



Practice Note 18

Street Stuff

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Topic Areas: Partnership Working, Community Engagement, Public Space Safety

Project Background and Aims

Street Stuff was launched originally as a two-year pilot under the “Investing in the Future” Initiative in 2009. The project was established as evidence showed many young people in Renfrewshire’s most deprived areas were committing acts of antisocial behaviour and violence, partly through gang-related behaviour. Moreover, partner agencies had confirmed a significant gap in youth provision at night and the need for additional sport and leisure activities. Street Stuff aims to engage with these disaffected and hard-to-reach young people through a host of diversionary activities such as football, electronic gaming and dance. Street Stuff provides activities across Renfrewshire including rural as well as areas of multiple deprivation.

The initiative is supported directly by a number of partners from the Renfrewshire Safer & Stronger Community Planning Group. Partner organisations involved in the initiative include: Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue, Renfrewshire Wardens, Anti-Social Investigation Team (ASIST), Paisley Partnership Regeneration Company (PPRC), Community Learning and Development (CLAD), St Mirren Football Club, Arriva, Reid Kerr College and Ferguslie Park Sport Centre (FPSC). However, anyone with an interest in youth disorder and/or diversionary activities within Renfrewshire is invited to attend the group to add value and ensure non-duplication of services.

Partners meet bimonthly at the Diversionary Group which is chaired by PPRC. The Diversionary Group work together to achieve key aims and objectives whilst dealing with problems and issues as they arise. All partners are represented on the Diversionary Group. The Diversionary Group is directed by the police-led Joint

Tasking Group, which meets fortnightly to coordinate police response or action to address area specific problems or crime specific problems in areas.

The finances of the project are managed by Renfrewshire Council's Antisocial Investigation Team and the coordination of the project is managed by Paisley Partnership Regeneration Co. Statistical and analytical information is provided by Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue and the Community Safety Manager. Additional information or support is provided by Renfrewshire's Warden Service, Reid Kerr College and the Scottish Football Association.

The project does not have a single base, with partners managing their involvement in the project from their premises. Arriva West garage, secure and maintain both buses at the Inchinnan Depot, Paisley. St Mirren FC garage, secure and maintain three mobile football pitches at their new ground at Greenhill Road in Paisley. The Box and mobile skate park are secured at Ferguslie Park Sports Centre when they are not in use. All equipment is mobile and can be deployed at any location where young people 'hang about' and the activities provided are based on consultation with young people from disadvantaged communities.

All management costs are met by the partners involved as part of their day to day duties within their relevant organisations and all activities are provided free of charge.

The outcomes for "Investing in the Futures" are set by the Diversionary Group and have an impact on Renfrewshire's Community Plan by contributing to the national outcome of "living our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger" and the local outcome of "sustainable reduction in antisocial behaviour and violence in our community is achieved".

Resources

Funding: Fairer Scotland, Cashback for Communities, Local Area Committee, Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

Partners: Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, Renfrewshire Wardens, Anti-Social Investigation Team (ASIST), Paisley Partnership Regeneration Company (Now operating as Engage Renfrewshire), Community Learning And Development (CLAD), St Mirren FC, Arriva, Reid Kerr College and Ferguslie Park Sport Centre (FPSC).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The project is monitored by Strathclyde Police and the PPRC on a quarterly basis. Quarterly feedback draws on police analytical and statistical reports, anecdotal reports from the Street Stuff venues and qualitative information from the coaches and local community. A register of user numbers is retained and anecdotal reports from young people also logged to feedback into the activities delivered.

Annual reports and evaluation reports are available on request from the Sports and Health Services Manager. The 2010 evaluation report will be available from May 2011.

