



St Albans
City & District Council

St Albans

“Just hanging out”

How to provide youth shelters



City & District Council

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Cover images – shelters at Crosshands, Carmarthenshire and Hesketh Bank, nr Southport

Introduction

- This document gives information on how youth shelters can be provided in the St Albans District.
- The project was carried out for a number of reasons:
 - a belief that facilities for older children and teenagers, as opposed to young children (under 12), were lacking in the District;
 - the need to provide facilities for young people who do not want to be engaged in “activities”, clubs etc
 - the wish for these types of facilities to be provided locally and in partnership (e.g. through neighbourhood groups, town and parish councils), rather than through sole District/County funding, in the current financial climate;
 - to build on the success of recent projects around the District providing outdoor facilities and equipment (e.g. adiZone in Verulamium Park, new play equipment in Wheathampstead, project establishing youth facilities in Harpenden)
- It was written by a group of councillors wishing to provide advice, tools and tips on providing facilities for young people. They worked in a Scrutiny Task Group working to the Overview and Scrutiny (Public Services) Committee.
- The following councillors worked on the Task Group:
 - Councillors Harrison, Prowse (Liberal Democrat)
 - Councillors Bell, Read (Conservative)
 - Councillor Harris (Labour)
- Councillor Beric Read chaired the Task Group. Councillor Crawley was also co-opted to the group.
- Their work was assisted by Claire Cowley and Ian Seres, Scrutiny Support Officers.
- Our thanks go to those who were involved in the work including St Albans City and District Council officers in Culture and Community Development, Policy and Partnerships and Environment and Regulation, staff at Hertfordshire County Council Youth Connexions, Harpenden Youth Town Council and staff at local authorities and play equipment manufacturers who provided case study information. Particular thanks go to Watford firm Monster Play who hosted a guided tour of some of their facilities.
- The document includes a summary toolkit to use when planning/providing youth equipment and case study examples of youth shelters and other youth equipment from local examples and across England and Wales.

Providing a youth shelter^{*}

A) Summary of key messages

- ✓ Design the shelter to meet young people's needs
- ✓ Choose your area carefully, listening to young people and local residents
- ✓ Consult and involve local people and groups before making final plans
- ✓ Consider a pilot/trial run – perhaps using a portable shelter which can be placed elsewhere if required[†]
- ✓ Consider publicity following a successful trial rather than at the start
- ✓ Situate the shelter so it's visible “in the round”
- ✓ But enough of a distance from amenities that it will not create a nuisance and that young people will not feel overlooked
- ✓ Consider locating with other “teen” amenities such as sports equipment
- ✓ Have a plan involving detached youth work for maintaining the shelter, its use and popularity

^{*} Some material adapted from 'Youth Shelters & Sports Systems – A good practice guide' Issued by Thames Valley Police <http://www.securedbydesign.com/pdfs/youthshelters.pdf> and Calderdale Youth Shelter toolkit <http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/community/crime-prevention/antisocial-behaviour/youth-shelters.html>

[†] See Caerphilly case study in Appendix

B) Why provide shelters?

For young people

- To provide non -“organised” facilities for young people - in a place that is theirs
- Equipment provided specifically for young people rather than children – fosters a sense of ownership/trust
- Reduces boredom, provides an outlet for emotions and energy
- Fosters sense of involvement and pride in an area provided for them

For the community

- Reduced damage, graffiti, crime and fear of crime
- Enhanced community harmony
- Preventing use/potential vandalism of equipment meant for younger children
- Be able to monitor young people’s activities and behaviour while not intruding on their territory

C) What are youth shelters?

- Structures allowing young people to sit and talk:
 - they have a roof with or without walls, but almost always allowing at least partial visibility from outside, enabling visibility, ‘natural policing’ and safety for users as well as at least partial protection from the elements;
 - shelters can be linked to some type of leisure or sporting activity thus providing an outlet for both physical and social activity;
 - the size and design of a shelter should allow for safety of users and deterrence of vandalism, as well as guarding against annoyance of neighbouring properties.
- Shelters can be co-located with multi use games areas - an artificially surfaced outdoor games court which can accommodate a variety of sports. These can be constructed in a variety of styles and sizes and incorporate a shelter.
- Shelters can also incorporate other outdoor activities such as moving equipment games (e.g. life size solitaire style ball games), individual goals, outdoor gym, climbing poles etc. These provide variety and interest as “non standard” sport/leisure activities, not relating to team/active sports. Can incorporate seating/shelter options.

