



TRAYE Annual Report 2019 by Kerry McCabe, Coordinator TRAYE project

Introduction:

The Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement project (TRAYE) has gone from strength to strength over this past year and we are excited to share this progress report with you.

We've had many highlights in 2019, including our 5 Squared Project which was a resounding success and our Around the World Cookery Project which was something the young people really enjoyed.

Since we began, TRAYE has engaged with over 387 young people, with 2019 bringing an increase of 24% more young people attending our sessions. We continue to provide Open Access community based youth work in five rural parishes (Rattery, Dartington, Staverton, Harbertoford and Marldon) and have now employed two new sessional workers, Laura Hamlyn and Joseph McCabe.

We have an active group of young volunteers who have become an important part of our sessions, helping to bring new ideas and support into our work.

We hope you will get a real sense of the valuable work TRAYE continues to deliver and the opportunities for informal education and social learning it provides, to those young people living in rural areas, some often isolated.

Project Breakdown:

Dartington:

In Dartington sessions happen twice monthly and are delivered from the Dartington Village Hall, which is a large space with good facilities. Attendance has continued to stay at a steady rate with an average attendance of 14 young people each session. Over the last year we have had 20 new members join the group.

We have delivered successfully and in line with our Yearly Programme plan and the main highlights include; various games and educational quizzes during the winter months and outdoor games, sports and picnics in the summer months.

The young people also love to cook and this gives us a great opportunity to work with them around healthy food, diet and budgeting for food. This inspired us to complete a project which focussed on food from around the world, where we prepared and cooked Mexican, Spanish, Italian and Indian foods. The young people explored culture, traditions and tastes and found this an interesting and uplifting experience.

We have also enjoyed a Vegetarian Night with vegetarian food and drink. This gave some of the non-meat eating young people an opportunity to discuss with the others why they chose to be

vegetarian. We explored modern farming methods and some of the value dilemma's that exist around food.

As always, our core focus is always healthy relationships, exploring issues such as bullying, loneliness, E-Safety and staying safe, with age appropriate 'workshops' around issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexuality.

'Youth Club makes me smile, I love it' (Faith - Dartington)

'The work TRAYE does and how you offer it feels exceptional. We feel so in awe of what you provide and how great the rapport is between the workers and the kids. Youth Club gives Izzy the unique chance to be with children from other schools and she enjoys herself so much, we are so grateful to you' (Michelle - Parent)

Staverton/ Landscope:

Staverton and Landscope Youth Club sessions take place on a twice monthly basis, with sessions delivered in the Staverton Courtroom, Staverton Pavilion and Landscope Victory Hall. This enables us to reach more young people and offer a wider scope of activities and settings. Our numbers have grown in this area with an average of around 13 young people at each session, with a peak of 20 young people at some sessions. We have also engaged 13 new young people in this area. Given the rural setting of this Youth Club, this is a great achievement and one cannot underestimate the positive impact this will have on the ever present issue of youth loneliness and isolation.

Once again, in line with our yearly planning we have delivered activities such as Outdoor Education including nature walks, river swimming and outdoor ball games and picnics. What is also really lovely to see is that the young people still choose (without prompting) to not use their phones or electronic devices during the sessions. This is such a lovely thing to see and now a well established norm within most TRAYE sessions.

Social Issues are of real interest to this peer group. They are from a wide variety of backgrounds including young people from the travelling community, local young people and young people that have travelled from as far as Ashburton to attend. We have explored issues of Discrimination, looking at what it is, and more importantly for the young people, how it might feel. This has allowed us to really help them explore their values and begin to articulate their own views. The young people have always been open hearted and willing to understand new perspectives and could probably teach us all a lesson or two.

We have explored Mental Health issues, helping young people understand what Mental Health means, it's links to well-being and the barriers to being able to discuss the issue. Most importantly, we helped the young people understand the issue of confidentiality, and that unless they were at significant risk, we would be able to speak to them in confidence about how they felt. We then expanded this to include schools and other health professionals where they could access help if needed.

'Its been so good going to Youth Club, I volunteer with my brother and I always have a good time. My favourite part of this year (2019) was learning Yoga although some people just couldn't concentrate!' (Marley).

