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Crowborough Youth Club Case Study

For some time Crowborough did not have a youth club and it had been noted that there was an increase in anti-social behaviour among some of the local young people. In order to provide an alternative activity and a safe space for young people to come together a local resident and Director of a creative project CIC, Artytime, Bev Pashley, decided to find a way to relaunch a youth club.

Bev wanted to ensure that the young people who would be using the club had a say in the way it was going to be set up and run so she created a consultation survey which was sent out to the relevant year groups (15-17 year olds) at the local school, Beacon Academy.

The results of this were used to inform the most appropriate day of the week, best time to run and type of venue. The main challenge for this project was finding a suitable venue but through her local community links and contacts Bev connected with the Crowborough Social club, located in the centre of town. It was discovered that they were facing the prospect of closing down as their member numbers had reduced. With the social club wishing to increase their membership and the youth club needing a venue a match was made. The agreement is that the youth club, which runs on a Monday evening between 7-9pm, has the use of a space within the social club. Those who attend the youth club pay a nominal fee to become a member of the social club which gives them access to the club during opening hours as well as entry to the youth club on a Monday evening.

The space is perfectly suited to this use as it is separate from the main social club area but still near to the bar to enable the young people to buy soft drinks and snacks etc. It has a pool table, games, tables and chairs and comfy sofas. There is also a great kitchen which has been used for baking cupcakes as one of the recent activities.

Bev is a prominent member of the local community and does a lot of voluntary work. She is well liked and respected by the community and the young people and has a fantastic energy and drive to get things done. The launch of the youth club on the 5th July 2021 really was a great addition to the town and has been enjoyed by a regular group of between 6-12 young people since opening.

Partner organisation

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The youth club is completely volunteer led but a couple of the volunteers are trained youth workers/counsellors which is a fantastic asset for the club.

The costs to run the club are mostly covered through fundraising events as well as donations from a variety of sources. Bev has secured a £500.00 donation from Sussex Weald Homes and a further £500.00 grant from the Sussex Police community fund which was presented by the local Police Community Support Officers. In addition to this she has engaged with the Making it Happen Project and recently applied for a Next Steps grant of £2995.00 to cover the costs of paying for activities for the participants, materials, insurance, volunteer training etc. One of the aims of the project is to create a 'best-practice' model

The lovely thing about the youth club is that the participants have a say in what activities they might like to try. To date some of the activities have included jewellery making, fishing, first aid, baking, boccia, Halloween party and a secret santa as well as the usual socialising that goes on around the pool table, chilling out on the sofas and spending time playing games such as chess.

When I visited the youth club one evening I spoke to a number of the participants and was struck by how much the club appeared to mean to them. One young man I spoke to told me that if he wasn't at the club he would just be hanging out in the local park with his friends. It was raining that evening and so I asked him what he would do on a rainy evening to which he replied *"still at the park getting wet or shut away in my bedroom alone playing computer games"*. I asked him what the club meant to him and he said *"It's a place to spend time with my friends somewhere warm and dry. I like playing chess and chilling out and I have tried some things I had never done before like jewellery making which I enjoyed. I feel more confident and like getting to see my friends outside of school time"*.

It was so wonderful to hear that the club had made such a difference to this young man's life. The launch of the club has proved to be a huge success and has provided a valuable asset to the young people of the town.

Below are some photos of some of the activities which have been run since the launch.

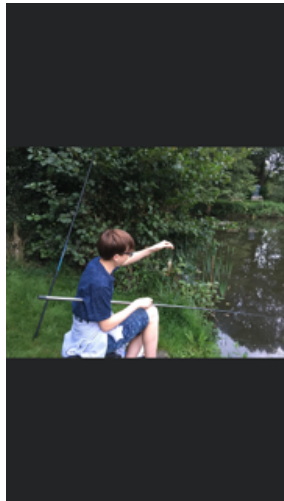
A local resident who enjoys fishing for recreation offered to take the group out to teach them the basic techniques of coarse fishing. The session was engaging and a great experience for the young people who seemed to really enjoy themselves.

The group fishing.

A good catch!

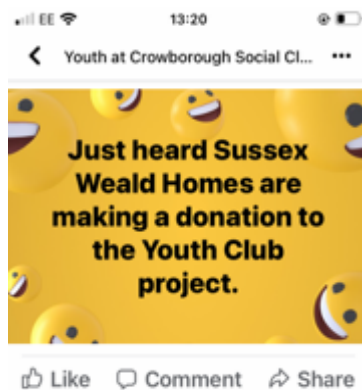
Partner organisation

MAKING IT HAPPEN



The group played bocchia one evening.

MAKING IT HAPPEN



Homes to support the youth club.

A donation of £500.00 was made by Sussex Weald

The group enjoyed a valuable first aid session which has given them some fantastic life skills and improved their confidence in dealing with emergencies in the future.

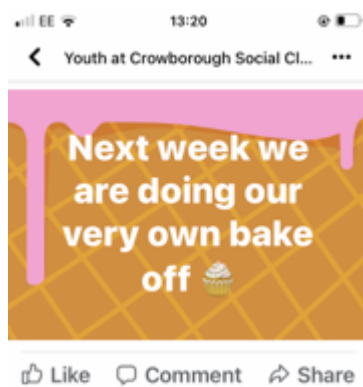
Partner organisation



MAKING IT HAPPEN



On another occasion the group made cupcakes which taught them some basic baking skills and a tasty treat to enjoy as well!



Partner organisation

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The local Police Community Support Officers presented a cheque of £500.00 to the youth club recently from the Sussex Police Community fund in support of the project and its aim to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Partner organisation

