

Report on Multi-Faith Centre (MFC) Youth Work



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Background to MFC Youth Work

This short report is designed to update the reader on the on-going developments of MFC Youth Work. This report is aimed at looking at the past two years of youth focused activity and to see the progression of the work undertaken to be able to review and see what the future may hold.

Youth led youth work will continue to act as a significant influence and blueprint for integration in the lives of the young people from Eastern European (mainly Roma) heritage in the area.

The work of the MFC has been focused in two wards of Derby city, Normanton and Arboretum; this has been built around a specific need for youth work with Eastern Europeans (mainly Roma) in the area. The MFC's involvement with Eastern Europeans was embedded in its partnership working with NC Fusion, a project funded by MIF, and designed to help integrate new communities into Derby, the partnership was supported by MFC, St James Centre, Upbeat Communities and Children and Young people's educational achievement team.

There has been since 2010, and continues to be, a large inflow of Eastern Europeans into the Normanton and Peartree areas, especially those of Czech and Slovak heritage, many of whom are ethnically Roma. Eastern Europeans in the area also includes those of Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Hungarian and Russian descent.

MFC set about offering dance and football classes that were supported by professionals, during the sessions there was a clear need for young people to explore more, this became clear that the simple introduction of paper and pens brought an increased number of young people that wanted to engage with art.

During the winter of 2012 there was a large increase of Anti-Social behaviour in the area, and the police were about to introduce a section 30 order on the area, in an effort to prevent this THE CLUB was set up. Pear Tree Baptist church (which had itself been a victim of vandalism) decided to respond by way of engagement, and had several meetings with the local authority, young people, charities and other organisations, about the best way to respond to the issues. This resulted in an informal partnership between (the then) NC Fusion Partnership, through the Multi-Faith Centre (as the capacity building arm) and Pear Tree Baptist Church, which was to provide the space for a youth work provision for the Eastern European young people based on the following aims:

Reduce Anti-social Behaviour

Improve English Language skills
Raise Aspirations
Develop Relationships

The Multi-Faith Centre (MFC) has experience of working with the Roma Community through the previous NC Fusion project and provided contacts to key members of the community. It connected through its outreach team (which has now developed into Roma Community Care), links with young people and trained a team of volunteers from within the Roma community and MFC staff to support the church volunteers in working with those young people. Pear Tree Baptist Church provided the space and facilities and some volunteers from their congregation. Both were also able to offer experienced youth workers and other skilled workers to the provision.

Support was established for Peartree Baptist Church by MFC and its Roma community contacts. A steering group was set up and The Church leadership agreed to offer the space for youth provision each Tuesday night, from 6 – 8pm, for a trial period. This was aimed at the age range 11-16 years old. THE CLUB opened on 22nd January 2013. Not knowing what to expect in terms of attendance, behaviour, desire or engagement, THE CLUB offered space for sports in an upstairs gym; music and art downstairs, and also other space for socializing, including a coffee bar area. There were 77 young people registered on the first night.

As the weeks progressed the numbers grew rapidly, and we found we had many who were clearly over the age limit trying to get in. Although they were not allowed in it raised concerns about what was available to those outside of the age range of 11-16? Providing additional support for post 16s was beyond our available capacity, but this showed a clear need in the community for engagement with people at post 16 years of age. This also showed a clear need for those under the age of 11 that were clearly free to roam the streets with siblings or alone.

THE CLUB has helped establish a raised awareness with other agencies in the area, some members of which have joined us as regular visitors and/or volunteers and members of staff. THE CLUB has had visitors, help and support from Rosehill Sure Start, the local Police, the Fire Service, Breakout, Derby City Mission, and Bemrose School.

After building relationships with the young people and from evidence gained through evaluations it became clear that the young people had very limited life experiences and therefore also had very low aspirations. Efforts were made to get the young people involved in forming an initial action plan, they were however unable to suggest a range of options, beyond a Disco. So the leadership formulated a plan of action over the months, to enable involvement in a wide range of activities and encourage change to happen. The action plans are designed to widen the young people's life experiences, and to raise aspirations.

This has led to a current provision of access to sports, games, arts and crafts, special activities, aspirational activities and social space. The young people generally have come to respect what is being provided and we are encouraging them to take more of a direct role in its organisation, by engaging them in suggestions and leading activities, be active in evaluations of the youth work carried out there, and to seek the development of a youth forum.

