

Barton Boys Decoration & Mural of Youth Centre (Involving Young People) – Case Study

Introduction

Youth Ambition works with young people to develop their knowledge and understanding of decision-making and to develop the skills necessary for effective participation in their communities.

As part of the refurbishment plan for Barton Neighbourhood Centre, Youth Ambition worked with young people in Barton to lead on the redecoration and designing of a mural on a wall in the youth centre as well as liaising with the Centre staff and building contractors.

The outcomes we wanted to achieve were for young people in the Barton community to help design and create a mural that they are proud of and for Barton community to build an identity by connecting people together.

Youth Ambition consulted young people on what improvements they'll like to see happen in the youth centre and together with a professional artist they chose the colours for the walls, flooring and came up with a design for the mural.

Young people gave their views to youth workers in relation to the walls and flooring, which was passed on to the decorating building contractors. They also took part in planning sessions with the artist to plan what the mural should look like and the messages it should convey.

They decided that the mural should convey positive messages about young people living in Barton and to showcase activities that young people can take part in at youth club such as: sports, arts, games, music, informal and non-formal education, and accredited activities.

Six young people took part in the project and they were involved in painting the mural on the wall with the artist. Through this they were able to build on the following skills, knowledge and capabilities such as: take responsibility for involvement in their community, take part in planning, decision making and evaluation in youth work settings, use their imagination and express themselves in different ways and opportunity to participate in youth work and their community.

See below evaluation responses from young people in relation to what they have gained from the project:

- 1- How did you feel about the look of the youth club before the project?
 - It didn't look nice and the flooring was dirty
 - It looked run-down and the walls were not clean
 - I didn't enjoy spending time there because it looked unattractive

- 2- How do feel about the look of the youth club now after the project?

- It feels good now the project is finished and it looks nice
 - I feel better than I did before the project and I'm impressed with my work
 - I feel great because I contributed to the youth centre looking a lot better now for everyone
- 3- What skills and knowledge have you gained from the project?
- Confidence to get involved in art work in my community
 - Planning and working with others in a group
 - Imagination and decision making
 - It has helped me to improve confidence, communication and team working skills
- 4- Which part of the project did you enjoy the most and why?
- I enjoyed sketching and drawing with the artist as well as helping in my community youth centre
 - The planning stages was fun and painting it on the wall has made me think of maybe being a painter when I'm older
 - I like the evaluation and reflection to check how the art project went
- 5- What would you have changed about the project?
- We would like to have seen more people getting involved
 - Some of the art sessions clash with our youth club session, so having it on separate days next time

Is anyone better off? Quantitative

Four young people gained accreditation (one of whom is from our priority groups i.e. BAME, in contact with social services and juvenile system) in planning, delivering and evaluating a social action project.

Staff were highly impressed by the commitment young people showed during this project and seeing the project through until the end where they invited stakeholders in the community to come and see the work they've done to the youth centre.

A project like this a year ago would have been impossible. We are very happy with how far we've come with the young people and the many life skills that they have improved on so far. The culture of the youth club has improved to enable young people to be involved in all aspects of youth work and community.