



Emerging Practice - Integrated Processes (Draft)

Suffolk: Engaging the Youth Voluntary and community sector

Young Suffolk (formerly Suffolk Council for Voluntary Services) works right across the Children, Young Peoples and Families VCS range of activities, this includes now Suffolk's Clubs for Young People and Suffolk Children and Families Forum (VCS).

Theme of the engagement - Working with differentiated approaches to support engagement and effectively reflecting the diversity of the voluntary and Community sector. One of the challenges the sector faces in presenting a cohesive response to the development of Children Trusts is the ability of its support systems to represent the range of activity between universal volunteer led activities for Young People and intensive high tiered targeted support for very vulnerable groups from well established organisations.

Partnership Arrangements Young Suffolk has developed a twin tracking approach- based on the separate needs of the continuum with distinct Voluntary Youth Council meetings to service the needs of that specific sector. Young Suffolk works with many of Suffolk Children's Trusts partners to deliver effective representation for the VCS. From a Youth perspective this includes for instance Extended Schools and Suffolk Youth and Connexions service.

Activity - Young Suffolk members and supporters meet three times a year including the opportunity to meet and talk about current issues. Meetings are large with up to 100 organisations represented. One of these meetings focuses on a particular theme, one showcases member organisations and Young people that attend them; the final meeting in the series is Young Suffolk AGM- which incorporates elements of all of the activity.

Key outcomes - the voice of the voluntary youth part of the sector is clearly heard and has a distinctive identity that does not get blurred with that of service providers and their needs. Partners are better able to identify, relate and support the sector, its organisations and most importantly the young people they are nurturing.

Sustainability Young Suffolk which carries the responsibility for these arrangements is relatively well funded, with a longer term commitments from The Big Lottery and V.

Challenges funding to support groups to attend, reflecting the diversity and needs within the Youth sector itself; from uniformed groups to community based projects supporting hard to reach youngsters.

'Young Suffolk is a pioneer for the voluntary children and young people's sector, and, is delighted that the diverse and skilled voluntary sector it represents, is now widely recognised and considered a vital partner in the design, delivery and development of Youth Matters in Suffolk'.

Rosalind Turner, Director for Children and Young People, Suffolk County Council