

Tidworth 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 Tidworth 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 Tidworth community area is:

- Promotion, recruitment and support for youth group setup in Ludgershall
- Further develop working with AWS
- Promotion of what is on offer

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. Tidworth area board have already awarded funding for year 2 but the area board is asked to agree what outcomes they would like to see. The CEM's recommendations are:

- I. To continue to support and help establish a youth offer in Ludgershall. 9 volunteers came forward at the open event held in March 22.
- II. To work with Yellow Brick Road and the police recognising that the young people move between Ludgershall and Andover.
- III. To work on joint projects with other community areas including pop up events and publicity so that we can maximise our resources locally
- IV. To work with Leisure Centre Manager and AWS to promote current activities and develop new ones
- V. To build up the network of local providers and stakeholders in order that we work closer together and support one another
- VI. To recruit and train volunteers and young leaders who can help run the provision
- VII. 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
- VIII. To consider how young people in the villages can access positive activities
- IX. To ensure that support and positive activities are available and accessible by all young people recognising that the area a higher than average (for Wiltshire) ethnic minority mix.

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

Tidworth Area

Young People engaged with	83
Total people engaged with	148
Number of Areas/locations	10
Referrals to Splash	3
Referrals to Building Bridges	1
Potential volunteers	1

Ludgershall	There was a need for a youth club here, but an ageappropriate space would be needed. Lots of people requested sessions for their children ages 11-17. Some said they wouldn't want it to be called a youth club. Wanted activities like darts, cooking, art, and music were popular.
Ludgershall Rec	Nets were needed at the rec for the goals and people want to make use of the space there too.
Chute	Teenagers here found nothing to do apart walks and going to the stables (if you are into horses) The lack of transport means having to rely on family; young people even must get taxis to school. There is nothing going on for teenagers, or younger people, even the pub has closed. The young people engaged with would like to attend a youth club/café if one was running and transport wasn't an issue.
Activ8	The Community Organisers met with Active8 on a couple of occasions, once when engaging with teenagers in Ludgershall rec, and have established an ongoing relationship for moving forward into phase 2; potentially for a youth club café.

<p>Leisure Centre and Hive</p>	<p>Engagement showed that there was a Youth club that ran at the Leisure centre called 'The Youth Zone' but it had stopped running after a volunteer stepping down and because one of the activities was climbing and they can't get another instructor. This ended the whole youth club. They also offered badminton and other similar activities. There was a mention of a need for a more social platform when advertising events at The Leisure Centre, as WOM is not reliable anymore and a Facebook and or Instagram presence is needed – especially when targeting youths.</p> <p>There is separate Youth Club run by the AWS (Army Welfare Service) run by Rachel Winter. Rachel gave great info about the Youth club, which had been running for 6 months and is for ages 11-18 and costs just £1 a session!</p> <p>This youth club is open to all children not just military. Continued engagement and enquiry revealed that the Youth Club is not well known about in the area, that may well be due to the 'newness' of it. The community organisers ensured that this was promoted when in Tidworth and it has had a very positive reception. Also said that the wheelchair basketball was missed.</p>
<p>Walk around with Pippa</p>	<p>Some young people were referred to PC Pippa to get ideas to improve the skate park. This data will be used to access improvement funding. Also committed to continue to work with the Community Organisers into phase 2</p>
<p>Tidworth & Shipton Bellinger</p>	<p>Popular ideas were cookery, music, and art- some even said about having a space that would allow them to teach each other guitar. (This came from some young people that were known as troublemakers in the community.)</p>
<p>Tidworth Youth Club</p>	<p>There is a newly established Youth Club run by The AWS (Army Welfare Service), although it has already grown in numbers, it was apparent that not many in the area knew about it. However, the news that there was such a club was greatly received and we handed out flyers with information on dates, times, cost, and activities. There were many questions asked about whether it was for Military children or Civilian children – the answer is both but we this seemed to be a common theme. Promotion of the Youth Club is key here. There is a younger Youth Club for ages 7-11 years, and this was oversubscribed with an impressive waiting list.</p>

Tidworth Military area	General feedback in Tidworth was that there was nothing for children of any age but particularly 11–18-year-olds to do. They just hang about in kids play parks or head to Ludgershall where they hang around on the rec.
	<p>A few families in the Military bases said, they don't even have the parks right (in terms of apparatus being age appropriate) which means the teenagers in Ashdown end up sitting in them and their language can be horrendous, they are quite aggressive and very intimidating to anyone asking them to move so younger children can use the park. They also kick a ball around which results in people shouting at them as the ball hits cars and people's front doors! No-one, especially the parents do anything! Military kids have lost all respect.</p> <p>A few do a Martial arts club, but this is after school (with the school) and some play football for Tidworth Town FC. Nothing for teenage girls at all. Lots of clubs stopped when covid hit and don't appear to have re-started. There isn't anything sport related and if there is you must commit – a few ad hoc activities would be a good idea.</p>
Collingbourne Ducis	In this area Community Organisers found a 22-yearold who showed an interest in volunteering for youth activities. she is also a freelance photographer and suggested a photography session if this is something the teenagers might be interested in

Ludgershall had the most interest and a direct need as there was a group that intimidate others in the community that could be reached by setting up a youth activity. It seems to be the place that young people travel to, to be with friends and this all gives good indication that a youth club would be well used and provide support. Those that didn't want to use a youth club did say that they would use the football pitches if there were nets.

The youth group in Tidworth run by the army is a good facility and fits with the needs described by the young people.