

# Evangelism Support Working Party

## **Experiences worth sharing with others who are planning outreach projects**

What follows are extracts from feedback given by those running projects especially in the section 'Advice to Others', collated for your information and in the hope that these tips might be helpful for others intending to run outreach activities in their communities. The congregations who have been involved in running outreach projects supported from central funds are noted below. Any of these would be happy to share their experiences with congregations who are thinking about a project themselves or any member of the evangelism support party could be contacted for advice:

*Arran, Back, Brora, Callanish, Dornoch, Dumbarton, Dundee, Dunfermline, Gairloch, Golspie, Greyfriars/Stratherrick, Kilmallie, Kirkcaldy, Park and Portree*

In all cases prayer was essential before, during and after each project by the congregations involved and the project leaders. The work party also ask the wider church to pray too via Record prayer notes and missionary prayer notes

Communication is key. From initial approval by the Kirk Session, advising congregations of plans and progress, involving everyone in the activity by providing regular updates and encouraging participation. This ensures that everyone feels that they are contributing/are involved in the project. Also encourages people to volunteer their time, gifts, money, prayers - whatever they can. It is important to communicate the outcome of the projects to everyone in the congregation as well as to the wider church via articles to the Record or the FC Website.

## **Children's Holiday Clubs with Family Events**

(most outreach projects supported take this form)

Plan well in advance, take up the offer of all help given. Discuss with others who have done similar events – if possible get some people on board who have done similar projects.

Start early with your organising. Choose your teaching material well and spend time familiarising everyone with the teaching. If people are to have specific areas of responsibility tell them in plenty of time so they can prepare properly.

Make sure the team are much in prayer throughout, helps to build the team for the work.

Make sure all the necessary paperwork especially Child Protection is in situ before the project starts

Do everything well, pay for quality crafts as children take them home and this creates a good impression.

Keep to your timetable but be willing to customise materials/events depending on circumstances.

Scripture Union material is excellent and the children enjoy the mixture of craft,

games and DVD presentations. Be prepared to simplify the material if required.

If running a club for the first time it is a good idea to engage SU workers or others who have already run holiday clubs to help and to train the local people. In this way congregations can build up their confidence in their ability to run holiday clubs and do it for themselves thereafter.

Consider using teenagers in the church to help lead groups, crafts, games. They are usually keen to help out and really benefit from doing so. In helping to teach younger children under the supervision of a Christian adult and being involved in daily prayer times helps to build up their own knowledge. Don't be afraid to use non Christians, some have been converted as a result of being involved in helping out with holiday clubs.

Encourage and train people in the congregation to be involved, even if it means stepping outside of their comfort zones and doing something they have never done before.

Advertise early as children may already be committed to other things during the summer.

Make provision for bad weather

## **Camps/Residential Trips**

Prayer support, good planning and an achievable programme is essential. Planning, detailed preparation and having a detailed programme means that the leaders and young people are aware of the rough outline of the camp. However, time for spontaneous fun and serious conversations about spiritual issues should be built into the programme.

Really worthwhile going away for a residential with your group of young people and is to be recommended. It is a good way to get to know them better. Being involved in weekly groups like Sunday School or Youth Fellowships is great but you don't get to know them as well as you do on a residential trip.

Problems with mobile phones at camp – allocated 'phoning home' times  
Run a camp bank and work out specific spending money needed before arriving at camp. Meet parents of campers before camp, keep in touch afterwards  
Have local Christians to speak at the evening meetings  
Good accommodation and facilities essential, prepare well in advance.  
Have people praying before and during the camp and meet the parents beforehand

## **Community Outreach**

(Door to door, Community Café, Christianity Explored)

Pray, Plan and do it.

Ensure that the work is planned thoroughly, that it is well publicised and pray  
Proper planning, training of CE leaders

Plan well for sustainable projects. Get a good team together and involve the congregation in the planning and implementation activities. Don't try to do too much

Door to door gives the opportunity to meet people face to face, makes the church known, shows the church cares, some people may never have been invited to anything in church, especially 'incomers' to the community

Prayer team covering each CE meeting

Follow up after the course important, plan to run Discipleship Explored soon after CE

Involve congregation in mission, adults and young people given the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the mission week, affirming their faith and increasing their passion for evangelism

## **Setting up Youth Fellowships**

Identify those in the congregation with the right attitude and gifts to be able to help to run the youth fellowship. Appoint one person to drive the project forward. Prepare a proposal with clear aims and objectives, present to Kirk session and seek their support.

Ensure Child Protection requirements met, encourage volunteers to go on any relevant training for working with young people.

Let the congregation know about the plans, ask for prayer cover. Regularly review progress, support the volunteers, ask the young people for feedback and try out their ideas. Regularly communicate your plans/activities with the young people in the community, parents, the congregation.

Neutral venue, each event starting with food and drink, time to chat with each other. Varied programme of topics speakers and activity planned in advance. Ask the young people what they would like to discuss, what topics or activities would interest them Consider residential weekend at the beginning of the programme ie in August when new youngsters will be joining.