

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 AUGUST 2016

YOUTH WORK AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

1. Background

The information provided below offers a broad overview of youth work projects in Angus which are directly supported or delivered by the Communities Service. It does not encompass all of the youth work that goes on in Angus. Specifically it excludes the significant contribution made by some of the traditional voluntary sector organisations which are well established and making a positive contribution to the lives of young people in the county.

The Communities Service directly delivers and enables a range of youth work provision which is intended to support young people's development. Its overall purpose is to:

'Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential'

(National Occupational Standards for Youth Work)

In Scotland, youth work is part of a broader strand of community learning and development activity that aims to improve life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship

The work described contributes to the lives of young people and communities in a number of ways-

- Provide positive opportunities to be engaged and involved in activity at times when there is greatest risk of becoming involvement in risky and less positive behaviour (e.g. Friday nights). This includes opportunities to associate with their peers in safe environments
- Offers opportunities to try new activities and experience success and achievement, thus contributing to the overall experience of education and learning
- Offers another arena in which young people can learn informally about a range of social topics and issues
- Creates opportunities for young people to engage with service providers and others and have influence on the decisions that affect their lives and those of the communities they live in
- Provides opportunities for young people to develop positive relationships with adults out with family settings and to develop their skills in forming and sustaining relationships more generally.

This is not an evaluative report; it simply provides information on current, recent and some planned youth work activity.

2. General Youth Work Activity

2.1 Friday Night Projects

Friday night projects run in Arbroath Forfar, Kirriemuir, Carnoustie, Montrose and Birkhill/Muirhead. There are plans to make provision in Brechin. This work is funded by Angus Council in 2016-17. Previously the funding has come from a Police and Fire Service Reserve fund that was given over to promote diversionary work. . The reported (combined) average weekly attendance at these projects is over 250.

Projects report a number of benefits to young people including reduction in alcohol related issues; reduced risk resulting from being in a safe secure space and not on the streets; improved transition to secondary school and increased confidence on the part of young people.

They also report benefits to the community through reduced anti-social behaviour and nuisance calls and young people being more engaged and involved.

2.2 Community-led Youth Work projects

There is a number of community-run youth work projects that make important contributions to youth work in Angus. They include:

- Forfar Drugs Initiative Group (The Pitstop) – provided 416 hours of youth work activity in 2015-16, with an average attendance of 35 young people on each night that they are open. The project reports a number of benefits to young people including gains in confidence, communication and ability to work with others. Also growth in self-belief and young people taking greater levels of responsibility for themselves and others
- Montrose YM Youth Café - delivered 144 hours in 2015-16, with an average attendance of 50 per week – biggest participating group 14-16 years. Young people attending report gains in confidence; communication; working together; literacy; communication; numeracy; it. The project receives positive feedback from the Police in relation to its impact on their work and the community.

The YM delivers a broader range of youth work under the terms of a Service Level Agreement with Angus Council Communities and this was positively evaluated in 2015-16. The SLA relates to the provision of the provision of both open and focused (music based) programmes. The YM also contributes to Opportunities for All by providing a location for contact with young people and through its own core activity.

- Café Project (Arbroath) provided 400 hours of youth work in 2015-16, attracting an average of 125 attendances per week. Young people participating report gains in confidence, communication, ability to work with others, literacy and numeracy
- Brechin Youth Project (The Attic) operates a 4 nights per week drop-in. In 2015-16 it reported 7200 attendances, averaging of 35 per night. There was an identifiable increase in the early part of 2016 to 47 per night. Young people report gains in confidence; communication, ability to work with others, literacy, numeracy, leadership, providing support to peers with additional needs. In 2015-16 young people 10 young people attending The Attic achieved Saltire Awards. The project works well with a range of local partners – Police; Fire Service (Young Fire Fighters); SPS; NHS (health sessions); WEB ; Scouts; Council

All four projects work in partnership with local agencies and receive practical (as necessary) and financial support from Angus Council Communities Directorate.

In addition to these four funded projects, The Basement in Letham and Frickheim Youth Club make provision for local young people and receive support from the Communities Service.

