



SHACKLES OFF ANNUAL REPORT **26th October 2016**



OVERVIEW:-

We have completed our 8th year and still we continue to grow and evolve. This year has seen the number of children and young people that we have contact with, rise to an all-time high of 153. We have provided a diverse range of children and youth work activities including; youth clubs, issue based workshops, advocacy, advice & information, support, 'Drop Ins' for those not in education, employment or training, Intergenerational work, and trips out.

As well as all of the clubs, activities and workshops we also support young people on a one to one basis and work alongside other agencies and families. During the last year we have helped young people with benefit advice and appeals, CV and job applications, mental health problems and addictions. Our priorities at present are addressing the increased cannabis use in the area among the 13-15 year old age group and to continue to support those with mental health problems. We will be working alongside other agencies to carry out this work.

At the beginning of 2016 we had just received the disappointing news we had been unsuccessful in a funding bid. We were all devastated, but picked ourselves up dusted ourselves down and started some serious hard work to address the shortfall. We wrote various bids and letters as well as making savings to the project to bring the costs down. At this point

the future looks a lot rosier. We have secured two new grants;- One from the Nuclear Management Partners via Cumbria Community Foundation and the other from the County Council local area fund. The staff reduced some of their paid hours but increased their voluntary commitment so as not to affect the service provision. We have been given some very generous donations and alongside our own fundraising, members of the community have also fundraised for us. We would particularly like to thank Seascale Stompers for their marathon 6 hour line dance and choosing us as one of the charities that they donated £400 to. We are currently awaiting the outcome of the last of our applications, in order to say we are fully funded until September 2017. However the hard work does not stop there, as we are also working on longer term funding for the next three years.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, volunteers, young people and members of the local community for their hard work and generous donations. We would also like to thank all our funders who are listed on the back page for their generous awards to support a well-used and worthwhile project.

Shackles Off continues to support young people through a variety of ways the current programme is;-

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| Monday Morning 11.00 – 13.00 | Babies & Bumps |
| Monday 16.30 – 18.00 | Music group |
| Tuesday & Wednesday Afternoons 14.00-16.00 | Drop in for NEET and those with any problems or issues |
| Tuesday 18.30- 21.00 | 'Energia'- Girls Group aged 14+ |
| Wednesday 14.00-16.00 | Intergenerational Tech & Chat |
| Wednesday 18.00-20.00 | Midweek Youth Club |
| Friday Evening 18.00-19.00 | Junior Youth Club |
| Friday Evening 19.30-21.30 | Youth Club |
| All days (when required) | Outreach sessions |
| Saturday 9.30 -11.30 | Train Your Brain |
| Sunday Morning 10am-11.45 | X-treme-Modern worship session |
| Over all sessions from time to time | LINKS (workshops/community tasks) |

There are also organised trips, residentials and adventure days as well as youth committee meetings. We facilitate outside agencies to work with our clients on Shackles Off premises as we are rurally isolated;- We help those in need and can refer on to appropriate agencies. We also provide advocacy at meetings ect.

EVENTS & PROJECTS:-

September 2015 - November 2015

The beginning of the year started with a trip to Blackpool pleasure beach and shopping. There were 22 of us and a good time was had by all. We went shopping in the morning and to the pleasure beach in the afternoon.

Jacq our lead youth worker had her first baby, Saffron, in September and was on maternity leave until June 2016. This was a challenge to us but our apprentice Lauren Oaten stepped up and following her apprenticeship became a youth support



All 'shopped out!' - Some of the young people we took to Blackpool

worker at Shackles Off and helped to cover some of Jacqs absence.

