

Team Brief

Regional Relay brings YMCAs together



Nottinghamshire YMCA arrives in Derby



Our team on route at Croxton Abbey



Our team arrives in Stoke-on-Trent



Pedal Power: (left to right) residential members Liam, Jamie and Wayne with Marc Stevens (second from left)

Marc Stevens and three intrepid residential members represented YMCA Derbyshire in this year's Regional Relay, cycling 55 miles from Derby to North Staffordshire YMCA in Stoke-on-Trent.

Sixteen YMCAs across the Midlands are taking part in the relay, transporting the text of a 'Relay Commitment' without the use of combustion engines. We received the baton containing the text from members of Nottinghamshire YMCA, who had brought it to Derby on foot.

The text, which commits the region's YMCAs to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and empower all young people to fulfil their potential, will be delivered at the end of the relay on 16th June to a meeting of YMCA chief executives in Sutton Coldfield.

Renew Maintenance gets to work



Our new social enterprise company, Renew Maintenance Limited, commenced operations on 16th May and has so far brought six vacated properties back into a lettable condition for Derby Homes. The work has been challenging at times as properties are sometimes left in a dreadful state, but the team is working well together and is already building a reputation for efficiency and reliability.

Renew Maintenance has also taken on its first apprentice – Simon Wilson – hopefully the first of many. We wish the team well in this exciting new project.

Images above: Nathan Moss-Burton, Andy Astley and Michael Walden (together in the first photo, left to right) hard at work. Ray Smallwood has also now joined the team.

A message from the Chief Executive

The English poet John Donne famously wrote that “no man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main”. This interconnectedness with others is fundamental to each and every one of us. We are all grounded within the context of our family, friends, colleagues, society and values.

However, many of our service user members come to us with chaotic or broken backgrounds and lack the connectedness that so many of us take for granted. A young person whose family relationships have broken down can feel isolated, alone and disconnected. Just as a plant wilts without firm grounding in the soil, so a human being cannot flourish without the firm foundation of human relationships and a sense of context and belonging. Without it, a young person can easily look for a sense of connectedness and purpose in the wrong places and go off the rails.

I believe that providing our service user members with an authentic sense of belonging and connectedness is crucial for our mission to help them develop in body, mind and spirit. We give them not just a safe environment in which to grow, but a sense of themselves in connection to others. This is why they are YMCA members. They are part of our family.

The importance of connectedness is true for YMCA Derbyshire as a whole, which does not exist in isolation but draws its identity from its place within the local community and, indeed, the wider YMCA movement. This fact was demonstrated clearly this month by our participation in the Community Litter Pick and also the YMCA Regional Relay.

We cannot understand what we are without reference to the community we serve and the wider movement from which we derive our mission and character. Yet this connectedness is a great source of strength for all of us.

Gillian Sewell

‘Suits you Sir’: Learner Chaz looks ahead

Chaz, 19, has recently completed the Passport to Independence programme in Chesterfield, only missing one session during the whole 12 weeks and even attending extra sessions.



During the ‘My Future’ module, which included mock interviews, it became apparent that Chaz did not have any clothing that would be suitable for a job interview. So, to reward his positive engagement, the Chesterfield team decided to use the Members’ Fund to buy him a full suit, shoes, shirt and tie from a local store. This will allow him to make the most of his potential.

Speaking to team member Teresa Christie, Chaz said: “I wanted to enrol on this programme to be able to use my time more positively, meet new people and learn more about my community. I feel I got something out of each of the modules but I think I enjoyed the My Health module most as we got to experience going to a local gym.

“I am now doing an English and Maths course but once that is finished I really want to find work. I want to do a job in catering as I have some qualifications in this and enjoy it loads.”

Children and Young People

The children had another great week at Y-Play over the half-term holiday by taking part in our ‘under the sea’ themed activities. The children made felt fish, paper plate octopi and sparkly sea creatures, and also took part in a football skills workshop as well as other sports and games.

Our daytrip on the Wednesday was to Twinlakes Theme Park, which is a favourite with all the children and staff!

Michael Leake also took a coach full of families from Firs Estate Primary to Skegness for a daytrip at the end of the week. Everyone had a great time playing organised games on the beach as well as trying their hands at crazy golf and enjoying the fun fair.

Preparations are now in progress for the summer playscheme. The themes will include Fit & Funky Week, Superhero Movie Week and Prehistoric Week. Further information is available on the website.

Amy Allen



Learning and Development

In a new innovation for the Learning and Development Service, we are planning to run Summer Schools for school leavers across the county.

The ten-week programmes, which result in City & Guilds qualifications, are intended to give the learners a real advantage in their future studies and a better chance of securing rewarding careers.

A programme in Caring for Children will be offered in Derby, Ilkeston and Chesterfield. In addition, learners in Derby will also be able to study Hospitality & Catering, in Ilkeston they can also study Retail & Leisure, and in Chesterfield they can also opt for a programme in Employability.

