

Calderdale
Safer Communities
Partnership



Youth Shelter
TOOLKIT

Introduction

This Youth Shelter toolkit & pro forma is one of a series being created by the Calderdale Community Safety Team. These guidelines will help those groups or individuals who feel there is a need for a Youth Shelter in their area / community. It offers guidance and advice as how to progress their requirements and the step by step process that they should consider prior to any requests for a Youth Shelter.

The Calderdale Community Safety Team view is that Youth Shelters provide an appropriate space for young people to gather, providing they are what young people and the community want.

Youth Shelters will only be of benefit to the whole of the community if they are well used and sustainable. Sustainability cannot be achieved without going through the four stages laid out in this toolkit.

Please contact your area Community Development Officer who will advise and guide you through all four stages.

Names and contact details can be found at the end of this document.

What is a Youth Shelter?

A Shelter is an outdoor, unsupervised structure designed specifically to attract – and withstand – the attention of young people. It is always an open structure designed to meet the social needs of young people, a sheltered place to sit and talk. The roof provides shelter from the weather, whilst most shelters are open on all sides, enabling all round visibility and ‘natural safety’ for users, although some shelters now include partial screening on one or more sides giving cover from the elements.

Construction, shape, size, height and colour all vary and can be dependent upon location and price; this can vary from £5k to £40k plus.



A typical shelter

They give an immediate demonstration of a commitment to include and cater for the needs of young people, both now and for future generations, as a legitimate part of the local community. It also contrasts with the idea that ‘the rest of us’ see young people as a problem that needs to be resolved.

FIRST STAGE

Before arriving at a decision it is important to consider the following process (Our thanks to the Thames Valley Police for the advice and information):

- Clearly identify your needs for young people and the community.
- If it involves young people, ask them how they see the issue and what their solution would be, and invite the whole community to comment.
- If they want a place to go would a youth shelter do the job?
- What facilities or Youth Service provision could it be linked to?
- Ask them to set the design brief or draw it.
- Involve them at the start and in all the subsequent processes.
- Should it be lit at night?
- Involve the young people in fund-raising and building projects.
- Consider the sustainability of the shelter and propose ways of maintaining the shelter, which could include painting, being adopted by a group, and raising money for extra equipment, buying additional lighting, or obtaining sponsorship.

Don't do it without:

- Clearly identifying the local needs of the whole community
- Ensuring young people want it
- Checking that the nearest residents will at least tolerate it

Ensuring that :

- It is safe in terms of equipment and surroundings
- It is regularly cleaned and maintained
- It is conveniently located so that it gets used

The Shelter may not be the most important product of the project; the process of involvement, empowerment and training may do more for the young people involved than the shelter itself.

SECOND STAGE

Before deciding upon the possible value and benefits of any scheme, it is important to undertake a thorough analysis of the potential advantages and disadvantages.

You should work with your local Community Development Officer and consult with the local Youth Worker, Neighbourhood Policing Team, Police Community Support Officers, Street Wardens, Housing Department or Registered Social Landlord and the local community.

Whilst it will cost money and require investment to build and maintain a Youth Shelter, it will invariably cost more to do nothing.

It is important to consider the following 'costs' of not investing in a shelter and the impact they can have:

Local Residents – Groups of young people 'hanging around', fear of crime, noise, litter, and ball games played against walls and fencing, loss of pride in an area.

Community Buildings – graffiti removal, youths congregating, annoyance to other users.

Shops and local business - litter, graffiti, a loss of trade, closure of business.

Education – exclusion of young people, reduced performance, early leavers.

This could mean an increase in Police patrols and volume of calls resulting in increased numbers of investigations and prosecutions. This in turn could lead to poor relationships with young people.

Other things you must consider:

Who owns the land that has been identified as the right location for the shelter, will there be year on year maintenance costs, insurance implications and is planning permission for the shelter required?

You must liaise with the landowner in regards to Health and Safety issues on the site, discuss the layout and landscaping, request the correct levels and relevant standards for lighting to ensure that natural surveillance is in place without impeding on others.

THIRD STAGE

To assist you in making a successful submission for a Youth Shelter in your area, the following advice should be considered;

Build the case, advocate and recruit partners to plan, consult and deliver – what are **we** going to do about it?

Propose an accessible, convenient and visible location and select youth shelter options that compete – or nothing will change

Consult and engage with all local stakeholders to raise awareness, ownership and understanding of ‘what’s in it for me?’

Develop a ‘lifetime’ strategy of ownership with young people to buy in teenagers as they grow up.

Co-ordinate the provision with partner support to embed the youth shelter as a community facility.

Complete the Support and Guidance Pro Forma and submit to the local Action Planning Team, details on stage four.

FOURTH STAGE

You should now be ready to submit a request for support from your area's Action Planning Team for a Youth Shelter. This does not mean they will fund a Youth Shelter, but they will be able to support identifying sources of funding.

The Action Planning Teams (APTS) are responsible for working towards the objectives in the Calderdale Safer Communities Strategy 2005/2008, in brief reducing overall crime and creating cleaner, safer, greener communities.

There are four APT'S that consist of representatives from the Calderdale Council, Police, Health, Pennine Housing 2000, Probation Service, other organisations also get involved as and when. They meet on a monthly / six weekly basis to look at ways of reducing crime and disorder in their areas.

What to do now ?

Make sure you have considered and or gathered information and evidence required in all the stages before you begin completing a Pro Forma.

If you require support to complete the support and guidance Pro Forma or further information please get in touch with the Community Development Officer for your Action Planning Team Area.

APT Areas and Contact Details

Upper Valley –	Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Sowerby Bridge, Luddendenfoot, Greetland, Stainland Community Development Officer - Mary Clear 01706 548133 Email : mary.clear@calderdale.gov.uk
Lower Valley –	Brighouse, Rastrick, Elland, Shelf, Northowram Community Development Officer - Rebecca Strutt 01422 393164 Email : rebecca.strutt@calderdale.gov.uk
Outer Halifax –	Illingworth, Ovenden, Mixenden, Park Ward, Pellon & Warley Community Development Officer - Mohammed Riaz 01422 393164 Email : mohammed.riaz@calderdale.gov.uk
Halifax Town Centre -	Town Centre, Southowram, Boothtown, Siddal Community Development Officer - Rebecca Strutt 01422 393164 Email : rebecca.strutt@calderdale.gov.uk

For further information contact:

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