

Team Brief

Protect
Trust
Hope
Persevere

Our footballers take on the world

A team of YMCA Derbyshire's residential members have taken part in an innovative football tournament held at YMCA Worcester ahead of this summer's World Cup.

The tournament was organised in conjunction with Rachel Bulley, a student on placement with YMCA England, and the Regional Youth Governance Group. YMCAs from around the Midlands took part with each one representing a country from around the world – the aim being to promote cultural awareness and have some fun. Our team was allocated the South American country of Colombia.

In an innovation unlikely to be repeated at the World Cup proper, teams that answered questions on their adopted country were awarded with extra penalties at the end of each match.

Unfortunately our team didn't scale the heights of tournament glory – in fact we came last (better luck next time guys) – but we all had a great day and felt very much part of the wider YMCA family.

We hope to follow up the tournament with another event in which each team will cook a dish typical of the county they represented and will then share what they have cooked with each of the other YMCAs. This will hopefully be held in Derby, so watch this space.

Marc Stevens



Colombia (aka Derbyshire) take on India (aka West Bromwich)



Representing Colombia: (left to right) residential members Daniel, Steffan, Stuart, James and Daniel.

Lights, camera, action!

A camera team descended on The Campus at the start of March to film parts of a promotional film for the National College for the Leadership of Schools and Children's Services. The film was intended as a case study on the role of Derby City Partnership's Children and Young People Executive in leading a Children's Trust Partnership – in which our own Chief Executive participates.

The filming involved an interview with Gillian and a tour around the building, capturing a snapshot of our work. Quite what the team members in the General Office made of it as they tried to work (see below) is anyone's guess!



The interview underway



In the General Office

A message from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the latest *Team Brief*. This edition comes at the start of spring, which is a very hopeful time of year. The cold and darkness of winter are giving way to the colour and brightness of a new season, and the warmth and vitality of summer are in sight at last.

Of course, this time of hope and growth can be seen as a metaphor for our work here at YMCA Derbyshire. We are in the business of bringing hope to those who, in their own lives and in different ways, have experienced the gloom of winter. For many of our service user members, coming to us heralds a new spring in their lives. This is what we mean by empowering our young people to achieve their potential.

Of course, we all know that not every situation we deal with results in such a positive conclusion. While there are many deeply encouraging stories of success, there are also cases of residents, learners or others who don't take full advantage of the opportunities we offer them to make a fresh start. This can be discouraging because they aren't just nameless customers but members of our YMCA. We care about their welfare and hope with them for a better future. However, I know that we are a truly dedicated group of people striving to make a real difference to those we serve, across all our services and localities.

We can't succeed every time, although we do succeed more often than not and what marks us out is the devotion with which we go about our mission. It is this devotion to the cause that makes me truly proud of our team.

Gillian Sewell

Children's and Young People's Services

The February half term holiday was our busiest yet. The Y-Play Playscheme received additional funding from two separate sources: 'Aiming High' funding allowed us to increase our Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision to seven supported places per day, with one-to-one support, while school funding enabled us to provide 40 children with a minibus pick up/drop off service from Reigate Primary school to our existing Playscheme in Mickleover. All of this resulted in us peaking at 51 children on one of the days!

The week culminated in taking nearly 150 participants on a family day trip from Arboretum Primary School, Normanton, to West Midlands Safari Park on the final Saturday of half term. This was enjoyed by all and was a great success.

Look out for our new April Y-Play leaflet (pictured) and at a school near you!

Michael Leake



Marketing and Communications



This month has finally seen us bringing day-to-day control of our website in-house. This is a very significant development as it means that we now have far greater flexibility and freedom to update and develop the site. The aim is to make it a more useful tool for team members, service user members and external visitors alike.

Already there have been a number of design changes to the site (hopefully to make it more user-friendly) and it has also been restructured to allow for further growth, but it remains a work in progress. So, please let me know if you have any particular requests regarding the website, or ideas on how it could be made more effective. The website belongs to all of us!

Dominic Baster

Hospitality Service

February has been a brilliant month for the meeting rooms as I'm sure many of you have noticed! I would like to say a big 'thank you' to all the resident volunteers who have helped both in the kitchen and in the meeting rooms. Their efforts have been outstanding so thank you very much for all your help.

The first residents' cooking course started last month, and the participants have now completed the course and the second group have started. Thank you again to everyone involved in the Hospitality Service and we look forward to an exciting and busy March!

