



Annual Report
April 2023- March 2024



How We Operate

The organisation has a Centre Manager (Matthew Kincaid) who ensures the organisation is running at full capacity. There is also a Youth & Development Worker (Paula Robinson) who plans, delivers, and oversees the running off programmes on the ground. Each month there is a staff planning meeting, which evaluates the impact of our work and directs future programmes. Our management committee holds meetings at least once a quarter. To give young people a voice we have developed a senior and junior youth committee, these committees are in direct contact with our management committee youth representatives (Abbie-Louise Robinson & Ruan Moorehead). At the end of each year, we develop an improvement plan, the information that informs this plan is taken from our key stakeholders such as young people, parents, and local services. The improvement plan will focus on the key issues identified by our committee, staff members and stakeholders.

Our funding from the Education Authority has continued which means we continue to employ our senior Youth Worker (Donna McCracken) and 3 part-time Assistant Youth Support Workers. All our staff team are continually undertaking appropriate training to develop themselves, which in turn positively impacts the services we provide. To provide effective services for our beneficiaries we work in partnership with many organisations. This enables us to be more effective in meeting the needs of the beneficiaries and having the knowledge off where we can sign post them to a variety of services when needed.

Youth & Development Worker Report

This year has been a challenging however successful year for the organisation. There have been many pressures around funding budgets being cut and lack of funding opportunities available to develop and deliver services. However, feedback from our key stakeholders has been positive as we are able to excess areas we have excelled in, areas for improvement and gaps in services. This has enabled us to improve our services and signpost community members unto services that they may benefit from that we are unable to deliver. This has strengthened partnership working as we work together to provide effective services for the community.

The past year has given insight into a variety of issues that young people are facing and ways in which the issues can be tackled. We have observed an increase in anti-social behaviour within the area and staff have worked to challenge this behaviour among young people. An example of staff addressing an issue is that there was group of young men experimenting with drug use. The young people continue to voice the benefit off the centre being open as a safe place to go where they can socialise and develop. This shows the impact the services we are providing is having not only for young people in the area but for the wider community.

As an organisation we will continue to raise our standards and look for methods and strategies to enhance our own practice to further develop all our members. The staff will continue with our own personal and social development through attending training courses to greater enhance our knowledge and skills which will then be implemented in our practice. An example of this is that Donna and I have participated in Study visits with the Education Authority to gain insight into a variety of methods we could adopt into our practice with community members. This will improve delivery of programmes throughout the organisation.

Our adult programmes have focused on increasing the health personal, social, and educational development of our members. An example of this is that we were fortunate enough to secure funding for a programme we developed called A Women's World, this programme gave 30 women the opportunity to develop learn about various cultures and the positive attributes they have brought to Northern Ireland. This has been one of our most successful adult programmes within the past year.

I would like to offer my appreciation and thanks to all members of our staff team, our management committee and our local partners for their constant support which contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

Many Thanks



Youth & Development Worker

Blackmountain Action Group

Senior Youth Worker Report

The funding received from EA has continued to enrich our approach when working with the young people. The increase in our staff team has enabled the development of more effective programmes for young people. However, this year has presented challenges when the budget was uncertain until July and when it was agreed we saw a decrease of £5000 from the previous year. This may seem a small amount of funding in comparison, to many larger organisations budget. This has meant the loss of a worker (6-hour post). This directly effects the services we had previously offered and has a negative impact on the young people we work with.

With the funding knock back, we have found innovative ways to provide an energetic and exciting service for the young people in our organisation. The programmes we have offered have been in direct response to the needs of the young people we work with. There are many programmes on offer that enables young people to take responsibility for their own learning, raises self-awareness, self-worth and encourages aspiration. The opportunities for young people to develop skills and gain recognition for their participation in different programmes has helped produce an environment of opportunity and growth within our organisation.

Our generic youth work enables the provision of two drop in evenings per week and as I have already mentioned are of great need to the local community. Young people had voiced that they felt that the centre should be opened more and that a weekend night should be included within the provision offered. EA have not given additional hours so one of the drop ins had to be moved from a weeknight to a weekend night. We had hoped for the weekend night to be additional however this was not the case.