Due to the large numbers of 17-18 year olds that wanted access to club evenings, we have been able to turn this to THE CLUB's advantage by encouraging them to take responsibility by becoming volunteers. We have provided training sessions and have trained 10 volunteers with continuing potential to train more.

THE CLUB was originally set up for a trial period and it was encouraged to continue by the church, but also local police and schools, who have seen the benefit in the local area, through a reduction of community tensions, ASBO's and school attainment increasing.

As the CLUB grew to having 538 young people registered on its book the need for extra free provision in the area was becoming increasing a need, several of the young people we came into contact with needed more support and access to generic youth provision, as we were dealing with increasing complex issues, such as: Identity issues, culture clashes and rebellion, drugs, sexual health, sexual exploitation, and many more. (It is not the purpose of this report to delve into these issues here, but it is something that might be addressed elsewhere).

With the Mandela Centre being hired and used by Spectrum D, in Partnership with MFC, RCC, Impact Derby and Oz box, MFC had a new place to conduct youth work, and we started two more sessions a week, Monday and Wednesday nights at 6-8pm. We were aware of the statutory service which provided a charged provision on Monday nights, but we were constrained in the use of the building.

These sessions started in March 2014, and provided extra generic sessions which allowed stronger relationships to be build, we found there was a core group of about 50 young people that accessed all three nights of provision.

In an effort to keep the youth work provision youth led, the Monday night sessions have changed to become a Dance session, which enables the young people the option to learn and develop street dance, and also combine with traditional Roma dance.

Working in partnership with St James a Junior Club was introduced (January 2014) for ages 8-12, this was originally set up to help eastern Europeans with homework, however there were several issues surrounding this, not least because there was a complete disengagement with education as a community, we were told by schools that children

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were not even putting their names on exam papers. The decision was to use informal learning techniques to promote education and learning, we took overarching school subjects, such as English, Maths and History, and formulated a plan of learning using games, activities and open discussion based around subject, these have included drawing emotions, making stress heads, crafts centred around aspirations, and many other opportunities to develop skills and English ability. The Junior Club also allowed the option for the children to eat together a meal that was provided; this was something which many of them did not have the opportunity to do at home. After six months we were told by the local school, that there was a clear level of achievement in the children accessing the service.

The Vision for MFC Youth Work

The four Cornerstones of Youth Work clearly set the ethics and values that we stand by as an organisation: Empowerment, Education, Participation and Equality. These values are not to be tokenistic, or glossed over, but are at the core of what we seek to do. It is through these values that the Youth Work of MFC has been developed and adapted. The running of the youth sessions and clubs has highlighted at various stages needs, some serious and some less so, again these have ranged from building relationships with the local police and being aware of the emergency number to working with Drug awareness agencies and informally educating about sexual health, as relationships continue to grow, more concerns can and will be raised.

There is still a strong desire to uphold the core reasons for starting the youth work with eastern Europeans (*Reduce Anti-social Behaviour, Improve English Language skills, Raise Aspirations, Develop Relationships*), and yet there is also the need to be adaptable and flexible to meet the needs of the young people as their world changes (which often does due to changes in government policy involving migrants, change in family circumstances as well as moving around the UK and returning home, not to mention the many stages of growing up).

It was a starting aspiration to be able to provide provision for younger children, (ages 4-11), so that these young people will have more opportunities and we can provide support throughout their formative school years, and this has started to happen through the Junior Club, and due to increasingly strong links with Pear Tree School, these are hoping to be developed even further.

There is, of course, the continuing desire of producing good, skilled volunteers that are active in their community, hoping to develop skills in mediation, advocacy and mentoring.

There has already been much progress in the forming of relationships developed between staff and service users, both those from the Roma communities and those from other communities. The staff are often recognised and treated with respect in the local area.

As more nationalities are taking part in THE CLUB's activities (see statistics), it is hoped that it will be an environment where barriers between different communities are broken down, and there can be continued celebration of diversity. However it is also to acknowledge that space is needed for eastern Europeans to be who they are, a space to speak their

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native language, to engage and celebrate traditions and cultures, as this is vital to the development of their identity. Do be able to socially interact with other cultures needs a firm footing in one's own culture, otherwise we risk mourning lost identity which can produce complex issues on young people as they develop.

