



2024 Evaluation

February 2025



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Note: All references to “Staffordshire’ incorporate the geographical areas of Staffordshire County and City of Stoke-on-Trent



Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime Ben Adams, Space Champion Amy Nolan and Andy Whitehall, Right Stuff Project Manager

Programme Summary

Introduction

Space is a programme of diversionary activities, running throughout the summer holiday period. Its introduction was based on the premise of reducing spikes in youth-related low-level crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) traditionally seen during the summer holiday break by providing a range of positive activities for young people to channel their energy into. The programme comprises a range of positive activities coupled with educational input for universal and targeted cohorts of young people across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Space 2024 was funded by a £180,000 investment by the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (SCO), with a contribution of £10,000 from Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (FARS).

Staffordshire Space is proud to have maintained its commitment to youth activities since the 're-boot' in 2015 of the original programme delivered in the 80s and 90s by Staffordshire Police. Staffordshire Space is also delighted that the programme has been embraced and supported locally by our tremendous stakeholders, communities, families, children and young people across the county.

The Staffordshire Commissioner extends thanks to all those who have contributed to Space 2024 and all of the associated successful outcomes for everyone involved in the programme.

Statistics 2024

Space 2024 outcomes have been pleasing, with attendance up considerably on the previous year and activities supporting young people, families and communities across the geography once more. The programme ran for 5 weeks between Monday 29 July and Friday 30 August 2024, offering a range of sports, arts, crafts and youth activities, delivered by 43 providers.

2,451 SCO and FARS funded activities delivered from 114 venues were available and promoted primarily on the bespoke website, (www.staffordshirespace.uk). The Space 2024 Programme achieved 26,645 attendances, equalling 53,072 hours of engagement by 8653 participants, made up of young people between 8-17 years, along with parents, siblings and carers in attendance at the Space Launch event in Hanley Park.
Deputy Commissioner Dave Evans with partners





Space 2024 worked with Community Safety Partners (CSPs) to identify hotspots for youth-related low-level crime and ASB, as well as identifying priority cohorts and individuals. We exceeded our aim to engage a minimum of 30% attendance from these hotspot areas and priority cohorts, with 5,126 young people attending from these areas and cohorts.

Since commencement in 2015, Space has seen a continued reduction in youth ASB during the school summer holidays, with an 81% reduction in reports to Police since 2016. 1,395 reports of youth-related ASB were recorded during the school summer holidays in 2016 compared to 248 in 2024. This, compared to 353 incidents in 2023, represents a 32% reduction.

Participant Feedback

Participant feedback has been very positive; collected through the providers and via the Space participant feedback forms. Feedback from young people, parents, guardians and carers described how the programme made a difference and provided positive opportunities to stay active and healthy, learn new skills and connect with friends in a safe environment and in their own communities.

General

This report contains outcome evidence secured from many sources including the SCO, service providers, partners and participants, parents/guardians/carers, and via data gathered through additional analysis and audit processes.



Strategic Alignment

National Context

ASB continues to be a national priority, with the Labour government's Manifesto pledging to 'Take Back our Streets' by a range of measures including a crackdown on ASB. The manifesto indicates ASB is not merely a 'low-level' nuisance; it hits the poorest communities hardest and, if left unchecked, leads to more serious offending.

Amongst other things, the Manifesto also pledges to develop a national network of Young Futures hubs to bring local services together, deliver support for teenagers at risk of being drawn into crime or facing mental health challenges and, where appropriate, deliver universal youth provision. Space will work directly alongside these initiatives to positively impact on the levels of ASB.

Another key Manifesto commitment was supporting every child to have the best and healthiest start in life. NHS data shows a deeply concerning trend of rising childhood obesity. Almost one in 10 (9.2%) reception-aged children are now living with obesity.

Space directly supports this national direction, offering a range of activities. Many involve young people getting active, having fun and building positive relationships. Evidence shows that these activities help to improve young people's health and wellbeing, reducing obesity and other issues, which in turn can relieve pressure on the NHS.



Space is also pleased to be continuing to support the Statutory Duty to '*secure, so far as is reasonably practical, sufficient provision of educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people*' in line with the Education Act 1996. Space also supports the Department for Culture, Media and Sport target from the Chief Medical Officer to have 1 million children (and 2.5 million adults) more active by 2030 through their 'Get Active' Strategy [Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-active).

Technology is an integral part of children's and young people's lives. It has transformed the way they learn, play, connect and communicate. But these opportunities don't come without risk. Children and young people can be affected negatively by technology usage such as becoming physically inactive and being exposed to harmful content, which can have a long-lasting impact on their physical and mental wellbeing. Space also aims to give young people an opportunity to take a break from their screens and social media. Space provides opportunities to engage in alternative activities that encourage physical activity, new experiences, mastering practical skills and having positive face to face communication with their peers and trusted adults in their communities.