The young people continue to take part in other programmes offered by partner organisations such as drama, Community development, Community relations, health and wellbeing, employability, and personal and social development. We held a celebration event at the end of summer to celebrate the successes and achievements of all our young people. This provides all members with the opportunity to develop as strong, confident young adults ready to face the challenges that life will bring them. And to show that we as an organisation are proud of their achievements.

We also held a very successful stakeholder event which helped to capture the success of the service offered and to find out what services we may be missing and how we can make our services better. This was attended by teachers from the local high schools and create a fantastic partnership that helped in our mentoring programme with the young members.

I would like to offer my sincere appreciation and thanks to our dedicated staff team for their dedication to the young people and the organisation going above and beyond to offer each young person every opportunity possible. Also congratulate them in their professional development and educational awards this year.

I must also thank our volunteers who help and support Blackmountain Action Group in all our endeavours.

I would like to extend my thanks and sincere appreciation to the Management committee for their constant support for the services offered to the young people.

Many Thanks

Senior Youth Worker

Many Thanks



Senior Youth Worker

Blackmountain Action Group

Projects April 2023- March 2024

As an organisation we offer a variety of services which cater for all members off our catchment area. Our programmes are developed and delivered to meet the needs and interests of our beneficiaries.



Community Relations

Due to been situated on an interface, community relations work is crucial to us as an organisation. Over the year we have developed great connections with organisations on the opposite side off the "Peace Wall". You will see below that our programmes ranged from working with young people to adults and the elderly, this was done in partnership with a variety of organisations which enhanced our work. The following programme's run this year where:

- Leadership Programme in partnership with Bytes and Corpus Christi Youth Centre.
- Community Relations Programme in partnership with Corpus Christi Youth Centre.
- Community Relations Programme in partnership with Glencairn Youth Club, Deanby Youth Club and Newlodge Youth Centre.

- Community Relations Residential for Health & Well-Being.

Accredited Courses

Being able to offer our members the opportunity to develop their skills is of high importance within our work. This is done using various methods which include accredited training. Below is a list of accreditations our members participated in over the past year:

- 12 Young people completed an OCN Level 2 in mental Health Awareness
- 20 men completed CSR Training.
- 10 young people completed an OCN in Youth Leadership.
- 20 women completed an OCN in Cooking.
- 12 women completed Essential Skills Level 1 in English
- 20 Women complete 3 OCN Level 2 in Community Relations, Diversity and Mediation.

Community Safety Initiatives

We deliver three annual community safety initiative's, these are delivered at times of the year, which our firework safety in the run up to Halloween, crime safety leading up to Christmas and Bonfire safety leading into the summer months.

Health & Well-Being

Our programmes focus on promoting health and well-being through providing a range off activities that develops physical, mental, and social health among all participants. We also provide direct health and well-being programmes that promote positive mental health and give participants relevant information on ways they can improve their health.

Youth Programmes

Youth Programmes are at the foundation of our organisation, it is vital aspect to the successful running of the organisation and makes up 70% of the services we offer. This has enabled us to develop and enhance the programmes we offered through the employment of a Youth Support Worker in Charge (Donna McCracken) and 3 part-time assistant youth support workers.

- Generic youth work 2 evenings per week 48 weeks of the year.
- Two Youth Committees continue to represent their peers.
- Youth Volunteer programme delivered.
- Mentoring Matters programme.
- Homework support class for primary school age.
- Four social action projects completed.
- Outreach service once a month all-year round (Increased at times of high tension.).
- Support for young people sitting GCSE's & Alevels
- Art & Crafts Projects Delivered.
- Gardening & environmental Projects delivered.
- Sports Programmes.
- Young Girls Programmes (issues Based).
- Young men's Programmes (issues Based)
- Community Relations Programmes.
- Media projects.

Summer Programmes-

Summer programmes are vital to the community we serve as many members do not have the opportunity to participate in activities over the summer months due to costs and home environments. This year saw another decrease in available funding however we were able to secure one youth intervention programme through the Education Authority and one Belfast City Council funded programme for our primary school age. This in total catered for only 55 young people. In order to provide effective services for young people throughout the summer we were able to use another organisation bus and take young people on activities where there was no cost. We also continued to provide our drop-in services over the summer months.

- One Natural High Programme was delivered. (Youth Intervention Programme).
- Two-week scheme for primary school age children
- An end of summer community celebration was held.