



Final Evaluation Report for

Sub 21 Wallsend

“It’s just like once in a blue moon you get an opportunity like this really innit? There’s nowt really out there for people our age and no wonder they have a drink and do stuff like that”

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Executive summary

Sub 21 started as a 10 week pilot project in 2008, as one of ten pilot projects supported by the National Social Marketing Centre and funded by the North of Tyne PCT. It followed a concern in the Wallsend area around levels of alcohol consumption among young people identified by a range of services. A range of diversionary activities are provided aimed at reducing levels of curb side drinking and associated levels of antisocial behaviour, particularly at weekends. An evaluation of Sub 21, commissioned by Mentor UK, was conducted during 2011-12.

Several key findings can be drawn from the evaluation as follows:

- The questionnaire data suggests that whilst most young people questioned have consumed an alcoholic drink in the past, the majority drank only on special occasions or very rarely. However, a significant minority of young people did claim to be regularly drinking (20% of 14-16 year olds and 5% of 11-13 year olds).
- Drinking was seen to be a social activity with the 11-13 year olds mostly drinking with family and 14-16 year olds tending to drink with friends.
- Young people reported a 'weekend culture' of drinking. This has been a feature of the Wallsend area for some time, and Sub 21 specifically tries to address this by the provision of weekend activities.
- Most young people who drank alcohol did so at home, although other locations including the pub, park, streets and transport stops were given.
- The young people who have participated in Sub 21 activities have been overwhelmingly positive about their experiences. They enjoy attending and they appreciate the opportunity to try new things. They are able to identify a number of benefits for themselves.
- Activity providers are convinced of the value of the activities provided and are able to describe some very real changes in the lives of some of the pupils they have worked with.

- A range of outcomes for young people have been reported by young people themselves, and the activity providers that work with them, including:
 - o learning new skills;
 - o gaining in confidence;
 - o opportunities to contribute to local community (hosting a radio show, DJ-ing for local events);
 - o opportunities to use real world skills (e.g. business skills);
 - o opportunities for young people to be seen in a positive light by local community members (e.g. providing nail art at a local festival, cooking mince pies for shoppers at a local store, hosting a silver service dinner for parents and community reps);
 - o Sub 21 keeps young people off the streets and stops them getting into trouble;
 - o Sub 21 activities provide an alternative to drinking, particularly at the weekend;
 - o meeting new people;
 - o learning social skills to get on with people you wouldn't normally socialise with;
 - o learning the skills they want for a future career (e.g. construction).

Introduction

Sub 21 started as a 10 week pilot project in 2008, as one of ten pilot projects supported by the National Social Marketing Centre and funded by the North of Tyne PCT. It followed a concern in the Wallsend area around levels of alcohol consumption among young people identified by a range of services. These services worked in partnership to develop the initiative using a social marketing model. Following the 10 week pilot, it was decided to continue providing the project under the banner of extended services. A range of methods are used to engage young people aged 12 and over. Some young people who are picked up by the police on Friday and Saturday nights are subsequently channelled into youth provision. Nevertheless, access to the project is universal and some young people self-refer or are encouraged to join in by outreach workers. Provision is aimed at reducing levels of curb side drinking and associated levels of antisocial behaviour. The project is up front about why young people are there, and they have to sign up and become a member. They are kept engaged through an intense communication network using their mobile phones, and they are encouraged to participate in a range of over 20 different activities such as nail art, skateboarding, cookery, cyber café, graffiti art clubs, kettle bells, boxing and football. Provision is offered through a range of local partners and providers. Local youth providers have been key partners as have the police and youth service. The project is overseen by a management committee which ensures continued partnership working. There is open access to all young people in Wallsend who are aged 12 and over.

A previous evaluation of the pilot of this project pointed to some significant changes in attitudes and behaviour among young people in the area. Since the inception of the project, suggestions have been put forward to extend it to more targeted groups, for example, young people attending accident and emergency services, as a consequence of alcohol abuse. More targeted work is still being developed at this time and funding for this is being sought.

A range of professionals and young people nominated Sub 21 to win an award from Mentor UK, which they obtained in 2011 in recognition of the innovative and valuable work that had been undertaken. This report presents the findings of an evaluation of Sub 21 in Wallsend commissioned by Mentor UK and conducted by the Research Centre for Learning and Teaching at Newcastle University.

Evaluation methodology

The aim of this study was to evaluate the Sub 21 project in Wallsend. We set several objectives following discussion with Mentor UK and those running the Sub 21 project. Our objectives were to:

- Describe the processes involved in developing and delivering such an approach
- Identify facilitators and barriers to effective practice
- Explore the benefits and challenges of partnership working
- Outline the learning that can be shared with others looking to implement a similar scheme
- Establish the outcomes generated (such as changes in attitudes to alcohol use, and behaviour, gaining skills) for young people as a result of participation.

We collected data to inform the evaluation by means of:

- Interviews with stakeholder group (partners)
- Interviews and focus groups with a range of young people accessing Sub 21 provision (some who had been part of the project since inception)
- Interviews with project staff
- Survey of young people
- Observations of young peoples' participation in activities

Involving young people in the research

The participation of young people in the Sub 21 evaluation was important to the design of the project. Seeking the views and perspectives of children and young people (CYP) is important in every sense if we are to improve practice and change lives. Researchers and practitioners often cite the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - and it is Article 12, in particular which states that CYP are entitled to have their voice heard regarding situations and contexts that affect them - as a starting point for justifying the involvement of children. However, there is less evidence of reflection on their own rationale and commitment to participatory approaches and even less so on the practicalities of just how we can do this well.

We are aware and have written about the context of participatory work with CYP and we were keen to involve Sub 21 participants in the survey design as much as possible. With this in mind, we visited Churchill Community College on 4 occasions to talk with young people to

explore their perspectives and experiences of alcohol use and risky behaviour. During these visits the team worked with a total of 12 young people, of which 8 were boys in years 7 and 8 and 4 girls from year 9. The aim of these 4 visits was to work with the pupils and try and get them actively involved in the formation of questions, survey design and implementation.

A second aspect of our participation strategy is our experience of using appropriate methods and approaches during projects. We are experienced in using a variety of visual methods and tools which can be used in an innovative and creative way to work with, and engage, young people. We recognise that not all young people respond in the same way to questions asked – some are more visual, some more verbal, some more aural – and different ages can respond differently again. By adopting a range of methods which is appropriate to the groups in question, we used a variety of tools throughout our sessions with the pupils.

Session 1: Facilitated by a researcher, the boys group worked on a spider diagram to explore their experiences and perspectives of alcohol and the risks associated with it (can we add anything in as an example? Snap shot of part of one?).

The girls group meanwhile completed a few exercises such as 'Photo-elicitation'. Talking about, choosing and ranking pictures can be used as an alternative or complementary to conversations with young people through photo-elicitation. Pupil Views Templates (PVTs). These have the explicit intention of prompting metacognitive responses from pupils. Some of the templates that could be used have more recently been adapted using photograph imagery for use in a range of contexts.

