

Empowering Young People



Carnegie UK Trust wishes to thank the many staff, advisory groups, consultants and partner agencies who supported the work of the Carnegie Young People Initiative between 1996 and 2007

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The Carnegie UK Trust normally does not take institutional positions on public policy issues; the views presented here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Trust, its officers, staff, or trustees.

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Foreword

This report is about the Carnegie UK Trust's youth programme – The Carnegie Young People Initiative (CYPI), which ran between 1996 and 2007.

Independent foundations such as Carnegie can play three roles. We can be 'drivers' seeking to influence public policy and public awareness. We can be 'partners' working collaboratively with government, civil society, the corporate sector and academia to promote change. And, we can be 'catalysts', funding others more specialist than us to tackle an issue. Carnegie's youth programme over its decade adopted all three roles.

CYPI was throughout this period the only independently funded national think tank in the UK dedicated to promoting young people's voice in decision-making. From the outset we sought to work with partners to promote our commitment to strengthening the voice of young people – not least young people themselves. We funded research, conferences, demonstration projects, training, networking, publications and online initiatives. We engaged in advocacy, for example supporting the right of 16 year olds to have a vote in local and general elections. We acted as advisors to government departments, local authorities, the NHS, schools and the voluntary sector. Through an aligned grants programme, we funded over one hundred community-based and young people-led projects across the UK in a spirit of experimentation, encouraging learning and the exchange of good ideas - sharing experiences as to what works and what does not.

Extending young people's participation in decision-making in the UK is now a policy commitment by the UK government, devolved administrations and local authorities, but one that still generates far reaching challenges in its practical implementation, for young people and for those working in government and in the public services that daily impact upon young people's lives. Much of this report is concerned with the translation of policy commitments into sound practice on the ground. In first promoting youth participation in policy terms, and then supporting improved implementation.

We lay no claim to having been the body that changed legislation in this regard, to having convinced governments to establish the Children's' Commissioners, although we did advocate for this. But we were certainly one of the voices, and one, which for a decade argued strongly for a more empowering political culture. Over this period central government and others sought our advice and we were able to create an independent space for dialogue between those with power and influence and young people. Much of that work at a national level continues through the work of the Participation Works project, established by Carnegie and a number of non-governmental organisations and now financially supported by government and the Big Lottery Fund.

This report charts the lessons we learned as well as presenting ideas for further action, targeted at government and others, which we believe still needs to be taken. The rationale for engaging young people in decision-making about the things that are important for them in their lives is one that will not go away. It will only grow in importance as we seek to make our society more democratic, inclusive and less discriminatory. Young people whether as consumers of public services and as citizens have a right to be heard. We believe this report will be a helpful tool in that process.

Charlie McConnell

Chief Executive
Carnegie UK Trust

Back to the future

Article 12.1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by the United Kingdom in 1991 requires that States ‘Shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child’.

The new equality battle?

Signs saying “only two school children” at a time or “no children after 7p.m.” are a common sight in the windows of shops across the country; we rarely question the rights and wrongs of such diktats or pause to think that children are now the only group against whom such naked discrimination is still acceptable.

In a world where attitudes to young people are shaped by Supernanny and scare stories about a feral youth, unrestrained by ASBOs, it is unsurprising that we start to think only in terms of restraint and control when it comes to young people.

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Despite the progress made since the UK signed up to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and, through this, acknowledged the right of young people to have their views given due weight in the decisions affecting their lives, sign up has still to deliver embedded and sustained cultural or attitudinal shift. This is creating a world in which far too many young people are still alienated from their local community, distanced from society at large and disconnected from decisions made for and about them by adults.

This is not just bad news for young people but for society as a whole. Young people can have little sense of responsibility for decisions made for them by others or incentive to abide by such decisions. The potential for storing up problems for the future is very real as disengagement becomes a habit that will follow young people into adulthood – as evidenced for example by low voter turnout.

Interest in youth participation

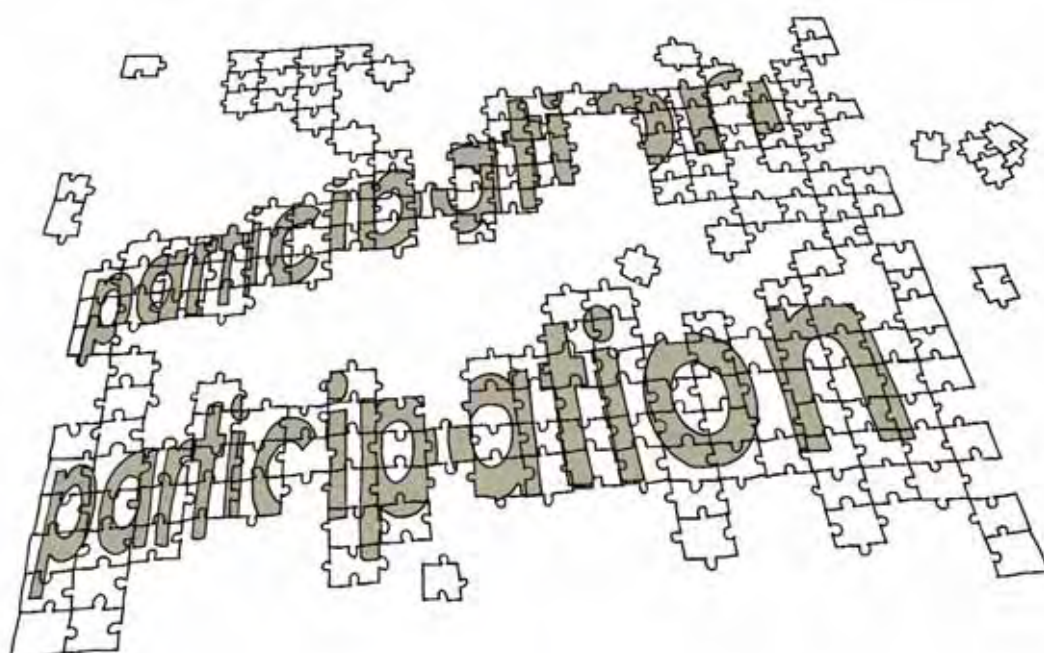
Interest in youth participation has been an explicit element of UK public policy since the latter 1960's. Nineteen sixty-eight is taken as a totemic year with students and young people vociferously calling for a voice. The then Labour Government responded with a range of youth policies and programmes, as indeed did governments across the OECD. Throughout the seventies and eighties successive central and local administrations in the UK began to recognise and acknowledge calls for a stronger voice for young people.

It was during this period that youth workers employed by local authorities and voluntary organisations typically played the lead role in supporting youth participation around youth and community concerns. In schools, a parallel interest began to develop with teachers supporting student participation in school governance issues. This reflected and informed a wider emphasis in public policy, planning and service delivery, which was highlighting the importance of public participation.

These public participation policies and programmes reflected and in part influenced wider economic, social and cultural changes in society – A reduction in deference, growing consumer (and consumerist) power, youth culture and a concern that if public authorities did not harness young people's ideas and energy, negative (i.e. anti social) consequences would result. However whilst this is now a country where everyone is asked for an opinion, young people still seem to be systemically ignored by many public agencies or where they are consulted, too often it is in tokenistic ways.

The last decade, coinciding with CYPI, has been a period of significant social, economic, technological and political change across the UK, and has presented new demands on policy makers and service providers. Compared with the preceding thirty years, it has been a period of economic growth and considerable public investment. It has been a period of social democratic intervention, during which there has been an unprecedented volume of policy and legislative activity, and a considerable proportion has been targeted at children and young people.

There has been growing recognition by the UK Government and the devolved administrations that dialogue with citizens is a key not only to restoring the link between voters and their representatives and to reinvigorating democracy, but in improving the quality and effectiveness of policy interventions and public service delivery and targeting. **Community voice, participation, citizenship, citizen education and citizen engagement have been enduring themes in New Labour's policies. Devolution; co-production and personalisation; strengthening social capital; rights, respect and responsibilities have become the mantra.**



jigsaw © andrew siddal 2006

Over the last ten years Carnegie funded over a hundred projects experimenting with youth participation and helped build a national infrastructure and support system for youth participation practice. The work we supported was a small part of a growing interest around engaging young people in decision-making. We were fortunate. The policy environment was conducive with the election of New Labour in 1997 and a strong commitment by the devolved administrations to support new forms of civic engagement from 1999. Whilst a shift in the attitude of public sector bodies towards

youth participation was sparked in no small part by the need to meet legal requirements on public consultation for example in the area of community planning.

Rising to meet this need many managers and front line staff in schools, public services and voluntary organisations, have gone a long way to breaking down the barriers. Through demonstratively successful projects they have been 'winning the argument' that decisions made following genuine engagement with the young people on whom a decision will impact are more effective.

There are now very many exciting examples of effective practice across the UK where young people are truly involved in the decision-making process. Alongside this it appears that the developing norm is of a service industry of 'youth participation professionals', youth and community workers being one, independent participation consultants another, who are managing consultations on behalf of public-bodies to 'youth proof' their work. This culture of compliance, though a huge improvement on the situation a decade ago, has we believe still not yet broken through the bottleneck whereby a much wider range of staff who work in and manage the public services are really confident and committed to making the effort required to reach out and engage young people in the decision-making processes.

Mainstreaming commitment

"I believe that Britain needs a new type of politics which embraces everyone in this nation, not just a few. A politics built on consensus, not division. A politics that draws on the widest range of talents and expertise, not the narrow circles of power...It is a politics built on empowerment and engagement, because lasting change only happens if people make it happen". – Gordon Brown, Prime Minister in a speech to the National Council of Voluntary Organisations, September 2007

With a new UK government and newly elected devolved governments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2007, there are opportunities now for the mainstreaming of the earlier policy commitments with regards to involving young people in democratic decision-making. **Several key factors now combine to make youth participation more important than it has ever been and yet there is a danger that unless measures are taken to mainstream good practice it will not achieve the impact so often proclaimed and hoped for in policy declarations.**

First, it is now more widely recognised that **children and young people have a right to have their views given due weight in decision-making processes under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.** However there is growing evidence to suggest that in the UK children and young people need more support in being able to realise this right, consistently, effectively and universally.

Second, **there is well-documented evidence of a steady disengagement of young people from formal politics and democratic processes.** This has been recognised across the political spectrum, and is generally perceived as a symptom of alienation in the relationship between young people and traditional politics. This disengagement has not been matched, however, by a de-politicisation of today's youth. Indeed, evidence

suggests that young people care deeply about local, national and global issues and see them as 'political'

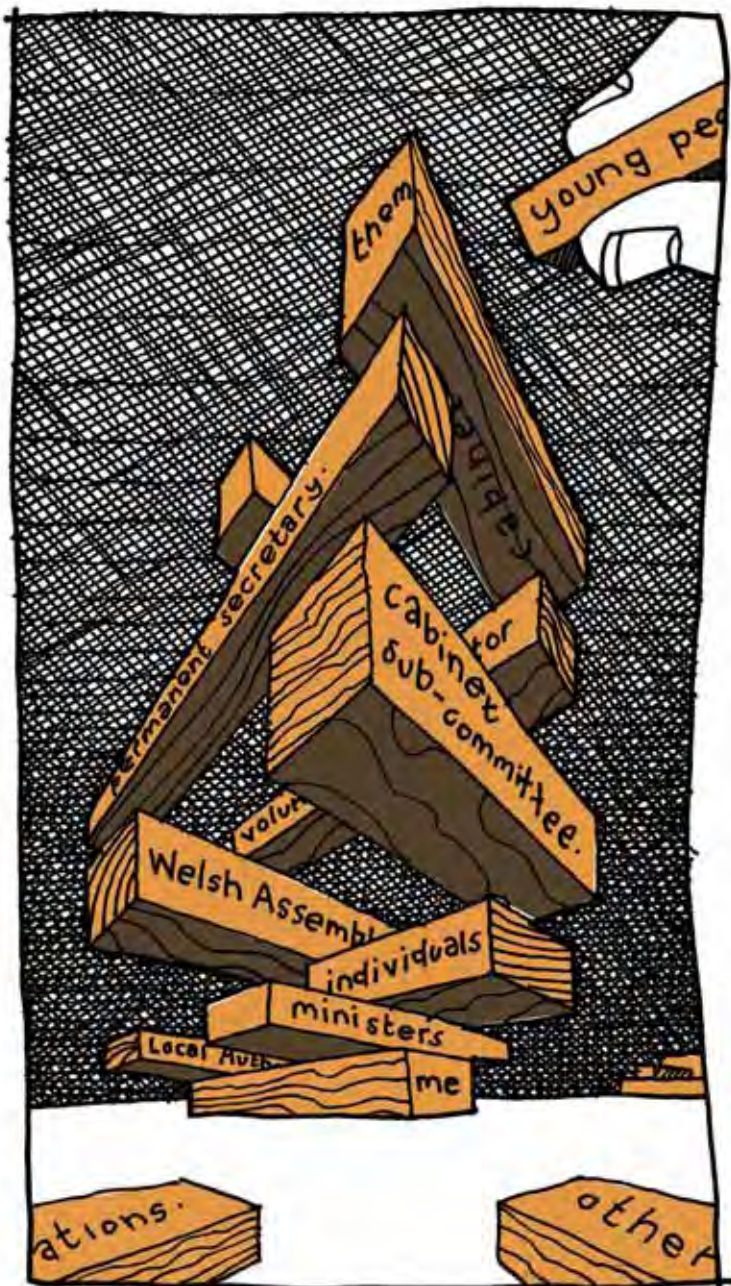
Third, **there has been an exponential growth over the last decade in the access citizens generally have to participating in public decision-making**. Though there have been wide variations in the effectiveness of this participation (for citizen and for government), and it has taken many different forms; focus groups, citizens juries and so on are increasingly common aspects of policy development and are to be further encouraged. With this growth comes the concomitant task of ensuring quality and finding ways for young people's engagement genuinely to shape change.

Fourth, **there is evidence that the worlds of adults and young people are becoming increasingly separated in important respects**. Whilst this phenomenon is not new, it is reinforced by generally negative media representations of young people. This poses a serious challenge for a society that values dialogue and understanding within communities and between generations.

So the "crunch" issue is how policy commitments to enhancing the voice of young people are being translated into practice. This challenge is akin to the forty-year journey of cultural change brought about by the promotion of equal opportunities and the tackling of race discrimination since the late 1960s.

This is a "policy to practice" journey still very much in progress. Much has been achieved over the past decade and much of the infrastructure to support youth participation put in place, including the welcomed establishment of the Offices of the Children's Commissioners across the UK and, the Participation Works 'centre', with which Carnegie was closely associated. But much, much more needs to be done.

