



Red Nose Day Funny Business

Evaluation of Stage 1 of 'Do it for Real' 2015

5th June 2015



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Introduction

This document serves to evaluate 'Funny Business', the first stage of Do It for Real, the partnership between Spirit of 2012, Comic Relief and UnLtd. It contains:

- a description of the project
- quantitative data (produced by Comic Relief and research company Chrysalis)
- outcomes linked to project objectives
- summary of the successes and challenges faced in year one
- seven case studies of youth groups that took part.

Background

In 2015, Spirit of 2012 partnered with Comic Relief and UnLtd to create 'Do it for Real', a four-step programme to inspire young people to become agents of change in their communities.

'Funny Business' was stage 1 of the programme. It aimed to use Red Nose Day 2015 as a springboard to encourage young people to hold events that would have a positive impact in their communities. Through running these events, it was hoped that young people would experience the positive benefits of social action that connects communities. And for some, this would provide the spark to continue with the event or apply to UnLtd for awards to carry on their good work.



Outcomes for success

For this stage, Spirit of 2012's selected key outcomes of success are:

- People are inspired and empowered to get (more) involved in their communities
- Inclusive national and regional events enable groups to connect and have fun
- Events show that getting involved in the community (as a volunteer or 'connector') can be fun, engaging and rewarding.

Research aims and approach

The aims of the research were to look at why young people got involved in Red Nose Day 2015 through youth groups, as well as the impact of that involvement on themselves, their groups, and their communities.

Comic Relief developed a short online questionnaire, which was distributed to youth groups around the UK who had been sent a fundraising pack soon after Red Nose Day. A total of 38 participants responded to the survey by the time it closed on 3rd April and nine of these were contacted for follow-up telephone interviews. The interviews were carried out by Chrysalis Research between 6th and 15th April 2015.

Comic Relief staff also attended seven Red Nose Day events over the weekend of Red Nose Day (Friday 13th – Sunday 15th March) as well as the planning events to form the basis of the case studies.

Profile of participants

Nine phone interviews were carried out with the following organisations:

Youth Groups	Scout Groups	Other Community Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth centre, Bermondsey Youth club, Jersey Youth group (linked with a church), Harrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scout group, mid-Wales Scout group, Wiltshire Rainbows group, Surrey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity group, Devon After school club, Hampshire Community group promoting social action, Lancashire

Four of the nine interviewees were either qualified youth workers or after school club coordinators. The remaining five were volunteers and the clubs took up a significant amount of their spare time in administration, and planning and running activities.

The impact of changes in funding for community projects was evident in the sample. The Lancashire community group replaced a group that had previously been run by the local authority while the Bermondsey group now operates with eight professional youth workers, having previously been staffed by a team of 30. This has led to a reliance on volunteers.

In terms of intake, the ‘uniformed’ youth groups considered their intakes to be predominantly middle class, while the professional youth workers and community groups tended to work with young people from more diverse backgrounds.

Seven case studies were conducted using the following organisations:

Youth Groups	Other Community Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth Group, Somerset• Youth Club, London• Youth Group, Berkshire• Youth Group, London• Youth Group, Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth Council, Kent• Young People's Project, Newcastle

Most of these groups were in areas of deprivation and saw themselves as a safe place for young people to learn new skills and meet new people. Two groups considered their young people to be from more affluent backgrounds where the communities encouraged young people to participate in 'productive' out of school activities.

Stage 1 in numbers

This data has been produced by Comic Relief and Chrysalis to quantitatively support Spirit's key outcome measurements. They have been generated from analysis of pack orders, website interactions, social media engagement and responses to the evaluation surveys.

Involvement and engagement facts and figures¹

- **3,800** youth groups around the UK took part in Red Nose Day events
- **94,000** young people were involved
- **224,000** people attended the events

- **7,455** bespoke Red Nose Day Youth Group packs were sent out
- **3,072** clicks (reach of 97,027) through bespoke Facebook advert
- **26** youth group chains partners
- **301** tweets mentions of Red Nose Day in Youth Groups

Varied activities took place across the UK, from car washes to skills swaps. The three most popular were bake sales, talent shows and family fun days. These were reported as being used as catalysts to reach out into the community and bring people together.

- **96%** of survey respondents would hold a similar event again
- **80%** of attendees and **90%** of young people involved said that they had fun
- **32%** of young people said as a result of the event they felt more involved in the local community and that they have a voice

¹ Based on extrapolation of raw data collected by Chrysalis

Spirit's key outcomes of success

This section evaluates the extent to which Stage 1 (Funny Business) met three of Spirit's outcomes relating to social action. These findings are based on responses to the evaluation survey and phone interviews as well as visits to events.