Extending the provision through efforts at the Mandela Centre and at Pear Tree Baptist, as well as other youth provision in the local area, allow greater engagement and help in smoothing the path to integration and further reduction in anti-social behaviour in the locality.

Above all the level of engagement of young people in the projects show the need and desire for Youth work in the area and also the value of the profession, that works with young people where they are at, in a way seeks for them to be empowered, and promotes positive citizenship.

Statistical Data

The Club Statistics

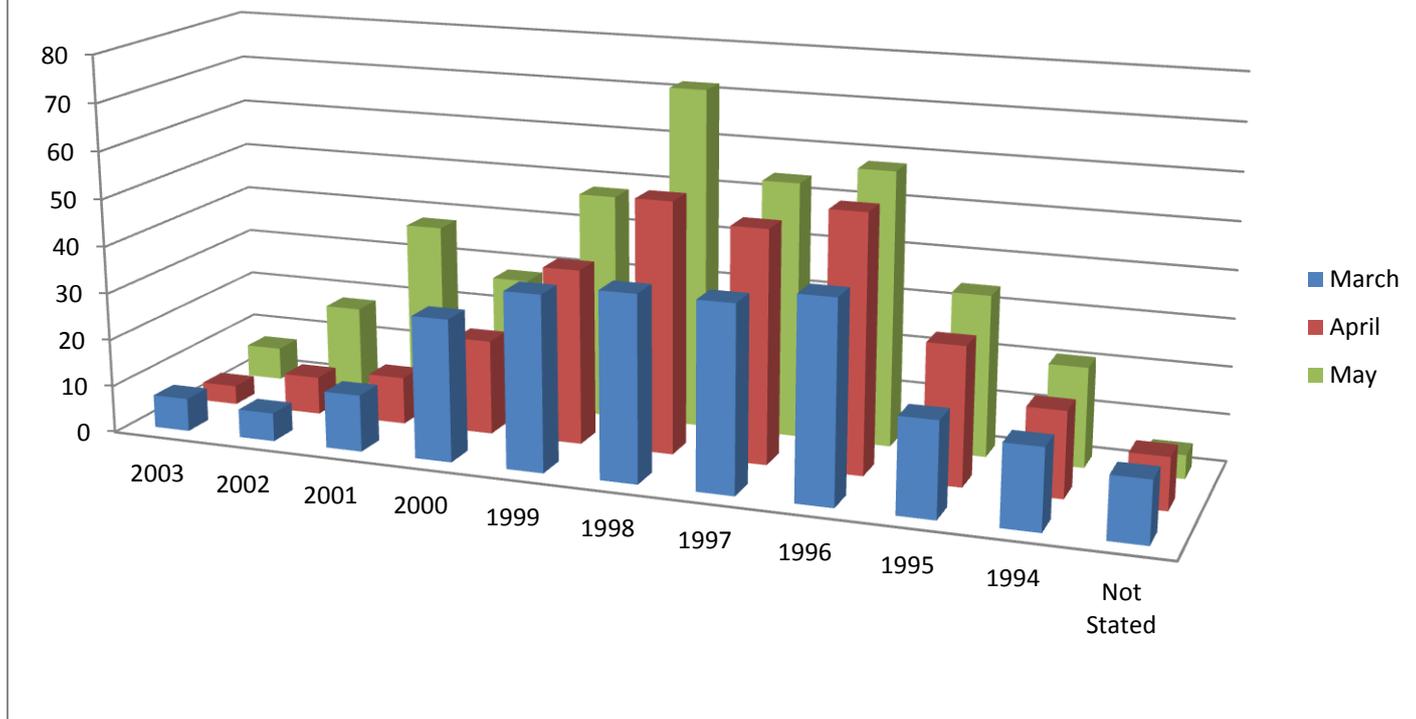
Registration = 528 young people.

Gender	
Male	Female
120	103

We have the following self-identified nationalities represented (Total 11):

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Slovakian (The majority of service users) | Czech | Pakistani |
| Bosnian | Italian | Polish |
| British | Latvian | Russian |
| | Lithuanian | Spanish |

Number of Young people grouped by age for a three month section.