In the next section we look back on Carnegie's part in this journey and on some of the initiatives we were able to support. We hope this presents a route map for what still needs to be put in place.



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2 Mapping the journey

Carnegie and people participation

Carnegie's long-time interest in promoting and strengthening democracy meant it was a natural course for the Trust's Young People Initiative to focus in on issues around participation in decision-making. By the mid 1990s a change of Government at UK level appeared imminent, 'youth issues' again began to take centre stage in national politics, not least because of the high levels of youth unemployment, which had been a feature of the preceding two decades. It had become clear to the Trust that the challenges facing young people as we headed for the new century were increasingly complex. It was therefore decided to investigate the potential for a more strategic youth initiative to examine these challenges and possible solutions.

The Trust already had an interest in grant funding local youth and community projects and had supported youth voluntary action and citizens service programmes since the nineteen seventies, but it had never established a strategic research and development initiative focused exclusively upon young people. The focus of what was to become the Carnegie Young People Initiative (CYPI) was confirmed following a conference convened by the Trust with leading experts on youth issues at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor. A series of papers were commissioned, which formed the basis of the conference. These papers mapped out the social, economic and political challenges facing young people over the coming decade.

One paper '*Youth in an Age of Uncertainty*' drew five conclusions that were subsequently influential in shaping CYPI's initial work.

- It argued that young people in the 1990s had experienced a sharp reduction in financial resources.
- It drew attention to the extension of youth transitions and growing dependence on families for support.
- It pointed to the growing inequality amongst young people in terms of educational attainment, wage levels, labour market position and health.
- It drew attention to the rising social expectations placed on the young, for more qualifications and remaining in education.
- It expressed concerns as to how young people would cope in a society where achievement was so narrowly drawn, but so highly valued.

Woven through the seminar papers and subsequent discussions, was the idea that young people themselves should be supported to define the issues, challenges and solutions they faced rather than this being mediated by adults.

What was required was a different decision-making culture – 'it is not simply a question of listening', said the authors, 'but actually responding in ways that are viewed as appropriate by young people' (and lead to change happening). In other words, adults were in danger of fast losing touch with the realities of young people's everyday worlds.

Cumberland Lodge also helped CYPI establish a series of operating principles for the newly appointed Director John Mayne.

- Promote the active involvement of young people at all stages
- Recognise the inter-related and interdependent nature of the influences upon young people and work across disciplines
- Work with others who shared our concerns, while retaining independence and objectivity.

This approach presented, potentially at least, a challenge to the way decisions were made within the Trust itself, in respect of its wider programme activities, particularly the idea that young people should be 'actively involved' at all stages of the work.

An Advisory Committee was formed, meeting four times a year to guide the work of a small staff team, which was based in London. The Committee included trustees, young people and individuals with professional expertise in the field of youth issues. (A full list of the CYPI staff and the Advisory Committees is contained in the annex).

Youth participation in public decision-making

Youth Participation for Carnegie was understood to mean the involvement of young people aged 10-25 in public decision-making. This was the age range covered by the statutory and voluntary youth services. It spans the many transitions and decisions, which take a young person through childhood and adolescence to adulthood. The choice of this age group as the focus of CYPI was not meant to imply that younger children are unable to express relevant and thoughtful views about a range of issues. Indeed, we supported some work with children under the age of five.

Young Children's Participation – Spaces to Play

With the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Carnegie funded a pilot project run by researchers at the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, in collaboration with Learning through Landscapes (the national school grounds charity) to examine methods for involving young children under the age of five in the re-design of their pre school outdoor environment.

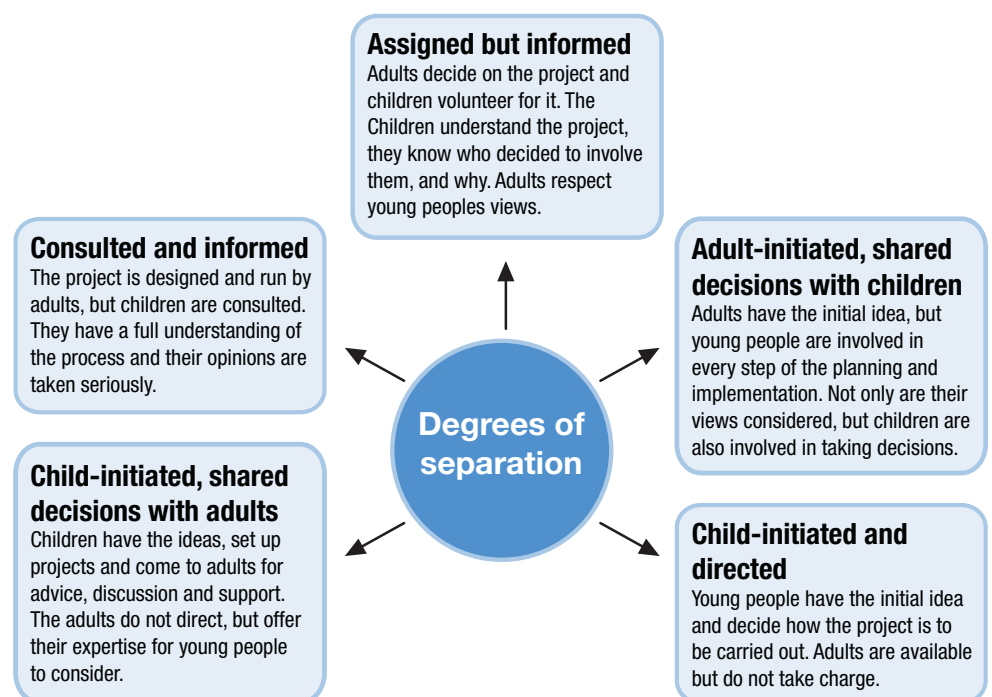
The pilot sought to challenge the tendency of adults – including teachers – to underestimate the capacity of children and young people to become involved and to contribute productively. The project introduced children early to decision-making, developing and evaluating the 'mosaic approach', a multi method framework for gathering the views and experiences of young children. Three and four year olds of different abilities showed themselves to be competent documenters of their play space, through their involvement in photography, book making, running tours, map making, slide shows and much talking and listening. This process led adults and children to identify places in the outdoor space to keep, to expand, to change and also highlighted the need for new spaces.

We used the phrase "public decision-making" to mean decisions made by public authorities and agencies – such as central and local government, schools and the NHS, together with those voluntary organisations that are increasingly providing public services which impact upon young people. It is deliberately broad and includes operational decisions about the detail of how an organisation or service is planned and run.

Ladders or spokes?

Power is a key concept when looking at young people's involvement in decision-making. The image often employed of public participation is of a ladder with the bottom rung representing the most limited form of consultation, where the views expressed may not be given much weight (often described as tokenism), to the top rung which gives full control of the decision-making process from initiation to outcomes. This simple and well known model is clear, but it sets out a hierarchy, which implies that the lower rungs are less worthwhile. A model which we found more useful and which we adopted in our *Taking the Initiative* report of 2001, is of a wheel with degrees of power as spokes.

Different spokes may be valid for the involvement of a particular young person on a specific issue at one time and young people will move around the wheel – something which is also true of adults. What is important is that young people should be able to use all the spokes of the wheel confidently and effectively in different situations.



(Source: *Empowering children and young people training manual: promoting involvement in decision-making*. Save the Children. Phil Treseder)

Barnardos, in a report to the Social Care Institute of Excellence on good practice, which drew on the views of Carnegie's Participation Workers' Network, highlights that what counts as effective participation is defined by the potential impact a decision can have on the life of a child.

First, participation should include children and young people's involvement in individual decisions about their lives, as well as collective involvement in matters that affect them.

Second, we should strive for a wider culture of listening that enables children and young people to influence decisions about the services they receive as individuals on a day-to-day basis, as well as how those services are developed and delivered.

Third, participation should not be seen as a discrete, isolated activity, but a process by which children and young people are enabled to influence change within an organisation.

Fourth, participation should not be regarded in hierarchical terms, where the objective is to reach the top of the practice 'ladder'. Different levels and forms of participation are valid for different groups of children and young people.

(Source: Social Care Institute for Excellence. Practice Guide 06. Involving Children and Young People in developing social care).

From our early research, we quickly discovered that young people experienced inconsistency in their everyday lives in relation to their interface with public service decision-making, which led to disaffection. For example, in some circumstance their views were actively sought. In others, they were ignored or less valued than those of adult 'experts'. In addition the influence young people were able to exert over matters that affect them was dependent on such factors as their social class, geographical location, ethnicity, involvement in social networks and confidence, the free time they have, and their accessibility to adult decision-makers.

Public decision-making bodies often appeared reluctant or unwilling to review and reflect on their participation processes, preferring instead to publicise the volume of activity they were undertaking, the numbers of young people involved in consultations, rather than the impact that such activity had generated. Whilst young people's involvement in participation allowed them to access a new world of politics, government and institutions, young people often complained that this world was dominated by a small elite of regular youth participants, upon whom adults placed an unhelpful reliance, and whose attraction was rooted in their confidence, skills and willingness to relate closely to adult and organisational sensibilities. There were large swathes of the youth population who either consciously did not want to enter this world, or whose lives did not cross over with decision-making opportunities.

So who benefits from youth participation?

In our work with young people, practitioners, academics and public service organisations we concluded that:

- **Young people benefit.** Effective participation could allow young people to develop skills such as communications, negotiation and teamwork, which are essential in many walks of life, especially for employment. Participation was an educative experience and could be used in acquiring knowledge, i.e. of how political systems work. We argued that the acquisition of these skills enhanced the position of young workers in the modern labour market, a point echoed in the IPPR Freedom's Orphans report which concluded that 'young people's personal and social skills and capabilities – for example their capacity to plan for the future, moral maturity and self-control – are more crucial determinants of their life chances across most domains than policy has recognised so far' (Source: Freedom's Orphans: Raising youth in a changing world, IPPR, Julia Margo and Mike Dixon with Nick Pearce and Howard Reed, 2006).
- **Public Services benefit.** The private sector had long realised that the best way of getting products and services right was by consulting the consumer. By the nineties this had become the axiom of public service too. It was only relatively recently however that young people had been recognised as consumers of public services in their own right. Our experience taught us that the skills staff developed to engage with young people would have a wider benefit as they sought to engage more actively with service users and citizens of all ages and backgrounds.

- **Society as a whole benefits.** Participation had the potential for bringing generations and groups together. Some of the most progressive forms of citizen engagement we identified were when generations came together in communities to listen to one another, to exchange ideas and concerns, and to negotiate an agreed approach to addressing issues they are confronted with. Cross-generational participation in communities was an important means of building social cohesion.

Youth Infusion and the Enfusion Network

Youth Infusion is an organisation created and run by young people. It works to support young people as decision-makers, advocates, and community change-agents. It does this by helping the organisations and institutions that make decisions for youth, start making decisions with youth. Youth Infusion focuses on the 'how-to' of youth-adult partnerships, building collaborative structures, developing transparent processes, and promoting inclusive cultures in both non-profit organisations and government agencies.

Youth Infusion and other companies that provide youth participation consulting services, cannot adequately meet the demand. That is why Youth Infusion is supporting the development of the Enfusion Network: <http://enfusion.network.org>. The network is made up of independent consultants (largely young people), technical assistants, and young trainers from all over the world, offering youth-serving organisations easy access to the help they need while supporting the advancement of youth participation.

Involving young people in the Initiative

The involvement of young people was a key defining feature of CYPI. However, actively involving young people in all we did proved challenging, with successes and failures along the way. Could the Trust practice what it was about to preach?

The aim of the CYPI team was to:

- Support young people to enable them to play an active role in all decision-making within the Initiative
- Consult young people about priorities
- Include the perspectives of young people within all research commissioned by the Initiative
- Enable young people to participate in all Initiative seminars and conferences

The CYPI team held consultations with young people from a variety of backgrounds across the UK. These consultations covered a wide range of topics including careers, preparation for work, health, independent living, citizenship, disability, and living in care. A CYPI 'sounding board' forum of 20 volunteer young people was also set up to work more closely with the staff team. Five of these young people were also members of the Advisory Committee.

Throughout its eleven years, CYPI experimented with a range of participatory techniques including peer research, focus groups, participation in staff recruitment, team building, and membership of committees and working groups, mentoring and chairing meetings. Young people sat with staff and trustees on a management group for the programme and were involved in grants assessment. A member of the staff team was specifically appointed to support young people's involvement in the programme's work.

Research and dissemination

An important part of the work of CYPI was research. The first of our publications were a series of five guides coordinated by George Smith at Oxford University. They were written by academic experts in their fields but discussed at draft stage with groups of young people. The purpose of these guides was to present up-to-date information on a number of the key transitions experienced through adolescence. This series included both the state of play in terms of national research and policy as well as a guide to best practice on the ground. The titles included *Citizenship and Community* by Howard Williamson and Tom Hall, *Local Action for the Health of Young People Who Have Left School* by Dr Paul Harker, Lucinda Platt and Alice Cruttwell, *Independent Living* by Robert Bell and Professor Gill Jones, and *Local Action on Crime Prevention and Young People* by Cathy Lloyd and Kate Preller with James Sandham and George Smith

Other early CYPI publications included *Good Work for Young People* by Andre Britton, Bernard Casey, Trevor Jones, Hilary Metcalf and Balbir Chatrik; and *In Our Own Words*, which gave the views of young people on the careers advice which they receive. *Taking the Initiative* was a series that surveyed the landscape of the enormous array of agencies contributing to youth participation policy in the UK and Ireland. Care was taken to canvas views from across the public sector, central government and local government, the police, probation and health services, as well as the voluntary sector at national and local level and in particular youth led organisations.

Although based in London, under new Director David Cutler, the CYPI team was concerned to understand the context across the UK and Ireland. In particular we needed to understand the different circumstances in England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the situation in the Republic of Ireland. We commissioned research on young people's involvement in the four countries of the UK, culminating in a UK report and a separate report covering the Republic of Ireland.

Although CYPI subsequently focussed most of its attention upon influencing policy and practice in the UK, discussions were also held with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which had established an education for democracy programme, the Ford Foundation, and the European Youth Forum in order to begin to draw upon policy and practice ideas from beyond the UK. **An international dimension was from the outset a feature of the initiative. The Trust was able to fund the exchange of ideas from many parts of the world and to disseminate these within the UK and Ireland.** We were especially keen to share lessons from abroad and published a volume of seven profiles of countries with youth participation policies: Barbados, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal, South Africa, and Uganda. The Commonwealth Secretary General launched this volume in 2001. An account of work in the USA was published in 2002.

