

looking at youth

OLDHAM YOUTH SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 04/05

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Foreword

Oldham Youth Service continues to be a high achieving service. Opening times have been extended, the number of young people using the service has dramatically increased and the quality of the work has improved. I am proud of our Youth Service and especially the manner in which it has worked in partnership with a range of other providers in order to improve the opportunities available to young people in Oldham.

This year Oldham Youth Service received yet another boost as it became the country's only Youth Service to win the prestigious national Investors in Excellence Award, which is acknowledged across Europe.

This is indicative of the range and quality of youth work Oldham Youth Service delivers.

This report illustrates their achievements. I hope you find it useful and informative.

Paul Makin,
Interim Executive
Director of
Children's Services



"Involving young people in democratic services is a priority, and young people's participation in management and planning within local areas, clubs and projects is advanced." (June, 2004, Ofsted Report)

Welcome

Oldham Youth Service is a fast expanding, vibrant and progressive service. As a result of their success, funding will be dramatically increased next year. Of particular note is how young people have been encouraged by the Service to take an active role in shaping our Council's future development, we look forward to continuing this partnership with young people. Keep up the good work!

Councillor Hugh McDonald,
Cabinet Member Children's
Services & Culture.



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"The quality of youth work practise is very good."

(June, 2004, Ofsted)

Introduction

I take great pleasure in introducing our second annual report and the opportunity to tell you about our work and achievements over the past year.

31 local authority Youth Services across the country have been inspected by Ofsted this year and Oldham Youth Service is one of only six youth services which were rated good or very good.

I am especially proud of the fact that we have further developed the work we do with a range of partners, in particular the targeted work we have delivered within Secondary Schools. It's been a very good year.

Almost uniquely our funding will be dramatically increased next year as a result of our success, enabling the creation of 16 new full time youth worker posts.

We also continued to deliver a broad range of community cohesion initiatives, exceeding nationally set targets by over 200%. Membership of the Service has increased once again this year, ensuring that we continue to provide value for money to our communities.



Oldham Youth Service has recruited many new youth workers and volunteers to the Service, and we are pleased to see many young people who were previously senior members progress into paid employment with the Service. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to our success this year.

Pam Griffin,
Head of Oldham Youth Service

"Oldham Youth Service has a structured robust process for developing plans with good stakeholder input"

(Investors in Excellence, November 2004)



Our Aim

Our aim is to provide and support a range of social and educational opportunities that will encourage young people to learn throughout their lives, make positive choices and achieve their potential as individuals, members of their communities, and members of society.

How we work with young people

We provide opportunities for 13-23 year old young people that enable them to have fun, try new things, learn to problem solve, take responsibility for themselves, meet with friends in inviting settings, be involved in decision making, get support from caring adults, learn new skills, develop new hobbies and make positive choices in their lives in order to achieve their full potential.

More information on Oldham Youth Service, including our Strategic and Delivery Plans for 2005-2007 can be found on our website:
www.oldham.gov.uk/cs-youth-service.htm

"The co-ordination of such a wide range of young people, the presentations and the overall tone of the evening was extremely professional. It was a great pleasure to work with you on this event and I look forward to further participation work in the future".

David Ashley, Head Teacher of Hathershaw Technology and Sports College, referring to Oldham Youth Service Annual Celebration Event



Our achievements this year

- Work with Asian Young Women increased across the Borough
- Gained Investors in Excellence Award
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy developed with partners
- Youth Advisory Groups attached to area committees established with the participation of young people
- Membership increased
- Recorded and accredited results increased in line with national targets
- Community cohesion initiatives exceeded nationally set targets
- Multi-cultural staff teams further developed in each youth centre
- Youth Service Compliments, Complaints and Suggestion Procedure developed by young people
- Targeted project work increased with secondary schools
- Curriculum Framework implemented
- Planning and Review Cycle implemented
- Extended comprehensive holiday activity programmes delivered
- £781,723 of external funding secured
- Successfully reassessed for Investors In People award
- Detached Conference attracted 120 delegates from across the country
- OYS Inaugural Celebration Event held, with 250 attendees
- Number of young people involved in residentials increased for the second year running

