

*"I have changed, I am more confident and happier"*



**Isle of Wight**

**Active 8's Summer Transition Programme 2006**

**Evaluation Report**



# **Active 8's**

## **Summer 2006 Transition Project**

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Active 8's pilot programme was developed through the identified need to provide a summer holiday activity programme to support year 8 pupils in their transition from Middle to High School. It was particularly aimed at those who were most at risk from exclusion, in need of additional support or had challenging behaviour. The programme had a universal offer open to anyone in that year and a targeted intensive element which was aimed at those most in need. The intensive element places were offered through a referral process, either through schools, parents or self referral.
- 1.2 The programme was funded by the Extended Schools Programme and delivered by the Isle of Wight Youth Service. This partnership programme supported both the Extended Schools agenda, through the core elements (*varied menu of activities*) and the Youth Service, through the Youth Matters agenda (*places to go, things to do*). This joined up working also supported the development of the emerging Children and Young Peoples Plan and Trust, and the 5 outcomes.

### **2.0 Programme**

- 2.1 Through using existing consultation and joint working with the Youth Service since August 2005, a varied programme of activities was created. This programme initially included a large range of activities across the Island based at a number of Youth Centres including: circus skills & carnival, song writing, heritage courses, car mechanics/bo-karting, fishing, sports activities, working within the youth service and an intensive residential programme. This programme of activities ran across the 6 weeks of the summer holiday July/August 2006.

### **3.0 Marketing**

- 3.1 Advance notice of the programme was given to Middle Schools in Jan 2006. A letter went to all middle Head teachers and year 8 leaders, the special school and the two Pupil Referral Units in April inviting them to an information evening in May. At this evening the programme and an outline of the activities was given and members of the Youth Service attended to build relationships with the schools. Further to this, communication with every middle school head was carried out electronically to distribute the programme details again and explain the booking process. It was intended that each Middle school would promote the universal offer to all year 8 pupils, target and refer those most at need/risk, and administer its own pupils booking onto the courses, by completing booking forms and taking payments. These would then be sent through to the Youth Service for central collation for all schools on the Island.
- 3.2 By early July when the booking process was about to close, it was clear that very few places had been taken. To promote the programme further an additional advert was taken out in the IW County Press. This did generate additional applications for places, although it did push the closing date for applications back, which generated additional issues. By the end of the revised deadline it was clear that a number of activities would not run due to low levels take up.

### **4.0 Delivery**

- 4.1 Due to the numbers of young people who booked places on the programme only around half of the devised activities actually took place. The following pages are the evaluative summary of the programme and the activities that took place. One thing is clear from this pilot programme; although the number of participants was not high, the impact of the programme was extremely positive, especially on those targeted young people on the intensive residential project.

## **5.0 Evaluation**

5.1 The following is a summary of evaluation from the young people who participated, the youth service leaders who organised activity and from all other individuals involved in the project, including the Extended Schools team.

## **6.0 Participants**

6.1 There has been nothing but positive feedback from all the young people who took part. They all enjoyed the activities, had fun, made new friends, had new experiences and learnt new skills.

6.2 Those young people on the intensive programme are now being discreetly tracked as they progress through their first term in year 9. Already youth workers have been involved in supporting these young people with issues they have to make sure they continue to enjoy and achieve within school.

6.3 It is clear from the individual self evaluations from the intensive programme that the memory of their participation will stay with those individuals forever. The impact of this programme cannot be under estimated and is hard to capture in a few words. It is best described through the words of the young people who participated; a summary of these is included at the end of this report.

6.4 Transport for young people is now much less of an issue with the introduction of the 50p bus fare.

6.5 Some of those young people on the car maintenance course found these new skills could lead to future training and employment, and even save them money when they are older as they would be able to carry out their own maintenance.

## **7.0 Activity Leaders**

7.1 The extension of the deadline for applications did cause problems for activity leaders. This had an impact on activity booking for other venues and the commitment of part time staff who would otherwise forfeit other income. Any changes with deadlines and activity must be clearly communicated to all those involved to avoid disappointment.

7.2 In future to be fairer to all part time staff involved, a contract with cancellation clauses needs to be drawn up. However this may affect the individuals willing to commit to activity. It might mean they do not gain the level of income originally anticipated, which could result in them finding more reliable work elsewhere.

7.3 Late referral, lacking of information regarding individuals referred and changes in deadlines caused issues at all levels, especially for the intensive programme.

7.4 Pressures and commitment of the activities, especially the intensive element, on staff need to be appropriately planned and managed to make sure all are prepared for the expected challenges.

