



**OXFORDSHIRE'S LOCAL OFFER
OF POSITIVE ACTIVITIES
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**



**"I WANT TO MEET NEW PEOPLE WITH THE SAME INTERESTS, IMPROVE MY
STRENGTHS, GET HEALTHY
AND HAVE FUN"**

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Foreword

I am delighted to bring you the very first Local Offer for young people in Oxfordshire. The Local Offer is a translation of Positive Activity Standards within the Education and Inspections Act 2006. To fulfil our duties within this Act we have come together across the Local Authority e.g. district councils; extended schools and the voluntary sector etc. to contribute our time, energy and resources to realise our ambition within this Local Offer for young people. As well as using existing consultation with young people we have also consulted with over 200 young people through in-depth 1:1 interviews using semi structured questionnaires; unstructured interactions and focus group interviews to identify the needs, issues, aspirations and passions of young people in relation to positive activities.

Our ongoing dialogue with young people especially those at risk of negative outcomes, has enabled us to understand first hand the barriers young people face in accessing positive activities. Over the next year we will be working with our partners such as those in transport etc. to address these barriers and ensure there is more participation in positive activities. Our research supports national findings with regard to the barriers young people are experiencing to positive activities. We hope to demonstrate that by increasing the participation of young people in positive activities we will improve young people's prospects and help them develop socially and emotionally. We want to increase their communication skills and improve their self confidence and esteem. We want to support the new 10 year youth strategy to increase young people's resilience, help them avoid risks such as experimenting with drugs, having unprotected sex, or being involved in crime, as well as contributing to improving better attendance and helping young people achieve higher attainment at school.

Oxfordshire's Local Offer is a statement of our ambition for young people and it will be reviewed annually through a continued dialogue with young people. Young people will be actively involved in the design and evaluation of our Local Offer. They will not only help shape the content but will provide us feedback on the impact the Offer has made to their lives. They will influence the presentation of our directory of positive activities and will assist us in publicising the Local Offer as widely as possible.

I am personally looking forward to working with very many of you over the next year to make this Local Offer an integral part of young people's lives thereby improving their wellbeing and their prospects for the future.

Councillor Louise Chapman

1.0 Introduction

In January 2007 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 section 6 was enforced. It gave local authorities new responsibilities to enable young people to access positive activities in their leisure time. These responsibilities place a duty on the Local Authority to secure for young people "as far as is reasonably practicable" sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities which are "for the improvement of their wellbeing". The duty applies to the 13–19 age range and those aged up to 24 with learning difficulties.

The Act also requires us to undertake a detailed analysis of current provision and of local needs and identify and target groups at greatest risk of negative outcomes. The Act outlines five national standards and asked that we translate these standards as our own '**statement of ambition**' taking into account the views of young people.

These standards are -

- Two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal team sports and other activities such as outdoor adventure, aerobics and dance.
- Two hours per week of constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes. This might include: young people's own hobbies and interests; personal, social and spiritual development activities; study support; activities encouraging creativity, innovation and enterprise; and residential opportunities.
- Opportunities to make a positive contribution through volunteering, including taking a lead on campaigning and fundraising.
- A wide range of other recreational, cultural and sporting and enriching experiences.
- Safe and enjoyable places to spend time, including socialising with friends.

During 2007 we have been working towards meeting the new duties within the Act. We have extensively mapped positive activity provision across Oxfordshire; we have undertaken an in-depth consultation exercise with over 200 young people many of which are at greatest risk of negative outcomes as well as using a range of consultation already undertaken. We have been collaborating with a wide range of partners and young people to translate the new standards into a Local Offer for young people

2.0 Oxfordshire's ambition

To improve outcomes for young people by giving them the opportunity to achieve their potential. Our vision is for Oxfordshire to be a place where young people receive the help they need to:

- enjoy good physical and mental health;
- be protected from harm and neglect and grow up able to look after themselves;
- achieve educational success and enjoyment, have good opportunities for play and leisure and develop self-confidence and life skills for a creative and positive adulthood;
- make a positive contribution to the community and society;
- live free from poverty, achieve their potential and make the most of their lives.