Key outcome: People are inspired and empowered to get (more) involved in their communities

- 96% of survey respondents would hold a similar event again
- 35% of survey respondents reported that attendees said they would like to take part in another similar event

'I think events like these are incredibly important, the whole community is involved - it boosts community spirit' (Police Officer who attended event)

'Perhaps just as valuable [as the money raised] were the less tangible benefits for the young people and their relationship with the local community'
(Youth Group leader)

Reaching outwards

Interview participants confirmed that the events had led their groups to reach out to their communities, with some suggesting that the outcomes were significant for both the group themselves and the young people involved. As one scout leader commented, *'It helped raise the profile of our group, we now do a lot for the community'*.

For some, the Red Nose Day events helped them publicise their group and it helped them to highlight what they are doing with the young people they are working with. It also helped them connect with parents by getting them involved in activities. This often resulted in parents celebrating their children's: *'We got lots of parents in each day looking at what we were doing and buying things the children had made'* (Youth Group leader).

For many, it was the connection with their communities and the positive feedback they received that was the biggest take away from their events: *'Some people look down on young people and one of our main aims at the Youth Council is to challenge negative stereotypes. In organising our Red Nose Day event I think we really managed to do this. What we can achieve when we work together is amazing.'* (Young person who arranged event, aged 15)

Inspired to continue the good work

The vast majority of young people who took part would hold similar events again. For some groups holding a Red Nose Day event was a natural progression, building on the work that they had already started to get their young people more involved in their communities. *'Community means a lot to us and we like being able to work with local people and make a*



positive contribution to their lives. In this case, we decided to build on a year-long campaign to make Dartford happy by running a fun event for families’ (Young person, aged 17).

For others it proved to be a way to start off a journey to a more joined up community, a reason to build new connections and relationships. In an area that had experience difficult community relation, the youth leader commented *‘I knew that some local people are a bit wary of the youth group after bad experiences in the past, so I thought fundraising for Comic Relief would be a great way to start developing more positive relationships’.*

Key outcome: Inclusive national and regional events enable groups to connect and have fun

- 40% of respondents said there was a more positive feeling towards young people in the area following the Red Nose Day activities
- 80% of attendees and 90% of young people involved said that they had fun

‘It’s great to see events organised and run by young people, very impressive!’
(Event attendee, aged 35)

Connecting across communities

The majority of the young people involved as well the people who attended these events stated that they had fun. Red Nose Day is always marketed as a day out of the ordinary, a day to have fun whilst doing good; but the events held by the survey respondents went even further. Connections were made in communities, new friendships were formed, and young people felt a real sense of achievement from their involvement, *‘New people have joined the group and it’s great to see new friendships being made. The young organisers grew hugely in self-confidence – they were really passionate about making the event work and took pride in its success’ (Youth Group Leader).*

Some groups used their Red Nose Day events as a chance to highlight what they do, inviting local people in to see their facilities, what they have to offer, and how they work with young people and the wider community, *‘It’s nice to find out more about what goes on here and the different services available’ (local businesswoman who donated cakes for community event, aged 46).* *‘I didn’t even know this was here! It’s amazing! We were lured in by cake, but have learnt loads. It’s lovely to see young people taking action, being proactive and raising money for others’ (local resident who had never been to the Youth Group’s facilities before, aged 21).*

Inclusive Events

A lot of the groups who took part were from less affluent areas of the country, so for them being truly inclusive was very important. One young person spoke about how, whilst they recognised that raising money was important, their group was acutely aware of the depravation in the area and wanted to make sure that families were not excluded from their activities because they couldn't afford to come. It obviously worked, with one mum who attended commenting, *'We had a great time. The kids really enjoyed it, they engaged in all of the activities and would love to come again. It was nice to meet other children and as I'm a single parent on a low income it was good that we could afford to come. The teenagers organising everything were fantastic!'* (Event attendee, aged 27).

Community members also reported that they felt more connected to the groups as they were proud to be part of something bigger, *'The young people should be so very proud of their achievement tonight. They have done a wonderful job and I am really pleased to have been part of it'* (Event attendee, aged 65).

Key outcome: Events show that getting involved in the community (as a volunteer or 'connector') can be fun, engaging and rewarding

- 30% of survey respondents reported that attendees said they felt more engaged in their local community
- 32% of young people involved said that after organising events they felt more involved and that they had a voice in their local community
- 10% of attendees and 15% of young people involved said they have been inspired to volunteer in their community

'I think this should be an annual event! When we read so many negative stories about young people it's lovely to see them doing something positive'

(Event attendee, aged 72)

Enjoying being part of something bigger

The young people organising and running the events certainly enjoyed their experience. Evaluation respondents said that the young people enjoyed the activity and gained satisfaction from being part of a community and the money they raised for a good cause. They enjoyed feeling part of something bigger and the recognition their efforts got from parents, the local community and, in some cases, the media.

