QLP News

Contents

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE QUALITY LEADERS PROJECT – YOUTH
"MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SERVICE DEVELOPMENT"

Editorial: QLP-Y – not just for young people!

The sixth issue of QLP News comes to you from Portsmouth. I think we have come a long way over the course of our participation in the project, and it is my pleasure to share with you some of our highlights. I am delighted that one of our young people, Martin Cox, has written a piece on the very first workshop we undertook in web design. From these beginnings, I think you will see how Portsmouth's library service has responded to the needs of young people in our city and improved our services to them. Our subsequent audience development activities (ADAs) have gone from strength to strength, featuring elements as diverse as painting and martial arts, graphic design and manga. We are expecting great things from a group engaged in an ongoing project around magazine production. QLP-Y has seen the library service form fruitful partnerships along the way with the Youth Service, Social Services, Community Wardens and local schools, all with the shared purpose of creating relevant and exciting library services for young people in Portsmouth.

I believe my participation as the Quality Leader has greatly improved my advocacy skills on behalf of young people. In the present climate of resource constraints in local government, the partnership skills developed have been of great benefit. I have also gained valuable project management (amongst other) organisational skills along the way. As well as putting together the ADAs, in Portsmouth I set up a seminar for library staff and other agencies working with young people.

The delivery of ADAs has enabled me to keep abreast of policy developments and thus ensure that any service initiatives have the interests of young people at their heart. Managing the project budget and negotiating my way through the often bureaucratic and arcane local government finance procedures has also been insightful.

QLP-Y has given me many opportunities that I would not have normally had access to and I hope that the project has had a much wider influence on libraries other than in my authority, and those of my colleagues working on the project.

Following a meeting with some progressive Scandinavian librarians, I was asked to write about my experiences and hopes for QLP. The article was duly published in the Swedish journal, *Bibliotek i Samhalle* (*Libraries in Society*).[1]

Closer to home, project leaders collectively wrote a piece for our own *Public Library Journal*.[2] Being a participant in this project has necessitated much work with young people, and this is hugely rewarding for me. It has also given me the opportunity to meet and engage in debates with colleagues in this country and beyond, particularly those with a commitment to ensuring social justice is served by public libraries.

All the Quality Leaders are currently undertaking a semester-long module in Innovation and Development in Information Systems at London Metropolitan University. During this time, I have become an "apprentice editor" on the board of their Department for Applied Social Sciences (DASS) journal, *Information, Society and Justice*.[3]

Dave Percival
Quality Leader, Portsmouth
Email: david.percival@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

[1] Percival, David (2005) Libraries, young people and QLP-Y *Bibliotek I Samhalle*, no.3, pp7-10.

[2] Durrani, Shiraz et al (2007) Filling the youth shaped hole *Public Library Journal*. Summer, pp7-10.

[3] Available at: www.londonmet.ac.uk/isj

Everybody was Kung-Fu Fighting

For several weeks in late June/early July, young people could be seen punching and kicking each other in broad daylight at Portsmouth's Portsea Library.

No, this is not a newspaper headline or a scene from a librarian's nightmare, the action was a result of a series of martial arts taster sessions attended by young people from a pupil referral unit and a local youth club.

A few weeks earlier, a group of the pupils came into the library for a chat. I asked them what kind of things they were interested in and they told me they would like to learn about Jeet Kune Do, a martial art developed by Bruce Lee. They showed me lots of information about the martial art on the internet and within weeks, thanks to QLP-Y, we were able grant their wishes!

