

The Core Youth and Community Centre

Interim Youth Work Report – Saltash Town Council Youth Work Funding

September - December 2024

Introduction

- **Overview of the Centre:**

The Saltash Youth and Community Centre is dedicated to providing a safe and nurturing environment for young people. Our mission is to offer diverse activities and support services that empower youth and foster community engagement.

- **Purpose of the Report:**

This report highlights the key activities, achievements, and challenges faced by our organisation in the last quarter, emphasising our response to the growing needs of our community.

Summary & Statistics

- **Summary of Achievements:**

This year has seen significant growth in the number of young people accessing our services, with our overall membership now exceeding 300. We have continued to support individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), mental health issues, and complex home lives. Collaborative efforts with local partners like Safer Saltash and Groundwork have focused on preventative strategies and alternative education to reduce anti-social behaviour among young people.

- **Challenges and Opportunities:**

The growing demand for specialised support has presented both challenges and opportunities, prompting us to enhance our programs and form strategic partnerships to better meet the needs of our community.

- **Outcomes and outputs achieved**

- Total current number of members at The Core = 300
 - Number of open access sessions delivered Sept to Dec = 42
 - Number of targeted youth sessions = 116
 - Number of young people receiving individual support = 25
 - Number of young people helped back in to employment, training or work = 16
 - Number of youth volunteer hours worked = 428
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Clubs & Activities

Climbing Club:

- *Age Group:* 5-18 years
- *Key Highlights:* This financial year saw the reopening of our climbing club. We recruited and trained two members of staff as instructors and launched two Wednesday afternoon climbing sessions, which are now fully booked with over 20 children and young people attending. We

invested in new mats, a significant expenditure that has proven to be very worthwhile, ensuring the safety and quality of our sessions.

Boxing Club:

- *Age Group:* 10 years and over
- *Key Highlights:* Increased attendance and active participation in local and regional events, fostering discipline and confidence.

Grub Club (Cooking Programme):

- *Duration:* 10 weeks
- *Features:* Grub Club remains one of our most popular activities often oversubscribed and booked up well in advance. This year, we are excited to incorporate food grown in our garden into the cooking sessions. This addition not only enhances the program's educational value but also connects young people with the food production process.
- *Participant Experience:* Young people enjoy learning to bake and cook in a friendly and inclusive atmosphere. They have reported that the sessions offer a pleasant and supportive environment where they can chat, discuss their day, and feel valued. The communal aspect of the sessions contributes to a sense of belonging and camaraderie among participants.

Craft Club and Just Be You Project:

- **Craft Club**
- *Collaboration with Arts Lab:* We have received another round of funding for another project with Arts Lab, which will begin in the New Year. We will be working with an artist and The Memory Café to bridge the generational gap whilst also improving education and understanding of dementia. The funding will enable us to run 4 sessions culminating in an afternoon tea!
- **LGBTQ+ Group:**
- *Support Provided:* Friendship, support, advice
- *Impact:* Strong community bonds have been formed, offering a safe and welcoming environment for self-expression and support. Continued partnership with The Intercom Trust has enhanced our capacity to support this community effectively.

Open Access Youth Sessions:

- **Senior Club (Ages 13-18):**
 - *Activities:* Sports, gaming, free food, socializing
 - *Impact:* Growing numbers have benefited from these sessions, offering a crucial social outlet and support network.
- **Junior Club (School Years 7 & 8):**
 - *Activities:* Sports, gaming, free food, socializing
 - *Impact:* The junior youth club continues to grow in popularity, with over 120 young people becoming members this year alone. The club provides

a structured and supportive space for younger adolescents to engage and develop essential social skills.

Alternative Education Program:

- **Partnership with Groundwork:**
 - *Funding:* Grant from the Levelling Up Fund
 - *Duration:* 18 months finishing March 2025
 - *Program Highlights:* Our partnership with Groundwork continues to grow with their alternative education project based at The Core, aimed at offering an alternative education program to young people. Our youth work coordinator is serving as the program manager, helping to shape and implement the curriculum. This initiative provides tailored educational experiences to engage youth who may struggle with traditional education systems, focusing on practical skills and personal development. We have now worked with over 30 young people to enable them to achieve functional skills, boxing awards, cooking skills and pathways to their next steps.

One-on-One Support:

- **Youth Worker Support:**
 - *Services Offered:* Guidance, advice, personalised support
 - *Outcome:* Increased demand for individual support services, particularly for youth with SEND needs and mental health challenges. Our youth workers have been instrumental in supporting the most at-risk young people, contributing to positive outcomes and improved well-being. We have also been able to refer in to the Groundwork project where young people are coming out of school or struggling to maintain a full time timetable at school.

Youth Committee:

- *Members:* 7 enthusiastic and active young people
- *Role:* The Youth Committee continues to play a vital role in shaping our services. They are involved in organising and helping at fundraising events and actively promoting the services we offer. Their engagement ensures that our programs remain relevant and responsive to the needs of our peers, and their contributions are invaluable in driving the direction of our activities and initiatives.
- *Future projects:* One of our members has written a proposal to start a well being group for those young people who maybe struggling with low mood or poor mental health.

New activities and Initiatives:

- **Well-being Support Group:**
 - *Objective:* To address the growing need for mental health support, our Youth Committee have identified a need to offer a well being support group. These sessions will provide a dedicated space for young people to

share their personal experiences on various issues, including mental health, friendship and family issues, school challenges and any other issues they feel they need to talk about.

Practical skills club

Objective: To work in partnership with The Saltash Community Shed offering after school clubs where young people can learn practical skills such as woodworking, laser printing and general repair skills.

- *Assessment:* We will conduct a survey to ascertain the specific needs and preferences of our young people regarding these sessions.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Success Stories & testimonies:**

The personal experiences of our young people reflect the success and impact of our relationships with our members and how providing them with a safe space can help to increase their confidence and ensure their voices are heard.

A 15 year old young woman has been on quite a journey during her time at The Core, starting as a very shy and quiet member at our Just Be You group and then joining our busier Senior Youth Club I have watched her grow in confidence and also been witness to her mental health improving which has been a privilege. She then asked to join the Youth Committee as she wanted to get involved in our activities for May Fair, something which was very challenging for her as she wasn't used to putting herself forward in this way. She has had a traumatic life as a child, having to go into care at a very young age, and then eventually she was adopted and now lives in Saltash with her adopted parents. She has had the support of CAMHS for her poor mental health and has often felt like she didn't want to carry on with life.

She presented the Youth Committee with the proposal for setting up a Well-being Group, which she had also used as course work for her GCSE Health & Social care course. It was so impressive we told her that we would be proud to send that to a funder it was so detailed and brilliantly written. We are so proud of how far she has come and to see her able to make friendships and relationships is incredible from the person she was when she first started with us. We have no doubt that she will go on to do great things.

Partnership Work

Collaborative efforts and partnership working with Safer Saltash, Saltash Town Council, Groundwork South, Intercom Trust, Targeted Youth Workers, Early Help Hub, Saltash Youth Network, local schools, emergency services and health have reinforced community cohesion and joint working to ensure we can best support our young people of Saltash, providing preventative support, a wide range of activities and support & resources to families in need.

Financial Overview

- **Funding sources and match funding :**

Continued reliance on grant funding, supplemented by income from hiring out rooms and community donations. Support from our Town Council has been a lifeline, ensuring the continuity of our youth work. Groundwork's 18-month funding for the alternative education program has been instrumental in allowing us to develop and expand this important initiative, however this is now coming to an end. This funding has provided the full match funding to our money from Saltash Town Council for this year.