A rewarding experience

Evaluation respondents also mentioned community-related impacts and an increase in confidence and self-esteem. One participant reflected that personal development may have been a result of opportunity for informal interaction with other people that they would not otherwise have had. The informal and fun nature of the activities helped young people develop relationships with their peers and their community, *'The nature of the activity which was fun and informal helped break down some of the barriers between the young people and helped bring them out of their shell'* (Youth Group leader).

All of the youth group leaders interviewed stated that the young people had gained valuable life skills and increased their employability by taking part in Red Nose Day events, *'The young organisers grew hugely in self-confidence – they were really passionate about making the event work and took pride in its success'* (Youth Group leader).

The young people themselves confirmed this, *'This has given us new belief in ourselves, made us feel as if we can do so much more. I never thought I'd be able to go out and talk to people in the street, but I did it. I'm so much more confident and I've got loads of new skills, such as teamwork, marketing, budgeting... We've worked really well as a team and learnt from each other. And on top of that, there's the satisfaction and warm feeling you get from helping others. It's been a great experience'* (Young person who arranged event, aged 13).

Conclusions

Overall it is clear that the young people involved thoroughly enjoyed organising, planning and delivering their Red Nose Day community events. The young people, as well as the community members who attended the events, had fun. The young people also gained in terms of their confidence and their connection with the community, with many reporting that they would be continuing to work as active members of their communities after the completion of their Red Nose Day activities.

Before we embarked on this project we noted that a recent study by the National Citizen Service found low levels of confidence among British youth, with one third suffering from lack of self-belief, seven out of 10 feeling they do not have the skills to set up their own business and six out of 10 believing they lack leadership skills. In this environment of disengaged young people who feel disenfranchised and isolated from their communities, the level of those who have reported that they feel more engaged and involved in their communities is pleasing. This is an excellent result for year one and puts the project in a strong position for the second year. As one youth worker noted, *"I think this has shown our young people the benefits of working in the community. It's a lot to ask them to volunteer regularly, but this has been a great start."*



As of 6th May 2015 there had been 47 expressions of interest to UnLtd for stages 2-4 of 'Do it for Real'. This is more than we anticipated for this period and serves to prove that this offer is something that young people are keen to get involved in.

Successes

- Our pack was well received and marketed, with an excellent first year sell through rate
- Complicated messaging and partnership structure was well understood and communicated, with young people being clear about what they were asked to do and why
- Umbrella organisations were very keen to get involved and promote through their channels – we already have many signed up and excited for next year!
- Survey findings have given us a strong base to litmus test next year's success against.

Challenges to address for Sport Relief 2016

- Measurement against Spirit's outcomes was hard at events as we were relying upon group leaders to complete surveys and phone interviews on behalf of their young people and event attendees
- Understanding of the definition of social action and community, as well as how events can be socially beneficial, was not clear throughout all of our audience. Now we have more information about the UnLtd Awards, case studies of successful events, and award applicant examples we can use this to make these terms clearer and promoted
- Leaders who worked with teenagers in uniformed groups saw this as potentially a good fit with their aims and a good way of young people gaining recognition for their work in the community. However, many felt it would be likely to be taken up more widely if linked to a scouting or youth award.

"Red Nose Day was amazing, we can't wait for next year. We are planning on going bigger and better!"

(Thamesmead Youth Group planning committee)

Case Studies

The following case studies explore key outcomes for the first stage of 'Do It for Real'. They are geographically and demographically diverse, looking at the impact that Red Nose Day events had on the young people organising as well as the wider community taking part. Findings are based on observations and informal interviews with organisers, attendees and youth group leaders.

Dartford Youth Council, Dartford, Kent: Making the Town Happy

Dartford Youth Council used Red Nose Day as a focus for raising its profile and making the town happy!

The activity: a family fun event in a local shopping centre

Outcomes for young people: promoting the Youth Council, teamwork, confidence and self-esteem

Outcomes for the community: positive young role models, bringing families together and having fun!

Dartford Youth Council gives young people a voice and a chance to change their town for the better. Council members – aged 12 to 18 – meet monthly to discuss local issues affecting young people and organise campaigning and fundraising initiatives. Membership of the Council is highly prized, empowering young people and giving them an incomparable opportunity to develop new skills and forge new friendships.