Mike Gray, a highly qualified expert, trained by many of Bruce Lee's former students in America, led six introductory sessions over three weeks in the library. Mike was able to provide a great many insights into the art, as well as the life and work of the master. Before and after the sessions, the young people took great interest in the library service's collection of m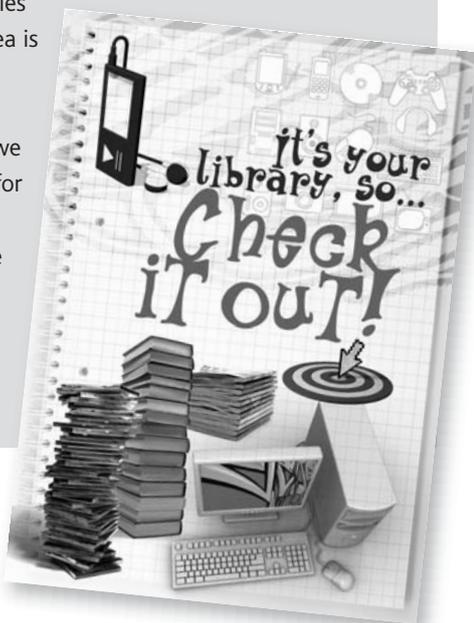artial arts-related materials. Inspired by this, they also took the opportunity to join the library. Over sixty young people attended the sessions in total and took part enthusiastically in the practical exercises!

The level of interest generated was so great that the youth club received some local funding to continue the sessions, increasing the young people's levels of fitness and raising their self-esteem.

It's all kicking off in the library!

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Young people have often complained about the lack of exciting publicity in the library so we got them to approach some local artists at Sifer Design and after consultation, they agreed on the design below. It is quite a long way removed from the standard library "branding" in Portsmouth – but then, that's the point! The young people have also agreed on several keywords which sum up the library service to them. These will be printed on a series of flyers. The idea is that this is advertising the youth services we are developing for young people, and they will be delivered by young people, for young people.

Its your library… check it out

Portsmouth's Teen Reading Group

Greetings! As the title of this wiki suggests, we are teen readers from Portsmouth*

We want to share with you our views and opinions on the books we've read, both as a group and individually. We also want your opinions, to find out what you think about books you've read, and share them with others, making recommendations and discussing various aspects.

The books we read vary from 'teen reads' to adult books, covering many different issues, cultures and situations. The best thing is that we read books we wouldn't normally pick up and often end up enjoying them. There are also plenty of books we have hated, but that's ok. We believe that you are not obliged to read the whole book – it isn't a punishment!

* The Small Print

Portsmouth's Teen Reading Group takes no responsibility for the content or security of any external site or third party advertising, whether accessed via this site or otherwise.

Furthermore, site users are responsible for their own postings. Whilst we delete comments that are offensive, libellous, 'off-topic' or spam, readers may occasionally find some comments controversial. The responsibility for the posting lies with the poster himself/herself and not with Portsmouth's Teen Reading Group.

http://teenreadinggroup.wetpaint.com/

As you can see from the article below, QLP-Y has been a learning curve for everyone taking part. We learned a lot from this initial audience development activity - even though it did not do exactly "what it said on the tin", it inspired the young people who took part to be creative in other ways…

ICT Web Design, Summer 2006

by Martin Cox

In late summer of 2006, a group of young people attended an ICT Web Design workshop at Portsmouth's Central Library. The day started well, and, after a brief brain storming session, it was decided that we would attempt to set up individual blogs. At first we thought that it might be possible to set up a website for the Portsmouth Teen Reading Group, but there were some technical problems with downloading the website software to computers on the Portsmouth City Council ICT Network. In the end, we settled on setting up blogs.

We spent a long time planning our blogs, going through what we would put in them, and thinking up ideas for design, shape and content. We considered many different ideas for content, including a blog about politics for young people, and a blog of random rantings and ravings.

Once we had decided what our blogs where to be about, we set to work. Blogger.com[4] looked like a good site – simple, easy to use and very versatile – so we set to work. We had our blogs up and running quite quickly, and soon we were confident of how to get the best out of them.

Although we got some good things out of the day, mostly the blogs, it was quite disappointing. We had spent all day working under the assumption that, by the end, we would have a proper website. And while I think we where all quite pleased with our blogs, it was hard to justify taking all day to achieve something that we could have done in the fraction of the time. If we had gone to Blogger.com from the start, we could have got a lot more done. Furthermore, we could have used blogger.com to set up blogs without all the planning, which turned out to have been a waste of time.

