

CHAPTER 6



Recommendations

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Below are our recommendations, drawing on the findings of the survey.

These will be discussed with all relevant and interested groups over the next few months. This is to see whether any of them would be able to act on any of the recommendations.

If you are part of an organisation which would like to discuss these findings, your interest will be very welcome! Please contact:

Ultimate Youth,

care of Gateshead Youth Council,
Gladstone Terrace Community Centre,
12 Gladstone Terrace,
Gateshead NE8 4DY

The results of this follow-up consultation will be published on the Ultimate Youth website before the summer – we are aiming for June 2005.

These recommendations fall into four areas:

- places to meet
- transport and trips
- activities
- media projects

1. Places to meet friends: indoors and outdoors

Indoors

Young people in this area have nowhere indoors to meet friends regularly. They are out of their homes most days and when they are not paying for organised activities, they do not have safe organised place to meet.

The nearest provision open most days is in Dunston and Blaydon – for most young people that is too far to travel. There are also clubs for some specific age groups but these only meet once a week.

Recommend: a steering group is set up to investigate and cost options for providing indoor facilities for young people in this area. This steering group to include young people.

Outdoors

Young people would love safe, clean, all-weather facilities for a variety of free outdoor activities. These include:

- space to kick a ball about
- area to play baseball
- area to play basketball
- adventure biking track

Recommend: a request for these facilities is put to the local authority

2. Transport and Trips

It would be valuable to provide to young people greater publicity about public transport eg the improved train connections

A minibus would be a lifeline to help young people get to the places on their wish list – the benefits include lower cost, greater opportunities to socialise in groups, and the chance to feel more empowered through suggesting destinations and helping to organise outings. Trips can also offer the chance for add-on activities such as digital photography.

Recommend:

- if a fixed youth facility was in place in the future, we recommend a minibus is considered as an add-on facility with trips to places selected by the young people
- without a fixed infrastructure, we recommend experiments with one-off trips to assess demand.
- Key issue: who should organise these trips? This should form part of follow-up discussions after publication of the report.

Suggested trips: within region (put in order of popularity)

- the Hoppings
- Go-karting
- Ice skating
- South Shields funfair
- Discos aimed at young people
- Horse riding
- Wet and Wild
- Go-karting
- Keilder

Suggested trips: outside region

- Alton Towers
- weekends away: Lake District adventure weekend / camping
- Scotland, Blackpool, London
- holiday exchanges abroad
- ferry trip to Amsterdam

Recommend:

- in follow-up discussions assess which organisations may be able to arrange trips inside and outside the region
- explore existing holiday exchange arrangements to see whether there is something can be expanded or adapted to help more young people benefit from them

3. Activities

The response of local agencies to the preferences expressed by the young people will be welcomed. Some areas to explore include:

- Community mountain bikes
- BMX track – amongst the most popular activities – surface needs improving
- Parks – huge improvements requested by young people to make safer for meeting
- Space to kick a ball about
- Area to play baseball
- Area to play basketball
- Exciting adventure bike ride routes
- Film Club – at school?
Local cinema – approach to see if there's a Local Club Membership with lower rate can be agreed
- Motor biking/ Motocross

Database of activities produced by young people:

a valuable resource has been prepared listing activities of interest to young people together with information on prices, locations, telephone numbers etc.

Recommend:

- Seek resources to add to Ultimate Youth website
- Offer to other organisations
- Publicise that this information is available eg at the launch event
- Seek resources to update in the future – ideally through co-ordinating young people to do the research

4. Media projects

The media projects were very successful in engaging young people, providing useful skills and helping express their views. Some of the strengths of the projects were:

- There were clear simple themes relevant to the lives of young people
- They involved young people from the beginning in deciding those themes
- The themes were communicated clearly to everyone taking part
- The benefit of media schemes is that many young people can be involved
- Digital photography proved to be especially useful as a way to involve almost twenty young people in learning enjoyable creative skills at a relatively low cost
- It was good for the esteem of young people to see their work displayed at the Discovery Museum.
- Art days in local community venues worked well for younger children – collage, painting, modelling, using a hired artist – again with a clear theme for the day's creative work.
- Video required greater organisational and resource effort.
- All the above projects were free to the young people.

Recommend:

1. Further digital photography activities/ training projects are organised in holidays and funded to provide training and a voice for young people.
2. Digital photography professionals are taken on by youth groups to offer to their young people as another activity they can spend time on
3. More art days are organised for younger people (from 5 - 16)
4. Accessible outlets are found for the photographs and artwork to be displayed
5. Video projects are worthwhile but as smaller projects involving a small core group of committed young people (eg a group of two or three who are prepared to commit for several months).
6. Funding should be applied for to make all these possible