Session 2: Question formation. Based on the completed exercises in session 1, we designed a series of possible questions and used these as a basis for discussion with the groups. We were keen to get ideas of what kinds of questions we should be asking, the best wording to use and the appropriateness of questions, etc. We also explored ideas of design style,

Sessions 3 and 4: Questionnaire pilot. We returned to the school with a final and more refined draft of the survey questionnaire and we sought the views of the pupils in completing it, in addition to further views on layout and style. In the final session we also asked the groups to complete a PMI activity (Plus, Minus and Interesting) about their experiences of being involved in the process of participatory research.

The context

Sub 21 is part of a larger package of extended services offered by the South West area of North Tyneside, which incorporates Wallsend. Wallsend is one of the most deprived areas of North Tyneside largely due to the decline of the industrial base alongside the River Tyne and the consequent loss of skilled employment. Major current issues that have been identified centre around issues that are of concern across North Tyneside, but that are particularly acute in Wallsend, including alcohol misuse, high levels of teenage pregnancy and high levels of obesity. The North Tyneside PCT is part of the 'Spearhead Group' meaning that they are in the bottom quintile nationally for health and deprivation indicators. Research conducted in 2005 as part of the development of the North Tyneside Children and Young People's Alcohol Strategy, identified that:

- More girls (73.3%) than boys (58.4%) were drinking alcohol. This contrasted with the rest of England where boys drink more than girls of all ages
- 52.2% of boys and 51.6 % of girls who drank, drank on at least a weekly basis
- The majority of young people drank at home, followed by at a friend's house and the street. Few drink in licensed premises
- Alcohol was mainly obtained from corner shops or from parents
- 28.3% of boys and 28.6% of girls found it easy to buy alcohol - even more found it easy to get others to buy them alcohol
- A strong upward trend in drinking alcohol was identified between the ages of 13 and 15 for both boys and girls
- Young people were receiving inaccurate messages regarding the consequences of drinking alcohol and there was a need for preventative interventions for all young people, particularly targeted at 13 -15 year olds

Churchill Community College was one of the first Pathfinder schools for extended services. Alongside Pathfinder status, the school also got Behaviour Improvement Programme and Educational Action Zone funding. For the first four years Alan Strachan was Assistant Head and was tasked with the inclusion agenda and ran all these initiatives at Churchill. In 2007, he took on the role of Director of Extended Services for the whole of the South West area of North Tyneside which includes two secondary schools (plus a Catholic school which is not in the area, but which three of the local primary schools feed into) 13 primary schools and two special schools. For the first year of his post he worked on developing extended services in these schools and bringing people together. The Local Authority regarded this role as being particularly innovative:

I mean you talk about innovation and creativity, Alan's post himself, coming out of senior management within a teaching and learning role into this role now as a non-teaching staff, you know, that's, yeah, it's an exciting one. (LA officer)

Sub 21 became part of a package of extended services that are run across all these schools so that 'children any age, from any school can go to any activity' according to the Director (although young people need to be over 11 to attend Sub 21 at the moment).

The schools in Wallsend have formed a federation. This federation assists in the development of the extended services action plan and shares information about local needs and provision. The three local children's centres operate under unified management and the Director of Extended Services sits on the Executive Board of the Children's Centres. He also sits on the Wallsend Area Children's Strategy Group, alongside the Children's Centre Manager and the Area Team Manager (also Chaired by the Churchill Principal) and this group is tasked with identifying the needs of local children and setting local priorities:

And that's really an intelligence gathering group that really keeps its ear to the ground and sets up a number of work streams that make sure that the key areas that we're hearing about are monitored. Where we can we will also try and do some activity around that, although that's not our primary function, our primary function is around gathering the evidence. (Headteacher)

This group feeds into Children's Trust meetings, and ultimately into the Children's Plan reviews. This means that any commissioning of services that takes place is informed by evidence fed up to strategic level from the operational level:

What that does is, on an annual basis that creates the commissioning backwards. So I'm never surprised when they come along and the commissioners say, "We want you to do the following things and have the following outcomes," because we've fed these things in, we've been party to how they've emerged across the year. So it doesn't come as a surprise, and actually it then closes the loop and provides the commissioning and the support and the finance, but obviously the accountability to then make the things happen. So I think when you step out of it like that, you very clearly see that people on the ground have got mechanisms to feed through, we do that, we influence, we try and change things through the year, but in particular we then get commissioned back to do that. (Headteacher)

Because of the integrated nature of the governance, very few conflicts of interest arise between the needs and priorities of the school and those of the federation and the LA. Sub 21 is therefore guided strategically by this governance structure, and driven by the Director of Extended Services. There is also a day-to-day co-ordinator who ensures that provision on the ground is maintained and developed.

A recent challenge was the loss of a key venue, Wallsend Boys Club. It is testament to the infrastructure of the Sub 21 management, and the strength of partnership working in the area that all activities were relocated within two weeks, with very little disruption to provision.

The universal provision that Sub 21 offers is extremely varied and differs depending on the availability of providers, venues and the views of the young people. Nevertheless, activities that have been provided include:

Bodyfit	Nail art	<i>Courses including:</i>
Football	Cookery classes	Young firefighters
Drop in	Kick boxing	Construction/Building
Graffiti workshop	Zumba	Citizenship course
Radio workshop	Indoor football	Rugby club
DJ workshop	Boxing/Boxercise	
Skateboarding	Quadbiking	
BMX/Scooters	Bike workshop	Outreach work

Attendance at the activities is monitored by the use of registers and session evaluation sheets completed by the activity providers.

The school survey

Characteristics of those responding to the survey

The survey was conducted in order to find out about the drinking habits of young people, and their views of Sub 21. The questionnaire is included at Appendix 1. The questionnaire was distributed in to 2 tutor groups in each year group at two schools: Churchill Community College and Burnside Business and Enterprise College, both secondary schools in North Tyneside catering for 11 to 18 year old young people. There are approximately 2300 young people attending both schools. We received 315 completed questionnaires, predominantly from 11-16 year olds. This would indicate a range of around 14% of all pupils. Moreover, only 3 questionnaires were received from young people over 16, indicating that among 11-16 year olds, the response was approximately 16%. We are confident that robust analysis is possible from the responses that were received.

The ages of those responding ranged from 11 to 19, and there was a good spread among 11-16 year olds. The following analyses concentrate on this age group only, given that only 3 young people were over 16. We received responses from both boys (55%) and girls (45%). Over half of the 11-16 year olds came from Churchill (56%).

Alcohol use

The majority of young people who responded admitted that they had drunk an alcoholic drink at some point in the past (84%). Of those, 44% had drunk alcohol within the last month. Older young people were more likely to have drunk alcohol within the last month. 51% of young people aged 14-16 had drunk alcohol within the last month as compared to 17% of young people aged 11-13. There was no difference between boys and girls in this regard. Young people were also asked how often they drank alcohol. Most young people stated that they only drank on special occasions (41%) or very rarely (22%). A further 23% stated that they drank sometimes, but 15% stated that they drank regularly. Older young people were more likely to state that they drank regularly (20% of 14-16 year olds as compared to 5% of 11-13 year olds). This percentage is certainly lower than the percentages reported in 2005, although the figures are not directly comparable. 11-13 year olds were more likely than older young people to state that they only drank alcohol on special occasions (59% as against 30%).