It was not all bad, however, as it did plant in our minds the idea of a website for the reading group. Some months later, we set up a wiki with Wetpaint,[5] which has become very popular, with about ten regular contributors, and many daily visits. We even have a contributor from the US. It is one of the largest Wetpaint Wikis, and is constantly growing, as we expand upon it. If we had been told about Wetpaint at the ICT Web Design day, then it might be even bigger.

[4] https://blogger.com/stat
[5] http://teenreadinggroup.wetpaint.com/

Magazine Project

A room has been set aside for young people to transform into their own space where, amongst other things, they will produce a manga magazine. QLP-Y has provided ICT resources, and some office equipment so they will be able to produce a professional product. Earlier in the year, Duane Melius, the editor of *Sense Magazine,*[6] [a magazine created in an earlier phase of QLP], by and for young people in South London, came and spoke with the editorial group about the skills they would need to be successful.

Many of the participants had decided that they needed to hone their artistic skills so we invited one of the UK's finest manga artists, Sonia Leong, to come to Portsmouth. Sonia is a member of the Sweatdrop Studios collective, and she delivered a highly interactive session with forty young people attending!

[6] *Sense Magazine,* formerly *Merton Sense,* is available at: www.sense.ik.com/p homepage.ikm
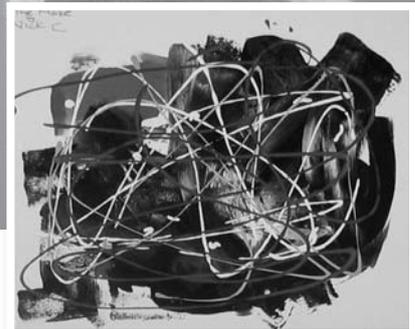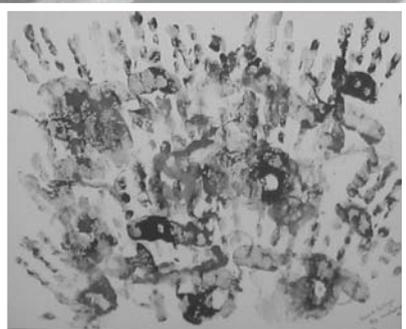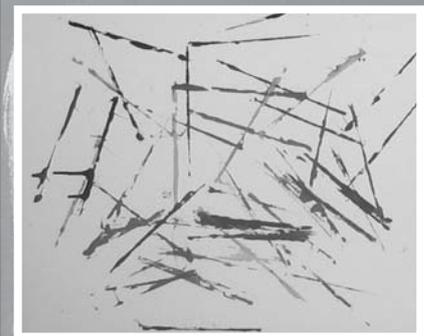
Young people from Portsmouth visit London Met

In January 2007, a group of us went to meet with Nick Jones, a librarian from Varby, on the outskirts of Stockholm, Sweden. We were interested to learn of his successful work with young people, who were the main users of his library. He had read about QLP-Y in a local journal and made sure he stopped at the University during a visit to Britain, to find out more about this country's approach, and attitude, to libraries and youth work.

Artwork created by Portsmouth's children

Local author, James Riordan is a respected writer for children and young people and he also writes an impassioned weekly column in the Portsmouth's Evening News. On Monday 25 September 2006 he wrote an article critical of the government's stance on youth issues. James argued "that all the most socially disadvantaged young people will be lumped together and become even more marginalized and stigmatised than they are at present". He then invited the Prime Minister to "see an exhibition of artwork created by some of Portsmouth's children in residential care".

  With the help and tireless enthusiasm of Monica Porter, a staff member at one of Portsmouth residential care units, as part of a series of summer QLP-Y workshops, young people had produced thirty works of art. These works were displayed in Central Library in a special exhibition that was opened by Lynda Fisher, Portsmouth City Council's Strategic Director for Children, Families and Learning. The Executive member for Culture sent each participant an individual letter of congratulation. The specially framed paintings were later returned to the artists.