"As support from the Youth Service across the Borough is unfaltering it would be unfair on my behalf to single out any individual for commendation, they should all receive accolades"

Susan Crabtree, Development Officer, Oldham Children & Young People's Alliance, referring to the Alliance Fun Day





Participation of young people

The empowerment and participation of young people is fundamental to the work of Oldham Youth Service. Staff from the Service support the involvement of young people in the Borough Youth Forum, Area Committees and many other decision-making bodies, in the Borough.

Successes included:

- 78 young people attended the "Over to You" conference
- 14 Youth Centres have established their own members forums
- 28 Young people attended youth advisory sub-groups across the Borough
- 26 young people took part in 5 video conferences linking up with Brussels, DEFRA, (Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs) ODPM, (Office for the Deputy Prime Minister, Home office and Ivan Lewis MP.

Bringing young people together

We continued to pioneer many initiatives this year including:

Fusion 2005

Nearly every secondary school in the Borough took part in this project aimed at promoting community cohesion, increasing young people's self esteem and giving young people an opportunity to learn about each other. This year's Fusion was sponsored by the NRSI (Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative).

Fusion 2005 brought 63 peer leaders together to take part in a five day residential in Thirsk, Yorkshire, which provided them with opportunities to explore each other's faiths, traditions, cultures and make new friends.

"I am writing to convey our thanks and to say how much our son enjoyed himself, in fact in his own words "it was the best week of my life" is testament to just how immensely valuable the Oldham Youth Service is."

(Parent of Young Person who attended Fusion, February, 2005)

Bringing young people together

Linked youth centres

Each of our youth centres have been linked with three others in the Borough. This linking enables young people from different communities and cultures to meet on a regular basis. The joint activities and events organised by linked centres have led to a significant increase in understanding and awareness of diversity.

- 568 young people took part in 17 community cohesion events, far exceeding nationally set targets
- 500 young people from a wide range of communities and cultural heritages have attended 41 residentials ranging from 1 to 5 days

Diverse staff teams

One of the continued successes of this year has been the continuous development of diverse staff teams in all of our units and projects, to ensure that young people have access to a wide range of positive role models.

"Staff deployment is designed to help break down barriers and build understanding and tolerance" (June, 2004, Ofsted Report)

What young people said about our Service

This year's annual customer satisfaction survey provided us with invaluable feedback from young people. Some key highlights were:

- 93% of young people were satisfied with the atmosphere in centres.
- 92% of young people found the youth workers to be approachable.
- 90% of young people were happy with the support youth workers gave them.
- 86% of young people were satisfied with the programme of activities on offer.
- 86% of young people had the opportunity to learn new skills.
- 83% of young people had the opportunity to discuss important personal issues with youth workers.

The full survey report is available in all youth centres and on our website.





Staff recruitment & training

Multi agency training established

The Service has delivered a range of compulsory and optional training for staff from a broad range of organisations, in order to develop their abilities, skills and knowledge, including two national qualifying courses for Assistant Youth Workers.

Opportunity Evenings

We have attracted many volunteers who have gone on to become part-time youth workers through our successful local recruitment evenings.

Partnership working:

Work with secondary schools

This year we have further developed our work with secondary schools in order to support young people to reach their full potential. This has included delivering a range of alternative curriculum programmes:

- New Start, New Start Extra & U Project programmes delivered in 11 secondary schools
 - Hardman Fold School Support Project
 - Two Ace Projects delivered in secondary schools
- Unity Project in partnership with Hathershaw College for Technology & Sport
 - Mobile Bus sessions at Marland Fold School

We have also worked with many other partner organisations; a full list can be found at the end of this report.

