



Godalming
Town Council

Supporting Our Community

Godalming
youth **th**
service

ANNUAL REPORT

September 2022 – August 2023

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Introduction

This year, the Youth Service has continued to provide a wide range of activities and services for young people in Godalming, including:

- After-School Drop-In, with themes and activities that are co-developed with young people
- Girl's Group that provides issued-based youth programmes for young women
- Music and Media night that seeks to involve young people in digital creativity
- Our Juniors group that provides young people with support in transitioning into secondary school
- Boy's Group providing issued based work with young men
- Well Fed Fridays, our Friday night programme that provides activities and a cooked meal

Additionally, we also delivered substantial school holiday provision, primarily through delivering the Club4 (Surrey's implementation of the Holiday Activity Fund), and undertook some work in partnership with local schools. We also continued to develop our policies and procedures, including digitising many of our processes.

Within our service, we use an after-session evaluation method based on three primary questions: *What's Working Well, What are We Concerned About, What Change is Needed?* Which has been used for summarising each programme for this report.

Case Studies

Before moving in to exploring individual programmes, it seems good practice to begin with some case studies that illustrate the ongoing benefit that our youth service is having for young people (Not real names)

Dylan: Dylan is a 15-year-old boy who contracted long COVID in 2021. The illness caused him to experience anxiety, and fatigue meant that he needed to withdraw from the social and sports activities that had previously brought him joy. He felt isolated and alone, and he didn't know how to cope with his feelings.

Dylan joined our Club4 school holiday programmes at Godalming Youth Service. Dylan was hesitant at first, but he decided to give it a try. He was glad that he did.

The youth service offered a variety of activities that Dylan could participate in at his own pace and in an unpressured environment. He started by going to the youth centre-based days, where he could relax and socialize with other young people including family members also attending. Over time, Dylan's anxiety started to improve. He made new friends and started to feel more confident. He was even able to start taking part in some physical activities such as climbing again. His mum reported that one day, he came home, looking in the mirror and exclaimed 'I'm proud of myself'.

It is inspirational to see how far he has come and how well he has used the opportunities afforded by the youth centre in order to progress his confidence. Dylan is grateful for the support he received from the Godalming Youth Service. He says that the youth service helped him to turn his life around.

Sarah: Sarah was struggling with anxiety. She felt like she couldn't control her thoughts and feelings, and she was afraid to leave her house. She didn't know what to do. One day, Sarah's friend told her about the Creative Drop-In at the Godalming Youth Service. Sarah decided to give it a try.

The Creative Drop-In is a weekly art group for young people. It provides a safe and supportive environment for young people to express themselves creatively. Sarah found that the Creative Drop-In was a great way to relax and de-stress. She also found that it helped her to connect with other young people.

After attending the Creative Drop-In for a few weeks, Sarah started to feel better. She was able to control her thoughts and feelings more easily, and she was less afraid to leave her house. Sarah is grateful for the support she received from the Creative Drop-In at the Godalming Youth Service. She says that the class helped her to manage her anxiety and to feel more confident.

A young man at risk of exploitation: James was at risk of exploitation. He was hanging out with a group of older boys who were involved in antisocial behaviour.

One of James's friends told him about the youth centre in Godalming. The youth centre offered a variety of activities that James could participate in, such as sports, arts and crafts, and music. The staff at the youth centre also provided James with support and guidance.

James started to spend more time at the youth centre. He made new friends and started to get involved in positive activities. He also stopped hanging out with the older boys.

Attendances

Our attendances continue to be high, and the table below gives an overview of each programme between February and July 2023:

Board Games	Boy's Night	Creative Drop-in	Friday Chill	Gardening Drop-in	Girl's Night	Jamming Drop-in	Juniors	Music, Media Night	Well-Fed Fridays	Years 9-11	Takeover Day	
31	11	38	32	15	7	20	6	8	6	5	60	
21	7	24	24	30	6	15	10	9	9	3		
32	10	22	38	26	7	26	9	5	29	3		
26	11	29	23	20	2	27	8	3	11	2		
28	10	23	33	18	4	20	10	3	22			
22	15	23	31	18	4	25	13	4	18			
23	7	35	27	22	4	25	12	4	16			
25	4	24	29	23	6	30	14	7	15			
31	4	32	31	27	5	28	15	7	15			
33	8	26	20	23	6	17	11	14	16			
26	14	27	23	25	5	14	12	9	22			
28	11	22	34	31	9	18	3	4	23			
28	6	30	22	22	4	21	12	6	30			
20	5	26	33	28	5	7	17		23			
14	11		22	24	4	16	15					
17	17			24		20	12					
	15			16		23	15					
				19		28	12					
				34			10					
							11					
Total	405	166	381	422	445	78	380	227	83	255	13	60

A new digital recording method using Microsoft Forms was implemented on 3rd February, combined with the previous manual records the centre's overall youth session footfall between **September 2022** and **July 2023** was **4545**. This excludes events such as school assemblies, school holiday activities and the day where we went to Broadwater School to facilitate activities for 500 young people in one day (this is not recorded here as it would skew the data).

Far from being a project that has diminished in popularity, the centre has instead maintained its appeal. It would be wrong, however, to assume that this means it is perfect.

Drop-in Programmes

What's working well

The After-School Drop-in as a whole continues to be a resounding success, as evidenced numerically and by accounts of the benefit of this project. Even after running for over a year, young people continue to attend, and some have been part of the project since the very beginning.

Numerical information

- The average daily attendance of 25-35 young people is a good number. It is large enough to provide a variety of activities and opportunities for the young people, but not so large that it becomes overwhelming for the young people and staff.
- The 1-10 ratio of adults to young people is ideal for providing an appropriate level of supervision. This allows the staff to be available to help the young people with their activities, provide support, and intervene if needed. It also matches the NSPCC and other guidelines regarding appropriate ratios.
- Seeking to get higher numbers for the sake of it would not be beneficial. It would mean that the staff would be stretched too thin and unable to provide the young people with the support they need. Additionally, it would be difficult to maintain a safe and positive environment for the young people.

Why is the drop-in successful

- The staff are friendly and approachable. They create a welcoming and supportive environment for the young people.
- The activities are varied and interesting. There is something for everyone to enjoy.
- The drop-in is a safe and supervised space. The young people feel comfortable and respected.
- The drop-in is a great place for the young people to make friends and build relationships.
- The staff take a pro-active approach to each session. Each session has a group chat, a planned activity, snacks available.

