

13-19+ Participation Strategy Project

North East Community Assembly event Evaluation

1. Introduction

This report is a follow up of the seven events that happened in each Community Assembly to present the results of the Consultation and Participation report by the 13-19+ Participation Strategy Project carried out by The Children and Young People's Empowerment Project in partnership with Sheffield Futures. The project was commissioned by Sheffield City Council's Children and Young People's Department on behalf of the Sheffield 0 to 19+ Partnership Board (Sheffield's Children's Trust) as part of the delivery of Sheffield's 0 to 19+ Consultation and Participation Strategy, and has been overseen by the Multi Agency Participation Group, MAP (a sub-group of the 0 to 19+ Partnership Board).

Please refer to the previous report for further information on the project.

2. Agenda

The events were designed to present the work that has been carried out since August 2008 including the mapping of provision, audit of participation from both adults and young people and the launch of the Participation Toolkit. Young people were invited to present the findings from this work to key decision makers, service providers and community organisations. Presentations were delivered by youth people from Action for Stannington, C.A.S.T Sheffield Youth Council and the NSPCC who met for seven weeks to build a team, prepare the presentations and plan the events. From this group discussions took place for people to discuss these results, consider how the involvement of young people could be increased and improved across the Community Assembly area and identify how everyone could contribute to this.

2.1 Location

The event took place at Longley Park College on 27th October 2009.

3. Attendance

Name	Organisation
Andy Dykes	Sheffield Futures
M Palmer	SPCT
Jan Cowley	YCA
B Johnson	Sidewalk
Aziz Dajl	CYPD
Vicky Williams	North East Community Assembly
Jackie Drayton	Local Councillor
Mariam Mohammed	Sure Start
Sally Marshall	SYPC NSPCC
Carol Beuham	Sheffield Futures
Andrea Nortcliffe	Rathbone
Nick Gill	Acitivity Sheffield
Alan Hancock	South Yorkshire Police
Alan Law	Councillor SCC
Pam Allen	Sheffield PCT

Michael Reid	Rathbone
Jenny Tibbles	Ellesmere Youth Project
Danielle Sharp	Ellesmere Youth Project
Caroline Seaton	Sheffield Womens Aid

4. Presentations

Ellesmere Youth Project also had the chance to present to the group an overview of the groups they are involved in and share what they have achieved.

5. Group Discussions

There were two group discussions each headed by a facilitator. Participants were asked to share their initial thoughts on the presentation and identify any gaps in the structures and methods of youth participation. From these action points were created to take the strategy forward.

5.1 Initial thoughts

- There is a high level of participation in the area, approx 3x as much as other areas → structures in place. Lots of regeneration has happened in the area e.g. SOAR and Sheffield Futures
- List is misleading → different sort of provision in different areas, not lots of things for young people to do in this area (but a lot of networks and infrastructure) – You can't say that the South West doesn't have activity and the North East does...the South West has many more sports clubs for example and North East has none
- 3 networks in area
 - SOAR
 - Burngreave
 - Shiregreen/Brightside
- Surprised by how positive young peoples responses were about their involvement – don't think this is representative of all young people
- Yet there is still a lot to do as it's hard to influence change (esp. in the city). Young people feel like they can influence in the North East and have seen changes e.g. demonstrations, saving funding and buildings.
- Young people have accessed the YOF
- Lots of community groups that DO work with children and young people. There is more joined up working inc. working with adults for an empowered community.

There are groups and structures set up for young people in the area yet there is still provision missing for young people in the form of activities. There was a lot of regeneration money being spent in the area and it has been a success in setting up the structures and getting the community to come together. Yet there are young people that are not engaged in this work and the young people who are haven't been able to influence change on a higher level.

5.2 Gaps in provision

- Feeding into higher decisions esp. to councillors and community assemblies.
- Extent to which young people feel able to influence services and decisions
- Lack of feedback to young people, a lot of consultation happens but then what?

- Being more creative and less formal – difficult when different stakeholders/perspectives
- 13+ have YOF yet Kids Can Do is not participation or done in the same way as YOF.
- Try and get YOF and Kids Can Do at community assembly level
- There are a lot of groups which need managing and linking together.
- Lack of publicity – esp. around young people having a positive image.
- Different definitions of participation, need to agree a common ground
 - Empowering young people to have a voice and influence
 - Be prepared to give up power (even if you don't like the outcome)
- Working with adults – changing how things are done, cultural shift
- All agencies will have a different definition of participation. We have to be able to accept that the outcome may be different.
- We need to get into the heart of the community
- Community police should be here

Work need to be done to support young people to make decisions at a higher level. This maybe achieved within the Community Assembly setting up a youth panel that can make decisions on how the money is spent on youth provision in the area. For this to work the money and resources to manage it need to be there and one way maybe to try and get the YOF fund, Kids Can Do and smaller pots of money from other organisations down to community Assembly level.

