

NEXTGEN



'Next Gen' is an initiative designed to upskill and empower young people to become the next generation of young leaders and role models within their local communities. Through this process, young people have been creating their own volunteering journeys, opening career pathways and inspiring others to do the same.

NextGen projects generally include the following elements:

- **Recruitment:** Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs) within the StreetGames network recruit young people from the local area to take part in the programme.
- **Induction:** The young people are introduced to StreetGames, the 'NextGen' concept and informally discuss training needs.
- **Training:** The young people access courses via the StreetGames Training Academy to help them develop as young leaders and volunteers, diversifying their delivery options and challenging them as individuals to support their peers and community. These courses are chosen by the young people, based on the informal training needs analysis.
- **Local Delivery:** The young people volunteer regularly at LTO sessions, putting into practice the leadership skills and knowledge gained in real life situations. They are encouraged to share these experiences with each other and reflect on any challenges they may have come across.
- **Social Action & Youth Voice:** Young people plan and deliver a social action project in their area which may involve planning a mini project that offers new activity or tackles a social issue.
- **Celebration Event:** An event for the young people and their families, where they receive certificates for their contributions to their community.

Through Department for Education, Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme funding StreetGames have worked with a number of young leaders to enhance the programme and develop young leaders. The project was delivered in partnership with three Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs): Parkside High (Ilkeston), Infinite Wellbeing (Heanor), and Insight CIC (Erewash).

During the project each LTO worked with a group of 4 young people who developed their skillsets through:

- Supporting the LTOs HAF delivery.
- Undertaking StreetGames training sessions.
- Taking part in a 'Dragons Den' event.
- Developing and delivering social action projects within the local community.

The young volunteers were all already known to the organisation prior to the project either as participants or existing volunteers and were invited to be involved by LTO staff.

TRAINING

One of the primary aims of the NextGen programme is to provide a range of workshops and training opportunities to stretch and challenge young people which can be included on their CV. To achieve this the following courses were delivered:

Safeguarding

Youth Social Action

Activator Essentials

Level 2 Food Hygiene

Level 3 First Aid at work

The young people who took part in the courses were complimentary of the delivery and found the courses useful:

"This is new to us...we haven't done anything similar at school"

"They made sure the courses were fun"

"I think the knowledge from the courses will help in the future"



SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

As part of the project, organisations utilised a £500 budget to deliver a social action project within their community. The young volunteers worked together in their groups to identify a social issue that they felt was prevalent in their local area, and a project that could play a role in addressing the issue.

To access the £500 budget, each of the groups pitched their ideas to a panel of StreetGames staff in a 'Dragons Den' format. This provided the young volunteers with an opportunity to practice public speaking and develop their presentation skills. Within their pitch each of the groups presented:

- The social issue they wanted to address.
- Details of their planned social action project and why they felt it was needed.
- The food that would be available at the event.
- An outline of how their £500 budget would be spent.

Once the group had finished their pitch, they received questions from the StreetGames staff that checked and challenged their plans.

All 3 of the pitches were successful, meaning the groups could go away and begin planning delivery. At the time of writing, Parkside High and Insight CIC have delivered their social action project, and Infinite Wellbeing's project is due to take place in October.

PARKSIDE HIGH

The social issue that the Parkside High cohort identified was a lack of opportunities for young people to engage in fun and wellbeing enhancing activities. To address this, they wanted to deliver an activity that fostered a sense of fun and cohesion amongst the young people that were taking part.

The group delivered a fun day for young people in their community that was largely based around water activities, this included activities such as a huge water fight and ice bucket challenge. They chose to deliver this type of event because they felt it was inclusive and would allow them to reach as many young people as possible with the funding they received. The event had over 50 young people attend who all received a lunch in the form of a buffet.

“As we ran our activity during our HAF programme, the community impact was great. It got all of the local children having fun and doing something in which they may not experience again, which is rewarding for the young volunteers to experience and help these young people grow.” – **Michelle Project Manager at Parkside High**

INSIGHT CIC

The issue identified by Insight CIC was the lack of local amenities for young people to access in their spare time, where they could socialise with their friends and have fun. Therefore, the group delivered a bowling and laser quest evening including transport and food. They took 18 young people to the nearest bowling and laser quest venue using public transport (supported by staff). The cost of visiting either of these facilities is high and they felt by visiting both on the same evening the young people were getting a ‘real treat’. Each young person who attended was also provided with a meal.

INFINITE WELLBEING

The social issue that the group identified was that there were no cinemas in their local area. Having to drive or use public transport to get to the cinema and the cost of a ticket makes it inaccessible for many young people. They felt this was part of a wider issue within the area of there being limited things to do which leads to young people feeling bored and at an increased risk of them engaging in anti-social behaviour.

In response to this issue, the group organised a ‘mystery movie night’ as their social action project. The funding they received will cover room hire, the license to play the movie and the costs of the food. The night will start and finish with fun games and activities delivered by the young leaders. The food will be prepared by the young leaders with the help of staff. The movie will be decided by a poll on social media and revealed on the night of the showing.

This event is due to take place during the October half term when there is no HAF programme available.

OUTCOMES

INCREASED CONFIDENCE

The NextGen project provided the young volunteers with a number of opportunities that would help increase their confidence including providing them with new knowledge and skills through training, presenting their social action ideas to a panel of StreetGames staff and supporting HAF delivery.

