

Welcome to the 9th edition of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) newsletter

For staff, colleagues, and service users, to update you on what's been happening in the service over the last year, since our last newsletter in Spring 2006. Your contributions to future newsletters would be very welcome.

Details of how to contact us are on the back page.

We hope you enjoy this edition.

In this edition we:

- Review our 2006 inspection
- Update you on the successes of the Rehabilitation and Aftercare Programme
- Look at what basketball player Fabulous Flournoy has been doing for the city's youngsters
- Celebrate our volunteers
- Get to know Gareth Johnson from the YIP

Moving on but not saying goodbye



Judith Hay

Judith Hay, previous Youth Offending Service Manager, has been appointed to the role of Head of Positive Contribution and Economic Wellbeing within the leadership team of the Children's Services Directorate, Sunderland City Council. Judith took up her new post on 1st September 2006 and a new YOS Manager will be appointed in the spring. Although Judith has moved on it is not goodbye as within the new children's services structure, the Youth

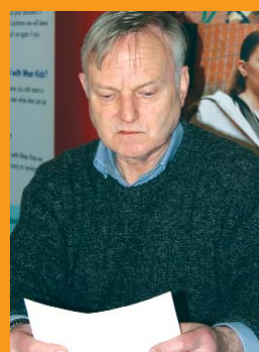
Offending Service has been located within services aimed at supporting children and young people to make a positive contribution and thus under the leadership of Judith in her new role.

Speaking of her role as YOS Manager, Judith said: **"Over the years the YOS has made significant advances, particularly in relation to developing effective practice and delivering quality services for children and young people. The service has grown considerably creating opportunities for new projects and appointments of specialist staff who, together with the core staff group, ensure a full range of needs led services to meet the complex needs of young offenders and children at risk in the city."**

"I am very proud of the dedicated staff and volunteers who work in the service that has undoubtedly made a difference for children, young people and parents in the city.

I am delighted that I will continue to have a role in supporting the YOS in going from strength to strength and I welcomed the Joint Inspection of the Youth Offending Service as an opportunity to demonstrate and celebrate the many achievements that have been made."

MP Bill Etherington visits the YOS



Bill Etherington, MP

On Friday 7th April 2006, Bill Etherington MP for Sunderland North visited Sunderland Youth Offending Service to find out more about the services we provide. The visit provided an opportunity for Bill to meet with staff and see first hand the work of a number of award winning schemes delivered by Sunderland YOS.

Speaking of his visit, Bill said: **"I am delighted to have had the opportunity to visit the Sunderland YOS. It was particularly helpful to chat to the project workers about their special interests and how their work dovetailed with other youth justice services".**

"I was particularly impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of each of the project team – all of whom are clearly dedicated to improving support and guidance for Sunderland youngsters in need of these special services".

Inspection, Inspection, Inspection

As one of 156 Youth Offending Teams nationally, Sunderland YOS has recently undergone a national Joint Inspection that is conducted every five years by a team of Inspectors drawn from nine national Inspectorates. The purpose of which is to report on the effectiveness of YOTs in fulfilling their statutory duties to prevent offending by children and young people, and thereby protect the public whilst still safeguarding their rights and promoting their welfare.

The main inspection visit took place during week commencing 27th November 2006 and was conducted against the published standards for Management & Leadership; Work with the Courts; Work with Children and Young People who Offend; Work with Children and Young People Subject to Detention and Training Orders (DTOs); and Victims & Restorative Justice. The visit included interviews with the YOS partnership board, managers, staff, victims, children, young people and their families, and included case file reads and scrutiny of YOS reports, policies, procedures and practice documentation.

Early indications are that Management and Leadership were felt to be very strong, particularly in relation to supporting staff. For the core areas of practice around work with the courts, work with children and young people who offend in the community and at DTO, positive verbal feedback was given in relation to engagement and enforcement and levels of contact. The Inspection team were impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of YOS staff. Initial feedback on the restorative justice and victims standard was also very positive despite YOT's nationally not performing well in this area of Inspection with no YOT having achieved the highest possible rating of 4, and the majority receiving ratings of only 1 and 2 for this standard.

The YOS will be delighted to announce the results when the final report is published in May 2007. Upon receipt of the final report Sunderland YOS will be required to produce an action plan (within three months) on any areas for improvement, the implementation of which will be overseen by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales Regional Manager.

That's entertainment - A film by looked after children



Setting up for filming

A partnership between the YOS and services for Looked After Children has turned to the big screen in a novel attempt to educate young people about the dangers of alcohol abuse. The latest Fear of Crime Survey revealed that one of the top concerns of Sunderland residents was the perceived threat posed by young people and alcohol related anti-social behaviour.