In 2014 the Council organised a Sport Relief Mile for Comic Relief but was disappointed by the amount raised. *'This year we wanted to do something bigger and better,'* explains one of the Council members. *'Community means a lot to us and we like being able to work with local people and make a positive contribution to their lives. In this case, we decided to build on a year-long campaign to make Dartford happy by running a fun event for families.'*



Party planning

The young people began by identifying the key objectives of their Red Nose Day fundraising:

- raising money
- raising the Youth Council's profile and generating interest in membership
- having fun and feeding into a year-long campaign to make Dartford happy!

Based on these objectives, the Youth Council members decided to target young families and agreed that the most likely place to find them on Saturday afternoons was at the shopping centre.

As experienced event planners, the young people recognised from the outset the importance of making sure roles and responsibilities were divided fairly and sensibly. They talked about what they were all good at - for example communicating, dealing with money, artwork and working with children - then matched their skills to job roles. They delegated shifts to share out the workload on the day and drew up a clear timetable for the event.

To get the ball rolling, the young people approached management at the shopping centre for permission to run the event. Working with the adults, they identified an appropriate space and organised logistics such as music.

As a group, they decided to focus on activities that would particularly appeal to families with young children: biscuit and cake decorating, face and nail painting, selling sweets and masks, games, fun competitions for the kids and a sweepstake for the mums and dads. *'We were conscious of ROI (return on investment) and spent time working out costings and scaling up,'* explains the group's finance manager. *'But overall we decided that we needed to spend money to make money. We drew up a detailed shopping list and researched the cheapest places to buy things to ensure we could meet our fundraising target of £125.'*

Event promotion was an important part of the planning process. The young people designed posters to display in local schools and offices and spread the word among friends and family. They arranged coverage in the local paper and promoted what was happening on Facebook and Twitter. They also enlisted the support of the Mayor of Dartford, who tweeted about the event. To back up their fundraising on the day, they set up a Just Giving page.



Family fun for all

As with any good party, getting ready was a big part of the fun! Inspired by the call to make their faces funny for money, the young people gave each other wild makeovers with face paint, colourful wigs, fake moustaches and mad make-up. They hoped that this would inspire families to get involved and bring a smile to harassed shoppers' faces.

The event began at midday and from the start created a real buzz in the shopping centre. The area had been decorated with posters and bunting from Comic Relief's youth group pack supplemented by the Youth Council's own materials. The young people had created a display board directing families to the fun and took it in turns to be walking adverts, attracting attention with their enthusiasm and funny faces.

From the outset, it was clear that all the planning and preparation had paid off. Families flocked to the event, happy to take a break from shopping and spend some time relaxing with their children. As one mum said: *'We really enjoyed it – it was something fun for the kids to do. I don't usually come to this part of the shopping centre, but I saw the young people walking around advertising and decided to have a look. The fun activities were perfect for my 5-year-old. It has been nice to see children being encouraged by the young people and shown how to do new things.'*



With the Red Nose Day TV programme from the night before fresh in their minds, people were keen to get involved and help to fundraise. When the money raised was counted at



the end of the day, Youth Council members were delighted to have raised £142 – exceeding their target by nearly £20.

Changing stereotypes of young people

Evaluating the event against its original objectives, the young people concluded that it had succeeded both in raising money and the profile of the Youth Council. Several younger children asked for information about the Council and said they would be keen to join in the future.

Lots of parents commented on how impressive it was to see teenagers acting as great role models and being so proactive in the community. As an added bonus, the young people themselves felt that they had learned some valuable skills from the experience. *'I would never usually go up to a stranger and persuade them to come to our event.'* said one. *'It has boosted my confidence when speaking to adults.'*

Overall though, it was the positive feedback from the community that the Youth Council members valued the most. *'Some people look down on young people and one of our main aims at the Youth Council is to challenge negative stereotypes. In organising our Red Nose Day event I think we really managed to do this. What we can achieve when we work together is amazing.'*



Somerset Rural Youth, Somerset: Bringing young people together

Somerset Rural Youth harnessed the excitement of Red Nose Day to recruit new members to their youth group.

The activity: a themed Red Nose night and disco

Outcomes for young people: less isolation, new friendships and lots of fun!

Outcomes for the community: young people positively occupied and engaged ²

'Isolation, nowhere to go, nothing to do, no transport... All are problems that face many of our young people living in rural communities,' explains Sarah Cooke, who works for Somerset Rural Youth Project. 'Youth groups can be a lifeline for these youngsters, giving them something positive to feel part of.'

