

## **Evaluation Summary of Use of Connexions Mobile to Support Young People in Response to Carlisle Flood**

The Rationale for the Mobile Use during the 8 weeks following the Carlisle Flood was

- To provide information, advice and support to young people in affected areas on any issue or concerns they may have had.
- Utilise opportunities for informal group work, etc
- Work collaboratively with other youth organisations doing detached/ Outreach work in the area to maximise services available to young people.
- Identify what young people felt they needed to assist them in the longer term of rebuilding / reparation process
- Support partner agencies to continue ongoing work with young people using the Mobile Provision as a base.
- Other agencies providing support services to young people were also offered opportunities to co - work with us over the 8 weeks to deliver services or forward information on their services for dissemination to young people who used the mobile provision.

### **Summary of Use of the Mobile,**

- During the 8 weeks that the Mobile was in operation in the Flood Routes, 16 sessions were delivered ( 20 were planned, with 4 cancelled due to staffing shortages)
- The majority of sessions were co-delivered by City Council and Connexions staff with some input from the YWCA. Outreach work took place in support of the mobile provision in the areas of Warwick Road and Botcherby, delivered by a partnership of staff from Botcherby Healthy Living Initiative, City Council, YWCA and Connexions.
- Routes covered Botcherby, Warwick Bridge and the Warwick Road area.
- The number of recorded attendances of young people on the mobile was 89 young people 36 Young Women and 53 Young Males. 4 Adults also accessed the mobile.

### **Issues Raised by Young People who Accessed the Provision**

- Lack of provision due to the flooding of Botcherby Community Centre – Nothing to do but hang around the streets. Cold and dark.
- The closure of Newman School.
- Difficulties of attending a different school.
- Adjusting to a different timetable
- Losing coursework
- Change of timings for mobile was an issue raised by young people, particular when it was changed after the 4<sup>th</sup> week of operation. (Further detail provided on this issue in staff feedback area for development section)
- Information on the new proposed ‘all weather 5 aside facility (what they would like to see on it and how they could get involved)
- School/education system. Attendance, positive and negatives of schools system.
- Youth Club updates (keeping informed of what is happening for young people in the local area such as cinema trips etc) A number of staff fed back that young people were really keen to find out what provision was available to them.
- Sexual Health and relationships (some condom distribution and discussion around sexual health /relationships)
- Community Centre updates. What provision is being put in place to continue the club (Brag House or portacabins)

### **Feedback from Young People regarding the Mobile**

“Good to have it there after school hours as it gave us something to do and stops us doing stuff we shouldn’t be doing.”

“ The bus is good we do lots of work in it, keeps us out of trouble”

“Its great condition and people are really, nice good support and make you feel good”

“I think its brilliant, everything you need”

“This is a really great idea, to create a number where you can get advice on anything that concerns you”

## **Young People's Evaluation of Mobile Provision**

*What did you like about the mobile?*

The Workers  
Good Information  
They were nice  
They were nice friendly people  
It was good and you could communicate with others

*What did you not like?*

The seats  
The way it was set out X 2  
It was quite boring

*What could have been done to make the mobile unit better for you?*

Leather couch  
More things about sex and drugs  
Set it out better  
Young fit lads  
You could have made a cup of tea!

## **Feedback from Staff who worked on the Mobile**

### **Strengths: Use of Mobile Provision**

- Quick response to identified need.
- Commitment to work together established by agencies from an early stage
- Young people have used the mobile unit as a meeting point to see their friends and have built relationships with workers on the mobile.
- Discussions with young people took place about how the young people felt about differently about accessing the Connexions Centre after meeting Connexions Staff.
- The mobile unit has worked in the capacity of a meeting point for the youth worker to keep in touch with the young people. It has been a central point for the young people to plan and think about their film project. Due to this and the move from the mobile unit to BRAGG House there has been a continuation of support for those young people after the mobile has left the area

- Useful in being a temporary stopgap /info point before more permanent provision came on line.
- Could go into areas where it was needed / could be used
- In areas like Botcherby it enabled youth workers to re-engage (after Xmas break) or engage with young people from the area, where there was no previous base to do so because of the floods. The unit gave a focal point for this to happen as well as a base for continuation of outreach work in the area by Community Health Workers and local Youth Worker. Without this it would have been difficult to have continued contact with young people in the area.
- The Unit provided a base for partnership working in the area
- Central point for touching base with outreach workers
- Using the mobile unit ensured some continuity of service and seemed to help maintain interest of young people in projects.
- The timing of the unit in the afternoon/ early evening provided an opportunity engage with the younger age group after dinner and school time.

#### **Areas for Development: Use of Mobile Provision**

- Clearer defined joint goals from the beginning may have helped speed a long a process that happened over time.
- More emphasis on workers from each organisation working as a team for example planning and evaluating sessions together.
- Greater communication and regular workers meetings may have helped with sharing information between sessions and improving outcomes for young people as well as sharing practice amongst workers on the unit ( i.e the introduction of the 'shared information book' for multi agency workers to pass information on between sessions.
- The mobile provision was ill equipped to deliver sustained working with groups larger than 4, with the current lay out of the mobile.
- Need better resources on the mobile to conduct small group work.