BARNET UPDATE

"I went to the library and all I got was this playstation competition, a DVD, a free hour on the PC, a CD and this bag"

Since our last update, Barnet has run two new projects. In May we ran a playstation competition at six libraries with a grand final to name the Barnet Libraries champion in two games; FIFA 07 and a dance mat game. In all, we reached 131 young people. From this, 74% were male and 74% were from BME communities, traditionally not typical library users.

Our sessions continued to develop the young people from the film project as they became our core group, helping to design publicity, writing rules and ironing out technical problems in the run up to the workshops. At the events, this group acted as our referees. Having designed their own t-shirts with 'The REF' emblazoned on the back the young people proudly supervised the competition, ensuring all rules were followed. We already had two PS2 machines in Barnet Libraries. Thanks to QLP-Y we were able to purchase two PS3 consoles too. This was a huge draw to young people who desperately wanted to try out these new machines and were impressed that they could do so in libraries. Both competitions were hard fought at the grand final where our winners received a trophy, certificate and game of their choice. All participants were given a kit bag printed with wording written by the core group. This said:

"I went to the library and all I got was this playstation competition, a DVD, a free hour on the PC, a CD and this bag".

Each bag contained information about the library, a joining form and a voucher. Evaluation forms were given to everyone attending the events. Results show the workshops were a huge success. 67% of participants were very happy with the event, 27% said they were happy and 6% said they were satisfied with the activities and all said they had learned something new about the library. Information was also collected on the make and type of games young people would like to see in libraries and the pricing and loan periods. This information will be used in discussions on lending policy. Winners and the core group are currently involved in the selection of games for stock.

Commenting on our success in reaching young people the QLP mentor said:

"it doesn't matter about the ugly buildings or young people's view of staff, if you offer them what they want, they will come in".

In October, we ran a **music and dance competition** for Black History Month as Barnet's contribution to the QLP wide Liberation event. Again working with our core group, we set up three workshops at different libraries to reach a diverse group of young people in targeted areas. At each workshop we had a dance trainer, a youth worker specialising in using the music composition software 'Garage Band' and a poet or creative writing specialist to help participants write a rap, poem or lyrics.

At each site the room was decorated with images of Black history, books on the theme and CDs played appropriate songs in the background. Refreshments offered were fair trade to support the petition designed by the core group which they talked about and asked participants to sign. On our last day we invited all young people back to perform their work to our judges (the core group) in an X-Factor style competition. Although we had a smaller turnout for this project, we reached young people who benefited from the close attention the tutors could give them. As a result, the quality of the work produced was excellent and the final performances were wonderful to watch (examples of the work are given below). Our core group filmed the final and we plan to edit the performances into a DVD which can be circulated to all QLP authorities in future.

As we joined the project later than the other authorities, we have some time left to continue activities supported by QLP-Y. However, we are already focussed on sustainability and planning for the future. Our core group will be training staff on services for young people in the near future and involving them in further stock selection is planned. We are working closely with Youth and Connexions to ensure our partnership continues long-term. Targets for increasing teenage membership of Barnet Libraries are now built into the Team Plan for this and the next three years. Our next project, as requested by young people will be a set of drama workshops. This will be followed by the return of the playstation competition using existing equipment to build on last year's success. There is a determined commitment to develop services for young people in Barnet from which Libraries can only benefit.

Catherine Lusted
Barnet QL

QLP-Y UPDATE

Quality Leaders achieve Award in Work based Learning

The following students have been awarded Diploma in Work based Learning at an interim meeting of the University Award's Board:

- Anthony Hopkins
- Krishna Ray
- Marcia Brown
- Rupinder Dillon
- Saleem Ayub
- Victoria Orekoya
- Zafran Aslam

Final Evaluation Report

Evaluation of Quality Leaders Project (Youth) initiative (2007).

