



PROPOSAL FOR YOUTH HUB WITHIN BIRCHEN COPPICE

Community Development – Nov 2021

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Overview

Active Youth Outreach Services CIC strives to develop its members of staff, so that when they move into other roles or progress their skills, they are in a better position than when they started within us. All of our staff are: is pleased to submit this proposal for services to support children and young people in the Birchen Coppice and Rifle Range community. Throughout this proposal I will breakdown our ideas to what we envisage bringing to the area. Through working with current networks that are already exist within the community and developing links with local and district wide organisations we aim to bring a developing vision for children and young people aged 5 – 24.

The Objective

- Need #1: Further support for a youth drop-in for young people aged 12-18
- Need #2: The development of activities outside of school hours
- Need #3: The development of skilled workshops for young people / adults aged 12-24

The Opportunity

- Goal #1: Deliver a youth drop-in service to the community for young people
- Goal #2: Provide internet support for young people who do not have access at home
- Goal #3: Increase the number of organisations supporting young people within the community

The Solution

- **Recommendation #1:** Improve the number of activities that children and young people have access to whilst not in education. This includes outreach service delivery to the community green, holiday club delivery at the primary school and the application of a youth drop-in service. I recommend a pilot programme for each of these activities to understand the size of the need in the community and to bring in more information on supporting young people in this community.
- **Recommendation #2:** Identify and supply a safe space for young people to access the internet for connecting with family, job opportunities and education. I recommend a space in the community church, which can be utilised by young people to do homework or find work or be tutored/supported by adults.
- **Recommendation #3:** Develop networks with sports clubs, organisations and business across the Wyre Forest District, supporting our delivery of outreach projects to open more experiences for children, young people and families within the community. I recommend a forum for young people to share their views on what they would like to see in their community. From here we can develop a plan to bring organisations, clubs and businesses that offer those services into the community.

Our Proposal

Birchen Coppice and the Rifle Range estate have a rich history that has been greyed by people's views in recent years. Services for young people have been in decline and opportunities have been limited due to funding cuts and a pandemic which still has a grip on communities across the country. These however should not be barriers to services coming into the community and supporting the development of spaces and children and young people that live in the area.

Active Youth Outreach Services have been working with communities across Worcestershire since 2015. On average we work with 3000 children and young people per year. In 2020, we shifted our strategy to focus most of our work within the Wyre Forest to have a larger impact on children and young people. We delivered multiple pop-up programs like archery and fitness in the park. In 2021, we successfully delivered a comprehensive summer programme to three holiday club venues and one outreach site within the Wyre Forest, engaging with children, young people and families. Following these successes, we have recently decided to shift our operational strategy to the Birchen Coppice and Rifle Range community, where we believe there is a real need for our services. We currently work with the local primary school and over the next few months aim to develop our presence within the community venues.

Within our organisation we have over 25 years of experience of working with children and young people. Our board of directors are versed in many areas including primary teaching, adventurous activity management, safety advisement and marketing and communications. Our Operations and Fundraising Manager has over five years of working within schools and with young people through volunteering. His insight into adventurous activities and his creative spirit support the development of exciting programs for children and young people to participate in. Our outreach team are made up of enthusiastic young people who thrive on new experiences and develop opportunities for young people.

Children and young people face a moderate risk of dis-engaging with their community, if they are not attracted by the activities and support that their community offer them. If young people cannot access adequate support, when they need it, problems are allowed to continue. Those problems then increase in severity and have an even greater social and economic impact as they persist into adulthood.

The problems arising from the absence of appropriate and adequate support networks is heightened in areas that have limited youth provision. Here children have no outlet to express their feelings, or access support for the issues they face, the problems they are encountering are likely to worsen, often with serious detrimental effects to both the individual and their family and community.

Appropriate support, positive engagement, sport and physical activity can all help to alleviate these issues, but without a coordinated 'joined-up' approach, the problem is unlikely to be resolved with any long-term effect. Through working with local policing teams, schools, the church, key community members and residents of the community, we can begin to turn the tide for children and young people in the area.

There are several areas for concern that currently exist and have been identified through conversations with residents of the community and representatives of important bodies in the community.

- Internet poverty is a rising factor within communities and more young people are getting limited access to the internet from their homes. With local services for young people to access education and job opportunities online in decline, it would only be a benefit for us to utilise the IT equipment that we have at our disposal to support young people to access the support that they need.
- Activities for young people in the community outside of education is limited. It has been identified that there is a five a side team and a judo club on the Birchen Coppice estate. There is also activities at the community church including a drumming circle and community breakfast. Throughout the year we would be able to offer half termly outreach projects and potential pop-up activities with the aim of bringing in activities that children and young people may not have participated in before. A weekly youth drop-in, where youth forum insight will guide the way for an inclusive service for young people.

