



Organisation Name	Misbourne Area Youth (MAY)
Project Name	Retention of youth worker
Funding Stream	Community Priority
Total Cost of project	£833.32
Amount of Match Funding	N/A
Amount being applied for	£833.32
Amount suggested	£833.32

Project Summary

Until March 2020 MAY's Youth Cafe ran weekly drop-in sessions during term-time in Prestwood Community Centre on the Common and an after-school session at the Misbourne School, on Monday evenings and afternoons respectively. The background of youth provision in GM Parish over the last 24 years is at <https://mayouth.org.uk/history/>.

Since last March, MAY has managed to maintain continuity and contact with its Youth Café young people, adapting to circumstances in line with government COVID guidelines, resorting to engaging and supporting them in a group via social media, WhatsApp, Zoom and messaging, strictly in line with MAY's safeguarding policy.

To be able to do this effectively, MAY retained its professional youth worker at a reduced monthly service level agreement fee.

MAY are requesting a grant for their COVID recovery project which will help them retain their experienced youth worker until normal activity (and funding streams) can be resumed.

MAY relies on achieving successful funding applications for its income.

MAY aims to maintain reserves for continuity of a youth provision in the Parish for a year in advance. Continuity in delivery of service is essential as we come out of lockdown and resume activities in the community.

How does the project address local priorities?

COVID recovery, Community Safety, Health and wellbeing, Youth support and provision

Supporting MAY's work will help young people with their mental well-being as we come out of lockdown and schools re-open. It is well documented that the mental health of young people has been severely affected and continuity of support with an experienced youth worker is essential.

The Lead Practitioner (Youth VCS), Family support service at Buckinghamshire Council confirmed that 13 youth centres are supported across the County, but MAY is not one of these. As such, they have not been eligible for additional funding from the Council which has been paid to other groups. The officer is impressed that the youth worker has managed to maintain contact during the pandemic and stressed the importance of young people having access to this sort of service at this time.

How does the project align with the values, objectives and corporate priorities of Buckinghamshire Council?

Which Buckinghamshire Council priorities does your project support and how?:

Strengthening our communities & protecting the vulnerable

For 11-18 year olds within Great Missenden Parish. MAY's Youth Cafe COVID recovery project aims to maintain support for young people, continuing to tackle mental health & wellbeing issues including social isolation and loneliness and reaching out to teenagers living in local pockets of deprivation.

How does the project achieve value for money?

Maintaining the service now will help MAY to avoid additional costs for recruitment of a new youth worker once the service can be resumed. Dealing with mental health issues at this level could also avoid longer term impact on other mental health services in the community and county.

Community Board Coordinator comments

The need for such a youth provision is well-documented nationally and much highlighted as a result of the pandemic. The past year has shone a light on the impact on teenagers' mental health & wellbeing including loneliness. MAY's drop-in Youth Cafe sessions are a continuing opportunity for young people to reach out for help.

It is important that the continuity of the service is maintained to assist with strengthening of mental health of our young people and their families.

The applicant has provided these comments from young people who use the Youth Café

.....Youth club provides a safe space for young people to be themselves and make new friends, altogether youth club has become an amazing family who support each other.

.....We get to socialise with people with different values, backgrounds and upbringing. Everyone supports each other, we all get on like a lil family.

.....to socialise and make new friends. The volunteer helpers are very friendly – they welcome you like a member of the family. In the summer we go outside to play in the park., doing sports and fun activities. In the winter we normally stay in and socialise, watch a film and have a lot of fun. I constantly look forward to it.

.....Cos it's something to do and meet new people. I can get out of the house.

.....I come to do great and fun activities and trips out.

.....Mainly the cafe gives people the chance to socialise and go somewhere after school, which is great for boosting confidence and building friendships. There are a variety of games for everyone to play including game consoles, card games, pool, ping pong and more! When the weather is good, we even have ramps for skateboarding. There is an activity for everyone! Even the occasional trips such as ice skating or golf bring a new dynamic to the cafe and allow everyone to bond.

... Youth Cafe is a great place for young people to hang out with friends, meet new ones and socialise safely. There are plenty of fun activities and games to enjoy, ensuring there is never a boring moment! The age range is diverse so there are many friends to make of all ages, which only adds to the friendly dynamic. All of these factors apply even if you're a volunteer here, as the majority of us are also young adults. This reinforces a feeling of friendship where there is no separation between the volunteers and anyone else. At this Youth Cafe, everyone feels like part of a big friendship group.

The applicant will be required to agree to terms and conditions, which include a monitoring agreement, as discussed with the Community Board Coordinator before the fund will be formally awarded.