

## Note from the Director...



I know this may sound a little odd but I love the winter, the snow, the frosty sunny mornings, I don't even mind the cold, though I have never worn as many layers as we do on our detached project! I also enjoy winter because in amongst the darkness there appear rays of hope – literally! We've known a lad called Ben for over a year now, at the start he was one of the most antagonistic, aggressive, confrontational young people I've met. We're not the only people who experienced this as he's banned from the local shop. Over the months, the team have dedicated time and energy into him and investing in a positive relationship with him. One Friday night a large group of youth were drinking heavily, one lad, Liam, was totally out of it with drink, being loud, rude and out of control. Ben, who had not been drinking, turned to me, gave me a pound and asked me to buy some water from the local shop. When I came back and gave it to Ben, rather than pouring it over Liam's head, (which I thought he might do), he passed the water to Liam and encouraged him to sober up. I was stopped dead and speechless with this spontaneous act of kindness and immediately told Ben so. What an amazing opportunity to witness that change in character. I'd spend hundreds more nights in the cold for transformations like that!

Kate Robinson - Durham YFC Director

# Winter Edition 2010



This newsletter has been designed by James, a Durham YFC volunteer. The names of young people have been changed to protect their identity.



## Introducing...

Ruth - Durham YFC Volunteer



I spend time in the DYFC office working on plans for the Tanzania Trip, which is taking place this summer. I've been booking flights, looking for people to give us money for the trip and generally ticking things off the 'Tanzania - To Do' list.

### **What excites you about being involved with DYFC?**

I love the fact that DYFC works in so many areas and has so many things going on at once - God is working in so many ways through so many people. The thing which probably excites me the most about the part I play though, is the idea of planning another trip next summer, with the guys from detached.

**What difference does it make to your life?** Well it obviously gives me a lovely way to spend my Monday afternoons, but it has also given me the opportunity to combine so many ways of getting involved in DYFC in one role. I've been doing admin things, organisational things, fundraising and spending time with the young people who are going to Tanzania.

### **What are you looking forward to?**

1) When we have all the money for the trip 2) When the guys come back from Tanzania and I get to hear all their stories and see their photos 3) When we start planning a trip for 2011

## In Schools...

Cat - Durham YFC Volunteer



'Summit' is a lunchtime drop in for year 10 and 11 students from Belmont Performing Arts College. DYFC, together with two local churches and the schools' extended services, have created an off-site haven for young people. The project was initially dreamed up to provide warmth and time-out in a safe place. Although we started out with a mere handful of young people, the progress thus far has been nothing short of encouraging - we now have an average of 30 -40 young people who drop in each week. Summit involves free chocolate, music, computer games, making things and, most importantly, a space to be accepted. It has been great to build relationships and give them a sense of how important and valued they are. We have a birthday list which is being constantly updated as new people come, where we get each person a cake on the week of their birthday to demonstrate they are worth celebrating! As Summit is set in church grounds they constantly refer to it as 'church', it is great to be busting their conception of what church is and what it means to them. In recent times, we have also developed authentic relationships with some of the regulars, many of whom genuinely look forward to seeing us and being honest about issues they face in their lives. In fact they seem to enjoy the space so much they have demanded it continues beyond the dark, cold months into the summer term! We will comply but will need to replace hot chocolates with ice pops! Personally, Summit has been such a great experience. It isn't all chocolates and roses all the time, but it is heartening to know that whatever input we make now in the lives of young people, may just go a long way!

## On The Streets...

Charlie - Durham YFC Volunteer



I'd like to take this opportunity to tell you about Louise, we met Louise for the first time a couple of weeks ago – the same week Kate had acquired a fantastic new resource - playing cards with questions; funny questions about yourself, about the future, about interests and about faith. Louise, who had a bit of attitude on her at the start, came alive as we began playing with the cards. At first, the questions were light-hearted which gave us an opportunity to find out about her, listen to her stories, to hear her take on herself and her life. There was a question about choices, and after chatting through her thoughts she said to me "Well, look at us (her and her friends), we've made some bad choices... and look at you lot (the detached team), you don't smoke, you don't go out and get drunk, you're spending your evening here with us... you have a faith and that makes your lives different. Maybe having faith helps you to make good choices." This opened up the chance to talk about what it is to know God, to have a relationship with Him. That night something happened in Louise's life, she had the opportunity to be honest, to ask questions. Louise's observations about the team meant something, not that we have got it all together, but that God is working in us and knowing Him makes a positive difference in our lives. I'm so glad that His light shines bright enough for Louise to see and pray that through our encounters with her and others they may make their own positive choices.

## At Events...

Jon - Durham YFC Volunteer



Since I began volunteering with the schools work team last year I'd been aware that something called TOAST was coming. I'd heard this is not your everyday piece of Toast! So it was with no small amount of pent up excitement, during the February half-term I discovered first hand exactly what this TOAST thing was all about. TOAST is a week long evening youth café, run every year since 2006. Durham YFC jumped on the band wagon in 2008 and along with St. Nic's, the LOL youth network and the Methodist Circuit, put on this great youth event. It's been one of the major focal points for this term and a lot of the other outreach we do has tried to feed into it. It's based in the centre of town and provides a safe venue for young people to gather, eat toasties, play games, competitions, Wii's, live music, make big art installations, do craft, chill out with friends and enjoy the holidays. Many of the young people who come are empowered to get involved at every level, from organising and MCing the entertainment, to DJ-ing and making toasties. In all this, the young people get involved in fundraising and campaigning for social justice. The theme this year: 'raise a toast to Africa' covered 'Stop The Traffik', Poverty, the 2010 World Cup and a Tanzania focus, and even involved signing a toilet seat to campaign about global safe water supplies! So all in all, TOAST was tasty, nutritious and filling!



How to get involved:

*Please help us to transform the lives of young people across County Durham today.*

First please fill in your contact details

Name:

Address:



Postcode:

Email:

Landline:

Mobile:

Church/Group:

Next, please tick boxes below:

**Pray**

I'd like to receive regular prayer updates for Durham YFC.

**Partner with YFC**

I'd like to give regularly by standing order to Durham YFC's ministry.  
*(We will send you further details) If you would like to give via Stewardship please enquire as this facility is available.*

**Volunteer**

I'd like to volunteer my time and skills.

**YFC visit**

I'd like you to come to my \_\_\_\_\_ to share about your work in the area.

**Donate**

I'd like to give £ \_\_\_\_\_ to your work (cheques payable to 'Durham Youth For Christ')

**Gift Aid**

*Increase your gift by 28% for every £1 you give. You must be a UK taxpayer, paying an amount of income tax or capital gains equal to the tax we claim on your donation. Please inform YFC in you cease to pay tax.*

Signature:

Date:

Please return this form to: Antioch House, 66 Crossgate, Durham, DH1 4PR.

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