

SHILDON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTION NETWORK

England & Wales · Charity number 1134903

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 2010-03-12

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Shildon Town Council
Civic Centre Square
Main Street
Shildon
DL4 1AH

Phone 01388 772563

Email k.regan@shildon.gov.uk

Activities

Objects: 1 TO ADVANCE IN LIFE AND RELIEVE THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO LIVE, PLAY OR ACCESS SERVICES IN SHILDON AND SURROUNDING AREA (THE AREA OF BENEFIT) THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESS THEIR EXPRESSED NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS2 TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE COMMUNICATION, PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND BEST PRACTICE BETWEEN VOLUNTARY AND STATUTORY AGENCIES WORKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SHILDON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

Activities: Co-ordinate activities and opportunities for children and young people within Shildon

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** SHILDON AND SURROUNDING AREA
- Durham

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£27,025	£14,580	-	-
2024-03-31	£45,232	£25,184	-	-
2023-03-31	£31,872	£7,785	-	-
2022-03-31	£10,000	£7,525	-	-
2021-03-31	£8,800	£5,600	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Samantha Townsend	Chair	2023-01-18
Neil Cleasby		2026-05-22
Timothy Hillary		2026-05-22

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SCYPAN AGM 2025



SCYPAN AGM 2025

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Chair Paula Nelson

Deputy Chair Samantha Townsend

Treasurer Ashley Wharton

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SCYPAN AGM 2025

SHILDON CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTION NETWORK



1. Our Membership

CORE GROUP

Shildon Town Council	Local Town & County Councillors
Shildon Alive – A St Johns Church Project	Durham County Council
Livin	Shildon Salvation Army
Jubilee fields Community Association	Sunnydale Leisure Centre
New Shildon All Saints Baden Powell Scout Group	Wellbeing for Life
Shildon Guides and Brownies Groups	YMCA Teasdale / Shildon
Jubilee Fields Community Centre	NHS Growing Healthy Team
Shildon Methodist Church	Locomotion
Shildon AFC CIC	Place Lab
Shildon Police	Northern Heartlands
St. John's CofE Primary School	
Timothy Hackworth Primary School	
Thornhill Primary School	

SCYPAN AGM 2025

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2. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year. I hope it is a good and successful year for you, your families and SCYPAN too.

As Chair I wanted to say how much I admire the dedication of all the adults and young people involved in our local groups, despite the challenges and difficulties we are facing in the current climate, you have continued with dedication to our young people and the community. We have a wonderful Shildon AFC CIC, Spectrum Roller-Skating Club, Running Clubs, Sports Groups, Scouts, Cubs, Brownies and Guide Groups, Jubilee Fields Community Centre and Shildon Youth supported by YMCA and Shildon Alive, drop ins, Mother and Toddler Groups and many more. This is not counting the After-School Groups the three primary schools in the town provide too. So, there is something for every young person of all ages.

Thanks to all of our funders, and Shildon Town Council for supporting our youthwork and partnership forum.

A BIG THANKYOU to Shildon Town Council, the dedicated Town Councillors and local volunteers for making Christmas a magical experience for all, the Christmas Tree light switch on was wonderful. Thanks to all the careful planning and hard work from the Shildon Town Council and Civic Hall team, once again everyone had the opportunity to meet Santa as well as enjoy great entertainment and bargains from the tabletop sale.

I would like to thank the members of SCYPAN, and your organisations this year as we have shown we can work in partnership and make events and activities bigger and better. Many SCYPAN members regularly volunteer their time to support vulnerable residents when they most need it, and many partners offer support or funding to help other groups support families in crisis. Thank you very much for giving up your time, your experience, your involvement, and your passion for our community.

My thanks also go to:

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 Shildon Town Council & Town Councillors
 Paula Nelson (outgoing Chair)
 Ashley Wharton – Shildon Alive (Treasurer)
 Saint John's Church
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 Bishop Auckland & Shildon Area Action Partnership

Local community and statutory organisations
 ALL The Young People of Shildon and the surrounding area

Thanks, as always
Samantha Townsend

(Chair – Shildon Children & Young People's Action Network)

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3. Aims and Objectives

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SHILDON CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTION NETWORK



4. Our Story So Far

The Network was set up in early 2006 to bring together statutory, voluntary and community groups that provide services for children, young people, and families in Shildon and the surrounding area. In past years we have delivered a Young Peoples Awards although that's currently not our priority as we felt that direct work with young people may be more valuable.