D) Planning a shelter

- Before planning any facilities in detail, identify the issues that need to be addressed in the local area – these will vary from one area to the next but will include at least some of the following issues.
- Ask all interested groups:
 - young people themselves[‡]
 - local residents
 - local businesses
 - police/police community support [‡]
 - local councillors
 - council officers from both district and county councils:
 - community safety[‡]
 - youth workers[‡]
 - housing
 - education
 - leisure
 - planning
 - landowners/housing providers

how they see the area, what problems there are and what the solutions might be.

- Use existing data – e.g. census/survey data for wards/super output areas – to identify areas of need, as well as community intelligence. This type of information will also be important in applying for funding.
- Provide options for facilities such as youth shelters, sports/game facilities and a range of designs – involve people in the design from the start and all subsequent stages (e.g. fundraising, building, personalised design)
- Location is key. A site needs to be close enough to where young people want to be (perhaps (close to) where they already congregate?) but far away enough from where others don't want them to be. And will the shelter be visible from a distance for policing and safety purposes?

[‡] Particularly important groups to engage early on

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- Consider different elements to a youth shelter design – colour, lighting, Bluetooth/music capability etc – according to what young people want.
 - A plan for maintenance and repair is important (including litter picking). Need to be sustained arrangements in place. Leading on from this it will be important to assess the design of facilities in terms of their technical features – involving police/community safety experts, council surveyors etc
 - Consider involving young people in the ownership and maintenance of facilities, and passing this on to others as the original groups involved grow older/move out of the area
 - Consider street scene/amenity issues – e.g. does a shelter require planning permission? This will depend on size/height and whether it is enclosed or not. Will it look in keeping with the surroundings and be acceptable to local residents as well as young people using it? What weather/aspect considerations will there be?
 - Are there other issues concerning e.g. health and safety, insurance that need to be borne in mind?

E) Funding a shelter

- Costs of shelters start from around £4,000 for a basic model but additional features/facilities, landscaping, maintenance, repair and support should also all be taken into account[§]
- It is advisable to look at possible sources for funding early on in the process as many play/youth facilities have not been funded by one source alone and often have relied on partnership/match funding and community fundraising.
- In addition, the applicant organisation would usually need to be a voluntary organisation if not a registered charity.
- However, a range of sources are worth exploring such as:
 - local strategic partnership;
 - section 106 funding from planning agreements;
 - town/parish council budgets;
 - sponsorship from local firms/organisations;and a range of additional potential funders as set out below

- If you are interested in looking into providing a youth shelter, please contact St Albans District Council's Policy and Partnerships Unit – who will be able to help you in the first instance and guide you to sources of advice, support and potential funding.

 policy@stalbans.gov.uk

 01727 866100

§ See <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/resources/835605/Equipment-Six-best-Youth-shelters/> for a reference to a range of types of shelter with associated prices

Selection of potential external funders **

<p>Funder Biffawards</p> <p>Eligible applicant Constituted groups</p> <p>Eligible work Work within 10 miles of a Biffa operation and of a landfill site (owned by any company) Site-based improvement work No DDA changes, fences, allotments, school grounds</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Make a difference to a local facility, be it a community building, nature reserve, cultural facility or outdoor space.</p> <p>Amount Small grant £250 to £5,000. Project must not cost more than £10,000 in total.</p> <p>How to apply Download and apply on form in electronic and by post to: Biffaward, RSWT The Kiln Waterside Mather Road Newark Notts G24 1WT 01636 670000 biffaward@rswt.org http://www.biffaward.org/about/soverview</p>	<p>Funder Biffawards</p> <p>Eligible applicant Constituted groups – not local authorities</p> <p>Eligible work Work within 10 miles of a Biffa operation and of a landfill site (owned by any company) Site-based improvement work No DDA changes, fences, allotments, school grounds</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Projects that provide or improve community spaces, cultural facilities and places for outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Amount Main grant – Community £5,000 and £50,000. You also need a third party contributor(s) to provide 10% of the grant you are applying for</p> <p>How to apply Download and apply on form in electronic and by post to: Biffaward. RSWT The Kiln Waterside Mather Road Newark Notts G24 1WT 01636 670000 biffaward@rswt.org http://www.biffaward.org/about/soverview</p>
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** With thanks to Stella Merryweather at St Albans CVS for providing this information