Working on health issues

The Service works closely with the Brook Advisory Service, Oasis and the Health 4



Me project to raise young people's awareness on health issues such as; teenage pregnancy, drugs and alcohol and healthy eating. This year all our full time staff undertook the necessary training to enable them to distribute condoms. On World Aids Day Oldham Youth Service alongside a range of partner agencies held an awareness-raising day for young people, using our fleet of mobile youth buses as venues.

"Opportunity evenings are used throughout the year to invite the public to find out more about youth work opportunities within the Service"

(Investors in Excellence, November 2004).

Reaching out

Detached Work

The borough wide detached team have delivered many successful pieces of work this year and greatly enhanced the Service's ability to reach young people not currently accessing Youth Service provision. Staff from individual youth centres also undertake outreach work on a regular basis.

On the 29th January 2005 the detached team organised our third Oldham Detached and Outreach Conference, which was attended by over 120 detached workers from across the country. The detached team works very closely with local communities and other agencies, such as Brook Advisory, Community Safety Unit, Connexions, Groundwork Trust and the Police and has successfully developed and delivered projects in Failsworth, Coppice, Oldham Town Centre, South Chadderton, Westwood, Lees, Sholver, Coldhurst Hollow and Hollins Road Corridor.

Mobile provision

Our fleet of three mobile units "The Buzz", "The Chill Inn" and "The Xpress" are on the road most evenings - look out for them! Each vehicle is equipped with state of the art computers.

The mobiles have enabled the Service to offer a resource in areas where there are few or no facilities for young people. Many other authorities have visited to learn how to develop similar mobile provision themselves.

"The Chill Inn is cool, it's like a youth club on wheels."

(Young Person, speaking about mobile provision in the Werneth and Hollinwood area).



Working with vulnerable young people

Initiatives

The Service is proud of its longstanding record of delivering initiatives that specifically target work with the most 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' young people. This year the Service directly delivered and actively supported many initiatives across the Borough examples of these include:

- In partnership with Connexions and other key partners the delivery of Behaviour Improvement Programmes. Targeted at young people who are at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour
- 'Out in Oldham' offers a variety of services to lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-gender young people. This includes a one night a week drop in session and a telephone support line for weekday advice, guidance and support
- Supporting Asian Young Women by delivering weekend youth work sessions in Werneth and Westwood. The latter in partnership with Barnado's
- The Social Access Project provided one to one support for young people who are in the care of the Local Authority in order to support them to raise their achievements
- Supporting the 'Terence O'Grady Club' for people with learning difficulties
- Supporting the PHAB (Physically handicapped and able bodied club)
- Working closely with schools, the Excellence in Cities programme and the Pupil Referral Unit on alternative curriculum provision for young people
- We also contract with the Learning and Skills Council as an Entry to Employment (E2E) provider to work with young people 16-19 who are not in education, training or employment

Positive Access

As a result of securing external funding, the Service has been able to improve access to our facilities for young people with specific access requirements.

Future Developments

As we continue to grow and improve provision for young people, our priorities for development in the forthcoming year are:

- Increasing and extending our work with young people with disabilities, learning difficulties and young people who have special needs
 - Increasing the number of young people who achieve Recorded and Accredited Outcomes through their involvement with the Service
 - Further Developing Area Committee Youth Advisory Sub Groups
- Introduction of the Young People's Inspection Project, involving young people in internal inspections of Youth Service provision
 - Further develop work in partnership with secondary schools