'Youth Club is so important for my boys, living in a rural area especially during the winter months and living as we do in a truck, light space is really important and socialising with their friends is paramount. The special sessions such as photography are a massive bonus, a chance to try something new out' (Lou - Parent)

Marldon:

The Marldon Youth Club runs twice monthly, between two venues; Marldon Village Hall and Ye Olde Smokey House Pub. Attendance here has grown, with an average of about 13 young people at each session with a peak of up to 20 young people. We have also managed to engage 13 new young people over this period.

There is older age group that attends this Youth Club (13-15 years) and this has meant that we have been able to get into some really useful 'Issue Based' work with them. For example we did an excellent piece of work with the group around self-esteem, self-harm and mental health. Here, we once again focused on Confidentiality and what this means, this has been helpful for the young people to understand and has led to some very open and honest conversations around some of the issues young people are facing.

This group have enjoyed taking part in cooking and preparing food, they also love to exercise and and play ball games. This has meant that we structure the sessions to include circle time (allowing young people to talk about their feelings), eating food together and then exercising and playing games. This particular structure works well at the village hall but needs to be adapted when we are at Ye Olde Smokey House.

At Ye Olde Smokey House venue, we tend to have a more relaxed session as it is a smaller space. The young people often enjoy dessert nights, quizzes and less energetic games such as Wink Murder and Fruit Salad.

It is clear that the young people enjoy getting together at Youth Club, they are a close knit group, with many knowing each other from Marldon Primary school but losing touch when going to different secondary schools. It is wonderful to see the reconnection they make and the joy of togetherness of this club.

'I feel excited about what else we will do at Youth Club, about doing something different and as a group and I feel this will improve my well-being' (Olivia).

'Thank you for giving our young 'uns' something to do!'(Anna's mum).

Rattery:

Rattery Youth Club runs every two weeks at Rattery Village Hall. Average attendance in this area is 11 young people each session but it has at times had 15 young people coming through the door.

Throughout 2019, this Youth Club has mainly been focused around delivering Cookery sessions, educational activities and the Five Squared Project, which we got funding to complete over all of the 5 areas we work in. The young people had outside providers coming in and running sessions which fit each of the 'mental health 5 a day'. First up was 'be active', a Non-Contact Boxing session which had 14 young people attending and they all participated in the very focused and physical session. Next up was 'learn new skills' which was a Photography workshop delivered by Fotonow, 15 young people attended the photography workshop; they got creative and worked together to produce some amazing photographs. 'Mindfulness, was a yoga session, delivered by Laura; 11 young people enjoyed doing yoga together, many for the first time. Our final focused session was about 'giving to others' and was young people making charity boxes for young people using the foodbank at Christmas; 14 young people attended this session and they really enjoyed making up gift boxes for those less fortunate than themselves and it definitely prompted some empathy in the young people. Another step of the mental health 5 a day is about 'connecting' and

was covered by our generic youth sessions, which included crafts and making candles and Christmas gifts, having a fun session of photo booths with our polaroid camera, playing games together and eating healthy food as a group.

Young people have really felt the benefit of this project, saying they enjoyed it and learnt new skills. There have been outcomes around improved confidence and better mental health – in terms of having new strategies to improve well-being. Also collaborating with each other and working together.

Since September 2019, we have had 10 new members coming along for the first time and 20 new members over the year. We have also have a new volunteer, a previous member, who is now working towards her Duke of Edinburgh award, with our help.

Our numbers in Rattery have been consistently higher than they had been, with young people travelling from further afield to join in with this dynamic, low tech youth session. It's great that our numbers are higher, but this has brought new challenges, especially as we are working with such a broad range of ages, ranging from 8 year olds to 14 year olds. Rattery village hall is also a big space, with lots of different rooms. We have asked for a third member of staff, to ensure the session remains safe and enjoyable for young people and staff. We have welcomed Laura as a replacement for Sharon; young people have warmed to Laura and it's great to have her on the team. We had Joe McCabe work with us on the last session and it really made such a positive impact to have a third member of staff, especially being a young man; when we are working with boys who are 14/15 years who respond really well to a male staff member.

