



# Youth Almighty Project

## Young Peoples Voices - September 2011



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## Young Peoples Voices

Youth Almighty Project (YAP) is committed to ensuring they listen to young people's voices. From April – August 2011 Youth Almighty Project undertook a snapshot evaluation of their services to assess if they were meeting the needs of young people in the area.

The consultation was carried out with a mixture of young people who attend junior sessions, youth club at the Community Centre and in the Youth Café. Young people were asked for their views by completing a paper questionnaire. Focus group sessions were facilitated by youth work staff and carried out with junior groups consisting of 4 groups of up to 10 participants, other participants completed the questionnaires anonymously and handed these in to staff.

103 young people aged 9 to 17 years participated in this consultation. 37 (36%) of young people aged 13 – 17 years and 48 (47%) aged 8 – 11 years, with a fairly even gender split.

In total young people attend 7 different schools, 3 primary and 4 secondary with 4 of these schools being outside the catchment area for Silksworth ward.

The results of this consultation, together with the results from a consultation carried out by detached youth workers in August 2011 will be compiled into a report for consideration by YAP Management Committee and the YAP Youth Committee. The business, work and finance plans for 2012 will be based on some of the findings from this research.

We hope you enjoy reading this report.

**This report is what young people have told us  
and we have not left out any of their views, or added any of our own.**

Please note that the quotes in *italics* are direct quotes from young people.



**Report prepared by Amanda Gerry, Development Officer - Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum (SVSYF) October 2011.**

## Key Findings

Youth Almighty Project (YAP) is listening to young peoples needs and providing a service that matches these needs. Building on consultations in October 2009, April 2010 and July 2010 Youth Almighty Project wanted to find out;

- a) what young people liked and disliked about the sessions currently provided
- b) Suggestions for improvement
- c) How they rated their experiences
- d) What they would be doing if they weren't attending YAP



It is evident that young people like being involved in making decisions at Youth Almighty Project. They told us they *'feel valued'*, *'appreciated'* and *'like knowing our voices are making a difference'*.

95% of young people told us they were happy with the activities currently provided by YAP.

61 (59%) young people like the activities on offer at YAP. 20 (19%) young people told us they like having something to do, somewhere to go that got them *'out of the house'*, *'off the streets'* and *'kept them out of trouble'*. 18 (17%) young people told us they went to YAP to *'socialise'*, *'see friends'* and *'make new friends'*. 15 (15%) young people told us they liked the staff; *'having someone to talk to'*, *'to support them'* and who were *'nice to them'*.

***"The Centre is brilliant, all you need in one place."***

#### **4 core areas for improvement in the curriculum are**

**Junior sessions** – 16 (16%) young people told us they wanted more sessions aimed at younger children specifically for them.

**Football** – 14 (14%) young people told us they wanted a) longer football sessions *'not just one hour'*, a session just for the juniors, and a girls only session.

**Out of centre activities** – 10 (10%) young people told us they wanted more trips

**Boys group** – 2 (2%) young people asked for a Boys Only Group *'The girls have a girls only group, why do we not have one?'*

Football remains an extremely popular part of the programme but young people are also appreciative of the new sessions offered by YAP including cooking, issue based sessions and holiday play schemes. The facilities on offer at YAP are fit for purpose and the varied, flexible programme is continuing to meet the needs of young people, although in this and past consultations young people have told us they would like the centre to be open longer and on more days; the project is currently providing 7 sessions per week including one junior session, café x2, girls group, outreach/detached sessions and generic youth clubs sessions.

The need for more junior sessions and holiday activities / play schemes is a recurring theme in this consultation but requires some thought and funding as to how this fits into the overall plans for the project. Young people again highlight their wishes for a trampoline and a gym together with better computer equipment and a 'chill-out' space.

Whilst young people appreciate the facilities and the activities on offer; (when asked direct questions about these two subjects they respond positively) they are less concerned about these in the overall experience of going to Youth Almighty Project.

Young people value the opportunity to develop new skills, and it is evident that the issue based sessions and information offered by the staff on a variety of subjects is well received. It should not be underestimated the importance of having a place where young people can hang out, have fun and make new friends.

Comparing the last 12 months (October 2010 – October 2011) Silksworth Foot Beats L3,4 and 5 have seen a reduction in reported Youth Related ASB incidents by 62%. Community Beat Officers have been displaced from the Silksworth Ward and allocated to another area of the city. There are currently no community police officers in Silksworth. This proves Youth Almighty Project is doing an effective job at engaging with young people in worthwhile activities whilst offering support for them to make effective decisions about other life choices.