2.3 Young Scot

There are currently 14,729 Young Scot Card holders in Angus, which compares well with Dundee (13,089) and Perth and Kinross (15, 143).

Young Scot Rewards has been piloted in Angus and is now being expanded incrementally. There are now 767 reward users in Angus and this has been achieved with relatively low levels of promotion. There are plans in place to grow this over time and link rewards to outcomes and desired behaviour changes.

2.4 Give it a Go Funding

The Communities Service of the Council funds the Give it a Go scheme, which is administered by the Public Protection and Enforcement Team (community safety). This scheme is designed to enable a range of agencies, including community run organisations, to provide youth work, sporting, arts and other activities – either as tasters, short programmes or enhancements to existing programmes. In 2015-16 21 projects were funded and a reported 1283 young people participated in activities supported through the Give it a Go Funding. This fund will run again in 2016-17.

2.5 Fire Academy

Fire Academy is a well-established partnership initiative which is in its 12 year of operation. It targets young people with a history of offending, particularly in relation to fire and fire setting and has demonstrated impact consistently over the period:

- Positive relationships developed between young people, Scottish Fire and Rescue , Police Scotland, Communities Staff and Tayside Council on Alcohol Staff
- Young people gain a better understanding and more respect for the role of a firefighter.
- Young people gain skills in teamwork, in particular communication and negotiating skills.
- Young people develop a greater understanding of the dangers and risks associated with fire and joyriding.
- Young people develop a sense of achievement.
- Young people gain skills in leadership

The 10 year evaluation completed in 2014 showed that over the 10 years 50% of young people involved in the project had never reoffended beyond Fire Academy. Since 2014 the project has extended over the year to try and raise this figure even further. It is too early to see long term impact of this extended work. However, evaluation from 2015 showed very positive initial outcomes of young people where young people were able to articulate positive social and personal learning outcomes they felt they had achieved as well as a greater sense of community safety issues, which was also backed up by staff observations from youth work and Fire safety staff.

2.5 Street Work

The Communities Service operates some street work programmes, as resources permit and in response to need. There is currently a regular programme of street work running in Hillview (Brechin) and in Arbroath. Programmes utilise information provided by Police Scotland to help plan and target their activities. This work was initiated as a result of work with community safety colleagues where hot spots were identified in each area. This allows youth work staff to target specific areas. As a result we have seen a reduction in hot spot areas in the centre of Arbroath last year.

2.6 Assist Programme

A youth worker is employed by the Communities Service, funded by NHS Tayside to support the delivery of the ASSIST smoking prevention programme. All eight Angus secondary schools are now engaged with this programme.

2.8 Transition Work

There are transition programmes operating for young people about to move from primary to secondary school in seven of the eight secondary school clusters. These vary in their focus and nature, but all seek to support successful transition for targeted groups of young people. Evaluations show that this input has had an initial positive benefit for young people involved. Learning outcomes identified are – more positive relationships with peers and greater awareness of youth services.

2.9 After School Programmes

The Communities Service is supporting after school/tea time clubs for primary aged pupils in all eight cluster areas. These form part of the overall transition programmes and extend the work of helping young people to build relationships with peers, gain further support around any particular issues in going up to secondary and other personal skills such leadership skills and life skills. This evidenced throughout all programmes.

2.10 Work in and with Schools

Communities Service staff are engaged in youth work activity in and associated with all eight Angus secondary schools.

