

MIDSOMER NORTON YOUTH HUB OUTREACH PROJECT (MSN-Y-HOP)

Consultation Report – May 2017

1: Background

The Norton Youth Club (NYC) is a joint programme run by three partners – Midsomer Norton Town Council, Midsomer Norton Community Trust and the Wansdyke Play Association. Thus far the Town Council having identified a need for a safe space for children and young people to meet has provided funding for financial years 2015/16, 2016/17 and with further funding earmarked for 2017/18.

The Midsomer Norton Community Trust (MNCT) has a range of buildings, a strong volunteer base and connections to the local community. As such it is ideally suited to facilities managing the two sea containers it is proposed are purchased to create two new outreach youth hubs in the town located at Orchard Vale and Gullock Tying.

The Wansdyke Play Association (WPA) has extensive experience and skills in working with children, young people and families in the surrounding area.

In short the partnership has proved a great success, being able to build a thriving youth club night on a Thursday in the Town Hall as well as a range of exciting outreach initiatives and events. The two main partners are also keen to call on the skills and services of other service providers such as Off The Record, which currently has a highly effective youth counselling programme at the Town Hall on a Thursday evening.

The partnership is now looking to develop a three year plan which builds on its strengths and the work so far.

2: Consultation

The partners carried out a two stage consultation as follows:

- 11 sessions – December 2016 to February 2017 at the NYC – Questionnaire Based – 109 regular users
- 11th May 2017 – Face to face interviews at the Midsomer Norton Skate Park – 52 young people

2:1 NYC Consultation

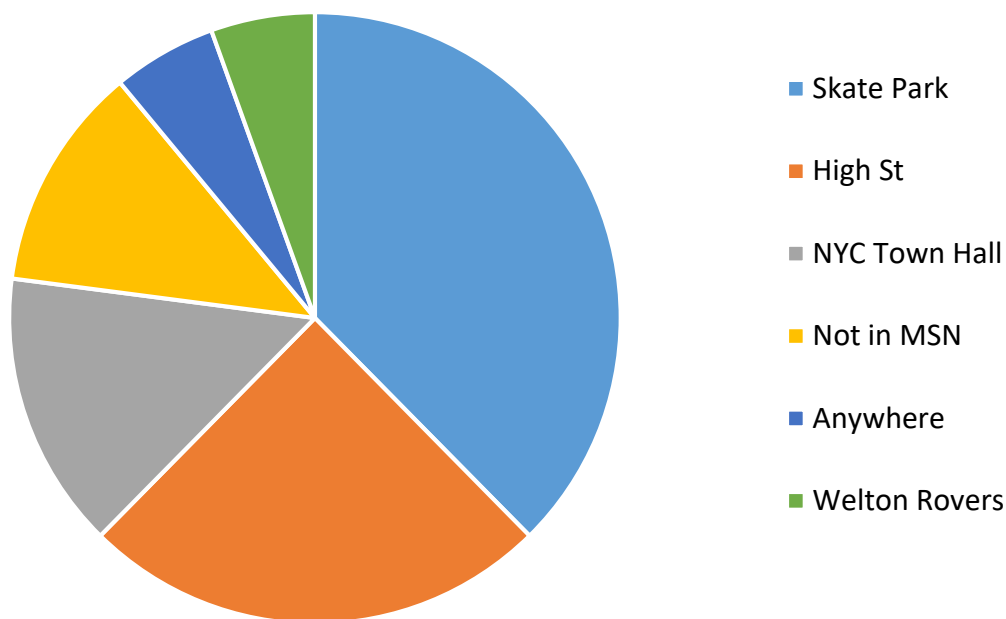
This consultation was based on a simple A4 page single sided written questionnaire which attendees at the Norton Youth Club (NYC) completed in sessions between December 2016 and February 2017. The resulting 109 completed surveys completed over the 11 weeks were collated and the following conclusions drawn (full results spread sheet is attached in Appendix 1).

In terms of participants there were 109 in total of which 55 were male and 54 were female representing the makeup of the regular attendees to the NYC. The average age was 13 years ranging from the youngest at 11 to the oldest at 15.