CYPI also became an active partner with other foundations across the EU, latterly through joint work under the auspices of the Network of European Foundation which in 2004 invited foundations across Europe to come together to form the Initiative for Learning Democracy Education (ILDE). This provided a platform for those foundations involved in citizenship education and with young people's participation to influence European policy and practice. CYPI became the UK member of ILDE, collaborating on comparative projects around youth participation on a Europe wide scale, leading to a series of tools and handbooks to support pupil participation and citizenship to be published in 2008.

Since the late nineties schools across the UK had been seeking ways in which pupil participation could be embedded across the whole school. The Trust was very keen to support this development. CYPI supported a number of projects, which piloted ways in which to involve young people in school decision-making. In 2004, we worked with IPPR to explore ways in which young people could be represented on school governing bodies. In 2006, in partnership with the Esmee Fairbairn Trust, we published *Inspiring Schools: Resources for Action*, which provided tools to enable teachers to embed participation across the whole school system.

Inspiring Schools – Impact and Outcomes

CYPI's Inspiring Schools research searched for evidence of the impact of student participation in schools and colleges. Seventy-five research studies from the UK and abroad were analysed. The review noted a number of positive outcomes in the classroom and the school as a whole. These related primarily to the broad issue of school ethos, atmosphere, belonging and trust that were engendered. Specifically, there was evidence – mostly perceptual – that better teacher-student relationships emerged, as students felt they were listened to, and teachers felt students understood their role.

Students participating in interviews for teaching staff felt this gave them a feeling of ownership, as well as leading to better appointments. Behaviour was improved (although this focussed mainly on students rather than teachers), mainly though greater participation in policies on bullying and peer support, and there was a greater ethos of care reported. School organisation was also enhanced through school councils that were influential, student involvement in the planning of curriculum and teaching methods, and governance issues (such as helping shape the school mission statement and school development).

We were especially keen to examine the opportunities for ICT and the internet for youth participation and in 2003 commissioned Demos to write *Logged Off: How ICT can connect young people and politics* and in 2005 we commissioned Professor Stephen Coleman to produce *Re-mixing citizenship: Democracy and Young People's Use of the Internet*. The report drew ten key conclusions based upon extensive online and offline research with young people.

We collaborated with the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York to examine the involvement of young people in the National Health Service. With support from the Big Lottery Fund we looked at whether and, if so, how young people's access to and use of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) had been promoted. It also examined how the NHS could better facilitate young people's access to and use of the NHS and generated recommendations for NHS Trusts and Primary Care Trusts on how PALS could be developed in ways which are more inclusive of children, young people and their parents.

Remixing Citizenship

This report argues that the nature of citizenship is changing and young people are the first to recognise it. Far from being disengaged from democracy, young people are in the process of re-inventing it. In the past civic and political participation has meant engaging with a fixed body of symbolic references: parties, nations, classes, governments, ideologies, which citizens could choose to take or leave.

This report draws on existing evidence as well as new research about how young people use the internet to gather information, express themselves and exercise power as pre-voting citizens. The focus of our research is different insofar as we have explicitly set out to challenge the prevailing normative accounts of youth citizenship. Our starting hypothesis is that much of what is offered to young people in the name of 'active citizenship' lacks appeal because it seems to be remote from their everyday experience and disconnected from the levers of power. Government agencies and other authorities seeking to communicate with young people are urged to consider these findings before embarking upon yet another 'politically cool' web-based strategy.

Key Conclusions

On the basis of extensive online and offline research with young people, this report draws ten key conclusions:

- It is not young people that are disconnected from formal politics, but political institutions that are disconnected from young people.
- Young people are more interested in new forms of participation – demonstrations, signing petitions and boycotting products. Political institutions must take these forms of participation seriously if they are to consider more productive ways of engaging with young people.
- Political activity should be planned with the needs of young people in mind.
- Young people need more support with finding civic and political information. Search engines are still not making it easy for young people to look for relevant information, particularly at a local level.
- Too many websites simply provide information and do not give enough opportunities for many to many conversations. Spaces for online interaction should have resources for online moderation and responding to users.
- While carefully targeted information from reputable sources is most likely to be trusted by young people for news and other hard information, when it comes to deeper and more interactive communication they prefer youth-created content.
- When seeking to engage with young people, decision-makers should utilise those sites and methods of communication that young people already use, rather than simply building new websites and expecting young people to come to decision-makers.
- If young people are to be engaged effectively in decision-making, they must have real power to influence decisions. Only when this happens can the Internet become an effective tool for engaging the 'hard to reach.'
- Remixing and sampling are now a key part of contemporary culture. Sampling is a technique in which music – but also text and pictures – can be re-ordered or even reconstructed. This enables consumers to become creative producers, casting everyone as potential remixers of meaning. The democratic potential of the Internet for young people lies in its scope for sampling and remixing so that civic life can be re-ordered and reconstructed to fit in with young people's own needs and feelings rather than predetermined structures.
- By giving young people more power and scope to create their own meanings, online participation can become both active and creative.

Evaluation of youth participation

In the early 2000s, there was little monitoring or evaluation of the effectiveness of young people's participation by public service providers, either in the statutory or voluntary sectors. Our work revealed that there was a paucity of hard evaluation of young people's participation in terms of impacts and knowledge of what works best. This led us to commission Perpetua Kirby and Sarah Bryson to produce *Measuring the Magic* which reviewed what was known so far and what more research was needed.

We initiated a local action research project in Kirklees, West Yorkshire to investigate the degree to which services at local authority or neighbourhood level worked holistically, and the relationship with the young people they serve. The pilot aimed to explore methodologies, which might be more widely replicated by local authorities. In this process we learnt lessons in the recruitment, retention and support of young people, methodologies for young people led research and participatory techniques.

In 2004 we funded work at the Children's Research Centre at the Open University which enabled several cohorts of young researchers, trained at the centre, to revisit the issues they had researched to see whether and how their investigation had led to changes subsequently taking place. The experience of the Centre was that young people were adept at getting responses to their research questions from within their peer group in ways that would not be possible for adult researchers because of power and generational issues, and that their work adds to the body of knowledge about young people's lives from a genuine youth perspective.

We advocated for the adoption of standards by the public and voluntary sector bodies dealing with young people at national and local levels in how they can guarantee good participation opportunities. This led to the publication of *Standard!* which proposed a national kite-marking system called the *Involving Young People Standard*. Such a kite mark or logo, displayed by an agency, would show that they had managed to satisfy local young people on two counts. First, that it was listening to the views of young people, and second, that it had changed as a result.

Standard! recommended that a scheme, based on a successful pilot run in Durham, *Investing in Children*, should be nationally recognised but locally delivered. Such a kite mark would need to guard against complacency once the award had been granted, with a review process put in place to ensure that standards were both being met and improving. In addition to *Standard!* we supported the National Youth Agency in the development of the *Hear By Right* Standards Framework, which subsequently became a major continuous improvement tool and training programme for local authorities and voluntary organisations.

Learning and training

In 2003 we carried out a short review of available professional pre service training courses to support youth participation practice across the UK. Professional youth and community work and to a lesser extent teacher training provided evidence of course content and field practice placements which tested out competences in this area, but provision was far from universal for these occupations. The then recently developed National Occupational Standards for youth work highlighted engaging young people as a core competence, and this was required in the training of youth workers. Work we commissioned from the University of Birmingham indicated that skills training in this area was also beginning to influence teacher training, largely in relation to the introduction of citizenship education.

Work we commissioned the University of York to undertake in relation to patient participation in the NHS, and secondary evidence from the health education field, also evidenced a growing interest in training opportunities for skills and knowledge development around youth participation. Generally however we concluded that youth participation training opportunities were of mixed quality, and other than for youth and community workers, patchy. We identified very few training opportunities where a mix of disciplines could work and learn together or of programmes that involved young people in the training process e.g. as trainers.

Throughout its life CYPI organised its own training workshops, seminars and conferences providing space for youth participation practitioners and young people to work together to discuss and debate youth issues. **Carnegie events provided opportunities for dialogue and networking where we brought together people from very different perspectives and gave radical ideas 'air time'**. This function, often underestimated as a means of generating social change, was an important tool used to encourage the collective shaping of challenges and solutions to issues.



jargon © andrew siddal 2006

Supporting practical action on the ground

We were particularly concerned to find ways of building capacity on the ground by supporting the development of what we termed the ‘participation infrastructure’. This work was to accelerate markedly from 2003, with a stream of grant funding to support capacity building projects.

We gave almost £2million to over 130 grassroots and national youth projects across the UK and Ireland, either led by or significantly involving young people. The average grant amount awarded was around £20,000. (See Appendix 1 for the full list of youth participation projects supported by Carnegie).

Although Carnegie grants changed in nature over the decade, they broadly fell into seven distinct thematic categories:

- **Advisory** – where grantees were involving young people through mechanisms such as youth boards and youth project management
- **Communication and Dissemination** – where grantees were developing ways to communicate their work on youth participation to a larger national or international audience
- **Consultation** – where grantees were recruiting young people to provide feedback and ideas on existing projects, strategies, and new initiatives.
- **Networks** – where grantees were developing staff, technologies and systems to support youth participation networks and general organisational development
- **Research** – where grantees were conducting surveys of young people’s attitudes on various issues
- **Training and materials** – where grantees were designing toolkits, curricula, and workshops
- **Skills for young people** – where grantees were training young people directly to build confidence and skills.

This capacity building grants programme funded a wide range of activities from human resources support to publications and research; across a wide geographical area; and projects that targeted distinct groups of young people, such as the disabled, young refugees and asylum seekers, young offenders, urban youth, and black and minority ethnic young people. **In the early years our approach was one of “letting a thousand flowers bloom”.**

Grant funded projects were encouraged to build close links with the CYPI team and latterly the CYPI Directors took a more proactive approach, encouraging organisations to seek funding for work, which we believed would substantially improve support for participation practice across the UK. Evaluation and the exchange of learning (as to what was working or not working) between recipients became a much higher feature of the programme, with a specialist youth grants officer appointed to the CYPI team.

To some extent our thinking was ahead of what was going on on the ground. We were using our grants to get organisations to involve young people in the genesis of proposals and in their delivery (an approach later adopted by the Big Lottery Fund).

Supporting sustainable change

By 2003 most of the major organisations serving or affecting young people in the public or voluntary sectors at national and local levels had made a policy commitment to their involvement in decision-making. This was a major step forward from the situation six years earlier. There was a consensus within the CYPI team, now under the co-direction of Robert Bell and Raji Hunjan that the attention of the Initiative should move from encouraging a policy commitment to supporting its implementation in practice.

Three questions were posed:

- 1 Had the battle for the hearts and minds of the adults who make these policies been won?
- 2 Were the systems and resources in place to make participation a real option for all young people?
- 3 Were young people being given sufficient information, support and encouragement to participate?

We concluded that, although significant progress was being made, the honest answer to all three of these questions was no. There were three further practical issues that needed to be met, to turn policy rhetoric into reality for young people.

- **Breadth** – the evidence available showed that only a small proportion of young people were involved in public decision-making, and with a bias to the more confident, middle class and privileged.
- **Depth** – Would youth participation be another case of organisations ticking boxes but not fundamentally reforming?
- **What works?** – There was a growing commitment to participation but organisations CYPI spoke to were often unsure and needed support, training, new systems and skills.

Encouraging organisations to mainstream participation practice

The new CYPI Directors approach saw the idea of ‘whole system’ change as useful in the challenge of embedding a commitment to youth engagement by the public services. We realised that legislation or national quality standards were not of themselves the way to ensure changes in the ways in which organisations worked. Standards needed to be complemented by the identification of champions within organisations, particularly in senior positions, with the capacity and commitment to set their organisations on this course.

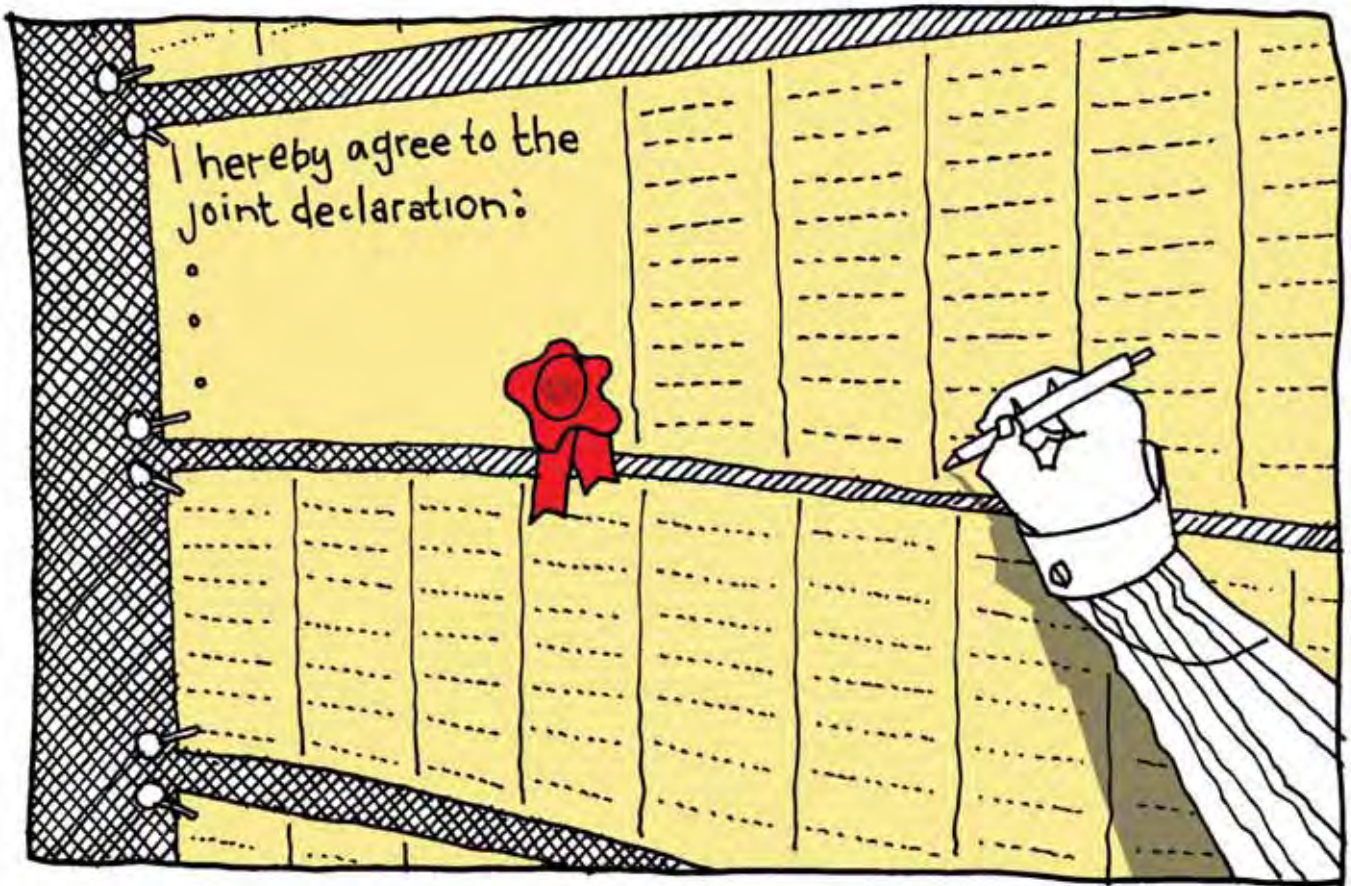
Our objective was to encourage the sharing of practical solutions. We worked closely with organisations to challenge their existing approaches and to develop new ways of embedding participation in the day to day working practices and ethos of organisations, such as government departments. We concluded that new approaches were needed which took advantage of organisational change techniques.

