

Welcome to the first edition of the new newsletter from Medway Council's Youth Service and, with Christmas fast approaching, an opportunity to wish you a happy Christmas.

This new format, highlighting youth service activities, has taken some time to get together and we would welcome comments about the style and content.

Enjoy the read and every good wish for 2009.



medway youth parliament

**Medway Youth Parliament (MYP) is going from strength to strength. New officers were elected at the annual meeting in September and they continue to take the organisation forward.**

The new chair is 17-year-old Rosie Rowe, from Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematical School, while Heather Calverley, 18, from Chatham Grammar School for Boys is the new vice-chair. They were elected at a lively meeting chaired by Sam Day, the outgoing vice-chair, who is currently heading for success in a national public speaking competition being organised by the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.

Rosie says her main focus during MYP's 10th year is going to be improving participation and extending MYP membership.

The young people of Medway may not have the vote but they certainly do have the voice.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

A programme of summer events took place, including ice skating and a dance project, aimed to develop relationships between all groups in Luton and Wayfield. Work was carried out in partnership with All Saints Community Project, Kent Police and the Beat Project to improve Slovak/British integration.

There was a huge divide but relationships were flourishing by the end of the five to six-week summer project. Anti-social behaviour has decreased and the opinion of the local community has improved.

The success of these events has helped us to get funding from Medway Council's Social Regeneration team for dedicated part-time workers and professional support to implement a programme for young people in the area. This will achieve positive outcomes and accredit their achievements.

## MEDWAY FUSE FESTIVAL

More than 40 young people from six youth centres took part in a series of carnival workshops, including face painting, dance, music and other art activities. This culminated in a performance as part of the Medway FUSE Festival opening carnival. This project was paid for and developed in partnership with Medway Council's Arts Team. We received positive feedback from all involved.



Making a task achievable and enjoyable was the challenge for organisers of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award when they worked with young people with special needs from Abbey Court School. Challenges included learning difficulties that made map reading difficult; staff who had to be on a waking rota while camping – an essential element of the expedition – and wheelchairs that obviously could not navigate stiles.

Most of the group had never stayed away from home and all had a good experience.



# FOCUS ON GILLINGHAM AND RAINHAM

## SUMMER PROM

The idea for a Youth Service prom came from Woodlands members, who held their own prom last year, to celebrate achievements and break down some well known territorial barriers.

Seventy young people and 20 staff attended the evening at the 44Two Sports and Social Club in Gillingham. Entertainment was supplied by The Young People's Events Team and a disco with music from all eras. Behaviour was exceptional and everyone joined in together on the dance floor. Staff were delighted at the effort that young people had gone to with their dress code, which helped make the evening so special.

Young people have requested this event be held every year.



Woodlands' Youth Development Worker Sharon McCauley with Charlton coach Freddie Ruby and Senior Member Team Leader, Tammy Utteridge.

## STREET DANCE

A programme has been developed and organised by a voluntary youth worker at Woodlands Youth Centre as part of attempts to encourage young people to be more physically active.

Cookery and healthy eating programmes are being developed to complement a healthy living initiative.

## PARKWOOD AFTER SCHOOL CLUB . . .

has an average weekly attendance of 150 young people aged between five and 13 (16-years-old with special needs). Recent activities included a 999 week attended by Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and RSPCA, and a Zoo Lab with insects and reptiles.

## ADVANCED COOKERY PROGRAMME

Parkwood has run a very successful advanced cookery programme for a number of years. This focuses on ingredients, a balanced diet, budgets and sharing a meal with others. Two young people who are in care have recently accessed the centre specifically to take part in this activity. One young person, who was one of the original participants and continues to take part in the programme, has attained his National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 in catering and is working as a chef. This young person came from a difficult background and has overcome many hurdles in order to work towards achieving his career goal.

# FOCUS ON CHATHAM AND ROCHESTER



## LORDSWOOD YOUTH CENTRE

The youth centre had a positive summer, with about 40 young people taking part each day in a range of activities, including the *Summer Dayz* programme.

The centre maintains close partnership working with local groups such as Lordswood Partners and Communities Together (PACT) and Neighbourhood Watch.

