



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# B302

## **Rural Area Working Party 18 November 2010**

### **St Edmundsbury's Rural Youth Work Programme**

#### **SUMMARY**

This Report provides the Working Party with an update about the various activities, events and projects which have been delivered for young people over the past twelve months which form part of St Edmundsbury's Rural Youth Work Programme. It also provides an evaluation of the rural youth work project, 'WOS UP', which is now in its third year.

The Borough Council is committed to improving the quality of life of young people within the community and to promoting the involvement of young people. The Youth and Community Development Officer will give a presentation at the meeting reporting on all the rural youth projects that have been happening and will outline options for the Rural Youth Work Programme 2011.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to provide the Working Party with information about the rural youth work programme and outline the future of the programme for members of the working party.

The range of activities which form part of the programme throughout the year make a significant contribution to the Council's corporate priorities, in particular around improving the wellbeing of the community. The Working Party is invited to make comments and suggestions as to how the programme of activities could be improved in the future and provide feedback about the activities of the past twelve months.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Borough Council works in partnership to deliver a wide range of youth work activities throughout the year. This report updates the Working Party on the work which has been completed in the last twelve months as a part of the Rural Youth Work Programme.

## **2. Partnership working**

- 2.1 A key part of the Rural Youth Work Programme's success in previous years has been that the projects it has funded have been developed with the input of existing groups, partner organisations and members of the community to offer a variety of activities and projects to young people.
- 2.2 St Edmundsbury works with a number of organisations to develop projects which improve the quality of life for young people in the more rural areas. Projects are usually delivered with smaller groups of young people to tackle specific issues. Often projects can help to address community safety, anti-social behaviour, health improvement and skills development.
- 2.3 Suffolk County Council is one of the main partners which the Borough Council works with. In the light of the County's New Strategic Direction there are significant changes expected in Children and Young People Services. These will potentially impact upon the kind of projects on which the two authorities collaborate to provide services and projects for young people in St Edmundsbury. Although there will be an impact on rural youth work the effects are likely to be felt the most in Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds.
- 2.4 There is currently limited information available about Suffolk County Council's New Strategic Direction. Officers will keep members informed as changes develop.
- 2.5 With the Introduction of the 'Big Society' it is anticipated that future youth work in the rural areas will have more of a local focus working with local groups providing projects for young people in their localities. This has been an ongoing ambition of the Rural Youth Work Programme but future work will place more emphasis upon this element of youth development.

## **3. Involvement and consultation**

- 3.1 All of the projects that formulate the Rural Youth Work Programme have been developed through consultation with young people individually or as a group. We have tried not to limit the activities and projects on offer to young people in the rural areas.

## **4. Rural Youth Work Programme Projects**

- 4.1 Clare Youth Club – BMX Maintenance Sessions

After a successful project in 2009 at Clare Youth Club, St Edmundsbury funded a second BMX maintenance course in 2010 which took place over the Summer term. The course ran over 6 sessions and encouraged the young people to use their bikes more and keep them road worthy.

#### 4.2 Transport for central activities

St Edmundsbury has worked with local organised groups of young people to arrange free transport to the more centralised activities such as the Skate JAM. We have continued to offer this provision but there has been no up take from local established groups. With the secondment of the Youth and Community Officer there were limited opportunities to develop transport initiatives this year but the option to provide transport remains, within the constraints of the available budget.

#### 4.3 On the Spot Youth Van

The On the Spot Youth Van came into service in Haverhill in May 2010 after receiving considerable external funding. The project currently operates 3 nights a week in Haverhill. In the New Year the Youth and Community Officer will be working with Parish Councils to recruit volunteers to take the van out to Villages in the Haverhill area, hopefully Hundon, Kedington and Clare. Volunteers will have to complete Basic Youth Work Training and Van induction sessions.

### 5. **Wos Up Project 2010**

#### 5.1 'WOS UP' Mobile Youth Provision

'Wos Up' is the name for a detached youth work provision delivered in rural areas. In partnership with SCA (Supporting Contemporary Adolescence) it is a mobile provision that works with young people. A 'Warrior' 4 x4 vehicle has visited a number of villages. Sports equipment, a tuck shop, DJ equipment, and a mobile media suite have proved popular with young people.

In 2010 SCA were given more of the project management responsibilities which included programming the villages and making the key contacts in the localities. This change happened because of increased capacity within SCA through receiving central government funding and it provided a logical solution given the secondment of the Youth and Community Development Officer who had previously provided project management.

