



## Summit showcases county's young voices



North Yorkshire's annual Youth Voice Summit took place this month. The event included various workshops for delegates, among them learning how to consult young people to better represent them; skills in public speaking; using social media; and expression through art. Full report: page 2

## Good progress recorded in Young and Yorkshire's first year

One year on from the launch of North Yorkshire's Young and Yorkshire children and young people's plan, good progress is being made against the strategy's three priorities.

These priorities are to ensure education is our greatest liberator, with a greater proportion of children attending good or outstanding schools and settings; help all children enjoy a happy family life, with a safe reduction in the children and young people looked after by the county council; and ensure a healthy start to life, with more children and young people leading healthy lifestyles.

Strengths identified in the first year include:

- The number of children attending good or outstanding school rising four per cent to 80%;
- improved educational outcomes in

many area;

- the success of the Developing Stronger Families programme;
- a reduction in the number of looked-after children from 460 to 448 over the year;
- fewer children killed or seriously injured on the county's roads; and
- a reduction in the teenage conception rate from 21 to 17 per 1,000.

The first year has seen a wealth of strategic activity that has led to the redesign of services and new ways of working.

It has seen the launch of the school improvement partnerships, phase two of the Developing Stronger Families programme and the No Wrong Door project to support vulnerable adolescents.

However, as this is a three-year plan,

**Continued on page 2**

## In this issue

Click on the page numbers below to view those pages

Pupils' views sought on school



page

Online music tuition success



page

Service children gather for event



page

Art shows what Being OK means



page

Young advisors help shape services



page

Ambition to create a smoke-free generation



page

## Pupils' views sought on new Bentham school premises

Pupils at Bentham Community Primary have been giving their views on their new school.

The site, which opened in February, serves High and Low Bentham and Burton in Lonsdale. It has a sedum living roof, cedar cladding and dry stone walls to blend into the environment. The building is based on an amphitheatre to provide an integrated playground. Coloured glazing provides attractive, light and airy spaces.

Pupils' views were sought so that their opinions can inform the work of the council's

strategic planning team and the review of the move.

Children were asked what made a perfect school and whether the school worked for everyone.

They walked around the school and scored different spaces out of five. All areas scored highly, with the library, hall and reception being rated as favourites.

The school design has also gained external recognition through being named the Best Educational Building in the 2015 North and East Yorkshire Local Authority Building Control Building Excellence Awards.



## Summit provides an opportunity for young people to share experience and opinions

North Yorkshire has been at the forefront nationally in its engagement with young people to improve services, and this was exemplified by the fifth annual Youth Voice Summit, which took place on 9 October.

The summit attracts members of youth organisations and school councils from across the county.

More than 100 delegates from school councils attended the event at The Pavilions in Harrogate. These included the Young People's Council, which represents looked-after children and young people; young carers groups; youth councils; the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) voice group and the Flying High Group, which represents young people with disabilities.

Hannah Berzins, chair of the North Yorkshire Youth Council, said: "The summit provides an invaluable opportunity for young people from across the county to gather, explain their

own experiences and give their opinions. It also gives them the chance to learn new skills to improve the youth voice in their community and their school."

Keynote speakers at the event included the Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield, who spoke about why it is important for adults to listen to young people's views. She was joined on the rostrum by Kevin Hollinrake, MP for Thirsk and Malton, who spoke about the need for young people to become politically engaged.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson, North Yorkshire's Executive Member for the Children and Young People's Service, said: "The Youth Voice Summit has become an increasingly important event in North Yorkshire's calendar. Improving outcomes for young people is the council's number one priority, and listening to what young people have to say about the way we shape our services is crucial."

## Good progress recorded in Young and Yorkshire's first year

### From page 1

there are still areas for improvement and challenges.

These challenges include:

- childhood obesity and physical activity in older children;
- the long-term and short-term stability of placements for looked-after children;

- the rate of re-referral to children's social care; and
- closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

Quarterly reports to the Children's Trust board show that despite the remaining challenges almost 70% of the first year targets have been achieved or very nearly achieved.