Current Stats of the club
Stats for Mandela

Feedback from THE CLUB evaluation conducted on the 2nd April 2013

1. What do you like about THE CLUB?

Being inside
Meet Friends
Activities, football, cards
Refreshments
The amount of people coming
Can talk to people
Discos
It's Fun

Gives me something to do
Dancing
Piano and use of musical instruments
Parties
Singing
Sport
We like it!

2. What would you change about THE CLUB?

Have Tombola
No Kissing
More stuff in the community for Young People
Every week a Disco
More Musical Instruments
Sell Beer
More Dancing
Longer time
Only kids allowed
More Games
A DJ

Table Tennis
Sell Soda (Coke, lemonade) in tuck shop
More singing
Dance Course
Hairdressing Course
Better Behaviour
More Motivational/aspirational activities
Have Club everyday
No small children allowed
Beauty Salon
At least five people said they would change nothing

3. Has THE CLUB made any difference?

Providing inside space
Make new friends
Make new relationships
Organising events
Allowed access to art
Number of things to do
More friends
People have more respect for each other (Three different people commented on this)

4. How do you want to celebrate Roma Day?

Prizes, Party, Music, Dance and Theatre

The Effect on the Wider Community

THE CLUB has been in existence for 18 months, it is therefore difficult to assess how the wider community has been impacted by it. The following are observations from the staff team not measured responses.

The Club has had a direct impact on reducing anti-social behaviour in the area, with an elimination of the troubles that were being caused on Sunday Night at Pear Tree Baptist Church.

The young people that attend are building relationships with staff and volunteers from THE CLUB, and as such are recognising and talking to them on the street, this building of relationships, has given both people of the community and young people more confidence in each other.

The young people have commented themselves that THE CLUB has provided access to meeting more people, and building relationships within their own community as well as the wider community of Normanton.

In November 2013 the local Derby West Police Inspector responsible for the Peartree area said:

The Club is much appreciated as it gives the local Roma youth a focal point and serves as a hub for meaningful engagement. It also prevents them from intimidating local residents for the time when they are at the club participating in organised and structured activities.

It is my opinion that the Club has had an extremely beneficial impact on the area and I fully support its continuation. The police and the club organisers enjoy an excellent and mutually beneficial relationship which we are keen to continue into the future.

The Effect on Education

Impact on education over the short term is difficult to measure, due to the time THE CLUB has been in existence and the lack to date of partnerships with various schools. In making an early assessment the following is a collection of comments and thoughts, not measured responses.

The aspirational activities that have been undertaken with young people, have helped broaden their horizons, enabling them to consider their futures, and what possibilities there are. Many of the young people are now talking about college, and having an idea of what they wish to do/become in the future, ranging from Translators to Doctors. Many of the young people, however, are aware of the difficulties in achieving their desires, due to barriers in education, support and finances.

CLUB Coordinator

Many young people are recognising that they can use their talents as work, and are seeking to get jobs within hair and beauty areas, IT and music.

Volunteer helper

Many of the young people have ideas for the future, whether they are broad or narrow in focus, but the desire to live a life that is full of work, and the rewards of a salary are often discussed.

Church Volunteer

Several of the young people have discussed the options of Gap Years; discussing what to do during them, options available, and the benefits and disadvantages of them. I have been a part of several discussions around this. There is a clear indication though that several of the young people are aware of the advantages of non-formal learning and broadening life experiences.

Sure Start Volunteer

Several of the young people are facing difficulties in education; due to a lack of attendance or exclusion, and this is something that the Multi-Faith Centre is particularly keen to make progress with. However this is very hard to know unless we are made aware of specific circumstances, and it is even harder to see what effect, if any, THE CLUB has had on truant behaviour to date, something we will look to measure in the future.

Director MFC

These are positive comments, including as above, from colleagues in the police about the level of engagement. We also have individual engagement with young people who the Police are concerned about either because of anti-social behaviour or crime. They see THE Club as a very positive step and it is hoped and anticipated that such engagement will lead to prevention of offences in the area and a reduction in overall crime, reinforcing the reasons to extend its reach to additional evenings in the Mandela Centre.

