

Summary of consultation at DHYP's 30th Anniversary Event Friday 8 September 2023



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Charity No. 1138554
Company No. 7313040

Introduction

Our Mission: To transform the lives of young people aged 16-25 who are vulnerable to homelessness, through the provision of user-led services, so they can achieve their own unique potential.

DHYP held an event on Friday 8th September 2023 at the Eco Power Stadium, Doncaster, to mark our 30th Anniversary and to plan for the future in terms of client and stakeholder priorities. The event was entitled '**Marking the Milestone, Looking to the Future**' and included a series of roundtable discussions, where attendees were asked to consider what would lead to better outcomes for young people.

There were 76 attendees at the event, including clients, stakeholders, staff, trustees, hosts and volunteers. Among the stakeholders were commissioners, funders, voluntary organisations, businesses and individuals with an interest in DHYP's work.

At the event, we committed to providing a summary of the discussions that took place, these are categorised by the broad headings set out below. They are listed in order of the number of comments made in relation to particular areas.

Some of the issues highlighted would involve policy changes at a national level and some are local issues which DHYP is able to address straight away. Most of the issues fall somewhere in between the two and will be the subject of further client and stakeholder consultations and feed into DHYP's strategic planning review in 2024.

We would like to express our appreciation to everyone who attended the event and took part in the discussions, which resulted in rich and varied contributions.

1. Mental Health Support

Issues relating to mental health support attracted the most comments during the roundtable discussions and the suggestions can be summarised as follows:

- A need for quicker and easier access to mental health support for young people in Doncaster
- The importance of early intervention in achieving better mental health outcomes
- Improved awareness of services offered by different organisations in Doncaster
- Importance of continuity of service in terms of client trust
- Increasing access to mental health services among young men
- A request for DHYP to increase the number of Wellbeing Hub sessions it holds, particularly in terms of addressing social isolation and low confidence

Immediate Action

DHYP is going to introduce a young men's mental health group which will commence in October and be partly volunteer-led. The group will particularly address issues of isolation and forming connections.

2. Accommodation

Under the broad heading of access to accommodation, a range of issues was highlighted including the following:

- A need for more shared housing - this was highlighted multiple times
- Difficulty for people in receipt of welfare benefits accessing accommodation [in the private rented sector]
- Greater rights for tenants living in the private-rented sector
- A general need for long-term, settled accommodation for young people
- A suggestion of repurposing empty dwellings to provide accommodation for young people
- A need for better move-on options

Early response

DHYP is looking at the potential to acquire further (non-supported) shared housing and this consultation will give added impetus to this.

We will speak to potential funders and develop a financial model for such a project. On the wider issue of accommodation, we will share the information with the Housing Strategy team.

3. Environment and Wider Services

Within the broad area that we have called 'Environment', there was a wide range of issues, ranging from affordable public transport to the adverse impact of social media. The key issues highlighted were as follows:

- Long waits for GP and other medical appointments
- Impact of high energy prices on young people
- Lack of access to youth centres
- The often adverse impact on young people of social media
- The potential to arrange after school activities in schools, which are regarded as safe spaces
- The importance of stronger communities and stronger families
- Better signposting and joining up of services within Doncaster
- Raise the profile of support networks in Doncaster and develop new ones

Early response

We will undertake further consultations with clients to identify specific areas in which we can support families and we will include the greater focus on social media within our life skills training.

Wider issues will feed into our Strategic Planning review.

4. DHYP

The following issues have been categorised under the heading of DHYP, in that they relate to issues that specifically impact the organisation:

- Opportunity to foster greater collaboration [in service delivery], especially in terms of how the 'jigsaw of provision' in Doncaster fits together
- Awareness-raising of DHYP's services, especially in terms of extending DHYP's reach
- Celebrating the impact of DHYP's work and recognising the difference DHYP makes
- Promotion of the Supported Lodgings service within Doncaster
- Expand the Supported Lodgings Service
- Greater opportunities for networking and promotion of DHYP's services
- Importance of signposting to other services
- Secure long-term funding
- Supporting young people to settle into their new home and to make their house a home, e.g. furniture packs and painting/decoration
- Expand the Floating Support Service and consider peer support arrangements
- Supporting people to access services who may currently be under-represented in those services
- Introduce a mentoring scheme for young people

Early response

We will incorporate all of the above into team and Board of Trustee discussions. We are in the process of reviewing our social media strategy.