The Summer Schools are free to school leavers, but places are limited so potential learners are asked to get in touch as soon as possible by emailing learning@ymcaderbyshire.org.uk or giving us a call on 01332 364128.

Health & Social Care learners reflect on a job well done



Learners enrolled on the Health and Social Care taster programme got the chance to share their views on the course with members of the wider YMCA Derbyshire team in May when they gave group presentations at Handyside Court – an extra care home for the elderly in Derby.

The learners told YMCA team members, including the programme coordinator Maureen Durham and Chief Executive Gillian Sewell, as well as Handyside Court residents, what they covered and what the programme had meant to them. Here are a few snippets from their presentations:

“We got along with the residents and enjoyed their company. We all enjoyed taking them out on a trip and spending time with them. We all worked as part of a team to help and support them.”

“We were very happy to know that all the residents taking part in the activities enjoyed themselves and that it was a good experience for them as well.”

“We have learnt how to engage and communicate with people from a different age group. We have also gained self-confidence and grown personally.”

“We agreed that the course is fantastic because it has the right teachers with all the skills needed to support the students.”

“When working as part of a team we learnt how to contribute and communicate – and also to use our own initiative when planning a task.”

“The work placement has been a wonderful experience and we have learnt skills such as patience, being non-judgemental and being a good team player.”

“We have learnt to listen and respect others – and also not to make assumptions about people we do not know.”

Marketing and Communications

The website is continuing to be an important tool. In the course of the last year, 195 separate enquiries for information or support were submitted via the online contact form.

There are now also well over 500 unique visitors to the site a month – not including members of staff.

Our new fundraising drive, Project 165, will be launched later this month. It will be a great opportunity to tell our story more widely. More information will follow in the next edition.

Dominic Baster

The Hospitality Service

Following a successful marketing campaign around Pride Park, involving the delivery of brochures to many of the businesses located there, a number of new bookings have been made for the meeting rooms at The Campus.

Demand has also increased for our delicious homemade cakes and we would welcome any future suggestions.

The catering team is now at full strength and working well. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Austen Anderson to the team.

Rachel Bradley

North Derbyshire Furniture Project

The month of May saw a record monthly sales total of £4,018 for the Furniture Project in Chesterfield. A significant contribution to this total was made by the sale of two donated ‘retro’ coffee tables on eBay – one for £99 and the other for £61.

Over the same period we also provided 11 emergency furniture packs – seven to individuals and four to families

We now have a new system for claiming Gift Aid on donations of furniture, further aiding the cause.

Gil Bowles

Community Litter Pick in Wilmorton



Left to r: Jarrod Hobson, Zoe Nettleship, Marc Stevens and residential members Kirsty, Jaime and Barnaby

Our residential and team members did their bit for the local community at the end of May by taking part in a Community Litter Pick in Wilmorton and Alvaston Park. Setting off from The Campus, our members were joined by Police Community Support Officer Jarrod Hobson and Zoe Nettleship from Derby Street Pride, who made the necessary equipment available. Team member Jane Evans also joined in, accompanied by her dog.

Once in Alvaston Park, the team were joined by members the 25th Derby Girls' Brigade at St Osmund's Church and their

Captain, Kath Cawdell, who is also a Network Officer for Community Action Derby.

Marc Stevens, who helped to organise the event, said, "Everyone who took part in the litter pick enjoyed the chance to demonstrate their concern for the local environment in such a practical way.

"Litter left on the street is a blight that has a serious impact on the quality of life of local residents. By helping to improve the situation, we were pleased to be playing an important part in the life of the local community."

Welcoming Eli Roy Love



This is the new member of the Love family, Eli, who was born on 9th May and is doing well.

His father, Chesterfield Locality Manager Mark, is also doing well and feeling much better after his recent stay in hospital.

MP made Patron



N.E. Derbyshire MP Natascha Engel has been appointed as a national YMCA Parliamentary

Patron in recognition of her campaign work in support of young people. She received the honorary appointment at Westminster, where she pledged to continue her interest in the work of the YMCA.

Reflection of the month

Lord Jesus, who would think that I am Thine?

Ah, who would think Who sees me ready to turn back or sink, that Thou art mine?

I cannot hold Thee fast though Thou art mine: Hold Thou me fast, So earth shall know at last and heaven at last That I am Thine.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894)

Bishop of Derby supports fundraising drive



Our new fundraising drive, Project 165, will be launched later this month with an initial mail-shot to churches in Derby. The Bishop of Derby, the Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern, is supporting the appeal and had this to say about our work:

"YMCA Derbyshire has been providing a powerful witness to the God-given potential of every young person in our community for nearly 165 years and I wholeheartedly endorse its work.

"In our current secular society, YMCA Derbyshire has remained true to its original Christian identity and mission by extending a warm welcome to everyone and working to develop young people in body, mind and spirit. It is very important that this local Christian charity is able to continue and grow its work to enable young people to flourish and to put its values into practice.

"I urge all Christian communities in Derbyshire to participate in the YMCA's witness to the dignity and value of all young people and others by supporting and praying for its continued success."