Rachel Bradley

Haiti relief effort

Y Care International, the international relief and development agency of the YMCA in the UK and Ireland, has raised over £430,000 for relief work in disaster-hit Haiti. The YMCA Centre in Port-au-Prince was lost in the earthquake, but staff and volunteers from the Dominican Republic YMCA have distributed 20 tonnes of food and blankets to over 500 families and a second convoy of aid is now planned.

Focus on support for resettlement



Mark Mullen (right) with Campus residential member Steffan

One key way in which our supported housing service differs from traditional hostel accommodation is the concern we have for the resettlement of our residential members. **Mark Mullen** is our Lead Support Worker for Resettlement, and here he gives his thoughts on this vital dimension of our work.

Before coming to YMCA Derbyshire I worked at the Metropolitan Support Trust providing tenancy support in the Derby area for young people aged 16-25. I gave advice and support during weekly visits to the tenants, aiming to empower them by building up their confidence and helping them towards total independence.

My role now concerns the stage before that. I provide advice to our residential members on their housing options before they leave The Campus, and when they sign up to a property I help manage the transition process of moving.

I contact the utilities companies and set up payment plans, as well as applying for any grants that might be available to assist them with buying essential items such as furniture.

I also arrange for them to be signed up to tenancy support services in the area, if required, which will provide ongoing tenancy support.

Most residents take up tenancies with social landlords when they leave us, although a small number might rent privately. Many of them may not have lived independently before and need advice on how to manage their income to pay all the household bills. Others just need a helping hand to settle into the routine of managing their new property.

I have seen at first hand how residents who move on from here have benefitted from the support they received with us.

They have been assisted to overcome personal issues and engage in training to help them develop independent living skills. All planned moves are a credit to the work of our team and everyone must share in that success.

I enjoy seeing the progress made by each individual when they realise that they can fulfil their potential. They have a renewed confidence, an awareness of their own achievement and also of having being treated with equality, dignity and respect.

Reflection of the month

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer (1662)

Prayer meetings

The weekly staff prayer meetings at The Campus are on Wednesdays in room R5 at 1.30pm. All are welcome. Prayer requests can be sent in complete anonymity by submitting them through the 'Contact us' form on the website as a general enquiry.

SFI team goes karting and skating to success

In order to demonstrate team working skills, the SFI team organised an innovative group activity in February requiring the learners to plan a day's activity. This would require them to develop their research and budgeting skills while taking on individual responsibilities.

Team meetings were held at which the learners were encouraged to assert their opinions, give feedback and make positive suggestions on how to improve the plans. The learners were expected to risk assess the activities planned, create a behavioural contract for the day's activities and provide a detailed itinerary.

After realising various problems with their first preference for the day, which was to complete an assault course, they discussed various options among themselves and decided to take part in two shorter activities – in the morning they would try go-karting, and in the afternoon have a go at ice skating. Then the work to plan the two events got underway.

On the day itself, the learners supported each other during each of the activities, and commented positively on each person's achievements.

The overall feedback was a recognition that good communication had been very important. Everyone fulfilled their individual responsibilities to make for a very enjoyable project for the SFI 'My Community' module.

Sarah Boone



All winners: SFI learners (left to right) Stuart, Steffan and James after the go-karting



Taking a break



Diane, Sarah and Hayley at the ice rink

Chesterfield Services – a year of achievement

Pulling together some statistics for the upcoming tenders for our Tenancy Support Service in Chesterfield has revealed some interesting findings which I thought I would share with you all...

Furniture Project

Since the start of project (May 2009) to date (1st March 2010):

- 325 families or individuals have been assisted with pieces of furniture
- 51 volunteers (the target was 15) have participated
- 900 items were saved from the tip

Floating Support – last 18 months

- 68 service users have been supported (the target was 45)
- 99% of users have left having completed their support
- 89% of all outcomes have been achieved (the target was 78%)

Connexions – 2009/10

- We have worked with 23 young people per month (target is 20)
- And with 53 young people throughout the year (target is 45)
- 28 young people were supported in education, employment or training.

These figures highlight the hard work that all our staff are doing with regards to engaging and successfully empowering young people to achieve their goals.

Mark Love



FP: Brief (left), the new newsletter for the North Derbyshire Furniture Project, is available online.