

A Second Evaluation of the Whitehawk Crew Club

“Still Cutting it?”



Crew Club Evaluation 2004

Introduction

This is the second evaluation that I have carried out on behalf of the Crew Club. Having initially approached the project sceptically my findings in the first year were staggering in terms of the clubs output and enthusiasm that left me both very impressed and much the wiser.

Having been commissioned to carryout a similar operation again I approached with a degree of trepidation in respect of the clubs ability to repeat its initial successes. Once again I have been impressed at the way the service has continued and developed, how the staff have developed, and also that of the membership. The club was not only continuing to deliver but also expanding its services and reaching far more people that it had previously.

The focus on the initial evaluation was to examine the clubs ability to meet the funding targets of its funder, eb4u, how its services were seen by its members, its partners, and by third parties, to identify good practice, and to provide information for future developments.

This evaluation is in reality primarily interested in two main subject areas:

Is the club continuing to perform at its previous, very high, standard.
What are the implications of its current service provision in relation to future activity and more importantly funding.

This current year¹ is a vitally important one for the Crew Club. Not only should it see the creation of its own purpose built premises, but also the primary funding source, new deal for communities, is coming to an end. It is anticipated that this report will feed into the clubs future work in relation to the range of activities that will occur in the building, identify potential new/continuing partnership work, and most importantly act as a demonstration of the constantly high service provided by the club.

I would like to thank those who have assisted in the work involved within this study, especially Ricky, Darren, and Lorraine from the staff team, and the members who formed a small survey group to help gather the information contained here.

Andy Silsby
Community Development Consultant..

¹ 2005.

Methodology

Three main sources of information have been utilised in the production of the report. These are the records held by the club, questionnaires carried out with the members and parents, and interviews with representatives of partner agencies.

In relation to the clubs records there had been a demand for detailed sophisticated information by the primary funder. This had resulted in a full baselining exercise, the development of a detailed database, and a system put in place for the collection and updating of information for the database. Unfortunately having completed this exercise the funder then altered its monitoring requirement, and in turn the club discontinued the capture of this data. This action while totally understandable is regrettable as the information that the club would have collected could be invaluable in demonstrating the impact that the club has had, and is continuing to make where all other attempts in the past by others have failed.

It is unusual to make recommendations in the “mechanical” parts of an evaluation, but the possibility of capturing such a wide ranging and detailed data set deserves a further chance of being preserved. For this reason it is recommended that: ***The management of the Crew Club gives serious consideration to the reinstatement of the now defunct data collection system.***

It is possible that the reinstating and maintaining of such a system could attract additional funding to cover its costs. Having said all of this the records that the club collects in relation to attendance and involvement of its members are of high quality and as such provide a robust testimony of the work carried out there.

The questionnaire used on the members, and to some degree the parents was based on that used in the first year supplemented by that used in the baselining exercise. Copies of both questionnaires are contained in the appendix of this report. The sample used was just over 10% (51 from a membership of 504) with the gender ratio of the sample being slightly higher for males than in the membership (65% compared to 60%). All of those interviewed were randomly selected over the full range of nights that the club was open.

The parent sample (again randomly selected and reliant primarily on self administration) equated to representing 5% of the membership, with 15 parents of 26 members taking part.² All agencies working in partnership with the club were approached to take part in a brief interview. Of the ten approached five responded. Interviews were either carried out over the telephone or in responses provided in written form via email to set questions.

² Ranging from 1 to 5 children per parent.

History.

Whitehawk and Moulsecoomb, have had a reputation for over 50 years, and one that the virtual rebuilding of the former in the late 1970's has not managed to revise. Within the city of Brighton and Hove the areas have the highest levels of deprivation and due to this the New Deal for Communities funding had been attracted, administered by eb4u.

Until very recently the local secondary school in Whitehawk reflected the reputation of its neighbourhood despite being rebuilt and then renamed three times. Its status as the lowest performing secondary school in the city has now been rectified due to the decision to close it at the end of the 2004/05 academic year. In this action the concept of a local/neighbourhood school has been lost and the city's score on educational governmental "floor" targets, increased quite dramatically.

The Crew Club was founded by two local parents as a service for their fifteen year old son following the murder of a local teenager. This created an extended "family" that went on to become the crew club. Based in a metal, portable, changing room that resembles a wartime bunker the club has thrived for over four years, outperformed statutory provision for young people, and attained a reputation that resulted in a visit by the Deputy Prime Minister.

In practical terms the club had, and continues to have, a membership that would be the envy of any youth club, even in the height of youth club attendance in the mid -late 1970s. It also has the best behaved, and kept facility that most people have ever experienced, that is treated with the utmost respect by its members. There is also unprecedented respect between members which for a club covering such an age range (our sample have members aged between 9 and 22 years old).