Organising a fundraising event for Red Nose Day offered an ideal opportunity to have some fun and get more young people involved in a Friday evening youth group. Five teenage members led the planning, developing communication and teamwork skills as they came up with ideas for the event, made arrangements and spread the word.

The final outcome was a themed party evening, with games, a disco and everyone dressed in red, white and blue. Members were invited to bring a friend who had never been to the youth group so they could find out more about the activities on offer. A £1 entry fee was charged and all proceeds were donated to Comic Relief.

The evening was a huge, lively, noisy success, culminating in a massive 'Just Dance-Off'. Members are already planning a repeat event for Sport Relief 2016 and are hoping to promote it earlier and further afield to attract even more support. Ideas being mooted include a skate jam, time trials on static bikes and a 'Colour Me Rad' run...

'The evening was a success on every level,' says Sarah Cooke, Assistant Project Worker. 'New people have joined the group and it's great to see new friendships being made. The young organisers grew hugely in self-confidence – they were really passionate about making the event work and took pride in its success.'

Somerset Rural Youth is now planning to apply for an UnLtd award to support the running of similar events in the future.

² Photos to follow, permissions being gathered.

Hawksmoor Youth Club, Hawksmoor, London: Improving inter-generational social cohesion

Hawksmoor Youth Club decided to use Red Nose Day fundraising to help bring the community together, particularly families.

The activity: a family fun day, talent show and sleepover

Outcomes for young people: planning and teamwork skills, friendship, fun and self-esteem

Outcomes for the community: improved relationships between different generations and fun for everyone!

'We, Hawksmoor Youth Club, want to bring the community together by providing a family fun day with talent show. We also want to organise a fun sleepover at the Youth Club for members. And raise money for Red Nose Day!'



This was the declared aim of eight young people as they set out to make a difference to those helped by Comic Relief and in their community in Thamesmead, London. In an area where lack of cohesion, anti-social behaviour and crime are cited by local residents as frequent problems, Hawksmoor Youth Club offers 10 to 19-year-olds a bolthole where they can take part in activities, learn new skills and find friendship. In turn, the young people are keen to act as positive role models and give something back to their community.



Roles, responsibilities and resources

The group decided to organise two events to raise money for Red Nose Day:

- a family fun day, complete with bouncy castle, face painting, arts and crafts, baking, nail art, tattoos, games, refreshments and talent show
- a sleepover party for club members aged 10 to 13.

To kick-start their planning, the young people filled in a skills audit identifying their strengths in communication, organisation, problem-solving, numeracy and research. Based on this, they decided (democratically!) who should take on different roles in the team, including project manager, publicity officer, budget manager and health and safety officer. Being clear from the outset about who was doing what and when played a key part in the smooth running of activities.

While recognising that raising money was important, the young people were keen to make sure that families weren't excluded from the fun day because they couldn't afford to come. With this in mind, they decided to charge a small entry fee to cover all the activities on offer (£2), leaving parents with the option of spending more on cakes and refreshments if they wished.

As a result, the budget was tight from the start and the young people thought hard about whether to spend to accumulate. *'We realised that we'd have to spend some money on resources like tattoos and bouncy castle hire,'* explained the team's budget manager. *'To keep costs down as much as possible we did things like bringing ingredients in from home to bake cakes to sell. We decided we wanted to make £100 on the family fun day and £50 from the sleepover, and worked out that to meet our targets we'd need at least 50 people to come to the fun day and 16 to the sleepover.'*

To rally support, members promoted the events through leaflets, posters in the local area, a big banner outside the centre and word of mouth. As the date grew closer, momentum grew and excitement built.

Fundraising fun

Having watched the Red Nose Day TV programme the night before, local families turned out in force to support the event. Youth club members wearing red t-shirts and badges made great activity leaders and role models, getting everyone involved in arts and crafts, baking and table tennis. Their enthusiasm was infectious and soon younger children were rushing around the centre wanting to try everything. The bouncy castle proved particularly popular and a great way to burn off some energy... face painting, nail art and glitter tattoos were a colourful addition and cakes decorated with sugar paper red noses went down a treat.



After two hours of frenzied activity, visitors settled down on beanbags to enjoy the talent show staged by youth club members. Gymnasts, singers, dancers, magicians and performance poets all took to the floor, supported enthusiastically by their community audience. *'We had a great time at Hawksmoor Centre,' said one mum. 'The kids really enjoyed it, they engaged in all of the activities and would love to come again. It was nice to meet other children and as I'm a single parent on a low income it was good that we could afford to come. The teenagers organising everything were fantastic!'*

The family fun day was followed the next weekend by the sleepover party for young members, who paid £5 for the privilege of snacks, storytelling, games, films and very little sleep!