- Mental health of children and young people has been in decline since the beginning of the pandemic, with the stress of GCSE's and A-levels making the biggest impact among other social elements which are feeding loneliness, anxiety and depression. Through research that has previously been undertaken, by us and other research bodies, we've found that by supplying a safe place for young people to socialize and engage with outdoor activities can have a positive impact on mental health. We can achieve this through promotion of volunteering activities in the community and through bi-weekly activities on weekends.
- Access to free activities is an element that has always been delivered by Active Youth Outreach Services. Money shouldn't be a barrier to children and young people taking part in an activity. With continued support from funders, we strive to keep up with holiday club delivery and the school and inventive activities that will continue to engage children and young people in their community. A youth forum would best establish what young people aspire to be and what they would like to see more of in the community.

The areas that we feel amass the most importance in children and young people include mental health, social injustice, crime and opportunity.

Mental health affects everyone into today's society, good or bad, it has an impact on our lives. Supporting a strong mental health requires a small network of individuals who safeguard others against decisions that may cause harm in another's life. Young people are not immune to this and 1 in 3 suffer with people mental health before they are 18. Through creating a safe place for children to express their views and feelings we can inspire a new approach to encourage and support children and young people to develop.

Social injustice plays a major barrier to young people accessing employment and further education, especially those who do not have access to technology or transport from home. If as a community we can identify those who are trapped by this barrier, then we will be able to shrink the size of social injustice young people endure. This includes supporting young people with interview preparation and transport or access to laptop to attend an interview, supporting young people find work that they will develop in and creating activities that will assist young people in living meaningful lives.

It is inevitable that some level of crime will exist within the community. Within previous projects we have supported community policing with outreach projects to reduce anti-social behavior by over 25%. Through engaging young people with meaningful opportunities and workshops we can assist local community leaders, schools and policing in reducing anti-social behavior and crimes that young people may face.

In time the three goals that we have set out to achieve will accomplished, not as a lone organisation but as a collective community, made strong by residents, community leaders, local policing, schools and other organisations.

Goal #1 Deliver a youth drop-in service to the community for young people

Goal 1 will be achieved by piloting a youth drop-in service that is delivered by Active Youth Outreach Services and supported by local youth workers, volunteers and staff. Young people are encouraged to participate, to give an insight into the need and support future funding for the service. The pilot will last until the end of January, where two forums will set up to establish the impact and the future for the service. Following this, mid-February we aim to re-launch the youth drop-in, in association with the youth hub, with activities delivered by the preferences of those who attend.

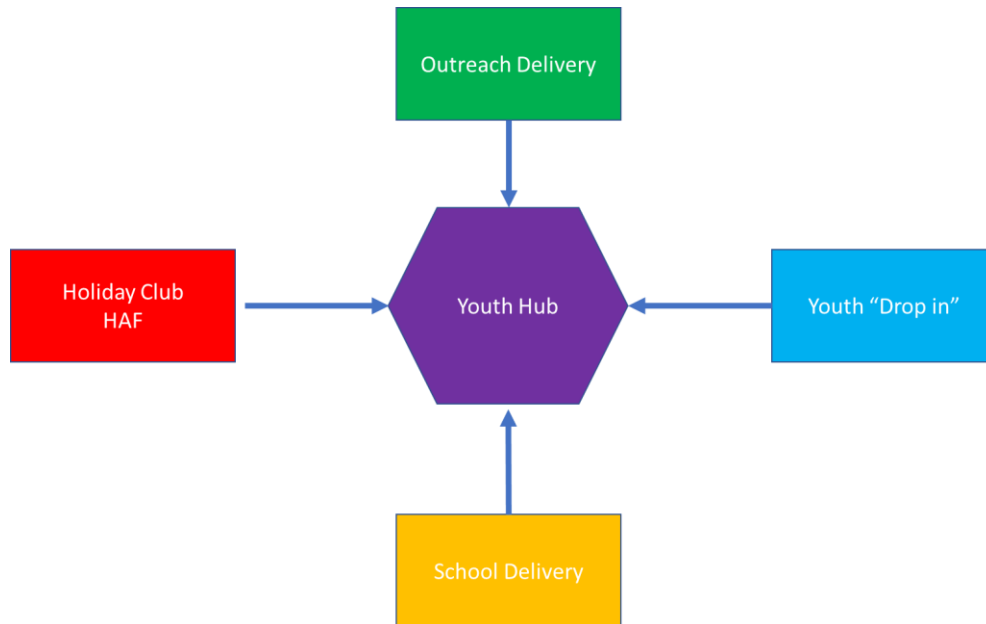
Goal #2: Provide internet support for young people who do not have access at home

This goal will be achieved through an extension to the youth drop-in service. There will be a allocated space within the community church for young people to access the internet through laptops and other computer equipment. This space is away from the rest of drop-in and will hopefully provide a place for study and for those who wish to keep in touch with family and friends further afield to do so. This will be available every week and if becomes an area of high need, then additional funding will be sought to keep up with demand. 10-15% of homes within the community do not

have access to the internet at home, this service will hopefully bring down the barrier and support those young people who need it the most.