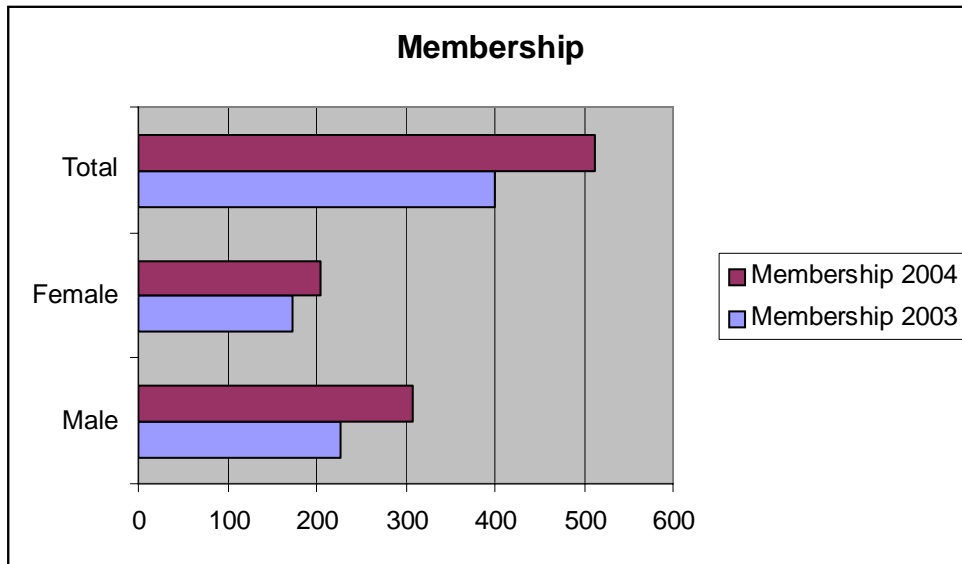
The success of the club goes from strength to strength, as does its reputation. An example of this is the featuring of the club in a recent local press article about the difficulties of engaging with young people.

"One success story is the Crew Club in Whitehawk. In a battered portable building which stands in the middle of a desolate football field, is a buzzing community of young people who treat the club as a home from home."

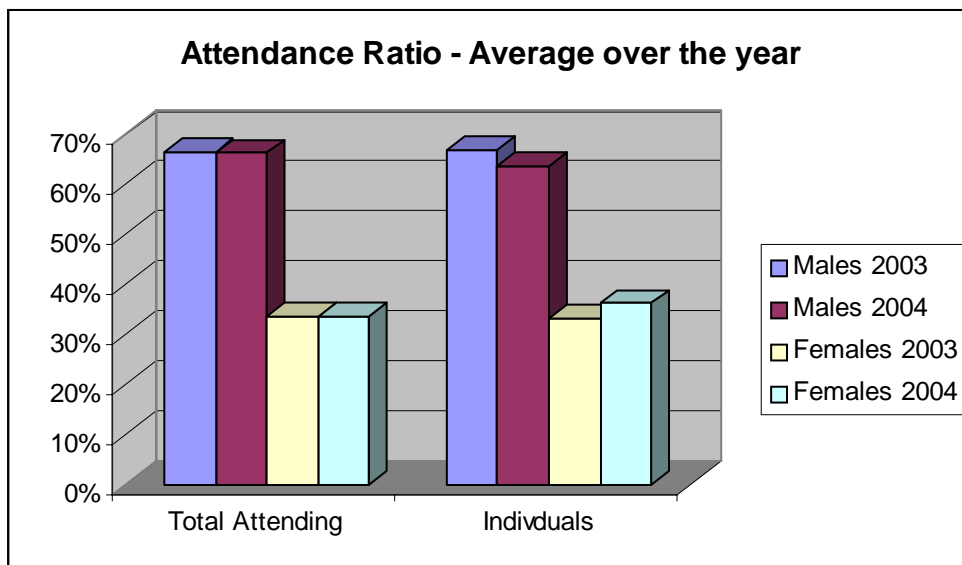
Evening Argus July 21st 2005.

Club Activity.

Membership in 2004 has increased considerably from that in the year previous, 399 to 512, a 22% increase. While there has been a slight decrease in the gender ratio the number of female members is still impressive at 40% of all members.



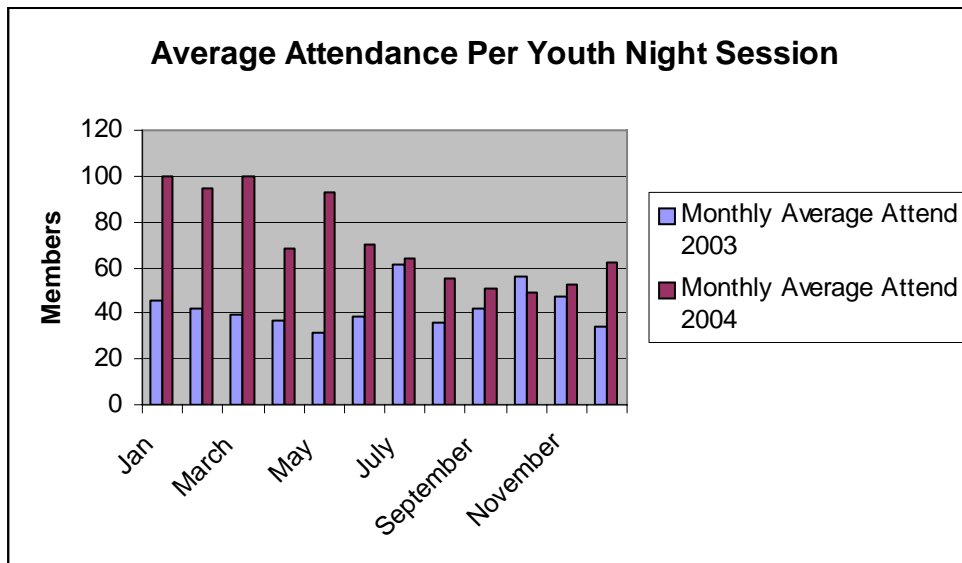
Even with the slight decrease in female members the gender balance on nightly attendance has hardly changed over the two year period, see below. If anything the average number of females attending (in relation to individuals) has increased.



