

"Challenging disadvantage by changing young lives for the better, offering friendship, experience, diversion, caring and mentoring."

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The Edge Project Co-ordinator Rose Abrehart
Young Carers Project Co-ordinator Mannie Rogers
121 Core Project Co-ordinator Lin Ramsey
Zero Ethnic Minority Project Co-ordinator Raymond Wilson
Music Academy 1080 Project Co-ordinator Lin Ramsey
Zero Project Co-ordinator Kelly-Anne Chambers

Executive Management Committee

Chair Audrey Dudman
Treasurer Nigel Cox

Trustees

Ram Appadoo
Racial Equality Council and South East Region Black and Minority
Ethnic Network
Anne Allen Dartford Borough Council
Michael Pethick Vice Chair
David Dicara Business Consultant
Laura Cox Volunteer
Simon Walker Befriender
Geoff Waters Medway Council Youth Officer

Advisory

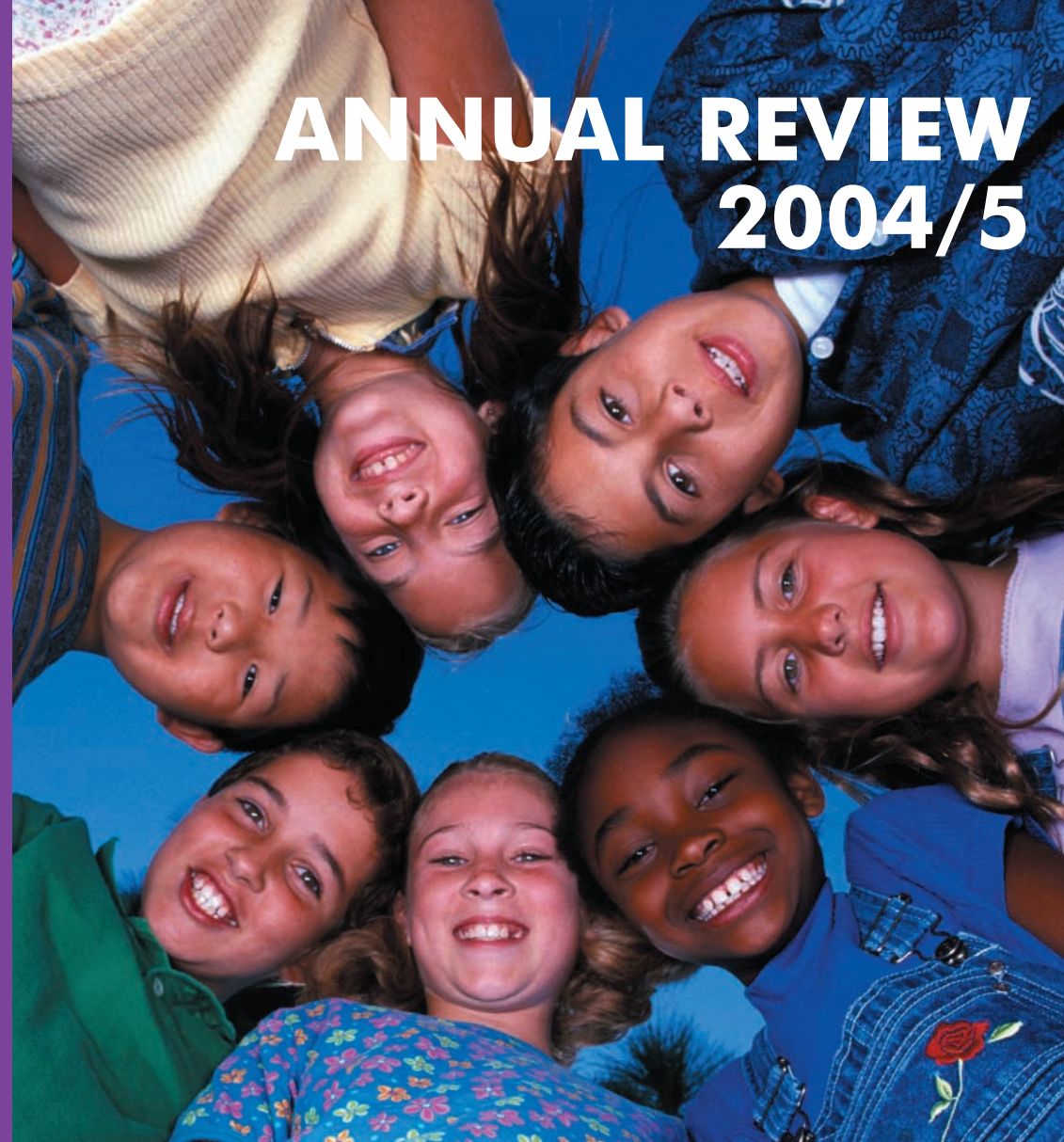
Stephen Carley The Beat Project Director
Lindsay Burnstead Kent Social Services

Co-opted Member

Gurvinder Sandher Racial Equality Council

www.youthbefriending.co.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW 2004/5



youth **121**
befriending

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- Currently supporting 80 young carers
- Respite activities offer a welcome distraction
- Working hard producing the newsletter
- Hoping to recruit an extra project co-ordinator

121 Youth Befriending offers a befriending and support service to vulnerable young people aged 6 to 16 living in West Kent. These young people can be isolated, excluded and living on the fringes of society within rural and urban communities, from families on low incomes and in areas of social deprivation. Supported by the Home Office, Kent County Council and Connexions, 121 has worked in West Kent for just under 20 years.