#### 5.2 Communication and Publicity

Communication and publicity responsibility was given to SCA to coordinate for this year's programme. The Project Manager from SCA ensured that all local parties concerned were aware of the project coming to their locality in advance. This included local police, Parish Councils, local youth clubs, village shops amenities and schools.

#### 5.3 Villages covered

In 2010 the project has been operating in nine villages: Barrow, Barningham, Ixworth, Hundon, Gt Welnetham, Kedington, Stradishall, Stanton and Wickhambrook. This is an increase of three villages on 2009 where five villages formed the main programme over the Spring and Summer and then a sixth village received an pilot series of sessions in the Autumn. To allow the extension of the programme it operated in blocks of six sessions per village on consecutive weeks whereas in 2009 the blocks were of 12 weeks. Stanton received an additional six

week block of sessions as the village which received the highest attendance figures in the first block of sessions.

In total in 2010 SCA delivered 60 Wos Up sessions over 9 villages (Stanton being visited twice) in six week blocks between May and September. This compares to 60 sessions delivered to five villages in 12 week blocks in the main 2009 programme which was then supplemented with a further 6 week block of session in Wickhambrook to pilot the six week session approach.

#### 5.4 Attendance Statistics

The 'Wos Up' project in 2010 engaged with 541 Young People aged 12 – 19 primarily. This is compared to 924 Young People in 2009. The lower attendance figures would suggest this was due to spreading the project amongst more villages but for shorter periods this had a significant effect on the numbers of young people accessing the service.

#### 5.5 Village statistics

<b>Village</b>	<b>Total Number of Young People</b>
Barrow	89
Barningham	46
Ixworth	19
Kedington	23
Stanton	148
Wickhambrook	50
Stradishall	5
Gt Welnetham	82
Hundon	79
<b>Total:</b>	<b>541</b>

#### 5.6 Wos Up Expenditure paid to SCA2010

<b>Project</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Youth Workers	5103
Vehicle Costs inc. Mileage, Fuel, Insurance, Maintenance.	3101
Project Coordination/ Management	375
Volunteer Costs	181.51
Publicity costs	500
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£9260.51</b>

#### 5.7 Wos Up Expenditure paid to SCA 2009

<b>Project</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Youth Workers	4971.75
Vehicle Costs inc. Mileage, Fuel, Insurance, Maintenance.	2812
Admin Support	236.25
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£8020.00</b>

## 5.8 Partnership working

Partnership working between SCA and St Edmundsbury on this particular project has been time consuming, information provided to officers has not always been accurate or provided in a timely way.

The Youth and Community Development Officer had asked for better recording mechanisms for young people accessing the service. SCA were also asked for evidence of young people being consulted about the service delivery.

These are issues which would need to be addressed in any future working relationship.

## 6. Rural Youth Work Programme Budget

- 6.1 The current budget is £10,600 per year. £9,500 has been spent, with the remaining £1,100 allocated for volunteer recruitment, training, fuel and costs to take the On The Spot Project to Kedington, Hundon and Clare.

## 7. Future Options

- 7.1 St Edmundsbury has now been funding the 'Wos Up' Project for three years, this is a natural time to evaluate the project and determine options for the future shape of the Rural Youth Work Programme.

Although there are some very successful aspects of the Wos Up project, such as the extent of the service being offered to engage with young people. It has, however, been disappointing to see a drop in the third year attendance statistics.

## 8. Recommendations for the future

- 8.1 It is hoped to continue and develop the Rural Youth Work Programme in 2011, building on the learning and partnership working from the last three years. Some recommendations for the future shape of the project are given below and the comments of the Working Party on these suggestions would be welcomed.
- 8.2 Members are asked to consider if they want St Edmundsbury to continue to fund the 'Wos Up' Mobile Provision. If members wish to continue funding improvements would need to be made to address the decrease in numbers of young people accessing the service and on delivery and recording.
- 8.3 The option also exists to explore joint commissioning for rural youth work with Forest Heath District Council. Forest Heath has been funding the Wos Up project since 2009 and is also reviewing the provision. This approach would result in a number of providers, SCA included, being invited to tender to provide mobile youth services in the two districts.
- 8.4 Officers will also continue to work with partners and existing groups to develop innovative rural projects.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 The Working Party's views on the Rural Youth Work Programme 2011 are requested.

### **Contact Details**

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