Obtaining alcohol

Young people were asked where they got their alcohol from. Of those young people who had ever drunk alcohol, the most common source was their family as it was in 2005 (72%). 28% stated that they bought alcohol from a shop. These figures changed somewhat for those young people who had drunk alcohol within the last month, of whom 57% said that they had got alcohol from family members, and 49% had obtained alcohol from a shop, as figure 1 shows. It should be borne in mind that most of these young people were 14 or over. One in ten of those young people who had drunk alcohol within the last month stated that they had drunk in a pub.

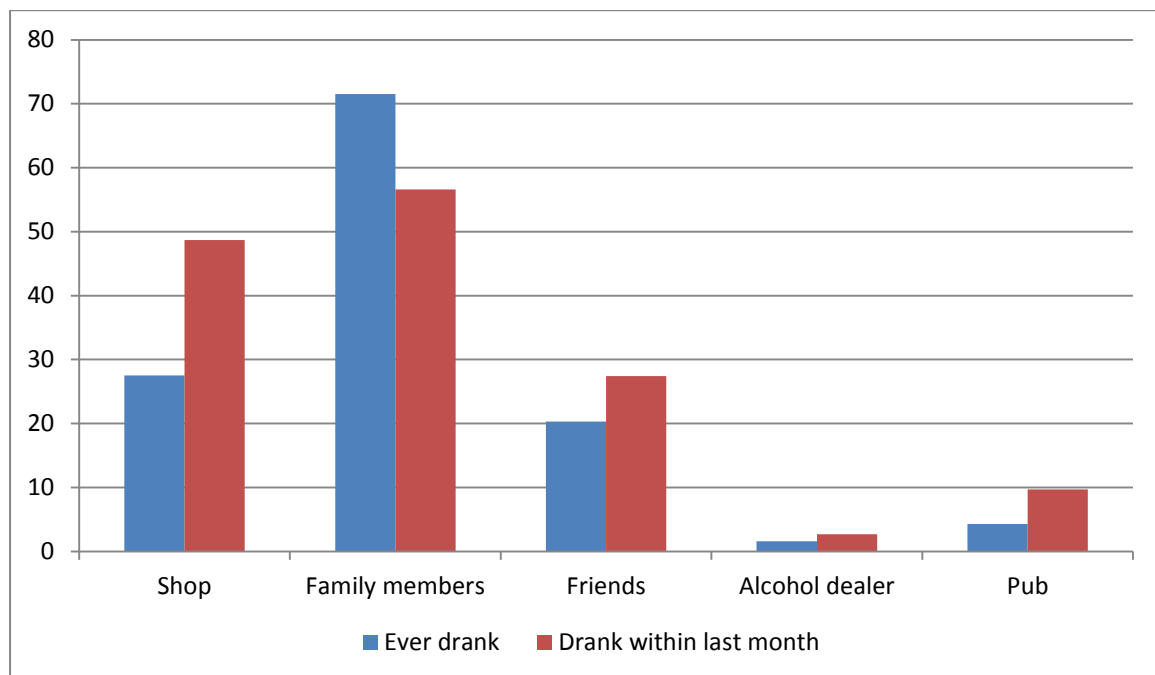


Figure 1 Where young people get their alcohol from

Drinking behaviour

Young people tended to drink with family members (70%). Looking at these results more closely, it appears that younger children are more likely than older young people to state that they tended to drink with family members (89% as against 56%). This may reflect that younger people were more likely than older young people to state that they only drank on special occasions. Indeed, those who stated that they were more regular drinkers (mainly older young people) were less likely to drink with family members than those who stated that they drank rarely. Older young people were much more likely to state that they drank with their friends (69% as against 16% of 11-13 year olds) as figure 2 shows. Drinking is not a

solitary experience for young people, and usually takes place with people they know, although three young people stated that they had drunk alcohol with local ‘tramps’.

The most popular alcoholic drinks were lager and vodka, although young people told us about a wide variety of drinks they usually drank including blue WKD, cider and wine. Spirits other than vodka were rarely mentioned.

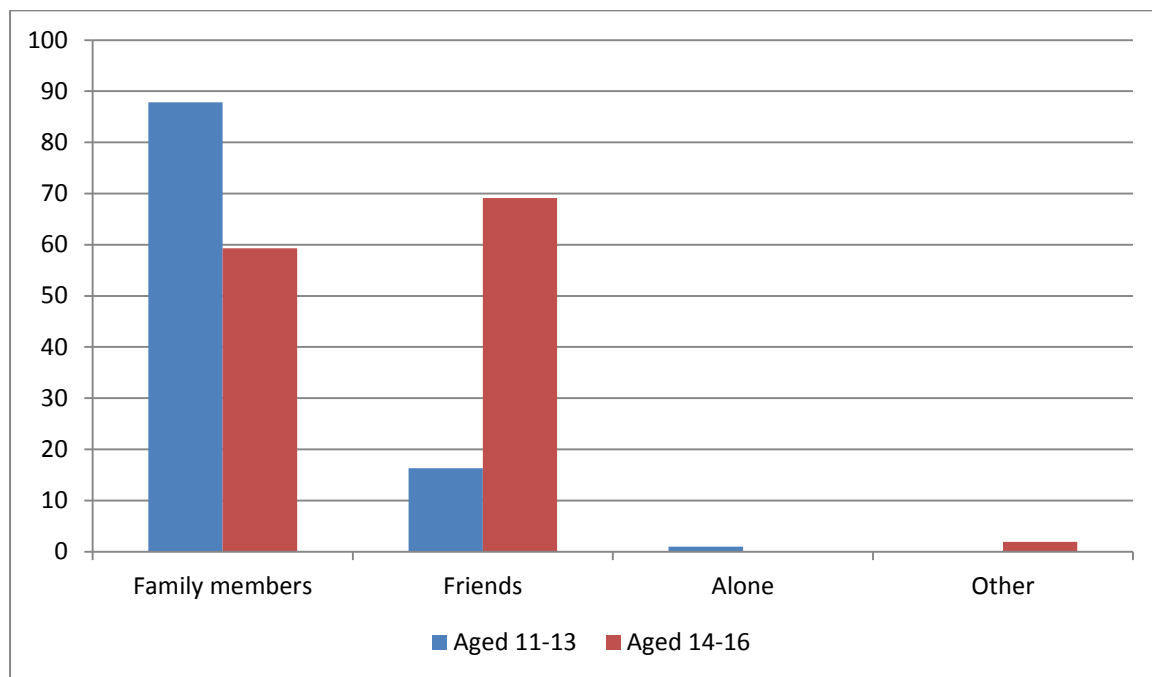


Figure 2 Who young people drink with by age

Most young people who drank alcohol stated that they tended to drink at home (87%). There were relatively few young people who drank elsewhere. One in ten young people said that they drank in a pub, 9% of young people said they drank in the street, and 8% said that they drank alcohol in a park. Only 5 young people said that they drank near transport stops. Older young people were much more likely to claim that they had drunk in pubs (14% as against 3% of 11-13 year olds), and the park (12% as against 3% of 11-13 year olds).

Reasons for drinking alcohol

Young people gave many reasons for drinking alcohol. The most common reason for those aged 11-13 was that they ‘just wanted to try it’ (36%). On the other hand, those aged 14-16 told us that they had different reasons for drinking alcohol, the most popular being ‘it tastes nice’ (36%) and ‘it’s the weekend’ (35%). Figure 3 shows how different the two age groups are in terms of the reasons that they give for drinking alcohol.