Registered charity 121 Youth Befriending* helps children offload stress, regain lost self-esteem and restore a belief in themselves. Befrienders also act as role models and give young people the chance to trust an adult outside the family. One-to-one meetings take place once a week and they also meet other 121 children for group activities, giving them a chance to socialise and feel part of the community.

121's new campaign will be called 'Heroes' – which is aimed at 'putting the friend into befriending'. 121 is currently pushing a volunteer recruitment drive, as demand for the service has increased. This ties in with a national Government initiative which announced 2005 as the 'Year of the Volunteer' and is both a celebration of volunteers and a call to action.

The objectives of the initiative are:

- To increase the number of regular volunteers
- To promote the benefits of volunteering to individuals and society
- To create more opportunities to volunteer and encourage people to find out about them
- To encourage businesses to allow staff to volunteer within work hours

The year-long initiative has been supported by the 'Give a Billion Minutes Campaign', which was launched on the longest day of 2005 (21st June) and aims to raise awareness of volunteering and increase recruitment of new volunteers.

Recognised as a Gold Star project by the Home Office, 121's Director was invited to 10 Downing Street this year to meet the Prime Minister. 121 was congratulated for the dynamic and creative community work that has been undertaken.

Any young person who finds themselves caring for a family member due to illness or disability is known as a 'young carer'.

The 121 Young Carers Project currently has 80 young carers registered. These young people need to be supported in their caring for a relative, which can be anything from helping with washing and dressing, to household tasks like ironing or shopping.

The support given by 121 comes in the form of a 'befriender' - someone who is there to listen to the young carer and just as importantly offer a distraction, so the young person remembers they have their own life to lead as well as caring for their loved-one.

A befriender can help a young carer in many ways, some of which are; helping to find out more about the illness or disability of the relative being cared for; arranging activities, like trips to the cinema and theme parks; and introducing the young carers to other young people in a similar situation.

This year, the Young Carers Forum has been nominated for a Try Angle Award, a result of the hard work that has gone into creating and producing their own Young Carers Newsletter.

"I was feeling quite stressed and just needed time out for myself. I joined the 121 Young Carers Project and I've found it much easier to cope - it's good to have other people my age to share problems with."

FUN TIME

The Forum members also helped to create the summer holiday activity programme which consisted of a trip to see a live game of national rugby, a visit to London Zoo, a 'Junk Drumming and Dance' workshop, a day at Legoland and a special trip to Adventure Island in Southend, which was awarded to the members to thank them for their continued dedication to the Forum.

Over the next year, the Young Carers Project will be working to secure further funding in order to extend the age limit to 18, as many 16 year-olds do not wish to leave the programme and are without further support until they reach 18. The funds raised will also go towards recruiting a co-worker for the Project, and updating the disability/mental health library as well as recruiting and training more respite activity volunteers.



THE ZERO PROJECT

- Dealing with social exclusion
- Encouraging expression through art and creativity
- Looking to recruit multi-lingual volunteers
- Helping the community to accept young people from alternative backgrounds



"I like having a befriender because she takes me out and we do exciting new things. I can also talk to her about anything that's bothering me."



DIFFERENCE

The Zero Project works with young people who find themselves socially excluded through no fault of their own, but due to their being from different cultures to those in the main. This can include people from ethnic or religious groups, those with a different sexual orientation and those with learning and other disabilities. The Project aims to help these young people who suffer from isolation and a lack of self-esteem by organising activities that promote a zero-tolerance attitude towards discrimination of any kind and offering a mentoring system.

Recently the group has been particularly involved in Batik workshops (the art of decorating cloth using wax and dye), which have encouraged the young people to work together and express themselves through art and creativity. In June, the Project also organised the opportunity for a group of young refugees to watch an international game of cricket between Australia and Bangladesh, which received fantastic feedback from participants, as it was a completely new experience for them.

"I find befriending is great fun. The young person I befriend is very enjoyable company. He likes doing normal things that he otherwise doesn't get the opportunity to do."

Fund raising is again a priority for the Zero Project over the coming year, and monies raised will be put into recruiting and training the befrienders. The Project's future work also includes the continuation of a programme in Darenth that involves liaising between travellers in the area and the residents living nearby.

