Trax: What we do

Trax was one of the first motor projects to be set up in the UK and has now been successfully supporting young people in Oxfordshire for 23 years. Originally set up to provide an alternative to custodial sentences for young car crime offenders, it now offers a far more comprehensive level of education and support. Our courses are based around mechanics and other practical skills such as catering and gardening, and more recently push bikes. Alongside gaining a qualification in practical skills the young people who access Trax also get support and qualifications in English, Maths and ICT. We offer one-to-one support and counselling, life skills, positive activities, healthy lifestyle options and free home cooked food. Our young people are aged between 8 and 25 each with a range of difficulties, whether social, behavioural or emotional. Many who access Trax are marginalised from school or society, exhibit low self-esteem issues and have a high risk of anti-social behaviour and becoming involved in criminal activity. We address these issues by offering a complete holistic package, mixing application of practical skills with group-work, mentoring support, team building and fun. Each young person who attends Trax is treated as an individual and given a flexible service that strives to help individuals develop and reach their full potential before moving on to further education, apprenticeships or work.

Since opening its doors Trax is proud to have worked with over 5000 young people from Oxfordshire. Each year supporting and engaging about 500 young people, offering an alternative for those who are excluded or without support through a crucial time of growth and development in their lives.

Trax: Our aims

- Improve the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in Oxfordshire
- Deliver high quality training to ‘hard to reach’ young people
- To offer courses which are attractive to young people and relevant to the job market
- To help young people move on to gain further education, training and employment
- To help young people address their sometimes complex issues preventing them from progressing
- To identify and work with marginalised groups such as young offenders and young people with disabilities
- To develop our staff and volunteers
Current issues

Increasing numbers of young people come to Trax because of difficulties at home or school. Many of them are struggling because of low self-esteem and confidence issues, behaviour problems, mental health issues and drug or alcohol misuse. Others come to us because they have little or no qualifications and have been unable to secure work or training once leaving school. In Oxfordshire youth unemployment peaked in 2014 at 6.8% compared to 6.3% in the South East as a whole*. Despite its affluent image, 10 areas of the city of Oxford are ranked among the country’s 20% most deprived areas, with low levels of education and skills. Oxfordshire has 30 areas within the worst 30% in England on education, skills and training deprivation; three areas in Oxford are ranked within the worst 1% in this measure.

“You guys are great; I never knew that you could use maths so much in the workshop... in fact you’ve even made it fun”.

Aiden 18, Entry 3 Motor Vehicle student

More recently students come to us with issues affecting their school placements. Due to pressures on schools and lack of staff these students are unable to access the support they need to gain reasonable qualifications in year 11. Often their time with us is the only opportunity they have to develop their key functional skills and gain a qualification in English, Maths or ICT. We are focussing on developing our provision for these students and offering a complete holistic support package for those with the highest need, supporting them to increase confidence, improve basic key skills and overcome barriers preventing them from moving into training or employment.

Trax is always looking for support from the Oxfordshire community to help support its crucial work. This can be in many forms, not just money! If you would like to help or find out more about the project please visit our website www.traxorg.com or call us to arrange a visit 01865 318040.

*Data taken from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/insight (Annual population survey, data taken from NOMIS)