What Are We Concerned About

The drop-in is an example of something that we feel is for the most part working well, but there are two things that we'd like to seek to respond to:

Age range

The drop-in is a mixed age group, which means that sometimes one age group can dominate others. This can be a problem if the older attendees have different or targeted needs, or if a lot of younger year 7s dominate the space.

What Changes Are Needed

Age specific opportunities

The drop-in will remain for all ages, but we are going to develop some more age-specific evening opportunities. One idea is allowing certain rooms to be set aside for a specific age group in one or two sessions.

Alternative trips that are accessible to all young people

Recognising that there is a disparity in opportunity created by delivering Club4 for a set cohort, we are looking at finding ways to fund similar trips out through other sources. This might involve a parent contribution, and possibly a mixed economy model for some projects where those in receipt of

evouchers receive free entry. This will be explored further in the *Club4 Overview* and *Future Changes* section of this report.?

Drop-in - Programme-by-Programme Summary

At the beginning of each term, we deliberately change our drop-in programme and produce new posters. This is in order to keep things fresh and ensure that the youth centre never feels static.

Creative Drop-in

Creative Drop-in is every Monday 3:00 – 5:00, with around 25-30 young people attending each week.

The Creative Drop-in at Broadwater Youth Centre is a weekly program that provides young people with the opportunity to explore their creativity through a variety of activities, such as art, music, and drama. The program is beneficial to young people in a number of ways, including:

- **It provides a safe and supportive space for young people to express themselves.** The Creative Drop-in is a judgement-free zone where young people can feel free to be themselves and explore their creativity without fear of criticism.
- **It helps young people to develop their creative skills.** The session offers a variety of activities that allow young people to develop their artistic and craft skills. No two crafts are repeated and there is a new activity every week. This helps them to build confidence and self-esteem.
- **It provides young people with a sense of belonging.** The Creative Drop-in is a community of young people who share a common interest in creativity. This can help young people to feel connected and supported.
- **It helps young people to develop their social skills.** The program provides opportunities for young people to interact with each other and build relationships. This can help them to develop their social skills and learn how to work and play together.
- **It can help young people to cope with difficult emotions.** The Creative Drop-in can be a therapeutic space for young people to express their emotions through art. This can help them to process difficult emotions and develop healthy coping mechanisms.
- **Informal education is key.** Whilst creating artwork, many informal conversations are had between young people and youth workers, and deeply personal themes are sometimes explored.

Overall, the Creative Drop-in at Broadwater Youth Centre is a valuable program that can benefit young people in a variety of ways. Here are some examples of how the Creative Drop-in has benefited young people:

- A young person who was shy and withdrawn found that joining the creative drop-in helped her to make friends and come out of her shell.
- A young person who was struggling in school found the session helped them to improve confidence and focus.
- A group of young people who were feeling isolated and alone found that the Creative Drop-in provided them with a sense of community and belonging.

Jamming Drop-in

The jamming drop-in session is between 3-5 every Tuesday and has approximately 20-25 young people attending each week. It is a music themed session that is free to access and very informal,

- **It provides a safe and supportive space for young people to express themselves creatively.** Jamming is a great way for young people to experiment with different sounds and

styles, and to learn from each other. It can be a very liberating experience for young people who may not feel comfortable expressing themselves in other settings.

- **It helps young people to develop their musical skills.** Jamming can help young people learn how to play their instruments better, and to develop their improvisational skills. It can also help them to learn about different genres of music and to appreciate different musical cultures.
- **It provides young people with a sense of community.** Jamming is a social activity, and it can help young people to connect with other young people who share their interest in music. It can also help them to build relationships and to feel supported.
- **It can help young people to relieve stress and anxiety.** Jamming can be a great way for young people to let loose and have fun. It can also be a therapeutic outlet for young people who are dealing with stress or anxiety.
- **It can help young people to develop their confidence.** Jamming can help young people to overcome their fear of public performance and to build their confidence. It can also help them to feel more comfortable expressing themselves creatively.

Overall, a jamming drop-in session can be a valuable experience for young people. It can provide them with a safe and supportive space to express themselves creatively, develop their musical skills, build relationships, relieve stress, and boost their confidence.

Gardening Drop-In

The project was started in 2023 with the aim of creating a wellbeing garden for young people to enjoy.

- The garden is located at the Broadwater Youth Centre and is being co-developed by young people with support from RHS Wisley.
- The garden has come along really well so far, with young people planting a variety of vegetables, herbs, and flowers.
- With support from the Rotary Club, the project is going to be developed further in the coming months.

The project has been a great success so far, and it has helped to:

- Provide young people with a safe and supportive space to learn about gardening.
- Teach young people about the importance of healthy eating and sustainability.
- Give young people a sense of ownership and pride in their community.

The project is still in its early stages, but it has the potential to make a real difference to the youth centre and young people's ecological education. With the continued support of RHS Wisley and the Rotary Club, the garden can become a thriving space for young people to learn, grow, and connect with nature.

Here are some specific examples of how young people have been involved in the project:

- They helped to design the garden layout.
- They chose the plants.
- They helped to plant the seeds and seedlings.
- They are responsible for watering and weeding the garden.
- They are also planning to hold workshops and events in the garden.

The project has been a great way for young people to learn new skills, get involved in their community, and make a difference to the environment. It is a positive example of how young people can be empowered to make a change.

Boards Games/Miniatures Painting/Role Playing

The board games and Warhammer youth work session at Broadwater Youth Centre has been really helpful in drawing in a number of socially reclusive young people and giving them a space to explore their interests. The sessions provide a safe and supportive environment where young people can feel comfortable being themselves and making friends. They can also learn new skills, such as how to play board games or how to build and paint Warhammer miniatures.

One young person who has benefited from the sessions is 14-year-old John (changed name). John is autistic and has social anxiety. He found it difficult to make friends and often felt isolated. However, he has since made a number of friends through the sessions and has become more confident in himself. He now looks forward to the sessions every week and enjoys playing board games and painting Warhammer miniatures.

The board games and Warhammer youth work sessions have been a great success. They have helped to provide a space for socially reclusive young people to explore their interests and make friends. They have also helped to improve the social skills and confidence of these young people.

