

# York Youth Community Action Programme 2010

## (Managed by City of York Council and Learning City York in partnership with York Cares & York CVS)

### Executive Summary

#### 1. Original Aims & Targets

To raise awareness amongst **ALL** 14-16 year olds in the city (4,774) and engage a minimum of 90% (4,296) in an average of 15 hours community action and volunteering which:

- mattered to them
- delivered demonstrable impacts in their school and / or community
- clearly identified the beneficiary of their activity ie: the local community, other individuals or the environment
- applied their learning and developed skills in real-life contexts and
- provided an experience of volunteering alongside other age groups, communities and sectors.

#### 2. What was delivered

In the 10 month programme period January – October 2010, before early termination of the national contract and a total investment of £813,435:

- 3547 14-16 year olds (75% of total cohort) completed 26,927 hours of **NEW** community action and volunteering activity, at an average of 7.5 hours per person
- 10 state secondary schools, 2 independents, York's Special School and Pupil Referral Unit participated
- 21 local community and voluntary sector organisations that delivered opportunities both in and out of school time through 32 different activities
- **Volunteering taster days** (Y9 / 10) = 1900 young people : 11,700 hours (53.5% of YP : 43.5% of hrs)
- **Menu of longer term opportunities** = 1200 young people : 13,110 hours (average 11 hours each)
  - 48% of organisations (10) delivered activity out of school time, 30% (7) delivered in school; 19% (4) delivered activity both during and out of school time
  - 38% of organisations (8) offered activities that enabled young people to gain a qualification or accumulate hours towards a qualification including Duke of Edinburgh, Guide Leaders, Sports Leadership, Sports Coaching, Arts Award, mentoring training and community action hours towards GCSE Citizenship. A scheme of work was also developed to support the BTEC Work Skills Unit for Foundation Learners.
  - Opportunities covered catering related activities; Conservation / Environmental / Horticultural related; Heritage; Intergenerational – with younger children and elderly; Multi-media; Peer mentoring; Performing Arts - drama, singing and music; Personal Development and Sports coaching
- **Young people led activity**
  - Much interest in young people grants, albeit only two bids submitted before early termination of the contract
  - A school based Tea Party and Afternoon of Entertainment for local Elderly Residents near Huntington School (an idea arising from the Volunteer Taster Day)
  - A community based drama project at Hurst Hall Community Centre, enabling young people to be trained to support younger children in creating and developing their own plays and performances for the community.

### 3. Outcomes, Impact and Benefits

Far better understanding of what interests and motivates young people to get involved. Far reaching impact and benefits of both taster activities and more regular opportunities for young people, local residents, community organisations, schools, parents and the wider community. Feedback & case studies show that activity can:

- Develop essential life, work & enterprise skills (team working, leadership, tolerance, creativity, taking responsibility)
- Increase levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, particularly amongst more vulnerable young people, including those with disabilities
- Re-engage disaffected young people in education & develop positive relations with school staff
- Broaden their knowledge and horizons, as well as changing their perceptions of their community, people and local / global issues
- Bridge intergenerational gaps and challenge misunderstandings
- Demonstrate young people making a positive contribution to society and the local communities in which they live
- Energise them to be enterprising and shape, plan and deliver activities that are responsive to issues that matter to them and that make a difference for their local community and / or other people
- Provide opportunities for experience of work & an insight into different career options in a totally different way to the traditional 'work experience'
- Support achievement through the accreditation of volunteering / community action and the opportunity to gain or work towards a qualification
- Support achieving something real and tangible to put on their CVs

#### Why young people 'get involved'

- Something different - new skills & experience
- Fun & meet new people in new places
- Given real responsibility to achieve something tangible
- Valued

### 4. Recommendations

#### Young People

- **Tackle branding, image, perceptions & self-belief** – We want young people to perceive volunteering to be valuable, relevant and inspiring, feel well-equipped to access different opportunities and confident in participating
- **Develop an information portal and an annual targeted marketing campaign** to promote opportunities to young people both in and out of school
- **Provide an 'out of school' brokerage service** for young people to access opportunities and develop their volunteering in their own time

#### Schools

- **Develop a Community Action and Volunteering Plan / whole school approach (Y7-11/13)** – to prioritise aims & facilitate leveraging external support, using a mix of shorter, larger scale engagement activities, as well as longer, more regular opportunities embedded within the curriculum
- **Maintain Community Action / Volunteering Co-ordinator** – with designated time to drive, co-ordinate, champion and provide contact for external agencies;
- **City-wide Networking meetings** (maintained by York Cares & Learning City) to share good practice, opportunities and connectivity with community groups
- **York CVS & York Cares to help foster sustainable relations between community organisations, schools and businesses** - to develop a portfolio of opportunities / projects that meet priority needs
- **Role of Personal Tutor and Individual Development Plans** – encourage YP to log their activity (both in & out of school) and reflect on skills developed.
- **Increasing capacity for delivery** – explore use of university & adult volunteers to support volunteering activities through schools with organisations in their locality
- **Primary links** - facilitate development of peer support programmes with primary feeders & explore how this might integrate with the new York Children's University

#### Community Organisations offering opportunities (in and out of school)

- **York CVS to continue to develop a network of organisations able to offer opportunities** with appropriate safeguarding and health & safety in place
- **Packages of Opportunities** – funding to support additional paid or unpaid staff to deliver and manage youth volunteering activity will continue to be a barrier for some organisations. York CVS will support organisations to develop costed packages to be developed for schools to consider, as well as helping them to seek alternative grant funding.

## 5. Summary – Youth Volunteering and Community Action in York in the Future

Building on the success of the Government funded York Youth Community Action Programme in 2010, we want:

**Young people** in and out of education and training to perceive volunteering to be valuable, relevant and inspiring, feel well equipped to access different opportunities and confident in participating.

**Voluntary & community organisations** to recognise the many benefits that young volunteers bring, are active in engaging young people and are confident in supporting them.

**Schools, Colleges and Universities** to recognise volunteering as being integral to their core business as a way of developing confident and enterprising citizens, developing essential life and employability skills, broadening their horizons and enhancing their learning.

**Beneficiaries of community activity and volunteering** to recognise young people as valuable and active members of the community leading to a more cohesive society.

**Employers and local businesses** to recognise the value of the enterprising and employability skills that young people develop through volunteering and to become more actively involved in supporting the delivery of volunteering and community action opportunities with young people, schools and community organisations.

Learning City York will continue to ensure that strategic links are made to the Local Strategic Partnership, the 14-19 Partnership and Education Plan, the Economic Partnership and the Local Authority Communities and Neighbourhoods team.

York CVS and York Cares will continue to be pivotal in brokering and developing innovative longer-term relations and sustainable delivering models between schools and community organisations and businesses as well as supporting young people to access opportunities outside of education.