Theatre production 'Cap-a-Pie' worked with around 20 children and young people who are looked after to create their film "That's Entertainment". The scriptwriter spent time talking to the youngsters to understand the situations teenagers found themselves in and to define the issues.



Filming in action

Alan Scott, Acting YOS Manager (Operations), explained how the YOS were looking for an innovative way of raising awareness of the importance of good citizenship and highlighting the issues linking alcohol and anti-social behaviour. He said,

"the film was a fantastic project and had the extra benefit of involving young people in all aspects of the production".

The 'actors' showed real commitment to the project and arrived on time for filming, which took place over an intensive four-day period involving 7am starts during the school holidays!

The project was financed from the Recovered Assets Fund as part of the Tackle It programme, a partnership between the YOS and Sunderland AFC. Alan Scott is enthusiastic about the results **"it has been a very positive experience for all the people involved. We are now producing a workshop booklet to accompany the film, so that we can carry on the work in other settings and evaluating the project".**

The film premiered on 15th July 2006 at Northmoor Community Fire Station in the presence of Councillor Patricia Smith, senior officers of the council, children and young people who are looked after and their friends.

Supporting young offenders after custody



Young person learning to live independently

The YOS works closely with young offenders upon leaving custody to support re-integration and the Sunderland Rehabilitation and Aftercare Programme (RAP) provides for some of the most complex, disengaged and at risk young offenders released from custody. It is aimed at those with substance misuse problems and/or dual diagnosis mental health issues, but there are often other significant issues including homelessness, lifestyle and motivation issues. The intensity, voluntary and alternative nature of the scheme has worked for some young offenders where all else has failed.

A critical success factor has proven to be the relationship of the RAP Support Workers with the young person. Built up during the young person's time in custody (engagement),

available intensively upon release (core provision) and sustained long after other young justice services have ceased, RAP Support Workers co-ordinate up to 25 hours of intervention including out of hours needs led and crisis support (aftercare). The scheme has seen engagement rates of 85% during the core provision of the programme and 90% in aftercare.

The scheme provides a range of interventions, but has a particular focus on supporting young people into mainstream substance misuse interventions, including transporting young people to appointments, and co-working with specialist Substance Misuse Workers.

The scheme is also developing a pilot project with Hassockfield and Castington Young Offender Institutes, which will see Prison Officers supporting young people on RAP into the community. The Sunderland RAP scheme has delivered some particular successes in addressing accommodation issues faced by many young offenders.

Although the Sunderland scheme was only launched in May 2005, there have been a number of turn-around successes. An early recruit to the programme complied with up to 28 hours of contacts, despite a history of non-compliance. Engaging with aftercare services, the young offender found ways of dealing with long-standing substance misuse habits and went on to complete the programme and enter full time employment in the demolition industry.

In recognition of the RAP workers hard work and commitment, they received a North East Youth Justice Award in November 2006 in the category of 'demonstrating an outstanding contribution'. Congratulations to the team!

ISSP decorating project



Young person wallpapering

Over the last seven months, youths on the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) have been part of a project, aimed at developing skills for employment whilst simultaneously helping a local family. The young offenders decorated a house in Jarrow that was in need of major internal cosmetic work. This involved them stripping, repapering and painting walls, and painting ceilings, doors, doorframes and skirting boards. The house was completed to a first class standard!

The house belonged to a family who were going to pass it on to their daughter, Louise, when she came out of hospital following treatment for liver cancer for the second time in her life. Louise was also coping with the daily struggle of using a synthetic limb as a result of losing a leg to meningitis when she was three years old.

Sadly, Louise died of liver cancer at the age of 27 before she could enjoy the newly decorated house and the family decided to sell it. However, they were extremely appreciative of the work that had been done and in recognition gave a donation to a hospice in Jarrow.

The YOS passes on deepest sympathies to the family and thanks them wholeheartedly for helping us to help them.

Tackle it – 10 Feet High

Tackle it

Providing an Education
on Anti-social behaviour,
Bullying and Citizenship

Throughout the city of Sunderland numerous youth forums have been given the opportunity to participate in a 6-week programme aimed at 13-17 year olds, involving basketball

sessions followed by workshops based on good citizenship and substance misuse.

In a brilliant coup, the YOS has been able to involve basketball star Fabulous Flournoy in the programme. He has actively supported each of the events and has been speaking to young people involved with the award winning 'Tackle It' programme.

