

STATES OF JERSEY



JERSEY YOUTH SERVICE: A THREE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Presented to the States on 2nd March 2004
by the Education, Sport and Culture Committee**

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

1. Introduction

In 1980, some 5 years after the inauguration of the Youth Service, there were approximately 5,758 12-18-year-olds in the Island. Today there are 6,958, and that number is predicted to rise by 339 in the coming 5 years. In an age of instant communication and information, they are not like previous generations. They are more independent and freethinking than were their parents or grandparents, they demand more from life and they are quicker to reject what they do not like and what does not meet their needs (*DfES report about young people*); and the challenge for all organisations, schools, youth projects, scouts, guides, etc. is to constantly review what they do, and how they do it to ensure that it remains relevant and attractive to young people.

The following report details a new direction and priority objectives for the Youth Service following a review carried out in 2003.

In publishing these objectives, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee is aware that the Youth Service does not hold a monopoly on youth work; and that successful and diverse youth provision can only be achieved through the encouragement and support of large numbers of voluntary and part-time workers, and through the development of partnerships with a wide range of allied youth organisations, parish authorities, States departments and young people themselves.

The review found that the quality of work undertaken in clubs and in youth projects where there are full-time qualified staff was satisfactory, but it suggested that overall provision could be improved by –

- (a) a reiteration of the core purpose of the Youth Service;
- (b) the development of a more coherent structure;
- (c) an extension to the range and quantity of youth work activity supported by increased numbers of voluntary and paid staff;
- (d) the establishment of systems for needs assessment and analysis with clear criteria for the allocation of resources.

In view of the above, the Principal Youth Officer was charged with the production of a 3-year strategy for the development of the service. This document therefore outlines a mission for the Youth Service, describes its aims and purpose, the underlying principles, and the priority targets that should guide its work in addressing the review findings detailed above.

2. A Three-year Development Plan

2.1 The core purpose of the Youth Service

2.1.1 *Mission*

The Jersey Youth Service supports young people in their learning and their personal, social and emotional development. It encourages young people to become active citizens and supports the development of a forum through which their voices can be heard.

2.1.2 *Aims*

It aims to create opportunities which are challenging and exciting, which enable young people to learn and develop in a supportive environment

2.1.3 *Purpose*

To these ends, the Youth Service is committed to working with young people, volunteers and partner organisations to secure –

- the provision of safe ‘local’ places where young 12-18 yearolds can socialise, meet friends and adults (other than parents) which are ‘hassle-free’, cheap, warm, and frequently open;
- access to information, help and advice that is confidential, informal and relaxed, which has clearly defined points of help and assistance for young people;
- a range of different challenging, exciting activities which enable young people to develop and learn, build confidence and gain self-esteem;
- a voice for young people which encourages democratic citizenship, involvement, participation, and responsibility.

2.1.4 *Working in partnership*

Partnerships are vital to the Youth Service. Effective local partnerships with a wide range of allied statutory and voluntary organisations and local communities are the key means by which young people will benefit from a wider range of provision and opportunity. The Youth Service’s key contributions to such partnerships include –

- (a) the direct provision of youth work** in a variety of settings such as purpose-built youth centres, in schools contributing to personal social and health education, in community centres and on the streets where young people congregate (detached youth work), through Island-wide schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme and through mobile youth projects such as the Youth Service Bus project;
- (b) co-ordination of activity** – connecting young people to a wide range of activities, services and projects within and beyond the Youth Service –
 - counselling and advice services such as Brooke, Minden Base or the Careers Service;
 - activities such as sports development initiatives, scouts and guides, residential and international experiences, arts work through ‘Arts Alive’, the Sounds Workshop and the Arts Centre;
 - promoting opportunities for young people to make their voices heard through youth club management committees, the Youth Advisory Council or, more recently, the development of a Youth Forum for the Island;
- (c) support for volunteers and voluntary organisations** through grant aid and through the development of training programmes to meet need and assure quality of provision.