SCYPAN strives to work in partnership and address the needs and aspirations of children, young people and families living, playing, and accessing services in Shildon and the surrounding area.

The network holds regular meetings for members and other interested parties to share information, raise issues, share problems and solutions. During this period we also commissioned Youth Work from YMCA to provide valuable opportunities for the young people of Shildon.

The network operates an open-door policy and actively encourages other relevant local Children and Young People groups to be involved.

SCYPAN would like to take this opportunity to thank all those groups and individuals who take part in this community effort to provide services and activities for children, young people, and parents.

The achievements of SCYPAN have been a combined effort and hope that the network can go on to achieve its goals.

SCYPAN AGM 2025



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6. ACCOUNTS - APR 2024/MAR 2025

Opening balance £23,060.32

OUT

date	to	Amount
19/09/2024	YMCA youth work	£14,542.15
20/09/2024	Bank charges	£12.50
24/12/2024	Community Bus Affiliation	£25

IN

date	From	Amount
25/04/2024	J Knott Trust Grant	£5,000
07/06/2024	Groundwork UK	£375
23/09/2024	Community Funding (Ballinger Trust Grant)	£5,500
24/03/2025	Durham County Council (AAP)	£16,150

Carried Forward £35,505.67

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7. INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS - APR 2024/MAR 2025

Name of independent examiner: Elizabeth
Oakes

X	I confirm that I have no conflicts of interest that mean I'm unsuitable to examine these accounts.
X	I confirm that I understand the financial information presented to me.
X	I confirm that proper accounting records were kept.
X	I confirm that the accounts accord with the accounting records.

Signed: 

Date: 28/01/26

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5. SCYPAN INFORMATION

Since the development of the new Shildon Youth Initiative (Shildon Youth Group) the annual award ceremony has been placed on hold. The youth group is now well established with regular attendance to the group each Tuesday evening. The group was much more in demand than SCYPAN had ever predicted.

Funding has been secured from Sir James Knott Trust, Point North, Ballinger Trust and the Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP. SCYPAN made the decision to appoint YMCA Teasdale to facilitate the youth group on a weekly basis and they work hard to ensure regular activities are planned in for the young people to enjoy. The group is now fully staffed and receive a weekly donation of food, which has been saved from landfill to help feed the young people who attend without often surplus for them to take home to their families and siblings.

SCYPAN look forward to continuing to work with YMCA moving forward for a successful youth provision in Shildon.

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6. Additional Achievements

- Continue to welcome new members to SCYPAN Network
- Secured the necessary funding to put in place a further 12 months delivery of the Shildon Youth Initiative (group), based at Foundation.
- Continues to support organisations within Shildon and the surrounding area.
- New Facebook group managed by YMCA Teasdale / Shildon ensuring regular updates relating to the youth group activities is shared to its followers.

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7. The Road Ahead

- SCYPAN & YMCA Teesdale, to continue to deliver the Shildon Youth Initiative (Youth Group), based at the Foundations building for a further 12-month period, providing monitoring and evaluation to support funding applications.
-
- Continue to work with local community groups, organisations, statutory agencies and partners for the benefit of the Children, Young People and Families of Shildon.
- Continue to promote SCYPAN and encourage new members to the network.
- Continue to be a supportive Network – move to more digital format for Network, communicating and meeting.
- Continue to share skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Continue to actively explore grant funding opportunities and share with the network.
- Continue to provide high quality inclusive events and activities for Children, Young people, and Families in Shildon.

Effective communication is a priority for SCYPAN, acting as a fulcrum point for the collection and dissemination of relevant information across the network.

