

Facts and Figures 2005/06

Priorities

The service works with young people between the ages of 10 and 25 years, with the priority age range being 13 to 19. The priorities for the service are:

- To enable young people to develop personal skills, social skills and high aspirations
- To involve young people in democracy and decision making
- To promote the social inclusion of young people
- To engage young people in new opportunities and challenging experiences
- To encourage young people to lead healthy lifestyles.

Targets

County youth service staff in Basingstoke district worked with 2,015 young people, 1,445 of whom were aged 13-19 years, equating to 11% of the target population. Of the 1,861 active participants in the service, 1,329 were 13-19 year-olds, which equates to 10% of the 13-19 population.

There were 9,299 recorded attendances at youth service units in Basingstoke district, of whom 7,462 were 13-19 year-olds. There were 73 recorded outcomes resulting from young people being involved with the service, equating to 4% of active participants. In total, four young people gained an accredited outcome, equating to 0.2% of the active participants.

The county youth service as a whole has exceeded the national benchmarks for reach and active participation, and recorded and accredited outcomes have significantly improved. This positive direction of travel is under-pinned by a robust system for the collection of the required data.

Management and range of youth work

The youth service is located in Hampshire County Council's Children's Services Department and strategic management of the service is the responsibility of the management team. Eleven district teams cover areas coterminous with district council boundaries and each team is led by a Senior Youth Worker. The service in Basingstoke district managed 12 different units and the range of work included youth centres, targeted group-work, detached work, mobile projects, inclusion projects, Duke of Edinburgh's Award groups and a whole host more.

Supporting youth work

The service in Basingstoke has six full-time, 21 part-time youth work posts and 12 volunteers. All youth service units in Basingstoke work with at least one other partner agency. The service provides a wide range of staff development opportunities for youth workers in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Promoting youth work

The service in Basingstoke district works in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector and has close working arrangements with the Borough, Town and Parish Councils.

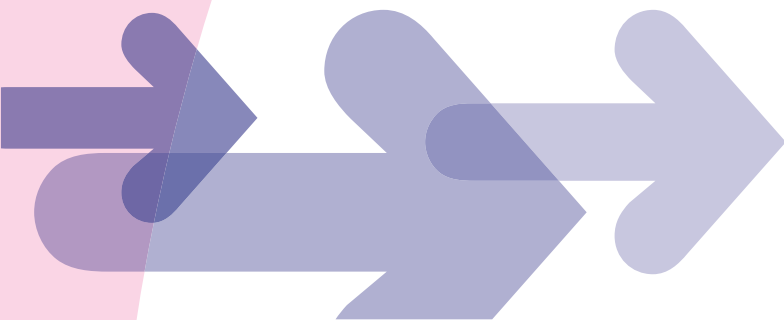
Financing youth work 2005/06

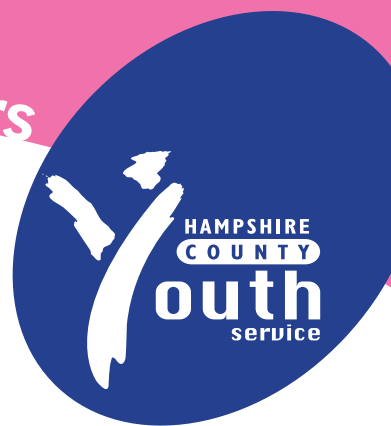
The Hampshire County Council delegated budget for the county youth service as a whole is £5.1 million; this equates to approximately £46 per 13-19 year-old living in Hampshire and £163 per 13-19 year-old involved in the service. The County Youth Service generated a total of £1.1 million of external funding.

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Foreword

Young people have so much to offer

– Chris Young, Senior Youth Worker



Welcome to our district annual report. The report reflects the range and variety of youth work undertaken across the district, youth work which provides the challenges, opportunities and encouragement young people need to reach their full potential.

The year saw the implementation of planned changes to the structure of the district team and an increase in staffing levels. These developments enabled the team to respond to the new county and district priorities while ensuring our high quality existing services continued to flourish. Successful new projects have been developed in rural communities and there has been a substantial increase in detached youth work.