We believe that:

- every child and young person has the right to be brought up safely in their own family;
- every child and young person has the right to receive full-time, high quality education appropriate to their needs;
- every child and young person has the right to be supported in a healthy lifestyle, and to health care that is accessible and appropriate to their needs.

3.0 Strategic Context

Following the publication of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 guidance the Government introduced its 10 year strategy in July 2007 “Aiming High for young people: A ten year strategy for positive activities”¹. These outline the Government’s vision of positive activities for young people and provide the Local Authority with a framework from which to develop our Local Offer of positive activities. The strategy recommends young people have:

- opportunities to take part in activities that develop their resilience and the social and emotional skills they need for life;
- access to learning that motivates participation and encourages achievement in education, employment training and positive activities;
- opportunities to gain new life skills and be empowered to take part in decisions which affect them;
- the opportunity, and encouragement, to mix with others from different faiths and ethnic backgrounds;
- the confidence and resilience to cope better with the problems life throws at them and make the right choices – both within school and college and outside it;
- access to a diverse menu of positive activities that meets young people’s needs and desires;
- additional support for those who need it through signposting and integration;
- opportunities to engage in wider services through involvement with positive activities particularly those young people who find formal services unattractive or difficult to access.

Oxfordshire’s Local Offer is a statement of our ambition derived from consultation with young people. In partnership with young people we have translated the following national standards.

Two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal team sports and other activities such as outdoor adventure, aerobics and dance.

Young people wanted....

Different kinds of dance	Boxing	Lacrosse
Female rugby	Mountain Boarding	Kick boxing
Rugby	Football	Nature trails
Female football	Bowling	Cycling
Horse riding	Ice skating	Water polo
Polo	Horse riding	Skiing
Extreme sports	Trampoline	Climbing
Snow boarding	Rock climbing	Basketball
Cricket	Rowing clubs	Baseball

Softball	Netball	Rowing
Gymnastics	Kayaking	Sailing
Fencing	Weightlifting	Judo
Yoga	Outward bounds	Running – cross country
Squash	Swimming	Karate and martial arts
Tennis	Kick boxing	Aerobics and Pilates
	Orienteering	Netball
American football	Athletics	

Our ambition is to offer ways for young people to engage in sport in a wide range of settings such as; leisure centres; sports centres; sports clubs, schools and local sports groups. We will support young people to build their confidence and self-esteem through sporting activities. We will assist them to acquire life skills through sport and wherever possible we will combine sport with learning and accreditation.

We will:

- continue to work towards the targets contained within the National School Sport Strategy e.g. 85 per cent of young people will participate in at least two hours of sport a week at school by 2008;
- work to the Government's target - by 2010 children aged 5 to 19 will be offered the chance to participate in five hours of sport, which will be available through school and community providers;
- provide a diverse menu of indoor and outdoor games that are organised by clubs; these will be team games or individual sports;
- offer a wide range of outdoor activities such as sailing, climbing, kayaking and surfing;
- work with our partners to ensure opportunities are widely publicised and that activities are affordable;
- equip our staff to be able to inform you and signpost you to sporting opportunities;
- work with our Sports Partnerships to increase access to sporting opportunities that are accredited such as Community Sports Leader Award and specific skills awards;
- work with partners to ensure there are sporting activities available when you want them.

Access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes. This includes activities in which young people pursue their interests and hobbies; activities contributing to their personal, social and spiritual development; activities encouraging creativity; innovation and enterprise; study support; and residential opportunities.

Young people wanted....