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The number of actual “youth work sessions”³ were down on that of the previous year from 208 to 143, but there was an overall increase in the number of members attending each session over the same period.

Month	Number of Evening Sessions		Number of male members signing-in per month		Number of different male members per session per month		Number of female members signing-in per month		Number of different female members per session per month	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Jan	12	16	748	436	128	77	450	294	75	31
Feb	9	16	535	463	103	103	317	215	73	42
Mar	15	16	897	438	131	96	595	189	79	49
Apr	13	18	547	427	159	109	344	230	88	46
May	11	18	695	400	117	102	325	172	78	64
Jun	12	16	565	445	119	101	275	176	64	46
Jul	14	20	591	792	128	125	305	431	69	62
Aug	14	24	509	534	120	97	264	338	72	59
Sep	11	17	389	489	104	85	166	232	62	50
Oct	12	19	454	748	94	112	135	324	42	47
Nov	14	19	560	588	82	103	179	316	46	55
Dec	6	9	290	207	92	53	84	101	35	28
Total:	143	208	6780	5967	1377	1163	3439	3018	783	579



To put this information into context Brighton and Hove Youth Service collects statistics from the five statutory youth clubs and six of the voluntary ones. Of this latter group one provides only advice sessions and not general youth sessions.

³ As opposed to specialist activities, events, sports sessions etc.

During the year 2003/2004⁴ there is a total attendance of 2186 young people at the five statutory clubs and 669 for the five voluntary ones. This equates to an average attendance during that year of 437 young people to each of the statutory clubs and 134 to each of the voluntary ones.

Adding the numbers of members of the Crew Club to this would give a city wide membership of 3367 young people. The crew club would be responsible for 15% of the city's youth club members with the statutory clubs providing for 65% of them and the other voluntary clubs the remaining 20%. There are five of each of the statutory and voluntary clubs which if the members were apportioned equally between them would provide an average of 13% of members to statutory clubs and 4% to voluntary clubs.

The Crew Club's membership figures are very impressive in comparison to the other voluntary youth clubs and are greater than the statutory clubs membership.

However the figures provided by the Youth Service relate to membership per month not members per year. If this is different members each month (i.e. not counting someone going to a club more than once in the month) the comparison figures with the Crew Club are 2855 to 2160, with the Crew Club have 4 times as many attendees than the other voluntary clubs together or the same number of attendees as the five statutory clubs.

The total numbers attending the crew club in the year in question, (the number of people times the number of sessions they attended), the total is 10,219, or over three times the total of all of the other youth providers in the city.

The Crew Club aims to run at least 4 general sessions per week. The five statutory clubs run between 2 and 3 sessions a week each, totalling 11 per week. Their voluntary sector compatriots achieve slightly more at 13 (again each club offers between 2 and 3 sessions weekly). The Crew Club is offering more sessions per week than any other single youth provider in the city.

While it is very difficult to compare the different figures collected by the Crew Club and the statutory youth serves due to being taken over different time frames and the differences that can occur in counting and allocating numbers, there is no doubt that the service provision of the Crew Club in terms of general youth work is massive compared to other providers.

All this of course does not include the other activities (one off and multiple) that are offered by the club which ran an impressive number of additional activities, events, trips, and courses during the year in question.

⁴ The latest available full year figures – although the projected ones for 2004/05 are lower.

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These ranged from one off activities to sessions lasting for more than 27 weeks. The number of these activities are far greater than in the previous year and is part of the reasons why the number of mainstream sessions were fewer in the current period.

Additional Sessions Provided.

There were 37 One Off events involving between four and eighty individual young people:

mountain biking with ACE	Drugs workshop	Climbing wall	2 night camping in Devon
Old Market Musical	Discussion Group (confidence test)	Soft ball	Thorpe Park
Brighton Bears Trip	Photo Shoot	Skateboard with YIP	Under 10s football
CoMART yr 7,8,9 Group	BBC Politics Day	eb4u skateboard event	It's a knockout community event
CoMART boys Group	Climbing Wall	Snag Golf	Paintball
Whitehawk Festival	Dry Slope Skiing	Go Karting	OAP Christmas party
DJ Workshops	Ice Skating	Cricket	Over 14's meal
Sexual Health Workshop	Pitch & Putt Golf	Roller blading	under 14s Disco
Art Workshop	Swimming	Killer Pool	Showcase Event
	Pool Tournament		

These included activities such as the Christmas party organised for the local elderly residents where club members cooked for, served, and entertained eighty seven pensioners.

