

CALLINGTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE CASE STUDY

Community Action Through Sport (CATS)

What this Case study is about

Community Action Through Sports (CATS) is a community based project that has been designed to 'promote and award positive community action' through the rewarding of sports based awards. It has been designed to develop cohesion through promoting engagement across all sectors of the community and to promote healthier lifestyles. The over-arching aim is to encourage residents, young people in particular, to engage with the wider community and to recognise the part they have to play in the present and future development of an area.



Background and Objectives

CATS is a partnership that engages all sectors of the community together with young people.

Pictures: Force into Action Day (above) and Art Project (below)

The scheme was developed in the Bude area following a general increase in reports of anti-social behaviour. At the same time it was recognised that across the board young people were making significant contributions to the community and were often helping other young people in a variety of ways on a voluntary basis. These young people were not being recognised and this lack of recognition was effectively reinforcing a negative image of youth. It became apparent that although sport and leisure facilities are available they are limited and not being accessed by young people. The reasons for this were examined and it was established that a key issue was cost as many, although attracted to the activities on offer, did not have the available funds to access them.



As a result CATS was developed to provide accessible activities and funding awards for young people involved in projects aimed at improving the community. The scheme has since received national recognition through the Youth Sport Trust Innovations Award, presented by Dame Kelly Holmes and the Minister for Sport.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To engage with the local community increasing the levels of community involvement.
- To reduce instances of anti-social behaviour through the district.
- To increase youth involvement in sporting activities in the area.
- To encourage access to local sporting facilities.
- To encourage healthy living.



Feeling Good, Looking Good Project

The scheme was launched in May 2005 when the first awards were presented. The scheme was extended to cover Callington and Saltash areas with the official launch in March 2007. The first award ceremonies took place in November 2007 and the second one took place in January 2009. As a result of these award ceremonies over 200 young people from Callington and Saltash have been recognised to date for the contribution they have made to their local community.

CATS Award Scheme – How CATS works

Each year Callington and Saltash CATS invite nominations from the public and organisations within the local community. A nomination form requests information about the activity in which they have been involved, the time they have spent on the activity, what experience they have gained from their involvement, who organised the activity, and requests information on what responsibility the young person taken for themselves and others. Nominations are considered by a panel and the young person if eligible will receive an award in one of five levels.



Youngsters involved in the 'Kick-Off' project



Youngsters working on the Graffiti Project at the skateboard park with the local PCSO



Force into Action Day

COMMUNITY ACTION AWARDS LEVEL 1 - 5

It is vital that the CATS Award levels are benchmarked through-out every community to ensure that the right award meets the right positive action, and to give young people something further to aspire to.

CATS Community Action 1 (Start)

This award is designed to introduce young people to the concept of doing something positive for their or within their community. It will provide encouragement, the feel-good factor and signpost them to carry on this good practise.

This Award could be awarded for someone who has taken part in an organised activity project arranged by a club or school and has joined in for a couple of hours. This includes Litter Picks and Force in Action Day.

Level 1 Awards provided with local providers. The recipients of this award generally receive a free Ten Pin Bowling Voucher or an Ice skating voucher provided by local providers.

CATS Community Action 2 (Train)

This award is where young people are doing community work under the umbrella of an organised project or club. They may have joined in with something before and we want to encourage them to be more involved.

They will begin to be able to be relied upon and help others. This would be good for a long term helper who has done long term work. Perhaps helping for an hour over a few weeks or being involved in a whole days work. (e.g. eight hours of community work will award Level 2). This will include supporting a local sports club, involvement in art projects and organising festivals and events.

The recipients of this level of award have received ski lessons, mountain boarding or tickets to a Plymouth Argyle, Plymouth Raiders and Plymouth Albion football amongst other activities.

CATS Community Action 3 (Discover)

This is where we begin to raise the standard of achievement. They will need to find a project that is existing and join in of their own free will and help with the setting-up of the community project, not just help on the day(s) required. This may be outside of their normal organisation or club.

This means that this young person will be part of a driving force behind a project, but not leading it. They will show responsibility to others and to the success of the project. They will be able to tell others why the project needs to be done and encourage others to come forward.

The awards that have been granted for these individuals range from team-building days with the local Coastal and Rural Extreme Sports providers, or spending time with the local professional football club's community development team.

Level 3 Awards provided with local providers. This award is being developed to match The Duke of Edinburgh community work module for the Bronze Award.

CATS Community Action 4 (Explore)

At this level, the young person is showing ability and interest in the development and success of a community project. This is very much a participation award and will work across different levels and skills, such as organisation, communication, recruitment of volunteers, involvement and execution of project. They will not yet be heading up a project, but will be playing a key part in the organisation and success of it.

They will be showing a range of skills and responsibility to themselves and to others. This is a perfect platform for them to introduce Community Power 1 starters. (Level 1 awards)

Level 4 Awards provided at central HQ and may use national providers. This award is being developed to match The Duke of Edinburgh community work module for the Silver Award.