- The Service manages the Council's Duke of Edinburgh Award Operating Authority and provides support to volunteers in and out of school on the operation of the award. Outdoor Education staff in ANGUSALive also provide technical support and advice in relation to the outdoor and residential elements of the programme.
- Health Drop-ins – The Communities Service works with young people's health workers and school staff to support health drop-ins in all eight Angus secondary schools. These operate on either a weekly or fortnightly basis and are successful in providing information and engaging young people in dialogue around health issues.
- In the 2015-16 academic year the service led a peer education initiative in Forfar Academy, working with S3 pupils to develop and deliver (to S1 pupils) on aspects of health and personal safety. 10 peer educators delivered to 180 S1 pupils through this programme. This work has been positively evaluated by school staff and participants.
- In Kirriemuir the Service has worked with another partner agency to deliver the Dynamics Programme with 13 young people.
- In Arbroath High School staff have delivered a leadership and volunteering programme and supported the ECO group to gain Dynamic Youth Awards. There is also a youth exchange group called #Destination targeting young people from low income households to take part in a programme of activity with the aim of raising aspirations and giving young people the opportunity to work on a project with young people from another European country. Initial evaluation from the group is very positive, showing a marked increase in confidence in some young people and overall an increase in young people's skills in planning and organising.
- In Arbroath Academy there are a number of groups including an outdoor learning group, lunchtime group for Young Carers, support to the pupil council and also has young people involved in the youth exchange group. All are showing positive outcomes. In particular the outdoor learning group, which is targeted at young people who may not be achieving at school, is showing very positive outcomes where young people's behaviour at the group has dramatically improved and they are taking on leadership roles.
- In Monifieth High and Carnoustie High Schools the communities service is delivering outdoor learning activity to small groups of pupils that are not engaging, or are at risk of not engaging with school. John Muir award activities were also delivered to P7s of Seaview Primary School earlier this year which proved popular and we are looking to work with other primary schools in the locality.
- In Montrose Academy the communities service operated an anger management group with five boys experiencing difficulty. It is also delivered Dynamic Youth Awards to young people with significant additional support needs

- In Brechin High School communities staff has ran a life skills course for 7 young people who they developed and implemented their own learning programme. As a result all the young people felt more confident in working as a team and are able to plan and organise events.

All of this work is currently being reviewed with schools with a view to evolving and developing appropriate engagement in the 2016-17 academic year.

2.11 Youth Volunteering

Angus Council funds Voluntary Action Angus through a service level agreement to support volunteering for young people, including the promotion and administration of Saltire Awards.

2.12 Rock Challenge

Angus Schools again participated in the 2016 Rock Challenge, with £12,000 funding from the Communities Directorate. In total 473 young people took part; 162 were of primary age and 311 attend secondary school. Benefits reported by young people and others include improved relationships with staff; reduced substance misuse in participating schools; positive impact on attendance; behaviour change resulting from positive peer pressure and impact on confidence and core skills

2.13 Focused or Activity Community Programmes

A range of community based youth work programmes are supported by the communities service, including:

- Music and art groups in Kirriemuir and Montrose (in Montrose the is supported through the SLA with YM Montrose)
- Art groups in Arbroath and Carnoustie
- Youth Exchange Group – a small group of young people from low income families who are being supported towards participating in a youth exchange when a suitable partner group can be secured

3. Youth Engagement Activity

3.1 Charrette Programme

Since February 2015 Angus Council has commissioned and supported 6 charrettes focused on developing long term vision and strategy for towns and town centres. Children and young people have been important participants in all charrettes, with their involvement varying from engagement in pre-charrette activity to making presentations at charrette plenary sessions:

- **In Brechin** – workshops were held at Brechin High School and pupils at Maisendieu Primary undertook work in school and presented directly to the charrette presentations.

The development of a wheeled sports facility was a major issue arising from the charrette and a group of young adults and young skaters remain involved in that work

- **In Carnoustie** a programme of workshops ran in Carnoustie High School during the charrette in March 2015 and over 100 young people attended a follow-up event one year after the original charrette
- **In Arbroath** 60 young people took part in pre-charrette workshops and a small number of senior pupils attended workshops during the charrette
- **In Montrose** five primary and one secondary school workshop were held in the lead up to the charrette and 25 pupils and their teachers participated in a workshop on the opening day of the charrette
- **In Forfar** a small group of senior pupils participated in workshops during the charrette. Young people attending the Pitstop Youth café also contributed to the event by decorating the

“charrette shop” and supporting catering. Young musicians from DD8 performed on the opening day of the charrette

- **In Monifieth** young people participated in pre-charrette workshops, taken part in a “kite making and flying” workshop and performed at the charrette launch event on 2 June 2016

In all of this activity the contribution of young people to imagining the future of their towns has been recognised and supported. Their contributions have added significantly to thinking and had influence.

