

**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

**Youth Connect**



**MAY 2017**

# **YOUTH CONNECT EXPRESS**

**Providing positive activities, advice and support to young people who need it the most**

# WELCOME

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## THIS EDITION WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY...

*Dan Rybacki*

*Claire Coleman*

*Calvin McCormack*

*Tracey Pike*

*Sam Plummer*

*Dave Wiles*

## ON THE COVER...

Local young people receiving their Duke of Edinburgh's award.

Youth Connect has enjoyed a stellar 2017 thus far, delivering exciting events and activities that enhance young people's lives. We also continue to work with those unemployed, speeding up their progression into jobs and education. As part of the Early Help preventative services we provide a wide range of services including positive activities, advice and targeted support to young people who need it most.

Youth Connect operates teams in Bath, Somer Valley and across the county (Countywide). Our Personal Advisers specialise in employment and training guidance, and are linked to schools and Bath College. We provide drop-in sessions and private support for unemployed young people in Bath, Somer Valley and Keynsham.

Our Targeted Youth Support Workers provide one-to-one support and group work programmes assisting those whose main issues are not related to information, advice and guidance.

All young people can attend open access youth work in Bath, Peasedown and Radstock, and we operate a Mobile Bus in hard-to-reach areas such as Paulton, Bishop Sutton, Chew Stoke and Timsbury. Youth hubs offer project nights, trips and residential experiences, and detached youth programmes now operate in Bath, Radstock and Westfield. These meet with young people at destinations of their choice.

*Want more information about our service or any stories featured? Got an article idea?*

*Drop us a line!*

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## LOCAL SCOOP

### WEST PLACE TO BE

Westfield Youth Project is fast approaching its 20-week birthday and we've already launched sporting, bush craft and cookery activities. As winter closed in we secured use of the Trinity Methodist Church hall, central to the community, every Tuesday & Wednesday evening.

Open-access Tuesdays play host a range of activities, including DJ'ing, gaming and issues-based sessions. Wednesdays are now 'project nights' and these are already benefitting young people - the first session spotlighted CV writing and college applications to our Year 11s, and one of our PAs was on hand to discuss post-16 options.

8 young people recently undertook our First Aid project, all of whom achieved their certificates. The Volunteer Network are set to run our upcoming Money Management course and we also hope to run the Cook It! programme in the near future.



### CERTIFIED COUNTYWIDE

Our young people have worked hard to achieve accredited outcomes that emphasise identifying and developing healthy relationships. Projects have raised awareness of White Ribbon Day, which tackles domestic violence, and supported anti-bullying week – where young people pledged to fight bullying. We've promoted diversity through sessions on the history of LGBT, and young people are also currently undertaking a First Aid programme.

In Foxhill the youth bus has become a magnet for local events & engagement. We've teamed up with Sustrans, the masterminds behind Foxhill's environmental improvement programme, to give young people a voice - they've voted on ideas and shared their thoughts on proposals. The Boom Satsuma /DNA event organiser (who happens to be Radstock Youth Hub alumni!) is helping young people shape this summer's Springfield Park event. Also teaming up with Bath Rugby, our young people have met major players and received tickets to live matches.



# RIVERSIDE REBORN

## OUT WITH THE OLD...

Young people, local groups and Youth Connect staff are thrilled at the renewal of the Riverside Youth Hub. £200,000 has delivered a renewed café, a refurbished music suite, an improved classroom and soon a floating harbour for kayaking. The hub is used for youth work (targeted, Open Access and a church group), music tuition and The National Autistic Society, among others. We are grateful that BANES has decided to invest in the hub and hope that we can ensure an ongoing vibrant service to young people. A huge thanks is owed to the BANES youth work team who have done so much to keep the service going and facilitate the redevelopment.



## MUSICAL FUTURES

We're thrilled to have upgraded our music studio as part of our Youth Hub's revamp. Lead by our savvy musical Youth Worker Clive Gordon, the studio allows our young people to express themselves in a creative manner. A rap project helped a young person raise awareness of 'Stop and Search' legislation, with Clive also helping young people develop bands and even record poetry - some of which was featured in our book Attention. It's still available through the Civic Centre for £2!



