

THE BEACON SCHEME 2005 APPLICATION FORM

Please email your completed application by midday on Monday 5th September 2005 to: beacon.application@idea.gov.uk

Please ensure you have read the Beacon Scheme Application Brochure 2005 before completing your application. The brochure is available at <http://www.idea.gov.uk/beacons>

PART 1 – AUTHORITY INFORMATION	
Authority Name (Lead authority for joint applications)	South Norfolk Council
Beacon theme for which you are applying	Positive Youth Engagement
Type of authority (Unitary, County, District, Metropolitan Borough, London Borough) (Please list all authorities for joint bids)	South Norfolk District Council + Norfolk County Council
Contact Name	Ian McArthur
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County	Norfolk
Region in which authority is located	East of England
Councillor with portfolio responsibility for the theme area (if relevant)	Vivienne Clifford-Jackson, Leader of South Norfolk Council Young People's Champion Rosalie Monbiot, Member for Children's Services, Norfolk County Council
List any other themes under which you are applying for Beacon status in 2005 (For joint applications please list authorities and the Beacon applications they are submitting).	Norfolk CC - Road Safety Norfolk CC - Valuing People
Do you agree to allow your application to be made available on the IDeA website once Beacon awards have been made?	Yes
What is the geographical size of the authority in square kilometres? (Please list all authorities for joint bids)	South Norfolk – 907 Norfolk - 5371
What is the population of the area covered by the authority? (Please list all authorities for joint bids)	South Norfolk – 113,300 Norfolk - 810,700
Authority's gross budget	South Norfolk – £37.5m (2005/06) Norfolk - £1,171.8m (2005/06)

PART 2 – THEME CRITERIA

The information given in this section should not exceed 10 pages in length.

1. Please summarise (in 1 or 2 paragraphs) the excellent practice for which you are seeking Beacon status.

Young people are an intrinsic part of the communities in which they live and as such must have a voice in how those communities are supported and developed. Through the use of the Hear by Right standards and a strong partnership between the County and District council, we are changing the hearts and minds of officers and members to place young people at the core of democratic services. This has been achieved in South Norfolk, a small rural district, through innovative and positive youth engagement built by forging a strong effective partnership; harnessing the resources and expertise of 2- tier government to enable, engage and empower young people.

The outcomes achieved for young people are:

- Their active involvement in planning and development of services outlined in the South Norfolk Youth Involvement Strategy.
- Their active involvement in the scrutiny of district council decision making through the youth forum, South Norfolk Youth Action (SNYA).
- The inclusion of young people as an intrinsic part of community cohesion
- The promotion of positive social behaviour within communities

2. Outline how you meet the six key criteria below (the criteria are explained in more detail in the Application Brochure 2005).

2.1 Outcomes (the tangible differences that have been achieved for your community)

South Norfolk Council (SNC) and Norfolk County Council (NCC) are giving young people an influential voice. Young people are playing a key role in shaping the district council budget; they have addressed SNC and NCC Cabinet; scrutinised the environment and other strategies; examined the way SNC handle refuse and recycling; and influenced SNC's policies on crime reduction.

- SNC has established a very active group of young people - South Norfolk Youth Action (SNYA). SNYA is about young people actively involving themselves in the community, particularly with the District Council. SNYA members are volunteers, and are supported by help with transport and expenses.
- The two councils agreed to jointly fund the post of Active Citizenship Co-ordinator, with youth work qualifications, to ensure that capacity was available to support young people and ensuring stronger two-tier partnership working through shared expertise and resourcing. The post is within South Norfolk House to strengthen the close link young people have with the Council, and young people sat on the interview panel.
- Young people are an integral part of the democratic process. SNYA provides a forum in South Norfolk through which young people are formally consulted, to debate, scrutinise and affect district council decisions. One "hot topic" they looked at was the provision of sun-beds in leisure centres. Young people debated forcibly with officers and members their misgivings over the associated health risks, against the income generation that was badly needed for the service. The outcome was that SNC Cabinet recommended that sun-bed use in their leisure centres should stop.