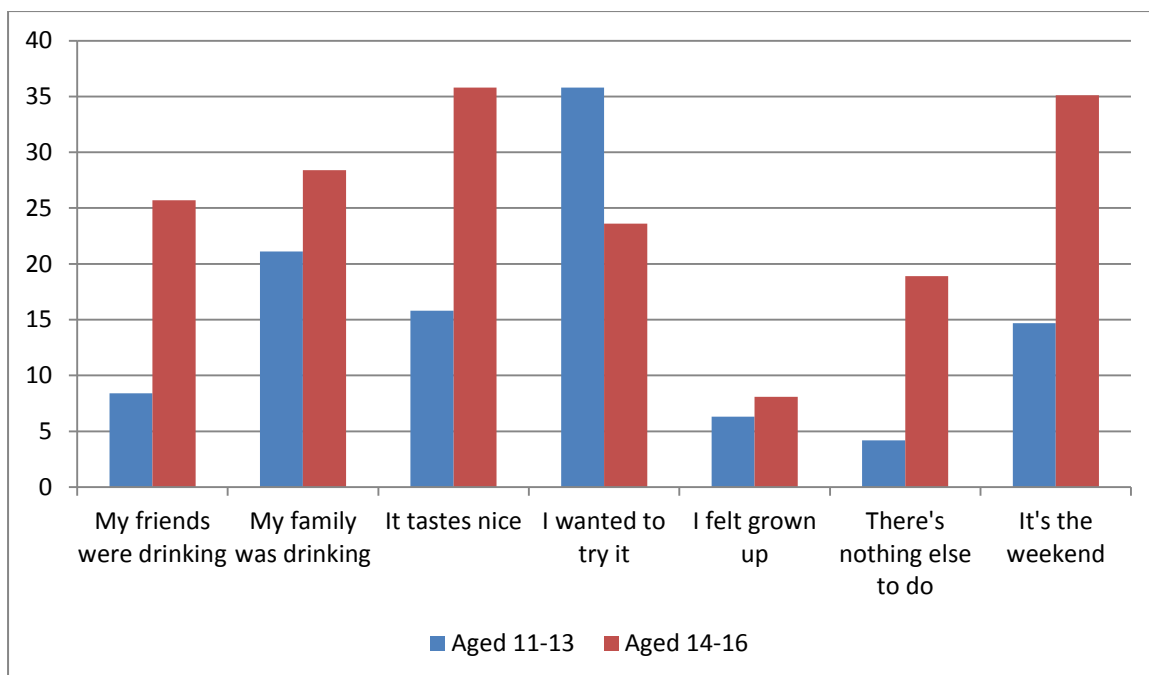


Figure 3 Reasons for drinking by age

Consequences of drinking

Young people were asked if they had ever done anything they regretted while drinking alcohol. 15% of young people said that they had. Again, it tended to be the older young people that were more likely to state that they had done something they regretted while drinking alcohol. The range of activities they regretted included hurting themselves, having sex, and getting into trouble. One 13 year old girl said that she had self-harmed as a result of drinking alcohol.

Young people gave us examples of when something bad happened to them, or somebody they knew as a result of drinking alcohol. Again, these experiences tended to fall into several main themes: being ill; people getting hurt; and getting into trouble, as the following examples show:

I was drinking with some friends/family. Everyone was always one ahead of me and I wanted to catch up so kept on downing my drink. Then I felt sick so I went to sleep for a little while then my dad ran into the bathroom because he heard a thump. He told me all he could see was me laying on my back being sick. I got told I nearly lost my life because I kept choking on my sick. (16 year old girl)

I was spiked with something. I have not found out what. I thought I trusted them but I started seeing things and I got drunk very fast. I had to get dragged home. I was violently sick and I cannot remember much. (15 year old girl)

*Someone I know shop lifted and got jailed because he was drunk. (14 year old boy)
My cousin fell down some stairs and had 40 stitches in her face. (15 year old boy)*

Many of the examples given showed young people being vulnerable because of their own drinking, but there were examples given of when young people had suffered from the effects of others' alcohol use, both strangers and their own family:

Friend was walking home by herself and she got attacked by drunk people. (15 year old girl)

Some old man started on me and [my friend] in the chippy... he was drunk. (15 year old boy)

Well I was only 5 or 6. My dad was 25 and my mum was 22. They were only young. My dad and mum had a huge argument. My mam was crying and my dad pushed me to the floor and I was hurt and my mam kicked my dad out the house but he said sorry. (12 year old girl)

The young people were also asked how they felt about these experiences. Although some young people said that they thought these incidents were funny and they made them laugh, most comments expressed negative emotions of shock, sadness, worry, fear and embarrassment. Three young people (all 13 or under) stated that they no longer wished to drink because of their experiences.

Young people were asked what might stop young people from drinking alcohol. The two most popular responses were to make alcohol more expensive (40%) and to prosecute shopkeepers (33%). Other suggestions included raising the age limit for buying alcohol (18%), making alcohol illegal for under 18s (12%) and being grounded by parents (13%). Young people aged 11-13 were more likely than older young people to state that shopkeepers should be prosecuted (45% as against 23%) and that the age limit for buying alcohol should be raised (28% as against 9%). Young people also had other ideas, including more police being around the areas where young people drink. A substantial number of older young people, however, felt that nothing should, or could, be done to prevent young people

from drinking alcohol, or that it should just be allowed. Some young people commented further:

There isn't a point in raising ages of being able to drink alcohol because people will still do it. But it's good that people know how to behave while under the influence of alcohol. (15 year old girl)

I think school should not be bothered if people drink unless they drink in school time. (15 year old boy)

People raise awareness about alcohol but kids just ignore it. (12 year old girl)

Use of local space and leisure time

Young people stated that they usually 'hung around' near where they lived (63.7% of young people said this). Other popular places included the Silverlink shopping complex (27%), Newcastle (the nearest city centre, 25%), and the park (26%) as figure 4 shows. The older girls were significantly more likely than boys, or younger girls to hang around at the coast, or in Newcastle. Moreover, girls were also more likely than boys to hang around at Silverlink. Younger children were more likely than older young people to hang around at the park. 30% of young people stated that they hung around 'elsewhere'. Other places included friends' houses, and local youth clubs and leisure attractions.

Young people also told us about areas where they would not go, because of people drinking. These areas included local green spaces, 'the Burn', and local shops, as well as street corners.