<p>Funder Chelsea Charity Foundation</p> <p>Eligible applicant A registered charity that is UK based and within a 10 mile radius of an office of the Chelsea Building Society Group.</p> <p>Eligible work A range of work</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Homeless and people in debt; Disabled people; People with mental health /learning disabilities; Children & young people; The elderly</p> <p>Amount £250 to £5,000</p> <p>How to apply Currently closed for application while eligibility criteria are reviewed. See website for opening date for applications Twice yearly decisions http://www.thechelsea-charity-foundation.co.uk/</p>	<p>Funder Co-operative Community Fund</p> <p>Eligible applicant Community & voluntary groups, self-help groups, charities incl branches of national charities</p> <p>Eligible work Long term community benefit in varied areas such as health, young, elderly and disabled people</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Disadvantaged communities</p> <p>Amount £100 - £2,000 (Max £500 if newly formed group)</p> <p>How to apply Apply on line 0161 827 5879. http://www.co-operative.coop/membership/local-communities/community-fund/onlineapplicationprocess/ Help line: 0844 262 4001</p>
<p>Funder Gannett Foundation</p> <p>Eligible applicant Registered charities in areas of the UK where Newsquest operates.</p> <p>Eligible work Usually capital projects with creative approach to education and community improvements, economic development, environmental conservation and cultural enrichment.</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Youth development and assistance to disadvantaged people,</p> <p>Amount £1,000 - £5,000</p> <p>How to apply foundation@gannett.com http://www.gannettfoundation.org/</p>	<p>Funder Garfield Weston Foundation</p> <p>Eligible applicant Registered charities only</p> <p>Eligible work Arts, Community, Education, Welfare, Medical, Religion, Youth and Environment</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries One-off contribution to core or project costs of people services Not one-off events</p> <p>Amount £5,000 or less</p> <p>How to apply All applications by post. No formal deadlines The Administrator, Garfield Weston Foundation, Weston Centre 10 Grosvenor Street London W1K 4QY 020 7399 6565 http://www.garfieldweston.org/policy/ApplicantsGuidelines.pdf</p>

<p>Funder J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust</p> <p>Eligible applicant Registered charities working with target groups for lasting change</p> <p>Eligible work Revenue and capital costs Social welfare Improving Prospects Repairing Lives Integration of Minority Groups</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Disadvantaged people Opportunities via volunteering Young people aged 14-19 Substance misusers and people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness Different social or ethnic minority groups</p> <p>Amount A large number of small grants of £5,000 or less</p> <p>How to apply Apply online at any time Decision within 6 weeks if your application can go forward to the next stage If you are making a request for less than £5,000, it may be possible for the trustees to award a grant between their quarterly meetings http://www.jpgettytrust.org.uk/funding.html</p>	<p>Funder Locality Budget – HCC Councillors</p> <p>Eligible applicant Any local constituted group</p> <p>Eligible work Any local project which matches HCC priorities</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Benefit to Herts residents</p> <p>Amount Maximum £10,000 per Councillor but in practice less</p> <p>How to apply Contact your local councillor asap and apply on-line https://www.hertsdirect.org/ufs/ufsmain?sessionid=4E7668B178A756422DC09E7AA4A2C188_1&formid=CS_LBS_APPLY http://www.hertsdirect.org/infobase/docs/pdfstore/aboutlbsmain0609.pdf</p>
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<p>Funder Trusthouse Charitable Trust Small grants</p> <p>Eligible applicant Local and national charities or not-for-profits with income less than £300,000</p> <p>Eligible work Community Support Disability and Healthcare Rural Issues</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Needy areas with 10,000 or fewer inhabitants.</p> <p>Amount Small grants for applications between £5,001 and £9,999</p> <p>How to apply Quarterly decisions Completed form plus details as above www.trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk</p>	<p>Funder Veolia Trust</p> <p>Eligible applicant Constituted organisation</p> <p>Eligible work Category D Provision or improvement public park or other public amenity</p> <p>Eligible beneficiaries Land within 5 miles of a Veolia facility</p> <p>Amount Average award £25-40K Over 40K 10% from third party needed</p> <p>How to apply Check next deadline date. Complete the on-line initial enquiry form. If you have any queries, contact 01902 794677 or info@veoliatrust.org http://www.veoliatrust.org/index.php?fuseaction=Help.main</p>
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Appendix - case study and evaluation examples

- This appendix includes a range of case study information from SADC itself, a number of local authorities around England and Wales and youth shelter manufacturers.
- It also includes information from a site visit carried out by the task group in Autumn 2010.
- A selection of local authorities was contacted in Summer/Autumn 2010 for information on their youth shelter projects including any evaluation data.
- Youth shelter/play manufacturers were also contacted who either put SADC in contact with clients or gave us the information they held themselves.
- Many of the case studies chosen are relatively close geographically to St Albans and/or have social/demographic similarities.