7.5 As a result of this programme significant relationships have been made between youth service staff and other children's service professionals. These developments will improve the working practices and relationships between these professionals supporting young people they all work for.

- 7.6 A central lead officer, who has the time commitment and experience to lead and co-ordinate this whole programme is an essential element, which was missed from this pilot.

## **8.0 Programme**

- 8.1 The breadth and variety of programme did not run in its entirety, this needs to be examined for future developments. Was the issue more to do with marketing and communication rather than the programme itself? And or does the programme need to be worked up in closer consultation with young people? In reality a bit of both will need to be employed in terms of future Active 8 programmes.
- 8.2 A booking deadline needs to be determined in collaboration with all providers and their subsequent bookings and staff commitments. This needs to be set early on, stuck to and communicated to all partners from the outset.
- 8.3 There needs to be a clear delineation between the open offer of activities and the referral element of the intensive programme. This needs to be clear for all involved and those marketing the programme.

## **9.0 Marketing & Communication**

- 9.1 It may be no surprise to some that like many issues faced in all environments, effective, clear and co-operative two-way communication is central to success. This partnership project was severely effected by break downs in communication and marketing.
- 9.2 Middle schools in the clear majority failed to communicate and promote this programme to their year 8 pupils. Whether this was in part due to them not understanding it and the process, is not known. The initial uptake on the introduction evening was poor and all subsequent communications to schools failed to generate anywhere near the number of bookings that could have been taken.
- 9.3 It is clear that any future programmes success lies in the individual activity leaders and lead officers selling this directly to schools and young people. This could be done as part of an ongoing exercise for Youth leaders to get to know their local young people in year 8 throughout the year in PSHE time and school assemblies. This will not only help to promote the active 8s programme but also the Youth Service in general. Once these positive relationships has been made, communication and involving them in activities will be more effective.
- 9.4 A clear and effective marketing campaign for this programme needs to be developed early on so that information can be drip fed through to schools and young people at an early stage and build on existing positive relationships.

## **10.0 Administration**

- 10.1 Clearly the administration of this project could have been quite time consuming, however due to the low numbers of take up in this pilot stage it was not. Clear planning and involvement of a central administrator is essential to make sure a seamless service is on offer to those enquiring and booking on any subsequent programmes.
- 10.2 Clear roles and responsibilities need to be established at the outset, with a clear and simple admin and booking process in place. By effectively splitting the roles between

schools and the youth service in this pilot year made things messy and over complicated. By having a single tier of administration and point of contact, schools will have no admin role and the process should be clearer for all.

- 10.3 The administrator needs to be involved in the whole process from day one, so they have a complete knowledge of the programme and all personnel involved.

## **11.0 In summary**

- 11.1 This pilot project did not achieve the involvement of the numbers of young people initially planned for, it did however have a big impact on those young people who participated. The intensive programme has deeply impacted on the lives of those challenging young people and their own self evaluations show this. All young people who participated had an enjoyable time, making new friends, learning new skills, taking part in challenging activities and making positive starts in their new High Schools.
- 11.2 Clear and effective leadership and communication of the whole programme, combined with building positive relationships with young people and teaching staff in year 8 throughout the Island will make for a more effective take up of future programmes.
- 11.3 Schools did not engage fully in this pilot project and to allow any subsequent programmes to be more successful schools will have to engage in a more supportive way. This could be just through allowing youth workers more access to young people and supporting effective relationships to be formed. In parallel to this youth workers would need to proactively try to build relationships with middle schools and local young people in year 8.
- 11.4 Through this pilot new positive relationships have been built between youth service staff and other children's service personnel to enable more effective targeted provision for young people.
- 11.5 A well planned and consulted programme of activity is prepared in advance, with all bookings, insurance, permissions, parental consents etc all in place in advance of the activities starting.
- 11.6 Clearer communication and publicity both internal and external should make the understanding, take up and promotion of activities and the programme known to a much wider audience. Utilising the support and expertise of the Childrens Service's communications and PR officer may improve results.

## **12.0 Activity**

- 12.1 The following pages are a summary of the activities that took place and have all been written by the Youth Service leaders who ran the activities.

# Song Writing

## Ryde Youth Centre: Stuart Capewell



*"I can now write about anything and not boring topics"*

*"Nothing could have made it better really"*

*"I learnt the mind map for songs"*

Ryde Youth Centre planned to deliver two four day workshops around song writing. At the point of the original deadline no young people had been referred. After the advert in the county press I received one phone call from a parent of a young person who was interested but was too young, just finishing year six.

