



St. Helens Council



YPF Assessors aim to help and improve healthcare services for young people across St. Helens

Young People Friendly Assessors

St. Helens Council

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Contact: Young People Friendly Assessors

Visit: <http://yaz.sthelens.gov.uk/pick-a-subject/young-people-friendly-award/>

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Dear Healthy Living Team,

This is the official report for the Healthy Living Team in St Helens, based on the assessment carried out by the Young People Friendly Assessors on 10/08/15. This report is set out in to five sections: Accessibility, Publicity, Confidentiality, Staff, and Setting. The things we think you could improve about your service and what we liked about your service will be covered in this report. We will also make a number of suggestions for service improvement, these will be summarised at the end of the report.

We would like to start off by saying thank you for letting us come and assess you on the 10th august 2015. The staff were all very friendly and willing to discuss the service and its various purposes. The atmosphere was friendly. However, as the service caters for all age ranges, it was difficult to gauge where improvements need to be made, specifically pertaining to the Young People Friendly Award. Below are some notes that we made during the visit and suggestions/feedback for the service.

Kind Regards,

**Young People Friendly Assessment Team.**



## **Accessibility.**

To start with, we think you are in a great location. A young person could easily access the service using public transport. The Healthy Living Team has recently moved into a new building and improvements were still being made. One issue is that the service doesn't really stand out, so it may be difficult for a young person to notice that it is there. We also feel that entering the building would be hard for an individual with a disability or who may have difficulty opening the door. During two visits with the YPFA's, we noticed that the door is not automatic, and there is no way to grab the attention of staff from outside of the building. Furthermore, there was no one specifically seated at the reception window to open the door. Luckily we managed to get someone's attention, but if someone using the service was perhaps unable to open the outside door, or unsure or shy, they may not even get into the building. Though the building is wheelchair accessible, it did seem that the positioning of some desks and furniture may limit accessibility; it seemed that accessing certain areas of the office may be very difficult or even impossible.

The desks were another issue; although each service isn't in a designated area, it was very difficult to locate a specific service, unless you were signposted by a member of staff to that particular area. A way to fix this would be to place a sign clearly above or in front of each desk cluster, making it clear which service is where.

After some discussion with the staff, we learned that the services that make up the Healthy Living Team have a variety of ways to publicise. We were given a leaflet, and it was also explained how the team reaches out to a variety of different groups. Overall, we would say the general accessibility of the Healthy Living Team is good, however, wheelchair accessibility, greeting at reception, and service desks are definitely areas requiring improvements.

## **Publicity.**

The Healthy Living Team is doing great things to get their name known in the local community. We thought that it was great that you have a website and are on Twitter. The service uses a lot of different outlets to advertise and make people aware of the things they offer. They cater to a range of clients, so they must employ a multi-pronged approach, with regard to publicity. There are posters and leaflets, as well as a website and social media (as mentioned above). To improve, the service could advertise around the local area, e.g. in shops, schools etc. We felt that making your website accessible from mobile devices, and further expanding your social media presence would be beneficial. We felt that although Twitter is a great start, there are more popular social media platforms with young people, such as Instagram.



## **Confidentiality.**

We thought the procedures for maintaining confidentiality, which were explained to us, were great. You use password protected computers, locked doors with pin numbers to enter, signing in and out files, and locked filing cabinets. All the staff we spoke to were aware of the confidentiality protocol. If followed correctly, this will help people to feel that what they have told you is safe and private. However, we picked up on a few small issues that, if not addressed, could pose serious problems. The first was that separate areas were very close together, potentially raising issues with data protection. Some cupboards had been left open around the office for anyone to see inside and the signing-in sheet was displayed upon entering the space. As we were being told about confidentiality, one of the staff realised that they had left their computer unlocked, and hastily logged off.

We thought a way to address this would be to display signs on the computers and around the office to remind people to lock cupboards and their computers. Some positives included that confidentiality is always explained to young people and that someone can make an appointment with a member of the team. Clients using the service are called by first name to keep the waiting room relatively anonymous, while remaining informal. Despite this we think it would be a good idea for you to speak to service users to see if they can think of any ways to improve the confidentiality on entering the office and waiting in the waiting area.