Long Term Action Plan

Here is a proposed long term action plan for the club

Action	Date	Those Involved	Reasons for:	Additional Comments
Engage with Emergency Services	Current and as soon as possible	Fire, Police and Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To educate young people in the jobs of emergency services. To pass on useful skills for personal safety, such as first aid and fire prevention. To build relationships with uniformed officials in the area. 	
Engage with supporting young people services	September	Safe and sound, Derbyshire friend,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To educate young people on services available for them. To promote safe, and healthy relationships. 	
Apply for funding	Current and as soon as possible	Simon, Elizabeth, Milton Phil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide funds for equipment to enable a broadening of young people's experiences 	
To develop volunteers	Current	Simon, Elizabeth, volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide skilled and effective volunteers To provide a united volunteer staff base. To provide effective supervision for volunteers 	
Reach 500	By end of	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To widen our contact 	

young people to have attended club.	2013		base, enabling more contact and support for young people.	
Train 15 new volunteers	By end of 2013	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To widen our contact base, enabling more contact and support for young people. 	
To encourage young people to be involved in community action	As and when	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable empowerment of young people To build confidence, responsibility and aspirations To benefit the local community To promote and celebrate diversity 	
Develop a Club for 4-10 year olds	2014	All willing participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide support at an earlier stage in people's lives 	
Develop a program for working with those who are disengaging with main stream schools	2013-2014	All willing participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help young people develop confidence To help young people develop skills to understand and live within the English educational system To help young people learn through informal learning. 	
Work in partnership with local schools and other youth provisions	As soon as possible	Leadership group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop the best opportunities for young people with a united support structure, enabling young people to feel empowered and confident as they develop life experiences. 	
Extend provision to three nights a week	As soon as possible by end of 2013?	MFC RCC Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop the best opportunities for young people with a united support structure, enabling young people to feel empowered and confident as they develop life experiences. 	

Addressing 16-18yr olds as part of the extended provision as soon as funding is available

