

OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER

**A GOOD PLACE
TO GROW UP**

PROJECT SUMMARY

YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORKING GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2008-MARCH 2009

OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER: A GOOD PLACE TO GROW UP

In September 2008, Cirencester Town Council adopted its Community Plan, “Our Future Cirencester” (OFC). This contained 16 community development projects including five aimed specifically at children and young people.

- Schools at the Heart of the Community
- Sports and Physical Activity
- Fun places
- Safe routes to school
- Cirencester Youth Town Council

From September 2008 to March 2009, the OFC Steering Group set up four working groups to consider how to take the community plan forward. The task for the working groups was to consider specific topics and to make recommendations to the Steering Group in March 2009 on how the project should proceed in the 2009-2010 year and beyond. The four working groups were Heritage, Business, Infrastructure, and Young People.

The Young People’s Working Group dealt specifically with issues surrounding services to children and how they could be joined better to provide children and young people with a more co-ordinated approach to provision of activities and to provide them with a greater say in the decisions that affect them. The working group was composed of around 12 local service providers from the education, community policing, housing, charity and leisure sectors who met monthly.

The working group considered and refined the original OFC action plan. In doing this, it took account of existing programmes including the Extended Services agenda, and existing Town and District Council initiatives.

This report constitutes the Young People’s Working Group’s recommendations to the OFC Steering Group.

SCHOOLS AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

The Community Plan set out to create a partnership of all local service providers for children and young people to help them work together to meet their common objectives.

A seed-corn group has been established and is meeting regularly. They have agreed to the principle of forming a partnership and have set out a draft list of potential partners, objectives and future actions. These are listed in **Annex A**.

Central to the partnership's objectives is to seek to integrate the Every Child Matters agenda into general service provision in the town. The County Council has a budget available for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 financial years where schools within the Cirencester Cluster can bid for funding for specific projects, many of which provide activities for children and young people. All members of the Community Plan Young Peoples' Working Party have been invited to bid for this funding.

There is an identified need, both from the community plan, but also from the cluster itself, for better information provision for the availability for the activities.

The 2008-2009 year's work will allow the partnership to become established, or to become subsumed into another partnership if that is desirable, and to begin to deliver some of the identified actions.

A bid for funding will be made to the Bingham Library trust to fund a part-time post to act as project manager for the Partnership.

COMMUNITY WEBSITE

One of the main actions for the partnership is to increase awareness of available activities.

The need for access to better information about activities and information about Cirencester has been raised by other working groups in the community plan process. The Heritage Working Group has identified that there is no centrally coordinated source of information about the town's history, though many publications exist. Local businesses have identified through the Cirencester Local project that information about the town is available in a number of places, but that a single information point would be easier to use for people who are considering a visit to the town. Our volunteers have commented generally that adults could do with better information about activities as well.

The Young People's working group has considered the need for information about activities in detail and has established a set of parameters for a "what's on" information service, set out in **Annex B**.

It may be desirable to establish a community website that meets the needs of children, young people, parents, other adults and tourists. Seed corn funding may be available from the Bingham Library Trust and a proposal for this will be prepared in 2009-2010.

It is envisaged that the website will be rolled out in phases to enable it to be established within the community and also to ensure that it does not cut across existing websites.

The first phase of the website's development will be a young people's facility. It is hoped that local schools can become involved by working the creation of the website into the curriculum. This would serve two functions: to engage more effectively with young people and to give them practical skills. The ultimate goal will be for young people to write and maintain the site, populating it with items they find interesting and relevant. University of Gloucestershire has expressed interest in becoming involved in the project. The Furry Feet website would be a good starting point when designing the website.

In its first year, the website will focus on young people's activities and heritage matters. It can then be extended to encompass activities for adults, or other information relevant to the community.

SPORTS AND ACTIVITY

The Community Plan seeks to increase the number and range of activities available for children and young people.