We piloted a series of Action Learning Sets – with middle grade civil servants in one UK Government Department (DEFRA) and with senior officials in the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). We used our creative space to experiment with approaches which were new to us, and generated new risks of failure. Previously we had not partnered up with government so closely; this laid us bare to their vagaries, as well as the more positive opportunities for making change happen.

Self-Managed Learning in the Welsh Assembly Government

Over the course of a year, working in partnership with Strategic Developments International – specialists in organisational change techniques – CYPI set up and ran a pilot self managed learning set of senior officials working in the Welsh Assembly Government. These officials ran directorates with responsibility for policy areas such as social justice, health promotion, tourism and enterprise, education and lifelong learning. The objective of the set was to go beyond the one off training on children's rights or youth engagement that many government organisations tend to rely on, and instead challenge officials to use their leadership and management skills to develop ways of driving cultural change in the areas they worked. In order to do this, we recognised that our approach could not be didactic but instead had to recognise the starting point of individuals and the reality of their highly pressured working lives. With sponsorship from the Permanent Secretary in Wales, the set came together and met monthly as a group to develop learning agreements that would set how they would develop individual skills and understanding and – critically – how they would begin to put in place changes in their areas of work that would support better engagement in the medium and longer term. This set was the first that ever attempted to engage senior officials in this way around the issue of youth participation, and worked closely with a consortium of Welsh children's and youth organisations in working directly with young people and visiting projects across Wales. The set also drew on expertise from across Wales and beyond by inviting expert witnesses to talk to them about ways of ensuring children's voices were heard and helped shape policy and practice. The Human Resources Directorate in the Welsh Assembly Government supported the pilot and plans are being considered for a wider roll out of this approach with officials across the grades. This innovative approach to cultural change was made possible by the way in which government and the third sector in Wales work closely together, and their receptiveness to CYPI's idea to challenge conventional approaches to learning and change.

Further details about the work of the set can be obtained from the Centre for Self Managed Learning, www.selfmanagedlearning.org

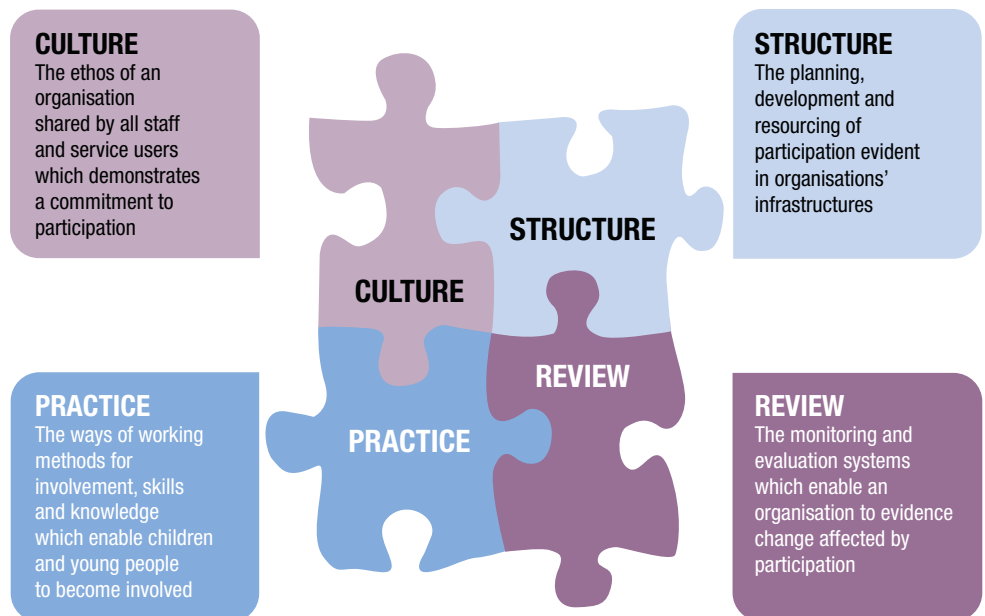


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From our work with the National Youth Agency *Hear by Right* team and others, we became increasingly convinced that long lasting change required managers, practitioners and organisations, as a *whole system*, to change the way they think and act. *The Hear by Right* participation standards framework adopted a whole system approach to professional development, which we strongly supported.

We recognised that building a culture where public service organisations routinely involved children and young people in decision-making on aspects of their lives was not simply a technical exercise, but one involving attitudinal, behavioural and cultural change on the part of the public servants as well as the young people. Further, although there was a rapid growth in the number of toolkits and in-service programmes that helped with the practical ways of engaging young people, there was a paucity of practical guidance for how the ‘whole system’ of an organisation might tackle this challenge.

A useful illustration of a whole system approach, which informed our thinking was produced by Barnardos, using the metaphor of a jigsaw with the pieces coming together to support and sustain improvement.



(Source: Social Care Institute for Excellence. *Practice guide 06: Involving children and young people in developing social care*, by Polly Wright and colleague. Barnardos)

Networking support

We were keen to support the development of support networks for staff involved in youth participation. This led to the establishment of practitioner networks, funded by Carnegie in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Over the decade of CYPI there was a significant growth in the employment of designated ‘youth participation workers’ working at local level within local authorities and the voluntary sector. To give some idea of the scale of this, the *English Participation Workers’ Network* established by CYPI in 2002 attracted 50-60 people. By 2007 it numbered almost 2000. Practitioner networks supported in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland witnessed a similar growth in the numbers of staff with a job remit relating to youth participation.

Whilst this cannot yet be seen as the emergence of a new occupation, indeed the majority of participation practitioners are youth workers and teachers, it is significant that other professionals, such as health workers, have been joining these networks and that other employers are designating staff with a remit to lead on consulting with young people.

We are perhaps seeing here the emergence of a small but nonetheless important critical mass of practice, which in turn could provide an inter-disciplinary mentoring/training resource for the public services. In this sense youth participation looks to become more of a set of practice approaches that can be adopted by a range of disciplines, rather than as a discrete occupation in itself.

Practitioner Networks supported by Carnegie UK

England

The need for an English Participation Workers' Network was first recognised and recommended in the Carnegie UK Trust report *Circus Skills* by Kylie Kilgour. Kilgour found that participation workers were demanding more opportunities for training, support and development in their professional skills basis. She concluded that one way of achieving this was through a national network. The Participation Workers' Network for England was established by Carnegie to provide opportunities to share new ideas and learn more about the participation landscape. The network was run by a Network Co-ordinator based at CYPI and a steering group made up of participation workers. Latterly regional networks began to be supported in England. The network is now supported by *Participation Works*.

Wales

The PWNW (Participation Workers' Network for Wales), funded by Carnegie aims to support workers and organisations in promoting children and young people's participation and making children and young people's participation a reality across Wales. The Network is a free service being offered to all workers and organisations interested in or actively promoting children and young people's participation in their work.

Northern Ireland

The Participation Portal funded by Carnegie is a free web-based resource which provides those working with and on behalf of children and young people, with the opportunity to exchange ideas and develop their own practice.

Scotland

The Participation Network administered by Children in Scotland, with funding from Carnegie, has formed well-established links between groups and organisations committed to the participation of children and young people in decision-making throughout Scotland. The Network facilitates the exchange of information and ideas between those working in this field through an e-directory, e-group and an interactive online map of participation projects across Scotland.

Sharing resources

We have mentioned already our interest in harnessing ITC as a resource to support the capacity of young people and those working with young people. **In 2005 we convened a consortium of national development agencies who agreed to work together to create a national online portal for youth participation – *Participation Works*. The initiative was financed initially with funding from the DfES and the Trust. This was the first national resource centre in the UK for youth participation.**

Participation Works is an online gateway to the world of children and young people's participation. The gateway was formally launched in October 2005 to improve the way practitioners, organisations, policy makers and young people access and share information about involving children and young people in decision-making. At its core is a comprehensive Resource Hub, which allows young people and people who work with young people to find resources on participation. Alongside this are a series of resources to:

- Learn about policy and rights
- Access training resources for children, young people and adults
- Find out about new thinking and ideas
- Map and plan for organisational change
- Get into governance in your organisation
- Find out about impacts of participation

Carnegie acted as the co-ordinator for the first eighteen months and with the consortium secured a further £4m from the Big Lottery Fund in 2007 to expand this national resource.

Our interest in establishing the *Participation Works* consortium of national children and young people voluntary agencies was also one of brokering change. **Carnegie's role was perceived as that of an independent convenor, helping build new partnerships within what was often quite a competitive part of the voluntary sector.** In this regard we were strongly encouraged by government and the Lottery to generate new forms of practical collaboration within the national voluntary sector, to avoid duplication and to harness joined-up working.

Seeking to influence policy

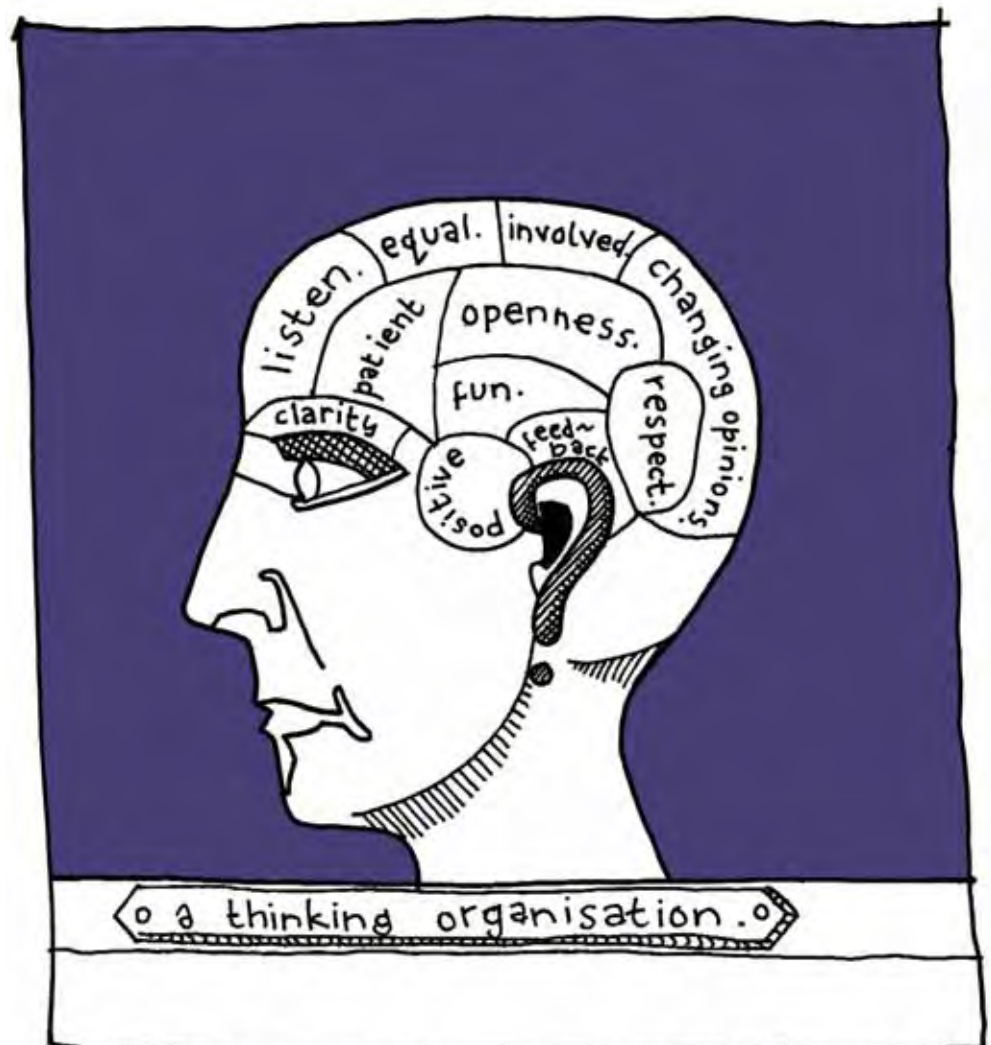
Besides commissioning research, supporting local action projects, fostering networks and capacity building, throughout its life CYPI had a “behind the scenes”, influencing, cajoling, supporting function which we believed might lead to big things happening.

We tended to avoid a strong public advocacy role critical of government or service providers. Rather, we sought to be seen as a useful yet independent source of advice for policy makers. We worked in a way that was not simply about lobbying for change. It was focussed on building strong relationships with policy makers, understanding their worlds – ensuring that our work had purchase with others.

As examples, the CYPI team provided advice to the Department for Education and Employment advisory group which set up *New Start* and contributed to the Social Exclusion Unit report, *Bridging the Gap*, which looked at finding ways to more effectively support youth transitions. We were instrumental in shaping the DfES report *Learning to Listen*, which set out for Government Departments the principles underpinning good practice in youth engagement. We were represented on a cross-departmental group, chaired until 2005 by the Education Minister Stephen Twigg MP, which focused on Citizenship Education.

In addition to working directly with civil servants, we worked closely with the Puttnam Commission on *Parliament in the Public Eye*. Raji Hunjan, was a member of the Commission, and facilitated the Commission's Young People Advisory Group to ensure that the views of young people were represented and that recommendations were made to improve young people's access to Parliament. Following these recommendations, the Parliamentary Education Unit has increased the capacity and remit of its outreach work, and has revised a number of its online and offline resources produced for young people.