We are excited to announce that we have been successful in acquiring a 3D printer from the Round Table. This will allow us to create more models for young people to paint and play board games with. We are also planning to start a new session on how to use the 3D printer. This will give young people the opportunity to learn new skills and to create their own unique models.

We are grateful to the Round Table for their support. We believe that the 3D printer will be a valuable asset to the youth centre.

Friday Chill Zone

The Friday chill session at Broadwater Youth Centre is a great opportunity for young people to relax and decompress after a busy week. The session provides a safe and supportive space where they can just be themselves.

There are no structured activities as such during the Friday chill session, so young people can do whatever they want. They can read, listen to music, play games, or just chat with their friends. This gives them a chance to relax and unwind after a long week of school or work.

The Friday chill session also provides young people with the opportunity to complete any projects that they started during the week. This could be anything from homework to arts and crafts projects. Having a dedicated time to work on these projects can help young people to stay organized and on track.

In addition to providing a space to relax and decompress, the Friday chill session also helps to build community among young people. It is a chance for them to meet new people and make friends. This can be especially important for young people who are feeling isolated or lonely.

Overall, the Friday chill session at Broadwater Youth Centre is a valuable resource for young people. It provides them with a safe and supportive space to relax, decompress, and complete projects. It also helps to build community and friendships among young people.

Other Projects within Drop-In

Phone Box Project

The project was a collaboration between Godalming Youth Service and the wider town council. Young people from the town spent several weeks exploring Godalming's historical context. With the help of youth workers, the young people created artwork that reflected Godalming's history and heritage. This has been displayed in the now converted phone box which houses a defibrillator. The project was a success and is now a source of pride for the young people involved, and they also learned about the importance of defibrillators and how to use them.

The project was a great way for young people to learn about their community and to make a positive contribution. It is a reminder of the power of young people to make a difference.

Evening Groups

Girls Group

The girls' group at the youth centre is a safe and supportive space for young women aged 11+. The group meets once a week and typically has 6-12 attendees. The group provides a variety of activities, including issue-based work, arts and crafts, and board games.

The issue-based work is designed to help the girls learn about and discuss important topics such as body image, relationships, and self-esteem. The arts and crafts activities are a way for the girls to express themselves creatively and have fun. And the board games are a way for the girls to relax and socialize.

One of the strengths of the girls' group is that it provides a safe space for the girls to talk about their experiences and feelings. The group leaders are trained to create a supportive and non-judgmental environment where the girls feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. This can be especially important for girls who may not have other safe spaces to talk about these things.

Another strength of the group is that it provides a variety of activities that appeal to different interests. This helps to keep the girls engaged and coming back week after week.

One area for development is that the group would like to increase attendance. However, the group leaders are careful not to increase attendance too much, as they want to maintain the group's small and intimate feel. They also want to make sure that the group remains a safe and supportive space for all of the girls.

Overall, the girls' group at the youth centre is a valuable resource for young women. The group provides a safe space for the girls to learn, grow, and connect with other girls. The group leaders are committed to providing a high-quality program that meets the needs of the girls.

Music and Media Night

The Music, Media and Minecraft group meets on Tuesday nights, which has always proven difficult for gaining youth club attendees. The group delivers music workshops, media creation, and a balanced approach to gaming. The benefits of these activities include:

Music workshops

- They can help participants develop their creativity, problem-solving skills, and teamwork skills. They can also help them build self-confidence and self-expression.

Media creation

- They can help participants develop their creativity, technical skills, and communication skills. They can also help them learn about different cultures and perspectives.

Balanced approach to gaming

- This approach can help participants develop healthy habits around gaming and avoid addiction. It can also help them learn about other activities that they enjoy.

The next steps are to keep the group going until half-term, then review whether to continue this or begin a mobile evening session. The mobile evening session would allow the group to reach a wider audience of youth who may not be able to attend the Tuesday night sessions.

Overall, the MUSIC, Media and Minecraft group is a valuable program that provides young people with opportunities to learn new skills, develop their creativity, and have fun. The next steps will be to evaluate the program's success and determine the best way to continue it in the future.

Juniors Night

The Juniors programme at Broadwater Youth Centre is designed to get young people ready for transitioning to secondary school. The programme is delivered in two cohorts of approximately 15 people in each group. This format was found to be effective in making young people feel at ease and the feedback from participants has been very positive.

The programme covers a range of topics, including:

- Making friends and managing relationships
- Coping with change
- Learning independence
- Dealing with bullying

The programme also includes a number of practical activities, such as:

- Teamwork exercises
- Problem-solving activities
- Board games that encourage communication

The Junior's programme is a valuable resource for young people who are about to make the transition to secondary school. It provides them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their new environment.

The programme is also responsive to the needs of the young people who participate. This year, the programme team noted a high level of SEND need within the group, and a lot of boys in attendance. As a result, the programme was adapted to include more activities that would be of interest to these young people.

There was also a significant group of girls who attended the Juniors programme. They are young women who are about to make the transition to secondary school, a time of great change and uncertainty, and the group provided them with a safe and supportive space.

We also utilised some young leaders who volunteered to help out. These were older young people who wanted to support their peers and the youth centre. They helped to run activities, provide support, and make sure that everyone felt welcome. The young leaders were a great asset to the

programme. They were enthusiastic, helpful, and patient. They also had a lot of experience working with young people, which made them invaluable resources.

The young leaders also benefited from the programme. It gave them a chance to develop their leadership skills, learn new things, and make a positive impact on their community. It also boosted their confidence and self-esteem.

Here are some specific ways in which the young leaders helped to make the programme a success:

- They helped to create a welcoming and supportive environment for all participants.
- They provided positive role models for younger people.
- They helped to facilitate activities and discussions.
- They offered guidance and support to participants.
- They helped to make the programme fun and engaging.

The young leaders were a valuable asset to the Juniors programme, and I am grateful for their contributions. We will definitely be using this approach moving forward and in other parts of our youth work.

The feedback from the young people who participated in the Juniors programme this year has been very positive. They have said that the programme has helped them to feel more confident about starting secondary school, and that they have learned a lot of valuable skills.

Year 9-11 Night

We provided a group for all students in Years 9, 10 and 11. It was held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30pm. The group was led by two youth workers who provided the group as a form of respite and stress management. They ran a variety of activities to help students relax and de-stress, such as arts and crafts, games, and group discussions.