## WHEELIE BENEFICIAL

Four Riverside young people joined a mechanical training event at the Wheels Project in Bristol. This involved constructing go-karts and attending Team Sport (Avonmouth) for a national go-karting contest. It's hard to overstate the confidence and improved self-worth that these activities give young people - seeing them kitted out in boiler suits wielding spanners and screw drivers was so encouraging, and watching them negotiate hair-pin bends at speed (with a growing sense of confidence and skill) was the icing on the cake.

It was a bonus to share this activity with young people from Connecting Families and the opportunity has created long-lasting friendships. It has also been great to see young people receiving awards for their contribution and participation. The skills, experience and team building that took place were first class, and we celebrated this with an award ceremony at which David Glossop (founder/CEO of Wheels) presented awards to our young people. He outlined the value of such activities in terms of confidence building, team building and as CV material.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### TALES OF AN INTERN

DAN RYBACKI Youth Connect Admin

It's been six months since Youth Connect's adviser Claire Middlehurst referred me to a work experience placement at our Keynsham HQ, and it's proven an exciting experience. Having spent months post-sixth form in bed binge-watching Netflix, I was keen to experience the working world - and my welcoming first visit ensured I settled in swiftly.

My stint in the department has been varied to say the least. I've designed & edited the last two newsletters, writing pieces ranging from advertising Southside's new café to tech-savvy IYSS advice. I've stalked tracked local young people on Facebook, filled endless envelopes with tracking cards and designed posters/banners to promote the various services we offer. I've also handled cash, and have updated Excel spreadsheets galore. I was even invited to a tracking meeting, where I felt enlightened, important & totally hapless all at once.

I've had an extremely positive experience so far and my CV now appears slightly less blank than last year! The skills I've demonstrated have provided much-needed confidence and boldness when gunning for my next career move, and I think I've made a very positive difference to the department. It's yet another example of how Youth Connect's work is so vital to young people's positive development.

## DIARY OF A TEAM LEADER



Sam Plummer  
Somer Valley

### MON

I kick off my week with a visit to Writhlington School, supporting a young person in a meeting with social care services. I then meet a young person pursuing a promising Apprenticeship (always exciting) before heading to Radstock's Open Access session in the evening, where I try my hand at card games and discuss career plans with our attendees.

On Wednesday I met with several young people to discuss how life is going, continuing to offer careers support. I also met a new young person in our first support session, where we considered how I could be of help. We also tried a spot of DJ'ing - impressively, he beat-matched first time!

### WED

### TUE

I deal with important admin such as petty cash receipts and a 4-hour supervision to determine my near-term goals. I also attend a meeting to plan this summer's residential for our young people, and arrange a group project at Bath's Natural Theatre ahead of the Bath Fringe Festival.

After checking in with the team, who fill me in on their week so far, I report heating & electrical faults in the office. Whilst the engineers work their magic, I meet with a social worker about a young person exhibiting risky behaviour.

### THU



**10AM**

## HELP AT HOME

I meet a NEET young person who is feeling unfocused and directionless. In our meeting we discuss her interests and brainstorm short-term goals.

After discussing her passion for art & IT skills, we agree on tattoo artistry and graphic design as two career areas to explore. I encourage her to visit our Youth Hub to battle her fear of unfamiliar places.



**12PM**

## SAFEGUARDING

A young person based in a hostel is on the brink of eviction due to unacceptable behaviour. I flag the concerns with his social worker, who heads straight to negotiations with the hostel. I receive stressed calls from the young person and reassure him that we're sorting things out.

The hostel agrees to let the young person stay, albeit on a final warning. We will explore career options once we locate a more stable living environment for him.



**1PM**

## CHARITABLE PROGRESS

I meet in Keynsham with a young person suffering learning disabilities, who is struggling to find suitable college courses. To support a planned Bath College traineeship, we meet with a charity shop boss who is quickly impressed with his appearance and attitude. After asking pre-prepped questions and meeting other members of staff, she offers the young person a trial period starting next week.



**3PM**

## DOWN BUT NOT OUT

A young person on an apprenticeship we secured together has decided it's not for him. I commend him for giving it a shot and explain that these are perfectly ordinary setbacks to encounter.