There were 14 activities that lasted between two and five sessions and involved between six and eighty young people.

Giant Jenga	Soft ball
Go Karting with YOT	Film Club
Swimming	Rounders
Pitch & Putt Golf	Football Skills
Friday Football (girls)	Dominoes Tournament
Sports sessions	Cooking
Mountain bike project	CoMART well being group

There were 11 activities that lasted between eight and twenty one sessions and involved between five and forty one young people.

Warden Buddies	Drama
swimming at st lukes	football coaching with BHAFc
Snag golf	Girls football Manor Gym
Table tennis	
tournaments	Break dance
singing lessons	Friday Football (boys)
	Under 12's football

While the number of mainstream sessions provided by the Crew Club during 2004 was less than the previous year the numbers of young people catered for increased dramatically and the range of additional services and sessions increased.

Members and Parents views of the Club.

The membership sample for this evaluation was a randomly selected 10% of the membership drawn from each of the nights the club operates. The age range of the sample was from 9 to 22 years averaging at 14. This reflects the actual membership of the club whose overall age range has fallen over the past year. Of those questioned the average length of membership was 2 ½ years and ranged from one day to five years. Attendance in the sample was an average of 3 sessions a week and 78% of those interviewed also attended at least one other activity or trip organised by the club. 43% of current members had attended another youth provision compared to 61% of those questioned in 2003.

The parent sample was quite small, 15 in total, but between these there were 26 children attending the club. The average age of the children attending was 12 years old ranging from 7 to 21 years old. The average length of their child's (children's) membership was just over 2 ½ years and the average attendance was 3 sessions a week (similar to membership survey). 93% of the children of those interviewed and attended the additional activity sessions or been on one of the arranged trips

Why Members attend the crew Club.

Why do you attend the Crew Club? ⁵	2004			2003		
	Combined	Male	Female	Combined	Male	Female
Play Pool	73%	64%	89%	70%	97%	13%
To see friends	96%	94%	100%	96%	97%	93%
To play the machines	73%	70%	78%	72%	68%	80%
To socialise in the warm	67%	61%	78%	78%	71%	93%
Because its better than being bored	90%					
		85%	100%	85%	97%	60%
Because its cool	73%	67%	83%	50%	45%	60%
For the activities	63%	58%	72%	83%	84%	80%
For the trips	67%	58%	83%	74%	84%	53%
For the freedom	65%	64%	67%	50%	45%	60%
Because "known" people run it	67%					
		61%	78%	93%	94%	93%
For opportunities such as employment assistance	37%					
		30%	50%	11%	16%	0%
It's a family type environment	43%					
		36%	56%	57%	48%	73%
Its relaxed easy going atmosphere	67%					
		67%	67%	85%	84%	87%
You get treated with respect	57%					
		48%	72%	93%	94%	93%
You do not get analysed	43%					
		36%	56%	59%	52%	73%
Other – please list below ⁶	10%					
		9%	11%	0%	0%	0%

⁵ Questions the same as the previous year to enable comparison

⁶ Helping, working there, and playing darts where the reasons mentioned under "other"

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While some of the combined results are very similar the changes in the gender balance of the answers is worth noting. Pool for example continues to be popular however there is a vast increase in this response being selected by females in the current year than in the previous one (89% and 13% respectively). Equally of note is the change in the response to “opportunities for employment assistance” with the number of males responding has fallen by almost half the number of females mentioning it has gone from none to 50% of the sample.

The importance of issues relating to known people running the club, its family environment, and treatment with respect have fallen but are still very significant, and the club being seen as being “cool” has increased. In some respect this would be expected as the original cohort which were part of an extended family moved on and the younger residents who have long aspired to be members are finally allowed to join.

In the Parents survey a question was asked about why the Crew Club was so successful. The options offered were taken from the previous members questionnaire and also allowed for additional, personal, reasons to be added. This resulted in the following responses:

What Makes the Crew Club Successful?

Run by Local People	53%
Run by Known Local People	87%
Active in the Community	53%
Its not successful	0%
Located in the Community	47%
Range of Services it offers	27%
Support on education and employment problems	0%
Support on Health issues	0%
Subsidised activities	33%
Other	0%

There is no doubt that the parents view of the success of the club and why their children attend is still very much down to the fact that it is run by known local people and is active and located in their community. The fact that the club can offer subsidised activities to their children is very much seen as a secondary reason.

