
Report To: Community & Leisure Committee

Date: 27 October 2025

Contact Officer: Paula Harrison

Subject: Youth Engagement Report

1. Youth Engagement and Activities Provision

1.1 West Swindon Background

The 2021 Census data indicates that West Swindon comprises approximately 27,000 people across 11,500 households; 5,700 people were aged between 0 and 17-years-old.

West Swindon Parish Council has sustained a commitment to children and young people and funded and supported a range of youth activities delivered through community organisations for a number of years. In 2021, the Parish Council commissioned Swindon Borough Council's Youth Engagement Service to undertake face to face outreach conversations to ascertain what type of activities young people in West Swindon would be interested in. Unfortunately, the project coincided with the escalation of Covid-19 and was curtailed. Initial feedback included

- Young people move freely around the Parish using bikes, cars and walking. Whilst they travel and hang around different parts of the Parish, they do have a neighbourhood identity e.g. Freshbrook/Toothill.
- Popular hang out spaces are play areas, skate park/wheels track, Shaw Ridge Leisure Park and West Swindon District Centre
- Many prefer to be outdoors with friends than inside in an organised space although this feedback came through outreach work speaking to young people who were congregating outdoors

1.2 Established Youth Sessions:

- *Toothill Youth Club:* West Swindon has had a youth club running at Toothill Farmhouse for over 20 years. It currently operates from part of the farmhouse building and offers a session to 5-15 year olds on Friday evenings – there is a small club fee payable for each session
- *Toothill Family Project:* offers Parish funded weekly youth session on Monday evenings and a family session on Friday evenings
- *Swindon ATB:* have provided Parish funded organised games at Rivermead on Friday late afternoons during the Spring and Summer weeks
- *Best Be a Better You:* have provided Parish funded bookable sessions for organised

activity on Wednesday afternoons during the school holidays

1.3 Other Youth Provision:

The full range of activities for young people is not fully known and there are likely to be additional activities taking place within clubs, churches and schools. The Parish Council also has 21 play sites that offer a range of equipment including multi use games areas, fitness and calisthenic apparatus that play facilities for mixed ages.

1.4 Next steps:

There are gaps in our understanding of youth needs including

- What is available to young people and where?
- Where are the gaps?
- What would be appealing to young people for example, do the majority of older teens prefer to access 'unsupervised' play and recreation?

To improve our understanding, it is proposed to conduct a consultation with pupils through our local schools using an online survey, short postcard format for schools and a playground pop up (if achievable).