St Albans City and District

- **St Albans** city currently has youth shelters located at Fleetville (Hatfield Road opposite Morrisons), Longacres (off Hatfield Road) and Temple View (off Oysterfields, adjacent to the City Hospital)^{††}.
- The Fleetville model is visible from the road, set slightly aside from the main teenage play area (an adventure/assault course facility) and is stand alone. It is an SMP meeting point design^{‡‡}.



- The Longacres shelter, also an SMP meeting point, is sited with other facilities for teenagers including goal ends and seating.
- The Oysterfields shelter is set aside from other facilities such as the nearby toddler play area and again is near to goal ends. It features a “petal” style roof which is designed to make the shelter more appealing to children and younger teens.
- The Council’s experience from siting these facilities is that it is important to plan for maintenance and repair beyond the initial provision. Also, the Oysterfields and Longacres sites are not as easily visible when driving by as the Fleetville facility.

^{††} See http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-green-space/play_areas/default.aspx for locations

^{‡‡} <http://www.smp.co.uk/sports/sports-collection.html>

- At the time of writing, **Harpenden** Youth Town Council are looking at the provision of a shelter in Rothamsted Park and have over 100 feedback questionnaires completed by young people who have attended activities/events in the park.
- Feedback received from young people suggests the following are important when planning youth shelter facilities:
 - consider locating with other 'teen' amenities such as sports equipment e.g. outdoor gym or skate park
 - providing *shelter from the weather*, and *somewhere safe to go* were frequently cited reasons for providing a youth shelter
 - it was important for young people to be able to see who was in the youth shelter but they also wanted protection from the weather so a design of youth shelter with see through walls was recommended
 - shelters that are linked to a leisure or sporting activity like a skate park also allows the skaters to shelter and service their boards!

Watford Council

Watford Council were offered a youth shelter as a “showcase” free gift by a local firm, Monster Play^{§§}, who were developing a solar lit/Bluetooth/radio enabled shelter. It was piloted in Goodwood Recreation Ground, Minerva Drive in the South of Watford. Young people and local adult residents were consulted about the initiative – at first the local residents’ association was cautious in welcoming the shelter but became positive about the facility after an initial six month low-key trial. The shelter was placed in the middle of the recreation ground where visibility of the shelter from all angles was good, and took young people away from hanging around local shops and child’s play areas.

The area has also been equipped with other teen equipment such as a climbing pole (see photo below) and goal ends. The radio is not audible from around 5m away from the shelter. A second shelter (paid for) has recently been erected at Callowlands Recreation Ground.

Other feedback from Watford Council concerning youth shelters is as follows:

- Ensure sufficient consultation is conducted with young people and residents in general about the concept and location
- Consider a trial and commit to moving the shelter elsewhere if there are problems
- A shelter is likely to produce more litter (even with a bin nearby) – be prepared for this with more frequent collections/clearing but it is likely to be more concentrated in one place

Contact - John Priestly, Acting Parks Development Manager (South)

Monster Play (based in Watford)

Task Group site visit to Watford

- The councillor task group visited the Watford youth shelter sites in Autumn 2010.
- Photos of the sites are shown below.
- Although on the day of the visit it was raining heavily, young people were still in one of the shelters we visited. We talked with them and they said they liked the shelter as somewhere to go that was “theirs” and away from adults or organised activity.

§§ http://www.monsterplay.co.uk/youth_shelters_b.php



Note the proximity to children's play equipment – close but not too close - and the bin close by.



Also note the additional play/leisure equipment near the shelter.



The shelter is closed to the elements on one side and semi sheltered on two. The perforation of the metal on two sides discourages vandalism. The clear back is also as vandal proof as possible.



One of the additional play/leisure facilities, like a giant solitaire game!



The audio/Bluetooth facilities in the shelter (speaker, receiver and on/off/channel buttons)– working and not vandalised.