The group was a safe space for students to come and ask questions, get help with their studies, and just chat to someone who understood what they were going through. The youth workers were always available to listen and offer support.

The group was popular with a small cohort of young people and many of them said that it helped them to feel less stressed and more confident about their exams. The group was stopped once exams ramped up as the young people needed to focus on their studies.

The group was a valuable resource for GCSE students, and it is clear that it made a positive impact on their lives. It is important to provide safe spaces for young people to talk about their worries and concerns, and to offer them support and guidance.

Boy's Night

The boy's group at the youth centre is a popular and well-attended program. There is a regular group attending each week. The group offers a variety of activities that appeal to a wide range of interests, including team games, video games, sports activities, and issue-based work.

The team games are a significant element of the group, as they provide opportunities for the boys to develop teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. They also have a lot of fun playing games together. Video games are another popular activity, and the group has a dedicated space for playing video games. This allows the boys to relax and de-stress, while also having fun. Sports activities are

also offered, and the group has access to a variety of sports equipment. This allows the boys to get exercise and stay active.

In addition to these activities, the group also offers issue-based work. This is designed to help the boys develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They may discuss topics such as bullying, peer pressure, and healthy relationships. The group also provides a safe space for the boys to talk about their experiences and challenges.

The boy's group at the youth centre is a valuable resource for young people. It provides them with a place to have fun, learn new skills, and develop their social and emotional skills. The group is also a safe space where they can talk about their challenges and get support.

Well Fed Fridays

Our Friday night programme is called 'Well Fed Fridays' and consists of the following:

- Young people can take part in a variety of activities, such as arts and crafts, games, sports, and music.
- They also receive a free cooked meal.
- Attendance varies between 20-40 per week.
- Most of the attendees are students from Broadwater, but there have also been young people from more challenging backgrounds attending.
- The activities offered at the session are designed to be fun and engaging, and to promote social interaction and learning.
- The free meal is intended to help ensure that all young people have access to nutritious food, regardless of their financial situation.

Changes for next year

- It is planned to do an outing once a month in the minibus. This is to give young people the opportunity to explore different places and have new experiences.
- For next year, meals will no longer be free except for young people in receipt of Free School Meals so as to remain consistent with our approach to Club4/HAF.

Club 4 (HAF) School Holiday Programmes

Club4 is Surrey's version of the government's Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme, which provides free activities and food to children who receive benefit-related free school meals during the school holidays.

The Club4 programme is run by Active Surrey, a local sports and physical activity charity. Active Surrey commissions a network of trusted and vetted activity providers to deliver a variety of activities, including:

- Sports and physical activities
- Arts and crafts
- Outdoor learning
- Cooking and food tasting
- Adventure activities
- Visits to local attractions

The activities are designed to be fun, engaging, and educational, and to help children stay active and healthy during the school holidays.

Club4 is open to young people who receive benefit-related free school meal, or who have been referred by a key worker.

- Vulnerable child / Child in Need (CiN) plan
- Looked after child / previously looked after child
- Transition phase between nursery/primary or primary/secondary
- Education, health and care plan (EHCP)
- Young carer
- Child protection plan / known to social services
- At risk of school exclusion
- Lives in an area of high deprivation / from a low-income household not in receipt of benefits related free school meals
- Refugee status / asylum seeker

As a trusted agency, Godalming Youth Service can also refer young people and we have always been active in doing so, those we refer match the criteria outlined above.

You can find more information about the programme on the Active Surrey website: <https://www.activesurrey.com/community/club4>

Godalming Youth Service began delivering Club4 during the Summer 2022 and it represented the first major external funding source that we accessed to extend our work. Last year we completed a two-week summer programme that highlighted as part of the previous annual report. Since then the Godalming Youth Service has completed Christmas, Easter and Summer holiday projects.

What is working well

Overall, all youth workers and council officers agree that Godalming Youth Service providing Club4 has been of huge benefit to the youth service. It has proven to be a valuable strategic move, primarily for the following reasons:

- **Increases the amount of youth provision available.** The Club4 programme provides funding for a variety of activities that would not otherwise be possible, such as trips to Laser Quest and Bowling, music workshops, and VR sessions. This gives young people more opportunities to have fun, learn new things, and make new friends.
- **Creates opportunities that otherwise would not exist.** The Club4 programme allows Godalming Youth Service to reach out to young people who may not otherwise be engaged with the youth service, such as those who are vulnerable or from disadvantaged backgrounds. This helps to ensure that all young people have access to the opportunities that they need to thrive.
- **Gives us a direct means to engage vulnerable young people.** The Club4 programme provides a way for Godalming Youth Service to build relationships with young people who may be struggling. This can help to identify young people who need extra support and provide them with the resources they need to succeed.
- **Increases youth service engagement.** The Club4 programme has helped to increase youth service engagement by making the service more accessible and appealing to young people. This is evident in the fact that the number of young people attending Godalming Youth Service has increased since the Club4 programme began.
- **Broadens our reach beyond Broadwater School.** The Club4 programme has allowed Godalming Youth Service to broaden its reach beyond Broadwater School pupils, an issue that has sometimes been present due to the geographic location of the youth centre.
- **Increase in reaching Ukrainians.** A number of Ukrainian teenagers have accessed Club4, and this has been excellent.

- **Increased our reach with Special Educational Needs and Difficulties (SEND).** Delivering the scheme has allowed us to engage a high number of young people with additional needs. However, this has not been without implications, particularly due to cuts in Short Breaks funding within Surrey, and this will be elaborated on in our concerns.
- **Increases staff awareness.** The Club4 programme has helped to increase staff awareness of the needs of young people. This is because the programme requires staff to be trained in working with young people from a variety of backgrounds. This training has helped staff to better understand the challenges that young people face and how they can best support them.
- **Gives staff more hours.** The Club4 programme has funded more staff hours for Godalming Youth Service. This has allowed them to provide more support to young people and deliver more activities.

