

Outreach in the Quarry- Summer Holiday 2021**Origins of project**

Through the Team Shrewsbury meetings hosted by Shrewsbury Town Council, concerns were raised regarding young people's behaviour in the Quarry park, Shrewsbury. Security had been contracted to work evenings and weekends to ensure that the park continued to be a nice place for all to attend. The Youth Support Team suggested that with a multi-agency approach, professionals could engage with young people in the park over the Summer holiday

Aim and outline of project

- To engage with young people aged 13+
- To be safe adults within the park
- To have conversations about reducing harm, making sure young people's voices are heard and they are signposted to, or have access to, a number of agencies if they need them
- Provide basic food for young people who may be in receipt of school meals (through Holiday Activities Fund)
- Small group activities (if young people want to)
- Recording of any safeguarding concerns
- **No advertising** of the work as the team didn't need to be encouraging more people to use the park in groups

Organisation of the project

- Funding obtained through Holiday Activity Fund for food, drinks and other resources
- Timetable sent out to all agencies that agreed to do the project. Professionals then booked in their availability and were paired up if needed
- Contact made with Food Hub who agreed to donate food twice a week
- Monitoring form sent out to professionals to record how many young people the project reached, postcodes of the young people's homes and schools/colleges they attended

Organisations involved

- Shropshire Council Youth Support Team
- Shrewsbury Town Council Youth Service
- We Are With You
- School Nurse Youth Workers
- Climb Project
- Shrewsbury Academy pastoral team member
- Shropshire Council Exploitation Lead
- Meole Brace Holy Trinity church
- One session was covered by a team member of Stepping Stones staff volunteering own time

Session information

- Outreach sessions held over 19 days- 44 hours in total. During afternoons and evenings
- 491 contacts made (these were the recorded ones, however there were more)
- The outreach team introduced themselves to Police, PCSO's and the security team when there was an opportunity
- Young people mainly lived in Shrewsbury. Young people also came from Telford, Whitchurch, Wem, Welshpool, Llanfair Caereinion, Llanidloes and a couple of larger groups from all over the country staying in Shrewsbury on residential trips
- The main groups that engaged with the outreach team were students attending Meole Brace (138 contacts) and 6th form or college students (128) These young people made up the 2 groups that were seen consistently over the summer. The park was used by a large number of Meole Brace and The Priory students to meet up
- Topics of conversation with young people included; water safety, keeping each other safe, litter, A Level and GCSE results, plans for the future, lack of things to do socially, lack of affordable and available public transport, drugs and alcohol, young people not feeling listened to, work, housing, school/college and the relationship they had with police and security
- Young people's self-directed activities included; football, talking to friends, swimming (river and using swimming pool) and eating and drinking with friends
- On the whole, young people were welcoming of the professionals when they were approached- shown ID and were introduced by using their name and profession
- A couple of the professionals also took litter picks and bags out. This was a good conversation starter with the young people- with some of the young people asking to use the picks themselves during the sessions
- Young people appreciated the food and drink given- with very little waste at the end of each session. Many of the young people were in park for long periods of time with no food or drink

Learning & Findings	
Young people generally using space in an appropriate way- good to see young people out after Covid	
Different schools mixing in the park- common meeting place for young people who live in different areas	
Young people generally have a good relationship with the security in the park and have appreciated them being around	
The outreach team did not witness a huge amount of substance misuse	
Young people were mainly aged 15+	
It was useful staying in the Quarry for the full amount of time because although some young people were in there for longer periods, others would be more mobile	
Some of the young people fed back that they don't find information on Criminal Exploitation useful. They say people 'go on about it too much' and it makes them 'shut off'	
Other feedback from young people included one of the young women saying that they had enjoyed talking to members of the team and it was nice to be listened to	

Areas of development for future multi agency outreach work	
Some of the team felt uncomfortable approaching young people at times	<p>A meeting for all those involved in the work prior to starting the project, to produce working agreement</p> <p>A session on detached/outreach youth work offered to anyone agreeing to work on the project</p> <p>Although still a multi-agency approach, it would be good to have a youth worker out on each session</p>
Events in the park impacting on sessions with young people (young people have less space when events are on)	Team to consult with Quarry events calendar when scheduling sessions
Not able to do a great number of evening sessions	Look at gaining additional funding to employ casual youth support workers to do evening sessions
Young people spoke of having nothing else to do but hanging around the Quarry	Look at gaining additional funding for a weekly organised activity that the young people are invited to join in with eg art, music, sports. Also, possibility of working with local businesses to see what support they can give
Professionals had to carry the food and drink in a backpack around the park. If they were unable to park nearby, to restock when busy, it would take time to reach more young people	Speak with Town Council about keeping a stock of food and drink in the park building and have access