3.2 Locality Community Planning Events

In 2015, Angus Council convened four open space events inviting partners in each of the four Angus Community Planning Partnership locality areas to consider what collective action needs to be taken to improve outcomes for people living in those areas. In all four cases young people from the respective secondary schools engaged with public and community sector partners in a dialogue about what matters and participated in a priority setting process.

3.3 Youth Work Planning Event

In September 2014 a youth work planning event was held at Webster’s Theatre bringing together around 50 young people from across Angus, 35 Community planning partner representatives and funders. This event drew on research undertaken by young people, a survey of youth work providers and background data about Angus. The outputs from the event were used to inform a SWOT analysis of youth work in Angus, in relation to the National Youth Work Strategy, which in turn informed the development of the Angus CLD Plan.

3.4 Scottish Youth Parliament

There are currently two active Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) for Angus; the third seat fell vacant as a result of a withdrawal and will be filled when the next round of elections take place in the autumn of this year. The sitting candidates are actively supported by the Communities Service to take part in sittings of the parliament and to be active on local issues.

Early in 2016 young people, including MSYPs were supported to meet with local MPs and MSPs as part of the Youth Work Changes Lives Campaign. The purpose of these meetings was to present a youth work manifesto to members and discuss youth work provision in Angus.

3.5 Scottish Rural Parliament

Work is currently underway to encourage and support young people to engage actively with the Scottish Rural Parliament which is taking place in Brechin in October 2016. Workshops took place to generate opinions that will inform the Scottish Rural manifesto which in turn will be the focus of debate at the parliament. There is a commitment in place to hold an Angus-wide event in September 2016, drawing young people from all eight Angus secondary schools to consider the Manifesto (which will have been published by that time) and feed the views of Angus young people in to the parliament.

3.6 Brechin Youth Action

The Brechin Youth Action Group is actively engaged in mapping mental health concerns in the area. The group is also working with NHS staff to improve the Cool2Talk website.

3.7 Brechin Campus Ambassadors and Think Tank

Children and young people in Brechin have been actively engaged in activities to promote the new community campus and identify ways in which all members of the community can benefit from the facility. This work has been supported by school staff, partners and members of the community. The

Think Tank continues to meet and is considering next steps, including active involvement with the upcoming Scottish Youth Parliament.

3.8 Arbroath Youth Council

This group is recently established and still working to find the focus for its work. The local MSYP has been a catalyst in the establishment of the group.

3.9 Arbroath Friday Niite Project

Some of the young people attending the Arbroath Friday Nite project have been supported to establish a small enterprise which generates funds that can be used to enhance the programme, by bringing in new activities that cannot be afforded through the core budget.

3.10 Inspire Group

The Inspire journalist and media group was initiated 3 years ago with the aim of giving ownership of the content of the local pages of the National Young Scot youth information portal. The young people have to take part in a recruitment process and are offered up to 6 weeks of training. In its 3rd year now, the young people have progressed to taking full ownership with a previous member now moving in to a youth work volunteering position within the group.

National Young Scot has recognised the work of this group and feedback from them suggests that there is no other portal in Scotland being led to this extent by young people.

4. Pride in Place

4.1 Litter Campaigns

Young people at Forfar Academy participated in a positively evaluated litter campaign in 2015, which led to improvements in recycling practices and initial reductions in littering in the community in areas adjacent to the school. Although there has been some fall back in the littering levels, young people continue to engage actively in this work, with support from school staff, Council services and a local elected member.

A similar project has been developed at Arbroath High School where pupils and staff are working to achieve a sustained reduction to littering behaviour. This work is linking in to the more formal curriculum wherever possible. The initiative will expand to include students from Dundee and Angus College.

Children at an Angus primary school have been supported to create a short video (litter song) that will now be used as a resource with their peers across Angus.

A Pride in Place Award Scheme has been created to recognise the contributions which schools, youth and children's organisations are making to develop a sense of pride in their community. The award is in its early stages of implementation, but has been tested successfully and will now be promoted more actively.

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