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9. AYCC - END OF PROJECT REPORT 2024

YMCA Teasdale / Shildon Youth Worker Final Project Report

Project: Shildon Youth Initiative (Group)
Funded By: SCYPAN

Period Covered: 2024

Author(s): Gemma Matthews

Contributions: Contributor YMCA Teasdale
Contributor: SCYPAN

A. Activities Performed during the period

Group	Shildon	Date of report (written)	Jan 2025
Report period (dates)	Jan - Dec 2024	Number of unique young people	75
Interactions Male / Female split	168/231	Number of young people who identify as SEND / additional needs	Unknown at present Support needs identified but official diagnosis not confirmed by parents/carers
Number of interactions	399	Number of repeat attenders	60
Number of volunteers	1	Number of volunteer hours	24
What has been happening? (inc any trips, etc)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid - British Heart foundation • Winter wonderland - trip to AYCC to enjoy this as part of the Youth Print work • Crafting cards and gifting work to local care home • Building community links - between young people and the local community • Youth print events e.g. branding (yp from various groups in the North East working together to develop a logo and slogan)- NE youth • Attending activities with other young people from different YMCA youth groups • Trainline project • Partnership work within the community of Shildon (Town council, Jubilee fields community centre, Shildon Alive) • Seasonal Displays in foundations • Halloween competition (NE youth) • Birthday celebrations • Pride and what this means to us and others • Neurodiversity workshops and positive interactions • Effective communication - what it is • Individual projects - young people decided what they would like to achieve and we worked in youth groups for them to create their goals. • Various fun and food projects (see below) • Den building in hamsterley forest • Beach trip • Ceramics - make your own mosaic • Woodwork - make your own door sign • Athletics event - Athletics track • Water event - family water activities • BSL competition winners - NE Youth 			

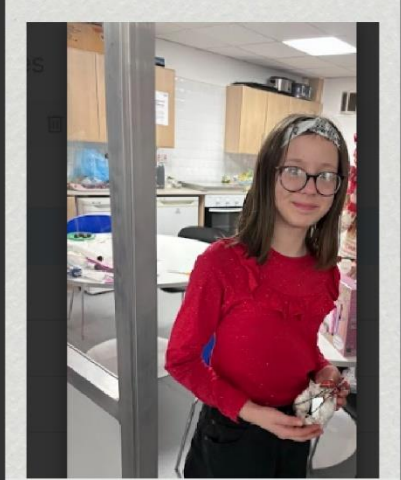
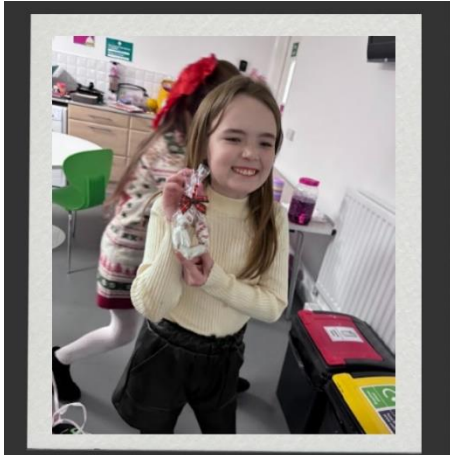
What is planned in the coming months?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day trip on the train • Graffiti art project for centenary train event • Light event project with bacchanalia • Fun and food projects - Feb half term and Easter being planned in • Youth Print youth voice event (collaboration with other youth groups) - invited by Youth Print following our consultation work in youth group. • Positive affirmation • Random acts of kindness and the impact this can have on self and others • Young carers support
What has been the impact / outcome of the work delivered?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence building • Learning new skills • Learning things about themselves • Team working • Compromise and negotiation skills • Independence skills • Conflict resolution
Feedback from a staff member on this period?
<p>-identifying individual needs and interest of the yp and using these to plan sessions and projects, which appeal to each yg member</p> <p>-identified some individual needs through engagement with yp over periods of time</p> <p>-Providing educational elements of the session to incorporate life skills with fun learning strategies.</p> <p>-Working with various partners and organisations has given a variety of project topics and explored the interests the yp have.</p> <p>-Working with parents/carers to provide support to their yp, linking home and school life with support available at youth group sessions.</p> <p>-yp voluntarily attending and engaging in educational sessions</p> <p>-Learning new skills to engage better with young people and their interests</p> <p>-exploring individual traits/virtues and what the yp look for in friendships and positive relationships with others</p> <p>-The importance of keeping up to date with the latest trends and challenges faced by yp e.g social media and school struggles</p> <p>-Observing the yp in different environments, outside of their usual comfort zone, seeing them interact with others from different groups, sharing interests and exploring new ones</p> <p>-Assisting the young people to step outside of their 'norm' and explore new ideas and assist with</p>



