

Orchard Park Community Council Application Summary Report

About the applicant: Community Council for Orchard Park.

Grant awarded: £8,000

Category: Anti-Social Behaviour

Proposals for Grant Funding: The aim was to engage with the young people of Orchard Park, make them feel connected to their community and support them to make a difference.

- 1) Engage with young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system and those undertaking low level ASB in the community
- 2) To connect young people into the wider Orchard Park Community and develop positive social networks
- 3) To reduce feelings of isolation experienced by young people and improve overall mental health of the young people living in Orchard Park
- 4) To motivate and empower young people by providing a platform for them to collaborate with others in their community and give them a voice to shape their community

Status: Not on track. Project did not get under way until March 2022 and a further update will be provided verbally at GAC

Outputs/outcomes of funding:

- Two Romsey Mill youth workers engaged with Orchard Park's socially disadvantaged young people through detached work, gave them opportunities and activities that they would not otherwise have been able to enjoy.
- They have made connections and started to build relationships with around 10 young people to date.
- Through working with Orchard Park's young people during detached sessions and on trips out, a group of young women suggested the boxing project, to help boost self-confidence, personal safety, fitness.
- To date Romsey Mill have invoiced for £5,952.93 representing 42 detached sessions, 9 boxing sessions and 2 trips out.

Challenges:

- The organisation commissioned to carry out the engagement work with Orchard Park's young people are still completing the work and will be gathering feedback.
- There are quite a few objectives to fulfil in a relatively short space of time, and some overlap between them. It might be more achievable to focus on empowering young people to build self-confidence and resilience and developing opportunities to engage in positive activities. Developing social capacity could be a longer-term project.

May 2023 update:

A meeting between Romsey Mill and Orchard Park Community Council took place on 9 May 2023 and provided further outputs/outcomes of the project:

- The detached work served the purpose of both engaging with a number of young people involved in anti-social behaviour and also signposting them to a range of other activities available. Initially the sessions were on Thursday afternoons which meant they could be directed to the Connections Bus when it was there. They were also informed about the Football projects that were running with Cambridge Utd Community Trust.

Appendix A

- Whilst doing detached work a strong relationship was built up with a group of girls aged 14-15 who were causing a number of issues in the Orchard Park community. There was a lot of anti-social behaviour including graffitiing around the Skate Park, stealing from Tesco and cycling dangerously on the roads in front of cars. They were challenged on this behaviour and also encouraged to get involved in more positive activities.
- Some of the young people engaged with were not from Orchard Park, but their behaviour had negatively impacted on residents. Getting them involved in self-defence and then as young leaders has started to build confidence and more productive social networks.
- Girls group - it was suggested to the girls that a group could be set up just for them which would provide fun activities and give them the chance to talk. The girls were keen to do this, and a weekly group was set up. Discussions within the group highlighted that there was a need for much more in-depth support around a number of issues including mental health, sexual health, and feeling safe in their community. These issues were discussed in more detail with them, including the support that is available.
- 100% of those engaged with reported an improvement in their wellbeing and in their ability to get on with others.
- Five Youth work Training sessions were provided and three girls have now gone on to volunteer at a local youth club and start training in youth work.
- A focus group held with three of the young people in March 2023. The following is an excerpt of conversation that took place:

What keeps you coming back to this project?

"I just feel safe there"

And why is that?

"Much prefer Romsey mill, it's much more nicer. I don't feel judged by the workers, whereas other places I have felt judged."

"They have all been really nice."

"My relationship with Mark and Yasmin is brilliant. I feel I can trust you more than most people."

"If I am going to tell someone something it's going to be you (Yasmin)"

How have we helped you?

"You have helped me a lot, I don't know how to explain what"

"You support us emotionally quite a bit"

"Being a young leader has helped with my social anxiety, helped me feel more confident to speak to more people."

"Feel a purpose to be a part of something"

"I have got used to going somewhere and being sociable, and it's something to look forward to in the week"

Do you have any final comments or any further questions about how we will use your comments from today?

"I just like talking to you, I feel like it makes me happier than I have been."

Future Plans:

Appendix A

The young people have identified some structured graffiti work that they would like to work on with a professional graffiti artist. This will be a constructive and creative project where the young people can learn new skills. The Community Council has agreed that the skate park can be used for this project and established graffiti artist Kilo, from Splash and Dash Creations, has agreed to work alongside the young people. This project will take place over the Summer of this year and the Community Council have requested that they utilise the remaining balance of their funding for this purpose. An extension until 30 October 2023 has also been requested to allow enough time to get the young people together with the artist and do the work. This will hopefully produce a positive outcome as mindless and offensive graffiti created by young people has been a cause of concern for Orchard Park's residents.

Additional Information:

- Two Officers from the Communities team attended the Orchard Park Public Meeting on 10 May 2023 and discussed how the sustainability of the project could be improved by linking in with the Council's Community Safety Partnership and Community Led Plan work. This was met with positive responses.
- In addition to this project, the Community Council are running/have run a number of other initiatives to support Orchard Park's more disadvantaged young people such as free-to-access sports, a youth zone, further detached work and they have just been successful in securing a grant from Cambridgeshire County Council to support the engagement of a youth worker working specifically with Orchard Park's young people