Targets met!

Reflecting on its fundraising efforts, the planning team was delighted with what it had achieved. *'Our aim was to raise £150 and in the end we made a grand total of £205 – £120 from the family fun day and £85 from the sleepover,'* explained the young project manager. *'I'm pleased that I got involved in organising everything because I learned things that I think will help me at school. The fun day was especially good because it helped to promote Hawksmoor Youth Club, as well as bringing the community together and making some really good family time.'*

Kintbury Youth Group, Kintbury, Berkshire: Building community bridges

Kintbury Youth Group used fundraising for Comic Relief as a fun, rewarding focus for fostering links with the local community.

The activity: working at the car wash

Outcomes for young people: cohesion as a new youth group, empowerment that they can make a difference, fun and friendship

Outcomes for the community: a more positive perception of young people ³

Kintbury Youth Group was set up recently to replace another group that had a poor reputation locally. Youth leader Lyn Cattlin saw Red Nose Day as the perfect opportunity to build bridges with the community while doing something worthwhile. *‘A core group of around 25 have started to attend the Youth Group regularly and they’re a great bunch of kids,’* she explains. *‘I knew that some local people are a bit wary of the youth group after bad experiences in the past, so I thought fundraising for Comic Relief would be a great way to start developing more positive relationships.’*

Deciding what to do to raise money required constructive discussion, negotiation and compromise. After some debate, the youngsters opted for a Saturday afternoon car-washing session as something that everyone would enjoy taking part in (the group includes boys and girls of different ages). As Kintbury is in an affluent area, the group decided to ask for donations rather than charging a set amount, reasoning that people were likely to be generous!

Working together for a good cause

The youngsters arrived on the day resplendent in red accessories and sporting a variety of Red Noses (£30 was raised through selling these alone). Armed with wellies, buckets and sponges, they set to their car-washing task with relish, getting soaking wet and having lots of fun in the process. A great impression was made thanks to the young people’s enthusiasm, polite manner with adults and the shiny outcomes of their hard work. Younger brothers and sisters also enjoyed getting stuck in, creating a real sense of the young community working together for a good cause.

³ Please note that if this case study is to be used externally the mentions of ‘bad experiences of the youth group in the past’ must be removed.



Many of the customers were parents, who enjoyed the opportunity to meet one another and were delighted to see their children involved in such a positive activity with their friends. Coverage in the local paper – which promoted the event in advance and featured a follow-up story – has raised the youth group's profile and helped to establish a good name for the new group. The event was also promoted through the local school, attracting new recruits.

'It was fantastic to see the young people bonding as they worked together to do something valuable,' says Lyn Cattlin. 'It was a good decision to hold the event on the Saturday after Red Nose Day as they had a really clear vision of where the money they raised was going and it made them work even harder. We raised £138 – a great result for the charity. Perhaps just as valuable were the less tangible benefits for the young people and their relationship with the local community.'



Streetwise Young People's Project, Newcastle upon Tyne: Giving something back to the community

Streetwise Young People's Project decided that Red Nose Day was a great opportunity to both give something back and promote its work.

The activity: karaoke, face painting, tombola and refreshments

Outcomes for young people: increased confidence, marketing and teamwork skills

Outcomes for the community: greater awareness of what Streetwise has to offer and new connections between different groups in the community

From its base in Newcastle city centre, Streetwise Young People's Project provides a free, friendly advice and support service for 13- to 25-year-olds. The project, which is funded by Comic Relief, can offer a safe place for young people struggling with the challenges of growing up in a city centre.

Among their number were six young volunteers who decided that Red Nose Day was a great opportunity to give something back. Together, they set about organising all sorts of fun and games to raise both money for the charity and awareness of what Streetwise has to offer.



It's all in the details...

The group met on Wednesdays for a few weeks before the event to put plans in place. They filled in a skills audit and assigned job roles accordingly – from project manager and budget manager to designer and face painter.

Stepping firmly out of their comfort zone, they plucked up courage to ask local businesses for raffle prizes and contributions to refreshments. They created flyers promoting the event and handed them out to people in the city centre. They prepared for the big day using stickers, balloons, posters and bucket labels provided in the Youth Group Fundraising Pack provided by Comic Relief.

Lured in by cake!

The young people had decided that the event should take place between 4pm and 7pm on Red Nose Day itself, in the gap between leaving school or work and settling down for the evening in front of the TV.

Tables were set up in the centre with a tombola and cakes and sweets for sale. A karaoke provided entertainment and face painting to make your face funny for money proved popular. One of the youth workers was sponsored to have his whole head painted red!



