

## Ground breaking News

Forget about the great films of cinematic history, The Shawshank Redemption, Forrest Gump, Pulp Fiction, a new era of film has dawned....

Ok, so it may not be a sassy, action packed crime-drama by Quentin Tarantino, but, the Youth Task Force are all ready and set for filming Leeds based reparation project 'Groundwork'. The film will be swapping the choreographed sword fights and smoking gun barrels of Kill Bill for the altogether more humble garden fork, and maybe crafty smoke. The Youth Task Force will be filming the young people undertaking environmental work as part of their reparation, whilst also helping to create safer and greener communities. They hope to show the film on a series of road shows aimed at professional people, and also hope for the film to go onto the Every Child Matters Website.

Groundwork has firmly established its roots within Leeds Youth Offending Service and allows for young people to actively put something back into the community, and in a small sense, allow them to have a stake in it. The young people have been involved in an array of different tasks, including graffiti removal, community clean-ups, horticulture, allotment work and landscaping, to name but a few. The project is a shining example of the positive impact reparation work can have upon young people – enabling them to better understand the consequences of their actions, communities and victims.

Keep Groundwork alive, Groundwork needs you! Keep on referring!

Also in this issue:

Meet the team – inside story of VLO's

Brand-spanking new  
Reparation Project  
St John's Ambulance  
First Aid Course

Sensational sessional  
Scoop by Zoe Hicks.



A Victim Liaison Offer's job is to contact victims when a young person has been convicted of an offence. Our role is to offer choices to the victim using the principles of Restorative Justice. Basically this is a process that allows the victim to communicate with the young person either indirectly, i.e. through a VLO passing on information and/or asking questions, or directly with a face to face meeting.

Sometimes our work is just about listening to a victim and allowing them to 'sound off'. The Judicial system we work under is sometimes very non-inclusive where a victim is concerned, so once he or she has given a statement to the police, their role in the process can be over. If a Young Person pleads guilty in court a victim will not be required to attend and therefore doesn't have a voice in the process. This can leave a person feeling very frustrated and angry.

We work alongside the YJW's and will pass on victim views and opinions which can sometimes help the young person to reflect upon their actions and may make them think twice if they get themselves into the same situation. The best way and the most successful way of doing this would be in a mediation meeting or with a victim attending a panel.

Contacting a victim can help to bring closure to all parties (including the young person) regarding the offence. Sometimes delivering information in the form of a letter is sufficient and needs no further involvement from the VLO.



**St John  
Ambulance**



# Sensational Sessional Scoop!

Right, I need to get your attention so I will start with a joke –

Patient: “Doctor, I think that there are two of me”

Doctor: “One at a time please!”.

Yes, it is a bad joke....but it was the finest that google had to offer and it has got your attention so you might as well finish reading this article!

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2009 witnessed the start of a new reparation project for young people aged 14 and over – the St John’s Ambulance First Aid Reparation Course. In conjunction with St John’s Ambulance, Leeds YOS is now offering a 4 hour first aid course to young people which can be performed as reparation. The course covers: emergencies in public; primary survey; unconscious casualties; CPR and severe bleeding. In addition, modules can be tailored to the group and can include: asthma; burns and scalds; chest pain; head injuries; seizure; shock and bone, muscle and joint injuries. This should be easier to sell as an interesting reparation project to young people compared to the hard labour of Groundwork, and will also, obviously look good on their CV.

We have had 100% positive feedback from the previous session, all the young people stated that they found the session enjoyable and useful, and the majority said that they would be interested in learning more first aid! Please send any referrals to James Barton.

Hello everyone, my name is Zoe Hicks and I work for Leeds Youth Offending Service as a Sessional Worker. Typically, I receive referrals from the Reparation Co-ordinator and from there I get in touch with the young person and their guardian, the caseworker and the project concerned and I co-ordinate the work to be done. I collect the young person, take them to the project and do the work with them. The type of work depends on the referral and usually includes working with a community based project such as People in Action, which is based at the William Gascoigne Centre in Middleton. People in Action run a social club for people with physical and mental disabilities and is such a wonderful place. It is under funded and doesn’t have luxurious facilities but the people who attend, run the project and volunteer there create a fantastic atmosphere where anything goes. Activities include singing and dancing, playing pool, playing board games and reading magazines. There is also a café which sells drinks and snacks. Young people can be over concerned with being cool and at first they are usually quiet and withdrawn at the project, but with a bit of encouragement they normally join in and enjoy the experience. Taking them to People in Action gives them a break from being cool and challenges them to be someone different for the evening.

# Food For Thought



Holbeck Food Enterprise is a social enterprise being set up in Holbeck to tackle issues around food access. In the area there is nowhere to buy affordable, nutritious or culturally acceptable foods. There are, however 6 take-aways 5 off licenses and 3 pubs! This does not help health statistics for the area – 25% of the population have a lifelong limiting illness, a further 25% consider themselves to be in ill health. Over 25% of the population are aged over the age of 65, and Holbeck falls within 10% of the most deprived areas of England.

The young people on ISSP have been involved in the initial planning of the Holbeck Food Enterprise – braving all kinds of weather conditions to deliver a feasibility study of the project – asking what the local community thought about the availability of fresh produce in the area.

If you are interested in the Holbeck Food Enterprise please contact James Barton.

Young people from Leeds Youth Offending Service have been carrying out reparation work in the grounds of Rothwell Parish Church for approximately two years. The reparation work takes place during the week and weekends and includes tidying and maintaining the paths and hedges, litter picking and maintenance in the cemetery. The project was initially set up by one of our Sessional Workers who is actively involved in the church and lives in the community and is a good example of a community based reparation project that has had a positive impact on the local area. A member of the Parish Council stated that the young people who have been involved in this project have always *'worked hard and done an excellent job'*. He also informed me that members of community have told him that the *'church front has never looked this good in years'*. I believe that this type of reparation work is also an opportunity for young people to show themselves in a positive way and develop relationships with older people in the community. This is an obvious benefit, but also an important way to challenge the negative views that some people hold regarding the behaviour and attitude of young people.





A small number of young people from the Youth Offending Service in East Leeds will carry out the reparation work in an area that is well known for anti-social behaviour and low level crime.

The aim of the project is to clean up and paint, the public shelter, hand rails and seating area of Micklefield Station during April. This project could also be an opportunity for the young people to develop new skills and gain practical work experience in a controlled environment.

Network Rail are also planning to involve the local media and a plaque will be placed at the station to highlight the work carried out by our young people.

# What do YOU Think?

And to close this literary masterpiece we have a few quotes from the young people about reparation work....

## **Groundwork**

“If you had to describe reparation to another young person, what would you say”  
Young person: “Bull, buy you have to do it”.

“What are your thoughts on the reparation that you performed?”  
Young person: “People benefit from it because the path is 10 times more visible so elderly people don’t fall and hurt themselves.”

## **Equestrian Centre**

“What are your thoughts on the reparation that you performed?”  
Young person: “It was something I wanted to do and I enjoyed it”.

## **First Aid Course**

“Name one thing you have learnt today”  
Young person: “How to save someone”.

“Name one thing you have learnt today”  
Young person: “I have learnt how to do CPR”.

“Name one thing you have learnt today”  
Young person: “I have learnt that CPR can only keep you alive for around 12 minutes”.

*This was written/slightly plagiarised by Stuart Leedham, RJ support Assistant/journalist extraordinaire...*