## Resounding success for online music tuition pilot project

Pupils and teachers across North Yorkshire have a lot to be proud of following the completion of an innovative digital music education project, Connect: Resound, which won funding from the Digital R & D Fund for the arts to trial online learning in North Yorkshire.

Over the last year, 71 pupils at seven schools received 196 hours of online instrumental tuition.

The primary school pupils learned a range of instruments, including trumpet, guitar, violin and clarinet, from teachers based many miles away, who delivered the lessons over the internet.

The idea is that internet teaching of music can open up more options for small rural schools to help their pupils learn to play instruments as easily and regularly as those in urban areas.

The full research report will be published in autumn by NYMAZ, which led on the project in partnership with the Music Hub, the University of Hull and technical experts UCanPlay. Initial findings suggest the approach could



work in music hubs across the country, and that internet learning could form a useful part of music education in North Yorkshire.

The full research report can be found at [www.nymaz.org.uk/connectresound](http://www.nymaz.org.uk/connectresound).

## County's work to give all children a healthy start in life comes under in-depth analysis

Work across North Yorkshire to give all children a healthy start in life - which is one of the three priorities in the county's Young and Yorkshire plan - has been scrutinised to assess progress and the challenges ahead.

The analysis has been carried out by county council colleagues in children's services and public health. While generally in North Yorkshire the health and wellbeing of children and young people is better than the average for England, the analysis did highlight challenging issues.

The rate of low birth-weight babies born in the county is worse than the national rate and the percentage of mothers that smoke at the time of delivery is significantly worse than the England average.

Unintentional injuries are also higher than the national average and there is a relatively high incidence of deliberate self-poisoning among older youths.

The county council's own survey shows a decrease in the emotional resilience and mental wellbeing of young people. Life expectancy varies, for example it is reduced by three

years between Northallerton and Scarborough. Child poverty in parts of the county is as high as the poorest places in England, leading to health inequalities.

The report sets out challenges to colleagues who work with children and young people and concludes that while the overall health of children and young people is better than average, renewed emphasis needs to be given to addressing inequalities in health.

- Similar in-depth analysis will be carried out in future on the other two priorities in the Young and Yorkshire plan.

- The newly published annual report of North Yorkshire's director of public health, Dr Lincoln Sargeant, also takes children's health as its theme. It focuses on the issues that affect young people's health and wellbeing, and outlines plans to ensure they can enjoy happy and healthy futures.

"We want to improve the health of all our residents and make sure everyone has equal opportunities to lead healthy lives, and to achieve this we must begin where our health challenges start - in childhood," said Dr Sargeant.

# Service children gather for annual event

For the third year, more than 300 service children will gather at Ripon Cathedral on 6 November.

This event will bring together children and young people from more than 30 schools to celebrate the rich diversity that service pupils bring to their schools and communities.

This year the theme is “new beginnings”, reflecting the high amount of change that service children manage in their lives, particularly in light of the ongoing rebasing and drawdown from Germany and the high amount of movement of forces families this year and next. Children will be contributing art for an exhibition in the cathedral during November and at the Station Gallery, Richmond, in December.



The following day three students from Bedale High School, Boroughbridge High School and Richmond Schools' HMS Heroes groups will provide a guard of honour as the veterans enter the Royal Albert Hall at this year's Royal British Legion Royal Festival of Remembrance.

# Progress shown across all priorities in strategy for looked-after children

The Children's Trust board heard of the progress made in the county's Children and Young People Looked-After Strategy.

It heard that progress had been made across the plan, including getting more children into legally secure placements, increasing the number of looked-after children having a health assessment, indications of improvements in the wellbeing and mental health of young people in care, improved educational attainment and very low levels of exclusion.

There has also been increased participation of children in care through the Young People's Council and its quarterly consultation days. Work has also been done to raise

children's awareness of sexual exploitation and online safety.

Areas needing improvement include increasing stable placements, increasing the number of care leavers in education, training or employment and reducing the time between a child entering care and adoption.

The strategy runs until 2016, so work will begin on a needs assessment to inform the review of the strategy and areas for development.

It was also suggested that the strategy be renamed the Children in Care Strategy, because young people had said they did not like the term looked-after children, particularly the abbreviation, LAC.