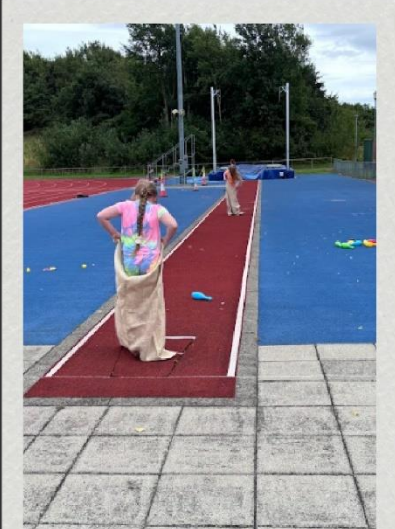
<p>their feelings and opinions around these</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -incorporating worldwide events into the yg session planning, making the yp aware of what is going on in the world around them and what impact this has on their lives and others -Learning lifelong skills such as compromise, conflict resolution, initiative and self-motivation -Refining skills such as confidence, self-worth and how important youth voice is in shaping a positive future community -developing problem solving skills so that the yp are able to make better choices -cooking skills and different ways to prepare and produce healthy meals on a budget -YP learning new skills and developing interests which turn into hobbies. -Navigating the privacy of all yp within the group with the dynamic of electronic devices and social media interests
<p>Feedback from a young person / young people</p>
<p>'I enjoyed trying new fruits and vegetables, cutting them into shapes and making art with food before trying them was fun. I didn't like them all, but that didn't matter'</p> <p>'I was interested in learning about the foods and the health benefits to both mind and body.'</p> <p>'my favourite thing was the wood burning because it was satisfying'</p> <p>'making the food was my favourite as you have to make it, and people can tell you to put effort in'</p> <p>'Playing games like 'pie face' with real cream was so much fun, we can make a mess . These are things that I wouldn't do at home'</p> <p><i>'I asked if we could have melon at the next session and we made fruit kebabs with lots of different fruits, we even had chocolate and marshmallows too'</i></p>
<p>Case study</p>

Remember to attach one or two images to go with the report.





HAPPY
Birthday



SCYPAN Annual Accounts for 2024						
Project	Brought forward	Donations	Grants	Sub-Total	Expenditure	Carried forward
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Youth Forum	408.64			408.64		408.64
Shildon Yella (1)	115.42			115.42		115.42
Holiday Brochure (1)						
Youth Council	168.12			168.12		168.12
Development Worker						
Young Peopl's Awards						
Sessional Worker						
Yella/Holiday Brochure (2)						
Dance and Drama						
All other	33,665.07		10,875.00	44,540.07	25,184.40	19,355.67
Total	34,357.25	-	10,875.00	45,232.25	25,184.40	20,047.85
	Certified as a true and correct record					
	D Benstead MAAT FdA					

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14/02/2024

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The SCYPAN Youth Awards have had to be 'parked,' while the new Shildon Youth Initiative was being set up. The new youth group was much more in demand than SCYPAN had predicted.

This has meant the youth group was much larger and as such, it has been more difficult to do the necessary planning work which would be needed for such a largescale event.

The loss of this large donation to SCYPAN impacted immediately on our ability to apply for further funding as we had no unrestricted funding to match against.

SCYPAN Member, Shildon Alive, has worked tirelessly with the SCYPAN's Shildon Youth Initiative young people, as well as support from Livin and Foundations to keep weekly sessions, from Project end July 2023 – through the autumn and winter terms.

Whilst SCYPAN had secured the funding to continue the project, a new delivery partner was needed as AYCC informed at Project End that the organisation no longer had sufficient staffing capacity to continue the delivery.

