

National Youth Service Consultation Report 2009



Introduction

The IWA national consultation took place in 2009. This provided a mechanism for the young members to express their opinions on what is working well in IWA for them and to identify areas they are interested in getting involved in. This report provides a summary of the main issues that came up. A full report is available on request.

Consultation Process

The process for consulting with the young members, aged 13 to 30 years, involved three main stages as follows;

1. Survey ~ incorporating an online and hard copy questionnaire advertised in Spokeout, the website and across IWA's services.
2. Random Sampling Telephone Survey sent out to 100 young people.
3. Focus Groups involving young people from across the country in six venues.

Who took part?

There were a total of 194 young people who took part in the consultation. The majority of people were aged between 22 and 30 years of age. They have been involved in IWA for many years and they were from all over the country and use a lot of IWA services including holidays, sports, discos, summer camps and local centres.

What did they tell us?

A lot of points were raised through the survey and issues were discussed at the forum meetings that are all recorded and available on request. This report focuses on the main points that came up and includes some of the comments that people made about these issues.

The Statistics	What the young people said
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Almost all of the young people indicated that they want services and activities in the evenings and at weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "After hours transport is needed." ▶ "Could IWA fleet be used at evenings/weekends for a nominal fee." ▶ "Staff use up all their working hours during the day time – could be more flexible for evening activities". ▶ "Include more variety e.g. change a day service to an evening outing once a month".
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 45% of young people surveyed indicated that they are involved in other services outside of IWA. When asked what might prevent them from going to that service they ticked transport, family matters, access, studying and a lack of PA assistance as some of the issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "Some buildings have a 'false sense of accessibility' – a nice ramp out the front but no way to get around inside the building (e.g. upstairs, into certain areas etc.) or inadequate toilet facilities." ▶ "Living in a rural area makes it more difficult for a person with a disability." ▶ "Having flexibility would be great. To be able to use IWA resources to suit my needs e.g. PA supports, play a game of pool, cinema or film club."

The Statistics	What the young people said
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ When asked how they got to the service, 31% ticked family and the remainder who answered this question mainly indicated IWA transport with some ticking public transport and taxis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "Lack of transport means that mothers are usually the taxi." ▶ "Delighted with IWA transport, saving money by not having to use taxis, buses, etc." ▶ "My parents are very good and bring me to things but it would be nice to be independent of that." ▶ "More accessible transport in their own area would allow easier access to events in other areas and less dependence on parents/neighbours."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 74% of the young people said that there are not enough services for young people in their area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "There is no service suitable for my age of 13 years old. The only outlet I have is school. I would love a fun outlet where I could meet people and get out of the house." ▶ "There is not enough being done to promote the day to day running of service for young people." ▶ "More regular activities that would allow you to be more social and make new friends, leading to more social opportunities on top of that." ▶ "I used to play basketball when I was in school but that all stopped when I left. I would like to start to play it again and do it every week if I could."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 83% of the young people indicated that they would like services to include young people with and without disability accessing the services together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "Youth service open to all will encourage young people who do not have a disability to attend events." ▶ "I don't mind if there is just people with disability in the service but the best option is to have a mix of people with and without disability." ▶ "Increase events, and events should be mixed."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ When asked what they would get from being in a youth service the following options each received between 60% to 80% of the votes; make new friends, have a bit of craic, get out of the house for a while, go places I haven't been before, and learn new skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "Increase possibility of meeting new people and establish new friendships." ▶ "Good feelings from doing these and achieving things." ▶ "Find new interests and new experiences good and bad find life long friends / partners / relationship awareness." ▶ "I would like to have somewhere to go a few days a week." ▶ "I would like to have a say in how it is run."

What have we decided?

The youth service has developed a plan to try to meet the needs of the young people in IWA that were highlighted in the consultation. There are three main themes that we will focus on as follows...

1. Increase the availability of transport for young people

What the young people said	What are we planning to do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ “You have to plan your journeys in advance so it would be good to know IWA could offer you a reliable service.” ▶ “More flexible use of IWA transport”. ▶ “Local transport to be made available to support people to go to places they want e.g. discos, night courses or the pub.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increase the availability of IWA’s transport fleet for the use of IWA’s young members (subject to licence and insurance issues). ▶ Work with IWA’s Transport Working Group to bring the issues facing young people to the attention of Government, Local Authorities and transport providers.

2. Improve the quantity and accessibility of youth appropriate information

What the young people said	What are we planning to do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ “Website to be developed and made more interactive giving information about what’s going on.” ▶ “Provide information on what is available in my area and promote it to others my age.” ▶ “Information/resources tailored for young people ~ Driving information, advocacy, independent living, peer counselling, develop a booklet for young people to inform re above.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with all relevant IWA Services to design information that is relevant and accessible to young people through the IWA website, text messages, flyers, posters and Spokeout Magazine. ▶ Further develop partnerships with youth work organisations to ensure that the information on the services they provide is communicated to IWA’s members. ▶ Create mechanisms for young people to be involved in the production and distribution of information to their peers.

3. Increase the level of services for young people in IWA

What the young people said	What are we planning to do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ “We want to spread our wings and not just hide ourselves away. We should be doing what everyone else is doing.” ▶ “Don’t want to take from services from older people but in 10 yrs they’ll be coming to ‘us’ to fill gaps and we wont be there as not providing services that we require.” ▶ “Find new interests and new experiences good and bad. Find life long friends / partners / relationship awareness.” ▶ “I got a job here and this is something that gives me great confidence. Having work waiting for me to do is great and I hope it lasts.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with all IWA Services and Departments to develop opportunities for young people to access the service and supports that they need. ▶ Further develop links and supports to other youth work organisations to develop opportunities for young people to access local youth services of their choice. ▶ Research and apply for funding to support the development of youth services in IWA.

Conclusion

The Youth Service Business plan has been developed and to the best of our ability has reflected the thoughts, feelings, comments and desires that were expressed throughout the consultation process. It is our aim to deliver on the plan despite the difficult financial circumstances that exists Ireland.