[1,000 Young Voices Research – StreetGames](#) highlights ongoing challenges faced by young people, particularly in low-income households and under-served communities who often experience inequalities of opportunity and participation. Young people were worried about:

- Finances and cost of living – 40%
- School and college – 39%
- My mental health – 35%
- How I look – 34%
- Not being able to achieve my career goals – 33%
- Feeling isolated/lonely – 31%

The research presented a number of key barriers to taking part in sport and physical activity:

- Can't afford it – 39%
- Not confident enough – 35%
- Not able to get there – 21%
- Haven't found a sport I enjoy – 19%

Space continues to provide positive and enriching activities to support young people, many getting attendees outside in the fresh air and physically active. As well as reducing youth ASB, Space provides opportunities to mitigate a lot of the concerns and barriers experienced by young people presented in the findings through:

- Free activities
- Safe environments with trusted adults, providing coaching and encouragement
- 'On the doorstep' provision
- A range of activities and sports to try



Local Context

ASB is a local priority for the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime and local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

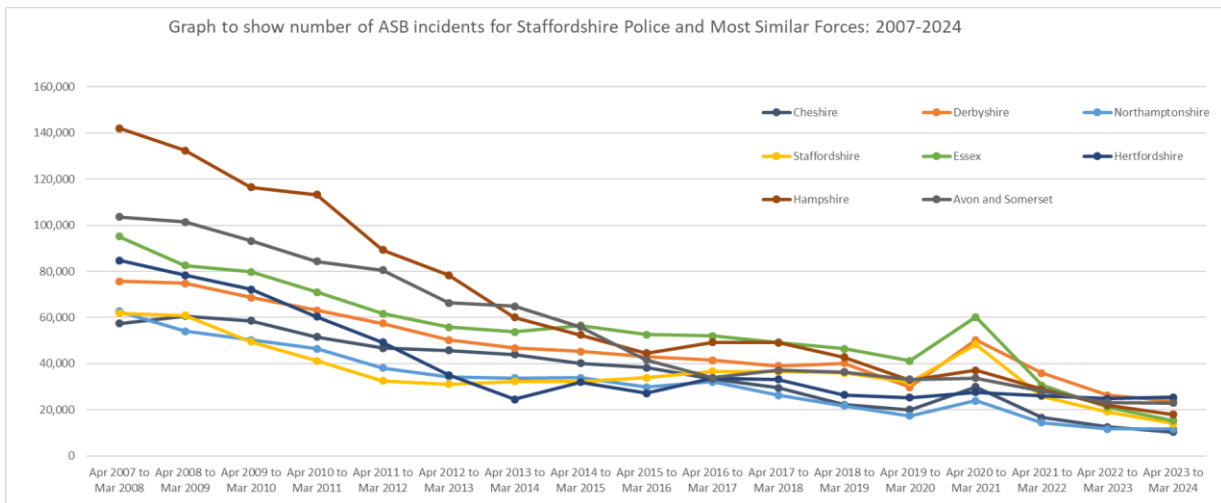
As such, ASB is reflected within the [Police & Crime Plan 2024-2028](#) and the local strategic assessments of CSPs. In particular, Space supports the priority of preventing harm, especially to young people, by intervening early. Intervening early can prevent issues from happening in the first place or escalating so they become even more damaging, complex and costly. Space provides safe environments with trusted adults, that help protect young people and support them to make choices that will prevent them becoming involved in ASB and crime.

ASB Prevalence

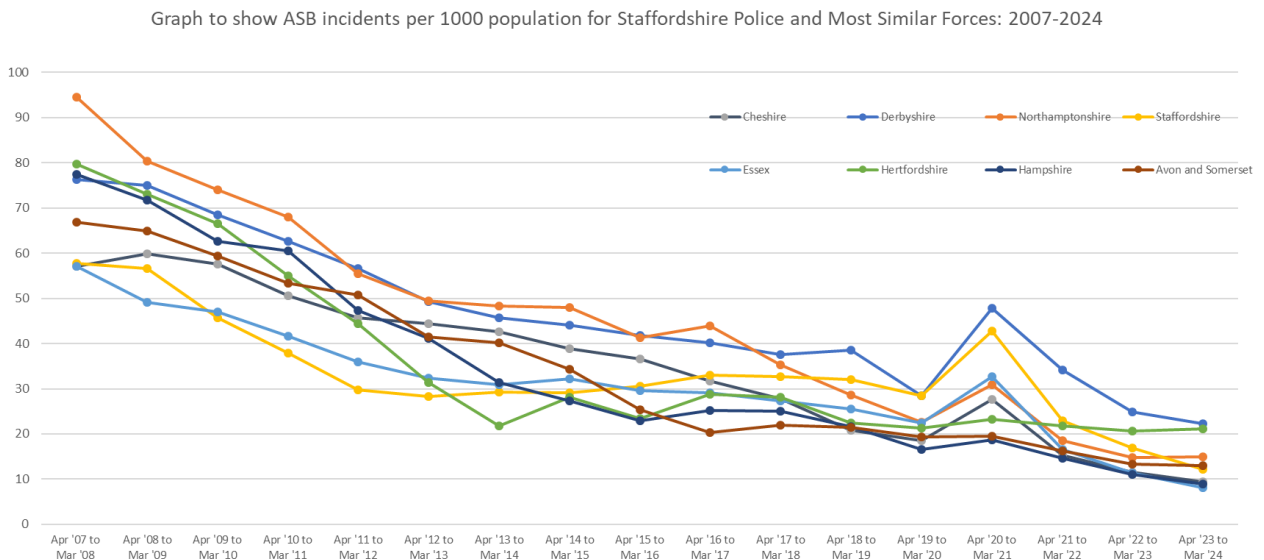
Overall rates of ASB in Staffordshire are now significantly lower than they were before the pandemic, fractionally lower than those seen across the West Midlands region but in line with national levels. ASB tends to disproportionately affect our most deprived and disadvantaged communities. Repeat victims tend to experience the same levels of psychological harm as victims of less serious violent crime.