We also worked with organisations whose actions, although outwith the realm of public policy-making, increasingly have an impact on young people. The Lottery and charitable foundations for example, give grants worth hundreds of millions of pounds to projects that impact on young people's lives. Through our involvement with other grant making bodies, we sought to achieve a greater involvement of young people in the design and delivery of their funded projects.



phrenology © andrew siddal 2006

3 Taking stock

It is impossible to ascertain CYPI's discrete contribution to changing the culture and practice of youth participation in the UK over the past decade. Nevertheless, as the only dedicated independent national centre in the UK focussing upon this issue, we were able to fund deliberative space, local experimentation and the sharing of ideas. There were many other players involved and our influence was achieved only through demonstrating that we were committed to working in partnership with others in the statutory and voluntary sectors and academia.

In 2005 an external review commissioned by the Trust consulted many of the partners with whom we had worked. The report drew a number of conclusions:

- CYPI had played a significant role in winning arguments about the importance of young people's participation. There was still a need for support to develop and embed a participation culture.
- CYPI's role in making this happen was accepted, welcomed and valued. Its effective collaborative working is key to this success.
- CYPI and CUKT had not yet fully embedded young people's participation in their own everyday practice. This is 'work in progress' and will require consideration about how to move this forward.
- CYPI's role as an honest broker was valued. Most voluntary organisations were heavily reliant on grant funding, creating a competitive environment. CYPI had not been viewed as a competitor – rather, it has been seen as a catalyst for pulling the sector together.

'They are in a unique position in that their core funding comes from the Trust which means they can concentrate on identifying needs and meet them rather than seeking out funding.' (CEO, national voluntary organisation).

'They have played a unique role in bringing Participation Works together. No other organisation would be in a position to do this.' (CEO, national voluntary organisation).

'CYPI's role as a strong engine for Participation Works is critical. This is what is needed and CYPI is providing the critical momentum for it. Participation Works will make practice easier, more so than a publication ever could.' (Director, national voluntary organisation)

'No other organisation would have been able to co-ordinate the participation consortium. They add balance to the sector and their focus complements the sector' (CEO, national voluntary organisation).

The six years since we published *'Taking the Initiative'* reveals much about how both youth participation policy and practice in the UK has developed. A brief review of policy statements identifies a growing commitment to listening to and engaging young people across the public sector – central government departments, local authorities, Non-Departmental Public Bodies, health boards, schools, funding bodies etc. Professions well beyond the youth services and teaching have sought to become more attuned to engaging with young people, from the health services to architects and urban designers.

But what is much more important is how these commitments have been translated into support for good practice. As our work developed we came to understand in closer detail some of the factors that enable and also check this development. **We have concluded that poor practice is rarely due to ‘participation cynicism’ on the part of planners and service providers. Although amongst some public servants this undoubtedly exists. Consulting and engaging with young people, as with other members of society, takes time and resources. That is the cost of democracy.**

We found policy makers, planners and service managers in positions of influence within central and local government and the third sector over this period who themselves had been the youth and student activists of the previous generation. For the vast majority of public service planners and providers we encountered and worked with, there was a strong will, but apprehension as to how to do it well and in ways that really did enable them to engage with and listen to young people who were less advantaged.

Our two published reviews of policy and practice *Taking the Initiative*, and *Sustaining and Expanding Involvement* together with our ongoing work with policy makers, practitioners, academics and youth activists throughout this period, has enabled us to observe progress made by public service organisations across the UK.

We have identified a growing realisation of the capacity challenges for professionals as well as for young people in the ways in which meaningful dialogue and power sharing can occur. Youth engagement, as a professional and personal development challenge, requires the thinking and tools associated with whole system organisational and cultural change.

Changing central government

Over the last decade, areas of decision-making by public bodies such as government departments, local authorities, health boards and schools have opened up to the influence of citizens and service users. Opportunities for children and young people to shape decisions made about their lives are growing, and look set to grow. In 2004 a comprehensive survey of participation activity in England showed that 4 out of 5 statutory and non-statutory organisations reported involving children and young people up to the age of 19 in decision-making. Further, almost 90% of statutory respondents and 75% of voluntary sector respondents said that the amount of work they did to involve children and young people had increased since 2000.

In England, the core principles underpinning youth participation were set out in the DfES guidance *‘Learning to Listen’* and for a period the UK Government’s Children and Young People’s Unit coordinated the work of English government departments on this agenda.

The practice of ‘youth proofing’ has grown across government departments at both UK and devolved administration level, but what is less clear is the extent to which there is any common system or approach to enable young people to access and shape decision-making; to enable departments to access young people; and – crucially – to enable government departments to build capacity to ensure that engagement becomes a sustainable way of operating.

What has been apparent is a failure of some departments to understand the concept of youth participation, where they concentrate on the beneficial outcomes of their work for young people rather than how they have involved young people in achieving them. Participation is being equated with consultation and finessing the reach and medium of consultation processes, rather than engaging young people earlier on in the policy development process.

It is not hard to conclude that within central government – at all levels, but most visibly at middle and senior ranking levels – there is a wide spectrum of commitment to youth participation. To some extent this can be explained by the historic focus of any department. For example, young people are central to the departments responsible for education and health, and youth engagement arises more ‘naturally’ there. In other departments, however, a closer look at their respective portfolios is required to identify the decision-making that might impact on children and young people.

Changing local government

Local Government across the UK has more information available on what is happening in terms of systems and procedures, structures and resources for supporting young people’s participation in public decision-making. This is hardly surprising as it is at local government level that public services are primarily delivered to citizens and where day-to-day contact with young people as citizens and service users is a central *raison d’être*.

We have seen local authorities across the UK concerned to improve their capacity to engage young people as citizens and service users. Research by the National Youth Agency and the British Youth Council found that the large majority of local authorities reported involving children and young people more in 2004 than in 2000. However, there remained a lack of evidence about the impact and the sustainability of this activity, and there were wide variations in the levels of commitment and styles of engagement. Our own research showed an array of local government initiatives requiring youth involvement but a lack of coherence across disparate engagement efforts. Local councils more than any other single sector across the country have participated in the *Hear By Right* training programme.

Local government however still faces the challenge of how to build capacity across the wider workforce and not rely upon a few members of staff, whose job it is to elicit young people’s views, generally youth and community workers. Councils have been supporters of structures such as local youth forums and youth councils and the introduction of Community Planning across the UK has focussed local councils more upon how to improve ways in which young people’s voices can be heard.

Youth Link Scotland: My Place or Yours?

In 2005 Carnegie funded Youth Link Scotland and the University of Dundee to carry out research into how Community Planning processes in Scotland could become more responsive and effective at securing young people’s engagement. The research found that the level of commitment to youth engagement in Community Plans at local authority level was mixed and that more support and resources were necessary for Community Planning Partnerships to help young people realise their rights.

Evidence from local authority case studies showed that the involvement of young people in Community Planning decisions led to positive results, which benefited the wider community, and that young people worked cooperatively with adults if the methodology applied was energetic, creative and sustained. The importance of adults raising awareness of how their own behaviour can inhibit young people’s involvement was highlighted, as was the need for proper consideration of the time investment needed to ensure the process was meaningful and a positive experience for all involved.

Changing the voluntary sector

Organisations in the voluntary sector promote themselves as champions not only of youth participation and children's rights, but also in developing trailblazing good practice and practical guides for others. Indeed Carnegie has grant funded many of these initiatives. Many national and local voluntary organisations now have some kind of policy commitment to youth participation. But practice varies considerably. **We have been unable to identify, other than in the specialised youth voluntary sector, a culture conducive to youth participation that is discernibly stronger than local government. As with local government there is a skills challenge for both managers and front line staff and for their wider workforce of volunteers.**

The local community sector part of the voluntary sector unsurprisingly varies in its capacity to engage young people at local level. Our experience, having funded dozens of community-based projects, often around issues of urban and rural regeneration is that we have seen innovative approaches led by community organisations as well as not particularly inspiring practice. However it is clear that as with the public sector there is growing commitment and a concern to do it well.

The importance of learning and leadership

In our 2003 training study we identified a plethora of in-service training events and short courses run by local authorities and voluntary organisations, although we did not assess the quality of these programmes. Recent evidence from *Participation Works* confirms that the availability of short courses and events around the youth participation theme has grown significantly, with a dramatic growth in the number of learning resource materials. The demand across local authorities and voluntary organisations for the *Hear By Right* training programme is strong evidence of a growing requirement for high quality practice support by a number of occupational groups well beyond the youth services and at middle and senior management levels as well as field staff.

However, we still have some significant concerns about training.

- **The first concern relates to quality.** Other than in the area of youth and community work, there is a lack of accreditation for training in this area, and it is consequently hard to know both whether training programmes are fit for purpose and improve the quality of practice.
- **The second concern is the pattern of supply.** The majority of available training for public service professionals, whether in the statutory or voluntary sectors, consists of single events run usually on an ad-hoc basis. This pattern of supply is not in our view sufficient to build the capacity of the wide range of occupations that provide services to young people and which will effectively change the culture and behaviour of an organisation. Effective youth participation work requires support and skills development that are longer term, ongoing, and provide opportunities for reflection and exchange with other practitioners. The Action Learning and Self Managed Learning sets developed by CYPI were pilots that attempted to meet these deeper capacity-building needs. Under the *Participation Works* programme, 'learning sets' have been established for groups locally to meet regularly to support the process of putting '*Hear by Right*' into practice.
- **The third concern is the scale of the labour market challenge.** Large numbers of personnel working across public service organisations (statutory and voluntary sector) need support to embed a culture of youth participation in their practice. We have found that both individuals and organisations will be at different stages and have varying levels of experience, so that the training must be flexible enough to offer appropriate support. For example, some organisations may have a strong commitment

to children's rights to participate and value this activity, but struggle to engage their senior management. Therefore tailored support is needed for senior officers. Others come to this work with little knowledge and understanding and need introductory training. It is for this reason that *Participation Works* was designed to publicise a wider repertoire of training and support to meet diverse needs.

- **The fourth concern is money and time.** It is rare for a public service organisation (whether statutory or voluntary) to have a dedicated staff development budget for youth participation. There remains a tendency to underestimate both the time and resources needed for participation to be effective, and there is a need for organisations to familiarise themselves with the guidance about costs that currently exists. Engaging young people cannot be done on the cheap and it will involve time and resources, as well as the skills and attitudes to want to make it work.

Three further factors are critical we believe in addressing how organisations can be improved to serve children and young people, and staff, more effectively.

- **First, the use of external expertise and support.** This became common in the Children and Young People's Unit in England where a number of 'experts' from the voluntary sector and academia worked on placement. However, that support must be used to build internal capacity.
- **Second, building participation effectively into the way the organisation runs requires strong and clear-headed leadership** from at least one senior official, able to win support and resources for the work, support junior staff, and ensure that it leads to changes and learning in day to day work.
- **Third, a senior level manager is essential to act as a champion** of the work and to take a cross-organisational approach to embedding cultural change. The experience of our work with the Welsh Assembly Government would suggest that the selection and enthusiasm of a senior champion within an organisation is vitally important to participation being properly supported, understood, and productive.

The issue of power

The transition of policy commitment into everyday practice is a challenge not unique to youth engagement, and raises many questions about what power the young citizen can expect over decision-making that affects his or her life. Youth participation has been described as an example of the sort of challenge facing those in positions of power who are being required to move from a traditional vertical model of decision-making to a horizontal process, with stakeholders, citizens and external experts all working to both shape and deliver policy.

In this challenge there is also an important shaping context – namely, the paradoxical relationship that adults and adult organisations often have with young citizens. Adults have – the argument goes – always been fearful of young people and seen them as a potential problem for the smooth running and organisation of society. But these fears are only one side of a contemporary paradox in the way society views young people. A growth in our fear and suspicion of young people has coincided with concerted efforts to protect children and young people from threats posed to them by adults and society.

'We often think that children ought to be happy, a notion that dates back to the romanticism of the eighteenth century. We also often want them to be obedient to adults, an idea with deep roots in many parts of the past. We sometimes think of children as innocent, but can equally easily lurch into thinking that some of them are at any rate evil, both of them ideas with a traceable ancestry'
(Hugh Cunningham, *The Invention of Childhood*, 2006)

How young people are portrayed

Evidence about how adults perceive young people in contemporary British society suggests that fear of young people has grown over the last fifteen years; that adult resentment of young people is growing and that media portrayals of young people are overwhelmingly negative. We believe there is a cause and effect here. We were made aware by the many young people and youth participation workers we worked with and through many of the projects we funded, that the pathologising of young people in the popular press was growing. It is not difficult to find daily stories in the press that label young people as problems. This is far less the case with TV, where far more positive images of young people have been portrayed in recent years.

In 2004, when the magazine *Young People Now* conducted research into the portrayal of young people in the media, almost three out of four (71 per cent) articles were negative. For the same period the following year, YPN found the figure had dropped to 57 per cent. It is not that newspapers have been converted to positive views of youth – only 12 per cent of stories about young people were wholly positive, about the same as in 2004. But the number of stories classed as "neutral" had doubled, from 15 to 30 per cent.

One initiative that particularly impressed us was *Young Scot* magazine, a regular supplement in the Daily Record newspaper, funded by national voluntary organisations and government agencies, which for the past decade has sought to portray positive images written by and about young people who are active in their community. *Young Scot* has become an active youth participation network in its own right and was one of the leading architects and supporters of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Fear of young people

In 2005 more than 1.5 million Britons thought about moving away from their local area due to young people hanging around and 1.7 million avoided going out after dark as a direct result. Last year Britons were three times more likely to cite young people hanging around as a problem than they were to complain about noisy neighbours. In 1992 it was just 1.75 times more likely. Britons are more likely than other Europeans to say that young people are predominantly responsible for anti-social behaviour, and they are also more likely to cite 'lack of discipline' as the root cause: 79 percent of Britons thought this underpinned anti-social behaviour, compared to 69 percent of Spaniards, 62 percent of Italians and 58 percent of French people. (Source: IPPR, *Freedoms Orphans*, 2006).

The number of children and young people being sentenced to custody has almost doubled in ten years. According to Home Office figures, in February 2007 there were 11,872 under 21-year olds in prison including 2,418 under 18. Prisons contain record numbers of teenagers and young adult men in their early twenties. There has been a measurable increase in levels of mental illness, distress and self-harm. Reconviction rates have soared to an average of 78 per cent for 18-20 year olds and over 80 per cent for under 18s. (Source: Prison Reform Trust, web site).

