specific activities for young people with additional needs and disabilities (SEND), with a focus on sport, both mainstream and alternative.

Young people are discussing ways to develop these ideas into activities and have/will be continuing to approach community providers to help with this. They will be working alongside the LYN task and management group to develop ideas too.

Anybody interested in becoming involved can contact sally.willox@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Providers of activities can become accredited through Wiltshire Council so that they are approved as a provider of positive activity for young people. They will also appear on a providers 'catalogue' so that they can be procured to provide activities for young people. This process is open now; please contact sally.willox@wiltshire.gov.uk for further information, as the window of opportunity closes shortly.

The Local Youth Network is open to all, so please become involved to enhance, shape and develop the Devizes Community Area for young people. If you have an idea that you would like to explore and develop, please contact the Community Youth Officer Sally Willox and Devizes Area Board for further information and support. If you would like to become a volunteer to deliver young people's activities, again please make contact. There is a process to follow for this, which involves support, training opportunities and how to apply for clearance to work with children and young people. Grant applications will be available online shortly for the positive activity for young people fund but hard copies are available now, please contact

Sally Willox. The Community Youth Officer is there to support the application process. The process will involve ensuring there are safeguarding policies in place, health and safety, risk assessments, trained volunteers/staff, DBS clearances, sufficient funding/means.

Regular updates will be available at each Devizes Area Board, through local media, school newsletters, the forthcoming Facebook group page, Devizes Community Matters website and Wiltshire Council's internet sites Sparksite.co.uk and wiltshirecouncil.gov.uk.

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