Final report. Jane Pitcher and Mary Eastwood-Krah. December 2007.

Full report available at QLP website: www.seapn.org.uk/listDocuments.asp?page id=37

Innovation and development in information services

An MA-level module, "Innovation & Development in Information Services" (Module Code CMP073N) was prepared especially for Quality Leaders and their team members as a way of making QLP-Y targets sustainable after the end of the Project. While it provided an in-depth understanding of issues around innovation, effective management, local authority context, globalisation and other key concepts and skills, it also provided an avenue of acquiring academic credits for the participants. The coursework included a project proposal, a summary of which was for publication in the journal *Information, Society, & Justice.* (see below).

Seven participants took up the offer to study Module Code CMP073N. Participants included 3 Quality Leaders and a member of QLP-Y team and a manager who had supported QLP-Y work, but was not a member of QLP-Y team. Participating authorities were Haringey, Barnet and Portsmouth. Included in the Coursework is "a reflective commentary on how engaging with the learning objectives of this Module has helped you in reaching a better understanding of the dynamics of organisational change".

A resource pack, "Readings in information, innovation, power and politics" was produced for the participants. One of the aims of the Pack is stated in an introduction: "It is expected that the material will be useful not only for Coursework, but will also be of use after the Module has been completed in work situations. It should encourage further reflection on the issues raised in the Module". Thus the Module – and QLP-Y itself – expects for personal development to continue after the Project has been completed.

Information, Society, & Justice[7]

The Department of Applied Social Sciences has launched a new journal, *Information, Society, & Justice.* As mentioned above a coursework for the "Innovations" Module mentioned above requires submission from participants to the Journal. In addition, all Quality Leaders were offered the opportunity to be active in management and other aspects of the Journal. One has now joined the Editorial Board as Apprentice Book Review Editor while another is preparing a review of a recommended book for the second issue of the Journal.

[7] The journal is accessible at: www.londonmet.ac.uk/isj

QLP-Y objectives and evidence of how these are being achieved

The aims of the QLP-Y project can be summarised thus:

- To refocus public library service so that services to young people are mainstreamed in accordance with the real needs of young people;
- To provide new skills to library workers so that they can develop and deliver new and innovative services needed by young people;
- To develop, plan and implement new services for young people in partnership with the youth themselves, and with other stakeholders, thereby empowering service users;
- To increase social cohesion by encouraging inter-generational work and by encouraging different communities to work together.

Evidence of how these are being achieved

Aims are achieved in a number of ways.

Staff development

The approach taken is to support the development of Quality Leaders (QLs) as strategic leaders and active agents of organisational change. For this to be meaningful, they needed to have the confidence that comes from clear awareness of their own contribution to service development and from an active involvement in policy making. Thus the emphasis was on moving away from purely operational work to a more strategic approach. This approach led to the following initiatives:

- Development Days
- QLP Network
- Personal Development Planning (PDP)
- Mentoring Scheme

QLP-Y Publications

A number of publications have been prepared to meet different needs. These are listed below (all are available on QLP website: www.seapn.org.uk/qlp/):

- QLP News (6 issues to date)
- Youth Ideas & Action – 10 issues (11th issue in production)
- Youth Policy Review. 1 issue to date (2nd issue in production)

Journal article

QLs are encouraged to write journal articles on their ideas and experience. Thus an article was published under the title "Filling the

youth shaped hole" in Public Library Journal. Vol. 22 (2) Summer 2007, pp. 7-10.

Editing QLP News

QLs gain confidence and new skills by editing QLP News. The first such issue (No. 5) has been prepared by Catherine Lusted from Barnet.

Research experience

A Barnet case study is being conducted by the Project Team, the Barnet QL and Mentor. This is in two phases - an article which has been submitted for publication. The second phase will see an in-depth Barnet case study.

MA-level Module for QLs & Team members

A Masters level Module carrying academic credits is offered to all participants. It is "Innovation and Development in Information Services". Coursework for the Module will be included in Information, Society and Justice Journal (see below).