# County's school improvement work undergoes peer review

The county council's school improvement work has undergone a challenge review from local authority peers.

The review found excellent drive and ambition at the highest levels and an across-the-board acceptance of the need to keep improving, along with a clear, widely endorsed vision. Also praised was the introduction of the School Improvement Commission.

However, it was said there was more that needed to be

done to achieve the ambitions, including clarifying the actions that need to be taken.

The peer group identified a “wicked issue”, which for North Yorkshire was the future of small schools. It highlighted several questions for consideration, including how small schools were affected by the challenge of increased costs and the need to build capacity and release leaders to provide support of others.

# Art illustrates what Being OK means

A new piece of artwork that reflects how a group of young people feels about living in Richmondshire has been unveiled.

Five teenagers created the panel – which has been installed in the YMCA in Richmond – as part of the Being OK project this summer.

Supported by North Yorkshire County Council's Prevention Service and the Safer Richmondshire Community Safety Local Delivery Team, the project saw the young people reflect on what Being OK means.

The six-week programme aimed to improve the understanding of issues that affect young people growing up – improving their empathy, learning about the consequences of their actions, healthy relationships and how they can help themselves for the future.

Alongside more academic work, the group used their knowledge and creativity to produce the artwork, which represents the ripple effect of actions and how the consequences can affect many other people.

County Councillor Carl Les, chair of Safer



**NEW ART:** Members of the group with Del Stevens and Jordan Conway from the Prevention Service and the High Sheriff.

Richmondshire, said: "I know that the work undertaken has been challenging for the young people but they have willingly and voluntarily given their time through the holidays to complete the programme. I am certain that they will reap the benefits for years to come."

The High Sheriff of North Yorkshire, Charles Forbes, met the teenagers to discuss their work and presented them with certificates and a scrapbook of their work.

# Budding actors take a step into the limelight with theatre group's summer production

A group of talented young people from North Yorkshire stepped into the limelight this summer to show off their acting skills, thanks to the county council's Connecting Youth Culture service.

The Fuse County Youth Theatre presented *The Journey*, a play that took the audience "from the highest mountain to the depths of the ocean, far into the future and way back into the past". It was performed by young people from across the county in York, Harrogate, Helmsley, Scarborough and Northallerton during August.

Fuse gives young people with disabilities and special educational needs the opportunity to come together with non-disabled youngsters for weekly theatre workshops that lead to performances twice a year. It has grown over time, attracting lottery funding to sustain exemplary practice, unique in the region. Fuse has attracted more than £280,000 in funding over five years from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and is also supported by the county council.

There are seven Fuse groups that meet across the county, but this was the first time a county-wide troupe had been



formed. Fourteen young people were chosen from up to 140 members. *The Journey* featured young people from Harrogate, Robin Hood's Bay, Skipton, Tadcaster, Richmondshire, Bedale, Stokesley and Northallerton. They worked with two professional dramatists.

*The Journey* effectively marks the launch of a new county youth theatre.

# New referral and screening process for county's Children and Families Service

From 1 January 2016, North Yorkshire County Council's Children and Families Service will receive all referrals via its customer service centre and screening team.

This includes referrals for children's social care and prevention services, and builds on the successful establishment of a multi-agency specialist screening team within the customer service centre last year.

The new approach will improve the experience of making a referral by putting the customer at the heart of the process, through the creation of one streamlined and simplified referral pathway, one referral form and consistent handling and screening. We are also exploring how best to enable people to make referrals online at a time that suits them, and will speak to some key partners as part of the process.

If you have a concern about a child or young person, contact the customer service centre on 01609 780780 or at [social.care@northyorks.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:social.care@northyorks.gcsx.gov.uk) during office hours, or the emergency duty team on evenings, weekends and bank holidays on 01609 780780.

Professionals are encouraged to continue to approach their local area prevention team to discuss potential referrals and other provision. The teams will still receive referrals directly until the end of 2015.

If you have any questions, contact Vicky Metherringham, head of safeguarding and LAC, on 01609 534900 or at [vicky.metherringham@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:vicky.metherringham@northyorks.gov.uk).

