

Projects Meeting at Christ Church Upper Armley

As requested here is a brief report on two of the projects based at Christ Church Upper Armley. We also include at the end a building plan for much needed office space.

Christ Church Armley Youth Project

Partnerships have been developed and maintained over the year. Successful partnerships include : The British council, The Youth Service, Jigsaw Visitors Centre, Local primary and high Schools, Yorkshire Housing, Children's Society, Hollybush Conservation, VAL, BASE 10, Joanna, Armley Fun Day and BARCA.

We have worked with 390 children and young people during the year aged between 7 – 21 years.

Our 17-21 group has been set up in the last 12 months, and been an exciting and challenging time. The young people wanted to continue their involvement in the project after they had passed the age limit. Funding through the Home Office to tackle gun and knife crime and gang culture in our local area enabled us to start this important piece of work. A regular group of 10 young men took part. Detached work has been a crucial part of this group – meeting the young people on their own territory. Leaders have been able to build relationships and help the young people discover their potential.

Following 2 years of ten week sessions, the Prison Visitors Centre gave us full time access to their buildings and resources on a Wednesday afternoon. We have been able to work with around 10 – 15 young people who have family members in prison.

The year has continued to see the 7-11s club full, and welcoming volunteers with leadership qualities who previously attended the club, the youngest of whom is 13!

The 11-14s has developed to meet the needs and challenges of this age group. The focus of a healthy meal planned and prepared by the young people has been fantastic opportunity for young people to develop life skills.

14+ this year has had a much needed strong leadership team to confront many issues such as: Homelessness, substance abuse, relationship breakdown, teenage pregnancy, crime, safeguarding issues and community relations.

Focus groups have “helped me with my behaviour, been really helpful, and we talked about incidents”

Young person aged 11.

We have been able to work with 12 young people for a series of one-to-one work looking at: behaviour management, self esteem, depression, anger rules, reading, bullying, life skills and revision sessions. One success story has been allowing a young person who is struggling with school to access Hollybush



The new 17-21 group on a go-karting trip

conservation once a week to do practical activities.

We have developed a strong team of 15 committed volunteers from the local community. 6 people have been to us on work placements – 3 from West Leeds High School, and others from Trinity and all Saints College, Leeds Metropolitan and Thomas Danby. British Council have provided 4 extra volunteers over the year and Yorkshire Housing and the Youth Service have both provided workers.



A 'home-made' raft in the Lake District.

Regular training and induction is provided and keeps the project up to date and aware of policies and procedures. Team building events such as Alton Towers trips and a weekend residential have been thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Holiday activities have proved successful – a graffiti project in partnership with the youth service, a drama week focusing on domestic violence and healthy relationships, and a tth 8 very challenging and 'at risk' young people.

Our Aims and Vision for the next year remain varied and exciting! We have secured funding to run a rolling arts project in partnership with Meeting Point, who work with refugee and asylum Seekers. This will start in April. In the older groups we plan to run the baby reality course, and sexual health sessions, and look deeper into the major issue of drugs with the 14+. We would like to move further into the work of preventing sexual exploitation for young people.

We aim to train more volunteers to run focus groups and mentoring sessions in the local schools, and to develop a programme to work with young people on the project who are not in Education, Employment or training, or who are excluded from school.

We aim to run residential for the 11-14 and 14+ groups, and depending on funding, take some of the more vulnerable and at risk young people on a holiday.



Our FANTASTIC team!

We aim to increase parental involvement and work more outside of school doing home visits.

The project is developing well, and continually expanding and changing according to the needs of the young people. In order to manage the task ahead, more youth workers are needed who bring skills and experience to expand the team. We are concerned about our volunteers, many of whom need much support. A volunteer co-ordinator would enable better support and training for our valuable volunteers.

We are concerned for our most vulnerable young people, and we would like to employ an art and play therapist to work alongside them and support them.

Our office environment is not conducive to a good working ethos. It is cramped and in desperate need of redevelopment. An opportunity for this is possible with adequate funding.

Those working on the project face many challenging and uncomfortable working situations. They need encouragement and regular supervision which is proving to be more difficult to provide as the project tries to meet so many needs.

Our vision for 2008 continues to be about increasing the security and confidence of the young people we work with, increasing their ability to make health choices and choose healthy relationships, and to reduce antisocial behaviour in the locality and encourage responsible citizenship.

The project has been encouraged over 2007 by the willingness of funders to support us.