CATS Community Action 5 (Excel)

At this level, the young person is confident, and very able. They have developed the skills to head and organise a community project or work for local people, a club or organisation. This may be a fundraising event for the community as long as the whole idea, development and execution of the project has been arranged by the individual.

They will have a high sense of responsibility to themselves, the project and others. Ensuring that the people take part, that young people who are looking to achieve Levels 2 or 3

Level 5 Awards provided at central HQ and may use national or international providers. This award is being developed to match The Duke of Edinburgh community work module for the Gold Award.

The awards are presented in a formal environment with families being invited to accompany the young people. This is important as it is a positive environment and gives true recognition to those who have taken part in an activity. A number of young people who have received awards to date are 'low-achievers' and have been able to experience a true feeling of achievement that is recognised within the community. The award presentations are held within the community in order to help strengthen the standing of the scheme and to further raise awareness of the positive activities that are being undertaken by young people across the area. We are currently in the process of organising the 2010 Awards which are to be held at St Mellion Golf Club in January. Nominations are already coming in and the Callington and Saltash steering group remain impressed at the commitment of the young volunteers.

The Cats Programme – Volunteering and Positive Activities

Callington and Saltash CATS decided that they wanted to develop an additional strand to CATS which provided opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities through the development of a targeted approach. This would link into the CATS award scheme but would also ensure the agenda of the police was at the forefront of the programme, and would engage hard to reach groups.

As a result of the CATS programme we have put together a volunteering programme and a positive activities programme to ensure that young people have the opportunity to take part in positive activities and action within the community.

The volunteering programme takes the form of a community event or activity once a month which has been developed by the students based on their interests, local community events and needs. These events have included 'Force in Action Days' in partnership with the police, CATS Football festival, Feeling Good, Looking Good primary festival, Skate park project and art projects for the community. Students are encouraged to volunteer for these events but also students are invited from specific groups to take part in these events. These targeted groups are identified by a range of organisations including Youth Cornwall, the Police and the College.

Positive activities have been delivered in the towns of Callington and Saltash which have been very successful these have included 'Kick-Off', a street based football programme which we have received funding from the Football Foundation; Street Paddler which was a six day canoe programme delivered through the summer holidays and Parkour. Funding has also been secured to develop Non-Contact Boxing and Archery in the near future. Some of these activities will be targeted and some will be open access. The aim of the positive activities programme is to engage young people in positive activities which they enjoy and may wish to develop into a coaching or leadership role within the community.

Impact

Involvement in the volunteering projects has given students a real sense of purpose. They feel valued and an important member of the community. Many of the young people will not have been invited to take part in anything before the project. Prior to the project they will often lack confidence, self-esteem, and will often feel they are under-valued. The impact of the volunteering projects and the rewards has given them the opportunity to be part of a team, they can take part in an activity that they can achieve in and it has developed their self confidence. Many of the young people involved then want to continue with volunteering and want to know how they can get to the next level within the CATS programme.

The positive activities programme has also had a big impact in engaging hard to reach groups both within the college and in the community. The Kick-Off programme and On-side Street based football programmes have had a huge impact in reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour within the towns of both Callington and Saltash.

Street Paddler was delivered during the summer holidays 2009, this involved twelve young people aged 13 - 19. They took part in a six day programme during the holidays taking part in canoe trips working towards the Canoe Level 2 Star award. As a result of the initiative ten young people achieved the Level 1 Star award and five of the young people have also been identified to take the Level 2 Star award. Once the young people have achieved the two star award they will be encouraged to lead activities for young people, which would then put them in a position to be eligible for CATS Award.

Support for CATS

Support for the scheme is significant and has come from a number of different directions. These include local sports clubs, who are able to offer taster sessions through to the much more established local providers such as Outdoor Adventure, who are offering a variety of sports and tuition as awards.

Initial funding for the scheme has been secured through the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, Football Foundation, South East Cornwall extended services network and through fund raising events. This allows the Steering Group to buy in specialist providers for some of the awards.

Support has also come from further afield with awards being offered by Plymouth Argyle Football Club and Plymouth Raiders Basketball team, both of which have allowed for an extension of the sports awards available.

Looking to the Future

The scheme is starting to have an impact. Projects have been developed that have had a positive effect in the local community and on the young people who have taken part. The aim now is to engage with other sectors of the community including the elderly and pre-school aged children, encouraging young people to take part in projects for their benefit. In addition, it is hoped that projects can be developed in partnership with other community organisations including the Rotary Club and the Lions Club.

We are also looking at facility provision within the two towns and what is available for young people. The development of a youth café is an area we are currently investigating and hope to be able to offer in the near future. This will be linked to the work of CATS.

A Summary

The scheme has proved a valuable addition to a number of aspects of the community. The College is able to promote the scheme and award those students who engage in positive activities, both inside and outside the College environment. The community is benefiting through the development of projects that are having an impact in different areas. The Police are also benefiting through being able to engage positively with young people in an effort to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour in the town and surrounding area.

Above all though is the effect on those who have received the awards, particularly those who recognise that they are not likely to be high achievers, but who have through this scheme have been given the opportunity to shine and feel proud of their achievements.