- During SNC's budget setting exercise last year, SNYA questioned the Finance Team on how the budget is set, and debated what the priorities should be. Their comments and assessment of the budget were more extensive than all other groups consulted combined. SNC Cabinet took those views into account, and the chair of SNYA

addressed the Cabinet budget meeting. Young people were consulted on the NCC budget through the Youth Service and Communications Unit.

- SNYA's involvement in the budget exercise forced significant change in the way financial professionals examine and present their information and convinced officers to provide more easily understood reports. This has benefited both adults and young people alike - other professionals who were not so prepared to admit their lack of understanding now receive material that they understand and can use more readily.
- Members of the UK Youth Parliament challenged the NCC Scrutiny system and have begun to lead changes in the way in which young people's views are taken into consideration through an accessible process. A DVD guide to Scrutiny has been produced with e-Voice funding in partnership with young people.
- Young people are involved with both councils' services in a variety of ways. They are supported individually through the ethics of youth work, and are becoming more engaged through greater involvement with, and exposure to, the broad range of services offered by both councils.

The example of youth involvement in the SNC budget exemplifies the possible changes that can be brought about by young people. Consultation on the SNC budget is now expected and anticipated by SNYA, and fully valued by SNC. Youth involvement in the democratic process is becoming embedded within both councils. Close partnership working with Norfolk Children's Services ensures appropriate professional practice alongside officer expertise.

2.2 Leadership, Vision and Strategy (what you are trying to achieve and political leadership and strategic management that drives this agenda)

Both councils have used the Hear By Right template in order to develop working with young people to encourage greater engagement in their community and the democratic process. South Norfolk's Corporate Plan has as one of its 8 priority topics a commitment to include young people and to take account of their views. NCC has a Hear by Right Strategy that has been approved by Cabinet.

Funding for work with young people is integral to a range of budgets as opposed to being isolated to a separate budget. Norfolk County Council (NCC) has also unlocked other budget sources such as the INTERREG funded e-Voice project to fund specific youth involvement projects such as a young persons guide to the Scrutiny process, an electronic council tax game and citizenship curriculum activity pack.

SNC has developed an overarching corporate Youth Involvement Strategy, based around the Hear by Right standards, which identifies policies for participation and reflects the shared values of commitment to young people. SNC realised that there were very few examples of good practice available when writing the strategy, so much of this was essentially developed in house, using the expertise of NCC professionals and support from Diss High School.

Young people were and are fully involved in the development of SNC's Youth Involvement Strategy and in devising the action plan that is being implemented over the next three years.

Young people have produced a credit card 'young person' version on one folded A4 page, with the wording and design devised by SNYA members and high school pupils. This is available in all South Norfolk high schools and youth clubs.

In July 2005 the OFSTED Report which rated Norfolk Youth and Community Service as

“Good” identified that “good progress has been made towards involving young people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of youth work and, active citizenship projects. Young people contribute to county planning events through a network of local and district user groups and feel that their voices are heard. Youth workers help to develop young people’s awareness of political structures and processes and their use in negotiating change”

The Leader of the Council and the Head of Corporate Affairs in South Norfolk are the champions for young people. Each year South Norfolk’s Chairman has a theme for their year of office. The last 2 themes were “Young People” and “Young People and Sport”. In Norfolk County Council the Head of Children’s Services, and Leader of the Council are the champions for Hear By Right and there is a Cabinet member with responsibility for Children’s Services. The Leader of NCC chairs the LGA Children and Young People Board.

2.3 Community and Customer Engagement (how you engage your service users and wider community)

Recognising the need to enable young people to become more involved in their communities, both councils have made a continuing commitment to engage young people in strategic policy development through youth forums, service user groups and direct delivery partnerships. Examples of innovative engagement strategies include:

- Norfolk Children’s Services, Service User groups provide feedback and information to identify improvements and to evaluate and review current practice.
 - The Local Development Framework (LDF) process is involving young people in South Norfolk in a variety of settings, including schools and other community buildings.
 - SNYA has been involved in debates with SNC Planning Service and in proposing items for consideration in the LDF.
 - The Van in the Village project, resourced through the SN CDRP, is short-term intervention work aimed at engaging young people and adults in their community. The Van is invited into communities, particularly where there are concerns about anti-social behaviour and minor vandalism. The project arranges referrals to specialist support services to encourage young people to reflect on their behaviour. This has led to new diversionary activities being set up, has strengthened the relationship between young people and adults, and built better community cohesion.
 - Parish Planning involves young people from the start. In one of the more remote villages in South Norfolk – Bunwell - Van in the Village helped young people become involved, which led to the formation of a youth committee. It runs alongside the Parish Plan steering committee to develop ideas for their plan. Young people particularly enjoyed using the graffiti wall to share their ideas. Innovative youth work practice is now being used in other villages.
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- SNYA members realised, after discussion with the police, that young people were not involved in police training. Through supported discussion and negotiation, we have set up special training with Norfolk Police to support mutual understanding and community cohesion. This uses real situations not role playing, involving young people, some on ABCs, to foster mutual respect. (See case study)
 - SNYA have developed their own website, with advice and help from SNC, to provide an easy access route for young people to gain information and to contact the Council.

- Norfolk Blurb is a young person run interactive website and moderated chat facility, supported by NCC, with links to both main council websites and dedicated district pages. (www.norfolkblurb.co.uk)
- SNC are working closely with young people in schools and SNYA, to develop, design and review the main SNC website.
- A focus group of young people were asked if the way NCC delivered its services via its website, Customer Service (call) Centre and Council Information Centres met their needs. The findings have informed service provision in specific areas.
- SNC are committed to producing reports and documents in jargon free, accessible language. Young people are an ever-growing part of this reviewing process. The Chair of SNYA, Jenni Clutten, addressed SNC's AGM in May, and took the Council to task for the use of bureaucratic language. SNC listened and since then have gone a long way to changing things, to the point where in an article recently in a local paper Jenni acknowledged that they are getting better.
- What young people think and what they want from their communities has become a focus. Young people are challenging the stereotypical media led views about youth crime and anti-social behaviour. They have written letters, met newspaper editors, briefed reporters, issued press releases in order to voice their concerns and positive stories about young people are appearing.
- Norfolk YouthBank is a really successful enterprise, one of the best in the country, run and managed by young volunteers. In 2004, nearly 180 young people in South Norfolk were assisted by YouthBank (SN) to help themselves and others. Projects ranged from helping to set up a youth club, to helping one young woman to deliver AIDS awareness training in Africa. Core funding comes from the County Council and South Norfolk YouthBank's good track record has led to, the South Norfolk LSP, South Norfolk Alliance, contributing £10k of their 2005/06 development fund to YouthBank. These additional funds will help to raise the profile of volunteering; increase the help and support given to local young people and help increase the capacity of YouthBank in South Norfolk.
- SNC is working with 42 pupils from Long Stratton High School to share expertise as part of their ICT core curriculum. They learn about the Council as a business organisation and see how ICT/e-facilities are used to deliver services and manage the Council.
- SNC provides training for young people on a variety of topics including innovative work around Community Safety. SNC have specialised training sessions - "Crucial Crew" - run in partnership with the Fire Service, a fun way for children from 8 – 11 to learn life-saving safety messages.

2.4 Actions (what initiatives or steps you have taken to deliver your vision)

Both councils consider all young people to be volunteers in all active involvement opportunities. Young people provide a valuable and unique insight to the services provided for them. They receive credit for their service in the form of certification, letters of thanks, references, publicity for their own endeavours, mobile phone vouchers, or whatever is most useful to them and within service abilities. Many young people like to use their extended volunteer placement to gain the service element of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and then go on to join an open award group.

Young people access more formal volunteering opportunities through Norfolk Children's Services, who support them in placements with training and supervision. Examples include running a youth club snack bar, sound engineering and police training, and are often called things other than volunteering; 'having a go at.; doing some stuff with.:' - preferred as an approach to engage young people who may have a less than positive view of what 'volunteering' means. Partnerships with Connexions and Business in the Community enable young people to try work experience outside the school system as part of their personal development. NCC have run an extensive volunteer recruitment campaign in partnership with the voluntary sector, which it is hoped will further increase volunteer numbers.

