

Celebrating the completion of Plantation's 25th Prince's Trust Team



*The 25th Team with Kat and Cassie
(2nd and 3rd from left, front row)*

Last Thursday evening saw a gathering at Guildford YMCA of young people, their friends, families and supporters for the celebration of the successful completion of their 12 week long Prince's Trust Team. But there was cause for further celebration, as this was the 25th team run by Guildford YMCA from its youth venue, Plantation, off Market Street.

Plantation ran its first Prince's Trust Team in 2003. This grew to two a year in Guildford. In recent years it has mushroomed to now include Egham, Reigate and most recently Crawley. More importantly, 83% of Team participants go on to find training or employment - well up on the national average for the Prince's Trust.

Experienced youth worker Cassie Philpot led the 25th Team, assisted by Kat Freeman, a police investigator on secondment from Surrey Police. Kat said, "This has been a fantastic experience. I'm grateful to the young people and proud of what they've all achieved. They've been a random bunch at times but we've had great fun too."

Each of the young people shared what a difference the Team experience has made to them - ranging from the benefits of getting up early and having a routine to the unexpected pleasures of doing things for other people and being appreciated. The Mayor of Guildford, Cllr Terence Patrick commended the group for staying the course to the end, and presented them with their Certificates of Achievement and other qualifications they have earned.

Cassie and other Plantation staff will continue to support Team members although the course has officially ended. Some are applying for further training, others are looking for employment. This course has given them a valuable springboard, which, despite the current gloomy outlook for young people, will stand them in good stead for the future.

If you are, or know, a young person aged 16-25 who is looking for direction and purpose, call Plantation on 01483 888122 to find out details about Prince's Trust Teams and other courses available to help build a future.