The first question sought to establish where young people hang out. The Skate Park scored the highest at 41 out of 109 – it’s clearly the most popular place to ‘hang out’.

Although the survey was carried out at the NYC in the Town Hall, only 16 out of the 109 stated that the NYC was where they ‘hung out’. However, whilst there is a growing attendance at the NYC it is only open one night a week and in term time whereas the other areas are available seven days a week all year round. That said these young people who referred to the NYC tended to avoid the public places like the Skate Park as the further results show below.

Where do you hang out in Midsomer Norton?



Where hang out	Total
Skate Park	41
High Street	27
NYC Town Hall	16
Not in MSN	13
Anywhere	6
Welton Rovers	6
Total	109

When asked where they would like to go but couldn't – of the 44 people who stated a preferred place, 22 wanted somewhere that was broadly inside where they could sit that was warm and dry which was significant.

When asked if they used the Skate Park 66 out of the 97 who answered the question confirmed they did. Of the 31 who didn't use the Skate Park it is significant that feedback on the reasons why indicated that they did not feel safe due to the presence of drug related activities or bullying (referred to by 11 of 66). This points to a need to address this issue with enforcement.

When it came to the activities that young people would like to do, of the 32 that expressed a preference 17 (more than half) wanted more activities for young people and 20 wanted a place to meet and socialise such as a Youth Café or as a minimum somewhere warm and dry. There were even references to the young people wanting to help run a café.

2:2 Skate Park Consultation

Following a rise in antisocial behaviour in Gullock Tying a further consultation was carried out on the 11th May 2017, led by the Town Mayor, Cllr Paul Myers and Siobainn Chaplin of Off The Record. Given the obvious synergy with the original core survey the results are included here. For this session which lasted 5 hours, the questionnaire format simply didn't work and so one simple question was posed – How could things be improved for young people in Midsomer Norton?

The results were interesting.

- 31% (16 out of 52) wanted somewhere to go where they could chill – described in most cases as a Youth Café.
- 25% (13 out of 52) wanted more activities either in the Skate Park or in a space in the town.
- 12% (6 out of 52) wanted the Skate Park improved with floodlighting or a cover.

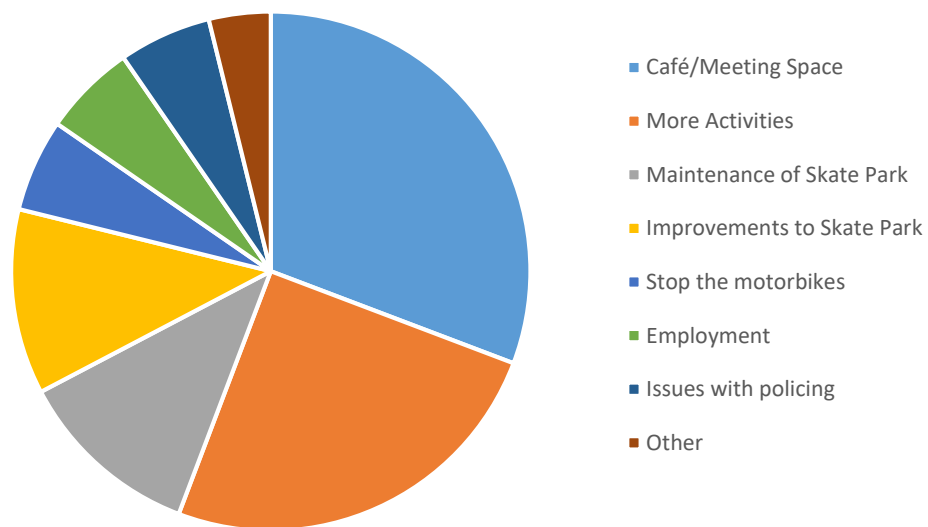
It was marked that when it came to litter the young 6 referred to either the need for more bins, for them to be emptied more regularly or for the horticulture maintenance to be improved.

