



APRIL - JUNE REPORT 2ND QUARTER

pace
HERE FOR YOU!

A MESSAGE FROM ZACH...

Hello all,

I trust you are doing well.

Well, we are back after 3 months with report no. 6 our 2nd quarterly report of 2024. This months report has a different feel... We are changing our design to make it more dynamic. We are sticking to what we have previously said about updating you all on a regular basis. I am are pleased to report that we have had a lot of amazing things happen since I last wrote to you in March 2024



Our team, as ever, have been working hard and continue to do so to execute the vision and the mission of The Blaze City Project. Our team is also growing rapidly, which is wonderful to see.

Enjoy the read

REPORT PRESENTED BY: ZACH WEAVER

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT LEAD

REPORT NO. 6

LOUGHBOROUGH YOUTH: THIS QUARTER

Our Loughborough youth group, meet every Thursday evening, we are still growing. Infact every week we are hitting record numbers. It was just a few weeks ago that we had **50 young people for the first time** attend plus staff, so overall we had around 70 people on site in one evening. Since then we have had anywhere between 45 and 50 young people attend every single week. We are still able to provided a 2 course hot meal for every young person who comes and also for all of our team as well. This is really encouraging because not only are we seeing a vast number regually, we are also seeing new faces every week. If all the youth on our register came we would be well over 70 young people in attendance at the Thursday youth hang out.

We have also had the opportunity to complete our all new series "Let's Be Real" where we aim to inform, inspire, encourage and equip young people about topics of their choosing, we do this through having real, authentic open discussions with a panel discussion through out. We also have had the chance to have some people come and **share their stories and share how important it is to make positive choices in life**, we have had people who where involved in knife crime, people involved who where in drug misuse, gangs, broken families, people who have experienced grief, amongst others. All with the aim of inspiring the young people.

Looking forward, **we have an amazing summer programme lined up**. Where most youth provisions slow down over the summer period, we see it as an opportunity to take things to the next level and engage with as many young people as possible. We have everything from summer camps, to residential trips, to movie nights, to outreach work, and everything in between - going on. Our summer plans are fantastic and our summer will most definitely be one to remember.



Our Thursday youth group

SCHOOLS WORK:

"The children really seem to enjoy the sessions and come away with more knowledge and confidence... I would say these sessions are positive, hopeful and interactive" - Admin Apprentice, Limehurst Academy.

We have concluded our first academic year of delivering schools content. We have been able to adapt all of our schools content, and also we have been able to write and produce new content that has been engaging, effective and well received. We also were able to give the young people opportunity to create and record their own podcast. This was truly fascinating to see, because it not only gave them an opportunity to voice their opinions on the world and some of it's current issues, it also helped them learn how to communicate in an effective way, how to debate well and also it helped them to appreciate each others faiths, beliefs, world views, future plans and thoughts. This is an area of work we want to open up to other schools along with developing other schools content. I do want to say, a massive thank you to Mr S. Smith and the staffing team at Limehurst Academy in Loughborough for allowing us to develop our content and establish the programme.

"Excellent content delivered, which has really enthused our students. Zach has built extremely positive relationships with all students at school... I would say these sessions are enthusing, engaging and relevant" - S. Smith, Assistant Headteacher, Limehurst Academy.

"The best part about these sessions was the advice given, the relationships made and the snacks!" - Year 10 Student, Limehurst Academy.

"The sessions were all fun and interactive... I wish we could even more!" - Year 8 student, Limehurst Academy.

"We all were together having good discussion, and even having fun. It was interesting to hear other peoples opinions on our podcast. One of the things I realised is that we don't all have to the same opinions to be friends or have good conversation." - Year 9 student, Limehurst Academy.

CONTENT CREATION:

Our Content Creator sessions are also another thing that are going well. We have a small group of young people who are taking full ownership of **creating positive content** that inspires others and helps supports other young people. They set up cameras, lights, audio equipment, sets, and then they do a podcast, which is also produced, created, recorded and edited by every young person in the group. We have young people who design the art work, run the cameras and some who star in the podcast. **We have also given them the opportunity to interview members of the local authorities**, again with the goal to show to young people that, with the right mindset they can actually achieve anything that they want to do! This is such an important message to share with every young person, not just the content group!