The basketball star, now captain of Newcastle Eagles, said: **"I was not the most uplifting of guys when I was younger, peer pressure and growing up in the Bronx thinking 'there was nothing to do and nowhere to go' brought me into some bad situations, but I became involved in local youth projects going on in the neighbourhood which helped me turn my life around"**.



A basketball game with Fabulous

The 'Tackle It' project within Sunderland YOS employs similar methods and is a partnership between Sunderland YOS and Sunderland Football Club Foundation, aimed at tackling racism, anti-social behaviour, bullying and promoting good citizenship. The 'Ten Feet Tall' element of the project uses the distance between the floor of the basketball court and the basket to describe how aspirational guidance and support can make young people within the project feel. Fabulous said: **"those youth projects meant so much to me growing up and I want to be able to say I made a difference to another young person's life in the same way."** Judith Hay, Head of Positive Contribution and Economic Wellbeing said: **"we are delighted that Fabulous is taking time to visit Sunderland and get involved in something which can have the same affect on the lives of the young people involved, as those he was involved with in his youth, which made such a difference to his future growing up"**.

Stone Tent Project Discovery Selection Day



Otterburn Climbing Wall

On the 18th February 2006 at 5:30 in the morning, a group of 20 young people from North East YOTs travelled up to Otterburn to experience the first of six-days (spread over 3 weekends) designed to give them a taste of Army life, whilst improving their team building skills and self-esteem. Two of the group were young people from Sunderland Intensive Support & Supervision Project (ISSP) and went on to be two of only five to complete the whole course.

On arrival for Day 1, the group was split into two teams and spent the day on four basic activities: the climbing wall, confidence course, assault course and a 4km cross country mountain bike ride. The two young people from Sunderland YOS were excited and looking forward to the challenges of the day: one was so fit that he left the Army instructor behind on the country mountain bike ride and the other showed exceptional determination in reaching the top of the climbing wall despite her diminutive stature presenting her with challenges along the way!

A midnight march in a blizzard and a freezing night sleeping in a forest awaited those that went on to complete the full course. The young people slept in an old stone building but some initial confusion about tents led to the project name - the Stone Tent Project!

As a direct result of the day, one of the young people from Sunderland YOS went on to join the Army as a Pioneer Corporal!

Those that completed the course attended an awards ceremony in August. Without exception, the feedback from the young people was extremely positive and they were eagerly awaiting the future residential course!

Getting to know... Gareth Johnson



Gareth Johnson

Gareth Johnson works for the Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) – a programme that is tailor made for the top 50 13-to-16 year olds who are engaged in crime or are identified as being most at risk of offending, truancy, or social exclusion. The project targets these young people and works with them to improve their behaviour and reduce youth crime and nuisance. The YIP receives referrals from the YOS, amongst other agencies.

What is your role / official title within the YIP?

Youth Inclusion Project (YIP) Co-ordinator.

What is your background?

My background is in youth work and residential care. I have worked for a number of years in semi-secure accommodation. Before working for the YIP, I worked for South Tyneside YOS as a Reparation Supervisor. I have worked for the YIP for over 5 years.

In one paragraph, how would you describe your role?

Managing my staff team to work towards meeting the key aims and objectives of the YIP, and to work in partnership with local agencies to deliver the best service to young people in the North Washington area.

What couldn't you do without at work?

My superb administrative support.

Tell us your best joke?

None that I could possibly repeat in this reputable newsletter!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy seeing young people grow in confidence and maturity during the course of time we work with them. This can be over a period of six-months to five years. It gives you a real sense of satisfaction when a young person comes back and visits the project after making a success of their life.

What would you like to achieve in the future (either personally or within the job?)

I would like to see the YIP grow in stature and for more people to understand the ethos behind the YIP.



The programme gives young people somewhere safe to go where they can learn new skills, take part in activities with others and get help with their education and careers guidance. The YIP is unique as it is based in a comprehensive school and this is extremely

advantageous as 75% of the core 50 young people are on the school roll. The programme works closely with the schools, mentors and attendance officers to support the young people both in the school and in the community.

We managed to catch-up with Gareth to ask him about his role in the YIP:

A breath of fresh air

Lambton House celebrates the New Year with a gold National Clean Air Award! This is in recognition of the service providing employees, staff and casual visitors with a smoke free environment.

The National Clean Air Awards were launched to encourage employers to provide their workforce and customers with a smoke free environment, not only to encourage more people to give up but also to avoid the dangers of passive smoking which causes 200 deaths in the under 65's in the region every year.