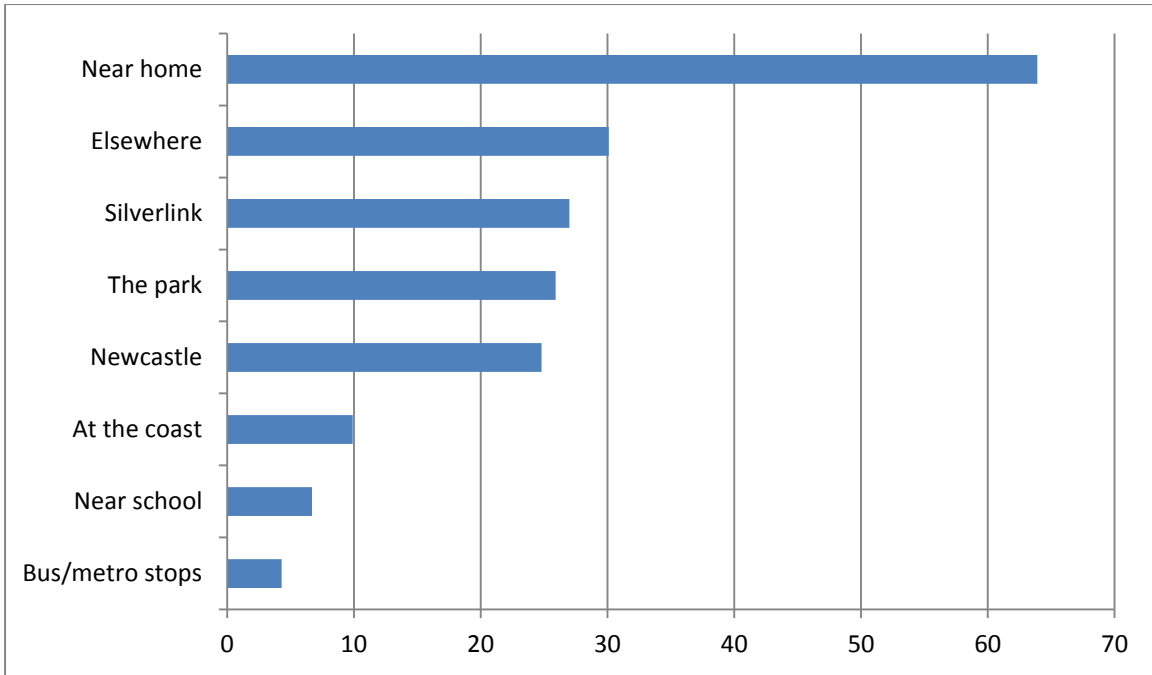


Figure 4 Places where young people going to school in Wallsend tend to 'hang around' Most (57%) young people said that they attended a youth club, activity or sports centre out of school hours, as figure 5 shows. Boys were significantly more likely than girls to attend an activity at least weekly. 53% of boys said that they attended a youth club, activity or sports centre at least weekly, as compared to 35% of girls. There was no difference by age in this regard.

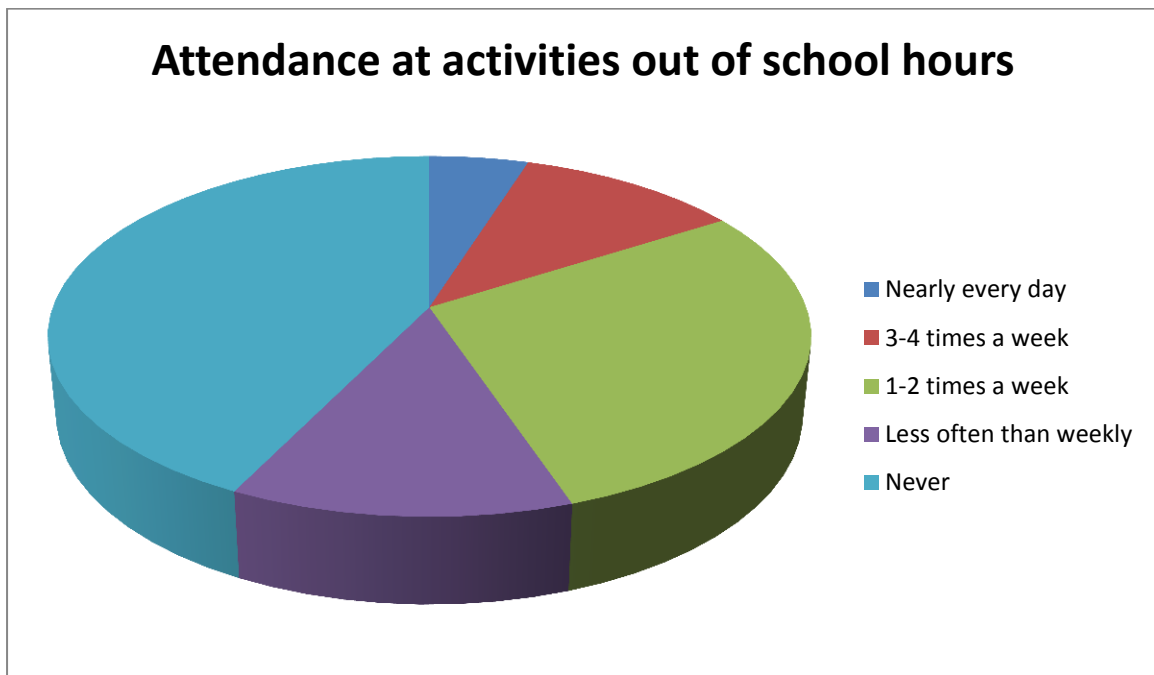


Figure 5 Attendance at a youth club, activity or sports centre out of school hours

Young people's views of Sub 21

The vast majority of the young people who responded had heard of Sub 21 (87%). 31% of the young people that completed the questionnaire had taken part in a Sub 21 activity. Of those, 82% said they had enjoyed taking part. Young people aged 11-13 were slightly more likely than older young people to state that they enjoyed taking part (93% as against 72%). Many young people stated that they had experienced a positive impact from taking part. 53% of young people had made new friends, 25% stated that they felt more confident, and 68% felt that they had learnt new skills as a result of taking part in Sub 21, as Figure 6 demonstrates. There were no differences in this regard based on gender or age.