Caerphilly Borough Council – portable shelters

Caerphilly Borough Council had a requirement for 6 portable youth shelters but was not in a position to immediately place them in their desired locations. Lightmain's^{***} solution was to erect all 6 shelters on site at Caerphilly's depot where they were stored until their individual destinations were agreed. All that was then required was for each shelter to be moved by Hiab lorry and transported to its new site.

Lightmain's Upton Portable Shelter with steel base is easily transportable and requires no ground works as long as the area is level.



The Upton Shelter can be moved to different areas and, according to feedback from Communities and Youth Leaders, the shelter, as well as being a meeting place in the park, has been found to make a positive impact on so called "youth nuisance".

*** From <http://www.lightmain.co.uk/showsub1.asp?topcontent=153&area=lightmainleisure>

Chiltern District Council

“We have a number of youth shelters across the District and most have been installed during the past 7 years. None in the past 3 years that I'm aware of but that's mainly due to budget cuts.

“The most important thing when considering a shelter is consultation with both young people and local residents. The young people must be involved from the start, selecting a style and agreeing on the colour. I used to work for a company that designed and manufactured shelters and it was scary how many times adults (Officers and Councillors) would choose the design and colour of one and then wonder why the kids didn't use it. Another option is allowing the young people to paint the panels. This means that they can get re-painted in a few years time when the new generation of kids start using it and allows them to take ownership of it.

“Without involving the local residents in the location you will not get their support. However there also must be consultation with the young people as well. Young people will not use it if they don't feel safe. It shouldn't be too far away from natural surveillance. Most of our shelters are near to a road (within 50m approx) so police can drive by and check everything's ok without having to get out and walk! We also tried to make sure they were no closer than 100m from the nearest resident's property to avoid any possible noise disturbance.

“We have found that the most effective shelters are installed along with other sports equipment such as a basketball net, football goal, skate park or MUGA. This is so that they can be productive rather than using them to drink in.

“If I was to install one now I would try and ensure it had solar lighting (this wasn't available previously) so that the young people feel safer and it could be used in darker areas or during the winter months.

“We did have one shelter that had a car driven into it and burnt out. To sort it out we used the Youth Offending Service with kids from the local area to carry out their Reparation. They scrubbed it down and re-painted it and we haven't had a problem with it since.

“The other good thing about our shelters is that the whole community uses them. The other day we saw a group of older people sat in our Amersham shelter during the day and often we see parents and families using them.”

Contact - Katie Galvin

Senior Community Safety Officer

Spelthorne District Council^{†††}

Youth Shelters have been put into the parks as part of an initiative to engage the young people in Spelthorne. Various consultations with young people have highlighted a need for a place for the young people to go, which they can call their own. Young people were aware of the youth clubs but did not want to go to these venues.

In response to this, Spelthorne recognised that the young people would be spending their time in the parks and so, by providing a focal point for this, it helped to keep them safe and allowed them to have a space in the parks away from the other park users. The young people in question will not, in the main, engage with the youth service and it is important for them to have somewhere to meet up. This creates a sense of belonging for the young people in society and so helps in a small way to engage them. As teenagers, it is natural for them to want to meet away from the presence of adults.

Site	Make/model	Date of installation	Funder
Feltham Hill Road	SMP Arena Meeting Point	November 2003	SSSP*
Clockhouse Lane	David Ogilvie Eng. Carlton shelter 3m	February 2005	Liveability match funded with CDRP
Kenyngton Manor (1)	David Ogilvie Eng. Carlton shelter 3m	November 2003	SSSP*
Kenyngton Manor (2)	David Ogilvie Eng. Carlton shelter 2m	February 2005	Liveability match funded with CDRP
Hengrove	Park Leisure	March 2005	SSSP ^{†††}
Cedars Rec	Kompan Meeting Point (Galaxy)	January 2006	SSSP
Staines Park (Commercial Rd)	David Ogilvie Eng. Carlton shelter 3m	December 2005	SSSP
Town Lane Rec	David Ogilvie Eng. Carlton shelter 3m	December 2005	Brett Environmental Trust
Long Lane Rec	SMP Arena Meeting Point	March 2003	As part of ball court construction

