



# Way Ahead

Issue 31 May 2009

## Youth Development 'Special Edition'

**Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Youth Development** is a small team of specialist youth engagement staff which is self-funding. The team delivers a number of intervention schemes predominantly aimed at disaffected young people involving them in structured and progressive projects of self development, promoting the fire and rescue service and with the intention of reducing crime. The team has taken over Way Ahead for this special edition...



**Our team** delivers youth engagement programmes across the county and we rely heavily on help from firefighters, officers and support staff. Together we in the fire and rescue service are in a great position to work with this particular part of the community and have been nationally recognised for our efforts.

Operational crews play a significant role in youth engagement by supporting youth development staff in team building and problem solving exercises, drill observation and young driver education, as well as mentoring young people or just taking an interest in their progression.



**Chief Fire Officer Richard Elliott with 'XLer8 Club' members from Earlham High School**

 **Norfolk** County Council  
at your service

**Our Youth Engagement Schemes** XL and XLer8 • Team Programme • Alite • Fire Cadets

**XL and XLer8** These are two year 'Key Stage 4' programmes (14 – 16 year olds) introducing wider key skills as an alternative to a GCSE. The young people that we work with are either permanently excluded from school, come through the pupil referral unit or are generally struggling to engage at school.

Within the scope of the programme we aim to deliver a range of activities that are challenging and engaging. All the activities are self funded by the groups. They receive no financial support from the fire and rescue service, however the young people and firefighters work together very well, engaging in road traffic collision demonstrations and role playing as well as learning essential firefighting skills including team building, leadership and first aid.

The group members identify community projects in their areas and undertake the planning, budgeting and work by themselves as well as applying to community and charity groups for funding. Preparation for work includes identifying work placements, writing CVs, and visiting a variety of employers as a way of introducing as wide a scope of employment opportunities as possible.

The residential element can take many forms and groups have been on three day camping trips and six day sailing trips. This year it is hoped groups will take part in the ASTO Small Ships race and also go hiking in the Yorkshire Dales.

**Delivery areas:** Norwich, Reepham and Thetford.

# Team Programme

## The Prince's Trust Team Programme (PTTP)

is a challenging 12-week full-time course aimed at unemployed young people between the ages of 16 – 25 years old, engaging them in structured projects and activities to develop confidence aimed at progression into employment, education and training. As a service we would agree with the Prince's Trusts statistic that 'within three months of PTTP completion 75% of young people move on to employment, education or training'.

## Fire & Rescue Service – our 'unique selling point'...

PTTP is delivered by a number of partners on behalf of the Prince's Trust. The programme on its own is special, however working with our diverse client group is extremely challenging. Delivery through NFRS offers the unique opportunity to positively diversify the programme even more through engagement with operational crews. Not only young driver education, tours of the stations, drills and problems solving activities on the station yard but importantly with adult role models who spend time with team members and quiet simply 'shows an interest'.



### Week 1: Induction

- Ice breaker games
- College enrolment
- Career planning
- Residential planning
- Community Project planning
- Skills for Life assessment
- City & Guilds Certificate

### Week 2: Residential

- Team Building
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Adventurous Activities
- Camping
- Navigation / Walking

### Weeks 3, 4 & 5 / 6: Community Project

- Project Planning
- Project Management
- Fund Raising
- Team Working
- Skills for Life
- Work Placement Preparation

### Weeks 6 / 7, 8: Work Placement

- Attendance
- Time Keeping
- Attitude
- Appearance
- Initiative
- Motivation

### Week 9: Next Steps

- Job / Course Finding
- Applications
- Letter Writing
- CV's
- Interviews
- Career Advice
- Course End 'Action Plans'



### Weeks 10 & 11: Team Challenge

- Demonstration of learnt skills e.g. Leadership, Team Working, Communication Planning and Management
- Community Engagements

### Week 12: Final Presentation

- Skills for Life exams
- City & Guilds Completion
- Progression Support
- Presentation Preparation
- Celebration of Achievement

**Delivery areas:** King's Lynn, North Walsham, Norwich and Thetford

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# 'I'm a firefighter – why should I get involved?'

By Leigh Prior Watch Manager, King's Lynn

**My initial views** on the Prince's Trust Team Programme at King's Lynn before becoming involved was commonly heard around Watches, and was based on the preconceived idea that the participants were all "worthless little tyrants just at the fire station on a jolly" looking to see what they could take. After taking on the challenge and 'coming on board' my views quickly changed.

## My Involvement...

I was lucky enough to get involved with the service's 21st Team Programme, which was due to the Team Leader being on his own for the initial 'try the Team Programme day'. This day consisted of some team building tasks, personal interaction and general routine tasks of such like days. At this point my opinion was still unchanged and stayed like this until the point where each individual had to be interviewed by their peers as well as the staff.