A club like a pub with DJ's	Fashion design and shows	Music and dance classes
Creative writing	Cookery Clubs	ICT related projects
Drama trips	Camping	Go-carting
Quad biking	Beauty therapy	Theatre trips
Multi-plex cinema	Photography	Bowling
Pottery	Chess club	Media activities
Duke of Edinburgh	Young driver lessons	Craft courses
Apprenticeships	Art clubs	Language exchanges
Arts projects	Poetry club	Cubs and Scouts
DJ workshops	Museums	Shopping centres
Nature society	Guides and Brownies	Work experience

We know that how young people spend their leisure-time has an important influence and impact on young people's resilience and their quality of life. Engaging in constructive activities can increase young people's positive attitudes, improve motivation, increase aspirations, develop social and life skills, enhance interpersonal skills and help build social capital. All of which is vital for young people to help avoid taking risks such as experimenting with drugs/alcohol or being involved in anti-social behaviour and crime. Participation in positive activities can also help increase the resilience of vulnerable young people who are trying to rebuild their lives. For young people with physical or learning disabilities it can be a lifeline and reduce social isolation. For groups such as young carers it provides respite and improves their outlook and quality of life.

We will:

- publicise a wide range of constructive activities across the county;
- work with transport partners to help make them more accessible;
- work with providers to make them attractive and affordable;
- ensure through regular consultation that we provide activities that are wanted;
- provide accredited opportunities wherever possible;
- ensure constructive activities are to include a range of media such as arts, culture and sport;
- provide constructive activities all year round.

Opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering, including leading action, campaigning and fundraising.

Young people wanted.....

- opportunities to be a mentor
- undertake jobs for neighbours
- to volunteer for different charities
- to volunteer for community groups
- to be involved in deciding how money is spent
- youth MP opportunities
- to volunteer to look after children
- to volunteer to look after animals
- media training
- campaigning training

We know that making a difference to the community can alter young people's aspirations and the way they see themselves. We will encourage young people to give up some of their time to get involved in something which will help others. We will do this by supporting them to take up one of the many available volunteering opportunities. We will also encourage groups to provide volunteering opportunities for young people.

We will:

- support volunteering organisations to help young people access opportunities on a regular basis or for a one of event;
- advertise volunteer opportunities across the county through a range of media;
- signpost young people to volunteering opportunities and provide staff to broker access to opportunities ;
- provide intergenerational activities;
- apply to 'V' to secure grants to provide volunteering opportunities;
- provide accreditation for volunteering and mentoring wherever possible.

A wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences

Young people wanted....

Theatre trips	Historical sites	Cinema
Live music events	Drama clubs	Music clubs
Professional sports coaching	British heritage	Independent films and film making
Open days at places of worship	Photography	Film making
Street art and street festivals	Dance, food and music events	Foreign films
Art and drama projects	Raves	Live bands
Graffiti walls	Drawing clubs	Creative arts
Creative writing	DJ workshops	Museums
Poetry club	Craft courses	Pottery
Media activities		

Our ambition is to offer opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities that are creative, cultural and use the arts such as dance, drama, visual arts, music, craft, digital media, film, photography and creative writing. Young people can choose to participate in activities, or be part of an audience. They might chose single art forms or creative combinations such as music and digital media. Within each locality there will also be a number of clubs and groups which offer opportunities for hobbies and other interests. We will make sure we know where they are and that young people can access this information. We believe that every young person in Oxfordshire has the right to high quality creative and cultural experiences. The providers of these activities will offer leadership and inspiration, they will be responsive to what young people say they want, and will see young people as equal partners.

We will:

- encourage providers to make the experiences inspirational;
- provide challenge and open up opportunities for progression;
- offer a range of experiences and activities across art forms;
- offer activities that young people enjoy;
- be responsive to young people's needs, views and aspirations;
- demonstrate young people's strengths and celebrate their value celebrated to the community.

Safe and enjoyable places to spend time, including socialising with friends

Young people wanted....