Over the summer, SCYPAN approached several youth delivery agencies from across County Durham, for meetings and discussions about the project needs. SCYPAN felt the most positive and realistic response was received from Rachel Dyne, YMCA Teesdale who was able to show their ability to deliver and put in place the necessary staffing support to commence the next phase of delivery.

SCYPAN has, therefore, taken the decision to work with YMCA Teesdale, to provide a new offering to the young people. YMCA Teesdale has recruited the Youth Lead worker, who has been working alongside Shildon Alive staff to get a feel for the group, the building and putting in place all the required framework for this project.

SCYPAN looks forward to a successful and productive 2024, with the full involvement from YMCA Teesdale, and members of the Shildon Youth Project, and in time, reintroduce some form of young people's awards, to celebrate the achievements of the young people in Shildon.

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6. Additional Achievements

- Continue to welcome new members to SCYPAN Network
- Secured the necessary funding to put in place a further 12 months delivery of the Shildon Youth Initiative (group), based at Foundation.
- Successfully found a new delivery partner for the Shildon Youth Initiative (group). SCYPAN has in place an SLA with YMCA Teesdale to provide staff support to deliver the continuation of the Shildon Youth Initiative (group) moving forward. SCYPAN has 12 months funding in place, with a further commitment of £5000.00 over the next 3 years from the Sir James Knott Trust.
- Continues to support organisations within Shildon and the surrounding area.

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7. The Road Ahead

- SCYPAN & YMCA Teesdale, to successfully deliver the Shildon Youth Initiative (group), based at the Foundations building for a 12 month period, providing monitoring and evaluation to support funding applications to secure the outstanding monies required to keep the project in place for three years to give it ample time to impact the young people and to evidence their success.
- Continue to work with local community groups, organisations, statutory agencies, and partners for the benefit of the Children, Young People and Families of Shildon.
- Continue to promote SCYPAN and encourage new members.
- Be a supportive Network – move to more digital format for Network, communicating and meeting.
- Continue to share skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Continue to actively explore grant funding opportunities and share with the network.
- Continue to provide high quality inclusive events and activities for Children, Young people, and Families in Shildon.

Effective communication is a priority for SCYPAN, acting as a fulcrum point for the collection and dissemination of relevant information across the network.

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9. AYCC - END OF PROEJCT REPORT 2023

AYCC Delivery Team Shildon Final Project Report

Project: Shildon Youth Initiative (Group)

Funded By: SCYPAN

Period Covered: July 2022 / July 2023

**Author(s): Maxine Jordan
Maxine Hymer**

Contributions: Contributor AYCC

Contributor: SCYPAN

A. Activities Performed during the period.

Arts n crafts
Pool / pool games
Outside area Gardening
Issue based Health and well-being.
Mental Health awareness
Outdoor Activities
Celebrations sessions
Green issues environment
Basic Cooking skills
Outdoor activity Going for a meal at the civic hall.

April

Following the resignation of one of the youth workers, two other youth workers were brought in to deliver the youth sessions, they brought with them their many years of experience of youth delivery in a range of settings, and a different style of working and a new set of boundaries.

In the early weeks, this change was a challenge for some young people, especially the firmer and consistent boundaries, however, this consistency to boundaries allowed some of the

quieter young people to feel comfortable to speak up and have their views heard and feel more valued in the sessions.

May

May saw young people become more engaged with issue-based work covering issues such as energy drinks and vaping. The group were now starting to feel more comfortable with the new youth workers and their style of delivery. The group enjoyed planning for their first offsite visit, and they decided on a youth club meal. The young people were supported by their youth workers to develop skills such as planning, negotiation, decision making and budgeting, to discussed where they would like to go, what they would like to eat, what date to go, and how to keep with a budget.

They enjoyed participating in

- gardening where some of the group planted basil in the troughs,
- playing 'pot the lot,' which encouraged connection and enjoyment of healthy competition.
- The Arts and Crafts worked well. Each week we left arts and crafts materials on the table so the young people could participate whenever they wanted, this a good opportunity to sit with the young people and have a general chat, which often resulted in issue-based conversations.
- Issue based discussions. The main issues that young people identified were vaping and energy drinks, with young people admitting to buying and drinking up to 4 or 5 energy drinks a day. The youth workers have regularly discussed with young people the impacts of energy drinks and vaping has on their health. Other issues covered included the cost-of-living crisis, upcycling (especially clothing), and environmental issues, to name but a few.