121 CORE AND THE EDGE

- Sparking an interest in education through music
- Learning to trust others
- Raising funds to ensure project continuation
- Planning a structured short course for future students

INCLUSION

The Core Project offers a befriending service to young people who for a variety of reasons are experiencing a crisis in their lives. The volunteers offer two to four hours of their week per young person and are skilled at listening and empathising with them.

The Edge Project is based on the same principles but operates solely on the edge of Tunbridge Wells, encompassing Tonbridge, West Malling and of course Tunbridge Wells.

Events this year have included trips to the theatre and Thorpe Park as well as a Volunteer Speed Match Evening in June that concluded with a salsa lesson which by all accounts was great fun, albeit exhausting.

Co-ordinators of the Edge Project have been busy meeting with many social bodies in their area, including Home Start, West Kent Partnership,

Children and Families Consortium, and the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership, all of which have helped the Project grow over the past year.

Both projects are continuing to look at new and more creative ways of recruiting, which include writing to all local businesses asking them to pledge staff time, in line with the current Government initiative. In all areas covered, the waiting list for befrienders is continuing to grow and as a result the co-ordinators would like to consider professional recruitment advice and are hoping to forge a more productive relationship with volunteer centres.

Future work for next year will include fund raising initiatives and further volunteer support meetings, as it is recognised as being just as important for the projects to look after their befrienders as it is the young people they are mentoring.



THE MUSIC ACADEMY

- Offering a way out of desperate situations
- Forging relationships with important social bodies
- Looking to businesses to pledge time
- Recognising the importance of taking care of befrienders



The Music Academy 1080 Project aims to inspire those young people who have been permanently excluded from school to take an interest in their education, through a variety of music-based activities.

This year the Project has continued three days a week at the Highfield Centre in Dartford, where the young people have had the chance to write and record their own music. The tracks were burnt on to CDs for them to keep and they were then given the opportunity to design and produce CD covers. The Project has received extensive feedback from participants, including personal letters to the music tutors thanking them for their inspiration and hard work.

It is hoped this project will continue as the young people have obviously gained so much from their experiences here. If it is successful and funding is

"It was brilliant - now I have my own CD and some great new friends."

indeed available to support its continuation, organisers are planning to write a structured short course for students to follow, so the participants are aware of their objectives and are able to measure their contribution to the Project.

The Music Academy has the potential to develop and expand achieving real outcomes for young people raising self esteem and self confidence.

- Developing the ability to provide a high quality service
- Understanding what the future holds for the organisation
- Continuing to provide a service of priceless riches
- Making their childhood one they want to remember

The past year has continued to be challenging but I have noted with optimism that 121 Youth Befriending is developing and evolving the ability to provide a high quality service to its growing number of young people. Our communication strategies have shown that 121 has a clear and authoritative voice and increasing impact within West Kent.

We have continued to work on building and developing solid relationships with other professional bodies, local government and public authorities that are all essential to the growth of any organisation.

A key issue this year is how we can further develop the organisation and our understanding of what the future will bring, in the midst of so much social change. It is clear that 121 Youth Befriending has made a great impact in education, health and social care and in people's personal lives. The challenge is to take this forward into the next 10 to 20 years.

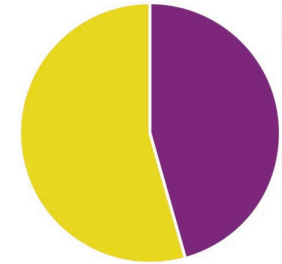
Earnest and warm thanks are due to the volunteers, staff and Executive Committee members who continue to handle difficult and complex issues with confidence and success. This has resulted in a heightened credibility amongst all of our stakeholders.

We always remember that our young people are at the centre of our professional work and we continue to provide a service of priceless riches - care, empathy, fun, support, an opportunity to talk and be listened to, an opportunity to play and an opportunity to learn life skills.

Your continued support will help to make their childhood a time that they want to remember.

Audrey Dudman
Chair

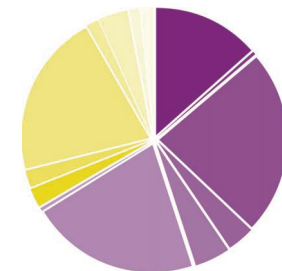
CHAIR'S REPORT



Expenditure

- Volunteer costs, children's activities and administration £117,078
- Staff costs £139,607

Total £256,685



Income

- Connexions £35,922
- Dartford Borough Council £1,000
- Home Office £62,438
- Kent Children's Fund £9,274
- Kent Community Foundation £12,000
- Kent County Council £56,662
- Sevenoaks District Council £1,000
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council £6,500
- BBC Children in Need £5,739
- Community Fund £55,254
- Medway Council (SRB) £4,190
- Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust £10,000
- Donations £3,427
- Misc £4,578

Total £267,984