Most Similar Groups (MSGs) are groups of local areas that have been found to be the most similar to each other using statistical methods, based on demographic, economic and social characteristics which relate to crime. The following graphs shows Staffordshire incidents and incidents per 1,000 population compared to their MSGs.

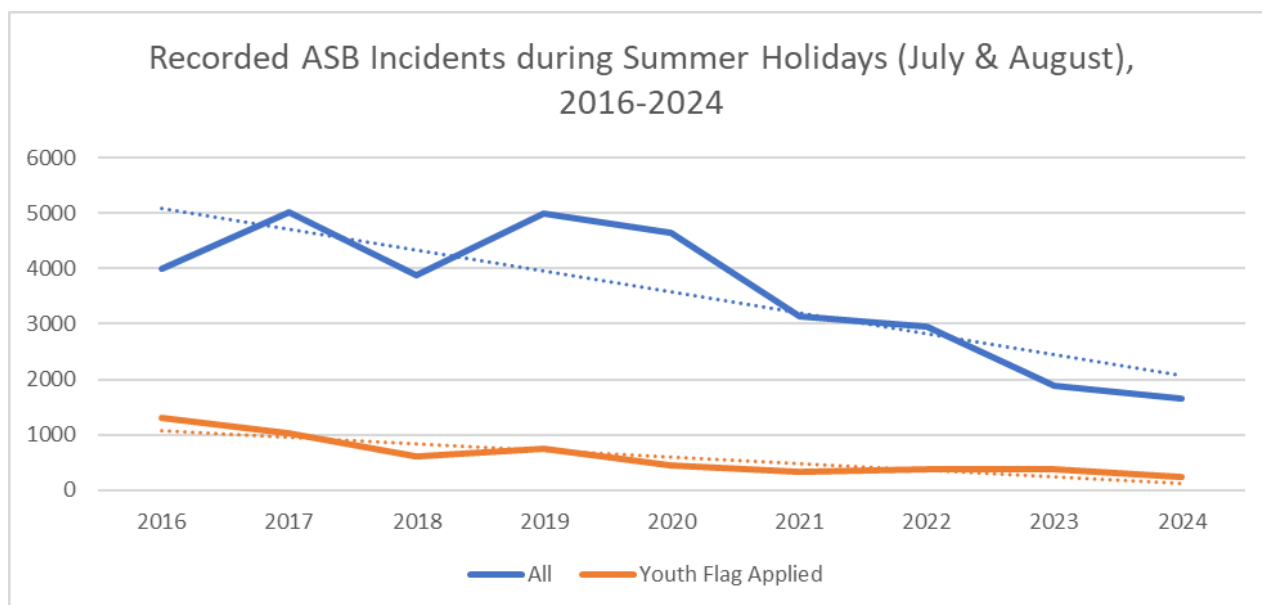
The graph below shows Staffordshire has maintained its position at 3rd lowest volume of ASB incidents for the past 2 years.



The graph below shows the number of incidents per 1,000 population compared to Most Similar Forces. Staffordshire has improved its position from 3rd highest for ASB incidents per 1,000 population in 2022/2023 to 3rd lowest for 2023/24.



In 2016, Staffordshire Police introduced a ‘youth-related ASB qualifier’ to calls for support and which has continued to be collected and monitored. This ‘ASB youth marker’ continues to be an effective tool to help ensure activities are provided within areas of highest levels of reported youth ASB. The data is also key to evaluating the effectiveness of outputs and considering reductions of reports to the Police of youth-related ASB. Previous Space reports have compared volumes of ASB during the school summer holidays against the same period in previous years.



Levels of youth-related ASB in summer 2024 reduced by 119 incidents when compared with the same period last summer, a 32% reduction year on year. There has been an overall 81% reduction in youth-related ASB since 2016. Table 1 below is an excerpt from analysis of Police data on Youth ASB reported in the school holidays compared with same period since 2016:

Table 1: Recorded ASB Incidents during summer holidays over time

LPT	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2016-2017	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2017-2018	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2018-2019	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2019-2020	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2020-2021	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2021-2022	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2022-2023	Youth Incidents	% Youth Change 2023-2024	Youth Incidents	% Change 2024-2016
Cannock Chase LPT	103	6%	109	-51.4%	53	37.7%	73	-54.8%	33	-9.1%	30	16.7%	35	-17.1%	29	10.3%	32	-69%
East Staffs LPT	110	-5%	105	-39.0%	64	10.9%	71	-32.4%	48	0.0%	48	-41.7%	28	14.3%	32	-50.0%	16	-85%
Lichfield District LPT	132	-55%	60	-36.7%	38	15.8%	44	-40.9%	26	-3.8%	25	-20.0%	20	30.0%	26	-26.9%	19	-86%
SOT South LPT	245	-18%	201	-37.3%	126	30.2%	164	-54.9%	74	-32.4%	50	98.0%	99	-24.2%	75	-65.3%	26	-89%
South Staffs LPT	101	-39%	62	-40.3%	37	8.1%	40	-17.5%	33	-48.5%	17	17.6%	20	-20.0%	16	25.0%	20	-80%
Stafford Borough LPT	121	-27%	88	-35.2%	57	7.0%	61	-39.3%	37	48.6%	55	-34.5%	36	-16.7%	30	-23.3%	23	-81%
Staffordshire Moorlands LPT	85	-9%	77	-9.1%	70	-32.9%	47	-21.3%	37	-43.2%	21	33.3%	28	25.0%	35	-40.0%	21	-75%
Tamworth LPT	86	-26%	64	-42.2%	37	-2.7%	36	-22.2%	28	-35.7%	18	-38.9%	11	90.9%	21	-28.6%	15	-83%
SOT North LPT	161	-30%	112	-45.5%	61	85.2%	113	-34.5%	74	-36.5%	47	44.7%	68	-26.5%	50	-14.0%	43	-73%
Newcastle District LPT	166	-8%	153	-54.2%	70	32.9%	93	-44.1%	52	-40.4%	31	-3.2%	30	76.7%	53	-37.7%	33	-80%
Total	1310	-21%	1031	-41%	613	21%	742	-40%	442	-23%	342	10%	375	-2%	367	-32%	248	-81%

Commissioners and Police recognise there is a spike in youth-related ASB during the school summer holiday periods. Additionally, through further data analysis, the SCO recognises youth-related ASB spikes are consistent with other school holiday periods such as Easter and Autumn half term (noting that data analysis is dependant on the accurate use of the youth qualifier by Staffordshire Police).

Space 2024

Geographical Spend and Activities Funded

The following table shows how Space programme funding was allocated across the geography.

Area	Funding Allocation	Activities Provided	Comments/Narrative
Stoke-On-Trent	£47,110.96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorstep Multi-sports • Mobile Climbing Wall • Leisure Centre Passes • Outdoor Activities • Community Fun Days • Fishing • Boxing • Youth Activities • Arts and Crafts • DJing • Nature and Bush Craft • Circus Skills • Tennis Coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of £10k from FARS directed to City of Stoke-on-Trent to supplement SCO funding, due to high prevalence of youth-related ASB • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
Staffordshire Moorlands	£17,325.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorstep Multi-sports • Leisure Centre Passes • Outdoor Activities • Nature and Bush Craft • Youth Activities • Circuit Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of providers and activities • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
Lichfield	£19,284.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorstep Multi-sports • Leisure Centre Passes • Community Fun Days • Arts and Crafts • Youth Activities • SEND Residential • Outdoor activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of providers and activities • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
South Staffordshire	£11,342.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Centre Passes • Fishing • Nature and Bush Craft • Youth Activities • Martial Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Staffs has struggled with quality and selection of providers to engage CYP and overcome geographical challenges • Good progress made with use of leisure passes, fishing and nature, outdoor activities and youth activities
Stafford	£14,660.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxing • Doorstep Multi-Sports • Swimming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers able to deliver worked hard to establish their provision in some priority locations and offered good quality, aiming to keeping ASB low.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennis Coaching • Fishing • Nature and Bush Craft • Youth Activities 	
Newcastle	£20,820.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Centre Passes • Doorstep Multi-sports • Fishing • Outdoor activities • Comic Art • Youth Activities • Mobile Climbing Wall • Trips out • Trampolining • Nature and Bush Craft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of providers and activities. • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
Cannock	£18,103.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorstep Multi-sports. • Inflatable Games & Park Events. • Leisure Ct Passes/Mountain Biking • Fishing • Mobile Climbing Wall • Kayaking • Nature and Bush Craft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of providers and activities. • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
East Staffordshire	£16,126.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doorstep Multi-sports • Leisure Ct Passes • Fishing • Mobile Climbing wall • Summer School Activities and Learning • Martial Arts • Nature and Bush craft • Youth Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of providers and activities • Providers work well with targeted and universal cohort
Tamworth	£13,640.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Activities/Trips out • Arts and crafts • Urban Arts and breakdance • Mobile Climbing Wall • Trampolining • Community Fundays and inflatables • Nature and Bush Craft • Fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tamworth’s selection of providers was improved with the addition of Fun Club, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Canal & River Trust • The area would benefit from at least one leisure facility where swimming and other activities could be delivered for a reasonable cost, mirroring other areas where the very successful leisure pass is offered • Providers worked well with targeted and universal cohort
Staffordshire Youth Offending Service	£5,418.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climbing • Team Building • Water sports • Fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffordshire YOS utilised funding for their bespoke programme of diversion and positive activities for young people known to their service from across Staffordshire
Stoke Youth Offending Service	£5,300.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor Activity Team Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stoke-on-Trent YOS utilised funding for their bespoke programme of diversion and positive activities for young people known to their service from across Stoke on Trent
TOTAL	£189,128.46		

*Some providers weren’t able to utilise all of their allocations creating an underspend of £3,884.16

Output, Funding Allocation and Cost Saving Comparisons

Attendees by Area and Costs

The following table shows funding allocations and the number of attendees per area, split by cohort.