Towards the end of the programme the young volunteers were asked to score themselves on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely', with how much they agree with the following statement: “I feel confident having a go at things that are new to me”:



The following percentage of young volunteers also Agreed, or Strongly Agreed with the following statements:

“I can achieve most of the goals I set myself”



“I can usually solve my own problems”



The young volunteers felt that the NextGen programme had given them new experiences that put them out of their comfort zone at the time, but has them helped develop confidence. For example, some of the young volunteers discussed that providing a service to the parents of the young people attending the HAF programme had given them a new experience of communicating with 'adults' outside of their usual school or home setting. They felt this had taught them to communicate in a more confident way and meant they would feel more comfortable going into similar environments when they begin to develop a career.

RAISING ASPIRATIONS & SUPPORTING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN THE DIRECTION THEY ARE WANTING TO TAKE NEXT

In the participant survey 50% of the young volunteers stated 'improving my career prospects' was a reason they started the programme. Amongst the group there were a broad range of career/education aspirations covering areas such as:

- Fashion
- Army
- Mechanics
- Youth/Community work
- Sport business
- Community sport
- University

Despite the specific skill requirements for each of these fields, the young volunteers felt that the NextGen programme had help them develop skills that would be helpful for their future careers. They felt that the soft skills that they were able to develop through the programme such as confidence, communication, leadership and teamwork, alongside the knowledge they gained from training courses would be transferable to any career path:

"I think we've gained people skills through the project that should help for a career"

"I think the courses will be useful for everyday life and careers in the future"

"I've now got more experience of engaging the local community"

The participant survey also highlighted the impact the programme had on the young people's desire to volunteer:

75%

of volunteers who had undertaken any other volunteering outside of the programme

80%

of volunteers who stated taking part here motivated them to do more volunteering outside of the programme

75%

of volunteers who think they will continue to volunteer in the future



SUPPORTING POSITIVE NEW INTERACTIONS IN NEW ENVIRONMENTS

The participant survey highlighted that interacting with others was a motivating factor for the young volunteers to stay involved in the project.

“Which of these options best describes why you continue to take part in this project?”:



75%

To socialise with other people



63%

To make friends

Throughout the Youth Leadership programme, the young people were presented opportunities to venture out of their local community and gain experiences of new people, environments and activities. These included:

- A trip to a waterpark.
- All groups teaming up together to attend training courses.
- Interacting with StreetGames staff during training and the Dragon’s Den event.
- Interacting with new people in the local community through HAF delivery and social action events.

“We mixed with people we wouldn’t normally mix with”

“We were able to meet lots of new people from the area”

CREATE YOUNG ROLE MODELS WHO CHILDREN ON THE HAF PROGRAMME CAN LOOK UP TO AND RAISE ASPIRATIONS

Throughout the project the young volunteers displayed positive behaviours that the children attending the HAF programme could look up to. Many of the young volunteers discussed how one of their main motivations for being part of the project was to help others, particularly children from their local community. The majority of the young volunteers were from the local community that the HAF programmes were being delivered in, therefore have a unique understanding of the challenges the children may face when growing up in that area.

“I want to be able to help young people who are at risk of going down the wrong path, as I know what it’s like being a young person and the challenges you face”

“The sessions are a way to get everyone involved in something they enjoy... the sessions get people off the street, and there’s a lot less trouble”



PROJECT LEARNING

YOUNG VOLUNTEER REFLECTIONS

When asked to 'choose THREE words which best describe volunteering to you', the young volunteers came up with some of the following:

- "Enjoyable, Helpful and Confidence building"
- "Helpful, kind and nice"
- "Helping, caring and enjoyable"
- "Positive, fun and great experience"
- "Resilience, communication and helpful"
- "Teamwork, resilience and communication"

They were also asked "Reflecting on your experiences, what does a good volunteering offer look like to you?". The responses emphasised the importance of an offer including opportunities to meet new people, develop confidence, learn how to lead, help others and foster a sense of community.

LTO STAFF REFLECTIONS

The LTO staff reflected that the programme had been of significant value to their organisation. Having volunteers working at their HAF sessions provided greater capacity and support at the sessions meaning they were easier to manage. The LTOs also reflected that the programme allowed them to provide more volunteer opportunities which strengthened the young volunteer's relationship with their organisation.

"It brought the volunteers and members of staff closer together as they were always with each other and wanting to come to sessions."

The LTOs reflected that the biggest success of the project was the increase in confidence that they witnessed in the young volunteers, as well as the friendships that they have fostered with each other over the course of the project.

The LTOs plan to maintain a link with the volunteers beyond this project and continue to seek out opportunities for them to volunteer going forward.

STREETGAMES REFLECTIONS & FUTURE PLANS

The programme had a significant positive impact on the young people we worked with. Over the course of the programme, we saw a transformation in their self-belief and confidence. Initially the group were very quiet and afraid to question or challenge but by the end of the programme, they were a confident group of young volunteers who were capable of planning and leading a community sessions and events with support from their group leaders. It was great to see their commitment and drive to understand their local communities and develop a programme that would really benefit the young people within it.

Throughout the programme, the group developed friendships outside of their organisations and supported each other when their close peers were unable to attend sessions. There was also a great feeling in the room when they were practicing delivery skills to each other.

We hope that all the young people who took part in the programme continue to volunteer for their current LTO in the future as they have all learnt and displayed valuable skills that would be an asset to any organisation. The skills that they have developed will also be useful in the workplace and we wish all of our NextGenners every success.

If HAF funding is extended, we would like to continue to deliver NextGen programmes as part of HAF.