BLAZE CITY BARROW PART 1.



We have some exciting news, in June 2024 we launched our second branch of The Blaze City Project. This is so exciting, we have partnered with the Barrow Parish Council for this venture. **This runs on a Wednesday evening, we take the young people hot food, drinks and we just create a space for them to come and 'hang out' with our team.** I believe, that this has been greatly received across the village, not just by young people but also by their parents and the surrounding community!

Now, I want to break down some stats for you and provide quotes and highlights from our sessions on a Wednesday at Barrow!

Week 1: We engaged with 32 young people and did a bbq, providing over 50 hot dogs and burgers! This was our first week and was well received by all who attended. In fact, we found that the young people were excited about engaging with us and engaged with our social media pages. One young person even said this, *"This is so cool, I can't believe you do it all for free, we are excited to hang out with you guys more!"*

So, on many levels we consider this a successful launch!

Week 2: Heading back for our second week, the team were excited, alongside the young people. During the week, I had countless emails, messages and phone calls from parents asking if their children could attend our youth hangout in the village. This was really positive for us, it showed us that what we are doing is having an impact! In Week 2, we engaged with around 38 young people, with quite a few new faces we hadn't seen before. Again, doing a bbq, this time giving out over 65 hot dogs and burgers, plus drinks! A parent of a young person stated that their child was so excited about the work the Blaze City Project was doing.

BLAZE CITY BARROW PART 2



Week 3: Well by this point, we are in the full swing of things! With excitement building throughout the week, we had young people messaging across our social media in anticipation of Wednesday! This weeks numbers were slightly lower, but still had a great turnout of around 28 young people. Giving out 40 burritos alongside drinks to not only the young people that attended but also to other members of the community, using the park at this time. Despite the number being lower, our team were able to have incredible conversations with the young people on topics surrounding mental health and substance misuse. We also had the opportunity to hand out some of our specially designed leaflets about these subjects.

Week 4: On Wednesday night we had a fantastic evening! The sun was shining, the bbq was on and the young people were having a great time! We engaged with around 40 young people throughout the evening, we also gave away over 70 hot dogs and burgers. Due to the weather being warm, we also bought 20 young people ice creams from the ice cream van! This went down a storm and really helped cool us all down. We were also, able to have conversations with some of the older young people about maybe joining us as junior leaders and being able to support them through this journey. One young person said, *"I read through one of your booklets and it was really inspiring and helpful... thank you!"*

Now we've broken down some stats, week by week, it is evident to me and the team at the Blaze City Project that we are having a significant impact on the young people's lives already! It's early days, but we are making a difference. I would like to say a massive thank you to yourselves, to Counsellor Sandie Forrest and also to Alice and Maya Gardam for their continued support in this endeavour and going the extra mile to make all this possible!

JUNIOR LEADERS PROGRAMME

“Being apart of the Junior Leadership program at the Blaze City Project has helped me too grow as a person. But also it's allowed me to learn key skills that are needed for later in life. I feel apart of the family, knowing whatever my next steps are Zach and the team will support me fully, and will always be there for me!” - Ajay, a key Junior Leader.

Our Junior Leadership Scheme is growing and the leaders are also growing. It is great to be working with between 8 and 12 junior leaders on a regular basis, mentoring them and opening opportunities for them to lead and grow in various areas of the project. We have also been able to provide a few of them with the opportunity to help support us at our newest branch at Barrow-upon-Soar. Because of some of the funding our partners have provided, it has meant that we are able to provide expense payment for the some of leaders time.

We are pleased to say looking into the possibility of making this programme a Credible Apprenticeship Program to deliver in partnership with colleges and universities. This would allow us to go up a level in delivery yet again across all areas of The Blaze City Project. It would mean there is chance for more schools work, online content, youth provision delivery across the Charnwood and so much more. This is a lengthy process, but in the long run will hopefully be well worth pursuing. We want to do this to genuinely help young people gain experience in a field that they are passionate about while also letting them work on the front line of youth work. We also want to do what is best for us at The Blaze City Project & PACE, as well as the local community and local young people.