In 2004 nearly 80% of Britons (and 99% of those over the age of 55) thought that 'young people today have too much freedom and not enough discipline' (Page and Wallace 2004). There is also evidence over time of a gradually increasing divide between youth and mainstream culture, with a small but steady rise in the proportion of people who – since 1994 – think that 'young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values' (Source: British Social Attitudes data, 1994-2004 cited in IPPR *Freedoms Orphans* 2006)

Competition between the generations and communities

There is also a new emerging phenomenon – that of adults and young people being in competition. Whilst adult and young people's worlds are segregated and separated in many respects, they have been thrust into new competitive relationships – not only in the workplace, but in the consumer market place, and in civil society, where increased emphasis on public deliberation and civic engagement means that adults and young people compete for power and influence over public decision-making. The nature of challenges in society – community cohesion, environmental concerns, and responsive public services, amongst others – requires co-operative relations between generations and communities, made up of dialogue, tolerance, awareness and understanding including a realisation of the assets, talent and potential of young people within and across different groups in communities including religious and ethnic dialogue.

The evidence presented is only some of that which hints at a growing separation of adult and young people's worlds. This places particular importance on youth participation being effective. Effective engagement has the potential to build bridges between adults and young people, who can share experiences, learn new skills from one another, and have dialogue that builds trust and understanding. This in itself is valuable, but it can also produce materially beneficial outcomes.

Democratic disengagement

Engaging young people in decision-making is essential to building young people's faith in decision-makers and political institutions. The decline in young voter turnout is well documented. The National Centre for Social Research (NCSR) point out that since 1994, young people's interest in formal politics has declined, as has their knowledge of basic political facts. The proportion of young people who would want a particular political party to win a general election fell from 68 to 39 percent between 1994 and 2003.

The NCSR also found that it was clear that a majority of young people do think they should have a say in decisions that affect them, whether these be over identity cards or the closure of a local sports centre (the examples researchers used in the survey) and that young people's views on these matters are not associated at all with their interest in 'traditional' politics. Those expressing no interest at all in politics were just as likely as those who were very interested to think that young people should be consulted. (Young People in Britain: the Attitudes and Experiences of 12 to 19 year olds). Further, there is a perception of government being unfair – According to *My Voice, My Vote, My Community* a majority of young people want to influence Government decisions on social justice issues but fewer than half trust the government to make laws to ensure that people are treated fairly.

The above points outline why youth participation is so vital for the future – both in terms of what it offers in revitalising interest in democracy, tackling youth disengagement and promoting inter-generational cohesion, and as a means of protecting children's rights effectively and tackling unequal power relations between citizens wishing to express their voice legitimately.

A Culture of compliance?

In many cases over the last decade public service organisations have adopted a culture of compliance in respect of youth participation – but the rapid growth of activity has not yet guaranteed profound cultural change. The current landscape can be characterised as follows:

- **Public service organisations (both statutory and voluntary) have been relatively efficient at making sure that they have a high-level policy commitment to involving children and young people in decision-making.** Making a policy commitment is easier for organisations with a clear remit to work for or with children and young people. For other organisations whose work is not clearly targeted at specific groups of the population, this policy commitment is often absent, deemed unnecessary or even unduly restrictive. Policy and strategic plans may be framed in the more general terms of a desire to engage with hard to reach stakeholders, which has the unfortunate consequence of putting children and young people into a competitive relationship with other ‘quiet voices’.
- **Public service organisations (both statutory and voluntary) have struggled enormously to translate this commitment into effective practice.** Typically, a large organisation may have a lead official or participation worker, whose job it is to advise others on approaches to engaging with children and young people for specific purposes. Frequently that person, or team, is poorly resourced and reactive in the way they work. Many organisations without these specific skills in-house prefer to ‘contract out’ participation to consultants, to organisations in the voluntary sector or if a local authority to their youth workers, with the consequence that wider in-house capacity does not develop. The approach to taking forward youth participation has often been to empower relatively junior and specialist staff to act as a support to others within organisations. In government, this is often at some distance from the main business of departments. Inherent in this is a particular model of change, with children’s and young people’s teams serving as technical specialists, and often without a remit to help build capacity, and – critically – often without the support and patronage of leaders in the organisation.
- **Translating policy into practice is consequently often reduced to a technical challenge.** For example, officials may spend an inordinate amount of time working out the methods and logistics of running a small focus group of young people about a particular policy measure. The end result is often confusion on the part of young people about what they have contributed, concern by managers over the time and resources put into such a small-scale activity, and a tendency to return to the default position where participation can become token and mechanistic. One of the features of the emerging participation landscape is the growing demand from organisations for ‘off the shelf’ solutions to the challenge of embedding youth participation in their ways of working. This demand is almost always for a quick fix. Five Year strategies to embed participation are unheard of. So, it is easier to borrow from other places where participation has been running for longer, and seems to be more successful.

4 Future horizons

During its final twelve months, the CYPI team went around the country to engage once more with some of the leading thinkers and practitioners in youth participation. In a sense this was a revisiting of the Cumberland Lodge event, but this time going out across the four jurisdictions of the UK and to Ireland, holding seminars with representatives from central government departments, the Offices of the Children's Commissioner, from local government, academia, the voluntary sector, schools and training providers. We debated how far we had come over the past decade, but also where we now needed to go to consolidate youth participation.

One of the events we organised with the International Futures Forum was a workshop with some of the leading agency players in youth participation in the UK, which aimed by way of a graphical map to articulate how youth participation had developed over the past decades and what might shape its future evolution. Through this we produced a 'knowledge map' (see pull out section), offering a way of both identifying how participation has developed and how possible futures might emerge over the coming decade. We used the metaphor of a journey through the participation landscape as a tool with which to identify and discover ways of embedding youth engagement more securely in public decision-making. It is a visual representation designed to stimulate thinking. We encourage organisations to scrutinise this map and discover how far it applies to their own organisational journey.

Towards a culture that supports young people's participating in decision-making



Some ideas for action

There is much left to do for champions of effective youth participation. On the basis of our experience over the past decade, we have identified several specific areas, which we believe still need to be addressed by particular key players, which we highlight below, if a commitment to listening to and engaging with young people is to become an embedded feature of our society. These are:

Enhancing Public Service Capacity

- There is an urgent need for more professionals skilled in engaging with young people, whether these are teachers, youth workers or people called youth participation workers. Such staff and the pre and in service training required to support them is part of the critical mass of expertise that will eventually tip an operational culture. We are convinced that there is a supply side shortage of staff able to support youth participation effectively; as a result this is undertaken either on the cheap or in ways that are not particularly effective.

Public service employers need to finance an expansion in the employment of trained public service managers and front line staff with a remit to support young people's civic engagement. The Government, employers, Lifelong Learning Skills Council and the relevant funding councils, also need to support an expansion in pre service and Continuing Professional Development training opportunities in youth participation.

Empowering young people

- Most crucial to success is a genuine willingness to put young people at the centre of the process. To enable this, it is essential to give young people the training and development support that will furnish them with the skills to engage as active citizens. Our work has coincided with the introduction of citizenship education across primary and secondary schools in the UK and we have strongly supported this development and funded projects that resource it. At its best, citizenship education is about education for living in and engaging with democracy.

Local education authorities, schools, and the statutory and voluntary youth services need to extend the range of formal and informal learning opportunities, including the use of IT that help young people to participate in democratic decision-making. Grant makers need to increase the funding available for projects that support young people's participation and, for initiatives such as *Participation Works*, which support effective practice.

Strengthening Children's Rights

- We need to reinvigorate the children's rights debate. In a stable democracy it is easy to become complacent about these issues but they are essential to the ongoing health of society. With rights of course come responsibilities. In a democracy the right to participate and vote implies a responsibility to become more active in the community, to learn how to listen to the views of others.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission needs to have an explicit responsibility for promoting the rights of children and young people. Whilst the Offices of the Children's Commissioners across the UK in recent years are already doing much to strengthen children's rights, they need to have a more explicit remit to promote the right to participate.

Enhancing quality standards

- Ensuring that standards that evidence an adequate level of participation, a strategy for improvement and evidence of resulting change are required across the public services. Children and young people should be part of the process that contributes to or at least endorses this evidence and strategy as a major safeguard against tokenism.

Central government departments, the devolved administrations, local authorities, the Connexions Service, other public service providers and the voluntary sector need to adopt national standards to assessing the quality of children and young people's participation.

Portraying young people more positively

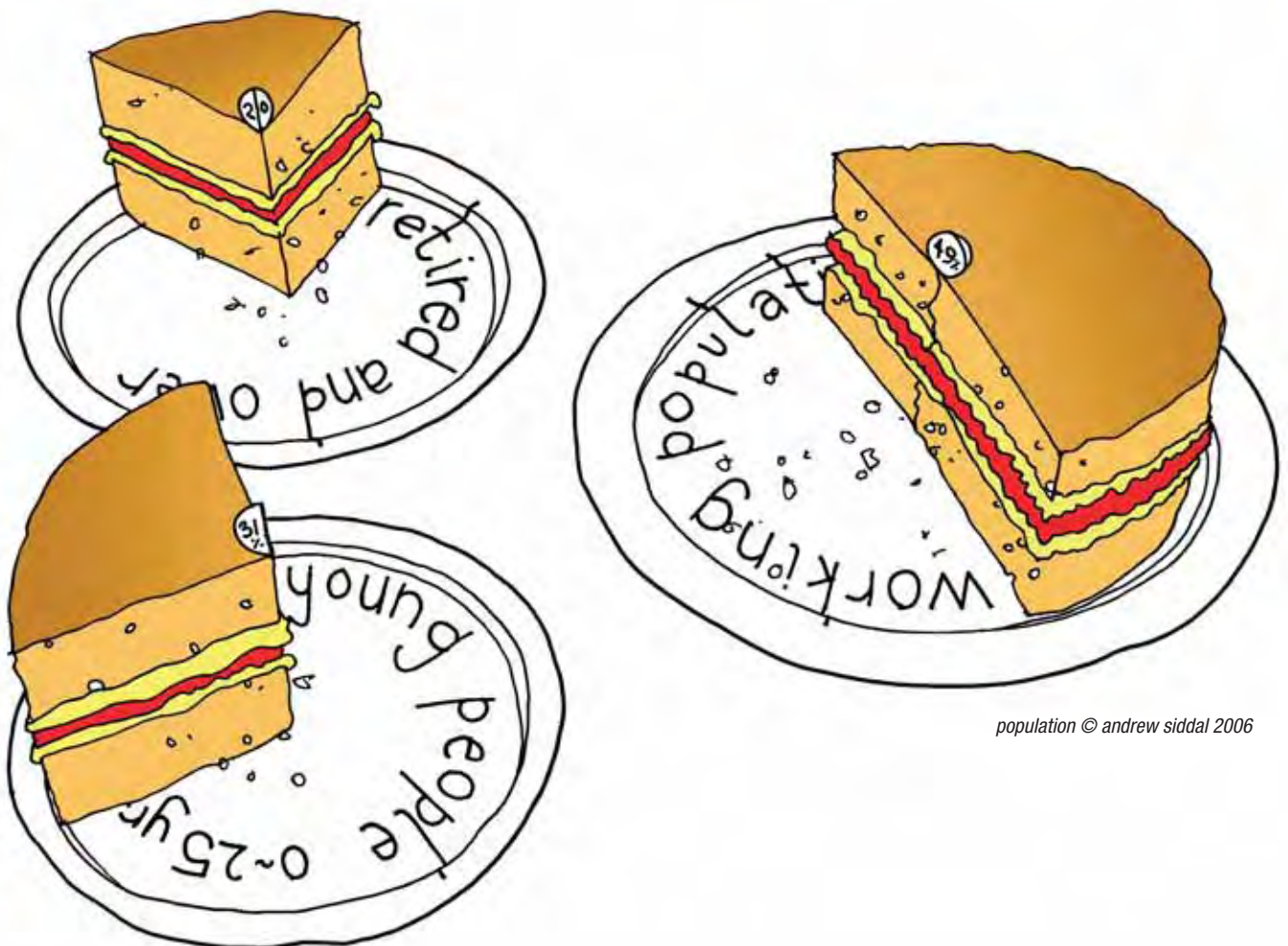
- The national and local media has a vital responsibility and role to play in encouraging young people to be active in their communities and in decision-making. We are not calling for a sugar coated coverage here, but certainly of the portrayal of real life role models of young people making a difference. This we are convinced will do much to breakdown the perceived fears that older generations have of young people. Support young people to be part of the solution, not the problem.

The public and voluntary sectors and youth organisations should work proactively with national and local TV, radio and print media and the media professions to enhance coverage that highlights the positive role that young people can play as active citizens in a democracy and in supporting inter-generational and social cohesion. Funders should make funding available for youth-led organisations to create their own stories, in particular harnessing the new media and IT and to support the training of young journalists.

Engaging young people in big P politics

- It is vital for the health of our democracy that young people are encouraged and supported to play an active role in politics. We need to form bridges between informal and formal politics, between being active in a pressure group, to wanting to stand as a local councillor or MP. Most important of all is to help young people value the responsibilities and rights of voting that have been created by earlier generations. Carnegie has supported the Votes at 16 Campaign and through our work with the Putnam Commission we are convinced that the established political institutions and parties need to do much more to engage with young people in a language that they can understand.

The UK Parliament, devolved parliaments and assemblies, local councils and political parties need to develop more effective outreach strategies that encourage young people to play an active role in politics locally and nationally. Political literacy needs to be given far higher profile in citizenship education.



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Annex 1

Youth Participation Projects funded 1996 – 2007

1996

British Youth Council (BYC)

£20,000

A three year 'Youth Participation in the Community' programme, backed by peer led training mostly in committee management skills, that helped develop new, and strengthen existing, Youth Councils.

Citizen Organising Foundation, East London

£15,000

To support a worker to pilot an alliance of local institutions with the aim of 'reconnecting young people with public life'. Worked in partnership with local communities, religious leaders and ecumenical groups to take action on common concerns.

National Youth Agency, Leicester

£2,000

Funding towards bursaries for young people to attend 'A Force for Change' conference organised by young people for young people and decision-makers.

Sobriety Project, Goole

£12,000

Funding towards employing a Community Adventure Worker to assist groups who did not have accompanying staff, to follow-up individuals with potential, and to establish Sobriety groups on estates and in rural areas.

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC), Belfast

£25,000

To support the initial set up of the Voice of Young People in Care initiative, established as an organisation with young people and adults working together to take decisions on managing the lives of the young people who are in and emerging from the care system.

Walter Segal Self Build Trust

£20,000

To encourage, support and lead self-build initiatives. This grant supported a proposal to forge links throughout England with Foyers whose programmes combine housing, employment training and pastoral support for the homeless and unemployed.