We appreciate the feedback and recognise the importance of the issues highlighted, all of which are within our ability to address (long-term funding is naturally a particular challenge, as is the case with many charities).

5. Employment Skills and Volunteering

A wide range of comments was made around supporting young people into employment:

- Develop links with employers for work experience
- Support young people to access employment through interview skills training and work experience
- Links with the voluntary sector for volunteering and work experience opportunities
- Advice for young people on potential careers after leaving school
- Focus on a change of narrative for employment, driven more by skills, personality and being the right person for the role (as opposed to the focus on qualifications)
- Support for young, single parents to enter work
- Support with ongoing education and skills development
- Providing a support fund for young people who are transitioning into work

Early response

We will discuss all of the above suggestions with DHYP's Client Scrutiny Group, which has been carrying out a review of the Employment Skills Service, as well as with the wider DHYP team in terms of these suggestions. We will seek to identify wider volunteering opportunities through the Voluntary Action Doncaster newsletter.

6. Voice and Influence

Listening to the voice of young people was also an important theme in the discussions and included the following:

- Creating an environment in which young people feel comfortable to share their views
- The importance of paying attention and acting on client views and not just listening
- Consideration of a 'Voice and Influence Worker'
- Potential roles for young people [to support consultations]
- The importance of using the voice of young people and not just professionals
- The importance of listening to young people in terms of service design was highlighted multiple times
- Empowering young people

Early response

DHYP is in the process of reviewing its client involvement strategy and will feed these comments into that review. The recently established Client Scrutiny Group is intended to significantly strengthen the voice of young people in holding DHYP to account and reviewing how services are delivered and how clients are heard.

7. Life Skills

Life Skills training attracted a number of ideas and suggestions including:

- The importance of life skills training for young people
- Supporting young people to deal with the fear of rejection
- Focusing on giving young people more confidence
- Linking life skills training to decisions clients take in their everyday lives in areas such as housing and personal finances
- Providing domestic abuse awareness training for young people
- Focus on communication skills when young people present as homeless
- Focus on practical skills, such as cooking and delivering these in a practical way

Early response

The Life Skills programme will be reviewed in the next three months, taking on board the feedback received from this consultation.

8. Post-26 Support

Several comments were made about what happens in terms of support for young people when they reach the age of 26 [under DHYP's constitution we support young people aged 16-25].

Multiple suggestions were made about providing support for young people once they reach the age of 26, including an informal support group for ex-clients that may meet on a quarterly basis.

Early response

The feedback will support our strategic planning review in 2024.

We do provide opportunities for former clients to volunteer with DHYP, such as at our Wellbeing Hub, which provides an opportunity for ongoing contact with the organisation.

We recognise the anxiety that can arise when support ends and we will look at opportunities for signposting clients to formal or informal support elsewhere and how we can facilitate support within DHYP. Our current constitution does not allow us to provide support for people over the age of 25.

9. Early Intervention and Prevention

The following issues and suggestions were highlighted in relation to early intervention and 'upstream' work:

- Focus on early intervention and work upstream - this was mentioned multiple times
- Provision, and awareness-raising, of mediation services to prevent the need for young people to access services in the first place
- Focus on trauma-informed services
- Grassroots support
- Provision of structured activities for young people

Response

We will feed all of the above into our Strategic Planning Review in early 2024.

Immediate action

We will publicise the opportunity for mediation through DHYP's services.

Thank you

We would like to reiterate our appreciation to everybody who took part in the discussions and for making such a tremendous range of contributions.

In addition to this summary, we will introduce a six-monthly stakeholder update for those who would like to receive this. This will provide updates on the development of services within DHYP and how feedback from this event has helped shape those services.

A reminder, too, of the email address if you would like to make any suggestions to DHYP is

brightideas@dhyp.org.uk



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