## Action for Children works to support young carers

Action for Children is working with North Yorkshire County Council in Harrogate, Craven and Selby districts to deliver services for young carers to ensure they are identified at the earliest opportunity to give the best chance of achieving their potential at school while managing their caring role.

Action for Children aims to address young carer's needs through one-to-one support, therapeutic group work, trips, activities, residentials, employment programmes and raising awareness in schools, health and social care.

The charity wants to break down barriers to accessing young carer services for fear of discovering a young person is providing care and welcomes referrals from families where there are issues with addiction or mental health.

For more information or to make a referral, call 01423 799135 or email [neyc@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:neyc@actionforchildren.org.uk).

## Young advisors are helping to shape services



**YOUNG VIEWS:** Young advisors undertaking a commission to create a youth annual report for North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board

North Yorkshire County Council has recruited a team of young people to advise decision makers on how to make their services, plans and policies more accessible to teenagers.

The Young Advisors are part of a national scheme. In North Yorkshire, the county council has employed six people aged between 16 and 24 on a sessional basis. They support decision makers in the council and the wider community in various ways. This includes "youth-proofing" plans, policies or premises.

They help the council and its partners understand how to engage the interest of young people, they speak for young people, help with research and consultation relating to young people and help to involve young people in neighbourhood improvements.

The council is recruiting young advisors at the moment. The closing date is 31 October and more information can be found by searching for "Sessional Young Advisor" at [www.nyccjobs.co.uk](http://www.nyccjobs.co.uk).

More information about Young Advisors can be found at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/youngadvisors](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/youngadvisors).

## Your Voice gives young people a direct line

Your Voice is a new way for young people to give views directly to North Yorkshire County Council.

All they need to do is go to [www.northyorks.gov.uk/yourvoice](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/yourvoice), where they will find questionnaires relating to child protection conferences and looked-after reviews. They pick the one that relates to them and complete it, either by themselves or with help from anyone they choose.

Their social worker and independent reviewing officer will then see what they have written and this will be included in their next meeting.

## Young People's Council scoops two awards

The Young People's Council, which provides a voice for young people in North Yorkshire who have experience of care, has won two awards in the British Youth Council's Youth On Board awards.

The council itself received the Inspiring Project award, while the council's chair, Steph Spaven, received the Make a Difference award.

The Young People's Council (YPC), which is supported by North Yorkshire County Council, consults and engages young people who have experience of care.

The British Youth Council said: "The Inspiring Project award recognises that the Young People's Council has enabled young people to make a difference, that it is run by and developed by young people."

Steph Spaven said: "We work incredibly hard to make changes of all sizes and are just so happy that now our hard work can be recognised on a larger scale. As chair, I would like to thank all members on the council for being so dedicated and passionate."

To find out more about the Young People's Council, contact James Parkes, participation officer, on 01609 533932 or visit [www.northyorks.gov.uk/ypc](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/ypc).

## Opportunity for young volunteers

Young people in North Yorkshire can access government-funded, life-changing overseas development opportunities – whatever their skills, qualifications and experience. York-based charity International Service is one of the agencies delivering the International Citizen Service programme, offering 18 to 25-year-olds a 12-week placement alongside other young people in one of 27 developing countries.

It is now assessing volunteers for January and April departures. Find details at [www.internationalservice.org.uk](http://www.internationalservice.org.uk).

## Students hear of ambition to create a smoke-free generation



**AMBITION:** Students from Scalby School, Scarborough, with (from left) Dr Lincoln Sargeant, director of public health for North Yorkshire; Emma Davis, health improvement manager for North Yorkshire County Council; and Scott Crosby, regional tobacco control policy manager for Yorkshire and the Humber.

Help us inspire a smoke-free generation – that's the message students at Scalby School, Scarborough, heard when they were told about a new strategy and publicity campaign to encourage people to work together to improve the health of future generations.

The new North Yorkshire tobacco control strategy has just been published by the county's Health and Wellbeing

Board and has a strong bias towards encouraging young people to be aware of the dangers of tobacco.

As well as hearing about the strategy, the students heard about Breathe 2025 – inspiring a smoke-free generation, a publicity campaign with the goal of seeing the next generation of children born and raised in a place free from tobacco, where smoking is unusual.

