



# END OF YEAR REPORT 2009

This report gives a summary of the activities of the Xcel Project for 2009. The report will cover the following:

- Xcel Youth Information Centre
- Xcel Project Activities
- Summer of Sport 2009 / National Playday
- Bluelight Music Nights
- On Yer Bike Event
- Just Dance Group
- Aims for 2010

## **Introduction**

The Xcel Project – Building on Success carried on from the original Xcel Project and is funded for two years.

The project started on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and received funding from Leader, Langholm Youth and Community Project, the Hammond Trust, the Stoneypath Trust, the Hollywood Trust, the David Stevenson Trust and Youthbank.

A new base was found for the project on Langholm High Street. This acts as an office as well as a youth information centre.

This report will show exactly what has been achieved during 2009 as well as the aims for 2010.

# Youth Information Centre

The Xcel Youth Information Centre was up and running from March 2009.

## **Ground-breaking youth project opens next week**

Published at 21:48, Wednesday, 18 March 2009

*THE new premises of Langholm's youth project opens its doors to young people next Monday from its base in the High Street.*

*The rooms have been refitted by landlord Andrew Scott.*

*Funding from various bodies will pay for the rent, heating and lighting, and the tables and chairs, along with the TV, were paid for by the community learning and development department of the council.*

*The future of the groundbreaking project, set up three years ago, was secured last December, thanks to the new two-year funding package.*

*Xcel Project was given £40,000 by grant-giving body Leader, half of the amount it needed to keep running for the next two years. Another £10,000 came from the John Hammond Trust and £10,000 from Langholm Youth and Community Project, with funding also from the Holywood Trust and the Youth Bank.*

*Led by Duncan Elliott, youth development manager, the new base will give Eskdale a building dedicated to young people and a presence on the High Street, creating more interest and gaining more publicity. It will provide a friendly environment where different organisations can meet young people.*

*Duncan wants to encourage young people to drop in and talk about ideas for new activities or projects they would like to get involved in.*

*There are a couple of laptops for the youngsters to use so they can go on the internet and there are leaflets on careers, health and other topics as well as newspapers to read. It is also hoped to have professionals come along and give advice on careers and health.*

*Duncan says he wants to get as many organisations as possible working with Xcel and to have somewhere for the young people on the High Street is ideal.*

*Youngsters can drop in from 3.30pm to 5.30pm, while adult members of the public are invited to look in from 11am to 1pm if they are interested in finding out more about the project, have any ideas for activities or would like to volunteer.*

*Duncan says having their own place will make a big difference. He will be more accessible more often, not only for the young people but also for the volunteers.*

*He said: "It takes a while to get volunteers up and running and we're always looking for people. I'm quite keen on putting volunteers into something they are interested in. That way they'll get more enjoyment out of it."*

*The youth club, which meets on Mondays in the community centre, is sending youngsters to take part in the youth club championships at St Joseph's College in Dumfries later this month. They will compete in various categories, including sports.*

*In August Langholm is hosting the national play day which includes sports coaching and displays by various organisations. It is hoped to involve local clubs such as the football and rugby clubs.*

The above is a press cutting from March 2009 and covers the opening of the Youth Information Centre.



From March to December 2009 over 150 young people have used the Youth Information Centre. They have been able to use the internet, pick up information on a variety of issues or just have a game on the playstation.

The centre has also been used for meetings with young people and has proved to be a very popular place. Somewhere they can call their own and feel very comfortable in.

## **Xcel Project Activities**

There are four main activities that have helped form the Xcel Project and keep it popular amongst young people. These are:

### **Youth Club**

*Takes place on a Monday night from 6.30 – 9.30pm. P4 - P6 from 6.30 – 8pm and P6 - S2 from 8 – 9.30pm, the cost for the club is kept at £1 to try and remove the barrier of cost. The club averages 40 – 50 young people every week and the young people have plenty of activities to keep them amused.*

### **Community Centre Drop-In**

*Takes place on a Wednesday night and runs from 7.30 – 9.30pm. The Drop-In is open to young people in S3 and above. It is more structured than the Hang Out with more focused youth work and different activities. Up to 20 young people attended each week and are taken on an outing at the end of each session. The group is run in partnership with CLD.*

### **Buck Hang Out Night**

*Takes place on a Tuesday or a Thursday night and runs from 7.30 - 10pm. Young people aged 14 – 18 drop in, play pool, darts, listen to music and generally hang out. The numbers vary from week to week with a minimum of 10 and the maximum 20. It is also a place where young people feel comfortable and they can make use of it throughout the week.*

### **Buck Hoodies**

*The Buck Hoodies came about as a result of the Buck Hang Out Night. The Hoodies compete in the local pool and darts league. Pool takes place on a Sunday night from September to April and darts on a Thursday night during the summer months. This is a great way for the young people to work together and also helps with the perceptions of alcohol amongst the young people.*



## Summer of Sport 2009 / National Playday

The summer of 2009 was a busy time for the Xcel Project. Leaflets for the Summer of Sport 2009 and National Playday are attached.