- Lack of space to do active sessions on the mobile identified as an issue, poor weather meant that mobile couldn't be used as a focal point with activities happening outside, difficult to manage 'energy' in the mobile with no immediate alternative activities to signpost to. (this is compounded by the lack of resources issue if the weather was ok to do activities outside)
- Lack of consistency in workers meant that relationship building was difficult for young people as different staff worked the mobile on different occasions.
- Young people should have been more involved in the planning and have a say in the times and venue etc also informed of any changes to the programme and have a chance to voice their opinion.
- Lack of consultation with young people regarding the shortening of mobile hours may have contributed to unwanted behaviour on the mobile.
- An exit plan should have been made and agreed by all organisations to reduce the risk of the mobile leaving and having a negative effect on the young people, in leaving a gap in provisions.

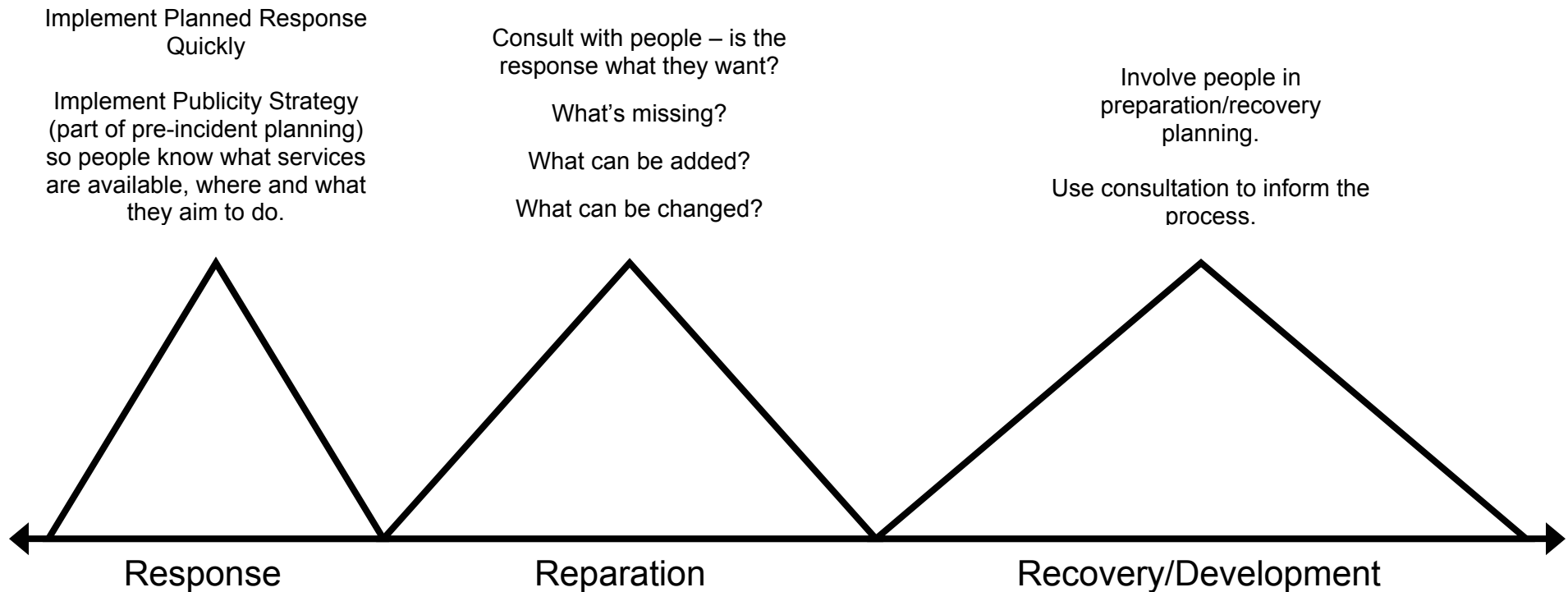
### **Recommendations for Consideration When Planning Future Incident Response Support for Young People**

Of primary importance is the need to ensure that all of the recommendations listed below form part of a discreet strategic plan outlining an agreed set of key initial actions for all services for young people i.e) Health, Social Services, Education etc, in the wake of any incident where services for young people have been severely disrupted and require an immediate collaborative response by agencies to deliver interim services to young people. An opportunity now presents itself to secure a shared set of key initial actions, endorsed by all providers of services to young people, should an incident requiring an immediate response occur in the future. Recommendations for inclusion within such a strategic response could include

- Have a clear and shared plan of action with clear commitments / roles, expectations timescales and outcomes for all parties involved in the plan of action.
- Establish from the outset an agreed partnership protocol (including goals, etc) with something about what each agency would like to bring to the partnership, with agreed review timetables.

- Agencies should consider consistency of workers for young people to develop relationships as a factor when allocating staffing resources for this type of incident response type project.
- Consider the full age range of young people when planning service provision. Identify partners who can work with younger age group and incorporate within the response provision of services for 8- 13 year olds.
- Consider a lead co-ordinator, to set tasks, objectives, outcomes for working to plan of action.
- Have a clear exit strategy that forms part of the plan of action to ensure that input doesn't 'drift' or alternatively that the withdrawal of service doesn't leave gaps in provision unaddressed (i.e need to flag up issues with appropriate agencies as part of exit strategy)
- The action plan agreed by all agencies should include preplanning meetings with all workers connected to delivering provision, in order to seek shared ownership of the project and to identify collectively the type of sessions that could be delivered. Agree the best use of time and space and provide clearer structures for staff to work in.
- During planning sessions secure interagency agreement on approaches to developing ground rules for using the provision by young people and challenging behaviour.
- Agree content of planned sessions – contingency plans – assigned workers to lead sessions.
- Have dedicated session times, including later evening sessions for the older age group.

**Suggested Incident Response Model – Based on Feedback from Areas for Development of Using Connexions Mobile during Flood Response**



**Incorporate regular review points and mark endings as the process moves through the phases**