It was noted that there needs to be more done on adults understanding of participation and they need to be willing to relinquish power to young people, yet different organisations currently have different definitions and agendas concerning young people involvement.

5.3 What can be done?

- There are four area wards that have their own meetings, these need to be better linked to the community assembly.
- Need a more creative/informal response so all young peoples voices can be heard.
- Those young people that are empowered can support the young people who are not
- Case studies of participation from organisations – content analysis?
- Young people to apply to community assembly participation event money in area wards? This will need setting up and additional funding.
- City wide YOF → bring it back down to areas...needs time and management
- Each organisation lead a group to access training for grant panels IF money from YOF, Kids Can Do can come to areas. Pilot could be Burngreave £2k, YOF panel, take it back to area, need structures in place
- Acitivity/flexible/choice about how young people can get involved
- Adults to go to young people instead of young people to adults
- Cheaper travel – the expense/cost for young peoples activities
- Linking the 3 area youth providers meetings into 1 youth providers community network, bi-annually?
- More youth centres
- Support different organisations to learn from each other
- Get deeper into the local community, harder to reach groups (engage)
- Everyone needs to play their part e.g. police
- Young people need to feel apart of their communities, start at an early age
- We can all commit to talking and listening to young people more
- Need to resource and support young people's involvement, requires people, time, money, skills and expertise

- Challenge is connecting young people with their local elected reps (councillors).
- There are different issues for different agencies – for those who just work with young people it is simpler. For other organisations there are multiple service users. E.g. It is a very different task for the police
- The British Government has received a letter from the United Nations to express concern about the way young people are treated by the country. A it has come out very badly in a recent survey e.g. locking up young people
- Young people should be treated equally in partnership work to adults
- It's a long term view. It is important to listen and talk to young people in our private lives as well as our work.

There are existing area ward meetings and youth provision meetings that need to link up to improve the information that is being fed into the Community Assembly. The Community Assembly wants to look into creating a youth panel to make the key decisions on youth provision in the area, this can be piloted in Burreave where they have set aside £2000 for young peoples provision but they will need support to set up the structure.

5.4 Community Assembly

- Young people need to be informed about what these are, what they do and how they work (everyone is still unclear!)
- Ask young people how they want to be involved (go to where they are)
- Too big! Need to engage young people at a more local level
- Be honest, don't raise unrealistic expectations
- The words are confusing
- It's about devolved councils – how do you influence the process of decision making at a local level

5.5 Actions

- Individuals to campaign to media about young peoples image (possibly YP from these events to follow up as a future project – YOF etc
- Police to question if we can have a young peoples PACT
- More local and outreach consultation and include schools and established groups
- Look into forming a local pot of money (YOF, Kids Can Do, Homes etc) for young people to apply to and panel
- Anti-stigma campaign – positive images of young people / young people to run it newsletter / paper → city wide response.
- Work with schools – that is where young people are reps from each school in local area (and local community groups)
- Advocacy – attend meetings on behalf of young people, present their views and feedback
- Process needs to be more than just meetings, different ways of connecting with people (including young people).
- Use more appropriate language: "Assembly"?
- There should be 1 representative from each school council who feeds back to the community assembly
- Aren't these the most tokenistic models of participation?
- Domestic abuse organisations are going to have a member of staff attend community – but how do they get involve
- Don't re-invent the wheel, re-name what we've already got → join up the three networks

6. Next steps

Everyone in the group was asked to go away with an action for improving young peoples participation in their community based on the discussions that had taken place. Pledge cards were filled in with their action point and these will get posted back to the individual in a couple of months after the event to remind and prompt them of their commitment to young people's participation.

7. Contacts

If you would like this report in a different format, language, more copies or further information about it and the findings please contact:

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For more information about the Strategy for the Participation & Consultation of Children & Young People in Sheffield and its supporting documents please contact:

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See www.sheffield0to19.org.uk/participation website for any of these documents.

For more information about specific Community Assemblies and City Wide findings please see the separate reports mentioned in the Introduction, available at www.sheffield0to19.org.uk/participation .

For more information about your Community Assembly Area contact:

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This work has been carried out by the Children and Young People's Empowerment Project in partnership with Sheffield Futures and has been commissioned by Sheffield City Council on behalf of the Sheffield 0-19+ Partnership.