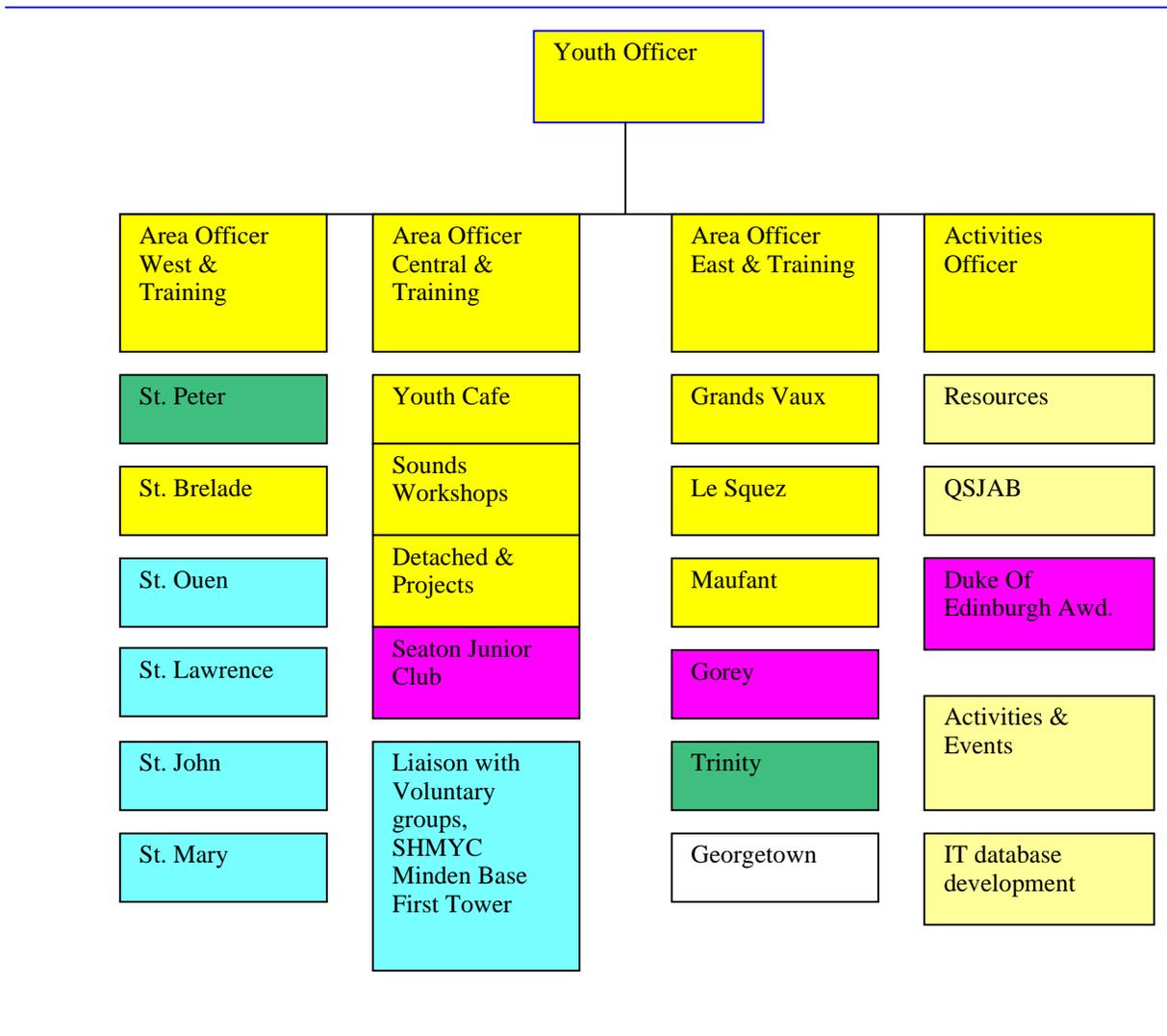
2.2 Developing an appropriate structure

The Youth Service is one of a range of services maintained by, and responsible to, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee. It is located within the lifelong learning division of the Department and is managed by a Principal Youth Officer. The staff team comprises 10 full-time professional staff and 181 volunteers. The service is managed in 3 geographical areas– east, west, and town. Full-time workers develop programmes, manage youth clubs and projects for young people, support volunteers, and liaise with a large number of voluntary and statutory organisations in order to encourage breadth and diversity of opportunity for young people in each area.

In order to strengthen the structure and to encourage closer work with partner organisations, and more liaison and co-ordination of activity for young people, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee has invested an additional £80,000 for 2004 in –

- developing a senior management team for the youth service;
- securing appropriate administrative and other support to ensure that professionally trained staff are able to concentrate on the development of high quality youth work;
- investing in training and support for volunteers.

The following diagram illustrates the organisational structure to be developed.