Not discouraged, we agree to meet next week to discuss alternatives. Although disappointed, I admire his willingness to move forward - reminding myself that he will learn from this experience.



**4PM**

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

As the sun sets, I log today's interventions and inspect records to edit any outdated data.

Overall I feel a good sense of achievement - it's been a varied and exhausting nine hours, and I'm certainly ready to chill out for the evening!

# KEYNSHAM OPEN AWARD CENTRE



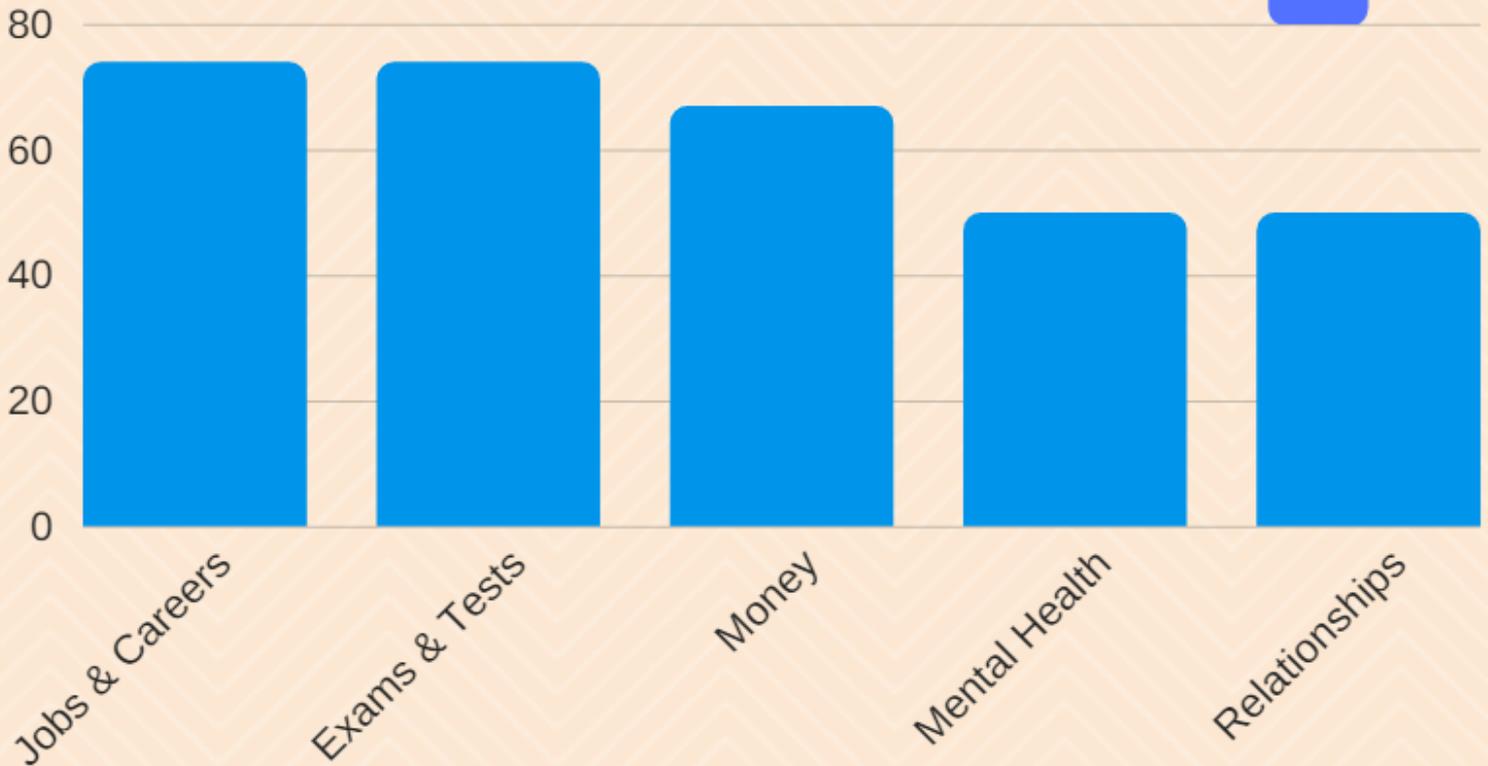
Here at KOAC we are extremely proud of what our participants achieve given the many competing pressures in their lives. A recent event at the Keynsham Open Award Centre brought together highly motivated and successful young people, all of whom have shown courage, commitment and strength in completing their Duke Of Edinburgh's Award. Participants spanned all three levels of the Award and were fortunate enough to have guests (Penny Shrub, Aquaterra and Tracey Pike, Youth Connect) present the hard-earned certificates. Neither VIPs were sure what to expect but fulfilled their roles effortlessly.