Shackles Off has been running an intergenerational 'Tech & Talk' group every Wednesday afternoon for 18 months, the group has been very successful at helping older people with all sorts of technology, while at the same time encouraging older and younger members of the community to work together. Mandy was asked by Martin Evans, who runs the Digital inclusion project for the Methodist church, to take part in events in the Whitehaven circuit. Between 5th September & 8th October we attended 11 events in the Whitehaven Circuit, reaching between 2-20 people each session with an average of 15. We attended the Egremont food bank, various coffee and chat groups and an individual session especially for two ladies who were unable to attend the other sessions. We have also seen an increase in our own intergenerational 'Tech & Talk'.



In October a group of young people, from the Sunday group X-treme, and 2 leaders went to Newton Rigg Penrith for 'Ablaze Now', which was a really fun day, packed with activities and workshops. We finished with supper and worship together before we headed home very tired!! We made friends with young people from the Network Youth Church in Whitehaven and are keen to join with them in future events.



Having Fun at 'Ablaze Now'

On Friday the 13th November, Shackles Off were invited, by Network Youth Church Leader- Alison Riley, alongside other churches and volunteers (21 in total) to take part in a 'Sacred Space day' at West Lakes Academy. The year 7's (200 11 year olds in total!) were 'off timetable' for the day and instead rotated around 7 themed rooms, instead of their normal lessons. The themes were:

Thankfulness, Be Still, Amazing Me, Threads of Life, Praying For Our World, Life's Big Questions, and Get Connected- Why we need each other.

Lindsay Gray, Janet Hardy, and Mandy lead the 'Threads of life' room which was all about using the experience to reflect on that which makes us - past experiences, memories. Lindsay brought one of her rag rugs which is made up of lots of old materials and wool, some of which were no longer useful for their intended purpose but were able to be re used to make something beautiful and useful. The young people had a go at rug making with small samples and enjoyed chatting and reflecting on their lives and relationships with others.

December 2015 – February 2016 The winter months are always our busiest in the youth clubs that we run and this year we had some of the highest numbers of children and young people that we have had in recent years. December saw the Christmas tree festival organised by Allison Hanshaw in aid of CLIC Sargent. Allison chose this charity as a number of young people we are in contact with had suffered from different forms of cancer and have all been supported in some way by CLIC Sargent. One of the young people wrote a lovely piece about her cancer and how CLIC Sargent helped her and her family. This was displayed in the festival. The theme was Christmas carols and we chose Silent Night. All the different groups within Shackles Off contributed to the tree which looked fantastic! The Christmas tree festival was beautiful and enjoyed by the community.



On the 1st Sunday in Advent X-treme invited the Phoenix praise band to join them and had a fantastic time of worship, prayer and learning. The young people are very keen for them to come again soon.

The girls group 'Energia' has been going for over a year now and they have taken control of the window displays. We have had some fantastic and imaginative displays this year. One of our favourites was the valentine's window where the girls had written poems and thoughts about love.



March 2016 - May 2016



In May the 'Seascale Stompers' did a marathon 6 hour line dance in aid of four local charities, of which we were one. We took both the junior youth club down and later in the evening the older youth club. We all had a great time learning the dances and the line dancers were very patient with us! We were given £400 from Seascale Stompers as part of this event and we are very grateful for their continued support of our project.

We have a regular subscription to JAM magazine for young people, and were asked in April to take part in a feature called 'safety glass' where young people were talking about their mobile phone cases. We all had great fun making this article and the picture to the right shows the finished results.



The 'Friday night project' youth club for aged 11+ and the junior youth club for those children aged 6-11 are both very well attended and provide a place for children and young people to go, have fun, take part in activities or just chill.

Junior youth club numbers have increased this year with an average of 15 children every week, sometimes we have as many as 20. We have played lots of fun games including: 'duck duck goose' 'Gruffalo' and the 'sunshine's on'. This helps to keep the children active and expend all the excess energy they always seem to have! The crafts we have made include; sticker pictures, scratch art, key rings, and the most popular craft with the parents (not!) - horns for the Euro football championships!



