



Services for Children & Young People

Integrated Youth Service – Summer Mix

Introduction:

August 2011 saw the second year of the Summer Mix programme to deliver informal learning opportunities to the young people of Plymouth during a time when they and their families have told us they need access to well organised, enjoyable high quality activities.

The aim of the programme was to:

- Raise the aspirations of the young people of Plymouth
- Increase access to education and vocational opportunities through innovative partnership working.
- Promote independent learning.
- Promote further volunteering opportunities for young people.
- Enable young people to have fun.

Programme Overview:

Summer Mix is a programme of high quality free courses for young people living in Plymouth between the ages of 11 to 19 (up to 25 with a disability or special need).

These courses focused on six key learning topics:

- Arts & Fashion
- Business & Careers
- Digital Media, Film & Photography
- Music & Performing Arts
- Skills for Life
- Sport, fitness and wellbeing

The courses were promoted via a brochure designed by young people and distributed to all secondary schools. In addition to hard copies being made available to all pupils within the City, a dedicated website was used (www.summERMix.co.uk) to promote the activities and to direct the expressions of interest to a particular course. Enrolment was complete via this online process and followed up with a signed parental consent.

The website was also used by providers to contact those young people registered to their course and to provide additional information to them. Policies, procedures and the opportunity to feedback were also available via the website. All tutors and programme providers were checked to ensure they complied with Plymouth City Councils Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and all tutors who delivered the activities were required to hold insurance and be CRB checked.

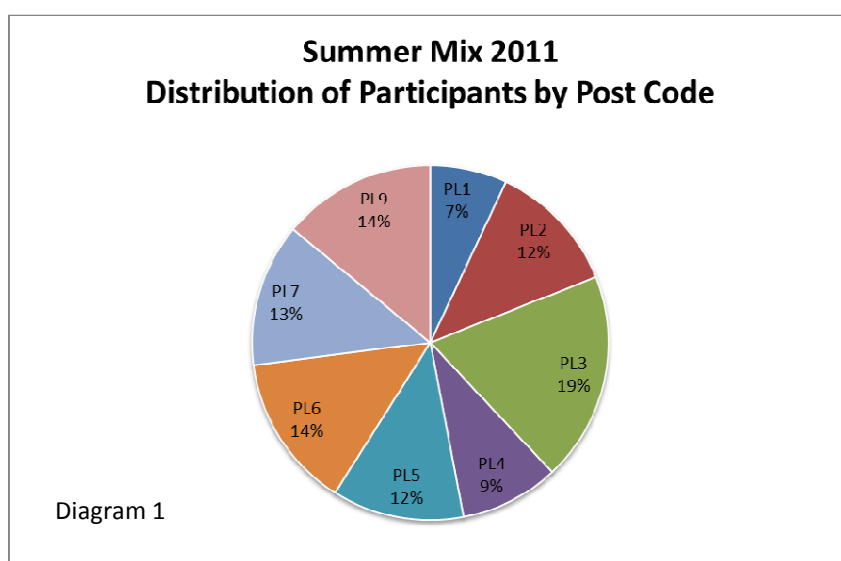
Courses varied in length from just a few hours, to a day or a week, however, all were expected to provide something new and positive for the participants. Courses were held in a number of venues around the city. Several academic facilities were used such as the university, design and music studios as well as historical buildings such as Devonport Guildhall.

Key Programme Data 2011:

- Summer Mix offered a total of 2516 course places (95% increase on 2010)
- 160 courses subject areas were provided such as IT, foreign languages, business, sport fitness & wellbeing, cooking and a number of career opportunities (86% increase on 2010)
- 1188 young people registered to enrol on the programme and 900, who provided parental/carer consent, were successful in obtaining one or more courses (70% take up and a 25% increase in number of participants on 2010)
- 58% of participants were female and 42% males
- 26% of participants identified themselves as requiring additional support needs (increase of 4% on 2010)

Volunteering: 15 young people were recruited as Young Ambassadors and have completed 172 hours volunteering each between January and August this 2011 equating to an average of 5.5 hrs per week. Without the support of this group of dedicated young people the programme could not have been delivered.

Diagram 1 shows that the programme has achieved its aim to be city-wide with all post code areas covered. Vulnerable young people have been supported to participate through a wide range of youth projects including youth centres, the Intensive Support and Streetwise Teams.