The event gave us a chance to thank those whose undervalued support we rely on, such as Tim Cann for delivering vital training and Aquaterra for hosting us. We also thanked parents and carers for the vital support they offer. Not only enjoying free food, guests also had the chance to meet up with old friends, which proved a pleasure both for the participants and their families. For us this was the highlight of the evening – watching them share the common bond and rekindle the spirit that took them through tough times.

Completion of the Gold Award is typically celebrated at St. James's Palace with a member of the Royal Family. Jemma Rowlandson's Gold ceremony has been postponed several times, most recently by the tragic events at Westminster Palace on 22nd March. We know Jemma as a co-leader here at KOAC, and know that her resilience and positive outlook on life will see her through this setback - but we share her disappointment.



**These issues matter most to our respondents. The results highlight the value of our Personal Advisers and Youth Workers, who can provide support in these areas.**

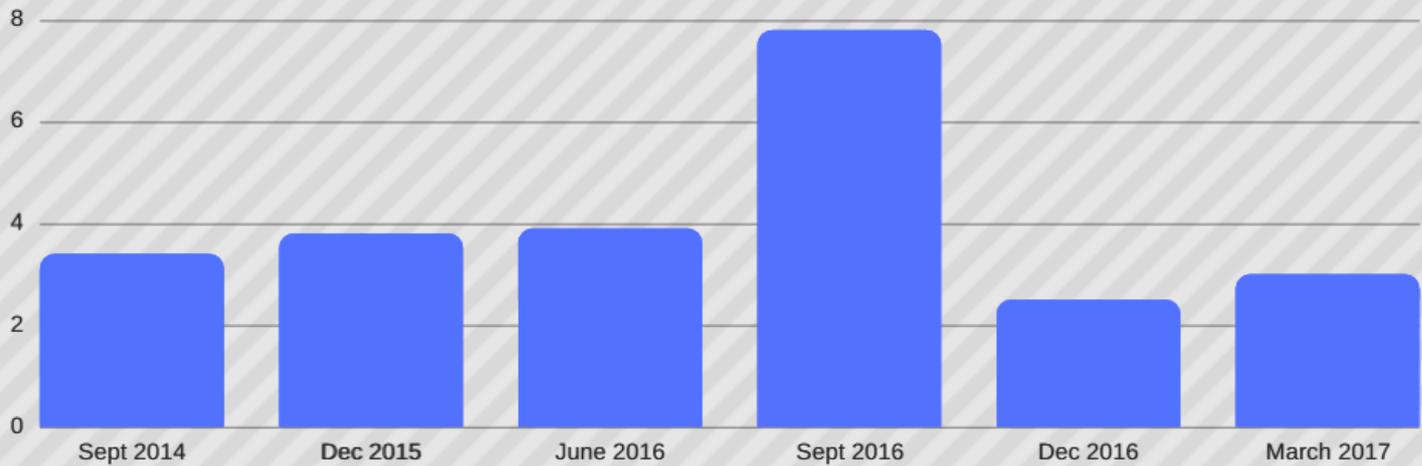


**56% said they've received 1-to-1 support from a Personal Adviser. Here's what most were helped with (%).**



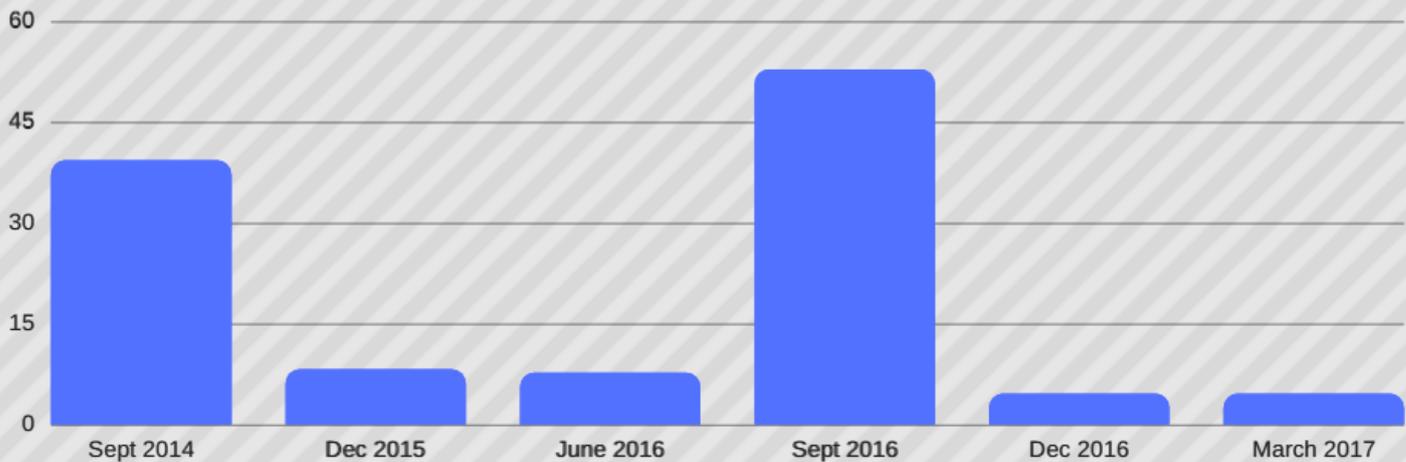
## NEET

Young people not in education, employment or training (%)



## UNKOWN

Young people for whom we can't establish a destination (%)



Indicator	England Apr-Jun	B&NES Jan-Mar	B&NES Apr-Jun	B&NES Jul-Sep	B&NES Oct-Dec*
<b>16-18 year olds NEET 2015/16</b>	4.7%	5.4%	3.4%	5.4%	2.2%
<b>16-18 year olds NEET 2016/17</b>	4.4%	3.0%	4%	5.4%	2.4%

\* 16-17 year olds only