In addition to the benefits listed above, Godalming Youth Service involvement in the Club4 programme has also seen some exceptional achievements. These include:

- **Being named a preferred provider within Surrey.** This means that Godalming Youth Service is one of the top providers of Club4 in Surrey.
- **Being approached by ActiveSurrey to lead the Community of Practice for all providers in Waverley.** This is a prestigious role that recognises Godalming Youth Service's expertise in delivering these programmes. We are consistently cited as a model for other providers to emulate.
- **Being highlighted as the most effective at recruiting teenagers in all of Surrey.** This is a testament to Godalming Youth Service's ability to connect with young people and engage them in the youth service. Our marketing is all produced in house, and it speaks to the effectiveness of our methods to have this recognised externally.
- **A nominated staff member has responsibility for liaising with parents, and this has been excellent, leading to much better parent support.** This is a positive development that will help to ensure that parents are able to be more involved in their children's lives and that they are better informed about the youth service.

Overall, Godalming Youth Service's involvement in the Club4 programme has been a huge success. The programme has provided many benefits to the youth service, including increased funding, more activities, and better engagement with young people.

Concerns

High uptake limiting availability

Our popularity as a provider means that our programmes are consistently full, making it difficult to meet demand. We often have a waiting list for our events, and this is just from young people in receipt of evouchers, without even taking into consideration our youth centre regulars who do not have evouchers.

This, of course, is inevitable. Our programme offers brilliant opportunities, many of which are very ambitious, novel and with no comparable offers within Surrey.

One solution we have tried already is having some days which have higher capacity, such as our youth centre-based days. However, uptake for these days is not as great as it is for other days.

Our plan moving forward is to make our centre-based more engaging. We found that our Christmas Dinner, Virtual Reality Day, Nerf Day and End of Summer Barbecue all proved to be popular, low

cost, high attendance opportunities for Club4. We will be aiming to provide a similar engaging centre-based, open access opportunity each day of the week.

Capacity to integrate other youth centre members

During our first couple of Club4 programmes, we had a few spaces left over places at events that we could offer to other Youth Centre members. However, the uptake from young people in receipt of evouchers has been so high this Summer that we were not been able to offer any places to others. This is considered a step backwards as it was one way in which we were able to integrate young people from different backgrounds and utilise the welcoming nature of youth centre regulars to encourage newcomers to participate more widely. The lack of left-over spaces for non-FSM children has also contributed to the issues below.

Restricted opportunities

Godalming Youth Service delivering the Club4 scheme has sometimes proven confusing for mainstream young people who access our regular term-time universal youth work provision.

Club4 provides funding for targeted programmes for young people in receipt of Free School Meals and others identified as needing support. Due to the nature of the funding, these programs are not universally available to all young people. This can lead to confusion and resentment among the young people who are not eligible for the programmes. It is difficult for them to understand the reason that that lots of non-regular young people are offered places as part of the Club4 scheme, whereas youth centre regulars are not offered places on these same schemes.

We had experimented with making a limited number of places available to non-Club4 young people, but this proved unworkable as we would often end up with 20 young people applying for just 5 places that were available, and then getting even more confused when young people with evouchers were 'jumping the queue'.

SEND participation

There are more young people accessing Short Breaks in Waverley than in any other part of Surrey¹, and there is always a need for more SEND provision. An especially high volume of young people with SEND applied to access Club4 in general, and with our Summer Programme being arguable one of the most popular in Surrey, this has led to a higher number of SEND young people than might be expected.

Whilst we are committed to supporting these young people, this can have a number of implications for mainstream young people, staff supervision and safety.

For mainstream young people, this can lead to feelings of exclusion and frustration, as they may feel that the activities are not designed for them or that they are not getting the same level of attention from staff.

For staff, this can lead to increased stress and workload, as they may have to juggle the needs of a variety of young people with different needs. It is also important to maintain sight of the fact that we are a universal or mainstream provider; we will always do our best to support those with complex needs, but we are not in a position to provide a one-to-one or key working service or similar.

¹https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/323354/Budget-2023-24-Children-and-Families-Short-Breaks-.pdf#:~:text=Whilst%20funding%20for%20these%20services%20is%20not%20currently,and%20Lifelong%20Learning%20Leadership%20Team%20in%20July%202022.

It can also lead to safety concerns, as staff may not be adequately briefed regarding the level of need a young person might present. For example, many of the consent forms just contain 'Autism' or 'ASD' in the description of needs, but this could mean any number of things with regards to challenging behaviours and training needs. In several instances, young people who have a SEND specific provision and are unable to access mainstream education, have signed up and provided no details regarding their additional needs.

This creates some challenging situations and there are a few times where we have had to be explain to parents that we cannot accommodate more acute needs, and whether or not it is appropriate to send their child to a mainstream provision without providing details of their needs and to a place where they don't have a dedicated one-to-one.

To address these issues, it is important to ensure that there is a balance of SEND and mainstream young people in Club4 activities. It is also important to provide staff with training on how to work with SEND young people and how to manage challenging behaviours, ensuring we continue to create a safe and inclusive environment for all young people who participate in Club4.

Addressing Concerns

Increased Non-Club4 Funded Opportunities

With the Youth Service now having its own minibus and staff no longer limited to term-time only contracts, we can begin providing outings for all young people. The term-time only contracts were previously the main barrier to this as we only had one all-year youth worker. The move to all-year contracts is considered a game-changer in regard to providing these types of opportunities, simple activities such as taking young people to the Spectrum or beach in a minibus become instantly attainable as a regulars feature of our youth programmes.

Mixed economy events

Something we have done previously with limited effectiveness has been to put on mixed economy events. This is where we would put on activities that would be free for Club4 young people, but with a charge for those not eligible. On surface, this seems like a simple solution, but proved problematic in practice. Our trips have been oversubscribed by Club4 young people and once we get to around 20 high-need young people on a trip such as swimming, supervision ratios would prove prohibitive to increasing numbers further. When trying to remain within appropriate supervision ratios, we would find ourselves making only 5 places available and doing this created more harm than good.

During Summer, making youth centre-based days mixed economy based was trialled and seemed to work well. It is planned to do this next year with the aim of having one centre-based day per week. We also want to try having some more elaborate centre-based opportunities, such as a Youth Comic-Con, where the event would be ticketed, and food would have a small cost for non-Club4 young people.

Christmas Holiday Programmes

We had a good attendance, but also experienced our first real set back with Club4 delivery which was that the Godalming's Got Talent only attracted 50% of the attendance we aimed for. This led to our HAF grant being slightly reduced as we did not meet numerical targets. We learned a lesson from this and emphasised off-site activities during our Easter delivery. Christmas activities included:

Christmas Dinner

Young people meet Santa and receive a small gift at this festive event. They also have the opportunity to socialize with their peers and make new friends.