We still need more resources in this session and are hoping to get a basketball hoop for outside, when the nights are lighter and warmer. Young people really value this session, in isolated Rattery, where there is literally nothing else for young people to do and no bus service to the village and not even a shop. Young people and their carers keep feeding back to us how important the youth club in Rattery is to them and how much they enjoy it.

Rattery young person 'it gives us a place to see our friends.'.... 'I've learnt new things'.

Rattery parents: 'Thankyou for looking after the boys, they really enjoy coming to youth club'

'It's brilliant, she can't wait to come each time it's on'.

Harbertonford:

Harbertonford Youth Club runs every two weeks at Harbertonford Village Hall. Average attendance in this area is 10 young people but we have had 16 young people come along to this session.

Over the year, we have had many active and engaging sessions, including Cookery and Outdoor Games. We have rolled out the same 5 squared project in all our areas, so at Harbertonford, we've been mirroring the work done in Rattery and the other areas. We have been doing workshops such as Non-Contact Boxing, Photography, Yoga and making charity boxes for young people who use the foodbank at Christmas, as well as our generic youth club sessions. These workshops have covered the 'mental health 5 a day' of being active, connecting, learning new skills, giving to others and mindfulness. The young people in Harbertonford especially enjoyed the photography workshop and making the shoeboxes and said their confidence had improved and they enjoyed the focused sessions. They also really loved the photobooth session, we did with our polaroid camera and also making candles and Christmas cards which they took home for their family members.

We had 20 new members at Harbertonford this year, 6 since September. Harbertonford is a diverse area and we find the young people there need the service we provide, more than anywhere else; proved by some hard to reach, at risk, young people attending and engaging with our sessions. It is great to see these young people attending our sessions regularly and how much they benefit from the work we do. Out of all the areas we work in, Harbertonford is the most challenging, but also where we are needed most. Young people in the village especially want to do more cooking and creative sessions and we hope we will receive more funding to continue the good work we do in Harbertonford and to be able to run new inspiring projects. Our staff team is committed to delivering high quality youth work and give the young people here, the right opportunities to help them thrive and support their personal and social development.

Harbertonford young person 'the 5 squared project has increased my confidence'

Harbertonford parent: 'Thanks so much for all the work that you do '.

Trips and Activities:

Throughout 2019 TRAYE completed 12 different trips with young people during school holiday times, ranging from Adrenaline Trampoline Park, Woodlands Leisure Park, Splash Down Quay West, Snow Tubing, Tobogganing, Viper Drop and Swimming. Each trip was well attended by all five areas and has meant that young people from different Youth Clubs have had the chance to mix and become friends. Our most popular trip was Splash Down Quay West where we saw 29 young people enjoying the water slides.

'Daisy always enjoys youth club and especially the trips you put on, she likes the variety and you always communicate brilliantly, you have kept the young people engaged otherwise they would not be there so that's very positive , I love that she has a membership to a group which is safe and fun but weighted with meaning and I appreciate that you care about our children and trust and know you do your best to ensure their safety. Thank you' (Daisy's mum).

Events and Community Days:

During 2019, we have continued to show our support in local communities by attending events and fairs. This is a good way to learn more about the areas we work in and to promote the work we are doing. The events we attended are:

Marldon Apple Pie Fair
Staverton Garden Show
Rattery Fair
Meadowbrook Extravaganza

These events allowed us to make contact with many new young people and their parents and carers and this has been a good way to attract new members to our Youth Clubs.

5 Squared Project:

After the Summer Holidays and our busy Summer Programme, we began a project called 5 Squared which allowed young people to take part in five activities which were designed to increase their mental well being. At the beginning of the project, young people were asked to use a scaling method to mark how they were feeling in various areas of their lives. We then rolled out the following activities:

1. Connect with others - We did this in our usual Youth Club sessions, but in a more focused way. We concentrated on building a sense of belonging and self-worth, giving young people the

opportunity to share their experiences through circle time and exploring support networks and ways to express emotions.