Information, Society and Justice Journal

Information, Society and Justice is a new electronic journal based at the University. All QLs are offered an opportunity not only to contribute articles, but also to be involved in the production and editorial work.

Dave Percival, Portsmouth's QL, is now a member of the Editorial Board. The first issue of the Journal comes out in December 2007. The Journal site is: www.londonmet.ac.uk/depts/isj

Service development

The service development aims are achieved by using the "audience development" approach. The first aspect of this approach is to increase the reach of libraries and youth services to meet the needs of all young people, particularly refugees and asylum seekers and those who have not been reached before. The second aspect expands on what has come to be known as "reader development". "Audience development" is a more inclusive term: it includes people who may have visual impairment and meets the needs of disabled people generally. It includes people who may not be literate either in English or in their own languages. It also allows for connecting people to the "reading experience" through non-print media, such as arts, cinema, music, drama and other cultural activities. It involves all the senses, rather than being restricted to the use of just one.

The "audience development" approach to library and youth work develops new areas of service provision which a "traditional" library may not have provided as mainstream activities. Over a period of time, this approach helps to develop a new model of a joined-up library-youth service.

Report to Paul Hamlyn Foundation Part 1 (December 2007)

The QLP-Y Final Report (No. 6) Part 1, covering the period May 2007 – October 2007 was submitted to PHF in January 2008. The full Report is available at QLP Website: www.seapn.org.uk/qlp/

Executive Summary

The Quality Leaders Project (Youth) started in October 2005 and ended in October 2007. This, the Final Report, covers the period May 2007 – October 2007 and is produced in two parts. Part 1 – the present report – focuses on the work of this period and takes the same approach as our previous reports which combined an in-depth look at activities of the particular period with some overview observations. The overview section in Part 1 is looked at in Section 8 – What we have learnt.

Part 2 of the Final Report will be issued in October 2008 and will carry a larger overview section and take a broader look at achievements and challenges faced by the Project. This two-part approach will also allow a number of developments taking place after October 2007 to be covered.

As with other innovations project which involve cultural and organisational change, QLP-Y has found that it requires time to ensure that the planned changes take root and influence future planning. In addition, organisational change was not the under the control of the Project Group as it was a local matter for participants themselves to come to grips with. An analysis of the role and achievements of the PG itself, as well as Sponsors, Mentors and Quality Leaders and

their teams will be covered in some detail in Part 2.

While we had expected that project implementation can take a long time and had allowed two years for this, it became obvious during the course of the Project that the necessary changes needed more time to weave their way through the local organisations and systems. This affected different participants differently. One authority – Barnet – had started almost a year after the others because of on-going organisational restructuring. They thus do not complete their programme until July 2008. Two other authorities – Haringey and Portsmouth – are still keen to complete the new service initiatives that are in the pipeline. They expect to complete their full programme at the same time that Barnet does. Their progress will be covered in Part 2 of this Report. Also covered will be "Activities planned" recorded in Section 9. Two additional staff have been engaged to help complete the QLP-Y programme:

• Elizabeth Smallwood, a founder member of QLP, a special Consultant to work on specific tasks.

• Monica Chatterjee, based in DASS, will work one day a week to provide administrative support

At the same time, the Department of Applied Social Sciences (DASS), where the Project is based, has decided to continue its support for the Project by extending time for a Senior Lecturer to carry on QLP-Y work to August 2008. In addition, DASS has provided additional funding for research in some aspects of the QLP Project. This will cover the following aspects:

- Barnet QLP-Y case study (working with Barnet's Mentor and Quality Leader)
- Organise a conference in Spring 2008 on "Sustainability of Innovation in Local Authorities"
- Preparatory work on a possible external funding application, based on the concept of developing a multi-discipline "Innovations, development and research unit" within DASS – to be informed by the "Sustainability of Innovation in Local Authorities" conference mentioned above
- Production of the QLP Manual to capture the experience of the QLP project as a whole
- Feasibility study re developing a short course or an MA module, based on QLP-Y (and other) experiences

It is also expected that the team which produced the QLP-Y evaluation report will be commissioned to produce further evaluation in 2008 and 2009 to reports on whether any of the initiatives have been sustained beyond the active stage of the Project. This, it is hoped, will provide a longer term perspectives on the experience, lessons and challenges of bringing about sustainable change in Local Authorities.

VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

These are voices of young people from all participating authorities (Barnet, Haringey, Lincolnshire, Portsmouth) supplied by the independent evaluators

I = Interviewer
R = Response from young people

Expectations

I: And what did you expect to get out of the QLP-Y when you first joined?

R: Something different from what you normally do, I suppose, something interesting.

Young people consulting other young people:

"we had like questionnaires that they [other young people] could voluntarily fill out and most of them filled them out. So we learnt quite a lot about what they want from the library."

Young people involved in planning:

"I helped in the planning, deciding what questions to ask. We all worked on this. I also selected some of the tracks."

"It was all young people. The librarian's didn't organize it. It was us."

"The ideas were ours. They advised us and we told them, and then we did it ourselves. "

"I think it was the QL that thought of the ideas and then we adapted them." (for filming project)

eg when asked if a young person wanted to be more involved in deciding what activities to run:

"I think it's better for them to suggest and for us to choose."

Young people perceptions of library before QLP-Y

"I don't go to the library because it is boring."

"Boring. You've got to be quiet."

"I'm not interested in books."

"(The staff) are always moaning for just us being there… but (QL)'s alright."

"Lots of people come if they don't have a computer, like me."

"They (other young people) want it to be more modern. They want it to be a better place to go, and I know they said it in the last project, not somewhere where most of the librarians are like over eighty. Even though they are probably not. And they all frown at young people when they come in there, like 'what are they doing there?'"

"One librarian in the central children's library is so horrible to children, in this library. She's just-because she is getting on a bit, she is getting rude. So rude to us. And there's small children here. She's just obscene."

Young people views of library after/since QLP-Y

"I never knew you could do something like that (martial arts) in a library."

"What could [libraries] offer to young people that would make them definitely go there?"

"I don't know. Nothing."

"But if they done that martial arts thing again I'd go."

I: Have these workshops encouraged you to use the library more?

R: Yes. Because these make people want to come in and see if there is anything going on. And they were thinking of not doing these competitions like once every three months, but they were thinking of doing them every year, with something going on every month. So these competitions, like the playstation, could be every month.

"(QL name) is alright, though!."

Young people on skills learnt:

I: Did you learn new things you did not know before?

R: Practically all of it really, all the things he taught. How to kick. How to use your fists. How to switch foot. Switching foot and kicking.

Other quotes on skills learnt:

"I have never used Garage Band. I just learnt it here. I like it. It's easy to make a beat."

"I learnt how to make a track from scratch"

"Well, so far we've learnt, obviously Apple Mac – we don't have them in school, because they are like, they are way more expensive to use. Yeah, learnt how to use them, the Garage Band, the Final Cut Express, which is like the editing software for the filming. I already knew how to set up playstations, but some people were learning how to do that. And dance mat, we learnt the games and things like that."

What makes QLP-Y effective

"(The best thing about the workshops is) that they have let the young people organize it. Because if the old people organize it, like the adults, it might not necessarily be what the kids want, and it could be more about what they want. We wouldn't like it."

"He (tutor) helped us design the laptop design for the title, the credits, how to edit the film, and how to get the best out of the software. He also taught us how to use the cameras and he was quite good at that."

Young people involved in decisions re service provision:

"We also are going to have say in the new games that are going to be in the library. (X library) is being refurbished, so that is another part of what we are doing for this."

COMING SOON: Youth Ideas and Action no. 11

QLP News no. 7 (Haringey Issue)

Sustainable Innovation in Local Authorities Conference.