*"Thanks ever so much for running the song writing course! It was so much fun & I am currently halfway through a song about a Led Zeppelin poster!"*

I then made the decision to run one three day workshop, specifically for that young person and some of his friends, but also to make it available to any late comers from year eight. In between this and starting the course I received three year eight referrals from Ventnor Youth Centre, and one year eight referral from a parent.

The actual course ran with only two young people, one being the young person going into year seven and the other a year eight referred by their parent. The course, though small, seemed appropriate and the young people had 100% attendance and were on time each day. I really enjoyed running the course and would like to run similar courses in future years.

*"I have learnt new tricks and techniques of writing songs."*

*"At last, it's finished, I'm on top of the world."*

# Car Maintenance & Bo-karts

## Newport Youth Centre: Robin Brigstock



*"Always got help when required"*

*"Enjoyed scheme and driving them"*

*"Learning technical bits"*

*"Fix breaks etc"*

*"Staff listened to us"*

The motor vehicle maintenance with building off road go carts was booked out before any other course. The only problem with this course was that the second course was being run during the last week of school holiday with the client group not taking up any other activities.



By the end of the holidays parents and clients had forgotten that they had committed themselves to the course. Some of the young people had got into a holiday spirit and one young person who did turn up and spent two hours with us said it was too much like school, he was on holiday and didn't want to attend. I was able to contact one of the reserves who did the last two days with us and one of the original group, who had been ill over the bank holiday, came in for the last three days.



The first course ran fully booked and was very successful with only one problem with getting a site to test the off road go cart on but due to parent intervention we were able to use an alternative venue which was highly successful, but it was a shame that they moved within two weeks and we can no longer access them in the future. Another alternative was found for the second week which proved highly successful and we are in further negotiation for use in the future. (Confirmation has been received from the farmer to use his field)

We are planning to use bo-karts with young people to give them experience of driving off road and the only hold up of putting this into practice is the finding of enough farmers to use their fields. We are hoping to link the use of them with some sessions to experience basic vehicle maintenance with the last session of actually driving the bo-karts.

# Fishing

## Newport Youth Centre: Robin Brigstock

*"Learnt to tie knots, put my rod together, be patient and learnt a lot in general"*

*"It was enjoyable and I learned how to catch a fish"*

The first fishing course had five of the six places filled, yet again, one of the young people forgetting that he was doing the course and missed the first day. With this course we offered sea and coarse fishing but due to the planned sea fishing programme, except for the first day, being cancelled due to the weather conditions. One of the young people didn't complete the last two days because we found out later that he was only interested in the sea fishing. The other four young people completed the course and, after negotiating the rest of the course, was spent fresh water fishing.



Due to there being no take up for the last course I wrote to the four candidates that had finished the first course to see if they wished to take up those places on the course, three of them accepted and these three enjoyed another weeks fishing with us. Due to the enthusiasm of these three young people I have now been able to form a fresh water fishing club based at the centre and we have a regular appointment to go fishing as a group on the first Saturday of each month.



I attended a committee meeting of the local fresh water angling association who have offered me free use of their facilities for up to ten young people to fish so long as I have two fishermen to oversee them. I have to report back to the committee in January to let them know how it has gone and I am looking for other young people to join this group so that the equipment and expertise that we are building up is not being wasted.



# Sports, Arts and Music

## Cowes Youth Centre: Darren Poplett



The Cowes Active 8's Summer Programme provided a number of activities ranging across sports, arts and music. The programme took place Monday to Friday for the four weeks from 8.45am – 1.15pm. There were three days, which didn't go ahead during the four weeks due to lack of numbers.



There were a total of 7 young people who booked on the programme, however only 6 of these attended the programme consisting of 4 males and 2 females. These six young people including one young person with severe learning difficulties took part in a multitude of activities. These are listed below:

Trampoline, Athletics, Arts poster, Climbing Wall, DJ'ing, Circuit training, Football, Table tennis, Computers/ playstation, Fitness Gym workouts, Cricket, Tennis, Basketball, Badminton, Uni Hockey and Lacrosse.



The Young people also got the opportunity to play pool and socialise with each other in the breaks between the three activity sessions per day. Some of the activities were a little difficult with the low numbers, however for the majority it was not a problem and was an advantage in climbing, trampolining and the DJ sessions. It also meant that those staff who were Youth Workers could also build up stronger relationships with the young people who attended and start to put some foundations in place for when they return to the Centre after the summer break.