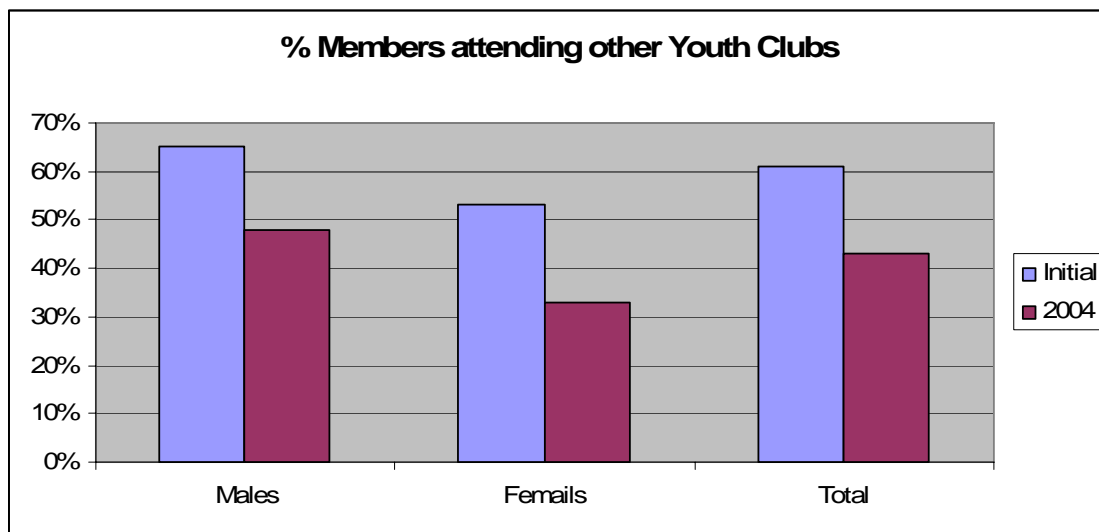
In the view of the members and parents alike the credibility, reputation, and continued success of the crew club is rooted in the fact that it is a local solution to a local situation run by known local people.

Attending Other Youth Provision.

The number of Crew Club members who had attended other clubs was lower in this year than in the previous one, 43% compared to 61%. This again is not surprising as the initial survey involved young people who had started the club and attending other clubs was not initially an option for them.

The range of clubs attended is similar to those mentioned in the previous year with some members travelling some distance, Hangleton and Patcham being the furthest.

In relation to the expressed difference between the visited clubs and the Crew Clubs 67% of the responses identified ways in which the other clubs were inferior to the local provision, 2% were indifferent and 28% were positive in relation to the alternative club. Reasons for difference ranged from the straight forward “nothing to do” or “only girls go there” (in relation to girls club), to the less straight forward “they will not let you out once you were in there” and “its run by Christians”.



There is no doubt that the Crew Club is not successful at the expense of other providers by preventing local young people attending other clubs. The fact is that the majority of those who do prefer the facilities offered by the Crew Club.

Impact of the Crew Club on its members.

The effect the Crew Club has on its members, from their point of view and that of their parents, was analysed by presenting a series of statements to which the respondent had five different response options. They could “agree” or “agree strongly” they could “disagree” or “strongly disagree” or they could retain a neutral position (“neither agree nor disagree”). The first column shows the combined positive response of the parents while the second shows the combined positive response of the members.

Statements -Parents Positive – Members – Degree of Variation %

The Crew Club helps me (my child).....

1	to be Healthier	80%	59%	Significant	21%
2	keep physically fit	93%	65%	Significant	29%
3	to eat better.	29%	39%		11%
4	to be less stressed	71%	69%		3%
5	to stay safe.	100%	78%	Significant	22%
6	To avoid getting in dangerous situations	100%	88%		12%
7	To know the dangers of smoking, over drinking and taking drugs.	87%	82%		4%
8	To behave better in the community	87%	80%		6%
9	To take an active part in the community	87%	73%		14%
10	To make a positive contribution to the community	86%	65%	Significant	21%
11	To gain recognised achievements and awards	100%	67%	Significant	33%
12	To gain new skills	93%	88%		5%
13	To learn new things	93%	80%		12%
14	To avoid getting into trouble.	87%	90%		-4%
15	To keep occupied	100%	82%		18%
16	Keep off of the streets at night	100%	84%		16%
17	To feel proud of our community	93%	75%		18%

The statements were based on those produced by the baselining exercise completed earlier in the year and were to some extent linked to wider targets for local and regional government.

While there are a number of variations in the view point of the parents and the members, and that some of these variations are significantly different (those above 20% were highlighted) the degree of agreement is quite startling. With only two exceptions the Parents see the input by the Crew Club more positively than their children, but in every statement but one there are a majority of positive views in both camps. Parents ranging from 71% to 100% positive agreement while the members range from 59% to 90%.

When examining the detail of these results it is easier to consider them in category areas⁷.