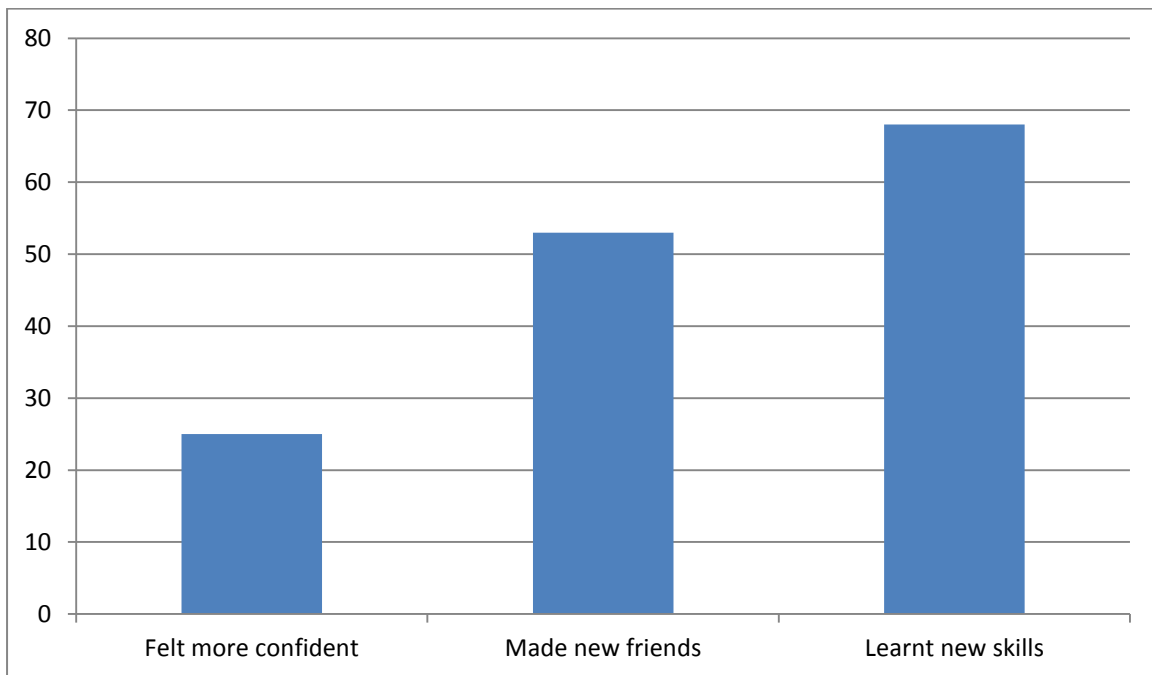


Figure 6 Perceived benefits of taking part in Sub 21 by young people

Young people commented about Sub 21 and the activities on offer:

Sub 21 is a great opportunity because it gets people off the street. (11 year old girl)

More things should happen and better advertising, more regularly. (11 year old boy)

In my opinion, if activities are going to get put in place (which I know they won't) then they would need to be good and not rubbish otherwise people won't go. (15 year old girl)

42% of young people said that they would like to take part in Sub 21 in the future. Those aged 11-13 were significantly more likely to state this than young people aged 14-16 (58%

as against 29%). Those who had already taken part in a Sub 21 activity were more likely than those who had not, to say that they were interested in taking part in the future (60% as against 34%). Some young people made further comments about the kinds of activities they would like to see on offer. These included horse riding, acting, and a swimming activity at Burnside pool.

Interviews, focus groups and observations

Young people's views of Sub 21

The benefits

The young people we spoke to as part of the evaluation all expressed their satisfaction at the Sub 21 provision they had been part of. Young people tended to enjoy the activities, and were appreciative of the way staff listened to them, and were prepared to take their views into account when providing and modifying services. They found it easy to identify the benefits that their involvement had brought them, including learning new skills, becoming more confident, keeping themselves fit and enhancing their relationships with others:

It improves my communication skills as well 'cos I've got to get to know kids so just helps overall really easier to make friends even though I probably won't speak to them outside of school as much as I do when I see them it's still just good to know more people isn't it. (boy)

I think doing stuff like that as well like obviously 'cos you've got to have a bit of discipline as well so it'll sort of help you at home as well if you know what I mean like so if your mam asks you to do this you won't be like eh well no it'll be like at boxing if you get asked to do something do it first time. (boy)

I'd say I got more self-esteem for meself, more confident with, like, me overall ability with stuff like, 'cos sometimes you think 'ah well I cannot do it' and you'll do it and someone'll say 'ah well you're doing it right' and you think 'ah well I am then' and just like confidence to talk with different people and stuff like that so you do gain a lot of new skills of going to stuff like that, definitely. (boy)

My confidence has really went up since joining the cookery courses, as at school I did it at GCSE and the teacher made my confidence go down. So joining these cookery courses has really helped. (girl)

It's a good thing for us to do. It keeps us off the streets and out of trouble... it's a good opportunity for us. (boy)

Some young people who took part in Sub 21 activities were those who were regular drinkers of alcohol, particularly at weekends. They felt that taking part in activities had suppressed or, for some, stopped them drinking:

'Cos it's like keeping us fit and getting us off the [drink] like, if my brother drinks then I'll be standing around with him, then I got like I knew about that [Sub 21] and instead of hanging around with him I just stayed every Friday up there. (boy)

A canny bit, yeah I did [drink] but then since I had more stuff to do on Fridays I don't drink any more at all (boy)

Young people could also see the benefits that Sub 21 was having for others:

Behaviour in school actually. Like the kids that I've seen that go to school, I've seen them always used to get wrong in classes like, always seen them standing outside of class 'cos they've been sent out and that. Now I don't see them doing anything wrong. (boy)

'cos it's having a good effect on the people that are already going and it's obviously gonna get more kids off the streets, the trouble and that that goes on, on the streets that rate'll go down. (boy)

Well I've seen there's less bother and some of the kids I know that have been causing trouble have been coming to sub 21 sometimes, and they haven't seemed to be as like mischievous if you know what I mean, sorta like go to boxing let some steam off then they don't feel the need to do it... (boy)

To me it gives something to do and there's not a lot for teenagers our age to do and if there's more for us to do it stops like some teenagers drinking and just doing anything bad. (girl)

None of it's really a waste of time, It's not just getting kids off the street it's getting kids off the street and doing something else for them as well. (boy)

Further issues identified

Four young people that we spoke to during interviews felt that Sub 21 needed to be advertised more widely. Although the results from our survey showed that most young

people were aware of Sub 21, it was felt that more information should be available about where and when sessions were held, and how young people could access them. There were examples of young people turning up to sessions where the activity had been cancelled, or where too many young people had arrived, and this deterred them from attending again, even though they wanted to. One young boy made the following suggestion:

Try and get more people to go because I haven't seen advertising for Sub 21 anywhere outside of school. Perhaps like put like posters up or something like that or even if possible on bus stops or something (boy)

Young people outlined to us the importance of their friendship groups. They felt it was easier to go along to activities if their friends were also keen. Some girls felt that many of the activities were aimed at boys, and would appreciate more 'girls only' sessions, or activities that would interest them. One young girl told us:

To me, a lot of it looks like a lot of fun. It's just I think again about what kind of peoples' gonna be there. It's like the bike one [activity] sounded like a lot of fun, but it sounds like it's gonna be more of a boys thing. (girl)

Findings from staff interviews

The Sub 21 project has worked from the standpoint of early intervention with the belief that all young people should potentially have access to activities to prevent them from engaging in alcohol misuse or antisocial behaviour, even if they are not seemingly at immediate risk. From this standpoint, further targeting has been gradually rolled out, and some integration of those most in need of support has happened alongside less vulnerable peers.

We have always said from the beginning it's not just about targeting it's about providing stuff for every young person in Wallsend who wants it. What I think we have learned from this is we can, I think, marry those kind of what you would call 'safe bet' young people who probably would never present a problem with anybody but at the same time offer a facility for ... some other young people who need a little bit of maintenance in order to keep them on the straight and narrow, so it's an interesting dichotomy between the kind of targeted and the universal.

All partners working in Wallsend that we spoke to have told us that they share this belief and have worked together to ensure the success of the project. Relationships in Wallsend are

good, and mutually beneficial. This has largely been due to the integrated strategic evidence based goals of the project, meaning that partners share the same targets, and are thus able to work together for a common aim. Joint training sessions have ensured a commonality of approach. Partnership working happens both at a strategic level and on a practical day-to-day level.

It's going to be self-sustainable and that is a big advantage with Sub 21. They are bringing in not only the private sector and the third sector in, they are working with the community as well and public services, but Sub 21 is effective and works well because it uses everybody. It doesn't just say right, okay, we are a charity so we are going to use youth services to deliver this... they say no, we will bring Digital Youth in, we will bring Graffiti Wall in, we will use Wallsend Boys Club, you know? And they bring everyone in and become a network, they become a hub and from that hub its controlled and you've got somebody else who can then fend off the red tape, the bureaucracy and all the stuff that goes with it but it releases everybody else to get the job done.