The YOS is a step ahead of the legislation, which comes into effect in July 2007 to make all enclosed public places and workplaces smoke-free. Norma Johnston, Assistant Head of Environmental Services said: **"a gold award is presented to premises who are totally smoke free while silver is the award available to premises which are smoke free inside but staff can smoke outside.**

These awards recognise businesses that have taken that extra step by becoming smokefree prior to legislation".



Helen Lancaster and Sharon Clutton-Dowell receiving the award

On Track



Jordan pictured with Helen Paterson, Director of Children's Services

An SIB funding application on behalf of the prevention scheme 'On Track' has been successful in winning funds to distribute some unique anti-bullying cards developed by a young person working with the scheme.

Jordan Robson is a young person working with PC Wendy Scott in 'On Track', to help him deal with the effect of being bullied. At the start of his intervention, Wendy described Jordan as "the most unhappiest boy (she) had ever seen".

When working with children and young people, 'On Track' use a lot of issue based board games and paper tools, and at the first meeting in Jordan's house he was playing with a pack of cards.

Wendy often used this during her sessions, as Jordan would talk more when he was 'distracted'. Whilst working with PC Wendy Scott, Jordan suggested he would like to create a pack of cards similar to the top trumps idea to help other young people like him tackle the issues of bullying, and so the sessions were spent drawing up characters. When these were seen by Lisa Boyd, Team Manager for On Track, she thought it would be an excellent idea to explore how they could be produced. GHP were commissioned to produce 4 packs and accompanying picture boards.

When these were presented at the project's celebration event in March, Councillor Sleightholme was very impressed and encouraged an application for SIB funding to enable the wider distribution of the cards – this application was successful. At an event taking place during anti-bullying week, schools nominated children and young people who have overcome bullying to receive a pack of these cards. Jordan went on to come 2nd place in the Karl Peart Award (regional award for anti-bullying) at the end of November 2006 and won the category of 'services to the community' in the Young Achievers Awards 2006.

Crime awareness and community safety day

On 12th July 2006, Jim Sexton and John Pirrie of the YOS, ran a Crime Awareness and Community Safety workshop at Southmoor School, as part of one of eight events organised by the charitable trust 'Prison Me No Way' – the only one delivered in Sunderland! Approx 240 14-15 year-old children visited the workshop during the day as part of their citizenship programme. Exercises related to the judicial system with particular reference to Referral Orders and the children prepared a Referral Order Contract based on a scenario presented to them.

Speaking of the day, Jim Sexton said, "it was obvious that the children found the whole day interesting, they showed a lot of interest and asked some very valid questions about the criminal justice system and youth offending in particular".

"At the debrief, the children and their teachers were most complimentary about the event and had obviously enjoyed it".



John Pirrie facilitating the workshop

Final warning support worker awarded

John Pirrie won a North East Youth Justice Award in November 2006 for his 'outstanding contribution' to youth justice. John, a Final Warning Support Worker, has a unique understanding of both sides of youth justice - from the victim's perspective having been a victim of crime himself and from his role in the YOS.

John is able to offer his co-panel members an insight into the experience of being a victim whilst supporting them in coming to appropriate decisions about what young people need to help them prevent offending.

Celebrating volunteering in Sunderland

Within the YOS, we are fortunate enough to have a considerable number of volunteers working across our services. Here, we celebrate the recent well-deserved awards of Keith Brown and Eddy Moore, both of whom have made a significant contribution to the work of the YOS and to the wider community.

Keith Brown Outstanding commitment

Sunderland YOS would like to congratulate Keith Brown, a volunteer who has worked with Referral Order Panels since 2004, for his award from the Mayor of Sunderland in recognition of the outstanding commitment and dedication he has shown in his work with the Referral Order Panels.

Sunderland Children's Services hold an annual event to celebrate the involvement of volunteers in many aspects of life in the city.

Sunderland YOS was proud to nominate Keith in recognition of the outstanding commitment and dedication he has shown to the Panel meetings, but also in recognition of his own personal development throughout the time he has undertaken the role. Staff have commended Keith for his ability to chair meetings, engaging not only the young person, but the parent too. Young people's comments include, **"he made me feel comfortable to talk", "he listened" and "I was able to discuss stuff"**. All of these comments reflect Keith's practice. Unfortunately for Sunderland YOS, Keith is moving on to pastures new and he will be a sad loss from the team. However, his commitment to volunteering continues, as he will be working with Preston YOS after his move to Lancashire.