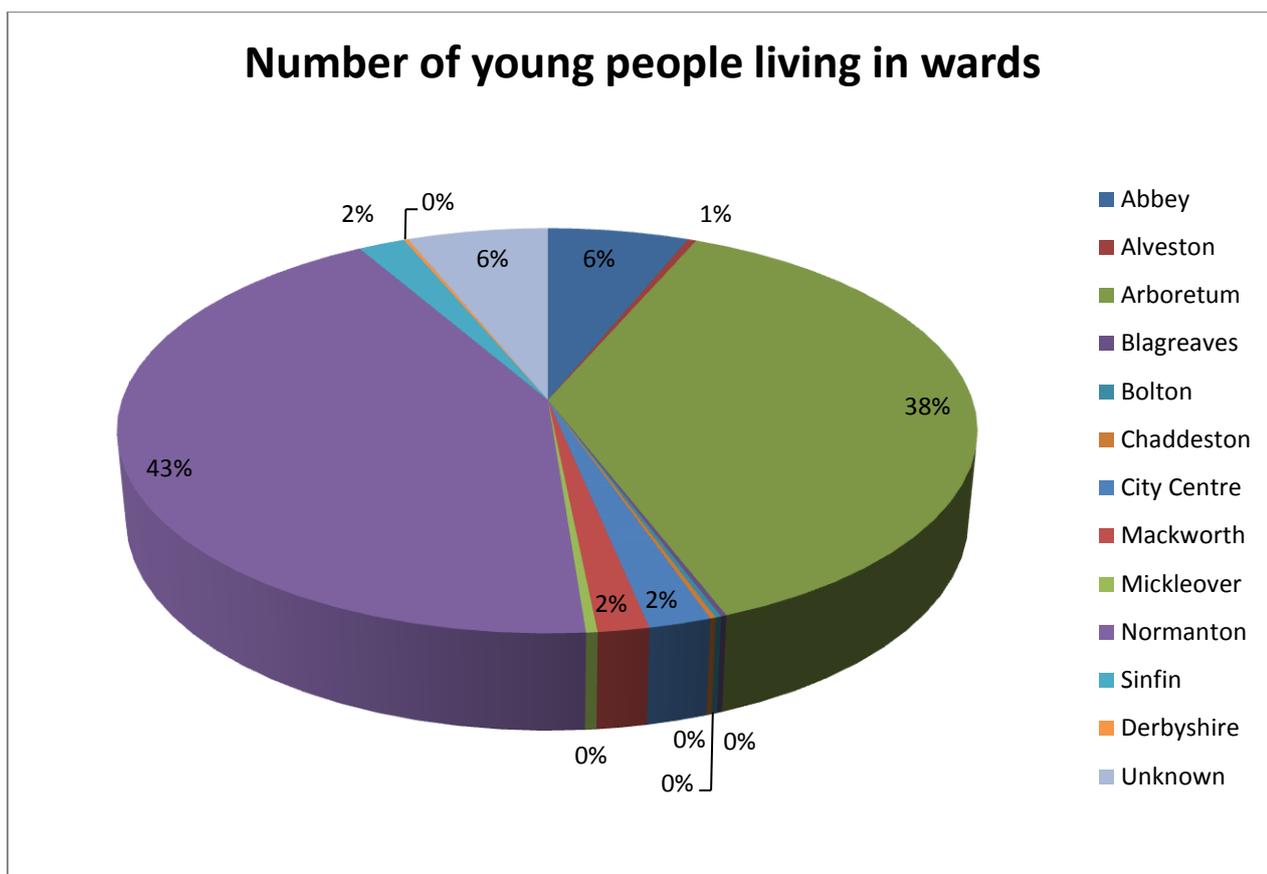
THE CLUB UPDATED November 2013

To continue the development and evidence of THE CLUB, this section will provide an update of the space from June 2013 – November 2013, providing more statistical data and evidence as appropriate.

We currently have 495 young people that have accessed the service; they are from the following wards.

Numbers by Ward

Abbey	33
Alveston	2
Arboretum	203
Blagreaves	1
Boulton	1
Chaddeston	1
City Centre	11
Derbyshire	1
Mackworth	9
Mickleover	2
Normanton	231
Not Known	33
Sinfin	11