- A warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere
- Refreshment facilities
- Older youth club café's
- Themed nights
- Weekend Youth Clubs
- Shopping
- Gateway clubs
- Youth Pubs
- Youth cafés
- Places like Sweatbox and Vibe
- Cheaper under 18 events
- More policing at night
- A programme of things to do which young people can help design
- Qualified adults on hand to provide activities and offer support
- Facilities that are open at times, and as often as, the young people in the area have agreed to

In making this offer to young people we are very aware that the quality of what is on offer should be good, and that young people will be safe when they participate in any of the activities. Wherever possible, we will verify and advertise the level of the quality of positive activity provision

We will:

- provide safe and age appropriate positive activities in local communities;
- provide high quality positive activities;
- encourage providers to put in place systems for young people to make comments and compliments;
- work with partners to provide sufficient, qualified, trained and skilled staff;
- offer activities in welcoming and safe environments;
- encourage partners to provide affordable refreshment facilities;
- continue to involve young people in the programme of 'things to do' which they can help design;
- offer activities that are open at times, and as often as, the young people in the area have agreed is reasonable;
- provide up-to-date, accurate information about other positive activity opportunities in the area and the necessary support, to anybody who needs it, in order to access these opportunities.

Addressing the barriers facing young people when accessing positive activities

Young people told us they face barriers because of

Poor quality	The time available
Other commitments	The cost of provision
Lack of transport	The cost of transport
Lack of personal support	Not feeling safe in local community
Lack of information	Not feeling welcome
No local activities being available	No local activities that suit
Homework restrictions	Being moved on by police
No free transport	No cheap transport
No travel cards for under 18s	Travel is not regular, reliable and cheap
Lack of free activity	No cheap child care
Insufficient support for mums	Not enough affordable things to do

Young people have told us about these barriers they face when trying to access positive activities. Some of these barriers are practical, such as lack of information, cost, transport or safety issues and some personal, for instance lack of confidence or peer pressure. We want to provide young people with the necessary support to overcome these barriers. We want especially to support vulnerable young people and those at risk of negative outcomes and those facing disadvantage. We want young people to have the confidence that activities are safe, accessible, welcoming and culturally sensitive. We want to offer young people high quality provision delivered by well trained, friendly and supportive professionals. We recognise that not everybody's circumstances are the same. Some people live in towns where there are numerous facilities available, others live in small villages with much less to do. Some people can afford more than others. We believe that nobody should be prevented from participating in the positive activities because of their personal circumstance.

We will:

- work with providers to overcome difficulties such as transport and the cost of activities if they prevent people from participating;
- support young people with disabilities to have equal access and work with providers to ensure activities are accessible;
- design activities to ensure that people's faith or culture does not prevent them from engaging in the positive activities they choose;
- ensure there are sufficient opportunities for both young women and young men, and that personal circumstances such as being a parent, or living away from home does not prevent young people from being able to participate.

Providing young people especially those at risk of negative outcomes with the personal support required to access positive activities.

We recognise that for some young people taking part is difficult for other reasons. This may be about not knowing where things happen, or how to get there, but it might also be about more personal things like not feeling confident enough. We will therefore ensure that we work with young people and offer experienced staff that can help them access the activities of their choice.

We will:

- provide personal and group support to help young people access the activities they choose;
- offer support to enable young people to understand, and take, responsibility for themselves, others and their community;
- offer routes to other types of provision, in the community, in education and in employment and training;
- ensure support to return to activities if progression is interrupted.

Young people will have opportunities to be actively involved in design, decision making and evaluation of the Local Offer

Young people told us they wanted to give their opinions, views and comments at

- organised youth events
- youth forums and youth councils
- school councils
- local councils
- in newsletters
- on websites

It is important that young people are involved in the design and delivery of all services for young people in Oxfordshire. We are committed to ensuring that young people have the continued opportunity to contribute to the design and delivery of this Local Offer over time. It is equally important that all these opportunities are utilised to gather effective evaluation of the Local Offer to enable providers to review, change and make more relevant.