Partners include the local Boys Club, social enterprises, youth service, local college, and the police, as well as local retailers. At the start of the project, a major push was made to engage retailers in preventing sales to young people. Over time, this role has been taken over by the retailers themselves and the Police (whose statutory duty it is). Some major retailers have adopted an 'over 25' scheme, whereby they will ask for identification of anyone who looks under 25 before selling them alcohol. Other smaller retailers have been prosecuted by the Police. This has meant that the staff of the Sub 21 project have been able to concentrate on providing the activities for young people.

Activity providers have been able to identify the benefits that they feel their work brings to the young people they work with. Many of the clubs that have been running for the length of the projects have recruited older young people as volunteers to mentor younger children and develop their skills at demonstrating and managing sessions. The provider of the radio club described how one young person had gained employment locally as a direct result of his involvement in the club, and the skills he had gained. The club started small, and young people learned how to use the equipment. They then decided to host their own radio show, and now one of the boys has got a job doing a session on a local radio programme and as a DJ for a local company two nights a week. Real life skills are viewed as important to foster:

I mean, you are looking at trying to get the kids involved to give them a different skill set that they wouldn't get at school you know? Yep, they can read and write, yep they can do maths, yeah they know all about history, yeah they know all about that, but 90% of them can't change a plug... and when you look at it from that point of view then hang on a second, we really need to be able to educate these kids - not in academia, we need to be educating these kids in real life.

There is also evidence of the strong messages that are given to young people about alcohol. Young people are not able to participate in activities if they have been drinking:

There is a couple of them that I have got that are quite prone [to drinking alcohol] at a weekend, you know, but we have a rule and it's a very simple rule, which is when you come, when you are working with me, you're sober, you're clean, you're presentable you know? And if you're not you won't get in the door and it works every time, but again that is something else they need to learn when they get a job you know, you can't just turn up on a Monday morning with a hangover, it doesn't work. So its life skills at the end of the day that's what it's all about.

The providers we spoke to demonstrated a real commitment to involving young people in the development of the activities and moving them forward. We observed them on several occasions encouraging young people to give their views and to help to decide how activities were to run. Young people responded well to this, and showed none of the fatigue that can sometimes result when young people do not believe that they can effect change. Young people were keen to give staff their opinions and be involved in development, and demonstrated a trust that their views would be taken on board.

Staff have shown themselves to be unflappable when faced with challenges. They have a 'can do' attitude (as observed by a Local Authority officer) and meet any challenges head on with a positive approach. This was evidenced recently by the collapse of the local Boys Club building. Sub 21 had recently organised a refit of a drop in area, and kitchens for cookery sessions. Some activities also took place there. Sessions had to stop immediately and the building was quickly demolished. Due to the strong relationships that were in place in the area between services and organisations, new premises were found for all of the activities with two weeks.

Churchill Community College, and the dedicated post of Director of Extended Services, has provided a stable base for the project to be supported. Even though the school is a major

driver for the provision in Wallsend, the Sub 21 staff hold the belief that young people do not associate the activities with their day-to-day experiences of school, and instead recognise Sub 21 as something different. Staff are not always traditional youth workers, but can come from industry, for example, and so there is the potential for them to form different kinds of relationships with the young people they work with, which the young people value. One provider commented:

I think, for us, it's more about trying to educate them without being a school because they get school every day and if you try and run a session like a class you just don't get it, you just don't get the attention so I think we try to look at things that they wouldn't do at school but in a very informal way and it tends to work because you say 'if you don't like it you can go, you don't have to stay', and that makes them think 'well, we'll just go and see what it's like' and very, very rarely do they get up and go once we've got them there.

Conclusions

Key findings

Several key findings can be drawn from the analyses of the data as follows:

- The questionnaire data suggests that whilst most young people questioned have consumed an alcoholic drink in the past, the majority drank only on special occasions or very rarely. However, a significant minority of young people did claim to be regularly drinking (20% of 14-16 year olds and 5% of 11-13 year olds).
- Drinking was seen to be a social activity with the 11-13 year olds mostly drinking with family and 14-16 year olds tending to drink with friends.
- Young people reported a 'weekend culture' of drinking. This has been a feature of the Wallsend area for some time, and Sub 21 specifically tries to address this by the provision of weekend activities.
- Most young people who drank alcohol did so at home, although other locations including the pub, park, streets and transport stops were given.
- The young people who have participated in Sub 21 activities have been overwhelmingly positive about their experiences. They enjoy attending and they appreciate the opportunity to try new things. They are able to identify a number of benefits for themselves.
- Activity providers are convinced of the value of the activities provided and are able to describe some very real changes in the lives of some of the pupils they have worked with.
- A range of outcomes for young people have been reported by young people themselves, and the activity providers that work with them, including:
 - learning new skills;
 - gaining in confidence;
 - opportunities to contribute to local community (hosting a radio show, DJ-ing for local events);
 - opportunities to use real world skills (e.g. business skills);
 - opportunities for young people to be seen in a positive light by local community members (e.g. providing nail art at a local festival, cooking mince pies for shoppers at a local store, hosting a silver service dinner for parents and community reps);
 - Sub 21 keeps young people off the streets and stops them getting into trouble;

- Sub 21 activities provide an alternative to drinking, particularly at the weekend;
- meeting new people;
- learning social skills to get on with people you wouldn't normally socialise with;
- learning the skills they want for a future career (e.g. construction).

The future of Sub 21

The Sub 21 project continues to thrive – new opportunities for expanding the work and obtaining more funding are continually being explored. Real efforts are being made to ensure the sustainability of the project. Future work will concentrate on targeting those young people most at risk, or most in need. Referrals are being channelled from the local Accident and Emergency department by an outreach worker, when young people are admitted with alcohol related problems. These young people are offered activities alongside other support that may be offered.

Funding is being sought for an expansion of the Childsafe project. This was a project run by the Police, who would pick young people up who were drinking and take them home. The plan is for police to work with outreach workers, who will stay with the young people who were with the person picked up by the police. The outreach worker will then offer activities to these young people and work with them to ensure they do not continue the cycle of alcohol misuse led by their peer.

Further work is also occurring around tackling obesity. This fits in well with the work around alcohol misuse as part of a holistic approach to promoting healthy lifestyles. Because of the vision adopted at all levels, the federation of schools, and within it, Sub 21, is seen as part of a system of provision for children's wellbeing, rather than simply being concerned with academic targets.

It's really working with an identified target market that we can support and will have a correlation in terms of adult health because when they leave school at 16 or 18 you know they immediately fit into the adult health arena and suddenly they become a problem for GPs, whereas if we can work with them in school and encourage them and embed some of those healthy eating and... look at what they are buying in supermarkets and just give them some basic advice... so it's a kind of holistic process.