Health (Statements 1 to 4). The two significant differences relate to the degree to which the club can be seen to be influencing Health and Fitness. Both groups feel that it does but the parents attribute to it more highly than the members. Stress is seen to be eased by club membership almost equally by both groups. The only statement in the whole exercise that does not have an overall positive response from either group, and is one of the two scored higher by the members than the parents relates to healthy eating. **Apart from not believing that the club is promoting the members to eat more healthily there is no doubt that the club is seen as having a very positive impact on the health of the young people attending.**

Personal Safety and Behaviour (statements 5 to 8). Overall in this section there is agreement between the two parties as to the positive impact of the club on these areas. The only "significant" variation is to the degree that the club is seen to be helping members to stay safe (from 79-100%) and not a dispute if it does or not. There is no doubt that there is strong agreement in relation to personal safety in respect of avoiding dangerous situations and staying safe and a greater knowledge of the dangers of substance misuse, while both parties strongly agree that the club assists its members to behave better in the wider community. **Here again there is no doubt that the Crew Club has impacted on its members personal safety and behaviour in the community.**

Community Involvement (statements 9 to 10). The only difference of opinion in response to these statements is in respect of the degree of involvement with parents attributing greater impact than the members. The significant difference in relation to the "positive" nature of that impact, which can be seen as a difference in perspective rather than impact with the parents being more able to recognise this. **The club is being seen a positively enabling its members to be involve in and impact on wider community activity.**

Employment/Education/Knowledge (statements 11 to 13). Parents are totally sure that the club is assisting their children to gain recognised qualifications and achievements while only two thirds of the membership think similarly. Again this could be seen as a difference in perspective or due to the fact that all of the parents who responded to the survey and had a positive experience

⁷ Some of the statements could be included in more than one category area.

involving their child (children). This latter situation although possible is very highly unlikely, and the fairly uniform response from both parties to the other two statements indicate that the reason for variation is the former rather than the latter. **There is strong agreement that the club has a positive impact on members learning and gaining new skills and agreement that it assists in the gaining of recognised achievements.**

Community Safety (statements 13 to 16). There is no doubt that in the past the Whitehawk area had a reputation for young people hanging around the area. This not only contributed to the numbers getting into trouble through boredom but also the general “fear of crime” by residents associating large numbers of young people as a danger to them. The parents are unanimous in feeling that the club keeps the members occupied and “off of the streets”. This is mirrored to a high degree by the members and interestingly the members give a higher positive view (than that of the parents) to the fact that the club helps them avoid getting into trouble. **Overall the highest combined response by members in relation to the impact that the Crew Club has on their lives relates to Community and Personal Safety issues.**

Community Pride (statement 17). While the parents score this statement higher than the members **there is no doubt that both parties feel that the Crew Club has assisted its members to be proud of their community.**

The results of this aspect of the evaluation demonstrate well that both members and parents have acknowledged a significant positive impact made by the Crew Club on its members and the wider community.

The Future of the Crew Club

There has been much anticipation in relation to a new building. For many reasons the initial timetable has slipped considerably, and building costs have increased while the allocated capital funding amount has not. Consideration has also been given to the amount of space that the new building would bring and the potential of attracting ongoing revenue to support the planned activities. At the time of this report being produced a final decision has yet to be made.

With the uncertainty relating to the new building a series of statements relating to the importance of a new building were given to the club members interviewed where they could indicate the degree of their agreement, or not. The responses to these questions are given in the table (over page).

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Statement	% Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing	Priority of Positive Response	<i>%Disagreeing or strongly disagreeing⁸</i>
A. Continuation of the Crew Club is the most important thing	95%	1	0%
B. We must have a new building	92%	2	0%
C. A new building would be nice but not essential	57%	5	20%
D. Additional Space on the existing site would be good	88%	3	0%
E. I'm happy with the use of other buildings for Crew Club activities.	73%	4	8%

While it is clear that the members would like a new building it is not their highest priority and that there is a strong support for adding to rather than replacing the existing building. The important thing to the members is the continuation of their club.

Following from the importance of the continuation of the club an open question about how the closing of the club would effect them was asked to members, and a similar one posed to the parents.

The members responded as follows:

If the club closed I would.....

Board/nothing to do	37%
Cry/be unhappy	11%
Die	11%
Campaign	5%
Other constructive	18%
Other destructive	16%

Even without the dramatics that indicate the possible outbreak of mass suicide if the club closed there was only one response that mentioned going to another youth provider. The rest related to the boredom and the movement back on to the streets to “hang around”, and have nothing to do. There were also some suggestions that due to this they (the members) may get into trouble or cause trouble.

⁸ Difference between the two relate to “neither agree or disagree” response

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The responses from the parents was overall similar to that of the members.

The result of the Crew Club closing on your child/children would be:

Loss to whole community	14%
Would miss out	7%
No safe environment for children	7%
no where to go	43%
More trouble on the street	7%
Children walking the streets	21%

The majority of responses form both groups indicate that the closure of the club would cause a vacuum that would not easily be filled, agreement on more children being on the streets more, and in the parents case realisation of the wider community impact that such closure would bring.

There is a consensus amongst the members and their parents that the continuation of the club is the main priority and that if the club for any reason where to close the impact would have very far reaching effects.

Working with Others – Crew Club in Partnership.

Case Study

Warden Buddy Scheme

An opportunity arose when the eb4u Neighbourhood Wardens identified a number of 8 and 9 year old children that were starting to become involved in forms of anti-social behaviour that also ran the risk of the perpetrators being seriously injured. When they were considering the potential of forming a Junior Warden scheme to counter this behaviour links with the Crew Club were made to see how the concept could be developed.