2. Be physically active - The young people asked to learn Non-Contact Boxing, so we found a Boxing Coach to deliver this session. This activity was highly physical and challenging, it taught the young people to listen carefully and keep disciplined.
3. Learn new skills - The young people chose to learn about Photography, so we had a company named Fotonow come in to facilitate this session. This session was very popular in each area, with young people enjoying learning how to use digital cameras and taking very creative photos of each other.
4. Give to others - The young people felt that they would like to give to those in need, partially families in the local area. They decided to make Shoe Boxes, which they decorated and filled with essential such as toiletries, hats, scarfs, socks and chocolates. All areas enjoyed this activity and it was lovely that the young people chose to do this at Christmastime. The Shoe Boxes went to a local charity called the Totnes Connection Hub.
5. Pay attention to the present moment (Mindfulness) - Young people from Staverton and Marldon came up with the idea of trying Yoga and Meditation to complete this step, so we went with it and rolled it out to all five areas. This created a slight problem in Harbertonford as the young people said they would have preferred to do a different activity. This is something we will need to be aware of in the future, however this activity did go down well in most areas with many young people asking to do Yoga again in the future.

‘The Shoe Box Appeal really got us thinking about homelessness, it was fun making the boxes but it felt good knowing they were going to people who really needed them’ (Jessica and Lily).



Youth Workers Views:

'This has been an amazing year for TRAYE as we have become well established in all five parishes. Our team of Youth Workers has grown meaning we have the flexibility to take annual leave or cover sickness and this has brought added skills and knowledge to the work we do.'

We have also grown in numbers of young people accessing our clubs, this is great news and shows a real need for open access youth work in rural areas. This 2020 we are going to need to secure more funding to continue our work and we are going to need more resources professionalise ourselves further.

I am very proud of what we have achieved and look forward to seeing what 2020 brings!'
(Kerry).

'I think the projects we did last year were great, the cookery project and the 5 Squared Project; lots of brilliant outcomes around confidence, life skills, team work, improved mental health and more . The trips were also a real strong point and are very popular. Our communications with parents are a strength too.'

I think we deliver amazing youth work which is great value for money! I think we have a strong team and we need to capitalize on the skills and strengths within the staff team. In all, well done and I have enjoyed my first full year working for TRAYE, and I know we are hugely valued and appreciated by the young people we work with and their families'
(Frankie).

'All of our TRAYE Youth clubs have consistency, inclusion and connection but all our young people in each area are viewed as individuals. We listen to their voices and needs and nurture their creativity, independence and kindness. Although we have structure for each session this is always adaptable to address current issues that may arise that the young people would like to talk about.'

My vision would be to see more funding coming in to be able to put more resources into each session' (Sharon).

'Having a safe relaxed space that the young people can connect, spend time together to make new friends. Free play away from school environment. What could be improved? Maybe introducing some sharing time to introduce topics have discussions that might support and empower them. In small groups for age groups specific? 'Right of passage' into adulthood.'

Games and creative focus for the younger ones introducing and asking them to share hobbies, knitting crochet making things. Learning new skills and being creative. Trying new things' (Laura).

'TRAYE is a great project that has such an amazing impact upon young people's lives. The 5 squared project was incredible and really helped young people to better themselves both physically and mentally. The youth workers are really good and are always there to support the young people no matter what.

TRAYE could really do with some more young volunteers that could help out at sessions and gain something from it like an award that they can put on their CV.

I would love to see more boxing and martial arts brought into the sessions and maybe even a trip to a boxing gym to show the young people the discipline and get them involved further in this sport' (Joe).

What we hope to achieve in 2020:

Now that 2020 is upon us, we need to look at ways to continue to improve our work. We firstly need to secure more funding to sustain our sessions. Kerry and Frankie will begin writing funding bids in February and will seek to secure funding from Children in Need, National Lottery Fund and other local funding streams.

We need to further professionalise our service with all workers having an ID Badge, access to Work Computers or a Work Space and G Suite so that we can monitor our work and progress easily. It would also be helpful for workers to have a bank account to use for petty cash and trips. This would be separate from the original TRAYE bank account.

We need more resources in our Youth Clubs, we need better equipment and games for the young people to use. We currently need music equipment, arts and crafts and sports equipment.