While the activities and refreshments raised money, posters and leaflets helped to raise awareness of Streetwise. An outreach officer was on hand to talk to young people attracted to the centre by the Red Nose Day shenanigans about the different services on offer.

Many visitors on the day and people that the young volunteers spoke to on the streets were surprised to hear about the work of Streetwise. *'It's nice to find out more about what goes on here and the different services available,'* said a neighbouring restaurant owner who donated cakes for sale.

'I didn't even know this was here! It's amazing!' said another visitor. 'We were lured in by cake, but have learnt loads. It's lovely to see young people taking action, being proactive and raising money for others.'

The young people themselves were delighted with the success of their first charity venture and are now keen to do more. They're already talking about how to make better use of the group's skills in the future – for example, one girl who is studying fashion and textiles wants to design and produce t-shirts and hold a fashion show in the centre.

'This has given us new belief in ourselves, made us feel as if we can do so much more,' said one of the volunteers. 'I never thought I'd be able to go out and talk to people in the street, but I did it. I'm so much more confident and I've got loads of new skills, such as teamwork, marketing, budgeting... We've worked really well as a team and learnt from each other. And on top of that, there's the satisfaction and warm feeling you get from helping others. It's been a great experience.'



Thamesmead Youth Voice, Thamesmead, London: Showing off their skills

Thamesmead Youth Voice used fundraising for Comic Relief as a focus for bringing the community together.

The activity: an open mic night showcasing young talent

Outcomes for young people: increased confidence, self-esteem and new event planning skills

Outcomes for the community: fantastic community spirit and greater awareness of what the centre offers for young people

As its name suggests, Thamesmead Youth Voice (TYV) aims to give young people a say in the future of their community. The group is based in a purpose-built centre complete with café and studios, and makes the most of the facilities to open up new opportunities for 11- to 19-year-olds living in this socially deprived area of London.

The youth workers at TYV find that social enterprise is a fantastic way to harness young people's enthusiasm, increase community spirit and make a real difference. This year members of the group decided that Red Nose Day – with its appeal to all and emphasis on fun – would provide an excellent focus for a community event.

Discussions and decisions

Twelve young people formed a planning group and identified their key aims as bringing the community together, raising money for Comic Relief and showing exactly what young people in Thamesmead are capable of. After some debate, they decided that an open mic night, with opportunities for young people to perform, would tick all the boxes.

Five two-hour planning meetings held in the month leading up to Red Nose Day passed in a flurry of discussion, decision-making, planning and action. Jobs were allocated and lists were drawn up so that everyone knew their responsibilities both during the planning process and on the night.

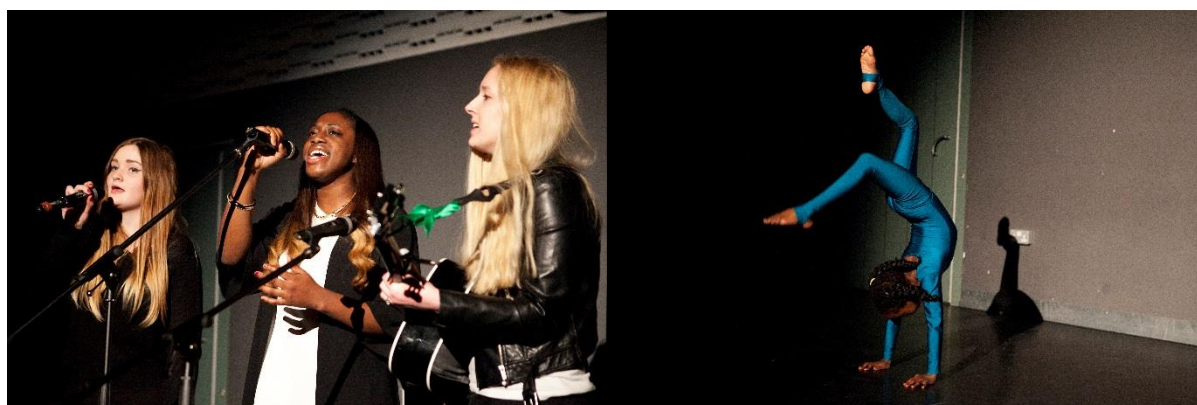
'We soon realised how much work goes into running a big event like this,' says one of the volunteers. 'As well as the advance stuff like shopping, rehearsals and risk assessments, we had to make detailed plans so that everything ran smoothly on the night. We produced a floorplan to show what would go where, did a breakdown of jobs and sorted out timings to the minute.'