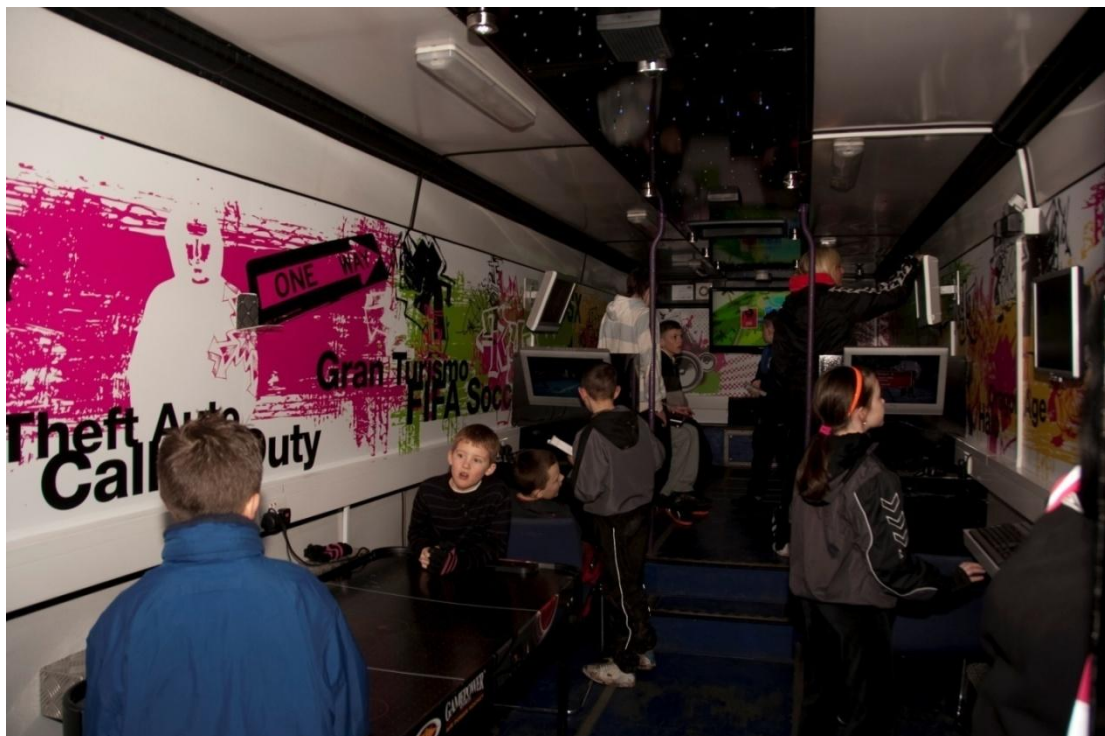
Activities

The range of diversionary activities provided include street football, youth gym sessions, interactive electronic dance mats, DJ workshops, skateboarding and computer gaming. Sessions were initially delivered only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, but due to the activities' popularity with local young people and its positive impact in reducing youth disorder, the number of sessions every week was increased. The activities now run six evenings a week from 6.30pm till 9.30 pm in five locations per night, all year round. Additional sessions are provided over the school summer holidays.

At the outset of the project the Diversionary Group was awarded funding from Fairer Scotland Funding for three portable 5-a-side football pitches. The 3 mobile football pitches are stored and deployed by St Mirren F.C. St Mirren F.C. also provide staff for all street football sessions on an "as and when required" basis. The SFA has engaged with the project and provides coaching qualifications for staff.

Street football complemented the project's existing mobile facilities: the youth activity bus (see Picture 1 below), mobile skatepark and the Box (mobile youth activity unit). The Box and mobile skatepark in particular had, until Street Stuff, been under-utilised.

Picture 1: The Interior of the Youth Bus



The Renfrewshire Youth Bus was donated to the project by ARRIVA as their organisation had suffered vandalism and assaults against a number of their buses and drivers. The bus is fitted out with Play Station 3's, X Boxes, Nintendo Wii, PC's with internet access and an air hockey table. In addition, Reid Kerr College students have also designed a bespoke computer game for the Youth Bus. ARRIVA donated a second bus in January 2010, which contains the first mobile youth gym in Scotland. The bus was refurbished between January and March 2010 and held its first session in April that year.

The mobile skate park provides young people with helmets, knee pads and skateboards, whilst the Box (a converted transport container) provides an area for Dance mat sessions, DJ sessions and chill out zones. When not in use the facility is stored at Ferguslie Sports Centre.

Activities were initially targeted at the three worst areas for youth disorder and violence, which had been identified by ASIST and Renfrewshire Wardens. The areas within Paisley, Linwood and Renfrew were selected for pilot deployment and a media campaign was used to promote the arrival of the diversionary equipment to the targeted young people. In addition, Renfrewshire's Campus Officers were used to circulate dates and times on school network systems. On 9 April 2009 the first sessions took place with coordinated deployments of the three football pitches, the refurbished and re-modelled "Youth Activity Bus" and skate-park.

Young people are consulted on what they would like to see in future activities, and a number have become volunteers and seasonal staff with the project.

Impact

Early support from local residents and community representatives has been of significant assistance in achieving local buy in. Several young people have volunteered across Renfrewshire and are now sessional staff with the project. Local community representatives have also become involved and have taken up training which will help to sustain activities once the project moves on.