We will:

- provide a clearly recognised system that enables the views of young people and their families and carers to shape local services at every level as well as in the design and delivery of particular services, and in the one-to-one support they receive;
- consult with young people on the content of the 'offer' every year throughout its existence;
- consult with young people on the amount, appropriateness and quality of positive activities on offer;
- set up a variety of methods by which individuals and groups of young people can articulate their views on both the content and delivery of the offer at all times;

- ensure that young people are involved with all partners who are engaged to plan and deliver different elements of the offer;
- secure choice for young people through active involvement; information; access and provision to ensure that at all times we have an ongoing dialogue with young people through the ways in which they told us they wanted;
- utilise new media forms to ensure that the dialogue with young people is up to date, in a form they recognise and use, is exciting and stimulating and that information is immediate.

Secure access to sufficient positive activities through publicising positive activities

Young people want us to provide information on positive activities that is comprehensive, up to date, accurate and accessible. We will provide information on a wide range of positive activities through a diverse range of media formats such as web sites, newsletters, e-bulletins; text messaging; flyers; posters and link this as far as possible with other opportunities in their lives.

We will:

- provide the name and description of the activity, the name of the provider, location, time of activity, cost, and contact details;
- show travel information that will enable young people to access the positive activities in their area;
- provide details on the accessibility of provision for young people with disabilities;
- confirm whether providers of activities or transport accept young people's leisure cards or similar when in operation;
- show our planned ambition alongside publicity used to drive and report on how young people's views are being 'taken into account' information on how to challenge and affect change;
- provide regular communication with young people enabling ongoing feedback and comment;
- make information available to parents/carers.

More young people will participate in positive activities

Young people told us positive activities provided them with....

Fun	New friendships	New skills
Confidence	Fitness	Not being bored
Enjoyment	Keeping out of trouble	Experiences new things
Gaining confidence	Fulfilment	Feeling proud of achieving things
A sense of leadership	Good way to occupy time	Opportunity to socialise
Not feeling like just a mum	Getting out of the house	Time away from caring
Moral support	Getting a positive feeling	Getting exercise
Stops me drinking	Having a laugh	A buzz from the achievement
Achieving something good	Feeling cool	

We will:

- listen and respect young people's views and comments;
- engage young people in dialogue about the offer ensuring opportunities meet their needs;.
- improve the prospects of all young people, especially those from communities with a poor history of engagement;
- make sure disadvantage is not a barrier to accessing local opportunities;
- ensure activities are popular with young people from a wide range of different backgrounds, faiths and ethnicities, actively bringing them together;
- ensure parents are fully informed about the available opportunities and have confidence in their ability to support their teenagers' personal development;
- work with local communities to play their part in providing opportunities and support for young people, building stronger and more trusting relationships across the generations;
- provide information about take-up of positive activities by all young people including those from targeted groups.

Young people will have opportunities to challenge decisions and make complaints

We believe that young people have the right to:

- have a say in decisions about them;
- be listened to and taken seriously;
- be safe, not hurt, bullied or abused;
- be treated fairly.

All providers will be encouraged to have their own processes for listening and responding to the views of young people. The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Sounding Board and other consultative processes within the Children's and Young People's Board provides an opportunity for young people to express their views about the wider local offer.

4.0 Conclusion

The content of the local offer has been shaped and influenced through ongoing active engagement of approximately 200 young people across Oxfordshire and the collaborative endeavours of the ¹Positive Activities Steering Group. We will continue to maintain an ongoing dialogue with young people across Oxfordshire especially those at risk of negative outcomes. We will ensure that this local offer is annually revised in line with young people's issues; needs and perspectives on positive activity.

¹ Steering Group members are from District Councils; Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership; Sports Partnership; Voluntary Sector; Extended Schools and services; Oxford Inspires; Youth Support Services; Cultural Services, 14-19 Sector