Weston Spirit

£10,000

To help establish a centre for Weston Spirit personal and group development activities for young people in London.

Who Cares? Trust

£10,000

To support a three project programme spearheaded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, in two local authorities – one rural (Cambridgeshire) and one urban (Bradford) – which identified practical methods of improving provision for young people in care in ways that could be replicated in other authorities.

1997**Changemakers North East**

£10,000

To encourage young people mainly based in secondary schools to become involved in the design and management of their own community projects. Funding was to support Changemakers North East – one of ten local project areas – to develop a model for working effectively with young disadvantaged people outside of school.

Cities in Schools

£27,000

To work with young people who were either excluded from or were long term non-attenders in mainstream education. This grant helped identify those most at risk of exclusion and assess those most easily reintegrated.

Citizen Organising Foundation

£30,000

Following the successful pilot with TELCO – The East London Communities Organisations – funding was given to further support young East Enders to become involved in issues which affect their lives and to work together for the community and the common good.

Common Purpose

£5,000

Support given to Your Turn, an initiative to develop a Common Purpose programme for 14 year olds in schools. The grant supported the first year of the Edinburgh Programme.

DEMOS

£30,000

To support an 18 month investigation into the problems faced by those not in work, education, training or in the government statistics ('The Real Deal') and to develop new thinking on how their transition to integrated independent living could best be supported by the State.

Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse

£30,000

Funding for a young worker, from the local area, who led community projects and demonstrated the value of employing local young people in jobs, which were of value to the community.

Human City Institute

£10,000

Support for the Human City Youth Project, which brought together young people and adult decision-makers to share their vision for the future of Birmingham. Further funding was given to enable the project to build on established relationships to develop intergenerational co-operation and promote practical ways of building Birmingham as a human city.

National Council of YMCA's of Ireland/PAKT

£30,000

To support a development worker and act as leverage for European and other funding. YMCA Ireland had been selected to extend PAKT – Parents and Kids Together – throughout Northern Ireland.

National Youth Agency/National Institute of Adult Continuing Education

£30,000

To help devise and test different approaches to reaching disaffected young people in specified localities to help them re-engage with education, training and employment.

1998

Association of Combined Youth Clubs, London

£10,000

To enable young people to develop and deliver their own projects in their local communities. The projects all aimed to help disaffected young people in the six most deprived London Boroughs to move back into the mainstream of society.

British Youth Council, UK wide

£19,500

Support given to the 'Youth on Board' programme, to help increase young people's civic involvement.

Bromley by Bow Centre, London

£20,000

Funding for a new staff member to disseminate information about this model for creative inner city development through 'social entrepreneurship'. The funding aimed to help encourage others to benefit from Bromley by Bow's approach to improving one of the poorest areas of the UK.

Glasgow YWCA

£10,000

To support 18-25 year old volunteers to run clubs for younger children aged 8-12 years.

Mobex Network, Northern Ireland

£32,550

Following a feasibility study and summer pilot, funding was given to establish in Northern Ireland Mobex – mobile resources to assist socially excluded young people where they live.

National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, England and Wales

£10,000

Following the success of the Trust assisted Shadow Scheme for young people in 1993, this grant helped NCVYS develop policy, training provision, and support for young people's participation in NCVYS and member organisation affairs.

National Playing Fields Association, UK wide

£10,000

To encourage 'midnight basketball' – a scheme to provide an opportunity to play basketball on condition that the young people attend workshops. The workshops will cover job search skills, technology and personal development.

Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust

£20,000

To disseminate the findings of the unattached youth programme through a report, training, seminars, and technical assistance to give workers new skills to stimulate further initiatives and to encourage youth providers to extend their work.

Participation Education Group (PEG), Tyne & Wear

£5,000

To evaluate and monitor PEG's work on the Rights of the Children and to establish whether PEG peer education initiatives are meeting their objectives and making a difference to young people.

1999**Changemakers, Northumberland**

£8,500

To support Changemakers North East during its transition to becoming the first of the six regional Changemakers to be an independent charity.

Children in Scotland

£30,000

To assist mapping existing groups and initiatives promoting the views of children and young people in their policy making; to establish a network of these groups to work with Children in Scotland's 'adult' children's policy network; and to facilitate the exchange of ideas and good practice.

Devon Youth Association

£15,000

To assist with dissemination and evaluative techniques, young people from Devon Young People's Peer Work Action group will develop quality standards for peer education and peer-led work based on their own successful experience.

LEAP, London

£15,000

Towards a development worker and associated costs to spearhead and widen the youth-led network to be a national voice for youth mediation.

Leicester Education Action Zone (LEAZ)

£30,000

To develop Our Turn, a programme to give young people an opportunity to take an active part in the life of their schools and/or local communities by giving office facilities, mentoring and funding support.

New Economics Foundation, London

£10,000

To support a one-year pilot project in Lewisham to develop the Time Money UK approaches to encouraging voluntary community involvement particularly among those who do not normally volunteer.

Springboard, Llanelli

£5,590

To broaden volunteering to ethnic groups, widen opportunities for young people to community radio, upgrade training and to extend the work to other locations.

Wales Broadbased Organisation/Trefnu Cymunedol Cymru (TCC)

£15,850

To involve young people in Flintshire, Denbeighshire and Wrexham, aged 14-24, to identify, develop and support new leaders who will revitalise local groups and who will work together to address community needs and issues.

2000

Bromley by Bow Centre, London

£10,000

To support the information worker's post to handle the increasing number of inquiries and visits to the Centre.

Divert Trust, London

£18,000

To support a two-year mentoring project in Brent, targeted at male school exclusions, in partnership with the Family Planning Association.

Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse

£3,300

To enable the youth worker, previously supported by the Trust, to continue his employment to lead community projects, while he completes his basic training in youth and community work.

Institute for Citizenship, London

£5,000

To assist in developing a project to encourage and support active citizenship in young people at school and by developing practical actions such as campaigning, involvement in schools councils and community projects.

Liverpool Personal Service Society (PSS), Merseyside

£10,000

To improve the way young people become involved in their community and change the PSS approach to the training and development of, particularly the young, volunteers. The scheme will use young people as mentors for other young people.

School for Social Entrepreneurs, Glasgow

£9,000

To train people in social entrepreneurship. The grant supported the embryonic Glasgow School, which will start with ten social entrepreneurs, two will be under 25 years old.

Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT), Scotland wide

£5,000

To develop Wild Action, a five-stage programme designed to use the environment as a primary mechanism for involving young people aged 13-24 in their communities.

Who Cares? Trust, UK wide

£34,900

To support Who Cares? Direct, a project to train young people, carers and the local authority in newsletter and print media production, which at the same time will improve communication with young people in care by making local information more available to them.

Worth Unlimited, UK wide

£10,000

To co-fund the Director's costs to extend the programme to reach over 600 alienated young people in 15-20 of the poorest communities across the UK.

UK Youth Parliament (UKYP)

£10,000

UKYP aims to give young people aged between 11 and 18 a voice, which will be heard and listened to by local and national government, providers of services for young people and other agencies who are interested in the views and needs of young people. The grant will go towards an election process and an annual youth parliament.

2001**Article 12 (A12), England**

£30,000

Over two or three years, to increase the part-time worker's post to full-time to enable A12 to develop a regional structure in England as a way of increasing participation.

Article 12 Scotland

£15,000

Over three years to develop its network of local groups and individuals, aged 12-18, and to focus on its current priorities including greater participation in education decisions, a reduction of the voting age to 16, and a minimum wage from 16.

Citizen Organising Foundation (COF)

£15,000

To appoint a youth organiser to develop the first broad based and diverse youth 'Citizens Organisation' in the UK starting with younger, not older, people. The project is based in the West Midlands.

Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE)

£10,000

To assist CRAE to set up a unit to 'translate' information about public policy and proposed legislation into accessible high quality young people friendly terms in a systematic way.

Community Links, Newham

£5,000

To include young people, particularly those marginalised groups, such as young offenders, those leaving care and the young unemployed in developing ideas for practical changes, which will improve their transition from school to work and relationships between young people and the police.

DEMOS, UK wide

£20,000

To carry out a major piece of research 'Children's Lives in Britain in the 21st Century'. The research aims to shift the public debate concerning children's needs from problems to opportunities and to change the policies and behaviour of key institutions towards better strategies to improve children's quality of life.

Fermanagh Shadow Youth Council

£10,000

To enable the youth council to employ a second adult worker to cope with the greater workload arising from the increased interest in the Shadow Youth Council elected in November 1998

Greater East Belfast (GEB) Youth Strategy Group

£20,000

To support a part-time worker to develop the Youth Assembly. 39 young people, previously involved in the GEB Youth Strategy Group, have signed up for the Youth Assembly which will create a forum for voicing opinions, provide a wider constituency of young people for consultation and tap into and develop ICT communications (chat rooms, website etc).

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)

£20,000

To establish a Children's Consultation Unit to provide training, practical support, consultation and evaluation services to organisations wishing to undertake children's consultations and to encourage participation in decision-making to improve services.

King's Fund, London

£1,000

To help fund a youth assembly in July 2002 as the final stage of the programme, Imagine London set up by the King's Fund to explore young people's views on how London could be made a healthier city to live in and to promote these views with London's decision-makers and opinion formers.

Little Hulton Brook, Salford

£6,250

To fund the involvement of young people in strategy making bodies and their education and training as counsellors and educators.

Mencap Northern Ireland

£5,000

To assist Mencap establish, Shout Out, a Northern Ireland wide forum which will allow young people, aged 16-25 with learning difficulties, to discuss their needs, influence policy inside and outside Mencap, and provide a vehicle for their personal development.

National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (YFC)

£5,000

Towards the YFC Rural and Agricultural Affairs Department, to ensure the agency is in a position through its young people to comment and influence policy on the fundamental changes taking place in the countryside.

Penumbra, Edinburgh

£15,000

To support a multi-faceted approach to supporting young people, consisting of supported flats, a drop-in service, specialist support groups and peer education.

Public Achievement, Northern Ireland

£15,000

To support the post of a Director to develop a sound infrastructure for the agency so that around 200 young people will be directly involved in groups in around 15 Public Achievement sites by the end of 2002.

Skills for People, Newcastle

£5,000

To support Young People on the Move, a two-year confidence-building programme, which will involve young people in the future running of Skills for People and give them an opportunity to share their views with relevant professionals and policy makers.

Youth Action Cambridge (YAC)

£10,000

To enable YAC to engage, train and support young people aged 18-24 to take up positions of genuine authority and responsibility within local and county wide decision-making bodies, such as trustee boards of charities and governing bodies of schools.

YMCA Scotland

£5,000

To enable young people to complete the second and third years of Full Board, a pilot scheme to increase effective youth participation in management committees and the wider community.

YWCA, UK Wide

£10,000

Towards a YWCA pilot scheme, Young Women's Voices, which will encourage, train and support young women to participate fully in decision-making within the YWCA, the wider community and the UK Youth Parliament.

2002

Alone in London

£5,000

To improve the participation of young people in shaping policy and managing the agency. In the long term, through its services such as advocacy it will involve young people in public decision-making.

The Ark Trust, Edinburgh

£2,500

To establish a six-month pilot project, led by 4-6 young homeless people from the drop-in-centre, to initiate dialogue between homeless young people and those setting policies on homelessness and drug related issues.

Barnardo's, UK wide

£10,000

To support the first year of a three-year national post to start the process of embedding young people consultation and participation into all areas of Barnardo's work.

Children's Rights Officers and Advocates (CROA), England

£14,000

To enable CROA carry out a longitudinal study to evaluate the training for young people with a care background to ensure their effective participation in policy-making and practice, thereby improving their life and career opportunities.

Children's Society, UK wide

£5,000

To support young people in monitoring the government's reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and in putting forward supplementary evidence to the UN as part of the Children's Society's wider work of involving young people with government.

DARE Foundation, Scotland

£5,000

To enable the organisation to improve the opportunities and support for terminally ill young people to secure further education, training or employment by developing a workshop programme throughout Scotland involving young people, carers, parents, employers, education providers, and voluntary bodies.

Democratic Dialogue (DD), N Ireland

£5,000

To build on recent innovative work of developing Citizenship and Education in schools, by researching the views of young people on the current political system in N. Ireland, to provide political parties with ideas on how to engage young people in political decision-making.

Development Education Association (DEA), UK wide

£10,000

To assist in establishing a young people's network across the UK to ensure youth involvement in DEA's global youth work programme, and to improve youth work practice within the statutory and voluntary sector by ensuring that global perspectives are integral.

Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse (FARE), Glasgow

£11,000

To enable a local young person to support the youth forum, and contribute to local policy and action, while training in youth work and related skills as a member of the FARE team.

First Key, Leeds

£10,000

To carry out a pilot project, drawing upon the expertise of care experienced young people, to develop a quality framework for care services for young people, which will be used as a basis for carrying out audits of local authority and agency services.

Foyer Federation, UK wide

£5,000

To enable young people to make their views known to the key decision-makers in the Foyer Federation and more widely.

Fusion, Oxford

£5,000

Towards a project using creative media to involve 13-19 year olds, from five different organisations working with socially excluded groups, in the planning for the future regeneration of East Oxford.

Green Explorer, North Yorkshire

£33,000

Towards a part-time co-ordinator for this rural community association to support the participation of young people with special needs in wider decision-making.

Hansard Society, UK wide

£5,000

Towards the cost of building, piloting and evaluating a website, Y Vote Online, where young people can explore and discuss issues that matter to them.

Howard League, London

£15,300

Towards a programme to enable young people to make effective input locally and nationally into community safety and youth justice planning.

Mobex North East/Save the Children, Tyne & Wear

£15,000

Towards a two-year partnership project to help young refugees develop the confidence and skills to play their full part in the host community, including influencing policy and practice locally and nationally.

National Children's Bureau (NCB)

£10,000

To develop a State of the Children's Countryside Report, which will reflect young people's experience of living in the countryside and enable young people become involved in public debate about its future.

Stonewall Youth Project, Edinburgh

£13,500

Towards a three-year programme to extend the Project's outreach to those who are particularly excluded; to involve young lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people in the planning and delivery of services; and to assist them gain experience and skills to take part in democratic and civil life.

TimeBank, London

£5,000

To assist young people to refine a suite of innovative, games-based software, which helps young people to think deeply about their own concerns and to plan and manage their own projects in school and community.

Thomas Coram Research Unit and Learning through Landscapes, London

£10,000

To develop and evaluate a method of introducing children (age 3 to 5 years) to the process of decision-making through a project to improve the effective use of school grounds for their own enjoyment and development.