Goal #3: Increase the number of organisations supporting young people within the community

Goal three will be achieved through developing links with sports clubs across the Wyre Forest, outreach their delivery to the community. It is important that children and young people have a choice of a range of activities to take part in. Through a young person forum, we can identify the organisations and sports clubs to approach and develop these links either through outreach delivery or a weekly activity that takes place on the green or other community spaces.



Rationale

Insight

As an organisation we have worked with children and young people for over a quarter of a century. During this time, we have seen an increase in disadvantaged communities, a decrease in youth services and a rise in anti-social behavior. Through conversations with several key members of the community and residents, we have identified a gap in the provision for children and young people. This proposal doesn't just outline the need for services for young people, but the impact it will have on the community, one we hope in the years to come will have a continued positive impact.

Opportunity

The opportunity to bring in new funding and organisations to the community is unscalable, and one we as an organisation will rise to overcome. These include the barriers and obstacles that face this community and the children and young people who live within it. No young person should be deprived of an experience because of where they live or because of the personal challenges they face.

Alignment with our vision

The vision that Active Youth Outreach Services has for children, young people and the communities we work with align perfectly with what we are offering here as an organisation:

- Young people are successful, realising their dreams and fulfilling their potential
- There are safe spaces that children and young people can access; call their own and have freedom to express themselves
- Relationships have improved within families and communities
- Children and young people feel empowered to ask for support.

Current resources/technology

Active Youth Outreach Services already has resources and some technology in place to support what we have outlined in the proposal. We have an outreach trailer, which supports our community outreach delivery, we have storage for sports equipment, inflatables and archery equipment. We have recently purchased laptops to support projects with vulnerable children, to learn how to be safe online and to access job opportunities. Our base of resources is always developing as we design new projects to be delivered.

Project Deliverables

Following is a complete list of all project deliverables:

Deliverable	Description
Youth Hub	Four staged approaches for supporting the regeneration of activities for young people in the community.
Youth Outreach	Activities aimed at young people and families to engage with together within the area.
Youth Drop-in (Name TBD)	A service for young people aged 12 – 18, once a week, to access a safe provision of activities.

Timeline for Execution

Key project dates are outlined below. Dates are best-guess estimates and are subject to change until a contract is executed.

Description	Start Date	End Date	Duration
Pilot Start – Youth Drop-in	26/01/2022	30/03/2022	10 Weeks
Milestone 1 - Youth Forum Launch	06/04/2022	06/04/2022	1 Day
Milestone 2 – Community Forum	13/04/2022	13/04/2022	1 Day
Pilot Complete – Youth Hub Launch / Phase 2 Start	20/04/2022	Ongoing	
Milestone 3 – Youth Drop-in Long term delivery Start	20/04/2022	Ongoing	
Milestone 4 – Wider organisational links developed	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Phase 2 Complete	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

Funding Applications

The following applications have been or are to be made throughout the duration of this project.

Funding Applications	Due Date*
Community Renewal Fund	17 th Jan
The National Lottery	Ongoing
Worcestershire Children’s First - Holiday Activities & Food Fund	Ongoing

Expected Results

We expect the following results from the delivery of a Youth Hub to the Birchen Coppice and Rifle Range Community to be:

Result #1: Improved access to activities for children and young people in the community

Result #2: A reduction in barriers that young people face in finding and gaining employment

Result #3: Increased number of organisations operating in the area

Qualifications

Active Youth Outreach Services CIC strives to develop its members of staff, so that when they move into other roles or progress their skills, they are in a better position than when they started within us. All of our staff are:

- Enhanced DBS Checked

And over the next few months will be:

- First Aid Level 3 Qualified
- Mental Health First Aid Qualified
- Archery Instructor Level 1 Qualified
- British Canoeing Instructor Qualified

Conclusion

Throughout my time within the community, however short, I have been to gain an insightful understanding to the need for services like what we are offering to return to the Birchen Coppice and Rifle Range community. It is with great hope and optimism that this proposal is accepted by those who read it so that we as an organisation can begin on the road to improving children and young people's lives within this developing community.

If you do have any queries or additions that you would like to make to this proposal, please write to me at connor@ayos.org.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read through this proposal,

Connor Allen

Operations and Fundraising Manager
Active Youth Outreach Services CIC