A pilot project was developed that linked the children to wardens to see what the wardens did in their daily work, and to provide a series of 10 weekly sessions relating to different themes including “How did it feel to be a victim?” “Dangers of turning off gas and electricity supply to homes”.

The Crew Club offered premises, refreshments, and assisted with the course design and offered referrals to the scheme. The credibility of the venue and the ability to operate initially under the Crew Clubs insurance were very important contributory factors to the success of the pilot.

The scheme is now ongoing and run from different venues by the warden team. The initial input and support offered by the Crew Club was seen as invaluable:

“The Crew Club facilitated the creation of the scheme, to pilot the project and then to approach others with a whole “product”. We benefited from their experiences and now have a project to share with other schemes throughout the country; it is being used as an example of good practice”

Imogen Wallace
Neighbourhood Warden Team Leader
Eb4u

During 2004 the Crew Club worked in partnership a range of organisations and agencies to deliver specific projects. In addition to the above example it included:

- ✚ Hosting a BB Gun “amnesty” with the local Community Safety Team.
- ✚ Working on a life skills programme with Bridge to Employment for year 11s at the local secondary school.
- ✚ Carrying out issue based work such as street drinking with Youth 4 the Future
- ✚ Offering work placements for the Probation Service and the Youth Offending Team.

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- ✚ Providing input to young people excluded from school in conjunction with Alternative Centre for Education.

In addition to regular links with other youth providers, neighbourhood groups, and interest agencies the Crew Club carried out significant pieces of work with ten other agencies or organisations: -

- Bridge 2 Employment (B2E)
- Youth 4 the Future
- Whitehawk Warden Scheme
- EB4U Community Safety Team
- Community Police
- ACE (Alternative Centre for Education)
- Youth Inclusion Project
- Positive Activities for Young People
- Youth Offending Team
- Probation Service

Interviews were requested with all of the above to gain the views of partner agencies as to the way in which the club worked with them. A 50% response rate was achieved. None of those responding recorded any negative comments about the club, or the partnership work and all of them would be happy to work with the club again. Additionally of those organisations who did not reply most have continued during 2005 to work in partnership with the club and as such this can be seen also as a testimony of their work.

Partner's Feedback.

A series of standardised questions were used as a basis for discussion with partners. These focused on a number of areas but were primarily concerned with the quality of the work carried out, the impact of the clubs involvement and the reasons attributed by the partner as to the reasons for the clubs success (if they thought it was successful).

What was the input/impact of the Crew Club involvement?

All partners felt that the club had a major impact in its ability to reach "hard to reach" young people, which most other providers are unable to do. Having been able to attract the young people the club was also able to work with them

and to capitalise on the relationship in a way that benefited both the young person and the partner agency.

“You get better numbers of young people - its very accessible and allows the client group to be included, this is not always true about other providers who will not tolerate, for example, bad behaviour. The Crew Club are willing to work to long term goals” (Youth Inclusion Project)

“Very good to work with, very receptive.” (Probation Service)

“The Crew Club plays a vital role in engaging with excluded and hard to reach young people from the Whitehawk & manor area. Many of these young people are at risk of offending and exclusion due to their circumstances. The Crew Club has assisted in reducing this risk & in helping to develop skills in the young people that increase their education and employment opportunities.” (eb4u Community Safety Team).

There is no doubt that the input of the Crew Club in partnership work created greater opportunities for working with local young people, and increased the potential for successful work to be carried out.

What makes the Crew Club Successful?

Part of the work of this, and the previous, evaluation was to try and identify the reasons why the club is so successful especially in respect of the lack of success other schemes and projects have had in the area over many years. The initial evaluation identified the strong extended family operating system that flourished in the club built on the natural input of its two founders. This was coupled very strongly with the fact that the club was formed by local people to meet a locally identified need that gave it extremely strong street credibility.

The importance of these individuals and the local roots are echoed by the partner agencies, all of which feel very strongly that the club is very successful.

“History of Daren and Lorraine -, not outsiders but people who can be trusted, young people can associate with that. Club is nothing without them; empowerment is real as opposed to that offered by most mainstream youth provision that cannot react quickly – Crew Club makes things work.” (Youth Offending Project)

“It is easily accessible; run by local people; young people, who use the club, get involved in its running through volunteering; there is a strong board with a wide variety of expertise”. (eb4u Community Safety Team).

“Home grown, resident led with the respect of young people – pro-active addressing issues on the estate and can see the root of the problem from all sides.” (Neighbourhood Wardens).

The importance of the project being “home grown” and the credibility of the local people running the club cannot be overestimated. **For an area that has had a negative reputation for so long and that has been the target for “parachute” operations with individuals and organisations coming in to attempt to provide their solutions to “local problems”, the ability to produce local heroes is invaluable. The crew club through its leadership is providing this.**

Would you work with them again? Is there any funding that you have or could attract to fund future work with them?

All of the projects questioned were very keen to record their willingness to work again or continue to work with the club. Unsurprisingly when asked about funding none of the partner agencies were able to offer any to the club although there were offers to assist to identify additional funds that could be attracted to assist in the work, or future works.