As part of the implementation of the Every Child Matters framework, almost 500 young people across Norfolk took part in a series of interactive conferences.

Both councils have established child protection policies and structures to ensure the safety and well being of young people. The policies are regularly reviewed and updated, and underpin the charter of shared values embodied in the South Norfolk Youth Involvement Strategy and NCC Hear by Right Strategy.

The development of the South Norfolk Youth Involvement Strategy used a structural evaluation based on the Hear By Right framework and toolkit. On Hart's Ladder of Participation, SNC assessed itself as being only on the second rung, and through the work carried out over the last year has reached level 5.

Both councils are actively involved in Local Democracy Week (LDW). In LDW 2003 SNC wanted to go beyond 'I'm a Councillor get me out of here', to 'I'm a young person, get me in there!'

SNC opened up the district council building to 75 young people who came in and questioned officers about council services. There were workshops where young people were able to find out about topics like housing and homelessness and for members and officers to talk with a large number of young people about their concerns. This helped shape the revised SNC Housing Strategy. Councillors said it was the best thing they had been involved in. Young people quickly assumed ownership of the office, and responsibility for the power they held.

In 2004 young people devised a user-friendly A-Z guide to South Norfolk Council Services, now published. Young people used LDW Making your Mark to launch SNYA, with about 150 young people attending a gig in Diss, with three local young bands who are involved in a Norfolk Children's Services music project (SN Sounds).

The programme for LDW 2005 - Ideas into Action, focuses on breaking down the perceived barriers between councillors and young people, and the involvement of harder to reach groups. For example working closely with a number of key service providers in NCC and an independent film-maker, young people will be challenging the NCC officers and members to consider the involvement of harder to reach individuals as service users.

While the strategic and democratic process is being addressed through the work of SNC with SNYA and older young people, further community youth engagement work is being

carried out in partnership with Norfolk Children's Services. Some of the work carried out with younger people is more "hands on". For example, young people in Diss identified the need for a skate park but had been frustrated in their lone attempts to secure a provision. Both councils worked in partnership with a group of young people and the Town Council to look at options, including operating a temporary facility to allow people to judge the impact on the local area. During that period the young people held fundraising events and raised substantial funds. The outcome is a very well built, well-used skate park, which has been welcomed by the local community as a real asset.

Sound Summer is a partnership project promoting healthy, active lifestyles for young people aged 12 – 15. Events run throughout the summer holidays and include residential courses on adventure activities and art related activities. Young people are fully involved in putting the programme together and over 110 young people took part in this year's events.

As the culmination of the year when "Young People" was the SNC Chairman's theme, an exhibition of art produced by primary school children was held following collaborative work with the NCC Community Arts Participation Officer. The theme, 'Ways of Seeing', encouraged children to portray how they saw their own environment. The acclaimed exhibition included sculpture, painting and performances and was opened by the Secretary of State for Education.

SNC have run 2 pilot programmes to positively engage young people of all ages in Countryside and Conservation issues - Rangers in Schools programme and the Junior Rangers Clubs.

SNYA are presently working with SNC on the provision of youth facilities through Planning Permission 106 agreements, having identified towns and villages with no recreational area for older young people.

SNC works in partnership with the Health Service, through the Southern Norfolk PCT with whom it jointly funds a health improvement post. Part of that work has produced a sun safety campaign for primary schools in which all schools in South Norfolk received parasols and sun safety advice for pupils and their parents.

NCC worked to encourage Norfolk's 18 –22 year olds to vote in county and general elections on May 5th 2005 in a campaign launched with the help of Norfolk MYPs. The campaign used bus advertising, direct mail to every Sixth Form College, higher and further education establishment and University across Norfolk, and a unique agreement was made with local commercial radio station VibeFM to champion 'young voters'. The result was a stabilisation of general turn out figures at 63.36% – and VibeFM polls showed a 20% increase in the target age group.

