

# Whitby Opinion & Community Section



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## Column

# Equipping youngsters for the world of work

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In times past work experience for under 16s was compulsory. In 2012 it was scrapped (or severely watered down).

Within two years employers were asking for it to be reinstated and that was confirmed in a 2017 study.

Limited though it was (a week or two) it allowed young people to meet the world of work largely on their own without the "cover" of parent, guardian or teacher.

My two sons benefitted greatly from the experience.

The self-discipline required to conform to the employment ethic and the social skills raised them several notches.

Work experience was a shared experience at an impressionable age; a rite of passage from older child to young adult and citizen.

Fast forward to Whitby in 2018. SAMS, the Men's Shed in Littlebeck, helped give students from Eskdale School and Whitby Eskmouth Scouts a taste of practical work – making wooden garden furniture and doing a makeover of a derelict garden in a day.

This newspaper (one of whose journalists entered the profession after a successful work placement in his youth!) published some of the students' views on the experience. High marks given!

Leave it there then? No.

The feeling of those involved is that the idea of young people in Whitby district (eight to 16 years) undertaking a form of work experience with defined outcomes aims has real merit.

Something young people not only influence but design,



Integrating young people into the world of work is a great experience.

monitor and appraise.

Offering a sense of purpose as in uniformed organisations, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme (in which Whitby senior schools participate) and the National Citizen Service (for older young people).

Our belief is that experience should go beyond the DIY of the two projects undertaken in early summer.

We envisage a series of Saturdays (and longer periods in term breaks) offering several different activities the children and young people specify and (with assistance) manage. Whatever is chosen should have social action outcomes to help others and rippling out to be community benefit.

Who might help in this, given that no individual will have the breadth of knowledge or the time to run it all!

We envisage that some of the many local volunteer organisations, companies and churches might offer resources they control – perhaps premises to be used once or twice a year or materials needed), or the human resource to run a purposeful activity on a Saturday for five or six hours.

What activities?

Ones that young people identify and take some responsibility for.

For example, suppose genealogy was a choice?

Obviously one of the groups that undertake that should fit the bill.

For manual work, the Sheds!

For cooking, maybe some of our many chefs. And so on.

An approach may be for sympathetic organisations and individuals to offer resources to the larder of possible ingredients, for young people to create the recipes!

As a grandparent with geographically remote grandchildren I cannot do much for them hands-on.

However, I could do things for the Whitby district youngsters I live among. So might you!

If you see merit in this idea, we would be pleased to hear from you.

At this stage personal insights are as important as tangible offers of resource.

## Horace and Doris



"I RAN OUT OF PETROL. IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED WHEN THE CAR ROLLED OVER."

## You said online...

What's been going on in the Whitby area this past week? Here are some of your Tweets.

Follow us on Twitter @gazetteinwhitby

Cast light on a dark history this Halloween as Whitby Abbey is bathed in dramatic illuminations. Don't miss the gothic splendour of the ruins lit up with all the colours of the rainbow!

ENGLISH HERITAGE

The amazing, kind, super cool Richard from @WhitbyBrewery has donated a cask of their delicious IPA for Sunday, every single penny from sales will go in the WSO pot.

THE GOLDEN SMOG

The fab team from the @Literacy\_Trust created a story on the literacy bus with Whitby's KS2 students - with the help from @CC\_WhitbyY7's... and had goody bags for all! #reading

CCW LEARNING CENTRE

There are much worse places to be running Viking outreach sessions. Had a great afternoon and evening with Year 6 from Cross Gates Primary. Fantastic weather for it too. @YHAWhitby

NORTHERN FORGE

## Pet of the week

Can you find a home for Rolo? Rolo is a lovely friendly rabbit aged about one year. He is fully vaccinated, neutered and microchipped and needs a home where he can live with another neutered rabbit. For more information about him please ring the Bridlington, Driffield and District RSPCA on 07850 190397.