Summer Mix 2011 - Ethnicity of Participants

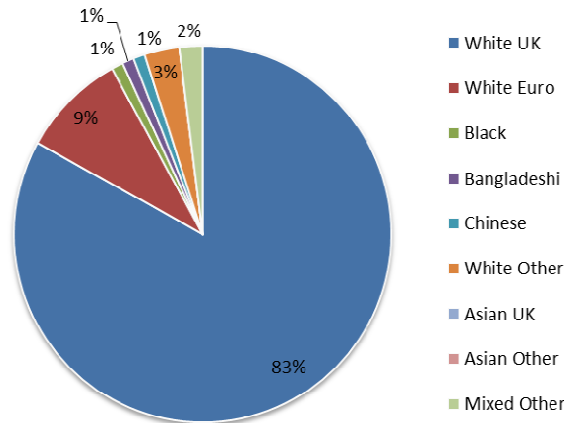


Diagram 2

Diagram 2 shows the ethnicity of the young people accessing the programme. Young people have fed back that one of the best aspects of the programme was meeting and mixing with different young people from those that they usually come into contact with.

The age range of the participants in diagram 3 highlights that the 14-18 year group takes up a large part of the programme. This was anticipated as our user research told us that this group often feel that there is little for them to do during key holiday periods.

Summer Mix 2011 - Age range of Participants

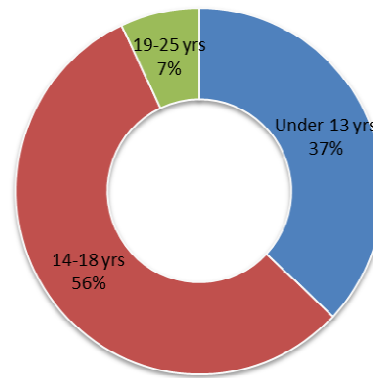


Diagram 3

Summer Mix 2011- Participants EET Status

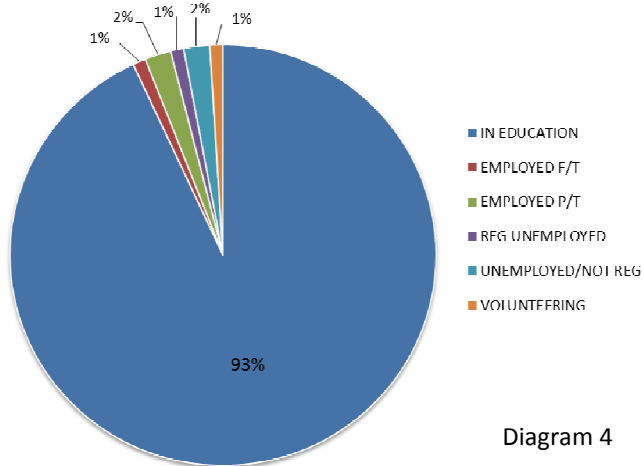


Diagram 4

This information in diagram 4 highlights that, whilst supporting some young people who are not in education, employment or training, the programme could consider further targeting towards this group next year. Consideration on how we can build in further employability skills is currently being considered with key stakeholders within the 14-19 strategy groups.

Feedback Questionnaires:

467 evaluation forms were returned by young people who took part in the 2011 programme. This is a return rate of 53% providing a reliable analysis of views of young people who participated.

Feedback is very positive with 97% of young people stating that they wanted to take part in 2012. The other 3% mentioned they would but would now be above the upper age limit next year.

Staff who delivered courses received particularly high scores; over 80% of young people who responded gave the highest possible rating to staff. This emphasises the importance of using providers whose staff are knowledgeable about their course subject, who can inspire young people and who are experienced in working with mixed age and ability groups.

Process for identifying courses for Summer Mix 2012

- Review the provision of courses, uptake, costs and young people's feedback for 2011.
- Identify any courses/providers which will not be included on the future programme due to low uptake or other reasons.
- Identify gaps in provision/requests from young people for provision for 2012.
- Notices inviting expressions of interest for the 2012 Summer Mix programme will be distributed to a wide range of providers.

Suggestions from young people who took part in 2011 Summer Mix

- Courses to last longer, with more places to be available on the courses.
- The range of courses available to be expanded, with specific requests for science, English, a wider range of arts and crafts, computer and IT, health/medical practitioner and history courses.
- More accredited courses with future opportunities to study at a higher level.
- The same courses offered through Summer Mix but with options for these to be taught to a higher level.
- More information about the courses available before enrolment.
- More courses available for younger age groups.
- Process of enrolment to be made easier, particularly improving the website to this effect.
- Learning styles – a few comments were about the learning styles on courses and asked for a wider range – specific to certain courses.
- Publicity – some asked for Summer Mix to be advertised more widely.

Next Steps: Planning for 2012 is already underway for the 2012 programme and Plymouth University has contacted the team to discuss further support to expand and improve the programme. An emphasis on employment skills will be developed in line with critical issues faced by young people within the current economic climate.