## Programme launched to create autism champions

An Autism Champions programme is being launched throughout North Yorkshire County Council's Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) this month.

The aim of the programme, launched by the Inclusive Education Service's team of autism specialist teachers, aims to ensure that there are practitioners in all CYPS services with an enhanced knowledge of autism.

These people will be able to offer advice and support about autism to their peers to facilitate more effective support for people with autism and their families.

To be an autism champion staff must have the approval of their line manager and commit to attending training sessions.

The aim is to increase the number of champions each year in accordance with the North Yorkshire All Age Autism Strategy, which is to be published shortly.

More information on the strategy can be found at [northyorks.gov.uk/autismstrategy](http://northyorks.gov.uk/autismstrategy).

For further information about the Autism Champions programme, contact [kate.race@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:kate.race@northyorks.gov.uk).

# County ranks highly on Stonewall Index

North Yorkshire County Council has achieved fifth place in the Stonewall Education Equality Index 2015.

The index provides a benchmark and ranking against the progress of other local authorities and enables the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans (LGBT) multi-agency delivery group to focus on areas for development.

Strengths identified by Stonewall include:

- A report called Growing up as a LGBT Young Person in North Yorkshire was presented to the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee. As a result, an elected member-led task and finish group has been set up to focus on the needs of LGBT young people.
- A Mind Your Language competition, with the winners being a film about the impact of homophobic language and a song about standing up for LGBT people.
- A member of an LGBT youth group also showcased the film to the Children and Young People's Extended Leadership Team and talked about her experience.
- A guidance document developed for schools about supporting trans children and young people.
- The council is also now a Stonewall training partner able to provide training to enable schools to challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language, celebrate difference and support LGBT young people.

The focus for the group over the next year is to:

- Ensure schools are challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and bullying, celebrating difference and supporting all LGBT young people.
- Explore providing further LGBT youth groups.
- Provide training on LGBT issues for professionals who work with children and young people outside of schools.

For further information, call 01609 536808 or email [clare.barrowman@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:clare.barrowman@northyorks.gov.uk).

This newsletter is produced by North Yorkshire County Council on behalf of the Children's Trust

For more about the work of the Children's Trust, visit <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrenstrust>.

## Who are the partners?

North Yorkshire County Council, North Yorkshire schools, NHS North Yorkshire and York, district and borough councils, North Yorkshire Police, Youth Justice Service, York and North Yorkshire Probation Trust, North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service and the voluntary and community sector.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

Tel: (01609) 532917 Email: [communications@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:communications@northyorks.gov.uk)



If you print this newsletter, please recycle when you have finished with it.

# Nappy race highlights new Prevention Service

Karen Murphy won the Great Nappy Challenge at an adult learning fair at Eastfield library in the summer.

The competition, held by the Prevention Service, saw Karen, pictured with family outreach worker Helen Thresh, change a disposable and a real nappy in the fastest time of 36 seconds.



The newly formed Prevention Service was launched in April and offers holistic family support to children and young people from birth to 19. The aim of the service is to offer a more co-ordinated package to families, with one worker taking the lead to ensure consistency and continuity of support. For further information, call 01609 534053.

## Play helps pupils learn about staying safe online

Pupils from seven school in North Yorkshire were given an opportunity to learn about e-safety as part of a joint campaign with North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board and the NSPCC to raise awareness of online safety.

Pupils enjoyed an interactive play, I Know About the Internet, which followed four characters, who through social media experience the risks associated with online safety. The play was delivered by Connecting Youth Culture and York St John University Theatre Department.

There also have been performances of the play, It Was Only a Text, which was among a number of activities taking place across the county as part of the e-safety campaign. The campaign aims to provide parents, carers and young people aged eight to 12 with information and support about how children can stay safe online.

To submit an article to this newsletter, email Martin Feekins at [martin.feekins@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:martin.feekins@northyorks.gov.uk)

## How do I get copies?

The newsletter is emailed to partner organisations and is available via the [cyps.info](http://cyps.info) website. You can also call Martin Feekins on 01609 533109 or email [martin.feekins@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:martin.feekins@northyorks.gov.uk)