We decided to celebrate the first year of the Youth Club, the young people asked if they decided that they would like to go for a group meal in Shildon. We decided on Shildon Civic as it was inexpensive and supported the town. Members of SCYPAN were invited to celebrate with us, and the young people also invited Tanya, their previous youth worker. 23 young people enjoyed a group meal. It was an amazing night with lots of learning and positive engagement by the young people. The young people behaved well and were very well mannered, even getting compliments from the town Mayor who came over to the group to complement them on their good behaviour and she stated how nice it was to see a group of young people enjoying themselves. The night was a success and the young people thoroughly enjoyed themselves as did the staff, it was great seeing them come together.

June

June saw more young people joining the youth club with over 30 young people attending each week. Unfortunately, due do staffing ratios and building capacity we had cap the numbers at 35.

This month young people engaged in discussions and activities focusing on the environment, how to live greener, and learning about how our environment impacts on the planet and sea life. They also engaged in activities such as pool, arts and crafts, biscuit decorating, and working in the outside garden. Some of the young people designed a board for the green fair in Bishop Auckland and had their work displayed them. The young people said they enjoyed

being involved in this project, and it encouraged them to engage in discussions around the benefits of recycling on our planet and our oceans and sea life.

Young people decided they wanted to make pizzas and cook them in the pizza oven that was in the garden. Young People took it in turns to make their own pizza with their chosen toppings and cooked them in the pizza oven. The young people engaged well, followed the health and safety guidelines, and they got to enjoy the snack they made for themselves. Seeing the young people smile and enjoy the food they had cooked was priceless. Young people said they had so much fun, some quotes from the young people were:

'It was fun to make pizzas and watch them cook.'

'I have really enjoyed tonight's session it has been fun.'

Issue based work this month included young people's mental health, Transition days at school and how it affected them.

July

AYCC's contact with Shildon Youth Initiative ended at the end of July 23, as the initiative had chosen to contract the work to another youth organisation, however, we asked if we could continue with our delivery to the school holidays, as this seemed like a better and more natural time to be ending to our involvement with the project, and this would be a better time for the young people.

July was a sad and reflective month for all as it was the last few weeks of Auckland Youth and Community centre's delivery of the youth club.

We celebrated this transition and the end of the school term with a pizza night. The young people enjoyed pizza shop pizzas, donner meat and chips and salad. It was a fantastic atmosphere and a lovely evening sharing food together whilst sitting and talking with one another. The young people were very happy to be treated to pizza and thanked staff for the treat and said how much they enjoyed the evening.

For their final session, the young people decided they wanted a party with a buffet, disco, and karaoke. This was a great night, the young people engaging well with the activities and with each other, the atmosphere was nice, and it felt good for us to be leaving on a happy note. In this session we had 2 visitors from the DCC Thrive team they came and introduced themselves to the young people and told them they would be offering sessions in partnership with Sky-pan over the summer.

B. Problems Encountered and Corrective Actions

The only issues were related to behaviour and boundaries. Youth workers have responded to this by being consistent with the group rules and agreed boundaries, and with young people knowing that there will be consequences for their actions.

C. Planned Activities for Next Period

AYCC's contract with SYI has ended, meaning that future activities will be decided by the new delivery organisation.

Evaluation from Young People

Young People have been encouraged to consider the future of their youth club, they have reported that they would like to listen to music, read spend time with friends, and liked to be round nature. Young people have also reported that the Youth Club helps them with their well-being, by having the opportunity to do activities and spend time with their friends in a safe place.

Tuesday 18 July 2023 was the final session, so we asked the young people to give us some feedback for the past year. We gave out card and pens and asked the young people 'what does the youth club mean to you?' - we received a total of 30 responses, which were all positive.

- There was a running theme of gratitude throughout, including gratitude to Greggs for regularly provided food for their sessions.
- 13 of the cards we got back spoke of the memories that they'd made here and the opportunity it gave to make new friends.
- Other cards read 'great youthie.'

