

Choysez Express

For the year 2007

Hat-trick of awards for Choysez

Healthy Business 2007

Choysez has recently been celebrating a hat-trick of awards. At the first Wansbeck Young People's awards we were presented with the News Post Leader Media Award for positive coverage throughout the year on both a local and regional level, and one of our groups were crowned fundraisers of the year. The third award came at the High Sheriff of Northumberland's awards night, at which we received a special honour for outstanding contribution to the county of Northumberland. Operations manager at Choysez John Tyers said: "We're over the moon with this award – it is great recognition for all the staff, young people,



and schools that work with Choysez. It's especially pleasing because it shows everyone that Choysez is a good place for young people to come to, and for schools to work with." Centre manager Chris Conroy added: "It was great to receive this award, because it sums up what we are doing in supporting our local community and our young people. "To be recognised for this means to world to us."

Celebration of young people's achievements

We have been rewarding our young people for their recent success in gaining ASDAN bronze and silver awards- equivalent to NVQ level 1, and the GCSE equivalent COPE awards. These awards have taken our total number of awards up to 150 since last September.



Due to the record number of awards this year- including two Wansbeck Young Peoples Awards- the young people have been treated to a special celebratory event in reward for their efforts. The participants were presented with their certificates, followed by an informal gathering and a barbecue.

Over 250 young people have benefited from the centre over the academic year with almost 90% achieving a recognised qualification during their time with us.

Centre manager Chris Conroy said all the staff at Choysez are very proud of the achievements and added: "This year has seen nearly 200 nationally recognised awards achieved by our young people.

"We have also had a record number achieve NVQ1 and GCSE equivalent. Everybody is very proud and it shows the benefit of providing an alternative curriculum. "The young people do want to achieve and do well but they need support and that's where we come in."

To add to our achievements this year, Choysez has been awarded the coveted Healthy Business Award. Our staff have been changing and developing practices in order to connect with the local community on issues such as global warming and carbon footprints. Centre manager Chris Conroy said that the award had made it possible for Choysez to work in partnership with many businesses that they would not have been able to have met before the award. "Meeting other voluntary sector organisations has enabled us to share information and good practice," he said.

"Working with the staff at the Healthy Living Centre has without doubt enabled us to improve practices and provide better quality information to staff. "Working with a wide range of people and organisations can only be a positive way of seeing how other organisations tackle certain issues and how they help their staff."



Pictured from left to right are staff members Susan Anthony, Kelly McKenna and John Tyres.

Grant from Greggs

Choysez has been awarded a grant of £30,000 from Greggs Trust. The grant will help to establish Future Choices, a new programme for disaffected young people in the area.

The project will support 10 people one day a week for 40 weeks. The community initiatives manager for

Greggs explained: "When I visited Choysez it had a real buzz about it.

"Chris is very committed, supportive and empathetic with the young people and an excellent ambassador for the organisation. With the extra funding we are able

to provide I have no doubt that he will be successful in expanding the Choysez 'model' in the region. This will give young people the opportunity to raise their aspirations."

Butterfly Village

Our young people have teamed up with local businesses to raise awareness of environmental issues through a community project. Support from CVS Action Earth and Asda at Cramlington has

enabled one of our school groups to develop a mystery Butterfly Village. The garden is shaped like a butterfly and contains hidden facts about caring for the environment. The young people received certificates for their involvement and they presented thank-you cards to Asda at Cramlington.