The full results are summarised in Table 2a, presented as a Pie Chart in 2b with full responses summarised in Table 2c below.

Table 2a – Summary of Skate Park Survey Responses

Improvements for young people	Responses
Café/Meeting Space	16
More Activities	13
Maintenance of Skate Park	6
Improvements to Skate Park	6
Stop the motorbikes	3
Employment	3
Issues with policing	3
Other	2
Total	52

2b How could things be improved for young people in Midsomer Norton?



2c Full results from Skate Park Consultation

No:	How could things be improved for young people in Midsomer Norton	Coding
44	Trails for mountain bikes	Activities - bike trails
10	Places for biking for motorbikes	Activities - Bikes
40	Why can't we have fun days	Activities - event days
1	Fire pit in the skate park	Activities – fire pit
31	Graffiti boards	Activities - graffiti
35	Need more things to do like a band night	Activities - music/bands
36	Why can't we have DJ nights	Activities - music/bands
37	I reckon we should have D&B nights	Activities - music/bands
41	Music events	Activities - music/bands
45	Music stuff in the skate park in the summer	Activities - music/bands
6	Things for us to do like learning sport	Activities - sport
7	Open up the courts - why do we have to pay now/not fair they're locked	Activities - courts open
23	Not fair sports centre have locked up the courts	Activities - courts open
16	Cover for the skate park to protect from the weather	Cover for skate park
17	Canopy over the skate park	Cover for skate park
19	PCSOs don't seem like community police for us anymore	Crime/policing
21	Police harassment	Crime/policing
28	Police are really annoying hassling all young people when its 1 or 2	Crime/policing
12	Small jobs we could do to earn money	Employment
13	Tacking the 15-18 unemployment trap	Employment
14	Better jobs training and advice and help at school	Employment
9	Flood lighting in the skate park	Floodlighting
18	Flood lighting in the skate park	Floodlighting
32	Flood lighting in the skate park	Floodlighting
43	Flood lighting in the skate park	Floodlighting
8	More bins - they moan we drop litter but not emptied enough	Maintenance - bins
30	More bins in the skate park	Maintenance - bins
39	If they emptied the bins more they wouldn't catch fire	Maintenance - bins
42	Why don't they provide bins with ash trays?	Maintenance - bins
50	More bins and empty them more	Maintenance - bins
33	Why does Skate park have to be such a mess - bald grass and overgrown	Maintenance - horticulture
15	More benches at the skate park	Other - More benches
22	Provide a place to park our bikes and lock them up	Other - Place to park bikes
2	Some where to go when it's cold and wet	Space/Café to go
3	Place to shelter when its wet and dark	Space/Café to go
4	Get Macdonald's to come to Norton	Space/Café to go
5	Fed up of being locked out in the cold and wet	Space/Café to go
11	Somewhere to sit and chill	Space/Café to go
24	Nowhere to go when its wet	Space/Café to go
25	We need a café shop	Space/Café to go
26	We want a youth place where you can buy cheap food and drinks	Space/Café to go
27	We want a café	Space/Café to go
29	Whetherspoons - we need something for the older young people	Space/Café to go

34	We want a youth café/youth centre	Space/Café to go
38	If only there was somewhere to hangout	Space/Café to go
46	A youth café as a place to go	Space/Café to go
47	A place to go when it's cold or wet	Space/Café to go
49	A youth café	Space/Café to go
52	Somewhere for cars to park up and chill that doesn't annoy people	Space/Café to go
20	Stop the motorbikes they're driving us crazy with their noise	Stop motorbikes
48	Stop the annoying motorbikes	Stop motorbikes
51	Stop the motorbikes they're driving us crazy with their noise	Stop motorbikes

3: Conclusions

Feedback from young people at both the NYC and the Skate Park indicated a need for a combination of more activities and a place to go in the form of a Youth Café.

4: Recommendation

The two surveys support the proposal for the creation of Youth Hubs which in the first instance would enable the NYC to begin to address the needs of young people.

Emma Hamilton

Wansdyke Play Association

12 May 2017