There are currently a wide range of activities available for young people in Cirencester, though their availability is not always well understood. Some local activities include:

- Army Cadets Youth Club
- Youth Club Mobile
- Play Rangers
- Brownies and Guides
- Young Carers
- Scouts
- Football
- Baptist Group
- Friday Night at New Life Church
- Fosseyway Junior Warden Scheme
- After School Clubs
- Cirencester Open Air Swimming Pool
- Passport for Play
- Leisure Centre
- Cirencester Skate Park
- Angling Club
- And many more....

The number of activities available for young people will probably be dramatically improved in the 2009-2010 year. The funding available for Extended Schools is

being targeted at activity provision and many schools in the cluster have made bids to create new after school clubs and other out of school activities.

FUN PLACES

The Community Plan identified that some parts of Cirencester are poorly served with play spaces for children and young people of all ages. The current offer is limited to:

1. Cirencester Town Council
 - a. Kingshill Lane – Sports Pitches, skate park, open space
 - b. City Bank – Open Space
 - c. Century Close – multi-activity unit
 - d. Two Acres – 2 multi-goals, teen shelter, balance beams, climbing frame, parallel bars
 - e. Thistle Park – open space
 - f. Four Acres – open space
 - g. Abbey Grounds – play area, fishing, bandstand
 - h. Baunton Lane – play area
 - i. Humpty Dumps – open space
 - j. St Michael’s Park – tennis courts, mini golf, play area, adventure trail
2. Cotswold District Council
 - a. Leisure Centre
3. Others
 - a. Cyber Cafe
 - b. Impact Youth Centre
 - c. Library

Cirencester Town Council has recently fully refurbished and upgraded the play facilities in Abbey Grounds which has proven popular with young children.

The Town Council has made a preliminary bid for significant funding from the District and County Council’s for play equipment in Chesterton. If successful, the Young People’s working group, the Churn Project and the Town Council will work together to develop the final bid. This provision will be aimed at 8-13 year olds, and will specifically address needs of girls and children with disabilities.

For older children, the Town Council is well underway in its planning for a new Kingshill Lane Sports Facility. Ideas on how the sports and community facility at Kingshill could be developed were sought from local clubs and organisations, along with local authorities, sport governing bodies and Members of Parliament serving this area. Following the study, the Town Council appointed 'Sports Solutions GB Ltd' to undertake Phase 1 of its Kingshill Lane Sports development. Phase 1 includes a supply/demand analysis, consultation, sports development plan, grant funding review, business planning, capital costs and indicative scheme drawings.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Community Plan seeks to create better routes for people of all ages by foot and cycle throughout the town. It seeks specifically to help young people move independently and safely through town and to and from school.

All available school travel plans have been assembled and an exercise is required for 2009-2010 to consider how these can be joined up to create a young person's travel plan for Cirencester. Moving safely and independently between school and home and the new activities that are being created will become increasingly important.


As a first step, a joint project between the community plan and the Cotswold Waterpark Society is being developed that will help link communities in Cirencester to the Waterpark. Not only will this project give young people independent access to the many activities in the Waterpark, the network created will serve as the first phase in creating the overall travel plan.

CIRENCESTER YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

The Community Plan seeks to give a voice to young people in Cirencester to help them shape the policies and decisions that affect them.

Following a Youth Day hosted by the Town Council in October 2008, a group of young people drawn from the Kingshill and Deer Park schools has begun to meet. The CDC Youth Participation Officer (YPO) is undertaking training towards the establishment of a Youth Council for the town.

The current focus of the group is to get to know each other and learning:

- group work skills
- ways of communicating effectively
- roles and responsibilities
-  what is community?
- planning community action

The role of the YPO is to prepare and educate the group to have the skills and knowledge available to be a Youth Council and this will take a few months. The group of young people will then begin to look more closely at engagement/consultation between a Youth Council and Town Council, meeting appropriate Councillors and planning their first 'campaign' or 'project'.

This should begin a transition process during which the Youth Council will begin to develop its identity and work much more closely with the Town Council and the community plan projects.