NCC worked with high school pupils to produce a video and teaching pack to help teachers responsible for the Citizenship Curriculum, who said they found local government the hardest topic to teach. The 'Methwich' project followed a group of students putting together a campaign and included resources to encourage debate and engagement with local councillors. The project pack is used within schools across the County.

An online council tax game was developed by NCC in 2004/5 to make the consultation exercise more engaging for young people. The game was publicised in schools and

used during curriculum time by almost 600 young people. The game will be further developed in future years with young people.

A Young Parent's project links with PCT through the Teenage Pregnancy Unit, supported by Council Tax second homes funding. Three groups are established across South Norfolk, the venue and programme is negotiated with young people. Young people are currently involved in forming their own committee, supported by Norfolk Children's Services, to establish themselves as a district-wide independent group. Strong leadership from a core of young parents engaged 3-4 years ago, who have grown in confidence, value the experience of being heard and want to ensure that other young parents can share that experience.

The Young Parents Group has access to counselling, a CAB worker, a Connexions PA, housing information, and access to a health visitor and dietician. There is strong support provided for those who wish to find a pathway back into education, training and/ or employment.

The group in Hempnall has had up to 12 young parents attending per week for 46 weeks per year. A mini-bus pickup service is provided and a new group has been established in Wymondham with 8 young parents attending, In Harleston the group regularly engages with 12 young parents.

SN Sounds is an entirely youth run music project supported by youth workers, which enables young musicians and music technicians to put on live gigs and workshops within South Norfolk. Young people recruit and manage volunteers, and organise and promote local events.

All projects are regularly evaluated and reviewed by the young people involved. Further active involvement is undertaken through service user groups, working in partnership across the two councils and informs service provision through an established annual programme. The findings of these evaluations aid the two councils in their commitment to the improvement of services for young people.

2.5 Partnerships (who you work with to deliver excellent services and what makes these partnerships work)

A Norfolk Compact has been established with the voluntary sector that underpins close partnership working across agencies to support shared principles and joint undertakings. Both councils work in partnership with the Norfolk Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) to raise the profile of voluntary youth work in Norfolk; provide a collaborative training programme open to adults and young people alike; share good practice through networking and issue based consultation events.

Both councils are committed to the recognition and celebration of young people's achievement as part of the process of youth involvement. As part of this process Norfolk Children's Services has developed the Norfolk Youth Award that has been written, designed and formatted by young people, including those with special educational needs to ensure accessibility. The Award was developed with a group of young people from a voluntary youth project, Exchange 2, in Harleston. Working in partnership with Comic Relief and Connexions the project provides a safe meeting place, opportunities for community volunteering and information and advice.

Norfolk Youth Award records young people's individual, group and community achievement and is designed to encourage them to move onto accredited programmes. Since the launch of the Award during 2005, 120 young people in South Norfolk have gained Norfolk Youth Awards.

Working in partnership with the voluntary sector, young people in South Norfolk are currently engaged with nationally accredited award programmes e.g.: Duke of Edinburgh awards (273 Bronze, 12 Silver, 20 Gold) and XL (15 Bronze, 15 Gold).

Norfolk Children's Services is the first in the country to develop and run a BTEC Peer Mentoring qualification and will be involving recently qualified young people in future delivery of the programme in South Norfolk. In part, this has been developed with young people involved in a Transition project in Diss, which supports up to 600 young people annually to make a successful and happy transition from primary to secondary education with ongoing support. This project has been nationally recognised as good practice, and continues to be funded, by the Children's Fund.

SNC works in partnership with the Prince's Trust to develop youth enterprise and has recently had 3 small businesses started. SNC also works with young people to develop their ideas for enterprise through the Young Enterprise Scheme. One of SNC's Economic Development Officers is trained as a Business Mentor, and is on the Southern Norfolk Board for Young Enterprise. They have recently delivered a 6-week course to students at Long Stratton High School, on Project Business.

This year at the County awards for Livewire, South Norfolk achieved a 1st and 3rd place. The winner went on to represent South Norfolk at the Regional final in Newmarket. As well as the more formal awards one of the young people received a special award for overcoming difficult personal circumstances as a result of positive encouragement and support.