At present YAP has had to discontinue some important sessions due to cuts in funding. To continue to meet the needs of young people in the community the project needs to be funded to continue its current work programme, additional funding needs to be found to support extra junior sessions and boys group, continue opening the Sunday café session, expand football sessions and expand the pilot holiday programme to include holiday provision for all age groups.

## **Recommendations**

The need for more junior sessions and holiday activities / play schemes is a recurring theme in this consultation and is a definite need for YAP. The project was successful in attracting funding in June 2011 to put on one session per week but this is not enough to meet demand. Additional sessions require some thought (as well as funding) as to how this fits into the overall plans for the project. Young people have also asked for provision to be extended during the day in school holidays, and Sunday afternoon sessions.

Young people have highlighted the need to keep the youth café open once the funding runs out in October 2011. Currently this session is funded for 2 sessions per week; based on young peoples feedback I would recommend seeking funding to open the youth café for 3 sessions every week.

.The Project Manager and Management committee members need to consider the implications of the project digressing into Playwork, consideration should be taken regarding recruiting appropriately trained staff with the right skills set, ratio of staff to children, and additional funding needed to support this new area of work. Play work is a priority for the local authority and I would recommend exploring options for accessing play grants from area committees to expand the current junior programme.

YAP also needs to promote the existing junior session to more children in the area. Whilst this session is well attended there were many children who told us they didn't know what times the sessions were on.

Working in partnership with Hendon Young Peoples Project (HYPP) to develop a project facebook page would also raise the profile of YAP, advertise activities / events and enable more young people to access services.



It's important to keep the curriculum flexible to incorporate new activities and keep young people enthusiastic about attending the project, but these activities don't have to cost additional money.

The project has plans to expand its health project to incorporate more skills such as cooking, baking, ironing and develop their intergenerational work. I would recommend the Project Manger contacting the Independent Living worker and the Older Persons Support Officer at Gentoo to explore opportunities for joint working.

Football remains very popular and in the past young people have been very enthusiastic about taking part in football tournaments with other youth projects. I would recommend exploring the possibility of a youth league / tournament with other interested Project Managers.

Get young people involved in fundraising. This could incorporate some of the new skills young people told us they wanted to learn; i.e. cooking, baking, making things to sell. Some fundraising ideas for YAP could include holding an indoor fete, a winter car boot sale, xmas crafts etc to raise funds for equipment that the young people can then choose – this would give them more responsibility for decision making and ownership of the equipment.

### **Project Development**

Since undertaking this consultation the Project Manager has implanted a number of changes to the programme and the building at Youth Almighty Project. These include;

- Bought new craft equipment and implemented ‘themed’ activity sessions for Halloween, Christmas and Easter.
- Identified the need for a gym-only session, purchased some gym equipment and will be offering this session on a trial period for 2 months.
- Carried out work in the Youth Café including; laying a new floor, installing blinds a settee and a television set. Working with the young people who attend this session, workers asked them to identify a wish list, allocated them a budget and asked them to prioritise, taking into consideration the views expressed during the consultation.
- Carried out repairs at the community centre including installing a new sign on the front of the building, discussed plans to redesign activity floor so its all one level and lower the ceiling in the hall to make the building warmer.
- Painted the whole centre
- Fed in young peoples suggestions to the Management.
- Multi sports sessions
- Discussed with Young People’s Youth Committee their involvement in future fundraising events
- The Project Manager has discussed with the staff team changes to the Thursday night football session – proposals include changing this to a Boys Group with 1 hr of football, 1 ½ hrs of issue based work.

### **Next Steps**

This report will be circulated to all YAP Management Committee members and Young Volunteers for discussion with the Project Manager. Recommendations will be discussed and action to be agreed.

YAP will continue to monitor the current and future provision offered to young people in their area by undertaking regular evaluations and consultations with service users.

### **Any questions or queries about the Report please contact:**

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The Questions Youth Almighty Project asked were:

**A. About Youth Almighty Project**

**Q1. What do you most like about the provision (activities, information and support) offered by YAP?**

61 (59%) young people like the activities on offer at YAP. 20 (19%) young people told us they like having something to do, somewhere to go that got them *‘out of the house’, ‘off the streets’* and *‘kept them out of trouble’*. 18 (17%) young people told us they went to YAP to *‘socialise’, ‘see friends’* and *‘make new friends’*. 15 (15%) young people told us they liked the staff; *‘having someone to talk to’, ‘to support them’* and who were *‘nice to them’*.