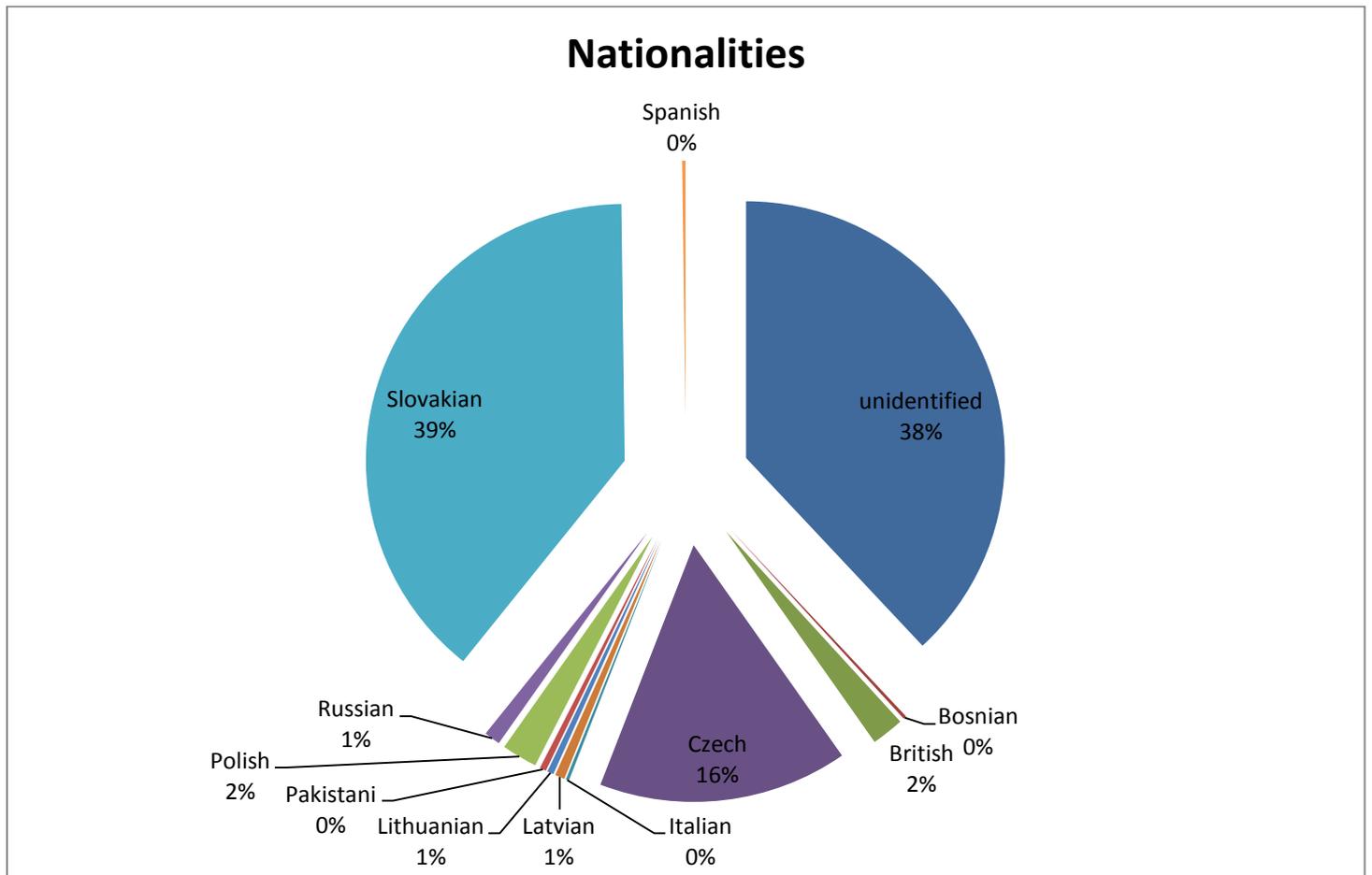
THE CLUB Statistics 7th November 2013

Registration = 495 young people.