The Cowes programme was looking to give the year 8 pupils a taste of what they could obtain and achieve here at the Youth Centre. This in turn would encourage them to attend the Centre once returning to school in the new term.

The young people were asked questions regarding their time on the programme, which included the following; Did they learn anything new, did they like the venue, were the staff friendly and approachable, Would they like to receive information on the Centre / future activities and were there any activities they would like to suggest for the future. The information from these evaluations told us that all of the young people enjoyed the activities, although some were enjoyed more than others and they all had favourites. All of the young people wanted to become members of the Youth Centre and were looking forward to attending the year 9 nights from September.

The Staff also enjoyed the programme, but there was disappointment in the schools' general involvement and lack of interest in the programme. More young people would have made a number of the activities more beneficial to the young people and motivating for the staff. The marketing for the programme will certainly need to be looked at and may need some work with the schools during the year, prior to next summer's programme. The staff saw a positive change in behaviour in the young people during the four weeks. Through their achievements it was clear to see that their self-confidence, willingness to be involved and interact with the other group members or staff had greatly improved.

In all, the programme achieved what it had set out to do. Positive activities were participated in, resulting in developing the young people, encouraging them to join the centre and to publicise the good youth work that goes on here at Cowes Youth Centre. As a result only one of the group did not join the centre due to transport issues from Ryde and the young people have since brought many of their peers down to the centre on the year 9 and activity nights.

There are over 30 new members to the centre attending the year 9 nights now. This will give the staff at the Centre the opportunity to work with these young people during the course of the year under the guidance of the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes and the IW Youth Service Curriculum.



# Intensive Project

Challenge & Adventure: Gary Meek  
Mobile Youth Initiative: Dee Makin



Mobile Youth Initiatives and Challenge & Adventure ran a three week intensive summer programme, providing educational and informal learning opportunities which enabled the personal development of the young people participating.

This was done through group work underlining a programme of activities that were designed to:-



1. challenge
2. provide new experiences and opportunities
3. be fun and enjoyable
4. educate and provide accreditation opportunities

The programme engaged young people in various activities and concluded with a residential experience that was designed to enable young people to:-

1. develop and build positive relationships with each other and adults
2. learn about themselves and how to make positive choices
3. learn how to communicate effectively
4. experience a complex communal environment with all its challenges



A placement trainee police officer joined the team, to get an insight into young people and their development. Young people underwent a major learning curve, as positive relationships were built before disclosure of his role. Young people were able to see the person and not the uniform and recognise that people in positions of authority can be supportive too.

The activities were:

<b>First Aid Training &amp; Qualification</b>	Educational	Develop a skill
<b>Sailing</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop a skill and enjoy
<b>Portsmouth Dock Yards</b>	Educational	Building knowledge on historical events and their community
<b>S.R.E.</b>	Educational	Understanding sexual health in positive relationships
<b>Sun Awareness</b>	Educational	Understanding healthy living
<b>Perceptions</b>	Educational	Understanding how they are viewed and how behaviour impacts on others
<b>Walking</b>	Educational	Healthy living lifestyles
<b>Quad Biking</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop skills and enjoy
<b>Laser Shooting (Clays)</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop skills and enjoy
<b>Archery</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop skills and enjoy
<b>Cooking</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop skills and enjoy
<b>Bivi Night</b>	Educational & Fun	Develop skills and understanding of their environment
<b>Bowling</b>	Fun	Team building and enjoy
<b>Robin Hill</b>	Fun	Team building and enjoy
<b>Blackgang</b>	Fun	Team building and enjoy

The aim of the programme was to ease the transition for year 8s from Middle School to High School. Young People were identified through a referral process as being those most in need of support. By working on individual issues that were affecting their education, and by building confidence and self esteem, young people were empowered to make positive choices about their future; as well as having their disruptive and negative behaviour challenged throughout. Young people were enabled to see how both their positive and negative behaviour affects others.

16 young people arrived at the start of the programme, with issues ranging from learning difficulties to disruptive behaviour problems. None of the group was known to any of the workers. The young people had to be constantly challenged because of their abusive communication towards each other and the adults, and their aggressive body language. This was all undertaken by the staff whilst building positive and effective relationships with them.



Others in the group were lacking confidence and self esteem and consequently their voices were not being heard. Through encouragement and skills development these young people thrived.

As a whole group clear boundaries and ground rules to adhere to were set. Young people were supported at all times through the group work process and they were shown that they were valued in the way the workers communicated and worked, even when attitudes and behaviour at times were testing. It was constantly reinforced that the person was what was important and not the behaviour, listening skills and effective communication were a theme throughout.