- Henry Smith funded the project manager role for 3 years meaning we have sustainability and stability.
- The Tudor Trust & Henry Smith have also funded the administrator realising the importance of the office manager role.
- West Yorkshire Community Police continued their funding for our 'Focus Groups' meaning we could develop our one-to-one work with young people with challenging behaviour.
- Local Network Funding has enabled us to promote emotional wellbeing throughout the project, and made in-house training more informed about Mental Health issues.
- Children In Need has continued to fund a Senior Youth Worker, and many activities of the project.

A six hour post of fundraiser has been a great asset to the project.

Meeting Point

Meeting Point began in February 2003, during the 5 years we have been working to serve the needs of asylum seekers and refugees we have seen many changes in the asylum process and have, as far as possible, adapted to meet the changing needs. Our 2 core activities are the weekly drop-in sessions and the weekly football training, these have been the main focus of our work throughout.

Achievements in 2007

The drop-in session runs from 4-7pm each Monday in term time. A hot meal is provided and service users are encouraged to cook for this. A halal or vegetarian option is always provided. We

allocate 3 volunteers each week to run activities for children. Access to computers and a nearly new shop are available. (Please see attached sheet for attendance figures)

Football training continues each week at Armley Lazer Centre, we have a volunteer coach and are



appreciative of the facilities provided free of charge.

We now have 5 part time paid staff and 18 volunteers. Volunteer training takes place 3 times a year. This year training has covered; The New Asylum Model, a study on Iran, Health and Safety and fire issues and emotional and mental health implications of the asylum process. There is also some peer supervision at each training session, this supplements the one to one supervision each volunteer receives.

A new befriending programme was begun in 2007. Meeting Point service users are linked with residents of Ilkley. This allows asylum seekers to get away from the city, and provides Ilkley residents with an opportunity to get to know asylum seekers on a personal level.

We ran a 14 week programme for young asylum seekers and refugees aged 8-12yrs. This included sports activities, web design and film making.

We organised outings to Kirkstall Abbey Museum and Park, EST Donkey Sanctuary, Scarborough, Eureka and Alhambra Theatre. We also took a group of 42 people, representing 10 different countries, for a residential weekend in Wensleydale. Activities on the weekend included sports, organised walks, games and arts and crafts.

In September we began ESOL classes. We have a volunteer teacher, teaching English at entry level. Most of the students are asylum seekers but the class is also open to local residents who for a number of reasons cannot access mainstream provision.

Other work has included ; accompanying people to court, providing witness statements for the courts, supporting people who are experiencing racial abuse, telephoning utilities providers, and accompanying people to hospital. We have also taken referrals from the prison service and befriended asylum seekers who have been released from prison and housed in this area. We sign post to other agencies where appropriate.

We secured funding for and filled a new Family Worker post. The post holder, who began work on the 14th Jan 08, will oversee the drop-in sessions and coordinate the community work and home visiting, which currently is done on an informal basis and not strategically planned or effectively recorded.

We run 2 Bible study groups, one for women only on Thursday morning and one mixed on Thursday evening. We hope these to be a safe space for reflection and encouragement in very difficult circumstances.

Another aspect of our work is education and awareness raising, we regularly make presentations on asylum issues to interested organisations.

Vision for the future (2008)

We plan to run a People's Commission. The Independent Asylum Commission have provided a toolkit for this and I have already talked to John Battle MP and councillor Alison Lowe about it. Members of the public will be invited to express their views on asylum issues.

We would like to form a relationship with the immigration services, particularly those based at Waterside Court. So far I have had no response from them. The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds has agreed to try and arrange a meeting.

Our 2 Bible study groups help to meet the spiritual needs of people in distress but are not appropriate for over 50% of our service users who are Muslims. This year we would like to bring Muslims and Christians together for prayer and reflection.

Ruth Smith, Community Mission Advisor for Grooms-Shaftesbury, is conducting an evaluation of Meeting Point. This will be completed and written up in April 08. We hope this WILL be a first step in working towards a quality assurance marker such as PQASSO.

We are aware that the numbers of asylum seekers coming to Leeds and particularly Armley are constantly changing. We hope to be flexible enough to

adapt to changing needs. In 2008 it may mean expanding our work to cover a wider geographical area, or putting more emphasis on integration as people are given indefinite leave to remain as a result of Clan Ebor.

We hope to explore ways of generating income as well as continuing to secure funding from trusts and grant making bodies.

Our new family worker has experience in awareness raising in schools, and we would like to use that experience to re start some work in our local schools.

Concerns

Securing enough funding is an ongoing concern. The lack of office space limits the amount of staff and volunteers we can employ, and the present office is unpleasant and unhealthy to work in.

There seems to be an increase in mental health problems among asylum seekers and refugees, it will be necessary to provide more training and support for workers and volunteers.