Both councils have strong links with national organisations such as the LGA and NYA who have used practice examples from the youth involvement work in South Norfolk as an exemplar for others to utilise. South Norfolk has had national coverage of the innovative work it does, and the Home Office requested details of the South Norfolk Youth Involvement Strategy for inclusion in the Youth Matters green paper.

Working closely with parish and town councils, young people are involved in Parish Plans with qualified officer support within SNC.

'Lorenzos' is an open youth provision that has developed to become a catalyst for creative partnership working across the community of Costessey. The SN CDRP funded development work in the area in response to concerns about considerable anti-social behaviour. Detached youth workers forged relationships with young people and local businesses and developed strong networking with the parish council, high school, Police and Connexions service to provide a building based programme of accredited activities for young people. This has further led to partnership working with Creative Arts East, the PCT and NACRO (sports). Most recently a community volunteer contacted the project to request support to help set up a project specifically aimed at and requested by, young people with disabilities and learning difficulties. This is being established in partnership with the NCC Library service.

Both councils work closely with Norfolk Connexions. Norfolk Children's Services support the Connexions Youth Council, which advises and scrutinises the decisions and structures within the Connexions service. The council involves young people from a diverse section of the community, including young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Through an innovative partnership between young people, NCC, SNC and Norfolk Police, young people are involved in the formal training of PCSOs in Norfolk. (see case study). As a result those young people involved now identify PCSO's, and the Police in general, as people who are approachable and trustworthy; recognise PCSO's and the Police as visible advocates for community cohesion and community interaction; and as individuals have gained increased self esteem and self confidence and vocalised an increased level of self esteem and community status. Additionally, these young people have begun to share their positive experiences with peers, resulting in interest in future interactions and training opportunities.

Partnership working is not just about agency interaction. It involves :

- The individual skills of professionals
- Being open to different ideas and the ability to think 'outside the box'
- Matching personalities within organisations, where individuals share similar attitudes and passions
- Transparency - being realistic about what is, and is not, achievable, and the real constraints regarding availability, costs and working practices
- Consideration of the mutual and individual benefit of partner working - the whole being greater than the sum of the parts

2.6 Equalities and Diversity (how you routinely consider equality of access to services, the various needs of different communities and develop strategies to address diverse views)

Norfolk Children's Services support a range of projects and individual support for NEET young people. In South Norfolk this includes a partnership appointment between Connexions and Norfolk Children's Services. The NEET PA identifies individual young people who are not currently engaged with services and refers, and supports them with personal development, community involvement and volunteering. This presently includes youth work-led small group activities such as kayaking, conservation and music making to build responsibility and encourage aspirations to engage with mainstream services.

There is strong partnership working between both councils, the Area Education Forum, the SN CDRP and Norfolk DAT to provide one-to-one support for socially excluded young people and to encourage community involvement.

Both councils are working closely with Norfolk and Norwich Racial Equality Council (NNREC) to engage young people from BME groups, including the recent appointment of a dedicated youth worker within the Norfolk Children's Services Active Citizenship Team. With NNREC, both councils are developing links with groups that can help to raise diversity awareness and foster community cohesion, for example through activities about Youth Against Racism during Black History Month in October.

The Young Travellers project within Norfolk Children's Services works closely with SNC and Traveller Education Service to provide an advocacy service for young people and their families. Young people receive requested support for help with their driving theory test; information and advice and support to access mainstream services, in particular health.

Both councils are working towards providing more service information in Widget form to ensure requested accessibility by young people with learning difficulties. A dedicated specialist youth worker is employed within the Norfolk Children's Services Active Citizenship Team, funded by Connexions, with a specific remit to involve young people with learning difficulties in consultation and service evaluation.

Signalong and British Sign Language training is offered to all agencies and young people through the collaborative training programme. Young people have produced a sign language version of the Every Child Matters outcomes for use throughout Norfolk.

Many young people have been encouraged to use community transport schemes supported by both councils to help combat rural isolation. Kickstart is a moped loan scheme that enables young people to travel independently to access training and employment. 44 South Norfolk people benefited from the scheme in 2004/05, securing work or training opportunities.