Godalming's Got Talent - Music and Yoga Workshop

This is a creative and relaxing activity that improves young people's mental and physical well-being. Music has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, while yoga can help improve flexibility, strength, and balance. This is a valuable experience for young people as it helps them de-stress and improve their overall health and well-being.

Laser Quest and Bowling

These are active and fun activities that improve young people's physical fitness and social skills. Laser Quest is a competitive activity that requires teamwork and problem-solving skills, while bowling is a more relaxed activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. These activities are a good way for young people to let off steam and have some fun.

Easter Holiday Programmes

During the Easter holidays, we provided the following opportunities. We went much more trip-heavy as we recognised that our school holiday provision needed to provide something different to our regular term-time programmes. As well as bowling we offered Ice Skating, Doughnutting on dry ski slopes and Centre-based activities.

Summer Holiday Programmes

The Summer Programme for 2023 was a combination of centre-based and off-site activities, a blend that worked well. We hit our numerical targets on all but one of our days. The learning we will apply to this is to make our centre-based days more distinctively different, taking the form of mixed economy special events where young people with vouchers get free entry. This year's summer activities included:

Broadwater Youth Centre - Nerf-Tastic Mayhem! - School Years 7-11

Instead of taking young people paintballing which would have proved a logistical and financial challenge, we instead decided to purchase 20 Nerf guns and facilitate our own games at the youth centre. This was resounding success.

The youth service is planning to organize more giant Nerf gun battles in the future. They believe that these events are a valuable way to provide young people with physical activity, teamwork, confidence, social interaction, stress relief, and creativity.

Bowling

Bowling achieved a number of great outcomes again. A particular benefit was that the bowling event caused young people who had not previously interacted to spend time with one another. The participants had a lot of fun and were physically active. They also worked together as a team and built confidence. They made new friends and reduced stress. Finally, they were creative and came up with new strategies for bowling.

Laser Quest

Laser Quest is proving to be a highly beneficial activity, where participants had a lot of fun and were physically active. They also worked together as a team and built confidence and made new friends. It was also of benefit to provide this free of charge to those who otherwise would be unable to participate due to economic barriers.

Amazingly, the Youth Service Officer, won the game and got the highest score of the day. He is embarrassingly proud of this accomplishment, and it led to some great banter with young people and staff, the kind of fun memories that make youth work so significant.

Doughnutting

Donutting at a dry ski slope has proven a very popular activity, and it definitely meets the Club4 goals with regards to physical activity as there is lots of running up and down the hill. Doughnutting is a relatively inexpensive activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and skill levels.

Virtual Reality Day

The Virtual Reality Day attracted a lot of young people with quite acute needs. Over 70% of the applicants for the event had severe SEND needs. The youth service was able to accommodate these needs by providing individual support and adapting the activities as needed, and it was great to positively engage and impact so many young people with targeted characteristics. The event was a great success, and the participants had a lot of fun, and we are looking at repeating something similar in the future.

The youth centre was a great venue for the event, and it is a really effective way to bring a new cohort of young people into our centre who will likely attend more regularly.

Swimming

Our trip swimming at Guildford Spectrum proved to be well-subscribed. As has been a theme with this Summer Club4 in general, over 70% of the applicants had severe SEND needs. The youth workers were initially apprehensive about facilitating a swimming trip for such a large group of young people with special needs, but they were pleasantly surprised at how easy it was.

The young people were able to participate in all of the activities and they had a lot of fun. By the end of the day, the young people were exhausted but happy. The time at the youth centre after the swimming trip proved to be an excellent addition and it meant they were able to relax after a physically tiring trip.

The swimming trip was a great success, and it has given the youth workers the confidence to plan more events involving swimming in the future. It was surprising how it met the needs of young people with SEND.

Ninja Warrior

Ninja Warrior is a physical obstacle course that challenges participants to climb, swing, jump, and balance their way through a series of obstacles. It is a great way to get exercise and have fun at the same time. This was a great venue and one we intend to use again. It also achieved a high attendance.

Virtual Reality and Sumo Suits

The youth centre organized a day of activities focused on sumo suits and virtual reality. The young people were divided into teams, and they competed against each other in a series of sumo matches. The matches were a lot of fun and the young people got to use their strength and agility.

After the sumo suit competition, the young people had a chance to try out virtual reality. They were able to experience a variety of different virtual reality experiences, such as flying through the air, exploring a virtual world, and playing games. The virtual reality experiences were a lot of fun, and the young people were able to use their imaginations.

Nerf-Day Two

We hosted a second Nerf Day, with the same intended goals as the first. We developed some new activities for this one, including a new game called 'Vampire Survivors'. We gave young people certificates for participating.

Ice Skating

The youth centre organized an ice-skating trip supported by ice-skating instructors were there to help the young people with their skating and to provide encouragement. The young people had a lot of fun skating, and they learned a lot about the sport.

Blue Spider

The youth centre organized a trip to climbing at Blue Spider in Guildford. The day started with a safety briefing at the youth centre, after which the young people were then divided into two cohorts, with 10 young people in each cohort. We then took the group in two trips, with three staff at the youth centre and three on the trip. Each climbing cohort had two instructors. The young people had a lot of fun climbing and they learned a lot about the sport. They also developed their teamwork and problem-solving skills.

End of Summer BBQ

The end of summer barbecue was a lot of fun and it was a great way for the young people to celebrate the end of the summer. It was also a great way for them to socialize and make new friends.

Mobile Youth Work

Significant progress has been made in setting up a mobile youth work project aimed at reaching out to young people in various communities, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Vehicle Acquisition

A Welfare Vehicle has been purchased as the primary mobile unit for the project. This vehicle will serve as a base for delivering youth work services and activities.

Adaption

The Welfare Vehicle is currently undergoing adaptations to transform it into a suitable activity space for engaging with young people. The interior is designed to provide a welcoming and functional environment.

Minibus

Besides the Welfare Vehicle, a minibus has been procured specifically for organising trips and outings for young people. This will enhance their experiences and broaden their horizons.

Funding

The project has successfully secured funding from multiple sources. The UK Shared Prosperity fund has contributed a significant portion, and additional contributions from Waitrose and the Dan Eley Foundation have allowed for acquiring a higher-quality vehicle. This funding ensures the mobile youth work project can operate with improved resources.