GOING DEEPER

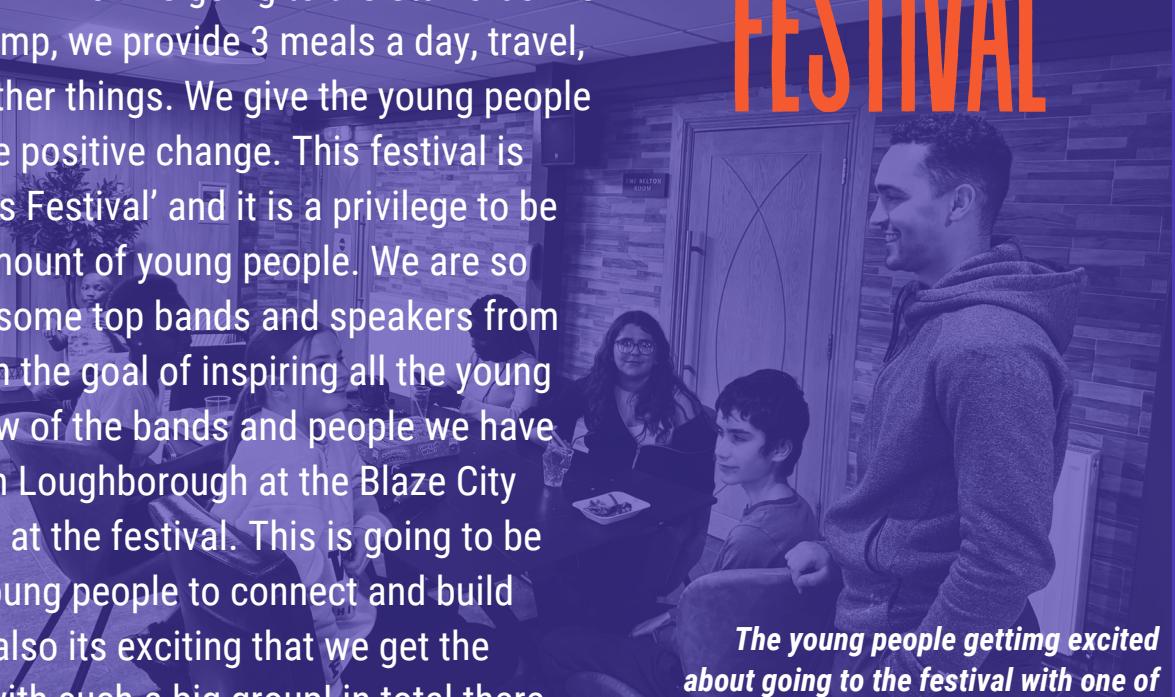


Image of the going deeper group

On a Monday evening, we have launched a small support group where we want to help young people be established and truly discover themselves and help to inspire them for the future. We average around 15 young people a week, so this is a particular group which solely runs for the purposes of building relationship, inspiring young people and supporting them through their teenage years in a bit of a smaller environment. We also play a couple of games that I played when I was a young person at a youth group! And of course it wouldn't be a Blaze City gathering without some sort of food or dessert, so every week we provide dessert for all the young people who come.

In the next few weeks, we have the privilege of taking over 30 young people from 3 partnership campuses from across the UK to a 5 day summer festival aimed at young people aged 11 -18. We are going to the Staffordshire Show Ground to camp, we provide 3 meals a day, travel, games, amongst other things. We give the young people the chance to make positive change. This festival is called the 'Limitless Festival' and it is a privilege to be able to take this amount of young people. We are so excited. There are some top bands and speakers from across Europe, with the goal of inspiring all the young people, in fact a few of the bands and people we have worked with here in Loughborough at the Blaze City Project will also be at the festival. This is going to be fantastic for our young people to connect and build relationships, and also it's exciting that we get the opportunity to go with such a big group! in total there will be over 5,000 young people at the festival.

SUMMER FESTIVAL



The young people getting excited about going to the festival with one of our leaders Asher

THE CHANGE TOUR 2024

This is something that we have spoke about for a while here at The Blaze City Project... But I am excited to announce that we are finally launching '**The Change Tour 2024**' which is taking place in local schools between **October 15th - October 17th 2024**, culminating with our 3rd ENERGIZE event which will take place on **Friday 18th October 2024**. I guess the question you are asking is, what is this and how does it work?