††† http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/lej_youth_shelters

††† Safer Stronger Spelthorne partnership

Brackley Town Council/South Northants District Council

Installation of a shelter in Brackley Park

*“From the **Town Council's** view this particular shelter has helped to draw youngsters away from the younger children's play equipment in Brackley Park, where they were hanging out, and the shelter was placed at the Leisure Centre where the Police could keep an eye on them. For a while it was seen as a challenge as to how much could be removed in the shortest time frame! It has been in place for two years now but I don't know which make it is. But I do not hear anything about it now so the novelty has worn off and it is probably used for the purpose it was provided for. It was noted however that the Police asked it to be sited in a place which caught the wind and rain so the siting of any shelter should be thought out more carefully, it can't be pleasant sitting there facing the wind and rain!”*

Contact - Sue Crouch, Town Clerk

“The District was approached by the town council as it was deemed that there wasn't any available land in the town council's ownership to place a youth shelter and therefore the leisure centre was suggested. The council's contractor was supportive of the scheme and said they would be ok with it being sited to the side of the leisure centre. It was positioned in such a way that it was visible from the road approaching the centre. There is a problem with wind and rain getting in, the way the shelter is positioned. We also placed a goal end which provides a basketball hoop and a goal and a drawn on set of cricket stumps and this is placed near the shelter and is on tarmac about 10m by 10m. After the initial concerns it's settled down and we don't get reports of any problems other than litter.”

Contact - Ashley Davey, Lead Officer, Leisure

Callum (13), Brackley, says *“Our shelter keeps us dry and there are lights so we can see what we're doing. It's a place where we can meet up with our mates”*

Jon (14), Brackley, says *“It's good because it's out of the way of the shops so we don't annoy anyone when we meet there”*

Telford and Wrekin Council

Telford and Wrekin Council currently have 28 youth shelters across the Borough with more going in each year. They have used a variety of designs / contractors over the last 13 years, namely:

- SMP's Meeting Point
- Base Leisure's Trojan
- Monster Play's solar powered lit Bluetooth radio shelter
- Rekk solar powered lit shelter
- Lightmain Leisure portable and permanent shelters
- PPL globe shelter
- 2 Wicksteed shelter designs, and
- 2 Record RSS shelter designs

"We have found that location is important. Shelters receive a significant test from young people and this can lead to vandalism. Therefore, assess your area for the potential for this issue before committing to the design; as the cost of replacing expensive elements of the proposed shelter such as electrics can result in hundreds of pounds in repairs on a regular basis and can lead to calls for its removal as a result of this issue.

"The ones with less to break in these areas are best such as the Base Leisure Trojan or the SMP meeting point. The ones with the plastic windows to act as a barrier to wind / rain (often a request of the user) can also be vandalised even if using the bullet-proof material, as the plastic can be scratched / painted on.

"The solar power on these items is not necessarily powerful enough for the intensity of use. When the power runs out the young people become frustrated and the inevitable can occur. Some companies are looking into this such as Monster Play.

"It all sounds very negative, but they can be a great asset to any area. I would advise that you look first at a more simple option without electronics first and Rekk are as good as any. Where I have worked well with this company is in the use of professional graffiti art workshops with young people on the backs / insides of their shelters. These tend to stay free from graffiti for about 3 years when there is a need to do it again to get the different users involved in owning the facility"

Contact - Derek Owen

Outdoor Recreation Officer, Parks and Open Spaces

Mid Sussex District Council^{§§§}

Use of portable shelters

The Council recommended that an increased range of informal youth facilities and skate parks should be developed in partnership with Town and Parish Councils. It was thought that these should be located within our parks and open spaces as part of a larger strategy to offer real alternatives to crime and petty damage. These have subsequently proved to be highly successful and well used.

As a result of this, Mid Sussex District Council, in partnership with Haywards Heath Town Council and NCH 'Streetmate!' are of the opinion that youth shelters are the next logical step in making young people feel worthwhile and valued members of the community.

The youth service regularly visits various sites in Haywards Heath, providing positive activities, games and arts projects and the provision of youth shelters in these areas would assist them in this work. One issue raised by the young people themselves was simply the need them to have their own space, to sit out of the weather and meet and talk with their friends. At the present time many young people meet in our playgrounds and skate parks, sitting on the equipment or under it for shelter, but there are times when this conflicts with younger children who want to play on the equipment.

Various green spaces have been identified as having a history of use by young people who were regularly using them as meeting places. Victoria Park Youth Shelter is now operational and Barn Cottage Youth Shelter is currently on-trial for 3 months, with a third to be announced shortly. A portable shelter, which was the idea of a police officer, was thought to be the best way of testing the viability of each site before committing public money to be spent on more permanent shelters.