Deployment Timeline

The adapted Welfare Vehicle will be ready for deployment by the end of September. This timeline allows for the completion of all necessary adaptations and the integration of essential equipment and facilities.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The mobile youth work project will achieve successful community engagement by involving key stakeholders such as Witley Parish Council, Rodborough School, and Godalming College. This engagement has laid a strong foundation for the project's launch, and we intend to expand outreach to additional stakeholders once the vehicle is available. The project has also prioritised flexibility to reach areas the Safer Waverley Partnership identifies.

Witley Parish Council

The project has engaged with Witley Parish Council, fostering a collaborative relationship. This engagement ensures alignment with local priorities, community needs, and potential locations for the project's activities. The partnership with the council enables effective coordination and support for the project's implementation.

Rodborough School and Godalming College

The project will seek to actively involve Rodborough School and Godalming College, recognising their significance as key educational institutions within the community. Engaging with these schools facilitates access to young people, enabling the project to understand their needs, preferences, and interests. Collaboration with these educational partners enhances the project's relevance and impact. To-date, informal discussions have been very promising but without having the vehicle ready to deploy and demonstrate it has been difficult to develop a concrete offer.

Expansion to Further Stakeholders

Once the mobile vehicle is available, the project aims to expand its engagement to involve more stakeholders. This includes contacting other schools, community organisations, local businesses, and youth groups. This broader engagement will ensure a diverse representation of young people and a comprehensive understanding of the community's needs.

Collaboration with Safer Waverley Partnership

The project has identified the Safer Waverley Partnership as a crucial stakeholder for identifying areas with specific needs and challenges. By maintaining flexibility in the project's operations, it can respond to the partnership's recommendations and proactively engage with these areas to address youth-related issues effectively.

Site Identification

The mobile youth work project has successfully identified suitable sites to deploy its services, ensuring strategic and impactful engagement with young people in the community. The process of site identification has involved several key steps and considerations, and the process by which we are choosing sites is summarised below. It should be noted that this is a dynamic process as, by design, a mobile youth project seeks to respond to the ever-emerging and changing needs of young people.

Needs Assessment

As part of site identification, a needs assessment is being conducted. This involves gathering information on the demographics, interests, and challenges faced by young people in the community. The needs assessment provides valuable insights into the areas requiring focused youth work support, and several sites have been identified as suitable for delivering targeted youth work support.

Stakeholder Collaboration

The project engages with key stakeholders, including local councils, schools, community organisations, and the Safer Waverley Partnership. Collaborating with these stakeholders is helping us to understand their perspectives, gather input on site suitability, and ensure alignment with local priorities.

Mapping Target Areas

The project team are creating a map to visualise target areas for mobile youth work using the information gathered from the needs assessment and stakeholder collaboration. These areas will be

identified based on youth population, limited access to existing youth services, and socio-economic factors, but crucially will in large take advice from bodies such the Safer Waverley Partnership.

Site Evaluation

The identified target areas require suitable deployment sites. Factors to consider during the evaluation include accessibility, safety, proximity to schools or community centres, availability of facilities, and potential for positive community engagement. The site evaluation process ensures that selected sites will be practical for fulfilling the project's goals.

Community Consultation

To ensure community buy-in and refine site selection, the project team has begun conducting community consultations in the identified areas. Community consultation work has been completed in Witley, and future consultations will be done as we identify other sites. These consultations involve engaging with residents, young people, and community leaders to gather feedback, address concerns, and better understand each community's needs and preferences.

Flexibility and Adaptability

As a mobile project, intrinsic flexibility will be retained in site selection, allowing for adjustments based on community feedback, emerging needs, or changes in circumstances. This adaptive approach is one of the distinct benefits of mobile youth work and we are taking care to ensure that the project remains responsive to the evolving requirements of the community.

The successful identification of sites for the mobile youth work project reflects a comprehensive and inclusive approach, considering the community's specific needs and leveraging key stakeholders' expertise. This strategic site selection will enable the project to effectively reach and engage with young people, fostering their development and well-being.

We have identified multiple sites, including a primary location for the initial deployment of the mobile youth work project. This site, Burton Pavilion, will serve as a hub for engaging with young people and delivering tailored services to meet their needs effectively. It has geographic proximity to Rodborough School, enabling us to increase our reach to students there. It is also a location that is remote from our Broadwater Youth Centre, meaning that it will attract young people from different geographic regions.

Staff and Volunteer Recruitment

Recruiting staff for the mobile youth work project was a long process. There were a large number of applicants. Summarising progress to date, the following key developments have taken place:

- **Advertising and Recruitment:** The project has launched a recruitment campaign to attract qualified and passionate individuals to join the team. The advertisements were widely circulated, resulting in a high volume of applicants.
- **Planned Start Date:** The hired staff commenced their roles in mid-September. This timeline allows for a seamless transition and ensures that the team is ready to deliver services when the mobile youth work project launches.
- **Youth Work Training:** The initial phase of the staff's role will involve comprehensive youth work training. This training will focus on crucial areas such as safeguarding, health and safety, and the safe use of mobile youth work vehicles. It is vital to equip the team with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the well-being and security of the young people they will engage with.

The recruitment process is complete, the next phase is volunteer recruitment.

Apprentice Recruitment

We are further supporting the mobile youth work project by employing an apprentice, a position that will be funded through a collaboration between Active Surrey and Godalming Town Council. The selected apprentice will play a crucial role in facilitating physical activities on the mobile vehicle, offering several benefits to the young people involved:

- **Facilitation of Physical Activities:** The apprentice's primary responsibility will be to facilitate physical activities on the mobile vehicle. This includes organising and leading engaging and inclusive sessions that promote physical fitness, team-building, and personal growth among the young participants.
- **Skill Development:** By actively engaging in physical activities led by the apprentice, young people will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills. These may include teamwork, leadership, communication, problem-solving, and coordination, fostering their overall personal and social development.
- **Health and Well-being:** The presence of an apprentice dedicated to physical activities will contribute to improving the health and well-being of young people. Regular engagement in physical exercise not only promotes physical fitness but also boosts mental health, self-esteem, and overall happiness.
- **Funding Partnership:** The project has secured funding from both Active Surrey and Godalming Town Council to support the employment of an apprentice. This partnership highlights the shared commitment to investing in the development and well-being of young people within the community.