As with any big event, budgeting was a concern from the outset. The young people had to pay money upfront for props and refreshments, and took care to keep an eye on the likely return on their investment. While buzzing with enthusiasm for their open mic night, they always kept in mind the overarching aim of making money for charity. They set up a Just Giving page so people could sponsor and support acts, as well as raising money through selling tickets and refreshments on the night. Negotiating free use of the studio and lighting equipment in the centre proved a major cost saving.

The team's communications skills were tested to the full at every stage of the process. One girl took responsibility for contacting possible acts, making the most of social media. Posters were created to display in the centre and local schools and promotional pieces were posted on Facebook and Twitter. Writing a script for the compere (a young TYV member) was a great team effort.

A night to remember

The night itself saw young people – both organisers and performers – at their very best.



Each member of the planning group took responsibility for a key role to ensure that everything ran like clockwork. From taking tickets and running the café to looking after the acts and hosting the show – every aspect of the evening had been thought through. A keen photographer ran a funny face photo booth, which proved popular with audience members eager to don outlandish attire and join in with the face-painting fun.

The quality and breadth of young people's skills was striking – as was their willingness to teach and learn. When a little girl expressed an interest in photography, the young people running the booth showed her how to set the camera and take a photo. Working with a mentor, young people learnt how to serve food, use the payment machine and run the café themselves. Two boys from another youth group came to see the event so that they could take away tips for their own open mic event.



The performances themselves – many by young people who belong to TYV or used to attend the centre – were outstanding. A total of 21 acts were showcased, including singing, spoken word, dance, comedy and gymnastics. The event was a sell-out, attended by over 170 people from the local community, who were blown away by the young people’s organisational skills and talent. *‘I think events like this are incredibly important,’* says a community police officer who attended. *‘The whole community is involved and it boosts community spirit.’*



Everyone’s a winner

Many of the parents, friends and younger siblings in the audience had never been to the centre before and are now keen to get involved in TYV in the future. As one audience member explained: *‘This area used to have nothing and the people who work here really want the best for the young people. It’s great to see our young people doing something so positive and having opportunities like this.’*

This really was a win-win event, raising £450 for Comic Relief and benefiting both the community as a whole and young people individually. The planning team developed fantastic event management skills and experience, which will stand them in good stead both for future TYV initiatives and employment. The performers gained massively in confidence:

one boy sang in public for the first time and, with the whole audience behind him, came away with new self-belief.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing was the young people's sense of ownership of every aspect and their pride in making a difference. *'TYV should be so very proud of their achievement tonight,'* said one. *'They have done a wonderful job and I am really pleased to have been part of it.'*



Youth Action Diversity Trust, Bexley, Kent: Crafts in the community

Youth Action Diversity Trust organised an arts and crafts sale to raise money and share girls' creativity with family, friends and the local community. ⁴

The activity: baking, drawing, painting, jewellery-making...

Outcomes for young people: new skills, friendship and team spirit, self-esteem and self-belief

Outcomes for the community: insight into the Trust's work and what young people locally are capable of

Youth Action Diversity Trust in Bexley, Kent, works in areas of high deprivation to divert young people from anti-social behaviour to positive engagement. *'Our Girls Allowed Club was set up a few years back when we realised we needed to offer something new to appeal specifically to girls,'* explains a youth worker for the group. *'The club provides them with a place to bake, sing, play netball, and make jewellery... all in a relaxed environment where they can just be themselves.'*

The girls decided that an arts and crafts sale would be a great way to both raise money for Comic Relief and share what they do at the club with the local community. Five weeks were spent planning the event, during which there were heated discussions about everything from products to pricing! However, by the time invitations were issued and Red Nose Day came around, the 12 girls involved were working brilliantly as a team and had learned valuable lessons about expressing opinions and collaborative decision-making.

Together, the girls designed and made jewellery, key rings and greetings card. They decorated glass jars and bottles, made beaded coasters and baked and decorated cakes to sell. They decorated the hall with balloons and posters from the Youth Group Fundraising Pack and set up a games area with soft play and a bouncy castle.



⁴ Please note that if this case study is to be used externally the accompanying photographs cannot be used.

Plans for the future

The event was held on the Saturday after Red Nose Day and around 40 family, friends and local residents turned out to support it. *'It was great to see what the girls had been making and I was really impressed by the quality of their work,'* said one local. *'I think this should be an annual event! When we read so many negative stories about young people it's lovely to see them doing something positive.'*

Seeing people admiring and choosing to buy their work had a fantastic impact on the girls' self-esteem. Having raised a grand total of £121, they came away with a real sense of pride in their achievements and a renewed enthusiasm to continue developing their arts and crafts skills.