### **Playday fun for all**

Published at 21:44, Wednesday, 29 July 2009

*THE fifth National Playday is at the Eskdale sports centre in Langholm on Friday, August 14.*

*This is the biggest annual play celebration in the country and gives children and families a great day out, as well as getting across some serious messages about play and children.*

*The event has been arranged by Dumfries and Galloway Council's active schools co-ordinators in Annandale and Eskdale, and Annandale & Eskdale sports and leisure trust, with support from the Xcel Project, home link worker and various organisations.*

*The event is free for all children and their families thanks to funding from Annandale and Eskdale area committee.*

*A wide variety of activities will be available. Many have maximum numbers, so please book in advance.*

*They include trampolining, gymnastics, rugby, cricket and handball.*

*Activities are both indoors and outdoors and families can join the healthy walks, family rounds and Wii competition.*

The above is a press cutting from July 2009. The National Playday was a huge success with 100 young people attending on the day.

The Summer of Sport is an annual summer holiday scheme offering numerous activities and trips to various venues. A number of organisations were involved in making it a very successful summer.



## **Bluelight Music Nights**

The third Bluelight Music Night was held in Langholm on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2009.

### **Youngsters enjoy third Bluelight night**

Published at 21:43, Wednesday, 15 July 2009

*LANGHOLM hosted its third Bluelight music night at the Buccleuch Centre when more than 50 young people went along, bringing the total attendance for the three events to about 250.*

*The youngsters enjoyed live music from local band The Vision as well as solo performances from Ryan Harvey, Rory Laycock and Pemma Ellis. It was a great way to celebrate the end of the school year.*

*The Bluelight events are for young people aged 11 to 17. They are all searched and breathalysed before they can enter the venue, ensuring a safe environment where they do not feel under pressure to drink alcohol or take drugs.*

*There is a chill-out zone where they can sit, relax and chat, enjoy free non-alcoholic cocktails from the dry bar and access interactive learning and information on alcohol, drugs, sexual health, volunteering, careers and other youth issues.*

*They are encouraged to get involved with the event as much as possible. They help with the promotion, selling tickets before the night and on the door, helping to source and provide the entertainment as well as setting up and clearing up after it.*

*Duncan Elliott, Xcel Project youth development manager, said: "The Bluelight event relies on partnership working. It was organised by the young people with support from the Xcel Project, Church of Scotland and the council's community learning and development service."*

*Partner agencies include the police, the Academy, NHS, Alcohol and Drugs Action Team, the council's youth issues unit and integrated substance services, Skills Development Scotland and Volunteer Action Dumfries & Galloway.*

## **On Yer Bike Event**

This event coincided with the cycling event the Tour of Britain travelling through Eskdale in September.

### **Youngsters get on their bikes to have a go**

Published at 21:48, Wednesday, 16 September 2009

*AS PART of the exciting build-up to the Tour of Britain cyclists hurtling through the town on Monday, Langholm hosted its own cycling event.*

*On Yer Bike at the Kilngreen last Sunday was organised by Annette Paterson of the Langholm Initiative Powerdown Project, Duncan Elliott, Xcel Project manager, and Richard Morrison, Church of Scotland youth worker.*

*More than 300 people came along during the day, with some energetic cyclists joining the guided rides organised by Tom Hutton, with a choice of an eight-mile ride and a more adventurous 19-mile route.*

*Visitors were thrilled by the stunts from the 7stanes mountain bike team. Many of the young people who had brought their bikes tried the Whithaugh Park skills course and anyone without a bike could have a go on their climbing wall.*

*There was a mountain bike simulator and bike maintenance was undertaken by Phil Brown and Bike7, who also had a stall displaying bikes and equipment. The police did bike security marking.*

*Time trials were held in the performance arena and the winners were Reece Patterson and Saikou Jammeh, who won a month's membership donated by the Eskdale sports centre. Luke Patterson, Connor Ewart and Katrina Allan won goodie bags.*

*Duncan and Richard were happy to see so many young people taking part in the day and Duncan was delighted so many parents came along, too.*

*Annette said: "Powerdown aims to reduce Langholm's carbon footprint and this event was a great way to show people that this can be done in a fun way. Encouraging people to cycle or walk more where possible instead of just jumping into their cars."*



## **Just Dance**

The Just Dance Group was set-up as a result of four keen dancers wanting to do something for young people. The Xcel Project helped the group get started and it has gone from to strength to strength ever since.

### **Group is just the thing for wannabe dancers**

Published at 21:52, Wednesday, 04 November 2009

*A NEW group called Just Dance has been set up in Langholm for youngsters from S1 and upwards.*

*The dance group is being run by Donna and Karen Adams, Catriona Bell and Stacey Wilson. They are meeting every Thursday at 7pm in the community centre.*

*The group will learn a variety of dances with the objective of putting on a display next summer.*

*The organisers have taken advice from the Xcel project on insurance and other matters and after paying a registration fee of £3, it will cost £1.50 each Thursday. There are more than 20 members currently.*



It is hoped that more groups can be set-up this way. The young people have been encouraged to get involved in the running of the group and the fundraising activities. They have taken ownership of the group and feel very proud of it as a result. The group has around 20 members and dance on a Thursday night.

## **Aims for 2010**

Halfway through the project and there is still plenty to be done. 2009 has proved that the Xcel Project is a hugely worthwhile youth project and offers great opportunities for young people in Eskdale.

The main aims for 2010 are:

- The development of the Xcel Project Website
- The creation of the Xcel Youth Cinema
- The creation of the Xcel Volunteer Database
- To keep the current activities running and encourage the young people to get involved
- To hold another Bluelight Music Night
- To repeat the success of the Summer of Sport
- To run focused activities from the Youth Information Centre
- To work with the young people and listen to their ideas