## CLOSING THOUGHTS...

There's just enough time to celebrate some big achievements & changes in our staff's lives. Bath Team Leader Dave Wiles recently received his Pride Award, and here's what he had to say:

*"It was a surprise and an honour to receive the award from our local Police Commissioner, who had previously visited Southside. She'd spoken very highly of our work so I received the honour at Avon and Somerset Police HQ (with a cream tea) on behalf of my first class team!"*



It's also been a busy year for Youth Connect babies, with 9 having arrived recently.



Congratulations to Dave and the new parents.

*Not meaning to nag, here are our contact details (again)...get in touch!*

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**A black young person experiencing police 'stop-and-search' penned the following moving poem with us...**

<b>Depends what you look at</b>	<b>Need a pill</b>
<b>But more how you see</b>	<b>Soap opera thrill</b>
<b>You see my skin</b>	<b>Over the hill</b>
<b>Or you see me?</b>	<b>I'm still</b>
	<b>.... here</b>
<b>I'm searching</b>	<b>Hostile eyes</b>
<b>You're searching me</b>	<b>Suspicious words</b>
<b>I'm stopping</b>	<b>Rehab minds</b>
<b>You're stopping me</b>	<b>Life unwinds</b>
<b>I'm risking</b>	
<b>You're risking me</b>	<b>The gang you hate</b>
<b>I'm being</b>	<b>Is just my mate</b>
<b>You ain't being me</b>	<b>While you wait</b>
	<b>We test our fate</b>
<b>I'm here to stay</b>	
<b>I like to play</b>	<b>Depends what you</b>
<b>I like the street</b>	<b>look at</b>
<b>I like the beat</b>	<b>But more how you see</b>
<b>Come meet?</b>	<b>You see my skin</b>
	<b>Or you see me?</b>
<b>Clashing will</b>	

## SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE!