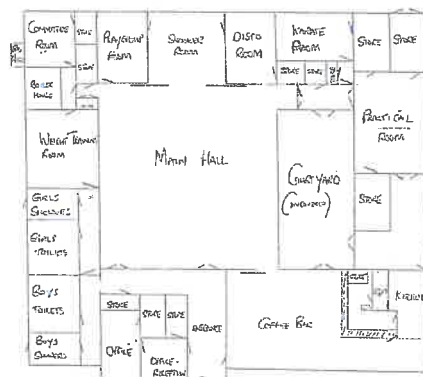


Serving the Community
for over 40 years
with over 1,000,000 visits

NEW IMAGES

future options building on past success



New Images
(pre 2003)

Committee, disco, karate
And practical room all
'multi-functional'



making the case for young people provision
independently from any other provider

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September 2012

Bob Barton

Bob Barton Mob: 07981 955 388

E-mail: bbarton.wyf@gmail.com

Note: New Images opened in 1970 and has been in operation for 42 years. Recorded attendances for Youth Provision during this time were 804,858 net attributable to direct delivery by the Youth Team with the addition of multiple lettings over the 42 years to other user groups which exceeds 1 million in this time.

I. Introduction

This is not a definitive history of New Images; that would take a couple of years to research and compile. However, a justification for a dedicated youth provision within Winsford, specifically using New Images as model for delivery.

The evidence is based primarily on actual data of use, backed up with personal reflections and memories from ex-users, many now parents themselves, with their own children attending.

Due to the open access policy, the drop in nature of the provision, the centre has always been available to those with a need to attend and to those who came for a specific reason, regardless of their 'position' within the community. There is no mention of 'outcomes' to define and justify the users of their needs, as would be expected today, to justify the funding or Youth Programme development.

Winsford Youth Centre – New Images, has always been a venue open to all young people and not just for over 13's. It has always worked with the over 8's, their families, and when needed, the relevant school actions that are presently being advocated via various new policy directives. As a consequence, funding has come from various sources to support a number of initiatives over the years, all to the benefit of the Centre and the young people.

This document hopes to provide an insight into what could and what has happened regarding a youth provision being proactive in the community – one that has had a positive impact on many of Winsford's inhabitants - one that could be repeated given the opportunity and belief from policymakers.



New Images
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2. History

Winsford County Youth Centre was built in 1969 – opening on 20th July 1970, one of hundreds of purpose built youth centres, built nationally as a response to the needs of 'teenagers'.

The birth of 'teenagers', from the fifties and their sub cultures alongside the new phenomenon of the 'rock and roll' era, was perceived as an element in society that had to have a 'service' - a response from Government. So a 'youth service' was created to compliment the new building programme.

Winsford with its expansion plans, the influx of new families and the large percentage of youngsters was one of 5 built at the time as a response throughout Cheshire. (Handforth Youth Centre being the 'twin' to Winsford's.)

Delivered via the Education Department, the first youth workers, working from the Centre were 'Youth Tutors' - those working part time as Teachers, and at night as Youth Workers. Social Education and Formal Education was delivered 'holistically'. The term 'County' was quite normal for many of these youth centres, indicating that the work/delivery from them strategically was area bound, a concept that has prevailed.

Nationally by 1970, dedicated, trained 'Youth Workers' were preferred over the Youth Tutor model of delivery, however they were not introduced into Winsford until the mid seventies. Delivery from 1970 was targeted at the 14 – 19 year olds, with provision for 11 – 13 y olds, limited to one night, and then via help with 14+ through a 'Community Service' scheme. Official documentation from that period shows that work with the 11 – 13 year olds was needed, however it could not be implemented, due to financial restraints.

Delivery from mid 1977 was increased to two full time youth workers, with one having a dual role of supporting external youth organisations within the town. Staff changes followed in the mid Eighties, with only one dedicated full time youth worker, with a second totally dedicated to external support and developing, what was then a new model of delivery 'detached work'

Within the centre the junior club was re-launched, with a wider age remit, but delivered using the same model, that is 'senior helpers' as volunteers.

With the birth of the Winsford Youth Forum, extending the work into the estates became easier, resources were accessible and attendances peaked at an all time high, helped with the introduction of the school 'lunchtime club'.

The Centre became a self publicity facility, with so many young people able to see and experience the building and its work internally and within the town. The centre had established a complete pathway, from a nursery, junior club, school clubs, youth club and, for a long period, an unemployment club – with the centre opening for 6 days a week.

The design of the centre is such that it allows for specialised activities to take place around the perimeter of a social area with the priority being about the 'movement' of young people from one to another as part of their

growth/development, On some nights the whole centre was geared to this concept, and this prevailed until 2003. All of this - in a safe and user friendly environment.

In the era of a 'cost centred approach' there was a drive to increase 'lettings' to meet this financial imperative. However many remained free, from home tutors, to play schemes, meetings or for school use. Paying groups were primarily Children's Parties, Weddings, 18/21st Parties and even christenings. Most of these were from members or ex members – but the amount of self publicity within the centre, and by the members themselves served to increase the usage.

From 2002 there were major policy changes with the introduction of 'Hubs' for each Borough area, as the vehicle for all full time youth work delivery. This spelt the end of an era for what by the early 90's had become **New Images**. The change in name had not meant a change in delivery as per the wider context of the town – that work was still going on via the Winsford Youth Forum, to which the Centre was a key partner, however Cheshire County Council now wanted as a financial necessity to adapt this concept to a wider area. To do that, alternative organisations had to take on existing provision, thus savings could be transferred to the 'Hub'. Efforts to amalgamate with the voluntary sector failed, so the Verdin High School, who needed additional classroom space took over responsibility for the building.

The 'battle' to save New Images is well documented – the affect was to preserve use for 4 nights a week, around the main social area, plus one side room. The school also guaranteed the 'roofing' of the courtyard area, as an additional area. Conversion, into classrooms, of the rear of the building was completed by 2004. these were initially as art rooms, since changed to accommodate, those with 'special educational needs'. Building control and costs since 2003 – 2013, under the terms of the licence are met by the school.

As such Cheshire Youth Service, then Connexions, now Young Peoples Services and the Winsford Youth Forum have enjoyed free use of the centre, on the 4 designated nights. Delivery from the Centre has been focused by the relationships of workers within the two organisations, guided by organisational requirements. School involvement has been restricted to issues surrounding the building. The two ideologies have never combined to develop any other possibilities that the centre could of achieved, although numerous efforts were made to that affect by the 'users'.

Senior delivery from 2003 has been mixed, from an initial high attendance, to very low, to a recent recovery over the last two years. Junior club attendances are lower, lunchtime club - until 2010 delivered via the Winsford Youth Forum has diminished drastically, due in part, to the shorter lunchtime period. This was also affected by the reduced space available. The impact of the changes can be seen clearly via the attendance/use data that follows:

3. Strategic Context

National Context

1. **From 1969 with the new centre, instigated by 'Albemarle Report' 1960** – first report undertaken as to the Needs of Young People. Main Outcomes –

- a) Establishment of a National College for the training of Youth Workers.
- b) Need for dedicated provision

2. **Thompson Report 1983** – this was largely ignored by government. (many unemployed at that period – major financial issues etc

3. **Every Child Matters Report 2004** Comprehensive review from which Connexions and Children's Centres were established, and has influenced Youth policy since.

Key points –

- 1. Every young person needs to be healthy
- 2. Every young person needs to stay safe
- 3. Every young person needs to be able to enjoy /achieve
- 4. Every young person needs to make a positive contribution
- 5. Every young person needs to have economic well-being

'Youth Matters' the next steps summary, published 18 months later outlined the priority actions and how this was to be implemented under the remit **'young people need somewhere safe to go and something to do'**. Age 11 – 19 years, up to 25 years with special needs; with a priority age range 13 – 19 years/

This was followed by the **My Place programme** which delivers new 'super youth clubs/provision' capable of responding to young people's needs in a 21st Century environment. On par with the present Life style Centre. To date 63 have been built, however, they like everything else have been affected by the financial situation, and the building programme has slowed down. The debate about the value of such buildings and how they should be funded continues – the basic concept is reminiscent of the ideology of the 60's!

4. Positive for Youth - Xmas 2011

This passed responsibilities onto Local Authorities - key points:

- 1. Raise educational attainment. All y.p participate in learning (definition of how this is achieved !!!)
- 2. Young people's experience outside 'classrooms' critical
- 3. Services have a responsibility to influence young people to succeed
- 4. Communities/local businesses need to take responsibility for young people to succeed

5. Some young people will need additional support (e.g. the most disadvantaged etc)

Government therefore is 'retaining the statutory duty on Local Authority to secure the provision of sufficient leisure – time activities for young people wellbeing, including youth work with a target age 13 – 19 years old.

Cheshire Policy/Practice

1. Dedicated Youth Service from 1976 – delivery via 5 purpose built centres and 'seconding' full time workers to work in large Voluntary centres. Detached work started in the mid 80's (60 – 70 F.T Workers)
2. Policy proposal to move to a Community Education Model of delivery – rejected in the late 1980's.
3. Change of delivery model to meet Every Child Matters strategy, via area 'Hubs' from 2002 with fulltime Youth Workers working from one base – supporting projects and clubs.

To achieve this staff were relocated from their dedicated youth club base and these buildings transferred to other suppliers. Rudheath Youth Centre became primarily a training base generating income while New Images was transferred to the Verdin High School. In both cases this was primarily to source the funding required to support the 'Hub' and delivery model.

In Vale Royal that was identified as being in a central location in Northwich. Hubs were defined as office facilities with areas designated for work with young people via small groups etc. (see battle for New Images Page 23).

The consequences for New Images were: no dedicated management group; restricted service delivery; and as a result a decline in use by Community Groups, lettings, developmental work, and the building no longer being properly maintained.

The net gainers being by/for the school, both for formal and informal education use, to meet their needs in 2003 and up to the present day. This appears likely to continue until the new build is complete.

As a consequence New Images as a service to the community and young people has been relegated to a minor supportive role.

4. Cheshire County Council then published its response to Every Child Matters via C&Y. Peoples Plan Executive Summary for 2006 – 09. In 2006/7 Cheshire Youth Service was 'outsourced' into Connexions to complete an 'integrated youth service' - to implement Every Child Matters / Cheshire County Council strategy. In October 2008 Connexions produced their 'Strategy for Youth Work Provision' as an integrated service, underpinning the Outcomes/principles of Every Child Matters.

5. Cheshire 'Place Survey' of 2008 (comprehensive study- questionnaire etc) put 'activities for teenagers' as the highest priority with 58% for Cheshire residents.

6. The Children's Trust Plan for young people (another action from Every Child Matters is that each Local Authority has a Children's Trust comprising of Chief Officers etc from all of the major orgs –Police /Fire NHS , Education etc, who shall administer this plan, much to do with Child Protection etc) for 2008 – 11 and since extended for another 2 years, pending a review in preparation for delivery via a S.L. Agreement.

7. Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) 'Strategy for Youth Work in Cheshire' -Implementation Plan produced for 2009/10, advocates a 'World class service –with and for the young people of West Cheshire.

By then the new Coalition Government had agreed to implement the previous Government's proposal of a new 'Career Service' - delivery model. The demise of Connexions has continued from 2010 until the new service was established and running, planned from April 2012.

The consequences for Cheshire which operated an 'integrated' youth delivery system, was and has been to leave the youth service delivery without a 'home' or 'direction'.

The immediate reaction has been to be to 're-house' the Youth Service back with CWAC; carry out the required 'consultation': and develop a strategy which is compatible with the Children's Trusts' /Financial need for 'target work'. The necessary preparation for 'tendering' out the service under an S.L.A - which appears to be the preferred choice – is still in progress.

4. User Groups prior to 2003 and the transfer to Verdin



Staffing has been the critical factor in delivery/programming, within a safe environment, especially when attendances are high. Since we had limited staffing sessions, it was essential to focus on key nights, for general provision, and then to 'specialise' on other nights and afternoon sessions for alternative provision, as the opportunity for members' growth and development.

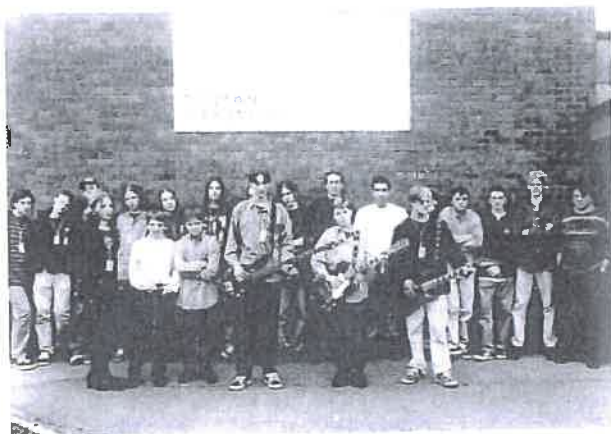
These activities, some delivered independently of the Youth Service, normally with trained instructors, included Karate, Weight training, Badminton and Table Tennis. Football training- coaching took place in the school sports hall or on Knights Grange for a long period.

Music

Delivery of music /playing was a significant element of the Centre's programme. With a number of separately funded projects delivered, and the need and the growth in local 'bands' needing rehearsal space, which we struggled to meet, it was a constant task, four nights a week, and most Sunday evenings. Having three bands rehearsing and a disco on one night, tests most people's hearing!

To help generate funds for these projects we formed 'Youth Generation', a voluntary group. This group could then apply for its own funding which enabled a mix of equipment from musical instruments to a PA system

being purchased, plus expenses to pay for the skills required in the delivery of these projects. In the late 90's



this was developed via partnership working with DAN (Development for the arts in Northwich) via a number of weekend skills-based workshops held at New Images.

Having a venue for local bands to play was critical to the developmental process. Being able to 'convert' the main hall via staging/lighting achieved on a limited budget. Having 'visiting bands' who were up and coming both regionally and nationally became a regular feature which allowed our local bands to support in front of much larger audiences and be more professional. We became a serious venue for some bands, especially within the punk community, with



audiences of 300 plus. Trips – going to gigs- became a need which we had to accommodate. With the growth of boy bands the interest extended, particularly for our girls!

Play Schemes

From the early 80's with the formation of the Winsford Play scheme Association, until the transfer to the Verdin in 2003, we held an annual 4 week play scheme at the Centre. Again, the need was clearly there with the highest attendances of all the schemes. A Special Needs scheme was



integrated into this, due to the space and facilities available.



Since 2003, the schemes have not been allowed to use the centre, due to what has turned out to be annual building maintenance checks, etc. Although this can be for just a couple of days, the licence agreement states that these groups needs need to be accommodated. To date the play scheme uses local schools whenever possible. Centre staff have and remain involved in this delivery.

Parties

Until very recently we were still getting enquiries regarding 'bookings' for children's parties. The popularity and need grew in the 80's, due to the facilities and general provision available here. With our own disco unit, it gave our own DJ's, or Senior Helpers, the chance to earn some pocket money and to provide a service. These parties were set at three hours, and it was quite common for one to start at 1.00 pm, another at 4.00 pm and a final one at 7.00 pm.

The necessity to comply with Health and Safety issues, Licensing laws, Fire Regulations and Environmental Health issues became more focused, and such recommendations from these authorities helped to make changes and improvements to the centre.

Many of these children came back on an annual basis for their parties. Eventually this demand extended to 18th and 21st celebrations with licensed bars, which proved to be far more demanding.

Some ex members came back for their Wedding celebrations. Wedding Anniversaries and Christenings have all taken place at one time. Thankfully we had a willing and able cleaner prepared to work at extraordinary times to help.

Nursery

One of the side rooms has always been dedicated to a Nursery, which was completely packed with equipment. This was bought into the main hall every morning for use. Ofsted inspected, it was run until the turn of the century, when with all the changes to nursery provision and falling numbers etc, it closed. It had been regularly used by schools for 'work experience' for students aspiring to take up a career in a Nursery environment.



Home Tutors

Side rooms were used frequently for this 1 to 1 process, until 2003.

Meetings

The Centre was used consistently by community and youth organisations as a venue, both locally and county wide.

Dance Troupe Events

The main hall, as it was pre 2003, was a major asset, with many adult groups (keep fit etc) enquiring about use. In the late 80's into the 90's we had a girls' dancing troupe practicing here on a Saturday morning. They held an annual event, eventually two, on a Sunday, which involved the centre being open from 8.00 am – 9.00 pm.

These events attracted competitors from all over the region and North Wales, who came in their coaches and took over the building, the rear car park, the front grass verge and part of Nixon Drive. We had girls and woman all dressed in bright colourful costumes dancing throughout the day, in every available space. It was a health and safety nightmare, the building clearly catering for far more than allowed, but they were well organised and fantastic, memorable events.

Wheels

Due to the expansion of youth activities and provision in Winsford during the mid 80's, and due to interest from other Community Organisations, a Community Transport Scheme was established. The need for a minibus to support projects was essential. By the 90's we had two minibuses and the Centre took on responsibility for bookings, invoicing and maintenance as per the Minibus Permit Act, established to guide and protect Community groups in delivering this provision.

All user groups became affiliated members, and were entitled to attend any meetings held. Due to the administrative support at that period, this was manageable, however, it was a very time consuming task over and above what was expected. Garaging the vehicles became a major issue, once the Fire Brigade Headquarters was established, requiring us to move them from that location and eventually relocating behind New Images. About a year later I was called down early one Saturday, by the Police, to find both vehicles completely wrecked. They had been used as 'battering rams and dodgems' by vandals overnight. So ended the Project.

Boxing Club

Another project that started in the early 70's at the Centre was the Boxing Club. It would be inappropriate not to mention this – since the club is still going and is still run by one of the 'Trustees' of Winsford Youth Forum, at Royle St, Winsford. Once established the Youth Club remained the 'responsible body' and helped whenever it could, especially with the building conversion. Upon their independence the Youth Club withdrew its involvement.

Unemployed

For the mid 80's with the rising unemployment issues we opened regularly on 3 afternoons a week for those youngsters and adults affected, simply as a venue for them to spend their time and use the facilities. These sessions continued as and when needed up to 2003. One of the needs expressed by this group, particularly the younger element, was the need to be able to drive to get to a work placement or the work itself.

Aided by ESF funding we ran 2 subsidised driving courses, each of 18 lessons with additional support funding for the relevant test. In return participants had to attend several issue-based workshops (all driving related), plus a basic mechanics course. 24 young people participated.

From 2003 after the transfer of the building to the Verdin High School this provision stopped ** as use of the building became restricted due to the licence agreement between Cheshire County Council and the school, allowing only 4 nights a week with a small summer provision which only finally happened in 2012.

*** It should be noted that the school remained very cooperative throughout within these restrictions allowing occasional additional use and use of the office on a regular basis.*

5. Historic Usage Statistics from 1971 to 2013

Key Milestones & Key Facts - see actual statistical sheet that info below relates to

- Winsford County Youth Centre (Now New Images) was 'rendered over' to Cheshire County Council by the builders on 25/3/1970. Then the only dedicated youth provision club outside of uniformed, church youth groups in an expanding Winsford.
- The First Management Committee meeting was held on 22/ 10/1969 and the first leader in charge appointed on 01/01/1970.
- The Centre was opened on 22/06/1970 under the Community and Youth Service department of Cheshire County Council. Consequently the remit considered U 14's to be juniors, with a maximum age of 25.
- Centre leader in charge and His 2 deputies (all full time) had a 'Youth Tutor' role – e.g. percentage of their time teaching in the school and running the centre.
- Reports later in 1970 indicate an average of 425 per week, with some of these attendances attributable to day time provision.
- In 1971 attendance had risen to 500 per week. Programmes included 18+ nights and an Under 14's (junior club) referred to as run by senior volunteers via 'community service'.
- Openings from 1970-1976 varied from 4-7 nights per week (Saturday and Sunday openings on a monthly basis) plus lunchtime and school sessions. Attendances listed are not recorded independently – so the figures cannot be broken down into sections.
- Staffing 1970-1976 included coffee bar assistants, doormen, Part time Youth Leaders and 7 paid activity workers (various). All supported by the equivalent of 1.5 FTW. In 1970, 20 adult volunteers were listed.
- In 1974 Senior (14+) membership as being 100 Junior (U 14) is 400.
- In 1975 the 'Service' was changed by 'Cheshire County Council' to 'Cheshire County Youth Service'.
- In 1976 it was officially recognised that the 'junior' need (from 11 years) was sufficient to respond to, when the financial possibilities allowed!
- The first use by the 'Unemployed' (pm sessions) is recorded from 1976.
- Cheshire County Council – increased entrance fees to youth clubs early 1976. This is recorded as having a dramatic effect on attendances (according to staff reports). Figures referred to during this period refer to an average 40 young people at each lunchtime session (5 days per week – school term time).
- Full time worker support, changed in 1976 from having just one 'Youth Tutor' (0.5 FTE) plus a new dedicated Full Time Youth Worker.

- Staffing Levels 1976- onwards, still consisted of a team of ancillary support workers, Part Time youth leaders and Activity (sessional) workers.
- From June 1977, Full Time staff support changed to 1 Full time Leader and 1 Full time Deputy.
- Details of 'Lettings' started from April 1984 and these included private, other organisational use and inter agency meetings etc. Some free, others paying . e.g. Play schemes , Playgroups Home/school tutoring, school use(special needs school)private parties, (children's) weddings, Christmas inter agency meetings, other organisational meetings, Manpower services Commission Use etc.
- Junior attendance figures relate to 9-13 years olds from 78-79.
- 'Lettings' figures from 1986 – 1989 period reflected use of the centre by Winsford Youth Forums M.S.C scheme.
- Lunchtime club from 1979 operated 4 days per week during school term time



YEAR	SENIORS	JUNIORS (1 night)	LETTINGS	UNEMPLOYED
APR 71 to MAR 72	12238	inc. Juniors U14	—	—
APR 72 to MAR 73	12368	inc. Juniors U14	—	—
APR 73 to MAR 74	12064	inc. Juniors U14	—	—
APR 74 to MAR 75	12113	inc. Juniors U14	—	—
APR 75 to MAR 76	10033	inc. Juniors U14	—	—
APR 76 to MAR 77	10256	7177	—	—
APR 77 to MAR 78	7370	2875	—	—
APR 78 to MAR 79	9968	4427	—	—
APR 79 to MAR 80	8504	6105	—	—
APR 80 to MAR 81	11952	4025	—	—
APR 81 to MAR 82	15692	6322	—	—
APR 82 to MAR 83	8728	3017	—	—
APR 83 to MAR 84	9075	3592	—	—
APR 84 to MAR 85	10056	3050	481	2144
APR 85 to MAR 86	8250	2997	567	3024
APR 86 to MAR 87	9707	3499	708	3781
APR 87 to MAR 88	9801	3972	706	3441
APR 88 to MAR 89	8607	3306	777	2284
APR 89 to MAR 90	9162	2973	424	—
APR 90 to MAR 91	7430	2735	482	—
APR 91 to MAR 92	9680	5062	628	—
APR 92 to APR 93	9790	5120	612	—
APR 93 to MAR 94	6687	3548	352	—

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YEAR	SENIORS	JUNIORS (1 night)	LETTINGS	UNEMPLOYED
CLOSED FOR 2 MONTHS DUE TO BUILDING WORK				
APR 94 to MAR 95	11709	3144	308	—
CLOSED FOR 1 MONTH DUE TO FLOOD DAMAGE				
APR 95 to MAR 96	10095	3020	245	—
APR 96 to MAR 97	7966	3281	306	—
APR 97 to MAR 98	9745	3694	332	—
APR 98 to MAR 99	6355	3284	410	—
APR 99 to MAR 20	7319	3921	445	—
APR 20 to MAR 01	6928	3498	315	—
APR 01 to MAR 02	7901	4146	272	—
APR 02 to MAR 03	8841	3760	158	—

New Images
Future Options building on Past Success

NEW IMAGES 'USE' FROM 2003 – 2012

YEAR	SENIORS	JUNIORS	LUNCHTIME	Totals
APR 03 - MAR 04	7482	3245	13650	24377
APR 04 - MAR 05	2450	1170	7000	10620
APR 05 - MAR 06	1278	2961	11700	15939
APR 06 - MAR 07	1541	2611	11700	15852
APR 07- MAR 08	2719	3168	11700	17587
APR 08 - MAR 09	1408	2876	8600	12884
APR 09 - MAR 10	1147	3449	7800	12396
APR 10 - MAR 11	2765	5435	7800	16000
APR 11- MAR 12	2962	5779	7800	16541

Key Milestones & Key Facts 2003 – 2012

- Centre 'Transferred' to Verdin High School in Summer 2003. Initial impact limited to loss of 1 room until summer 2004. (Licensed agreement and restricted openings of 4 nights implemented from September 03).
- Centre Closed for refurbishment / building work from Mid August 2004 – Dec 2004.
- From January 2005 youth Centre usage restricted to front of building and one room (4 sessions per week).
- Senior attendance from 2005 at an all time low upon re-opening.
- Increases from 2010 due in part to new special needs group (buddies) and additional after school sessions.
- No lettings or use by play schemes etc during this 8 year period.
- From 2004 lunchtime figures were not recorded so these figures are estimated via feedback from staff and own observations.
- Lunchtime delivery via Winsford Youth Forum from 2004- 2010 then transferred to school, as per there request.
- Centre – maintained building repaired, cleaned by school. School also paid for all 'Services' during this period.

6. Development of the Junior Club Membership

Key Facts:

Junior Club – those 8 - 13 year olds started in 1977, as a response to the number of these in Winsford with no dedicated provision.

By the mid 1980's other clubs within Winsford had started along with summer 'Play schemes' and a 'Junior Football League' with teams starting at under 11's.

Work with this age group had never been recognized as necessary by the Youth Service until the late 1970's, when it was reported as 'being possible whenever the financial circumstances allowed'. This situation was still relevant by 2003. To circumnavigate the blockage, senior members and volunteers were recruited. Those over 14 to help. Therefore Senior Staff could justify, with the support of Local Officers at that time that the



work and time spent was specifically with the seniors, and therefore could be justified. However, in the mid nineties, support was withdrawn due to a new direction the youth service was embarking upon.

As part of the 'Senior Helper' process, they undertook 'youth leaders' training



courses, delivered in partnership with the Youth Federation. Some of these young people then participated in volunteering at events for the Youth Federation including summer camping weeks for disadvantaged juniors. Accreditation via the V scheme of D of E being the main forms for reward - except for annual trips to the theatre for all helpers. Normally, this was to see the 'Rocky Horror Show'.



Recruitment of 'Senior Helpers' developed via a 'Job Application Form' and 'Job Description', from those who were regular attendees at the senior club.

The Junior Club has also attracted a number of adult volunteers over the years, especially from ex members. This has also been used as a training session for college and university students studying and training for youth and social work.

The primary aim, however, as always been to use the

club as a route to into the senior club.

Participating in Youth Federation events and activities extended the value and experiences of many juniors. Most notably was the annual 'dancing competition', for individuals and groups. For those able to be able to compete, endless hours of planning and rehearsing were required and not just on the Friday nights.



Individual behavior and issues have always been another concern for staffing, and this had led to many school and home visits and these continue to this day.

Junior membership years run from September to August, with memberships pre 2003 normally closing by February due to the numbers attending and demand.

Junior membership was compulsory, (unlike seniors), with the majority attending on a regular basis.

With the building transfer to the Verdin High School and a redirection of staffing and 'direction', financial support ceased. Winsford Town Council then agreed to support funding for three staff via the Winsford Youth Forum, and that has been maintained to date. Transfer agreement included use by the Junior Club one night per week.

The Junior Club initially established run on a Monday night moved to a Friday in the early nineties, due to the decrease in senior attendances on that night and the conflict caused by those who did attend or those refused admission due to alcohol use.

Age group for junior membership changed in the mid nineties, to align with the school system. Due in part to the numbers, the recognition that an intermediate club was needed and the growing number of differences and conflicts between the older and younger ends of the age groups. Another consideration taken into account was that a number of senior helpers, those just 14, were struggling with their roles, being just one year older than those attending.



An Intermediate club for years 7 and 8 commenced in 1995, ran for 2 years then closed when Youth Service Management enforced the new policy of delivery of prioritizing – 13 plus only. (Policy indicated work with over 11's but priority was 13-19 year olds). Impact was lack of contact with this group – lack of continuity re access to New Images and its facilities and opportunities. More importantly, a break in the relationship with staff. The social consequences were clearly noted in an increase in anti-social behaviour on the local estates, noted and relayed back by parents, community groups and the Police.

The club was reintroduced in 2007 with a change of management, and although the criteria for delivery remained the same, interpretation of policy had changed.

Parental impact – many of the Junior club attendees were 'delivered' and 'collected' by parents. This became an opportunity to engage directly with parents and deal with any issues and or concerns we may have had with

YEAR	SENIORS	JUNIORS (1 night)	LETTINGS	UNEMPLOYED
CLOSED FOR 2 MONTHS DUE TO BUILDING WORK				
APR 94 to MAR 95	11709	3144	308	—
CLOSED FOR 1 MONTH DUE TO FLOOD DAMAGE				
APR 95 to MAR 96	10095	3020	245	—
APR 96 to MAR 97	7966	3281	306	—
APR 97 to MAR 98	9745	3694	332	—
APR 98 to MAR 99	6355	3284	410	—
APR 99 to MAR 20	7319	3921	445	—
APR 20 to MAR 01	6928	3498	315	—
APR 01 to MAR 02	7901	4146	272	—
APR 02 to MAR 03	8841	3760	158	—

New Images
Future Options building on Past Success

their child(ren). Staff became known to them and they became aware of the work. Eventually over the years, many of these became parents (and grandparents) and still today are linked to the Centre.

Another consequence of 'parental visits' and input from their youngsters, was the introduction and demand for New Images as a venue for 'birthday parties'. It became quite normal for the Centre to hold 3 x 3 hour parties every Saturday and the odd one mid week, whenever possible. These initially were 'Disco' focused, which meant that we could 'employ' our Senior Helpers.

Main Hall - Eventually, most of the parties had a theme, such as football or a magician with balloon making, etc. This became an additional income for the Centre, although it was priced as a community benefit (finished with the transfer).

Until very recently we have still received enquiries about the provision of parties. Again, this allowed more adults and parents into the Centre to see the venue and attracted new members.

7. Economic & Social Impact

Job Creation/Training

The centre has always offered itself as a training placement for youth work placements, to either part time or full time students. Those from University, undertaking long term placements, have always had to do community audits and placement reports, which have been of direct benefit to the work, as reviews and checks on our own delivery. Full time workers themselves have had to sharpen up their skills via additional 'supervision' demands. Some students via the Youth Federation were 'gappers' - those taking time out, doing something totally different; prior to going back to University to other disciplines. For them it was a means to gaining 'life experience'.



Work Experience for schools expanded in the late 80's to include on average 2 separate weeks away tasting 'Army' life under the 'Look at Life' programme. The Army used this as part of their recruitment programme – giving those with a passive or real interest an insight into what to expect from life in the Army. These events took considerable planning of the senior schools, not only in Winsford but throughout Vale Royal. Groups participating ranged from 9 – 25 young people of both

sexes. The Army, in turn, made a number of visit/exhibitions at New Images. These events we know did impact on career choice and left many with life-long memories. In all up to 30 events were delivered

The offer as a venue for schools' work experience 2 – 3 times per school year, continued until 2003, when the transfer of the dedicated full time youth worker made this and all other training opportunities unviable.

In the eighties and early nineties, alongside youth workers, we had 'Activity Workers'. These were skilled in a particular activity, especially a sport. These were used to develop particular skills, many young people later continued to take up training and become skilled coaches, etc. within their sport of choice.

Many got involved as volunteers within sports clubs. By working with the voluntary sector, we have been able to obtain many grants, based around delivery of specific activities, leading to employing additional skills within the centre for the benefit of the young people.



Senior helpers/volunteers within the Junior Club have and are critical to its continuation. Many young people have developed through this particular section. To date, we use this via a Job Application, Job Description and prior to 2003, a training scheme. Many have gone on to work with children and young people in some capacity. Prior to 2003, many were involved as paid DJ's supporting the delivery of 'parties'.

Community Service

Again, until 2003, we were a major venue for the Probation Service and its Community Service, specifically helping the Centre with its continual need for redecoration, etc. (Money saving exercise). Many of their Clients being well known to the Centre!

In the mid eighties; under the Manpower Services Commission, and sponsored by the Winsford Youth Forum, in which we were involved; the Centre became a major base within Winsford for the delivery of additional after school and weekend work from the Centre. Up to 32 additional people were employed throughout Winsford, with many based here. Some of those actually went on to work with both adults and young people in some capacity.

Business Creation

Although this is not a direct remit for the centre, however from 1980 – 2002, we were a major venue for the many 'bands' that needed rehearsal space from which many earned money at 'gigs'. Some of these took place at the Centre or the Civic Hall. We have heard of several of these moving on into the creative industry as a consequence of their experiences here.

Crime Reduction and Prevention

Youth work and provision has always been closely associated with the social issue of crime prevention. To help achieve this, New Images was conceived historically and it is still relevant today, as being somewhere safe for young people to go and for them to have something to do, in other words, to distract them from the possibilities of negative forces influencing their behaviour and actions. This was clearly identified in the late eighties via the work delivered by our major partner, the Youth Forum, as mentioned in an 'Home Office' report regarding 'Youth activities in disadvantaged areas'. Other partners in that organisation were the Police, supporting them in delivering activities at that time became the norm, specifically fishing, 5-a-Side Football, and to some extent, the Monday evening discos.

Being seen to be working with any enforcement agency shows that partnership working is taking place, and that we have certain expectations from the young people.

Young people themselves, are more likely to be victims than any other age group. Being in a safe environment is a realistic need and expectations from them and parents alike. That does not just apply within the Centre but also at events, etc. On one occasion total support was required to assist in a vicious dog attack where a coat was ripped to pieces. The owner had no intention of replacing the coat and the incident had to go to the Small Claims court for the expenses to be reimbursed.

New Images has been key in reinforcing that young people have the right to the protection of the law and know the positive side as well as their perceived negative side, thus producing respect amongst young people to uphold the law

Teaching and Coaching

Delivery of skills based projects has always featured as part of the delivery of New Images. From table tennis, football, badminton coaching to projects teaching playing musical instruments, singing and how to paint murals, small nightly sessions around specific art and craft skills and discussion groups around 'teenage issues' are all delivered at the Centre. One of the main aims of the youth centre is to bring a variety of new experiences and opportunities for the young people to explore, making a varied and exciting programme. Not doing this and becoming repetitive makes an unhealthy environment and is 'boring'!

Generally, the concept has been to introduce young people to something, develop it and then take it to a new level. The aspiration has always been to support the young people to a higher level. The simplest examples of this are:

1. Bands – learning to play a musical instrument and rehearsing, etc. then need a venue to perform. New Images became that venue and then became actively involved in planning and delivering events throughout the town, especially at the Civic Hall.
2. Pool Matches – Having these and producing some very good players was constraining, so we applied to go to an adult (Winsford) Pool League, during which, we had to overcome adult perceptions and concerns, especially regarding the use of alcohol. This became a major initiative around drinking, apart from the game itself, not just for us, but for the adults who would be playing at an alcohol free zone, a youth work initiative, which had many varied social implications – but allowed our members the opportunity to play high competitive games, many who moved up into pub teams later.
3. Football – The loyalty to this Centre of many members who had progressed by the many age groups football teams that we ran, pressurised the Centre into applying and going into an Adult League (over 18's). Again, we were the first youth centre to make this request, and challenge similar perceptions as we experienced in the Pool League.

The key to all this is having a pathway for members' development and aspirations, one that we have (until 2003) always, as an organisation, aspired to do.

Raising Educational Standards and Aspirations

Challenging and moving young people on, is a key aspect of Youth work. We do this by creating opportunities and developing relationships with young people in a friendly and safe environment. Challenging when required, especially with regard to respect and care for other users (staff and young people), equipment and the building. Consistency is imperative in that approach via an agreed with members set of rules. This creates an atmosphere and standards from which educational attainment and aspirations can be achieved. These can be pursued via informal learning, which is delivered in a planned constructive manner.

Current Impact and Activities

The majority of existing provision since 2005/6, has been supported by Connexions – now Young People's Services, consisting of Tuesday and Wednesday night youth clubs and 'Buddies' (special needs) club on Thursdays. Additional 'After-School' clubs run on Mondays and Thursdays, which include a Duke of Edinburgh award scheme session. These sessions run for 2 – 2.5 hours.

On Monday night, two table tennis teams play their league fixtures (seasonal) here. This is supported via an after school club run by Winsford Youth Forum TT Group on Tuesdays from 3.15 – 4.30. Winsford Youth Forum also run the Junior Club on a Friday night.

8. Future Options and Opportunities

History of the Battle for New Images

The change of delivery style for the Youth Service to area 'Hubs' had to be achieved within the dedicated annual budget, as set by Cheshire County Council. The only 'assets' held by the Youth Service were its own 'County' youth centres. Vale Royal had two. With the 'preferred' location for the New Hub being in the centre of Northwich, costs dictated both had to be delivered via a different delivery model, to be able to sustain a third asset.

This vision and the potential impact on New Images was clearly appreciated and steps to integrate local delivery via partnership working with the voluntary sector, from New Images was envisaged as a means forward. One that was mutually beneficial to all parties.

However, Senior Officers from the Youth Service at that time believed that this could be done without community consultation. Promises were made and broken, resulting in a totally unexpected reaction and response at a public meeting. Youth Workers were barred from participating, one being threaten with disciplinary action, should he do so. Senior Officers appeared to have little to no understanding of the impact of the work the Centre was providing on the community and the needs of the community.

Subsequent press articles and demonstrations outside County Hall, etc. resulted in the Voluntary sector withdrawing from the proposal. Consequently another 'party' was needed; one that many thought was the preferred option of Senior Managers –the Verdin High School.

The school at that time was chronically overcrowded and needed additional space, so they agreed to take over building responsibility under a 10 year license, with provisions for Youth Service delivery on four nights, and playscheme use during the summer, within an agreed area of the building.

This agreement continues as the basis for the Centre until the summer of 2013.

Background structure

For the last 2-3 years, Connexions has been going through major restructuring and rationalisation of its delivery, as per the National Social Policy to restructure its information and advice/guidance to young people. Since Connexions in Cheshire is an 'integrated service', (IAG and Youth Service Provision), the Youth Service has been a casualty of this restructuring. That is not to say that rationalisation would not have happened within the Youth Service). To date, that process is ongoing, with what remains of the Youth Service controlled back within CWAC. That is until another review, in preparation for outsourcing via an SLA is completed and due in the summer of 2013 for implementation in the following spring (2014).

Meanwhile, the disruption to staffing morale, etc. has had a profound effect on the delivery throughout. Presently, the task is to maintain key services especially in 'targeted areas'.

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New Images, due to its perceived location and the oncoming return of its lease back to CWAC in 2013, faces additional pressure via CWAC's need to make further rationalisations due to the number of properties it supports. Amalgamating services into these properties, regardless of need and type of use to save money, is now a clear priority and the biggest threat to the Centre.

Future Options and Opportunities

The situation specific to New Images is further compounded by the building of the new Academy close by. Although not defined as being within their 'footprint', the opportunity to increase the school's space via the demolition of the Centre is a major concern.

The forces working against New Images need to be balanced against the needs of the young people and the future potential of any dedicated youth provision within Winsford. New Images still has the major elements (with modifications) to fulfil that function. Winsford, as a targeted area, which includes specific targeted groups as in the seventies, requires facilities capable of delivering the work required, with an infrastructure sustainable and dedicated to carry out that work. Any new Service via a Service Level Agreement, must and should incorporate that provision and requirement.

Previous attendance/use shows the potential of a vibrant Youth Centre, to attract not only 'targeted' young people, but others too, with the right support model in place to meet the required outcomes could easily be achieved.

9. Proposals going Forward

Youth provisions over the years in Winsford have evolved from the needs of one major venue to additional units within some of the estates, due to more local needs.

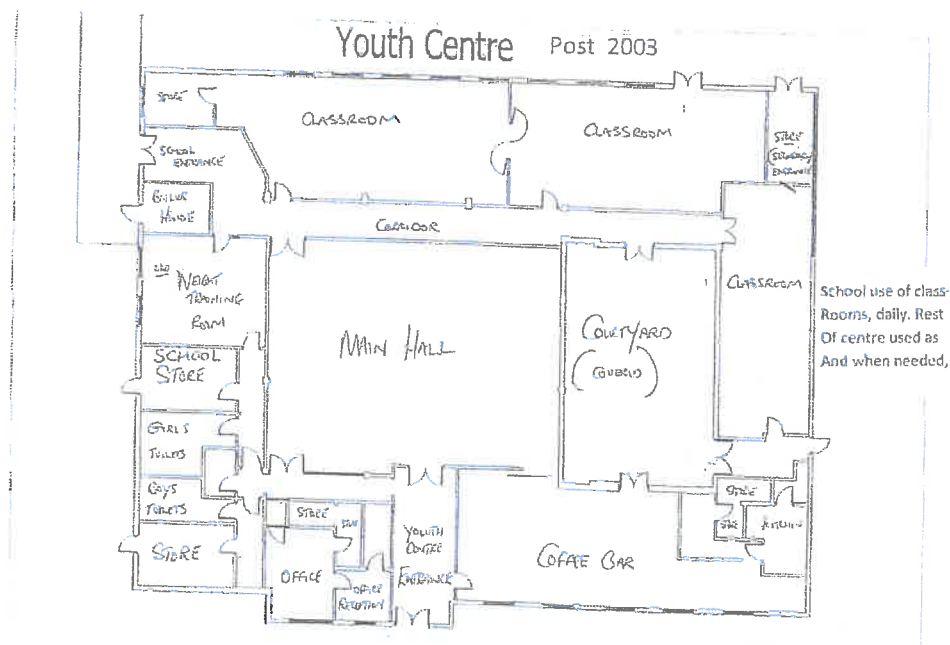
The diluting of provision and facilities at New Images has not been matched by like for like increases on the estates. So, in effect, youth provision has decreased over the last nine years.

To facilitate small units; which by their very nature have limited appeal; facilities and opportunities to be vibrant, would suffice to justify the authority to provide youth provision and save monies at the expense of the provision of such as New Images, however, they would have limited use and be at best 'tokenism' to the needs of the young people.

The potential of one vibrant 'youth provision' as presently being advocated under the 'My Place' programme, which echoes the original concept under which Winsford Youth Centre was formed, is the basis on which we should build.

The plans below indicate the existing layout which with some minor modifications, and modernisation, would be suitable for the ongoing delivery of youth provision in Winsford.

This would allow the Centre to remain flexible in its approach to meet the needs of young people and to some extent, the community via organisational support from existing or potential users with an interest in youth provision, within an agreed supportive financial structure.



The data within this report reflects the evidence from the past when this approach was delivered and the potential for the future.