There was an appreciation of the range of games and different activities they've participated in as well as lots of comments about how fun it's been. Overall, the feedback we have received speaks volumes on the success of the youth club and the impact that it's had on the young people and the lives of the young people who have attended.

Participation

Youth club numbers Dates of sessions held.

6/6/23	24 Y.P Male – 12 Female -12
13/6/23	21 Y.P Male – 11 Female - 10
20/6/23	20 Y.P Male – 9 Female - 11
27/6/23	31 Y.P Male - 15 Female -16
4/07/23	22 Y.P Male -10 Female - 1
11/7/23	18 Y.P Male - 8 Female - 10
18/7/23	23 Y.P Male- 10 - Female-12

AYCC final comments

Food is a big issue across the board with the cost-of-living crisis. This group rely heavily on the Greggs delivery and the additional food and fruit that we brought along. Many Young people asked to take food home for their siblings if anything left.

It was with regret that in the early months we were not able to deliver some of the sessions, due mainly to staff illness and staff's family issues, and the inability to find qualified staff to cover the sessions, as stipulated in the contract. However, we believe we have made huge

steps forward over the last few months, and we have really engaged with the Young People, and have gone above and beyond to end our contract and commitment on a good footing.

We feel that the young people have had a good grounding during this first year of the project, and they are now in a good position to grow and develop their club. We are leaving you with the foundations for a fantastic youth project, and with some amazing young people. We wholeheartedly wish you and the young people every success in the future, and AYCC are always here to support you wherever we can.

Thanks

Maxine Jordan

Maxine Hymer

Youth and Community Workers

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10. Community Development Workers Report

SCYPAN's 2023 Mission - Shildon Youth Initiative - to research, identify, and apply for funding to secure continuation of the Shildon Youth Initiative (Group).

SCYPAN approached a wide range of both local and national funders, completed many applications and over the early part of 2023, received positive news that our efforts were rewarded. The Youth Group was visited by the Sir James Knott Trust and The Ballinger Trust, and received feedback from both funders that they would indeed provide grant funding.

All the required monies were secured before the projects ended in July 2023. Difficulties had been encountered with delivery of sessions however, SCYPAN continued to work with AYCC to complete the project.

During this time, AYCC recruited a new Delivery Manager and SCYPAN met with AYCC to discuss the ongoing issues. Agreement was reached to deliver extra sessions through July into August to compensate for lost sessions.

Difficulties with the delivery of sessions had emerged and information was provided to SCYPAN relating to AYCC and the ability to continue delivery of this project due to staff resources.

SCYPAN was disappointed, as the young people had developed a good working relationship with the AYCC staff team, however, a new delivery organisation was sought.

The Shildon Youth Initiative project was sustained from August 23, through to November 2023, with support from Durham County Council, who were able to provide workers to support Shildon Alive Staff and Volunteers to continue the sessions, so as not to lose continuity for the young people.

By the beginning of December, YMCA Teesdale had recruited the Youth Lead, Gemma Matthews, and we hope the rest of the team will be in place early 2024. Gemma attended sessions with support from Lauren Robinson, Shildon Alive, who has continued to provide high-level support to the group into the new year. The young people completed a First Aid Course provided by Red Cross and continue to take advantage of opportunities.

The YMCA Teesdale provided us with confidence that they shared our values, and with support from SCYPAN would indeed be able to fulfil the project brief and provide us with a Service Level Agreement to take up the delivery of the well-attended youth group.

Unfortunately, at the end of August I had a health impact, which took me away from the project long-term whilst I recovered. I am back at my desk now and am humbled by the support that has been provided to keep this project vital through the uncertain times.

The SCYPAN Chair, Paula Nelson and Shildon Town Council's Clerk, Tracey Bellas, continued to work with Rachel Dayne YMCA Teesdale, to finalise the SLA, prepare the Job Descriptions and Specifications, for the three roles the project required to continue, and liaised with Foundations regarding the building.

The Shildon Youth Group recommenced on Tuesday 16th Jan 2024, and we look forward to another productive and successful year for the project.

Shildon Youth Group will continue to welcome new young people to the group and hopefully will grow and develop through 2024 to meet its full potential.