2.3 Key objectives

During the next 3 years, the service will seek to achieve a fulltime area worker for each of the 3 geographical areas it serves. These senior staff will work with the Principal Youth Officer to–

- implement the Youth Service strategy, encouraging the delivery of quality-assured programmes that meet the needs of local young people;

- assure high quality youth work practice through the provision of effective training and development opportunities for staff and volunteers to meet the needs of young people;
- forge closer links with other youth organisations and allied agencies to encourage a broad range of opportunities within each area.

3. Extending the range – increasing the opportunities

Young people need safe, warm places to meet with friends and adults, other than parents or teachers, within reasonable travelling distance of their homes to which they can travel independently. Experience gained through the development of the ‘Move on’ Café as a drop-in youth project suggests that café style venues are popular among a wide range of young people and they provide an ideal base from which a wide range of programmes and activities can be developed. They also provide a focal point for contact, enabling young people to make direct contact with a range of services and provision made by allied ‘connected’ services.

Beyond the clubs and cafés, many young people enjoy the sense of achievement provided through sporting, cultural and outdoor activities. During the next 3 years therefore, the Youth Service will place particular emphasis on extending opportunities in these fields available through allied services and through the extension of its own provision.

Finally, having been central to the creation of opportunities for young people to make their voices heard through the ‘Vision Jersey’ initiative, the Youth Service will work towards the establishment of a permanent Youth Forum, as a means of encouraging democratic citizenship, involvement, participation, and responsibility among young people while ensuring dialogue between them and the wider community.

3.1 Key Objectives

During the next 3 years the Youth Service will work with partner organisations to secure–

- staffing and premises for a youth club in each Parish open for 12-18-year-olds open at least 3 evenings per week;
- a drop-in café facility within each Parish for the remaining evenings of the week (*beginning with the development of a drop-in facility at Le Squez and Sounds Workshop during 2004, Grands Vaux 2005*);
- closer connections between youth workers and allied professionals so that individual young people can be connected through youth work to a wide range of support and information networks as required (*Brook, the Careers Service, employment and social security, housing etc.*);
- the development of work with young people who have specific needs or interests focussing on prevention and remedial work, integrating informal education and leisure activities in appropriate supportive environments (*young parents, young carers, unemployed young people, etc.*);
- greater opportunities for young people to participate in challenging, stimulating activity through the creation of a ‘Challenge and Adventure’ programme for young people in general, and more specific groups of young people, to take part in outdoor pursuits, travel and community service and to gain recognition for their experience and the development of their skills (*International travel projects, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, ‘On-Two Wheels’ safe motorcycling programme, Trident personal challenge and community involvement etc.*);
- closer liaison with allied cultural organisations to extend and diversify opportunities at sounds workshop and elsewhere for exposure to, and participation in, art craft and cultural activities;

- a partnership with States and Parish organisations to develop a Youth Forum for young people.

4. Needs Analysis – resource allocation

The achievement of the above will require close attention to the identification of young people’s needs and the careful allocation and distribution of Youth Service resources across the Island. The present arrangements have developed over a number of years and bear all the hallmarks of a development which has been ‘ad hoc’ and ‘piecemeal’. The proposed new structure for the Youth Service, allied to a reiteration of core purpose will enable the service to develop a more strategic role with greater focus on –

- quality assurance through training for staff and volunteers;
- the development of its relationships with other services and authorities.

4.1 Key objectives

During the next 3 years the Youth Service will develop a standard partnership agreement for all ‘partners’ involved in making youth club style provision. The agreement will detail levels of financial support available from the Youth Service and outline other resources available to support the development of part-time and voluntary staff.

In addition, the Youth Service will work to ensure that all youth clubs and their management committees have access to professional youth worker support for management and planning purposes.

The Youth Service will also establish quality standards for youth work, detailing the minimum numbers of trained and qualified staff required to operate safely and effectively within youth clubs and will work with partners to encourage local people to become involved in youth work.

All volunteers and part-time staff will have access, through their area youth workers, to accredited training appropriate to their needs.

5. Conclusions

The above report signals a turning point and a new sense of direction for the Youth Service. Moving from being primarily a ‘provider’, towards an extended role as a co-ordinator of activity, a supporter of voluntary projects, a training agency, and a vehicle for connecting young people to a wide range of departments, agencies and opportunities, and finally, an organisation which encourages young people to make their voices heard in a positive and democratic manner.

The achievement of these aspirations and the key objectives of the strategy will be dependent upon the quality of the partnership which can be developed among a wide range of organisations, all of whom carry interest in or responsibility for our young people. It is an ambitious strategy, but at a time when the Island is considering its vision and priorities for the future, it provides a framework and sense of direction for the way in which our community cares for and values its young people.