

Report to Alton Full Town Council Meeting

We are very pleased indeed to report on recent developments following our report dated 4th February 2019. As noted in that inaugural report, our key strategies and approaches include: sustainability, young-person centred, locally supported, and safe and fun.

Most significantly, commencing 7th May, we are offering three different focused once-a-week programmes, each for ten weeks (not including the summer half term) on anxiety, identity, and self-esteem. We are hiring space on a negotiated hourly basis at the Alton Community Centre for these programmes. We have space (based on the constraints of the facility) for twelve students per programme. Each programme will be led by two KA-employed youth workers, two adult volunteers, and two junior volunteers, with space for twelve young people referred by local schools, their parents or themselves. Right of first refusal is being offered to the young people who were supported by the Community First Thursday programme which ran through March. Amery Hill and Eggar's School are already promoting these courses via their school communications and social media, and we're also inviting the Alton young people with whom we have ongoing relationships. We wish we could support more young people initially, but we want to start well with this targeted work until we can roll out the "open access" after school club that is what most people are looking for in a youth centre. Further developments are as follows:

Venue

Priority: To find a base for Alton Youth work until March 2020 that is compatible with a long-term arrangement

Actions: Extensive continued investigation into possible venues, culminating in a viable freehold stand-alone property, with acquisition by ATC with the goal of a long-term lease. Purchase is contingent on structural survey and change-of-use planning approval. Asbestos survey of the first-storey roof revealed low risk, acceptable for youth-centre use. A uniquely situated residential neighbour concerned about significant impact visited KA Petersfield on 11th April to learn more about KA-resident dynamics and our commitment to respectful relationships. This neighbour had already lodged an objection to the planning application prior to the visit. Whilst the change-of-use application is pending, we are working with the Town Clerk to agree Heads of Terms. We offer our sincere gratitude to the Town Council and Mrs Coney that this freehold property may be the KA Alton venue. If the purchase and leasehold are successful, we will be able to offer 'open-access' after school clubs in the autumn term subject to two years' free rent. With this expectation, mid-September informational assemblies are already being scheduled at the local secondary schools.

Personnel

Priority: To find staff and volunteers

Actions: We continue to recruit volunteers, including junior volunteers from Alton College, further described below. We meet on 18th April to explore the possibility of local churches' partial funding of a KA youth worker. The Alton Services Manager has completed further induction training, after school provision training ('How to Run a KA After School Programme'), and an Advance Fundraising course in London on 25th March. We have secured funding for some hours for mentoring at the new centre. [We will also be engaging volunteers, both adults and young people, to set up the new centre over the summer.](#)

Work with young people

Priority: To start to build relationships with local young people

Actions: On 12th February, we jointly hosted the East Hants Mental Health Youth Conference at Penns Place in Petersfield. Students from Alton College were central to the success of this event, facilitating much of the discussion at their respective tables. Students from 8 secondary schools attended the Conference, with a total of 74 participating in this event. On 21st March, as noted above, we participated in the Alton College Health and Well-Being Fair, where we surveyed a number of Alton College students about what they would like to see in a King's Arms Alton youth centre. Thus, our recent focus has been on Alton College students to help support the programmes we are rolling out next month for secondary-age young people.

Connecting with existing youth providers

Priority: To build relationships with existing providers

Actions: We have continued our efforts in this regard, collaborating closely and effectively with Community First in providing seamless transitional support to the young people who participated in their Thursday programme through March 2019. The Mental Health Youth Conference reinforced the already-strong relationship we enjoy with Alton College staff and students. On 29th April, the Alton Service Manager will visit the Green Room Kingsley and build relationships with the provider of this innovative provider of alternative youth provision in this area. We are also part of a working party focusing on Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) in the Petersfield area, reaching into the Alton area; this working party involves inter-agency efforts and communications with other youth providers. Additionally, Youth link remains a powerful vehicle for effective and meaningful connections with existing youth providers throughout East Hampshire.

Community Connections

Priority: To raise awareness and build appropriate relationships

Actions: We continue cultivating and developing connections with Alton Buckle, Alton College, Health and Well-Being Partnership, Alton Head Teachers (formal presentation on 26th March), Alton Buckle, Church of the Resurrection, Harvest Church, Salvation Army, and local service organisations including Rotary, Lions and Masons.

Publicity and Awareness Raising

Priority: To raise awareness of KA Alton's youth work provision

Actions: We have continued promoting our efforts and activities in the community, primarily through the local schools and Alton College most recently, as noted above. Additionally, information about our upcoming referral-based programmes is circulating through the Alton Clergy and local GPs, and shortly through social media.

Fundraising

Priority: To secure funding to run After School/Lunch youth clubs during 2019

Actions: We continue to pursue grants and donations through private individuals, trusts, and community groups to include financial support and items useful to a youth centre. Significant contributions:

- Most recently, we have received a grant (amount not yet released) from ABF Charitable Trust for furniture.
- Following the upcoming town council and EHDC elections, we will apply for the next wave of councillor grants.
- Finally, as noted above, discussions are underway to explore support by several local churches to support partial timetabling by a youth worker.

Current Priorities

Our current priorities for May through July are to:

1. Support ATC efforts to secure the proposed freehold venue, then agree Heads of Terms for long-term leasehold
2. Successfully launch initial focused programmes, commencing 7th May, on Tuesdays/anxiety, Wednesdays/identity and Thursdays/self-esteem; courses to run once-per-week for ten weeks at the Alton Community Centre
3. Continue efforts to secure separate insurance cover
4. Continue fundraising and recruiting volunteers/staff with a goal of an up-and-running youth centre in September 2019