Media coverage of asylum issues can cause friction in the community. The entrance to the church can seem quite foreboding and there are some people who don't access our services because they don't feel safe walking around Armley in the dark. Numbers are always higher in the summer months.

Meeting Point Budget 2008 (updated jan08)

Staff Costs	Cost £	Funding Secured	Amount £	Outstanding
Salary Project Co-ordinator	13000	Henry Smith	13000	
Salary Project Worker	7834.63	Church Urban Fund	6000	1834.63
Administrator Salary	5400	Tudor Trust unrestricted	5000 400	
Family Worker Salary	7834.63	Garfield Weston	7834.63	
Staff Training	550	Leeds Community Chest Unrestricted	100 400	50
Staff Travel Expenses	300	Leeds Community Chest	300	
Recruitment	1000	Garfield Weston	1000	
Total	35,919.26		34034.63	1884.63
Premises and Office Costs				
Office Rent	1800	Garfield Weston Henry Smith	600 1000	200
Venue Hire	1000	Leeds Community Chest	1000	
Stationery	150	Garfield Weston	50	100
Postage	150	Garfield Weston	50	100
Telephone	540	Garfield Weston unrestricted	466 74	
Total	3640		3240	400
Volunteer Costs				

Volunteer training supervision and support	500	Unrestricted	370	130
Volunteer Travel Expenses	250	Unrestricted	70	180
Total	750		440	310
Activities				
Drop-In (food)	2800	Allen Lane Foundation Leeds Community Chest	2100 600	100
Football	800	In Kind Armley Lazer Centre	800	
Outings and Residuals	2000	Donation	184.80	1815.20
Total	5600		3684.80	1915.20
Total	£45909.26		41399.43	4509.83

Meeting Point Numbers Accessing Drop-in Sessions Jan-Dec 2007

Date	Beneficiaries-Adult	Children	Volunteers	Children	Footballers attending Drop-in	Visitors	Total	Football Players	
Jan 15th	9	18	10	4	3	2	46	7	
22nd	6	12	9	9	3	1	40	6	
29th	5	7	10	8	3	4	37	9	
Feb 5th	15	17	9	4		2	47		
19th	13	13	11	9	3		49	6	
26th	14	17	15	6	1	1	54	9	
Mar 5th	13	11	9	5	4	1	43	10	
12th	No record register lost								8
19th	12	21	10	3	1	1	48	6	
26th	10	11	11	5	4	2	43	12	
Apr 23rd	13	12	12	7	2	2	47	10	
30th	10	7	13	4	2	3	39	8	
May 14th	5	7	12	4	2	2	32	9	
21st	16	19	10	4	2	4	55	10	
Jun 4th	20	23	11	2	4	1	61	11	
11th	17	21	9	5	2	4	58	9	
18th	23	22	10	5	1	2	63	7	
25th	8	7	9	5			29	Cancelled, centre flooded	
Jul 2nd	21	17	11	5	4	3	61	8	

9th	26	18	9	7	4	2	65	9
16th	17	20	9	8	4		58	11
Sep17th	11	5	9	7	6			6
24th	5	1	9	6	4		25	7
Oct1st	12	8	8	6	4		38	7
8th	15	13	11	7	4	3	53	10
Date	Beneficiaries	Children	Volunteers	Children	Footballers	Visitors	Total	Football Players
Oct 15th	21	6	10	7	7	1	52	11
29th	12	11	6	5	4	1	39	10
Nov5th	16	18	8	7	6	5	60	8
12th	9	11	9	5	4	1	39	6
19th	11	4	9	4	5	2	35	6
26th	14	12	8	7	4	4	49	8
Dec3rd	11	13	9	6	5	4	38	7
10th	16	11	10	8	4	3	52	12
17th	28	32	9	6	4	6	85	6

Building work for the Projects



Have you been in the Youth Project/Meeting Point office recently? It's buzzing, it's vibrant, there are so many exciting things going on! Trouble is, everyone is cramped in like sardines. In fact, though the projects are doing some amazing work in the community, the conditions the workers have to work in are extremely poor. (The office covers all the management and admin work for Meeting Point, Youth Project and Heights Bites).

Over the past year we have been talking about this problem on the projects and we think its high time that we do something about it! Consequently, we are conferring with architects, builders and the diocese and we are embarking on an ambitious two-stage building plan, which will make the projects run far more effectively. When finished, it will result in new meeting rooms and a brand new office above the coffee lounge.

Equally important in our plans is provision for the increasing number of people with disabilities who use and volunteer on the projects. In tandem with the building work for the projects, we are planning to rebuild the disabled toilets.



Enclosed below is the staged plan that we are undertaking over the next few months and the projects are actively fundraising to achieve this.