Keith Brown receiving his award

Eddy Moore

Taking a stand



Eddy Moore receiving his cheque from the YOS

Eddy Moore worked as a community member of Back on the Map, a project dedicated to the regeneration of Sunderland's most deprived, yet oldest and most historic areas. Back on the Map manage the government funded £53.9million New Deal for Communities (NDC) regeneration programme in the East End and Hendon to tackle community issues such as housing, community safety and the environment.

Eddy is a prominent member of the Hendon community and has given up a large amount of his own time over a number of years, to create public awareness of the problems within the Hendon area.

Through the support of local residents and the YOS, we have seen the regeneration of the local beach, the state of which was a personal concern for Eddy.

It was for this work in particular that the YOS nominated Eddy for the Taking a Stand Award following the success of the clean up campaign. Through Eddy's single mindedness and determination to regenerate Hendon, he has engaged the local community and there has been a dramatic change in the area with Hendon Beach becoming more accessible to the community, cleaner and with a reduction in incidences of reported anti-social behaviour.

Eddy was invited to an Awards Ceremony in Birmingham, hosted by the Home Office. Unfortunately Eddy was unable to attend the event. Instead he accepted his £1,000 cheque at an event organised by the YOS showcasing restorative justice work. In nominating Eddy for this award, the YOS wanted to reward Eddy for his dedication to the Hendon area. Eddy is using his award to continue the regeneration of the local community.

In brief



The Great North Run

Great North Run 2006

Sunderland YOS had two colleagues competing in the Great North Run last year, Kim Elliott who was running to raise funds for Breast Cancer and Michael Edwards who was running to raise funds for the Children's Foundation. For

Kim, this was her first Great North Run and she completed it in a fabulous time of 2 hours and 23 minutes. Michael was running for the Children's Foundation and he managed to complete the run in 2 hours 5 minutes. Michael added, **"I would encourage anybody who has thought about it to try it, it's a great experience"**. Willing volunteers eagerly awaited then for 2007...!

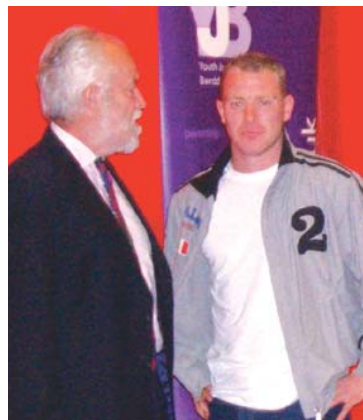
The Children and Young People's Services Awards, 2006

The Children Now and Young People Now, Children & Young People's Service Awards 2006, celebrate achievements in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors throughout the UK, in a wide range of categories with awards aimed at recognising and celebrating the best that is being achieved throughout the UK, as well as being a means to communicating some of the learning and best practice from projects at the forefront of developing new ways of working.

In Sunderland we are pleased to announce that two YOS projects were nominated for their exceptional work; one of which won. Wear Kids with their 'Tackle It' programme were successful in winning the Preventative Award for the project that has made the most effective targeted early intervention with children or young people at risk.

On Track's Community Development work in Sulgrave was highly commended after been nominated for the Play and Social Development award for the project that has done

the most to further opportunities for children or young people to play or socialise freely. Such national awards and recognition is a tremendous achievement and our congratulations and best wishes go to all who were involved for the award ceremony in November.



Andy Lamb and Rod Morgan

Getting in on the Action

Andy Lamb, an ISSP Advocate worker from Sunderland YOS, attended a national Arts Conference.

During the conference Andy had the opportunity to meet Rod Morgan, previous Chair of the Youth Justice Board - and even managed to get his photograph taken with him!

Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008

Sunderland YOS will publish its Youth Justice Plan for 2007/2008 in May 2008.

The plan will set out the focus of the YOS Board and the operational YOS as we continue with the integration of Children's Services and joined up Criminal Justice Organisations.

Making a Difference

Andrea Robson (Social Worker) and Wilf Garbutt (RAP worker) were both judged best examples of joint working to support a young person in reaching and maintaining independence, in the autumn Making a Difference awards. The young person they helped described the YOS as his family due to the level of support that he received during a period of time in his life that he viewed as 'scary and overwhelming'.

Contacting the Youth Offending Service

For further information you can contact the Youth Offending Service at: Lambton House, 145 High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 1UW.

Tel: 0191 566 3000, Fax: 0191 566 3002

E-mail: yos@sunderland.gov.uk

Redesigned Website: www.sunderland.gov.uk/yos

For all newsletter enquiries, please contact the Planning and Information Team at the Youth Offending Service on 0191 566 3000. This publication can be made available in Braille, large print, on audio-cassette and in other languages.

Please contact the Youth Offending Service for further information if you require any of these.

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