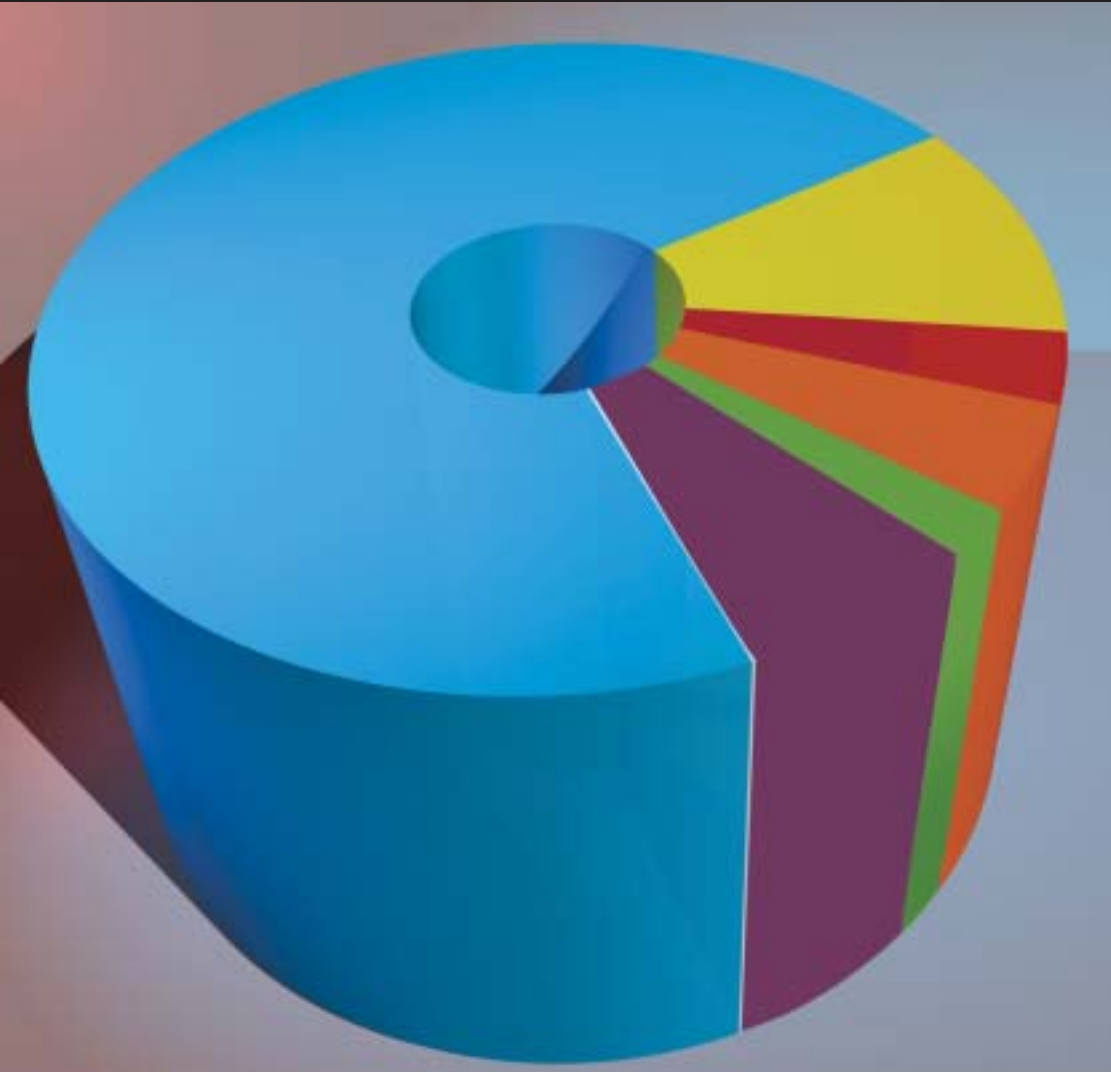


Pie chart illustrating ethnicity of young people accessing Service provision.

54,302 in total

- 65% White
- 13% Pakistani
- 8% Bangladeshi
- 11% Other
- 1% Refused to say
- 2% Black (Caribbean & African)

These figures mirror the Borough's overall ethnic makeup in 2004/2005



Pie chart illustrating external & mainstream funding 04-05

Mainstream funding = £1,528,665 (66%)

External Funding £781,723 (34%)