There were several questions, but the one that really hit home was 'How do you think the challenge of the 'Team Programme' can change your life?'. This brought home to me how many of these young people could benefit from a little time and patience (something I generally struggle on) if offered to them.

The answers the youngsters gave were honest, open and heartfelt, and made me realise just how lucky I have been during my life.

When you have a nineteen year old stating that 'this is their last chance' and 'to achieve this will be the first thing they have ever achieved' and 'my life is s\*\*t', it really makes you sit up and pay attention.

I decided then to help out firstly if required and secondly if time allowed. I volunteered my services and was immediately invited onto week two of the course, 'The Residential'.

This saw the 'Team' living away from their usual environments, be it either home, a care home, a caravan or the streets. The week consisted of team building, problem solving, hikes, map reading, cooking etc and focused around general life building skills. It took them away from their usual lives consisting of perhaps drugs, alcohol, misguided friends, abusive family members (mental or physical) and gave them the opportunity to try new activities, socialise with new people and take responsibility for their own actions in a controlled and safe environment.

I cannot say at times this was not challenging, however it was a great chance for some reflective time and self development.

The course ran the remainder of its time. The weeks consisted of such things as, fundraising initiatives, work placements, voluntary work, college courses. Each little step helping them to gain more confidence and belief in themselves.

Due to the course being run from the station it was often the case that the watches would get involved and show support and offer guidance if and when asked. Watches at Lynn are now regularly involved in 'Team Programme', helping with charity events, team building exercises and supporting the crucial work that the NFRS Youth Development carry out.



## So why should you get involved?

Of all the activities the young people get involved with a common answer to a regular posed question should perhaps give you the answer.

The question asked is "What part of the 'Team Programme' did you enjoy the most, and helped develop your personal confidence?" The answer is quite simply 'Working with the firefighters.'

All there is left to say is if you are interested, speak to any of the Youth Development delivery staff, any watch member at King's Lynn, Rob Curtis/Jim Palmer or me.

## You may be surprised at what you learn...

By Station Manager

Tim Edwards

I got used to hearing these words when I became the first Team Leader for the NFRS Youth Development Prince's Trust Team Programme. "You must be mad taking on a role like that!" I was told this regularly. However I've never regretted it for a moment. It's been one of the most difficult and challenging roles I have performed during my career but the most rewarding and to put the icing on the cake I have seen Rob lead his team to success in integrating Youth Development into the service. Every time I see and speak to the young people, who have benefited from the dedication and hard work that our staff in YD invest into each one of them, I am never anything other than uplifted.

The team's job is far from easy – the young people they work with, the constraints of the service's core aims and with funding always an issue but I am convinced that to engage with and to understand our communities and to drive down anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting the work of the YD team is vital.

I think that the benefits to the service, the community and most importantly the young people will be far reaching.

I wish the team every success for the future.

### Alite

The 'Alite' course aims to increase fire safety awareness among 10-14 year olds within the community and takes place over a week from Monday to Friday 09.30 – 16.00. It utilises three differing fire service activity areas: Skills, Safety and Team Building. The week concludes with a 'passing-out' parade with invitations sent to NFRS employees, partner organisations and most importantly family and friends of students.

#### 'Alite' Objectives

- To protect and encourage fire service principles of self-discipline, good time-keeping, leadership, team work and respect.
- To give participants the opportunity to improve their motivation, problem solving and communication skills and in turn gain self-respect and confidence.
- To acknowledge the achievement of young people so they can see the advantages of improving their own learning and performance.
- To gain positive engagement with young people that increases awareness of the work of the fire and rescue service.

'Alite' has been running for 2 years and we have successfully completed seven courses with more than 70 participants. Courses can be run at any fire station irrespective of size or location.

Further courses are planned for 2009-10, so if you think your station area could benefit from 'Alite' please contact the Youth Development.

**Delivery area:** Countywide



### Fire Cadets

We have six cadet units spread throughout the county. With the exception of Thetford all the units are based at retained stations and meet one evening a week.

Cadet unit activities include educational visits to fire stations and departments within the service or to other services throughout the country. Summer camps, hill walks, forest hikes and even visits to other countries have been undertaken, in addition to regular drill nights on station where the cadets learn about elements of a fire fighters job.

The main aim of the Cadet Service is to provide a disciplined environment for young people aged 13 to 18 years of age from all sectors of society to learn basic fire service skills and core values. This in turn leads to many young people joining us.



## WayAhead

### WayAhead is your publication

Your ideas, requests and contributions are welcomed. Please contact the editorial team: Martin Barsby, Duncan Ashworth, Dave McMahon, Trevor Leggett, Karen Palframan, Peter Holliday, John Burrows

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