Youth shelters are not intended to solve all the broader problems and issues a neighbourhood may have, because young people may also need more structured environments such as organised activities, youth clubs, advice and counselling services etc. It can, however, be a small part towards addressing these issues. A youth shelter can allow youth workers to know where young people are gathering, meet them for a chat and build a rapport with them. They are also situated in open areas where police patrols can easily observe use of the shelter.

§§§ <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=2992>

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

A skate park, multi-use games area (a fenced-in tarmac pitch for playing football, basketball, hockey and other games), a youth shelter, climbing net and basket swing are planned for Tattenham Recreation Ground. Beecholme Recreation Ground in Nork is to get a new youth shelter.

The improvements come following extensive consultation with residents as part of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council's Local Community Action Plan (LCAP) for Nork and Tattenhams, which identified that the area needed better facilities for young people, particularly those between the ages of 12 and 17.

Community fundraising efforts provided the initial 'seed funding' for the project. Cllr Brian Stead said: "Over the last three years, the local community has worked really hard to raise funds towards the scheme and I would like to thank them for their efforts in helping to make the vision a reality. The new facilities will not only keep local youngsters occupied, but active as well."

The project, costing £63,000, has been funded in partnership by Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, Reigate & Banstead Youth Council, Surrey County Council Local Committee, funds raised through Music in Nork Park events and local Ward Councillors through their Councillors Community Awards. As well as contributing to the funding of the project, the Youth Council have been involved in the project since its early stages, including organising consultations with pupils at The Beacon School and users of Banstead Youth Centre to find out what local young people thought of the proposals and the designs for the scheme.

Recreation facilities provider Playworld has been appointed to install the facilities and started work on site on Monday, 17 August 2009****.

**** Information awaited on success/evaluation

London Borough of Richmond^{†††}

As part of the Borough wide [Parks Improvement Programme](#) money has been allocated to provide youth provision within the Boroughs Parks and Open Spaces. The aims of the programme are; to provide a range of facilities for park users; to trial Youth Shelters and Fit Points in Parks and Open Spaces for the 12 to 16 years age group, and to promote health and well being to young people and their peers by enabling individuals and small groups to exercise.

Traditionally teenagers have not been provided with interactive equipment after they grow out of the traditional park playground. Facilities in parks for this age group tend to be focused on football and team sports, which often exclude teenage girls.

Equipment



Youth shelters - A cosy place to be together; to read a book, just be alone for a while, a place to hang out with friends during school breaks or after school. The shelter is designed to provide cover from bad weather while at the same time ensuring maximum visibility into the shelter and leaning benches. **Fit points** - A stimulating unit designed for both young and old to test their strength and exercise their bodies.

Consultation process

It is proposed that discussions with local young people will help site the equipment in the most appropriate location within the park. Parks and Open Spaces will investigate working in conjunction with the Youth and Sports Development Services to do this. The police will also be consulted to discuss the siting of the shelters.

By contacting existing Park Friends/Liaison groups and known individuals to discuss the proposals, and displaying public notices with information about the new facilities and what they are designed for, will aim deal with any preconceptions attached to youth shelters and fit points.

It is important that monitoring and evaluating the use and success of both the youth shelters and fitness points takes place. It is proposed that this takes place at 3 months and 6 months after their installation, by means of on-site discussions with the public and local Police.

^{†††} http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/leisure_and_culture/parks_and_open_spaces/improving_richmonds_parks/young_people_and_parks.htm

Further information/useful links

<http://www.cypnow.co.uk/resources/835605/Equipment-Six-best-Youth-shelters/>

“Six of the best” youth shelters/manufacturers and associated costs from Children and Young People Now magazine online

http://www.getbracknell.co.uk/news/s/2067007_youth_shelter_anger_boils_over

Reaction to youth shelter proposals from local residents who did not think they had been consulted/involved

<http://www.thisisgloucestershire.co.uk/news/ASB-tumbles-Matson/article-2843658-detail/article.html>

Building a youth shelter has contributed to falling crime rates in a Gloucestershire village

<http://www.shrewsburychronicle.com/2010/08/19/anger-as-new-youth-shelter-is-trashed/>

But a shelter in Shropshire is vandalised only weeks after installation