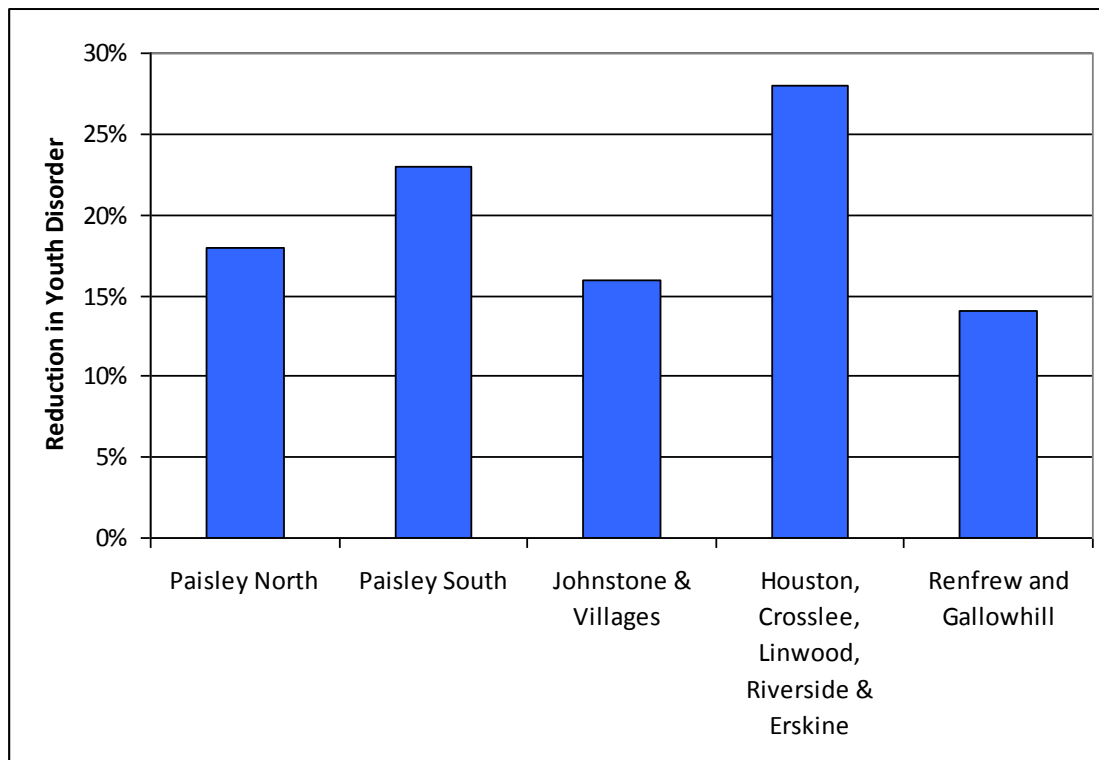
The activities are deployed to the areas of greatest need, which are identified by crime analysis provided by the Joint Tasking Group. This allows Street Stuff to actively engage with young people from deprived areas while at the same time seriously addressing localised crime and disorder. It has also helped improve the availability of sporting services to young people where previously they may have been inaccessible.

Young people have provided positive feedback on the diversionary activities provided. One young person stated, *'The Youth Bus is really, really good because it lets you meet other people, it has all the latest computer games and gives you more to do in your community'*.

On average, approximately 3500 young people have attended the youth activities each quarter and over the first year of the project 15,000 attendances were recorded. Many of the diversionary activities are sports-based and thus the project has improved the general health and fitness of young people who regularly attend.

Strathclyde Police have identified the project as playing a key role in contributing to an average reduction of 20% in youth disorder (aged 10 to 18 years old) over the first year of the project. Moreover, vandalism was at a six year low in the hot spot areas during 2010. Chart 1 below shows the reduction in youth disorder recorded by the police in 2010.

Chart 1: Reductions in Youth Disorder in Hot Spot Areas 2010



In addition, several young people have become volunteers or sessional workers with the project. For example, the success of the dance mats in the Box has led to two young women undertaking training to allow them to volunteer in the Box as dance instructors. They have now progressed from volunteers to sessional staff members. Four young men who started off as volunteers are qualified, paid coaches, with essential training in first aid, SFA level 1, manual handling and dealing with difficult behaviour. The Future Jobs fund will provide additional employment opportunities for young people who want experience in this area.

The 'Street Stuff' project was awarded the Safer & Stronger award at Renfrewshire Council's Quality Awards (June 2010) and has been shortlisted for the 2010 UK Housing Awards (November 2010). In September 2010 the project won a Safer Communities Award in the category of Partnership Working.

Lessons Learnt and Sustainability

Street Stuff attendances have been high, although these dipped slightly due to extremely cold conditions in the winter months. Young people are consulted regularly for feedback on activities and to identify the future direction of the project. The procurement of the mobile gym was a result of this consultation process.

All partners play an active role and are called upon when needed. Partners have acknowledged the impact that the service has had on their organisation and are willing to contribute running costs for at least another 12 months. Thus, the partners will continue to support the project as it still meets the original needs identified and fills gaps in service provision within disadvantaged areas. The partnership model works well as all partners have something to gain from the provision of activities.

The project has benefitted from the involvement of St Mirren; this has been a hook for engaging with local young people and encouraging them to return.

Summary

Street Stuff is a project delivering mobile diversionary activities for hard-to-reach, disaffected young people through Renfrewshire. A range of activities are provided by the project including street football, youth gym sessions, interactive electronic dance mats, DJ workshops, skateboarding and computer gaming. Mobile facilities include a youth activity bus, youth gym bus, mobile skatepark and a mobile youth activity unit. The project has won several local and national awards, including a Safer Communities Award in 2010.

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