ANNEX A: A PARTNERSHIP FOR PROVIDERS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS (POTENTIAL)

- a. Cirencester Town Council
- b. Churn Project
- c. Youth Service
- d. SHAPE team
- e. Cirencester Schools
- f. Cotswold District Council
- g. Fosseway Housing Association
- h. Cirencester Community Policing team
- i. Head Teachers
- j. Churches
- k. Police

PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

1. Provide information on the availability of activities in multiple media and signpost towards other information providers.
2. Understand the scope of the current local offer, identify gaps in provision, and work with partners to fill the gaps.
3. Engage with users and providers to ensure that decisions made meet real needs in the community.
4. Help children and young people learn to value and contribute to their community.
5. In its activities, the partnership will pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable families and seek to meet their needs.
6. Improve the local offer to teenagers.
7. Use Every Child Matters as they basis of the Partnership's approach within a community context that embraces schools, service providers, the voluntary sector, and children and young people.

8. Build a core of dedicated participants to drive projects and initiatives forward.
9. Provide a range of activities and fun places that are:
 - a. Age appropriate
 - b. Accessible
 - i. Location
 - ii. Cost
 - iii. Understanding of availability
 - c. Created in response to demonstrated need
 - d. Safe
 - e. Fun and attractive
 - f. Varied
10. Help small providers market their offer and raise awareness.
11. Disseminate information about children and young people to other sectors of the community.
12. Identify resources from existing partners' budgets and prepare bids for additional resources to deliver identified projects and initiatives.

PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

1. Provide information on activities available to children and young people by encouraging providers to load data onto GLOSCYP. Seek to have links to GLOSCYP put onto a range of websites that might be used by children, young people and their families.
2. Engage with children and young people to understand what they want and help them assist the Partnership in meeting their own needs by involving them in decision-making.
 - a. Youth Town Council
 - b. Feedback from individual school's consultation structures
 - c. Consider creating a Youth Forum to augment the Youth Town Council, perhaps as a one-off event, as a way to gather data about unmet needs and to raise awareness about the partnership.
 - d. Consider holding a one-day event for service providers to gather data about unmet needs and to raise awareness about the partnership.

- e. Consider doing a survey of children and young people to learn about specific issues.
 - f. User surveys at the point of delivery
3. Prepare appropriate projects and identify funding sources through partners' budgets, grants, fundraising, etc.
4. Benchmark against other successful local schemes and adapt Cirencester programmes accordingly. Some examples are:
 - a. Dursley Youth Forum
 - b. Pub opening for under 18s before 6.00 pm
 - c. World Jungle
 - d. Rural Cinema lessons for creating a Youth Cinema
5. Speak to venue owners to explore hosting youth activities:
 - a. Wildmoor: Corn Hall
 - b. New Brewery Arts: Nicole Theatre
 - c. English Heritage: Amphitheatre
 - d. In our Element: City Bank
 - e. Church Halls
 - f. Chesterton Primary: Children's Centre
 - g. Churn Project: Churn Fun Day
6. Disseminate information about the partnership and the available offer to children and young people:
 - a. Community Days of Action
 - b. Cirencester businesses

ANNEX B: PARAMETERS FOR A “WHAT’S ON” INFORMATION SERVICE:

1. Create a “brand” for all age groups so that information of interest can be easily identified
2. Collate information according to the following age groups:
 - a. 0-4
 - b. 5-13
 - c. 13-17
 - d. 18-25
3. Information should be made available through a range of media:
 - a. Websites
 - b. Notice Boards
 - i. Community
 - ii. Schools
 - iii. churches
 - iv. offices
 - v. Activity locations
 - c. Organisations’ newsletters
 - d. Existing publications that would be read by young people
 - e. Tourist Information Centre
 - f. Library
4. Prepare a database for activities so the data can be sorted:
 - a. Providers
 - b. Contact details
 - c. Age group served
 - d. Entrance requirements

- e. Costs
 - f. Etc
5. Create an interactive on-line forum where young people could propose new activities, critique, ask questions or blog.
 6. Have facility for users to search by various criteria such as date, location, age group, etc.
 7. Furry Feet is a good website to emulate.
 8. Need it to be professionally designed.