**What young people like about YAP**

Position		No of young people	Percentage	Comments
1	Activities	61	59%	
2	Something to do	20	19%	
3	Socialising	18	17%	
4	Workers	15	15%	
5	Sports	13	13%	
6	Fun	10	10%	
7	Computers	7	7%	
7	Learn new skills	7	7%	i.e. cooking
9	Everything	6	6%	
10	It's warm	2	2%	
10	Information	2	2%	

**Q2. What do you dislike about the provision (activities, information and support) offered by YAP?**

46 (45%) young people told us they didn't dislike anything about YAP. Comments from the remaining 57 young people focused mostly on 4 core areas;

**Junior sessions** – 16 (16%) young people told us they wanted more sessions specifically aimed at younger children where *‘the big ones are not allowed!’*.

**Football** – 14 (14%) young people told us they wanted a) longer football sessions *‘not just one hour’*, a session just for the juniors, and a girls only session.

**Out of centre activities** – 10 (10%) young people told us they wanted more trips

**Boys group** – 2 (2%) young people asked for a Boys Only Group *‘The girls have a girls only group, why do we not have one?’*

## **B. Activities**

### **Q3. Are you happy with the activities' currently provided?**

95% of young people who answered this question told us they were happy with the activities currently provided by YAP.

### **Q4. What do you think YAP could do to improve the range of activities on offer?**

The top 5 things young people wanted to improve were;

- Junior Clubs 40% (41 young people)
- Activities offered 36% (37 young people)
- Football 25% (26 young people)
- Holiday playschemes / holiday activities 20% (21 young people)
- Open longer 20% (20 young people)

<b>Position</b>		<b>No of young people</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Junior Clubs	41	40%
2	Activities	37	36%
3	Football	26	25%
4	holiday playscheme / hol activities	21	20%
4	Open longer / different days	21	20%
6	be open weekends and during day	17	17%
7	Girls only gym session	8	8%
7	Boys group	4	4%
9	Job club	2	2%
9	Independent living	2	2%
11	Disabilities group	1	1%
11	Stricter age groups	1	1%

## **C. Equipment**



What equipment (that is not already provided) would you like to see at YAP?

The top 3 answers were;

- Sports equipment (trampoline, gym)
- Computer equipment (ipads, better internet, psps2, imac etc)
- Chill out Room

Other equipment suggestions include; dance mats, mini cinema, crash mats etc)

### **D. Buildings**

Do you think the buildings (CA, Park and MUGA) are suitable for young people's activities?

66 young people told us they thought the buildings were suitable for young peoples activities, and 20 told us they weren't, the rest didn't answer

Suggestions for change included a lot of the things already mentioned by young people in every consultation carried out in the last 18 months; longer sessions, more girls sessions, improvement to the centre (new carpet, painted, new floor etc) and the café.

### **E. Rate your time with us**

*Please note the scores were weighted to give a true reflection of the statistics. The formula used was;*

*Excellent = 4*

*Great = 3*

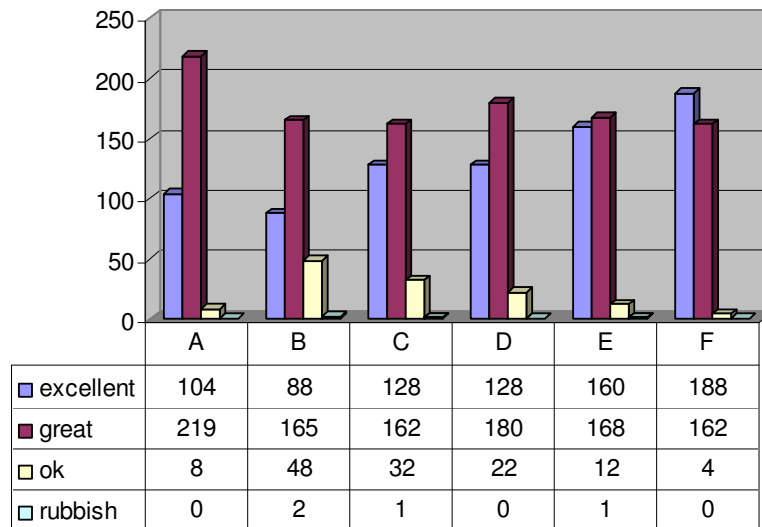
*Ok = 2*

*Rubbish = 1*

*All scores were then added together and ordered from 1 – 6 to find those experiences most important to young people at YAP.*

1 <sup>st</sup>	Total	354	Opportunity for young people to get involved in the project
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Total	341	Facilities
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Total	331	Activities on offer
4 <sup>th</sup>	Total	330	Equipment
5 <sup>th</sup>	Total	323	Days we are open
6 <sup>th</sup>	Total	303	Times we are open

**Please rate your experience with us in the following**



Activities on offer	A
Times we are open	B
Days we are open	C
Equipment	D
Facilities	E
ties for young people to get involved in the p	F

*Please note the scores were weighted to give a true reflection of the statistics. Young people were asked to use a scale of 1 – 10 ((1 is the most important, 10 is least important) to score various options. The formula used allocated each score a number, then the scores were then added together and ordered from 1 – 10 to find out which options young people thought were most important.*

1 <sup>st</sup>	Total 909	Opportunities to develop a new skill
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Total 902	Opportunities to learn something about issues that affect me and my family
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Total 896	Chance to go on trips outside of the centre
4 <sup>th</sup>	Total 887	A place to have fun with other young people
5 <sup>th</sup>	Total 883	Chance to make new friends
6 <sup>th</sup>	Total 867	Opportunities to talk to an adult about different issues
7 <sup>th</sup>	Total 866	Opportunities to volunteer in my community
7 <sup>th</sup>	Total 866	Just somewhere to go and something to do
9 <sup>th</sup>	Total 853	Opportunities to try a new sport
10 <sup>th</sup>	Total 839	Opportunities to try new activities

Whilst young people appreciate the facilities and the activities on offer;(when asked direct questions about these two subjects they respond positively) they are less concerned about these in the overall experience of going to Youth Almighty Project.

Young people value the opportunity to develop new skills, and it is evident that the issue based sessions and information offered by the staff on a variety of subjects is well received. It should not be underestimated the importance of having a place where young people can hang out, have fun and make new friends.

Opportunities to learn something about issues that affect me and my family	A
Opportunities to develop a new skill	B
Opportunities to try a new sport	C
Opportunities to try new activities	D
Chance to go on trips outside of the centre	E
Chance to make new friends	F
Just somewhere to go and something to do	G
A place to have fun with other young people	H
Opportunities to volunteer in my community	I
Opportunities to talk to an adult about different issues	J



### **F. What would you be doing if you weren't accessing the services of YAP?**

Over ½ of young people surveyed told us they would be spending their spare time *'hanging about on the streets or in the park'*, 54%. 38 % told us they'd *'just be in the house'* whilst worryingly 14% told us they be *'causing trouble'* or *'drinking and taking drugs'* (13%).

Appendix A – Questionnaire



We would love to hear your views about Youth Almighty Project.  
Please answer all the questions – thank you

**About You**

Q1) Are you Male  or Female?

Q2) How old are you?

Q3) What nights of the week do you attend YAP? *Tick all that apply*

Monday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

Q4) What school do you go to?

St Anthony's RC School	
St Aiden's RC School	
Thornhill Comprehensive	
Farringdon School	
Venerable Bede	
New Silksworth Jnr School	
I don't go to school	
I'm home schooled	

**About Youth Almighty Project**

Q5) What do you most like about the provision (activities, information and support) offered by YAP?

Q6) What do you dislike about the provision (activities, information and support) offered by YAP?

I don't dislike anything

I dislike.....

**Activities**

Q7) Are you happy with the activities' currently provided?

Yes  No

Q8) What do you think YAP could do to improve the range of activities on offer?

**Equipment**

Q9) What equipment (that is not already provided) would you like to see at YAP?

*Please be realistic and remember we do not have loads and loads of cash!!*

**Buildings**





Q10) Do you think the buildings (CA, Park and MUGA) are suitable for young people's activities?

Yes  No

Q11) Do you have any suggestions for change?

**Rate your time with us**

Please rate your experience with us by ticking one of the boxes for each question

	Excellent 	Great 	Ok 	Rubbish 
Activities on offer				
Times we are open				
Days we are open				
Equipment				
Facilities				
Opportunity for young people to get involved in the project				

On a scale of 1 –10 please rate the following (1 is the most important, 10 is least important)

Opportunities to learn something about issues that affect me and my family	
Opportunities to develop a new skill	
Opportunities to try a new sport	
Opportunities to try new activities	
Chance to go on trips outside of the centre	

Chance to make new friends	
Just somewhere to go and something to do	
A place to have fun with other young people	
Opportunities to volunteer in my community	
Opportunities to talk to an adult about different issues	

What would you be doing if you weren't accessing the services of YAP?