Partnership working has been an important factor in increasing the level of our response to young people. Nearly all our projects involve one or more partner agency and there has been an increase in requests for youth work inputs into new multi-agency initiatives. There is growing recognition of the benefits that youth work skills can bring to a range of interventions and settings.

The quotes below indicate that the district team has listened to the voice of young people and responded to their needs and aspirations:

“We got lost, muddy, told stories and it was brilliant.”
– Duke of Edinburgh’s Award group.

“Young people have acquired new skills and interests.”
– Report on school inclusion project.

“It’s brightened this subway, I will use it now.” – Passer-by, youth arts project.

“We start our new course at Basingstoke College of Technology in September, never thought we would get there.” – Two young people from a targeted school inclusion group.

“When do we start building?” – A group of young people planning a new youth facility.

Feedback like this speaks for itself! I congratulate the whole staff team on the high quality of their work this year and on their positive and constructive plans for 2006–07.

Introduction

Malcolm Rittman, County Youth Officer

I am delighted to introduce you to the Hampshire County Youth Service Basingstoke district report for 2005-06. Our youth workers in Basingstoke are to be congratulated for the constructive and energetic way they have responded to the changing needs of young people. The Basingstoke team has ably demonstrated the wide range of skills and qualities needed to enable young people to make a positive contribution to their communities and to their own future.

This report gives a range of interesting examples of how county youth service staff in Basingstoke work in partnership with other agencies and make a significant contribution to young people achieving the five outcomes - staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well being.

There is much to do in the year ahead and the service in Basingstoke district is well placed to play a full and active part in delivering on the four challenges of the government Green Paper - Youth Matters:

1. Empowering young people – things to do and places to go.
2. Young people as citizens – making a contribution.
3. Supporting choices – information, advice and guidance.
4. All young people achieving – reforming targeted support.

There has never been such an interesting and exciting time to be involved in developing the high quality services young people require and deserve. I am looking forward to next year with optimism and to the birth of a new era in youth work in which every young person matters.



→ Young people have their say – Daniel finds his voice

Encouraging young people to participate in decision making processes is a fundamental part of youth work. The district youth work team heavily promotes young people's involvement in the UK Youth Parliament, Hampshire County Youth Council, Youth of Basingstoke Committee and local School Councils.

For example, at John Hunt of Everest Community School, youth workers have been working on various participation projects including a youth parliament competition. The competition required young people to debate a topic of their choice in a room set out like the House of Commons. The arguments for and against extending alcohol licensing hours were well put, and the debate was lively and interesting.

One young man stood out as being particularly skilled in putting his views forward. Daniel is an elected member of the School Council and has played a huge part in its successful development. Despite being one of the youngest people on the School Council, Daniel is highly respected by his peers. Daniel recently said:

"I enjoy the challenge of writing and delivering my speeches. In the parliament competition we all worked out our own speeches and we appreciated the encouragement of the local youth worker. Being part of the School Council makes us proud of our school."

→ Opportunity Knocks

It's OK to learn

The Opportunity Knocks (OK) project aims to reach young parents who feel excluded from other supportive services and organisations. The group meets weekly at a town centre venue and the programme evolves from discussions with the group members. During the past year the programme has covered a wide range of relevant issues and the young parents have developed valuable life-skills.

The major highlight of the year was the group's hosting of a successful Sharing Good Practice Conference for the Hampshire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership. Other successes included structured swimming sessions during which mother/baby relationships, and the physical fitness of the mothers, noticeably improved. Healthy eating workshops and advice on budgeting, also had a positive impact on the health and well being of the group members.

Red Cross instructors were invited to demonstrate emergency resuscitation techniques and they also provided certificated first aid training. Another accredited learning opportunity taken up by the group was linked to the Promoting Adult Learning (PAL) in the community project. PAL focussed on improving motivation and developing self confidence. The project finished with a short photography course and group members gave formal presentations.

Regular evaluation indicates that the group members consider the project to be a vital source of support, especially during difficult times.

→ Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Young people enjoy their achievements at the Open Award Centre

Over the winter months, participants in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award from all over the district met at the Basingstoke Open Award Centre to plan their expeditions, learn basic first aid and develop their teamwork skills. Then the spring arrived and it was time to put all that theory into practice!



Despite lots of rain and camping equipment swimming in mud, the young people enjoyed their practice expeditions and were really pleased with what they achieved. Below are examples of the feedback received:

"We walked through a bog and felt very adventurous, and we finished without help and no serious injuries!"

"We managed to navigate our route and found our way back to the path when we went wrong."

"By the end of the weekend I felt very satisfied with what we achieved."

"It was an amazing weekend and it gave me a positive outlook on life."

The Open Award Centre leader reflected on the expeditions and the feedback from young people, and summed things up by saying:

"It was fantastic, the young people tackled lots of difficult ground, showed good humour throughout and had lots of stories to tell."



→ School inclusion projects

Building portfolios of achievement

Youth workers involved in school inclusion projects in the district this year have worked with more than 30 young people known to be at risk of exclusion and under achievement. The youth workers and the young people worked together to develop their own activities, and the programmes are designed to enable young people to cope better in mainstream school.

The programmes included 60 hours of group work aimed at improving social skills and managing anger. Evidence of the learning outcomes was recorded in individual portfolios. Twelve of the portfolios proved to be good enough for young people to gain The Youth Achievement Award (YAA) at Bronze level.

An interesting feature of the project was the use of a token system devised by young people for rewarding achievements. Tokens were lost for unacceptable behaviour and the young people had to retain at least ten tokens to participate in an end of project visit to an outdoor education centre. They all managed to keep hold of the required number of tokens and enjoyed taking part in the challenging activities on offer at the centre.

During the evaluation of the project, young people reported feeling ready to face the challenges of returning to the mainstream school curriculum, and youth workers will follow up their progress in the months ahead.

→ Freedom Youth

Telling our story

The Our Story project gave members of Freedom Youth the opportunity to reflect on their experiences at important stages of their lives and on the development of their personal identity. These pivotal points included the first realisation that they could be lesbian, gay or bisexual, coming out to family and friends, and school experiences including bullying and sex education.

Appropriately trained youth workers provided a safe and supportive environment where members of Freedom Youth can express their thoughts and feelings, and learn from their own experience. Feedback showed that members of the group valued the Our Story sessions and the quotes below reflect some of the real issues and key moments they have faced in their lives:

"I realised I was 'different' from a very early age, but did not know what gay was until I was about 14/15 years old, and then thought – Oh that's me!"

"When my dad found out he told me that as soon as I was 16, I was out the door."

"I came out to friends at 16, but didn't tell my family until I was 18, the day before I went to university. My dad cried, and told me he was so proud of me and then I cried. My mum gave me a hug and told me that she kind of already knew – I think mums usually do."

→ Detached Work

A snapshot of detached youth work

"Oh great, now you're here I'll go and get Stevie, he said he would only come out if you two were here"

This is how two members of the detached youth work team were greeted on arriving at a green space, close to a local housing estate, where young people regularly congregate. Keen to build on such a positive start to the session, the workers set out the games equipment they had brought with them and an informal game of rounders soon began. Eighteen young people eventually joined in and, as regularly happens when detached workers engage young people in informal activities, numerous discussions began on issues raised by the young people.

One young man described how angry, frustrated and intimidated he felt after being ordered to leave the town centre for no reason that he could identify. This led to a wider discussion about anti-social behaviour, the measures that can be taken by Local Authorities to curb it, and how best young people might challenge actions they disagreed with and make constructive contributions to local debates. After thinking things through, the young man decided to write a letter to the local paper stating his point of view.

During the sessions that immediately followed, the youth workers distributed quizzes and questionnaires on the subject of anti-social behaviour, and the young people took part in a competition to design a poster informing young people about Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. By the time these sessions came to an end the group were much more aware of the possible consequences of anti-social behaviour and their rights and responsibilities, and it all began with a warm greeting and a game of rounders!