PART 3: CASE STUDY

The information in this section should not exceed 2 pages in length.

Outline, with reference to a specific case (a geographical area, a particular section of the community, an individual or a particular issue) how you have taken action to address an issue and the impact that this action has had.

This case study will be used to assess how your leadership, vision and strategy and partnership working draws upon the messages received through community and customer engagement and feeds through to actions and ultimately to improved outcomes (including outcomes that seek to promote equality and diversity).

SNC and NCC support Creative Arts East, a county-wide arts development company, who work in close partnership with Norfolk Children's Services to deliver arts and music workshops to post-16 young people outside of mainstream education, post-16, who are at risk of exclusion and crime. This supports the diversionary work of the SN CDRP.

This partnership has led to the recruitment of 22 young people from these groups, taking referrals from Norfolk Children's Services projects, Connexions, the Youth Offending Team, high schools, the Visiting Teacher's Service (now Attendance and Behaviour Support) and individual referrals during the project's activity since January 2005. The main aim of the project is to give the young people a sufficiently healthy experience of learning for them to have the confidence and skills to re-enter mainstream education, or training, or employment.

John – not real name. One of the young people who was referred to this project in March, aged 14, had been outside of mainstream education for nearly two years. The referring agency were concerned that John had very few skills for working in groups, very low confidence in his academic abilities, and had been in trouble with the police. John engaged with the project because he saw it as an opportunity to improve his DJ-ing skills. His need for individual attention in the early stages was met. He began to make friends and grow in confidence.

The group was offered the opportunity to participate in an innovative pilot scheme to involve young people in PCSO training with Norfolk Police. Members of SNYA, who were concerned about the lack of direct involvement of young people during the practical training of the police, initiated the project. John was the first young person in the group to say he would be interested, and he recruited two other young people. On the day, John was able to organise himself to meet the other young people in time to get transport from Diss to Norwich.

John was very lively throughout the day, interviewing PCSO's on camera, and asking the questions that some of the other young people didn't dare to ask! John also enacted what he saw as 'real' scenarios between young people and PCSO's in the community – notably stealing a uniform hat – 'just to see what would happen'. His contribution to the day brought a new dimension, he entered into the spirit of safe, mutual learning without looking back and was appreciated by young people, the PCSO's in training and police officers as much as by the youth workers.

He subsequently left the music project, and rejoined himself to ABS to try to gain some GCSE's. Youth workers are still in touch with John, and he still talks about his 'moment of glory'. John's personal development from needing intensive one-to-one support within a youth work group setting, to confident community volunteering as an individual is as a

result of close partnership working between two-tier government, young volunteers, and supportive agencies.

The role of PCSO's is to support community cohesion and to be a visible advocate for positive social behaviour. This pilot project has shown that young people are both willing and very much able to share in the training of PCSO's to this end. Such active citizenship helps to build relationships between young people and the Police, promotes positive social behaviour within communities and challenges the oppressive barriers between adults and young people in relation to policing and community enhancement.

This project illustrates how partnership working between agencies, authorities and young people can be interesting, fun and have positive outcomes that can be replicated in the wider community. Such involvement and methodology supports the foci of the Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It specifically supports the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Local Authorities, as well as the work of Children's Services (particularly supporting the five Every Child Matters outcomes and Children Act 2004).

The pilot project was deemed a success by all involved, and instantly gained national recognition and interest from national and local government, and related services. Minister of State Hazel Blears used this work as an example of good practice when she addressed the annual meeting of the UK Youth Parliament in July 2005.

Norfolk Police have now adopted the project as an intrinsic element of PCSO training, which has led to the development of further youth involvement opportunities within Norfolk Police. The partnership work between SNC, Norfolk Children's Services, SN CDRP, Norfolk Police and young people is ensuring community youth involvement whilst supporting the social inclusion and community cohesion agenda.

PART 4: DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE AND LESSONS

The information given in this section should not exceed 2 pages in length.

Authorities will be asked to provide more detailed information on their dissemination proposals if short-listed.