Trust for the Study of Adolescence (TSA), UK wide

£30,000

To carry out a wide review of support and campaigning groups for the socially excluded, such as young disabled people, young carers, and gay and lesbian people.

YMCA England

£5,000

To establish three regional young people's fora a year for each of three years, mirroring Regional Development Agencies regions, to explore citizenship and enable young people to influence RDA's policy and practice.

Youth Action Network, Birmingham

£30,000

Towards a youth Participation Support Worker to develop youth participation within its own activities and more widely.

2003

Africans Unite Against Child Abuse (Afruca), London

£5,400

To establish a Youth Forum to help develop the leadership and decision-making skills of young Africans living in the UK.

Centre for Innovation in Voluntary Action, London

£5,000

To support an international summer school for young people run entirely by young people. The summer school will provide an environment where young people who are active in their communities can share experiences and gain new skills.

Children's Rights Alliance for England

£30,000

To extend the U What? Project for a further two years to enable the Young People Translation Unit to support government in producing young people accessible consultation documents.

Citizen Organising Foundation, London

£15,000

To provide follow up action from the Trust funded Peoples Inquiry into Saltley, when young people successfully argued for city officials' and business' action on issues of concern, and to launch new work in another neighbourhood

Citizenship Foundation, London

£7,500

To adapt Youth Action! An American citizenship programme, into a UK context.

Children's Parliament, Scotland

£15,000

To develop a Scottish-wide network in 20 local authority areas, which will meet monthly to talk about issues, and come together annually as a Children's Parliament.

Children in Scotland

£30,000

To provide training workshops and seminars and an exchange of practice for youth participation workers; to enable the agency set-up a young person's e-network and to increase the participation of workers and young people in the policy process at local and national level.

Community Consortium, Essex

£9,000

To support the ENABLER – Youth in Regeneration initiative, part of a wider community empowerment programme aimed at supporting young people to engage in the regeneration of their area.

Cumbria Youth Alliance

£13,500

To develop direct involvement of young people in policy development by establishing six co-terminus youth representative groups each of which will be represented on Joint Policy Advisory Committees.

Depaul Trust, Newcastle upon Tyne

£15,000

To support a youth worker, with expertise in using arts based skills, to engage young people in shaping planning decisions in the East of Newcastle.

Devon Youth Association

£15,000

To support a National pilot of the Young Assessors programme, giving young people the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge required to assess and effect change to services that affect their lives.

Heeley Development Trust, Sheffield

£30,000

To establish a youth consultancy service run by young people in Sheffield as a development of the Heeley Youth Participation project set up in 1998.

Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), England

£14,000

To pilot and evaluate pupil governorship in secondary schools in England under new regulations permitting young people to become associated members of governing bodies.

Longford Community Resources Ltd, Ireland

£7,000

To develop a primary health course led by and for the young Travellers Women's group focusing on 14-16 year olds.

Northern Ireland Youth Forum

£20,000

To facilitate the development and publication of a Northern Ireland wide cross-sectoral Youth Participation Strategy.

Partners in Advocacy, Edinburgh

£15,000

To enable the agency establish a number of self-advocacy groups specifically for young people with learning disabilities for skill development, collective action and social interaction.

School Councils UK, London

£15,000

To set up and service a national network of schools councils.

Wansbeck Council for Voluntary Service, Northumberland

£5,000

To work with Northumberland Youth services to assist in the development and delivery of a Young People's Equality Congress led by and for young people.

West End Youth and Community Centre – Theatre Pie

£15,000

To enable Theatre Pie build on an accredited training programme for young people in community theatre arts skills and citizen education. The programme links with local and regional policy-makers, and young people's service providers.

Woodcraft Folk in Wales

£15,000

To increase the numbers and level of young people participating in the running of their Wales-wide environment sustainability project, focussing upon the theme of Participating in Democracy.

2004**Bolton Lads & Girls Club, Lancashire**

£10,000

Towards the Make an Impact project, to enable under privileged young people to participate in the Local Area Forums established by the Borough of Bolton as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

British Youth Council (BYC), UK wide

£25,000

To pilot Every Young Voice, a project to widen BYC membership and increase the participation of young people who are socially excluded or not involved. This will help to revitalise the roles played by Local Youth Councils in decision-making partnerships.

Centre for Educational Innovation, Brighton

£19,000

To support a National Dissemination Worker to work with the University of Sussex Student Voice Team, based at the Centre who are currently working with young people, teachers, other professionals and the Local Authority in Portsmouth to develop ways in which to develop Student Voice in schools and the wider community.

Centre for Sustainable Energy, Bristol

£10,000

Towards the Climate Change Challenge, a new programme that will team young people with policy makers to deliver sustainable energy and action plans for their area. The programme will be developed in four local authorities in the South West in association with four secondary schools (500 young people).

Centrepoint 8:59, Oxford

£16,000

In collaboration with Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership, the National Development Team are developing a Housing Action Project, to encourage young people to actively participate in decision-making to seek solutions to homelessness in rural Oxfordshire.

Changemakers (Foundation), Nr Wells

£10,000

To design and develop a peer advocacy toolkit which will feed into a three year National Youth Action Tank Project (NYAT) - a peer advocacy project where young activists will work to promote and support the positive community involvement of other young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and environments.

Children's Research Centre, Open University

£19,000

CRC had piloted work with two cohorts of children and young people, training them to become peer researchers. The grant will help children and young people develop new ways of making sure that their research is used by decision-makers – in schools, and their local communities.

The Children's Society, London

£10,500

To support the evaluation and further development of their Young People's Charter of Participation.

Dove House Community Trust, Derry, N Ireland

£10,000

To recruit and train a team of young people to develop a youth charter and development plan, to meet the needs of young people in Bogside and Brandywell area of Northern Ireland.

English Secondary Students' Association (ESSA) – Phoenix Education Trust, London

£30,000

To 'pump-prime' the development of ESSA, a young people-led organisation, as the representative body for secondary school students in England.

Hi8us South Ltd, London

£15,000

Towards the Tag Map interactive youth consultation website project. The project will enable the agency to engage and consult in a creative way with young people in the regeneration of their area

Motiv8, Portsmouth

£10,200

To develop the Involvement Project enabling young people voice their views about 'what works' with regard to Motiv8 and citywide services to reduce, prevent and stop offending amongst young people.

Network 81, Stanstead

£12,600

Towards Something to Say, a project aimed to support groups of young people with special education needs to decide their own standards guidelines for quality of inclusion in mainstream schools, including developing best practice ideas for their involvement in decision-making.

Redburn Community Centre NI Youth Group, Holywood, N, Ireland

£1,000

To enable the group to hold an intergenerational conference to share their learning experience, launch a report, and demonstrate how young people can become more informed and knowledgeable.

Weston Spirit, Liverpool

£4,500

Towards the first National Award ceremony for the UP2U Awards. The Awards, piloted in Merseyside, are managed by young people who interview decision-makers in public services before voting on those organisations they feel best meet their needs.

West Sussex Voluntary Organisations' Liaison Group (VOLG), Billingshurst

£10,000

Towards a part-time Training and Development Officer to train young people as trainers to lead on the planning and delivery of a consultative training event with Children's services providers and young people across the County.

Young Scot Enterprise, Edinburgh

£20,000

To support a group of pilot initiatives to test the technical and social infrastructure for E-Voting, E-Consultation and Smart Citizenship.

Youthlink Scotland, Edinburgh

£20,000

Towards a joint initiative with Dundee University to work with youth workers and other local authority staff across departments in three local authorities, to monitor and evaluate their approach for involving young people.

2005**Northern Ireland Social & Political Archive (ARK)**

£12,000

With a number of organisations, ARK had carried out a Young Life and Times Survey of 16 year olds in Northern Ireland, and published 'Voices Behind the Statistics'. With permission from the Inland Revenue ARK would use a sample of 16 year olds from their Child Benefit registers to run the surveys over the next two years.

Save the Children, Wales

£35,000

Towards 'seed' funding for an emerging Participation Network for practitioners across Wales to develop capacity, share good practice and disseminate information.

Children in Northern Ireland (CiNi)

£30,000

Towards a similar proposal to develop a network to support practitioners in Northern Ireland.

Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People (GMCPD)

£10,000

For a local and nationwide Peer Support/Consultancy Service, which would support and empower young disabled people to be more actively involved in decision-making processes both locally and nationally.

Eighteen and Under

£15,000

Towards a pilot project 'Taking Over the Asylum' to encourage and allow young people to take an active role in the management of the organisation and in decision-making at all levels. The grant would support a part-time worker to set up a shadow youth management board and to recruit and train young volunteers.

Citizenship Foundation

£15,000

To develop a Youth Act Toolkit for the long-term development of the programme, as the work had generated interest outside London.

Annex 2

CYPI Staff 1996 – 2007

Razia Begum	June 2003 – February 2004
Robert Bell	September 2003 – September 2007
Samantha Bramwell	September 1996 – July 1998
Tom Burke	July 2006 – March 2007
Sara Bryson	October 2000 – August 2002
Elise Christensen	June 2003 – September 2003
Abi Carter	November 2004 – March 2007
Terry Clark	January 2005 – July 2006
Lila Cooper	September 1998 – January 2000
David Cutler	June 1999 – July 2003
Raji Hunjan	September 2003 – August 2006
Roger Frost	October 1996 – March 1997
Kylie Kilgour	February 2000 – December 2000
Morven Masterton	February 2006 – June 2006
John Mayne	May 1996 – December 2007
Sandra Mills	January 2000 – June 2004
Mayse Nababteh	October 2004 – December 2004
Yvonne Pick	January 1999 – January 2000
Habibur Rahman	June 2002 – April 2003
Claire Reindorp	November 1996 – October 1998
Rebecca Robinson	June 1998 – July 1999
Sarah Schulman	January 2006 – December 2006
Rehema Shabaya	September 2004 – January 2006
Mahpara Thompson	March 2004 – January 2005
Alice Taylor	September 2002 – December 2003
Laura Wirtz	May 2002 – May 2003

Kirklees Project

Angela Tingle	April 1998 – July 1999
Nina Green	September 1998 – May 1999
Roy Fulwood	March 1998 – May 1999

Members of CYPI Advisory Committees

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Lynne Carney
Charles Clark
James Doorley
Rajeeb Dey
Tony Elson
Stephen Foster
Emma Frank
Roger Frost
Alan Gemmill
Ravi Gurumurthy
John Harding
Jeremy Holmes
Professor David Ingram
Lord Laming
John Leighfield
Roz Mascarenhas
Monty Meth
Gary Rowland
Charlie McConnell
John Naylor
Reena Patel
Judith Phillips
Angharad Price
Rob Smith
Sir Kenneth Stowe
Sir William Utting
Dame Gillian Wagner
Robin Watson
Roy Woodrow
Tom Wylie
John Wyn Owen

Annex 3

CYPI Publications

Inspiring Schools: Case Studies for Change

By Professor Lynn Davis

Inspiring Schools is a series of publications which examine the Impact of Pupil Participation in School Settings, written by Professor Lynn Davis of Birmingham University. Inspiring Schools is an extensive literature review, which draws on existing evidence about the benefits of pupil voice. The series comments on a range of pupil participation activities and strategies adopted by schools and illustrates a wide variety of frameworks and participation activities.

"they help you get respect": Booklet and DVD

By PWNE

This is a booklet and DVD film package created by members of the Participation Workers Network for England (PWNE) as an introduction to 'participation work'. It is a valuable tool for all those who wish to improve the way they involve children & young people – not just 'Participation Workers'.

Remixing Citizenship: Democracy and Young People's Use of the Internet

By Dr. Stephen Coleman

Remixing Citizenship starts from the position that it is not young people that are disconnected from formal politics, but political institutions that are disconnected from young people.

The report sets a new agenda for debating the relationship between young people, the Internet and democracy. It argues that the nature of citizenship is changing – there is a generation moving to newer, more creative forms of participation and that new forms of communication are key to this. Young people are now able to sample and remix citizenship, picking out the desired elements and discarding those that lack relevance. Remixing Citizenship refers to the idea of adding one's own innovation to the concept of citizenship.

Expanding and Sustaining Involvement: A Snapshot of Participation Infrastructure for Young People living in England

By David Cutler and Alice Taylor

In April 2003 the Children and Young People's Unit (CYPU) in the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) commissioned the Carnegie Young People Initiative to examine the evidence regarding organisational participation infrastructure in the statutory and voluntary sectors in England. This report looks at existing research on participation infrastructure. This is supplemented by a review of the much greater accumulation of policies and by over thirty discussions with key stakeholders, comprising academics, policy makers and practitioners.

Measuring the Magic: Evaluating and researching young people's participation in public decision-making

By Perpetua Kirby

This report examines the different ways in which involving young people in decision – making could be measured and evaluated. It recommends a number of different ways of effectively evaluating work in a variety of settings.

Circus Skills

By Kylie Kilgour

Published in 2002, this is the first ever survey which looks at training, support and developmental needs of Participation Workers in England. Its main recommendation was the need for a Participation Workers' Network.

Standard! (2003)

By David Cutler

This report raises the question of how standards can be applied to young people's involvement in the decisions which shape their lives. It looks at the use of standards by young people's organisations and others and draws lessons.

Logged Off: How ICT can connect young people and politics

By Lydia Howland with Matthew Bethnal

Can ICT reduce the democratic deficit? This report explores and analyses a number of youth projects that use ICTs, and concludes that the digital technology has an important part to play, but only if young people are offered power over decisions that affect them.

The Taking the Initiative Series

This series mapped activity to promote young people's involvement in public decision-making across the five countries of the UK and Ireland. It looks at activity in the fields of national and local government, education and health, illustrated by case studies and ending with an analysis of what more needs to be done. It was based on a series of reports by our research partners under the common title of 'Taking the Initiative' – studies on Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were also published.

International Reports

Youth participation in Barbados

By Richard Carter

Ways of promoting youth participation in education in Denmark

By Sine Lehn

Young peoples participation in Germany

By Werner Frenzel and Willy Essmann

Youth participation in decision-making process in Lithuania

By Algirdas Augustaitis

The empowerment of young people through participation in public life and civic society in Portugal

By Catarina Lains

Youth and nation building in South Africa from youth struggles to youth development

By Steve Mokwena

A report on young peoples' participation in public decision-making in Uganda

By D Kawaka Obbo

Promoting young peoples' involvement in public decision-making in the USA

By David Cutler

Carnegie UK Trust is one of over twenty foundations worldwide set up by Scots American Andrew Carnegie, working to support a more just, democratic, peaceful and sustainable world. We support independent commissions of inquiry into areas of public concern, together with action and research programmes.

If you would like to comment on this publication or offer feedback please email morag@carnegieuk.org

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