Area	SCO Funding	Targeted Attendees	Universal Attendees	Total Attendees
Stoke-On-Trent	£47,110.97	1487	744	2,231
Staffordshire Moorlands	£17,325.00	851	221	1072
Lichfield	£19,284.00	298	125	423
South Staffordshire	£11,342.40	87	984	1,071
Stafford	£14,660.00	116	339	455
Newcastle	£20,820.00	391	741	1132
Cannock	£18,103.00	887	33	920
East Staffordshire	£16,126.00	512	46	558
Tamworth	£13,640.00	565	139	704
Staffordshire YOS	£5,418.00	62	-	62
Stoke YOS	£5,300.00	25	-	25
Totals	£189,128.46	5,214	3,372	8,653



The table below shows a breakdown of the 5,124 targeted young people.

Targeted Cohort	Space 2024
Targeted Area	3,624
YOS	94
BRFC/LST/Early Help/FM	165
Pupil Referral Unit	5
Looked After Children	23
Disability	165
ASB	135
CAHMS	25
Free School Meals	200
Other	778
Total	5,124

Annual Cost Comparison

The table below shows the cost of provision since the start of the programme. Costs have fluctuated each year due to various variables; for example, 2020/21 costs were higher and attendance number lower due to the impact of COVID restrictions. However, it is considered to be a good invest to save scheme.

Narrative	Target Audience/ Allocation of Spend		Recorded Attendances on SCO funded activities				Activities		Funding					Average Attendance Cost	
	SCO Targeted Cohort	Universal Cohort	Attendances	hrs	Yps	Targeted Yps	SCO Funded Activities	Non SCO Funded Activities	SCO Funding	FARS Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding	Other Funding Comment	per attendance	per hour attendance
Space 2015	Local Discretion to include Targeted Cohort		13,388				246	340	£127,053.76					£9.49	
Space 2016	30%	70%	12,432				1,114	1,968	£139,297.41					£11.20	
Space 2017	30%	70%	18,101				657	1,572	£133,546.45					£7.37	
Space 2018	30%	70%	30,110				847	731	£159,465.15	£6,780.00	£10,050.00	£176,295.15	Dfe	£5.85	
Space 2019	30%	70%	38,322	68,361	15,812	8,151	1,055	379	£167,627.77	£7,145.00	£39,743.90	£223,971.43	Dfe	£5.84	£3.27
Space 2020	30%	70%	4,715	14,225	2,301	1,393	500		£83,453.93	£7,500.00		£90,953.93		£19.29	£6.39
Space 2021	30%	70%	17,625	35,333	6,042	3,875	1,492	199	£174,704.60	£8,000.00		£182,704.60		£9.91	£4.94
Space 2022	30%	70%	21,786	47,391	10,994	7,721	2,365	170	£172,488.26	£10,000.00	£1,900.00	£182,488.26	Local S-O-T Businesses	£7.88	£3.63
Space 2023	30%	70%	22,218	43,848	9,635	6,998	2,437	152	£185,615.84	£10,000.00		£195,615.84		£8.84	£4.46
Space 2024	30%	70%	26,197	53,072	8,653	5,126	2,451	114	£179,128.46	£10,000.00		£189,128.46		£7.21	£3.57

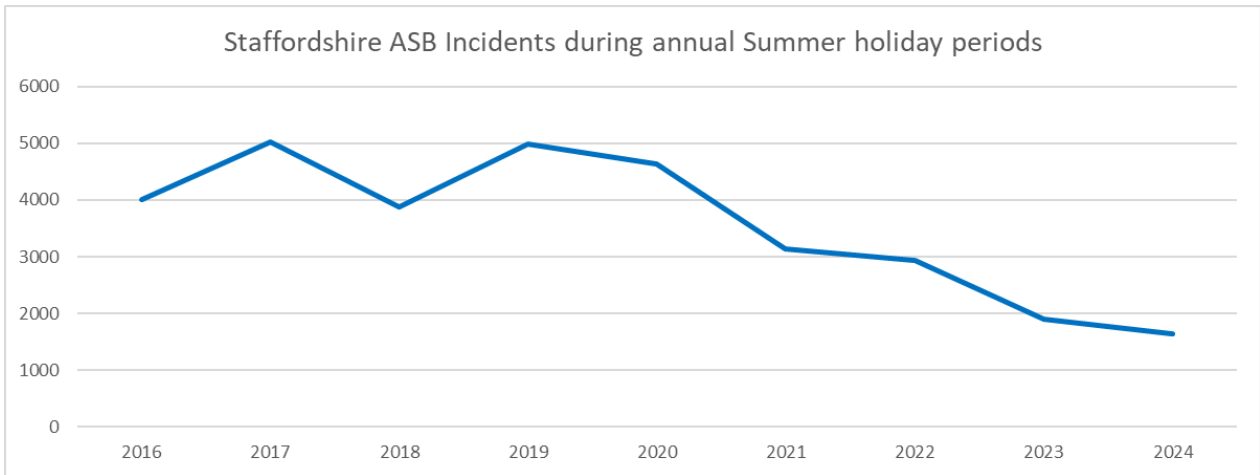


Chart 2: Graph above shows downward trend in all ASB Incidents have been reducing year on year over the summer holidays since 2016 in Staffordshire.