Well, we go into a school for one day, (3 schools over the 3 days) delivering fun, informative, well-structured, engaging, educational lessons, that are high-energy and definitely memorable. We go in with a band who tour around the UK called 'Social Beingz' who have done similar tours for years and years. We deliver dynamic lessons, including multi-media and various engaging factors from our team as well. All our lessons and schools content fit into the guidelines of Ofsted. Each day costs £2,000 to deliver, however PACE is raising the money to cover the cost of the whole tour and the ENERGIZE event at the end of the week. Thus costing PACE UK some where in the region of £10 - £12K. If you feel you could sponsor a part of the tour it would be so helpful... Let me break something down for you... for example for just **£3** per young person we would be able to deliver '**The Change Tour 2024**'. During the week we will reach approximately 4,000 young people giving them the possibility to make a positive change to their life and their future.

Our all new '**Change Tour**' will promote positive mental health and well-being. Inspiring young people to make positive changes to their lives, helping them make good choices, that will benefit them in the future. As I have stated before, PACE UK will raise the money which is a high cost, yet we believe it will reap high reward. The idea that we get to help 4,000 young people potentially make a positive change to their mental health and also inspire them to make a difference to their future is significant! The exciting thing is, just after sending the information out too schools a couple of days ago we already have one school fully booked in and another 2 who have responded in saying they are interested. It looks like demand will be great.

THE **CHANGE**
TOUR 2024
Launching our all new schools tour across Charnwood

SOCIAL MEDIA & ONLINE RESOURCES



Team building at the Blaze City Project

Our bank of modern, relevant online resources are ever growing and we want to grow these even more, and also make them accessible to all. Infact we are currently partnering with a social media company who are able to help us develop our social media presence and our online content. Over the past 3 months we have reached over 3,500 accounts across all of our social platforms, and our websites. We are super excited about this because social media is a huge platform for reaching and engaging with young people in 2024. We want to try and be a positive influence across social media, as it can be such a negative place for young people, and can be a bad influence on mental health.

A MESSAGE FROM THE C.E.O



It is my privilege to be the CEO of Pace in Loughborough. And we are thrilled to have the successful 'Blaze City Project' as an important part of what we do. Under the leadership of our Youth Lead, Zach Weaver the project continues to go from strength to strength. He and his dedicated team work across Charnwood each week on the various estates, in the Town Centre, in a number of schools and via the weekly Thursday evening youth nights and our innovative Energise' festival gig events. Their success has been truly remarkable.

The passion they show is clear for all to see. Though we say it ourselves, what they are doing and what they are achieving is truly remarkable by any standards. Over the last ten months or so our charity PACE has invested more than £20,000 into the work of The Blaze City Project. It is indeed a significant amount for such a small charity as ours, however I am pleased to say it is certainly paying off on so many levels.

I have no doubt Zach and the Blaze City team are making a significant impact in the lives of the young people they are reaching and I have no doubt there is much more to come.

TO CONCLUDE:

These past few months have been staggering as ever. We are clearly having a significant impact upon the local youth, across Loughborough and Barrow. Once again, it is the huge volunteer team that keep the project on the ground and keep us growing and developing. Anything we plan to do, they just get along with it and they don't complain. It is inspiring to see them taking ownership of the project.

Since our last report, we have reached over 3,000 young people feeding well over half of these on a regular weekly basis. I am truly encouraged and humbled by the feedback from local authorities, teachers, parents, the PACE Trustees, national partners and of course the young people concerning the impact we are having. It is also phenomenal how much we have got going on regularly, and this will ramp up even more over summer.

The next time I write to you we will be coming to our one year anniversary. This is so exciting! Thank you for your continued support. It truly blows me away how much we are doing and have done, and knowing the fact that we are just getting started, and there is so much more on the horizon.

**WE THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT WITH
THE PROJECT**

**SEE YOU NEXT TIME,
ZACH WEAVER**



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pace
HERE FOR YOU!