

**CRANBROOK YOUTH CLUB UPDATE**

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, it is not all positive news for us in this update. However some things that have been implemented are going swimmingly, so we cannot complain overmuch!

In the last update I mentioned the dichotomy in support needs between SEN attendees, and rowdier teens who need a physical activity to engage with. We have started a 'quiet session' once a month, the is exclusively craft based and deliberately very low key. Young people are warned before they enter that there is a dedicated activity to engage with, and they are not permitted to come and go, or engage in noisy and disruptive behavior. This session is working very well, and the noisier amongst the cohort are largely very respectful of the quieter environment.

In the kitchen sessions, our Young Leader continues to shine. She plans all the menus, and delivers a tight run and well organised session to small groups throughout the evening. She tries to find a balance for the group in cooking nutritious foods that young people also want to eat and tries new and interesting recipes every time. Last session saw cinnamon rolls and chicken curry, which was delicious. We are also costing some new knives and pots and pans to aid her creations.

The young people remain committed to making an impact in their community. On top of their litter picks, they are keen to meet with the PCSO to engage with a road safety session. We are also discussing ways to reduce the recent spate of poor behaviour in the community, as they feel it reflects poorly on them all. We also want to organize a session with the park ranger to maintain a connection with nature and our outdoor spaces.

The poor behaviour choices of the few have had a real negative effect on the majority. Due to harassment and assault one of our members, as well as poor language and behaviour repeatedly exhibited in session, we have felt it necessary to permanently ban more young people this term than ever before. Though it's sad that these young people can no longer access the club, it is of utter importance that we safeguard the vulnerable among the group and make a safe space where they feel supported and valued as members. A significant amount of our time is given over to both reassuring parents that their child is safe, as well as having to talk to parents of children with poor behaviour to explain why they are banned. We look forward to participating in Anti-Social Behaviour Week, as our young people feel strongly about nipping such attitudes in the bud.

As before, all comments and suggestions are heartily welcome, we can always improve and stretch ourselves to provide different opportunities in our community.