## **Staff.**

Firstly, most of the staff were very helpful, and gave us great information, that really helped us when we were assessing the service. We also thought it was good that the staff were able to get involved, and wanted to hear back from us, so that they could improve the Healthy Living Service. We did feel however, that the staff definitely needed to be made more aware of our visit.

One staff member talked about things that were very off topic, and while we understand that they were trying to keep the visit informal, they should be reminded to maintain an air of professionalism. We felt that some staff focused on our age more than anything, and treated us less like professionals there to do a job, and more like children. One member of staff commented that when a young person comes to the office, they assume that they are there to see TAZ, by doing this staff will make that person feel uncomfortable and may stop them getting the help they need. Despite this, everyone was very well informed about the team they work in and the Healthy Living Team as a whole.



## **Setting.**

The environment was quite professional and initially, not very welcoming. We felt that the office could be quite intimidating, because we were not sure what to do to get the attention of reception staff. Some areas were more cluttered than others, with boxes and paper lying about in corners. This not only looks bad, but poses a health and safety risk. Specifically regarding young people, the environment is not very welcoming, there is not much colour within the office itself, and it is difficult to identify where different teams sit. We thought that colourful signs might make this easier and more welcoming. We did like the corridor with all the pledges; we thought this was a great idea. There were some good facilities within the service and for use by young people, particularly the kitchen, which looked really clean and modern, and the teen gym. To improve we would suggest injecting more colours into the reception and waiting area, just to ensure that it is welcoming for young people.

## **What do young people think of the service?**

We spoke to a local young person who had accessed some of your services (Teen Gym); they were comfortable with giving you their information, as they felt that you would keep it safe. The young person thought that your staff were welcoming, and loved the overall service that you were able to provide for them.

## **Recommendations.**

The Young People Friendly Assessors are aware that your team are willing and ready to work towards gaining a Young People Friendly Award. Below is a list of suggestions that the Young People Friendly Assessors feel would be beneficial for your team to work towards, in order to gain your award. We are aware that it may take some time to implement any changes, and that some of these suggestions may be out of reach in the near future. The Young People Friendly Assessors will appreciate any significant effort towards making some of the suggested improvements.

### *Accessibility*

- Work towards improving the noticeability of the service from outside the building.
- Install a system whereby people can call for assistance from outside of the building.
- Address the issue of getting the attention of staff from the reception window
- Look at the positioning of desks and furniture; are all areas of the office wheelchair accessible?
- Signpost individual services within the office.



### *Publicity*

- Work towards increasing advertising in the local area, including shops and schools.
- Work towards making the Healthy Living website mobile friendly.
- Work towards expanding your social media presence.

### *Confidentiality*

- Display signs around the office to remind people to lock cabinets, cupboards and computers.
- Use a closed file to store the signing in and out documents
- Speak to service users about how they feel that confidentiality could be improved on entering the office, and waiting in the waiting area.

### *Staff*

- Improve communication and the sharing of information around visits from other services.
- Remind staff that the level of service required by a young person, is equal to anyone who accesses the service.
- Remind staff that anyone visiting from another service (including volunteers and young volunteers), should be treated as professionals.
- Remind staff not to make assumptions around why a young person may be visiting the office.

### *Setting*

- Work towards storing more equipment and paperwork out of sight and in the path of visitors.
- Work towards making the space feel more welcoming for young people (use of colour and signposting).

### **Conclusion.**



## St. Helens Council

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Once again we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing the Young People Friendly Assessors to visit your service. We would also like to apologise for the delay in returning your full report. We feel that your service has the potential to be a great candidate for the Young People Friendly Award in the future, simply by implementing a number of the suggested improvements above. As a service we appreciate that some of the above suggestions may not be achievable at this time, but feel that the provision of a rationale for why certain suggestions may not have been implemented by our next visit would be acceptable. Please contact us with any feedback or questions via the comments box on our webpage, signposted above. The Young People Friendly Assessors will be in touch in the near future in order to arrange a date for re-assessment.

Kind regards,

**The Young People Friendly Assessors**