Any additional comments about the experience of working with the Crew Club?

“I see the project as being one of the best examples of community led regeneration for young people in eb4U.” (eb4U Community Safety Team).

“It’s a fantastic local resource that is doing a lot of work that it is not funded to do – very flexible and responsive to the needs of the local community.” (Probation Service).

“Its not seen as a youth club but a provider of all that young people need in one place. Perception is important for young people” (Neighbourhood Wardens)

Conclusion.

The previous evaluation identified the basic questions to be considered and then proceeded to identify how these were successfully answered by the Crew Club. These questions were:

1. Did the Crew Club do what it said it would do?
2. Would the work have happened anyway?
3. Did it happen at the expense of anything else?
4. Did it work with others in delivering the service?
5. What were the views of those involved in the process?
6. Can examples of good practice be replicated?
7. What developments should take place in the future?

These provide a useful framework when revisiting the work of the club.

Did the club do what it said it would?

In the previous evaluation the consideration of this was very much driven by the then targets agreed with the funder. In this instance the funding requirements were chopped and changed and while there has already been mention of the loss of an impressive data collection system the prime role of the club was to continue meeting the needs of local young people.

Throughout the given year the club has not run as many general youth work sessions as in the previous year. However the membership has increased dramatically as has nightly attendance. To this must be added the fact that the range of activities and additional, specialist, sessions has also increased on previous years, and that a number of these were as a direct result of the views of members.

Additionally even the reduced output is greater than any other youth provider as are its membership numbers, and its percentage share of members across the whole city.

The Crew Club has continued to deliver and expand the services it provides to local young people and in doing this has continued to do what it said it would.

Would the work have happened anyway?

The initial club was formed to meet the self-identified needs of local young people that were not accessing any other provision. This has not changed over the last year. The young people are free to access, and some do access, the services of other providers, but the majority of those attending would not attend mainstream youth provision. The additional output of the club in relation to the numbers of sessions offered (general and specialist) and the throughput of regular attendance would not have occurred without the club being open.

The services and provision of the club are unique in many ways and would not have happened without the Crew Club existing.

Did it happen at the expense of anything else?

The club was formed to meet an identified gap in service provision. Originally and currently a number of members have accessed other youth provision. The fact that the Crew Club is in operation provides a choice not only to those young people who did/would attend other clubs, but also to those who would not otherwise be interested in youth provision. Historically numbers attending the other local providers have been quite low. Logically the large numbers currently attending the Crew Club indicate that the majority of these were drawn from non-attendees and not attracted from existing clubs.

The establishment of the Crew Club has provided a choice for local young people and its membership has not been established at the expense of other service providers.

Did it work with others in delivering the service?

Prior to the last evaluation there was consideration of the club becoming a provider of a range of different youth related services. One of the issues highlighted in that report was that the club should be aware of its primary focus, the attraction of young people and the continuing involvement of them in the activities. It is pleasing to note that the club has capitalised on its expertise and has used these skills to work with other to provide additionality to its work. The views of the partner agencies are unanimous in their view as to the value they place on the working relationship with the club. It is certain that many of these agencies and organisations would not be able to access their desired client group without the support of the crew club, although it is unfortunate that they are equally unable to provide funds to assist the club in its work.

The Crew Club continues to work in partnership with a range of organisations and agencies to the benefit of its members and the wider community.

What were the views of those involved in the process?

The club values very much the views of its members and has always responded to their requests and suggestions. For the first time this study has also sought the views of some of the parents of the club members and again without exception their view is very positive about the club and its work. A view echoed by the agencies who work with the Crew Club. Most impressive of all is the combined member and parent viewpoint as to the impact that the club has made on the lives of its members and that of the wider local community.

The club is seen by its members, their parents, and other collaborating agencies as having a major impact on the local community and those who live in it.

Can examples of good practice be replicated?

One of the previous recommendations related to the consideration of attracting funds to try and replicate the success of the club. Current priorities especially in relation to the possible new building has meant that this has not yet been pursued. A number of contributory factors have been identified as the main “ingredients” of the success of the club, with the main one revolving around the key personalities involved. Further work would need to be carried out to test this concept and investigate the possibility for duplication.

The replication of the successful model of the Crew Club has yet to be tested.

What developments should take place in the future?

It is certain that the club needs to continue doing what it is currently doing. It is also certain that the biggest challenge facing the Crew Club is its need to be sustainable after the end of the New Deal for Communities funding. It is this that will be the pressing issue to be faced by the club.

While the main purpose of this report is to evaluate the service provided to date there is a need to ensure that the excellent work, and excellent it is, continues. This alone is more than enough for the club to be concerned with in the near future, however should the opportunity arise for additional work to be carried out this report has identified a number of options. For these reasons the following recommendations are made:

- ***The management of the Crew Club gives serious consideration to the reinstatement of the now defunct data collection system.***
- ***The management of the Crew Club investigates the potential of attracting funds to replicate the model outside of the Brighton and Hove area.***
- ***The Crew Club continues to develop its successful practice of providing employment opportunities and experiences to its members.***