The reducing ASB trend has been used to estimate youth ASB incident volume over time without SPACE intervention. This is shown by the orange line in chart 3 below. However, there has been additional reduction across youth ASB incidents as demonstrated by the blue line. This additional reduction could be attributed to the work of the SPACE programme.

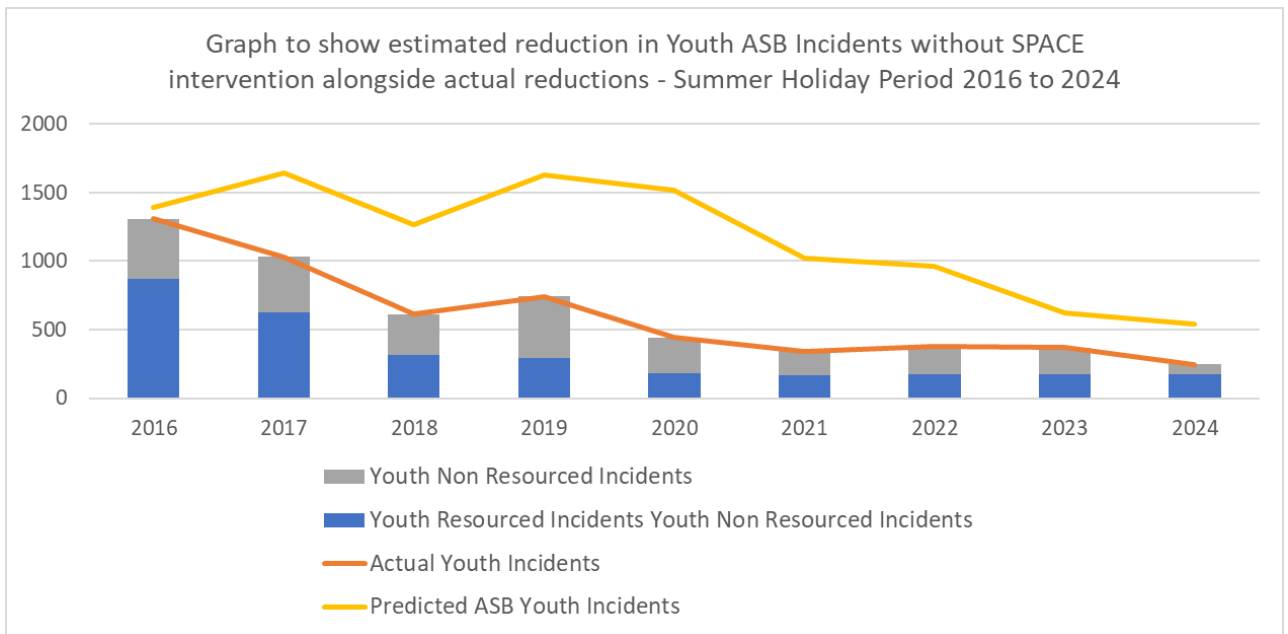


Chart 3: Graph to show additional reduction in Youth ASB incidents over the summer holidays compared to estimated reduction.

Since the Space programme has been running over the period 2016-2024, cost savings can be estimated using benchmark costings* from 2019 (with inflationary increases). Chart 4 below shows estimated savings from the reductions in Police not having to respond to youth ASB incidents:

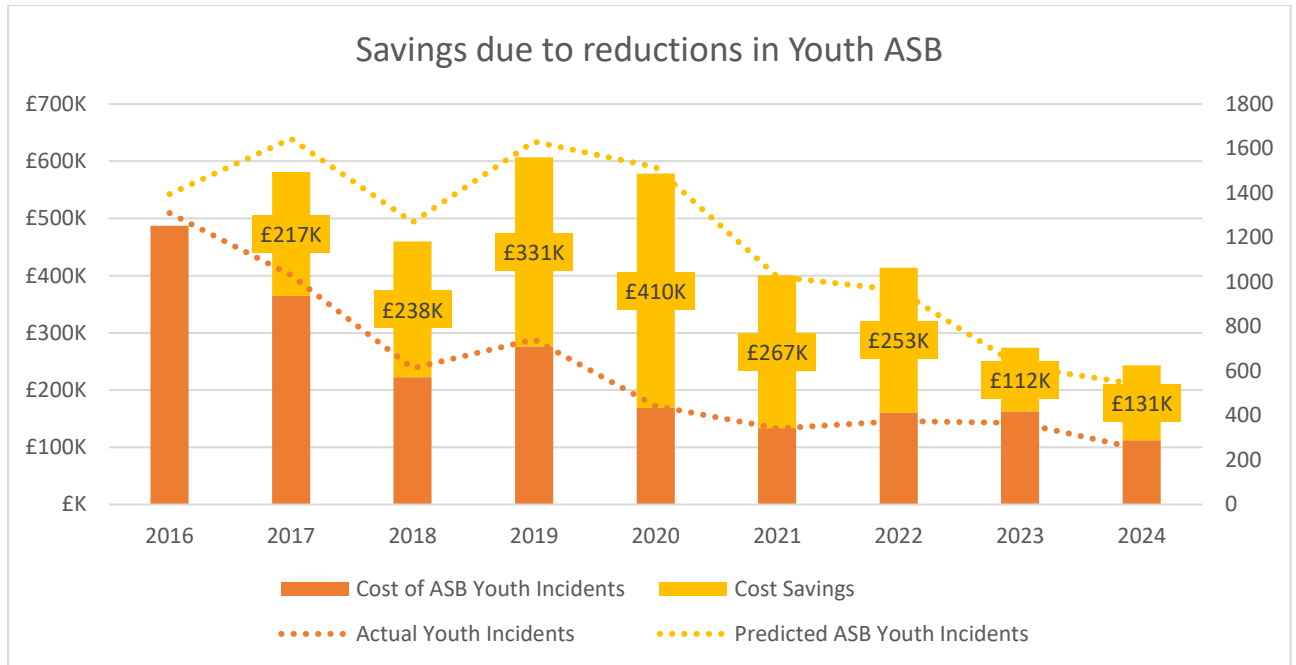


Chart 4: Graph to show Savings attributed to SPACE Intervention

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Cost Savings	0	£217K	£238K	£331K	£410K	£267K	£253K	£112K	£131K
Cost of ASB Youth Incidents	£487K	£365K	£222K	£276K	£169K	£134K	£161K	£163K	£112K
Actual Youth Incidents	1310	1031	613	742	442	342	375	367	248
Predicted ASB Youth Incidents	1395	1644	1268	1632	1516	1024	963	619	538

Table 2: Accompanying Data table for Chart 4

These cost savings can also be considered with the combined benefits of reduced calls to the local authority and housing providers. Reductions in ASB incidents are likely to reduce impact on victims and associated demand for services such as victim support and mental health. Space has also used a Social Return Calculator shared with us by Cheshire Police and a Housing Provider. The Social Return Calculator presented cost benefits associated with young people gaining confidence and improving mental and physical health. The Cheshire project generated a total Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £2,173,529 from their investment of £3,000 (including funding and staff time). This equates to a SROI ratio of 1:725, which means that for every £1 spent they received £725 back in outcome value. Following the same methodology, if the Space cost benefit is also 1:725 then the Space programme has generated an approximate social return value of £137.7m for summer 2024.

Website and Marketing Analysis

The Space programme was marketed via various channels, including a standalone website (www.staffordshire.space.uk) and through social media: Facebook, Instagram and X.

Participants were able to review activities within their geographical location on the website, identify the provider, any specific requirements related to the event and book a place. Viewers could also choose to receive Space website updates, including any future announcements, direct to their email address.

The website continues to promote activities and to provide safety advice for young people, including promotion of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Team's 'Be Wise' campaign, the NSPCC's Childline helpline number and useful advice and the Safe + Sound [Safe+Sound \(staffordshirefire.gov.uk\)](http://staffordshirefire.gov.uk) online platform produced and funded by FARS and links to the Staffordshire County Council's 'Knowaboutcse' website, which aims to educate and prevent child sexual exploitation.

Social media and email campaign activity between 19 June and 14 September:

Facebook

- Space 2024 Facebook page followers at the start of the campaign: 8,466
- Space 2024 Facebook page followers at the end of the campaign: 9,441
- 11.78% increase in Facebook page followers

Instagram

- Space 2024 Instagram followers 2024: 639 (4% Increase)

Twitter X

- Twitter/ X followers 2024: 919 (1.7% decrease)

Event responses from social media ads:

- Events: 2,451 – 0.5% increase on 2023
- Link Clicks: 10,251 – 265% increase on 2023
- Reach: 578,620 – 112% increase on 2023

Overview of social media campaigns:

- The campaigns reached 60,342 unique users, while delivering a total of 195,407 impressions – an indication that many users saw the ad multiple times, reinforcing its visibility and effectiveness.

Email Campaigns

Three email campaigns were sent. The ‘Blast off for Space 2024’ email sent on 19 June achieved:

- Total Recipients: 6,902
- Delivered: 6,556 (95%)
- Opens: 2,985 (46%)
- Clicks: 1,126 (17%)

The Staffordshire Space Marketing campaign in 2024 was a great success, with results showing a significant improvement over last year's performance.

Feedback

Participants, parents, guardians and carers were encouraged to provide feedback through the Space website. Responses were higher (50) for 2024 compared to the previous year (17). On the whole, respondents were satisfied with their experience. 50 respondents answered 6 questions:

Question	Answer True	Answer Not Sure	Answer False
The activity was what I thought it would be	47	2	1
I felt involved in the	48	1	1
I learnt or did something new	47	2	1
I want to do this again	48	1	1
Taking part made me feel happier	48	1	1
I would do this activity again	48	1	1

Some constructive feedback was received in relation to one parent and young person who experienced problems with an activity they had a voucher for. The feedback was brought to the attention of the provider and was rectified.

The following feedback was received by Space providers from young people, parents, guardians, carers and people working for organisations that refer young people into the programme:

Resident 1:

“At the start of the summer we were a bit worried about the amount of kids waiting outside in the street and were a bit rowdy as they left The Yard but as the summer went on their behaviour improved and we can see the value in having something for them to do.”

