



National Citizen Service (NCS) allows young people across England – including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable – to develop the tools, skills and belief to unlock their potential and make a positive impact in their communities.

NCS is open to Year 11 and 12 students from all schools, colleges and pupil referral units and 16 and 17 year olds not in education. For people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities the age range is 16 to 25.

Act now to help young people in your area ‘say yes’ to National Citizen Service.

How you can help

- Email ncs-teachers@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk to contact the partner selected by the Government to deliver NCS in your area.
- Inform your youth and social service providers, schools, colleges and other local organisations working with young people about NCS and its benefits.
- Work with these organisations and your regional NCS provider to provide young people opportunities to take part.

“This is such a fantastic opportunity for young people to begin engaging in their local communities and supporting local projects that will benefit everyone. This is without doubt a life-enhancing experience for all those taking part. This NCS scheme really does have the power to demonstrate how we can all make a difference for the future.”

Councillor Kay Twitchen OBE, Essex County Council Chair

How young people can benefit

- NCS participants will have the chance to:
 - meet new people from different backgrounds on residential challenge weeks.
 - work with local businesses and social leaders to learn important skills and discover more about their area.
 - develop and deliver community based volunteering projects that matter.
- Independent evaluation by NatCen found NCS promoted personal and social development among participants:
 - 95% gained skills, such as leadership, teamwork and independence.
 - 90% got to know people they would not normally mix with.
 - 85% increased their awareness of education and employment.
 - 85% learnt something new about themselves.
 - Benefits were particularly valued by young people at greater risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET).

- **Every young person is potentially able to benefit.** Fees for participants are capped at £50 and bursaries available for disadvantaged young people.

"Before the programme, I was just a guy on the streets, fighting, getting kicked out of schools. I was all negative with no positive inside of me. The staff who introduced this programme to me have opened doors - if it wasn't for them I'd probably still be on the streets. I've learnt there is so much in this world that you can do."

Saad, National Citizen Service graduate, Harrow

How you can benefit

- Reduces demand for specialist services. NatCen found NCS contributed to lower Anti-Social Behaviour and more young people wanting to stay out of trouble.
- Helps you meet your statutory responsibility to provide services and activities to improve young people's well-being. In addition to the above, NCS is shown to:
 - support young people to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives.
 - allow them to develop a strong sense of belonging.
 - provide them opportunities to socialise safely with their peers, experience spending time with older people and develop relationships with adults they trust.
 - improve their physical and mental health and emotional well-being.
 - raise their aspirations, build their resilience and inform their decisions.
- Fulfils your 'September Guarantee' statutory duty to secure 16- and 17-year-olds a suitable offer of education or training in school, college or work-based setting.
- Contributes to your duty to support voluntary and community organisations. Participants gave 900,000 hours, as well as raising funds, in summer 2012.
- Raises your profile. Projects have received media coverage and visits from Ministers, MPs and celebrity ambassadors.

"Their accomplishments were amazing and clearly every individual had worked very hard! These young people are now active members of their community and lots of on-going opportunities have been presented to them through the Early Intervention Service"

Ryan Johnson, Oxfordshire County Council NCS Co-ordinator

How you can find out more

- Contact your NCS provider by emailing ncs-teachers@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk
- Visit www.direct.gov.uk/ncs and www.facebook.com/ncs
- Read the case study below of how the borough of Harrow has benefited



IT ALL STARTS AT YES



Case Study: National Citizen Service in Harrow

Harrow Council has partnered with vInspired and Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust to deliver the National Citizen Service. The first year of the programme in 2011 saw a small team of 15 young people come together, including four from a gang, 5 from care and two from a private school. As part of their six week National Citizen Service, the team took part in a sleepout to raise money for a homelessness charity, community volunteering and two week-long residential activity trips.

Recruitment was focused very much on local authority services at first, to gain access to hard to reach young people and those in care, those known to the youth offending team and in need of extra help, through referrals from social workers, youth workers and care services. Young people were also selected from mainstream and private schools across the borough to achieve a diverse social mix. The successes of the building of the team and the development of its programme of activities were reflected in that not a single person dropped-out from the 15-strong team throughout the programme.

The project was extremely rewarding for the young people who took part, and the whole local community has benefited. The differences in the young people can really be seen, and they have built on what they were given through the programme to give back to their community. The team has remained together after the completion of their National Citizen Service, and continues to do work in the community. Six of the participants were invited to take part in a leadership programme, and they have since returned to support the National Citizen Service programme in Harrow, helping to run events for future intakes.

By focusing on referrals from local authority services, Harrow's National Citizen Service has helped these youth and social services meet their objectives and see positive changes in young people they have responsibility for. These services have also directly benefited from the National Citizen Service by receiving funding from the government for each of the young people who participated in the programme.

Harrow has also gained much positive publicity through its National Citizen Service programme, winning a V regional award for the category of 'Most Outstanding NCS Team', presented to them by Cabinet Office Minister Nick Hurd. They also won a Team London Award signed by Mayor Boris Johnson. Two young people were also invited to 10 Downing Street and had an amazing opportunity to meet David Cameron. Many of the young people were also able to present to minister Nick Hurd and were interviewed live at BBC Radio London.

Harrow was successful in the running of this programme and gained support from the local community and professionals, so much so that the intake for the Summer 2012 programme was increased to thirty, although the demand and expression of interest was much higher.

The thirty inspiring young people who joined the programme in summer 2012 spent six weeks developing their own community action projects. Working as a team, they hosted a sponsored sleep out and hunger strike to raise a staggering amount of £1460.52, which has seen them make a massive impact on the lives of people locally and nationally. The money raised was distributed to Harrow Church Housing Association to support homelessness and to Oxfam to relieve the issue of famine in West Africa. The young people also raised the issue of gang violence in their local areas, helped to clean the local streets to raise the issue of litter. They also helped to clean and renovate two local gardens in the area and closed the programme with a Funday for the public to celebrate their achievements and also fundraise to support their projects.

The idea of the National Citizen Service programmes is to bring together young people from diverse parts of the community and help to build their skills and confidence while using their own ideas and abilities to do good for people in their area. It is hoped that the programme will provide that new links between young people and the community.

Daryl Moy, NCS participant in 2011 says: "The National Citizen Service has changed me, and made me realise that if you put the hard work in, you can achieve whatever you want. The course is the first thing I have ever put the work into and I got so much out of it. To anyone thinking of taking part in this course, I'd say do it, it's brilliant, and will help you."

Ali Abdu, NCS Project Co-ordinator at Harrow Council says: "What we hope to achieve is for the young people to be more integrated into the community and to be more involved after leaving the NCS programme. We found this seemed to be the case with the young people. The National Citizen Service programme was designed to allow young people to develop their social and planning skills but most of all it was to help build the relationship between young people and the community and to help both to value each other during the good and bad times."

Cllr Mitzi Green, Portfolio holder for children's services on Harrow Council says:
"Harrow's National Citizen Service was an incredible success and is great news that we have secured funding to double the size of the scheme in 2012. The scheme gives young people the skills they need to make the transition to adulthood, but does it in a fun, engaging way. Every one of this year's participants agreed that it was an unforgettable experience. I congratulate everyone at the Council, our partners and especially to the young people themselves for their achievements and making the scheme such a success"



IT ALL STARTS AT YES