

Yellow Submarine

Yellow Submarine runs a variety of projects across Oxfordshire for young people with mild or moderate learning disabilities and autism.

They have a strong track record of helping teenagers transition into adulthood and find work opportunities, and a grant from Oxfordshire Community Foundation has helped them make a significant addition to their services.



Why

Fewer than one in five people with a learning disability work. But, according to Mencap, at least 65 per cent would like to work, for much the same reasons as everyone else – it provides us with a sense of purpose and is an important part of our identity.

Toby Staveley, Yellow Submarine's CEO, says: "A job can make people with learning disabilities feel useful and worthwhile; become more independent; and engage them with their community." He wants to remove the obstacles to getting into work – giving people with learning disabilities and employers alike confidence in their abilities.

How

Having started by running holidays away for their young people, Yellow Submarine decided to significantly scale up their services by opening a new social enterprise in Oxford city centre. The resulting Yellow Submarine café gives young people with learning disabilities

work experience, as well as selling delicious sandwiches, cakes and coffee to local office workers and shoppers. They have since received rave reviews in the local press and on TripAdvisor endorsing the quality of their food and service.

What

In 2014 they successfully applied for a grant from Oxfordshire Community Foundation, receiving £2,000 towards the training of four new apprentices: Darren, Hannah, Anthony and Ian. Toby Staveley says: "Unlike with internships or traineeships, they will have full employment rights and be paid a weekly salary – they will train, learn and earn. An 18-month apprenticeship will be totally transformative for these individuals in a way that doesn't compare to a short-term placement or volunteering."

To find out more about OCF grants such as this one, go to www.oxfordshire.org.

AT A GLANCE

Profile

- Award-winning charity supporting young people (11–18) with learning disabilities and their families
- Runs a social enterprise café in central Oxford, offering apprenticeships to people with learning disabilities

Social themes

- Supporting people with learning disabilities such as Down's Syndrome, Fragile X and autism
- Sustainable education and training opportunities
- Residential trips and holidays

Benefits of working with OCF

- Access to a grant that helped fund four life-changing apprenticeships for young people with learning disabilities



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Toby Staveley
Chief Executive
Yellow Submarine