

***Surrey Council For Voluntary Youth Services***  
Supporting the Voluntary Youth Organisations of Surrey  
*President: The Lady Baden-Powell CBE DL*  
*Vice President: John Walshe DL*



Astolat  
Coniers Way  
New Inn Lane  
Burpham  
Guildford GU4 7HL

Tel: 01483 453962  
Fax: 01483 440508  
Email: [admin@surreycvys.org.uk](mailto:admin@surreycvys.org.uk)  
Website: [www.surreycvys.org.uk](http://www.surreycvys.org.uk)

26 November 2008

Dear Nick,

### **Youth Project**

I mentioned at the last Children and Young People Commissioning Partnership that we had some observations to contribute about the Youth Project, and you said these should properly be addressed to you.

I am very conscious that the Youth project is an internal matter for the County Council, but we were asked for our views initially, and I should like to contribute now to these concluding stages of the work.

We welcome the appointment of a new Head of Services for Young People, reporting to Andy Roberts, as this gives a prominence to the particular needs of over 100,000 young people in the 10- 19 age group. Moreover I can see great advantage in bringing together YDS, Connexions, YJS and some other elements –principally to do with shared focus, targeting and commissioning.

The reference to targeting brings me to some of our concerns.

The first is a risk that the new service becomes overly focused on targeted youth support to the detriment of mainstream young people, especially as two of the three main Government funding streams support targeted work – notably PAYP and Connexions. Clearly what is needed in pursuance of the s 507 duty is to map what provision exists, spot gaps and then commission additional mainstream services. We are keen to participate in this process. Our own revamped website will be launched next month, and includes a Google map of our 80 members and the facilities/ opportunities they can provide.

Closely linked to this is a second concern arising from the emphasis in the Executive report on targeted work (see paras 12 and 13 of Executive report). The risk is that young people may constantly be seen as problems and criminalised, whereas the YJS figure is that just 350 young people a year are first time entrants to the criminal justice system.

The third concern is interlinked, and it is on the emphasis on the YDS focusing on targeted work, in the interests of clarity and matching resources to National Indicators/ LAA priorities, whilst the voluntary sector undertakes universal provision. I appreciate that this model has a fairly widespread currency – for example in the Government’s “Targeted Youth Support” paper, and elsewhere - but I suggest that the voluntary and faith sector in Surrey is also a major provider of targeted youth work.

My point is that it is simplistic to conclude that the YDS should do targeted work, and that the voluntary and faith sector focus on mainstream provision. For example the work of the three YMCAs and Surrey Care Trust is very much in the targeted category, and so too is the work of our members with Connexions contracts.

It is clear that the new Head of Services for Young People will have to address these issues and the implications for commissioning.

I would like to register on behalf of Surrey CVYS and its now 80 member organisations that we would very much like to participate in a partnership discussion about this at some convenient point, and to make our positive contribution to helping to meet the needs of all of Surrey's young people.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Abbott

Chief Executive

Copies to: Anthony Durno and Toby Wells  
Surrey CVYS Trustees



Registered Charity No: 1093718  
Affiliated to the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services