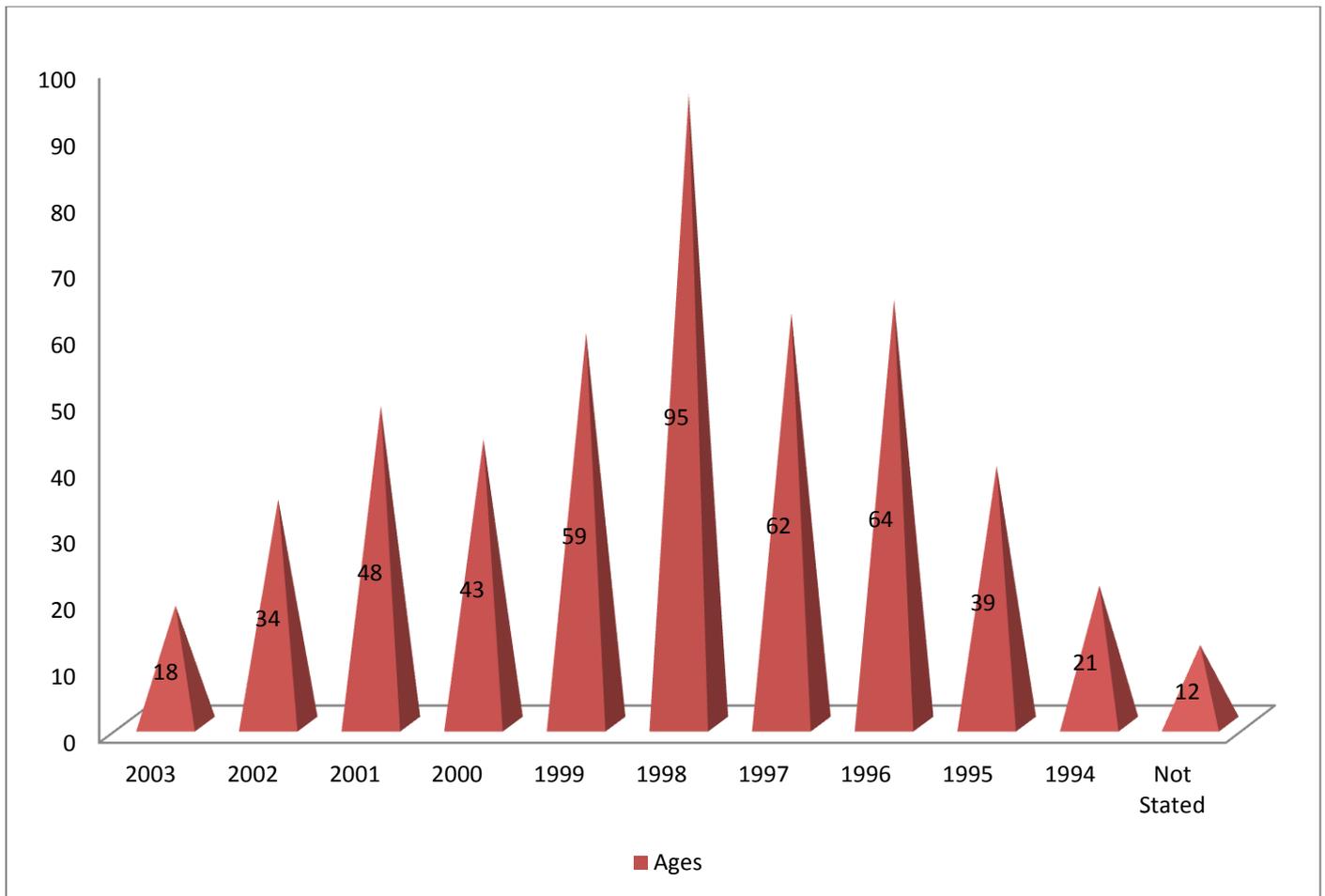
Gender	
Male	Female
277	218

We have the following self-identified nationalities represented (Total 12):

Nationality	Number
Unidentified	188
Bosnian	1
British	10
Czech	77
Italian	1
Latvian	3
Lithuanian	2
Pakistani	2
Polish	11
Russian	5
Slovakian	193
Spanish	1
White Asian	1
TOTAL	495



Rough Gathering of Ages										
2003 (10)	2002 (10- 11)	2001 (11-12)	2000 (12- 13)	1999 (13-14)	1998 (14-15)	1997 (15-16)	1996 (16-17)	1995 (17-18)	1994 (18-19)	Not Stated
18	34	48	43	59	95	62	64	39	21	12



Comments from an evaluation undertaken on the 5/11/2013

What activities do you enjoy at THE CLUB?

- **“Sports, and Music”**

Do you think THE CLUB has helped the local community?

- **“I have changed”, “opportunity to young people”, “provides somewhere to go and gives a sense of belonging”**

What school do you attend? How do you think schools and THE CLUB can work together?

- **“Yes, we can work together”**

Do you feel safe at THE CLUB?

- **“Yes, mentors are friendly and a better place to spend my time”**

What changes would you make to THE CLUB?

- **“More often with different age groups”, “More music and dance”**

Recommendations

THE CLUB has proved its value in removing young people from parts of Peartree and Normanton for a short period of time one evening a week and has had a significant impact in that area on the reduction of anti-social behaviour. It is also having an impact on the lives of many of the young people involved, who do not have any British based input in their lives outside school which is not authoritarian. The trust that has been developed between the workers, volunteers and young people is a remarkable step

forward on a larger scale than has ever been experienced before, by comparison to other youth related activity in the area which in the past has attracted very limited numbers of young people from Eastern European backgrounds.

The key to even greater engagement, confidence building, and preparing for a life where work and aspiring to succeed become genuine goals is to increase the number of evenings when youth activity can take place. Peartree Baptist Church cannot extend its reach beyond its already commitment to one evening a week, but MFC and Roma Community Care can, by securing an additional two evenings a week with occasional weekend activity for these young people.

The option to extend relies on the Mandela Centre project currently being worked up by Spectrum Derbyshire and MFC to provide a vital outlet for the young people. If funded to extend the work it would have a very significant and long term effect on the young people and the anti-social behaviour associated with large gatherings in the locality.

Extending this work will provide the platform from which to launch a youth HUB from Mandela supported by University of Derby Youth and Community student placements, which will help provide greater reach in other parts of the city as well as Normanton and Peartree. By engaging other third sector youth services, like Global Education Derby, Rathbone, the local Churches, YMCA to name but a few, a youth service provider network can be established.

Extending the work with young people will also be the first steps towards creating an integrated youth work provision in which all young people can have a part and through which, cultural differences and the challenges they present can be eroded.

Phil Henry/Simon Williams

8.11.13