

East of England Market Town Awards

Young people plan and manage their own clubs

Youthie and Youthie+ – Icen Partnership

Overall regional winner and winner of the Social and Community Category



Young people working on one of the Youthie projects

A youth survey showed a need for a safe environment in Swaffham and, after a trial, two youth groups were developed by the Icen Partnership - Youthie and Youthie+.

More than sixty young people attend the clubs each week. With the young people gaining their own funding for a youth

worker, the clubs have become the vehicle in which they have the confidence to plan and manage their own affairs.

With the help of the Community Police, they have organised a series of discos, resulting in a reduction of anti-social behaviour, especially over the Halloween and Bonfire nights,

in which the police received no reported incidents in Swaffham for the first time. The Community Police have also provided DJ deck equipment which has allowed the training of some of the members to become DJs.

A new wifi and computer facility now gives young people access to computers outside of school hours, and will be used during club hours for school projects, homework and team building exercises. The facility will also be used to educate and raise awareness of online bullying.

During school holidays, club members are encouraged to take part in community activities such as litter picking, which aim to give them an ownership of and pride in their wider environment.

The aim is to grow the clubs by involving the villages in the hinterland; to this end the Community Police are looking

to fund a minibus to transport youngsters to the clubs.

The club was set up in April 2008 with funding gained by the young people from the Norfolk Youth Fund for a youth worker's time for two years. Youthie is for age 11 years old to year 10, while Youthie+ is for year 10 to 19 years old. They have formed a management committee named ACOSY (Activity Committee Of Swaffham Youth) who oversee the activities of the groups and apply for funding for projects. The group is now planning activities for the next two years which include summer camps, outings and social events.

Key partners: Icen Partnership, Norfolk Children Services, Swaffham Safer Neighbourhood Team, Family Action

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