Resident 2

“Kids are always hanging around the streets so it’s brilliant that they have somewhere to go!”

NHS Worker

“We use The Yard every Tuesday to run a men’s mental health group and it’s great to see so many kids waiting outside ready to take part in the activities. I’ve spoken to a lot of parents in the community, and they have nothing but positive words to say about what’s happening at The Yard. Having worked in Meir for a long time, it’s great to the difference that these activities are making.”

Coalfield Regeneration Trust (CRT)

“It’s fantastic that children have somewhere to go and something positive to do over the summer. As an organisation working in Meir, The Yard is seen as a safe place where young people can thrive.”

Parent 1

“K enjoyed the sessions. They have helped out a lot in the school holidays. We both work full time and K has to stay at his nan & grandads while we are at work, so he finds that really boring. Going to The Yard has kept him busy and less bored. He has learnt new skills and his confidence is better. K is not the easiest of children to deal with and I would like to thank you for letting him be part of the sessions. It’s amazing what you have done putting the sessions on and helping out the children, hopefully they will continue in the future.”

Parent 2

“Would just like to thank you as a parent for being so selfless and giving up your time for the kids. B was bored at home as we had a holiday planned for the end of summer. B was able to socialise with friends he was missing, he was active and keeping fit and was always in a better mood from being involved in these groups. Thank you to all of the staff for a well organised summer camp.”

Conclusion

Space 2024 is evidenced as effective, value for money and supported by local communities, families and young people.

Recommendations

Based on this year's delivery, the following recommendations are offered for consideration:

- A. Continue to operate the Space Programme
- B. Facilitate Expression of Interest exercise for new and existing Space providers aimed at increasing the range of activities available to engage all young people (including the older age range of 14-17 years), in all areas
- C. Look to encourage and promote positive cohesion through the Space Programme.
- D. Continue to scope delivery areas utilising local knowledge and expertise, CSP data and new intelligence products to map hotspot areas
- E. Engage and consult with young people with support from parents and stakeholders to identify any key issues and concerns to inform types of activities, where, when and who etc
- F. Maintain publicity, promotion and explore new opportunities for marketing in line with trends / mechanisms used by young people
- G. Explore sponsorship and donations aimed at generating additional funding
- H. Review and look to innovate to increase engagement with targeted cohorts such as young people's school exclusion cohorts and support workers
- I. Space providers to have all DBS Checks for all employees and volunteers registered with the government update service
- J. Share good practice across other Local Authority area Space provision with a view to replicating successful activity approaches
- K. Explore upgrades to calendar updates where a series of activities or all Local Authority area activities can be uploaded to parent or participant calendar and reminders enabled
- L. Look to compliment and align the Space Programme with emerging local or national initiatives

Case Study

Background:

Child A is a teenage girl diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and she faces significant challenges with social interactions, group activities and emotional regulation. Her severe behaviours and mental health struggles often lead to anxiety, especially when faced with new environments or interactions with unfamiliar peers. Historically, these difficulties have impacted her ability to engage in group settings or embrace new activities.

Programme Participation:

Recently, Child A participated in a structured teen scheme designed to nurture social skills, build self-confidence, and encourage personal growth through a variety of team-based and individual activities. The programme was tailored to create an inclusive, supportive atmosphere where young people could explore new interests, confront fears, and develop meaningful connections with peers.

Behavioural and Emotional Response:

During the scheme, Child A exhibited notable progress across several areas where she has historically encountered challenges:

1. **Peer Interaction:**

Despite her usual tendency to withdraw, Child A engaged positively with her peers. She initiated conversations, actively participated in group tasks, and maintained positive social interactions throughout. This was a marked improvement from her typical avoidance of social settings, reflecting her growing confidence in engaging with others.

2. **Trying New Activities:**

One of the standout achievements for Child A was her involvement in physically challenging activities like the climbing wall. Although she has often shied away from such tasks due to fear and anxiety, Child A demonstrated remarkable courage by choosing to face her fears. Her success not only boosted her self-esteem but also inspired those around her.

3. **Politeness and Volunteer Support:**

Throughout the programme, Child A consistently displayed politeness and respect toward the volunteers. In contrast to previous environments where her behaviour has been more challenging, she followed instructions well, offered assistance when needed, and maintained a cooperative attitude.

4. **Supporting Younger Participants:**

In addition to her own progress, Child A stepped into a leadership role, supporting younger students during more difficult tasks. Her encouragement and advice reflected an empathetic, mature side of her that had been difficult to express in the past.



Impact on Mental Health and Behaviour:

The structured and supportive environment of the teen scheme had a positive impact on Child A's mental health and behaviour. The routine and predictability helped her feel safe, while the encouragement from peers and volunteers allowed her to push her boundaries in a way that felt manageable. This, combined with the physical activities, provided her with an outlet for energy and emotion, leading to a noticeable reduction in challenging behaviours.

Conclusion:

Child A's participation in the teen scheme was a turning point in her social and emotional development. Her willingness to face her fears, connect with peers, and contribute to the wellbeing of others demonstrates the benefits of the right support for individuals with autism and challenging behaviours.

For further case studies visit the Space website [here](#).

Images

View all images from this year's Space [here](#).

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