Specific challenges were set for those young people displaying extreme issues and at all times they were monitored closely. This enabled these young people to see them, to see what would be accepted and what would not. Gradually young people shifted from being disruptive or lacking in effective communication skills and making their voices heard towards young people who could enjoy and achieve together.

Young people went through a self evaluation process which enabled them to identify their own learning.

The following issues, in relation to this intensive programme, need to be overcome in terms of future programmes:

- Extremely long days as the team battled with young people's behaviour and extreme issues that they had, i.e. difficult home lives, bullying, eating disorders, self harm, negative and abusive behaviour as well as disclosures of criminal activity.
- High expectations on a group that had not met previously, so storming, norming and forming, constantly occurring.
- Part time workers expected to work to the same level as full time youth workers, when clearly these should be given the opportunity to support and observe.

The Extended Schools Summer Programme was the pilot venture; it clearly provided opportunities for young people's needs to be met and gave the opportunity for the identification of future needs. We as a team believe that this project will grow and hope that it will enable future young people to continue their personal development.

The following are extracts from the individual self evaluations all the young people undertook at the end of this programme. (All sentences include the original spellings used by the young people)

*When I go to the new school I will now feel confident to make new and a wider type of friends. I have realised that some of my friends are not benefiting me in any way. I am now not scared to hang around with other people.*

*I have changed, my behaviour is better because I am mixing with different people. I am more mature and responsible because I feel I can make my own decisions now.*

*I will leave Activ8's and take with me happy memories of walking in the mountains and crawling through caves, these will stay with me forever!*



*I feel more confident now, I can talk more and not be afraid. I will go to the new school now knowing some of my new friends better. I have talked to people more, tried new things and had fun.*

*I have changed as a person a lot. I am more happier and take part in group things. I am much more confident to talk to people.*

*I will take with me pictures, new friends and memories of happy times that have made me laugh.*

*I have changed, I have more self control and am able to apologise when I am wrong. I have fun. I feel more relaxed and calm when talking to people. I know myself a bit more.*

*I will leave Activ8's remembering the good times and all the experiences. I will always have memories of the project, friends and the staff.*

*I like being able to get support when I need it.*

*I have changed because I control my temper, co-operate with others and work as part of a team more.*

*I will leave Activ8's remembering how good it has been!*



*I have calmed down a lot and I am not so angry. I feel good about myself and feel that I can talk to anyone if I have problems. I can control my temper so that I can have fun and make new friends. I have tried and learnt new things.*

*I am more confident because I have done things that I was frightened of! I have achieved lots and I have learnt new things.*

*I will leave Activ8's and take with me memories of having a good time, it will stay in my mind forever!*

*I feel happier, I understand myself more and I feel more positive about myself.*

*I understand how I effect other people and how sometimes I upset them without meaning to because of the things I say and do. I think more now.*

*I have changed because I have learnt so much and can now feel confident when talking.*

*It is hard to explain how I have changed, but I have. I am more positive, less grumpy and more friendly.*

*I will leave Activ8's and take with me a better attitude, confidence and friendships; and of course my Activ8's t-shirt!*

*I will leave Activ8's and remember a fun, mental, crazy and wohoooooeee time!*

*I have learnt how to save someones life! I know how I should treat other people. I feel more responsible. I am not so quiet and I go and talk things through with other people. I know not to get involved in other peoples arguments.*

*I have changed because I am more understanding, less gobby to others because I do not know how they are feeling inside and I can effect others if I act before getting to understand them.*



*I will leave Activ8's and never forget the whole experience, the camping out under the stars and the girly chats.*

*Activ8's got me out of the house and away from my home life. I do not swear now! I am happier and feel better. I am less lazy and want to do more. I can talk more because I know what I have to say is important. I will be more athletic and eat better*

*I have changed because I feel healthier and happier. I do not moan as much!*

*I have got fitter and lost some weight by eating better. I have not been robbing cars or getting in to trouble.*

*I have learnt to keep my temper in control, my behaviour is better because people listen and talk to me instead of shouting at me. I exercise more and am less lazy. I have learnt to talk instead of shouting and swearing. I listen to what people say.*

*I have sort of changed because I am not misbehaving or getting in to trouble with the police, and that is cool.*

*I think I am a little fitter, less tired and more healthy. I have changed because I am calmer, I think about things more and get less angry. I do not let things wind me up so much.*

*I am happier now, feeling cared about and listened to.*

*I have changed, I am more confident and happier.*