**As there was a drop in anti-social behaviour for the second year running, this led to young people receiving a cheque from the local neighbourhood police officer.**

## MOTOCROSS/MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

A 10-week course at Woodies Youth Centre, paid for by Medway Council's Youth Offending Team, led to nine of the 12 participants gaining their Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) awards.

## HAIRDRESSING PROJECT

Run for six weeks by Woodies Youth Centre with Reflections Hair and Beauty, Rochester, this project looked at maintenance and the importance of self-care and self-image.

In the first four weeks the girls learned how to shampoo and dry a client's hair; apply a treatment; style clients' hair using appropriate techniques; communicate with clients in a professional manner; use a technique to ornamentally dress hair; look at how face shape can help you to choose the perfect style and try different styles and products. In week five they had to demonstrate their knowledge to a stylist and in their last week they let their imaginations run wild.

At the end of the project, the six girls taking part gained an Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) award.



# FOCUS ON STROOD AND HOO

## STAFF AWARDS

Awards for outstanding service were made under Medway Council's Excellence and Innovation Scheme to:

- Roy Smith, Area Youth Work Manager, for work on last year's summer activities;
- Trevor Peen, Outdoor Education Manager, for work at Strood Youth Centre.

## SPRINGBOARD

A group of six young people from the Springboard project planned and ran an international day at Strood Youth Centre, where they explored Chinese food and culture. The day was a huge success, with representatives visiting from home school support, as well as parents and other family members.



Students have also been enjoying the more practical side to researching Chinese culture by looking at the different Chinese New Year signs; food; sculpting vegetables and practicing Chinese-style writing.

## TARGETED SUPPORT

A survey carried out in Strood (the targeted support pilot area for Medway) has provided information on how young people perceive services; what they feel makes a poor service - not being listened to and staff problems - and what they feel their issues are - drugs, alcohol and gangs being key issues.

## ACCREDITATION

Mandy Tee has joined the team and is looking into liaising with other partners such as John Nike, The Arethusa Ventura Centre, outdoor education, the Scouts etc.

A submission to the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) has just gone through for 53 young people, covering:

- football;
- attending a meeting;
- Hairdressing;
- motocross;
- voluntary youth work for young leaders;
- making a film video;
- street dance.

At least another 40 submissions are due to go through in October.

## SAILING INSTRUCTOR HONOURED

Tom Banks, from the Strand-based Medway Outdoor Education Centre in Gillingham, has been presented with a lifetime achievement award by HRH The Princess Royal.

Tom, who has taught sailing to juniors and adults for 24 years, was nominated by the centre for services to the community. Testimonials ran to three pages and described Tom as enthusiastic and a great teacher who makes learning fun.

Many of Tom's students have gone on to have water-based careers all over the world.

Tom received a medal and certificate from Princess Anne, who is President of the Royal Yachting Association (RYA), at their annual event in London.

## COMING SOON .....

**SNAP** (Say No And Phone) dance nights have returned to Medway. The second event is planned for Friday, 23 January at The Brook Theatre, Chatham. These events offer informal opportunities to discuss social issues, while enjoying music and live performances.

The Beat Project is taking the lead for the January night, with a rapping competition and musical workshops warning against drugs and drink.

These events, planned throughout 2009, are managed by Medway Council's Youth Service, with strong support from Kent Police, Medway Council's Safer Communities officers, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Kent Council on Addiction, voluntary and housing organisations.

## TRY ANGLE

Be prepared. Start thinking about deserving young people who contribute much to your community. Nomination forms for the 2009 Try Angle event will be available in the spring.

2009 Dates:  
Saturday 17th January  
Saturday 28th February  
Saturday 28th March

Venue:  
Greenacre School  
Sports Hall,  
Woburnside

**STREETBALL**  
BASKETBALL & FUTSAL

Times: 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm  
Ages: 13 - 19 years  
Cost: £2 per player  
Teams of up to 8 welcome  
Spectators watch for FREE!  
Parental consent needed  
- please pre register!

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Basketball and Futsal, delivered by Medway Council's Youth Service in partnership with Greenacre School