This collaboration between Active Surrey and Godalming Town Council was not anticipated and represents a fantastic additional opportunity for growth and engagement. We will outline how their appointment contributes to the Mobile Youth Project in future reports.

Summary of Overall Progress

Overall, progress towards setting up the mobile youth work project has been significant. The acquisition of the Activity Vehicle and minibus, along with successful funding efforts and stakeholder engagement, sets the stage for a successful launch towards the end of September.

Regarding hiring staff, the high volume of applicants signifies the project's appeal and the reputation of Godalming Youth Service. The selected staff members are undergo comprehensive training to ensure their readiness to provide safe and effective support to the young people they will engage with.

Additionally, by employing an apprentice to focus on physical activities, the mobile youth work project will further enhance young people's overall well-being, personal development, and skill-building.

The mobile youth work project is also seeking to demonstrate successful community engagement by collaborating with Witley Parish Council, Rodborough School, and Godalming College. This engagement will ensure that the project aligns with local priorities and deeply understands the target demographic. The project's commitment to expanding stakeholder engagement and maintaining flexibility allows for a broader reach and a more targeted approach to serving the diverse needs of young people in the community.

When summarising these progress goals together, it is evident that the foundations are in place for this to be a successful project that will provide support and opportunities for young people that foster their personal growth and development.

Social Media and Marketing

For the bulk of our online marketing, we have opted to use two platforms - Facebook and Instagram and support their use by using Linktree as an index for all of our content. We previously had a Twitter (now 'X') account but found that young people and parents did not use this, making posting to it superfluous.

Facebook

Facebook is an effective tool for the Godalming Youth Service. The youth service uses Facebook to promote itself to parents and guardians, as well as communicate with them. They do this by creating posts about upcoming events, activities, and programs. They also share photos and videos of past events. This helps to raise awareness of the youth service and encourage parents to sign their children up for programs.

Facebook is used to send out important notifications to parents such as changes to schedules or cancellations due to weather. It is also used to answer questions that parents may have about the youth service. This helps to keep parents informed and involved in their children's activities.

It is important to note that, by and large, young people do not tend to use Facebook. Studies have found that only 29% of teenagers use Facebook, compared to 72% in 2012. This is because young people are increasingly using other social media platforms, such as Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. We have opted not to use Snapchat or TikTok for reasons that are outlined below.

Why we don't use TikTok

As a service, we have opted not to use TikTok despite its popularity. This is for the following reasons:

- **Age concerns.** TikTok is designed for users aged 13 and up. However, many younger children use the app. If we were to make content available on this platform, we would be encouraging it to be prematurely adopted by young people.
- **Content concerns.** TikTok has been criticized for the content that is available on the platform. Some users have reported seeing inappropriate or offensive content, such as videos of bullying or violence. By using this platform as a service, we would be normalising young people making use of it and it would come across as an implicit endorsement and normalisation of the platform.
- **Addiction concerns.** TikTok has been criticized for its addictive nature. The app's short-form videos are designed to be highly engaging, and users can easily get sucked into spending hours scrolling through the app. We don't want to contribute towards this happening for our young people.

These same issues exist for Facebook and Instagram, but there are better safeguards on these platforms.

Why we don't use Snapchat

Unfortunately, Snapchat can and has been used as a tool for grooming youths in other contexts. For this reason, we do not want to encourage or normalise the use of this app by young people. This is for the following reasons:

The app's ephemeral messaging feature, which allows messages to self-destruct after a set period of time, can make it seem like a safe way for children to communicate with strangers. However, this

feature can also be used by groomers to convince children to send them explicit images or videos, knowing that the evidence will disappear.

In addition, Snapchat's location sharing feature can be used by groomers to track the movements of their victims. This can make it easier for them to meet up with their victims in person.

The app's anonymous messaging feature can also be used by groomers to hide their identity. This can make it difficult for children to identify who they are talking to and to report abuse.

Snapchat has taken some steps to address the issue of grooming on its platform. For example, the app now requires users to be at least 13 years old to create an account. However, it is still possible for adults to create fake accounts and pose as children.

Snapchat can be addictive. The constant stream of notifications and the pressure to keep up with Snapstreaks can make Snapchat addictive for young people. This can lead to problems with sleep, school, and relationships.

Snapchat is not age-appropriate for many youths. The minimum age to use Snapchat is 13 years old, but many younger children use the app. This can be a problem because Snapchat does not have the same privacy and safety features as other social media platforms.

For these reasons, our risk assessment of the platform found it to be an inappropriate tool.

Procedures

Digitising

Godalming Youth Service has benefited from digitizing its consent forms and registers by moving to Microsoft Forms. Overall, Godalming Youth Service has seen a number of benefits from digitizing its consent forms. These benefits include improved security, better records of information and better ecological practice.

Evaluations

At the end of each session, we complete an Evaluation. The evaluation is adapted from Signs of Safety, a strengths-based approach to social care, and uses the following three questions to inform future actions. This method has proven to be time-productive and useful in giving staff teams a sharp focus on improving practice:

What's working well? We begin by focusing on the positives in each session, recognising that our strengths will also present methods and assets for responding to any concerns.

What are we concerned about? This question helps to identify areas that are of concern to youth workers.

What needs to happen? This question helps to identify the actions that need to be taken to build on the strengths of the programme and identify how to respond to any concerns.

We have also added additional questions regarding what volunteering took part, comments from young people and any equipment that might be useful (this is to inform the Wishlist and use of budget).

As with our consent forms, we have also moved our end of session evaluations to Microsoft Forms.

Food Hygiene

Godalming Youth Service is proud to announce that it has been awarded a five-star food hygiene rating by the Food Standards Agency. The rating reflects the high standards of food hygiene that are maintained in all of our premises.

The benefits of the five-star rating are numerous. It increases confidence from parents and carers and gives us the ability to attract more funding for food-related projects. It also helps us to know that we are providing young people with a safe and healthy environment to eat and socialize.

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our young people, and this rating is a testament to our efforts. We would like to thank all of our staff for their hard work and dedication in ensuring that our food hygiene standards are always met.

Conclusion

I would like to thank the Town Councillors for their continued support of the Youth Service. Your investment in our young people is making a real difference to their lives.