Future activities include:

Cinema nights

Active craft group

Nightclub

Girls decks session

Funky floristry

Further outreach work

Urban skate off

One off activities

Use of a new venue for drop in and structured activities

This report offers support for the continuation and expansion of Sub 21. Over its development, the project has met several challenges: encouraging partners to work together; dealing with day to day crises; engaging young people; trying to involve local retailers; and trying to reach the young people that need intervention the most. These are challenges that projects such as this often face. Nevertheless, these challenges have been met head on and have been overcome by the strong infrastructure in place; the ethos of inclusion; strong relationships and good communication between partners and a clear strategic direction supported by adequate operational resources. Sub 21 has become something of a flagship model in the region. They continue to disseminate their experiences and other Authorities have much to learn from them. Nevertheless, there are learning points for Sub 21 at this time. Our recommendations to them are as follows:

1. The provision has worked well as a universal provision. However, many of the young people that may be most in need of a service such as this, may remain largely invisible and may not participate without encouragement. Further efforts need to be made to find ways of identifying and targeting these young people. Progress is already being made in this regard, and if the bids are successful in extending the Childsafe initiative this will be a step in the right direction.
2. It is clear from the survey results that some young people are continuing to purchase alcohol from shops. Sub 21 can play an important role in continuing to lobby the police to keep up the good work in identifying and prosecuting shopkeepers who continue to sell to underage children.
3. The Sub 21 project has, from the outset, been child focused and evidence driven. This has served to ensure that the activities are relevant and interesting to young people, and are successful in keeping some young people off the streets and out of trouble. This has been facilitated by the strategic focus of the project, and the robust infrastructure that exists, and its emphasis on sustainability. Gathering evidence of

changes is an on-going process and Sub 21 needs to continue to be flexible enough to respond to needs that arise in the local area. Continued efforts to involve young people are important in this regard.

4. Some thought may need to be given to how to engage more girls in the activities that are provided. Some activities are perceived as 'for the boys', even if that is not the intention. Some of the future activities that are planned may well start to address this.
5. There are still a substantial number of young people (including those who regularly drink alcohol) who would like to participate in Sub 21 but have not so far. Further efforts should be made to identify the reasons for non-participation and to devise a strategy to enable these young people to access provision in a way that is relevant to them.

Appendix 1 The school survey

SURVEY ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE AND ALCOHOL

This survey is being carried out by Jill and Karen from Newcastle University on behalf of Sub 21. The results will be used to help to develop activities for young people in Wallsend. You do not have to fill it in if you do not want to. If you decide to fill in this questionnaire, please be as honest as you can. You do not have to put your name on it, and nobody will know the answers you give are from you.

SECTION ONE: ABOUT YOU

1. **How old are you?** *Please enter your age in the box*

2. **Are you:** *Please circle one answer* *A boy* *A girl*

3. **What school do you go to?** *Please write your school here*

4. **Have you ever drunk an alcoholic drink?** *Please circle one answer*

Yes – this week *Yes – this month* *Yes – in the past* *No, never*

IF YOU ANSWERED **YES** PLEASE CARRY ON TO SECTION TWO

IF YOU ANSWERED **NO**, PLEASE GO STRAIGHT TO SECTION THREE

SECTION TWO: ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF ALCOHOL

5. **How often do you drink?** *Please circle one answer*

Only on special occasions *Regularly* *Sometimes* *Very rarely*

6. **Who do you tend to drink with?** *Please circle as many answers as apply to you*

Alone *With family members* *With my friends* *Other (please say who)*

7. **Where do you drink?** *Please circle as many answers as apply to you*

Home *Park* *Street* *Pub* *Metro/bus stops* *Elsewhere* *Other (please say where)*

8. **Where do you get your alcohol from?** *Please circle as many answers as apply to you*

Shop *Family members* *Friends* *Alcohol dealer* *Pub* *Elsewhere (please say where)*

9. What do you tend to drink? *Please tell us what kind of drink you have most often, e.g. lager, vodka*

10. Have you ever done anything you later regretted when you had been drinking alcohol? *Please circle one answer*

Yes No

If **yes**, please tell us what you did here.

11. Why did you have a drink? *Please tick as many answers as apply to you*

<i>Because my friends were drinking</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>I felt grown up</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Because my family were drinking</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>There's nothing else to do</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Because it tastes nice</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Because it's the weekend</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>I just wanted to try it</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Another reason (please tell us)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE CARRY ON TO **SECTION THREE**

SECTION THREE: ABOUT ALCOHOL AND OTHER PEOPLE

12. Are there any areas near where you live that you would not go to because people drink there? *Please circle one answer*

Yes No

If **yes**, please tell us which areas.

13. Please give an example here of when something bad happened to you, or to somebody you know, that involved alcohol:

How did this experience make you feel?

PLEASE CARRY ON TO SECTION FOUR

SECTION FOUR: ABOUT YOUR LEISURE TIME

14. When you are not at home, where do you hang around on evenings or weekends?

Please tick as many answers as apply to you

<i>Near where I live</i>		<i>In Newcastle City Centre</i>	
<i>Near school</i>		<i>Metro/Bus stops or stations</i>	
<i>At the park</i>		<i>Silverlink</i>	
<i>At the coast</i>		<i>Elsewhere (please tell us where)</i>	

15. How often do you go to youth clubs, activities, or sports centres outside school hours? *Please circle one answer*

Nearly every day 3-4 times a week 1-2 times a week Less often Never

16. What do you think would stop young people from misusing alcohol? *Please tick as many answers as apply to you*

<i>Activities after school</i>		<i>Raising the age limit for drinking alcohol to 21</i>	
<i>Activities at the weekend</i>		<i>Making alcohol more expensive</i>	
<i>Being grounded by your parents</i>		<i>Prosecuting shopkeepers who sell alcohol to under 18s</i>	
<i>Making alcohol illegal</i>		<i>Something else (please give us your ideas here)</i>	

17. Have you heard of Sub 21? *Please circle one answer*

Yes No

18. Which Sub 21 activities have you taken part in? *Please tick as many answers as apply to you*

<i>Bodyfit</i>		<i>Kickfit/Kickboxing</i>	
<i>Football</i>		<i>Zumba</i>	
<i>Drop in at Wallsend Boys Club</i>		<i>Construction</i>	
<i>Graffiti workshop</i>		<i>Firefighting</i>	
<i>Radio club</i>		<i>Quadbiking</i>	
<i>Skate/BMX/Scooters</i>		<i>Cookery club</i>	
<i>Nail Art</i>		<i>Other (please tell us)</i>	
<i>I have never taken part in a Sub 21 activity</i>			

If you have taken part in a Sub 21 activity, please go to **SECTION FIVE**.

If you have never taken part in a Sub 21 activity, please go to **SECTION SIX**

SECTION FIVE: ABOUT SUB 21

19. Did you enjoy taking part in Sub 21 activities? *Please circle one answer*

Yes No

20. Did you experience any of the following? *Please tick as many answers as apply to you*

<i>I made new friends</i>		<i>I learnt new skills</i>	
<i>I felt more confident</i>		<i>Other (please tell us what)</i>	

PLEASE CARRY ON TO **SECTION SIX**

SECTION SIX: THE FUTURE

21. Would you be interested in taking part in a Sub 21 activity in the future? *Please circle one answer*

Yes No

22. If there is anything else you would like to say about drinking alcohol, or about Sub 21, please write it here.