4.1 On the basis of the practice you have described in Parts 2 and 3, what are the key messages you have to share and whom do you see as the audiences for these?

a) Factors that underpin your success –

Small local authorities are often short of resources and expertise to work on issues like youth involvement. Strong partnerships with appropriate tiers of government and the voluntary sector can draw upon the expertise and experience of qualified professionals. Officers, members, LSP's and voluntary agencies are the audience for this message. Both councils are committed to the core values of youth involvement and active citizenship, as framed within the Hear by Right standards. Officers, members and young people are the audience for this message.

Innovative and creative methods of working are encouraged. The use of specialist professionals such as youth workers and arts practitioners enhances service delivery in a culture of creativity. Officers, members, LSP's, young people and practitioners, including those in the voluntary sector, are the audience for this message.

An open and congruent approach to working with young people is an essential element of the shared values for enabling and empowering young people to be involved in formal and informal democratic processes. Officers, members, LSP's, young people and practitioners working with young people are the audience for this message.

Effective consultation with all sectors of the community is essential. Where young people are to be consulted, they should be involved in the development and evaluation of consultation methods. Officers, members, young people, LSP's and voluntary sector groups are the audience for this message.

Accrediting and celebrating the achievements of young people promotes volunteering; highlights good practice and inspires others to become involved. Officers, members, young people, LSP's and voluntary sector groups are the audience for this message.

b) Successful initiatives –

South Norfolk Youth Involvement Strategy, developed using the Hear by Right framework, and further developed through consultation with young people to produce a credit card sized young people's version of the Strategy.

The formation of SNYA within the formal structure of SNC – an active effective voice for young people.

Training programmes for PCSO's actively involving young people

Young people's involvement in the development of a BTEC Peer Mentoring course for young people to equip them to deliver peer support programmes.

Videos produced by young people of events during LDW and of the police training, showing how effective these initiatives have been, from a young person's perspective.

Videos used to promote volunteering, community involvement and to support the citizenship agenda.

Creative partnership working with three tiers of government and voluntary and private service providers to engage young people from the harder to reach groups.

Development of a network to inspire and support young people in their continued engagement, using all partners.

4.2 Beyond the national Learning Exchange conference and Open Day, how might you work with other Beacons within your theme to maximise the impact of your dissemination activity?

We have reached out to young people in our work, and we aim to reach out to other local authorities and agencies with our dissemination. Norfolk is a rural, relatively remote county, and both councils will take their message to other authorities rather than just facilitating events in Norfolk. We will attend at national and regional conferences, to share good practice and encourage networking.

We will promote via council and youth led websites. Young people would lead this where possible. We will use video-conferencing and other multi media approaches, distributing videos and DVDs produced by young people, which record, examine and celebrate their involvement.

We will use youth led blogging sites and moderated chat facilities, where young people can share experiences, views and ideas, and we will utilise voluntary youth service networks such as CVYS, Rural Youth Network

We will develop youth exchange projects with other local authorities to encourage young people to share experiences, develop aspirations and encourage good youth involvement practices nationally.

4.3 What experience does your authority have in sharing lessons with others? Give examples of where your dissemination activity has supported other authorities to improve.

Jointly SNC and NCC have been involved in national events, such as LGA conferences, to demonstrate the outcome of our work to date, and had articles published in LGC, Young People Now and First magazine, as well as considerable local press coverage. Young people have been involved in producing a number of videos that help explain democratic processes; celebrate active youth involvement; and promote volunteering opportunities such as YouthBank and UKYP.

Both councils contribute expertise to regional and national networks on a regular basis, not only on youth involvement, but on topics as varied as performance management, e-Government and human resources. We have officer and member representation on national bodies and related organisations e.g.: Leader of NCC chairs LGA Children and Young People Board; officers regularly attend LAYSER conferences. The County Council is already a Beacon Council for Rethinking Construction, and we have been a Pathfinder e-Government authority.

As part of the INTERREG e-Voice project, three Norfolk MYP's (one of whom represents the views of young people in South Norfolk) are participating in an international conference on e-Government during September 2005. Young people will be recording the event and their involvement using multi-media in order to disseminate best practice with NCC and SNC, interested organisations and other young people.