The Youth club for those at secondary school is still very popular and we try to have both the hall and the 'drop in' open to give young people a variety of things to do. Activities are planned in consultation with young people, however they mostly want to come to hang out and 'chill'

June 2016 - Aug 2016

The new Co-op opened in June and on the opening day we were visited at the 'Drop In' by the team and presented with biscuits; about 25 boxes in all!! They were very interested in the project and spent time talking to young people, and finding out about what we do.



Lauren, Sophie, Owen and Karl receiving the biscuits from members of the Co-op store opening team'

The LINKS project takes place normally during midweek youth club. Young people can earn points to use for free activities and trips. Points can be earned by taking part in issue based workshops and community tasks.

Examples of workshops we have undertaken recently are;

healthy relationships, body image, healthy eating and internet safety. In June we took a group of young people to the new 'Jump Mania' trampoline park in Workington. A good time was had by all, although some were more adventurous than others! As part of the Links scheme we encourage young people to take part in events such as beach cleans, community fun-day, litter picks, weeding ect. We feel that this helps them to become part of the community and good citizens.



Our workshops are influenced by what is relevant to young people at the time. Earlier in the year we were alerted by members of the community that there had been some problems with anti social behaviour. We took the lead and worked alongside the local PCSO- Dawn Lowerson and the young people concerned, to find out reasons for their behaviour and to help them realise the potential consequences of their actions. This was very successful and we were thanked by the members of the community.



Leading up to the EU Referendum we supported some young people between the ages of 18-24, who were voting for the first time. We had a very informative workshop, to try to give young people some unbiased facts, to help them decide how they wanted to vote. On voting day we supported two young people who were very nervous about voting. The response from one of them as we came out of the voting hall, was- 'That wasn't as bad as I expected'. Although they were both in their early 20's, this was the first time they had exercised their right to vote. We are always here to support young people into adulthood and will tailor support according to what is needed

Friday nights continue to be busy and in June we have enjoyed watching the Euro 16 championships (although not so much, after England got knocked out!!). We have had enough staff and volunteers to be able to open both venues. This meant that those who were not the slightest bit interested in football didn't have to endure it! Summer is our quiet time of year in the youth clubs and we do more outreach on the streets.



AGENCIES & ORGANISATIONS WE WORK WITH:-

The list of agencies we work with grows continuously, below are those we have worked with in the past year:-

- Local Churches of Seascale
- Methodist Synod
- Ignite Calder
- Cumbria Police
- Cumbria Youth Alliance
- Fairtrade
- Copeland Youth Council
- Whitehaven Jobcentre Plus
- Young Cumbria
- Calderwood House
- Childrens Services
- Community Beach Park Project
- Youth Offending Team
- West Cumbria Dyslexia Association
- Seascale Parish Council
- Churches together Cumbria
- Church Groups across Cumbria
- Copeland Borough Council Homeless Team
- Seascale Sports Hall
- Inspira Cumbria
- Cumbria Voluntary Services
- Lakes College
- Rathbone
- Youthwork Copeland
- Messy Church
- Copeland Friday Night Project
- Seascale Sports Hall
- Seascale Health centre
- TETHERA Magazine
- Seascale Parish Council
- Cumbria LSCB
- Local Politicians

FUNDING:-

We would like to thank the following for their generous awards:

Francis C Scott Charitable Trust, The Methodist District Advance, Copeland Community Fund, Cumbria Community Foundation NMP Fund, Cumbria County Council local area Committee, Friday Night Project For Friday night youth provision Copeland Community Fund

We are very grateful to all the Grant giving bodies and local business for their generous awards, without which we could not continue with our work. We are fortunate to have the support of the local community and various churches across the UK who provide a steady source of income from donations, and fundraising for which we are extremely thankful.

May we finish by saying that we are grateful for the continuing support of the local community and other friends and supporters further afield, without whom none of this would be possible.

On behalf of the Shackles Off team and the young people that we work with, please accept our most sincere thanks.

The **Methodist Church** 