The total cost of stage 1 of the building work will be around £25,000. We plan to reach this with a generous Gift already given by the Area Well being Fund, and from £15,000 donated by the church. We plan to have started this work by Easter and to have completed it by the Summer.

For the rest of the building work, we plan to apply to trusts, charities and to local grant giving bodies.

As a church we are 100% behind these projects. They make a large impact in the community, and its privilege to work alongside others from the statutory and voluntary sectors in the Armley Area. We realise that the £10,000 from the Well Being Fund has already been a great boost to us, but we have been asked to flag up all our needs at the present time, and these include the balance of the money (around £150,000) to finish the stage 2 building work. (further details are available)

Below are the two stages of the plans affecting the work of the projects.

Proposed Building Plans for 2008 which will improve the work of the projects at Christ Church. (updated December 2007)

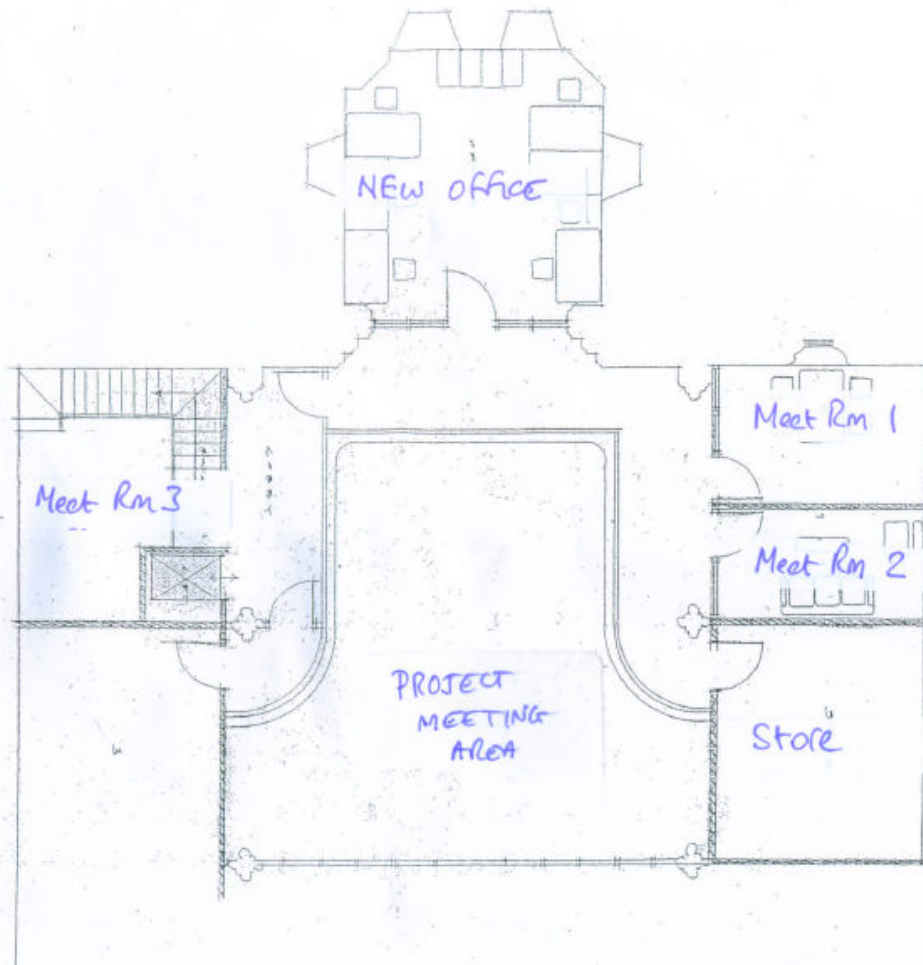
Phase 1

This work involves renovating all the toilets including enlarging the disabled toilet to current accessibility standards. This will entail replacing the cleaner's store and extending the toilets into the area where the crèche room currently is. This work will also include preparatory building work necessary to build above the kitchen/toilets where later there will be a meeting room, a counselling room (small meeting room) and a store.

Phase 2

This work involves completing the required building in the narthex end of the building to provide office space, meeting rooms and storage space for the projects, and their staff. This will include dividing the area currently used as an office by removing the stairs and replacing with floor to provide a large storage space (ground floor) and a meeting room (upper floor); creating a large project office above the current lounge area; creating a meeting room, a counselling room (small meeting room) and a storage room above the kitchen/toilets/crèche room; and ensuring access with a balcony round part of the narthex, a lift and a stairway. A new lobby will also be created giving easier and more welcoming access to the

projects. An existing ground floor meeting room will be rebuilt and extended.



If you need any further details please do not hesitate to contact us.....
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