



Voluntary & Community Sector Funding  
Year One April 2009 to March 2010

### Young people 13 to 19

South district area: Chorlton, Didsbury, Old Moat, Withington & Burnage.

Targets set by MCC	Actually Achieved
Contacts 110	Contacts 141
Participants 60	Participants 66
Recorded Outcomes 36	Recorded Outcomes 35
Accredited Outcomes 18	Accredited Outcomes 21
Satisfaction 70 % (Individual Participant evaluations are available.)	Satisfaction 85 %

Unity Arts is a member of the voluntary sector, South Partnership working with young people along with: Chorlton Youth Project Old Moat Youth Outreach Project, & Burnage Multi Agency Group. In addition, Unity developed work with a wide range of agencies and was supported /advised by others including:- MYS, South District Panel, GMP. Crime Prevention, MCC Ward Co-ordination, Chorlton High School, Friends of Parks Groups, Barlow Moor CA/SYC, Park Warden Service...

Didsbury: Fog Lane Park Visual & Urban Art & 'Youth Voice'.

The 'Fog Lane Friends', Projects for younger children, & Unity, identified limited provision as an issue, particularly for those living in the social housing area. Using visual arts, young people engaged in youth work & were given info, support & encouragement to join other youth provision. There is a need to constructively engage young people in this community, particularly in projects that promote intergenerational cohesion. Young people expressed they would like more activities in Fog Lane Park.



Chorlton High School: Unity has worked as a partner with CHS on a variety of projects with special needs groups, high achievers, to help ensure their continuing success despite hurdles. SEN & Disability Group: Visual Arts - this enabled the young people to work towards reaching their creative potential. Unity delivered this accessible art programme in-conjunction with the school staff. The participants were those young people who would not generally have the opportunity to join in extra curricular activities, building confidence, promoting equal access.

Unity Music Makers – extra curricular activity The longest running project, which has been consistently successful with many groups of young people, some of whom would not take up a school based music activity, often due to barriers & constraints, some self imposed. UMM performed at community festivals such as the first ever organised South District Summer Fusion Festival 09 & other community events.



Unity took the Circus to CHS to further support and contribute to the skill base of a group of young women who were undertaking the First Diploma In Dance. The young women gained in confidence & really enjoyed this new experience and approach.



Chorlton 'Chips': Urban Arts & Drama Chips is for young people who have been excluded from school. Unity delivered a project alongside one of its partners CYP to support retention. The young people engaged well in the activities especially the urban arts. Participants received an AQA award – designing a piece at a youth club during the project.

BMAG: Urban Arts: Youth Arts workers engaged with the Senior Youth Club staff & members to create new artwork for the building around the theme of Identity. BMAG staff were struggling with behaviour and the project was designed to engage young people as stakeholders. It was successful with the work being completed and adding to the refurbishment of the building, creating a better environment for informal learning. We also made recommendations for strategies to improve the cultural norms of behaviour including the setting of agreed ground-rules.

BMCA: Senior Youth Club - Urban Arts The young people are currently completing the project, which has focussed around learning urban art techniques, using lettering, how to use colours and images the young people would like to do a project for themselves. All the young people have expressed how much they are enjoying the project, which has been extended due to the fantastic work that is being created and the levels of active engagement.



## Youth Voice

VCSF cont...

Unity's Youth forum focussed actively on young people's participation, in more depth, enabling young people to become greater stakeholders in projects and the issues that directly effect them, by meeting fortnightly; planning and discussing issues about their local areas, activities and services. Together the young people also explored other cultures and cohesion issues. Positive work has come from the youth forum meetings, including a healthy lifestyles weekend, which showed self determination on the part of the young people who self disclosed personal information regarding their lifestyles that they were ready to explore and change. From this, they were supported to plan the weekend residential on this theme. The residential was a partnership activity with an OMYOP youth worker.

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## Staff Development

During this period Unity had a positive away day to discuss projects, understand the context for current work in the light of changing policy and plan projects with this in mind. We also considered appropriate ways to diversify due to other funding restrictions an issue for many groups in the city/country. Three of our professional artists qualified at L2 as youth workers and one is in the process of completing at L3. All staff have completed as a minimum the Child protection/safeguarding foundation including volunteers and we have made good use of the free MCC training made available to us when we have been able to get places.

training cont...

One senior arts youth worker has completed CAF awareness training and the senior co-ordinator is currently undertaking the Diploma in Youth Work at Huddersfield University to compliment her arts and media experience. Currently we have two part-time trainees, two young men - one in live music production and the other is specialising in film production. Both have the opportunity to work alongside experienced professionals and receive guidance and support. One trainee was successful in his YCF application to enhance the work he can do with other young people.

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## Spin-Offs

We've mentioned a few already. We've established greater links in communities. More young people were informed about funding that could assist them in developing activities and having new experiences. Unity encouraged contacts /participants to apply to YOF, YCF and other young people led initiatives. An issue we became aware of later in the year was that Unity would find it difficult to support many of the young people who asked for it as they weren't allowed to apply for staffing support from us. If we acted as their contact organisation. They could apply for funding for strangers, self employed specialists but this isn't good practice in terms of residential etc and seems to undermine the youth work process of establishing relationships... Unity Arts Youth Workers are already the specialist in the chosen art form with the added bonus of being qualified also as youth workers. Often, small voluntary youth

organisations are funded for specific work unlike LA youth workers and larger organisations and unfortunately we don't generally have this level of flexibility. We tried to refer some young people new to youth work to the LA service but they don't always have this capacity, particularly in areas where there is very limited provision. We understand that Manchester wasn't represented at the regional/national consultation meetings about YOF funding but if this opportunity arises again we would like this view represented as it does restrict some young people in their choice about collaborations for projects.

Other spin-offs include new relationships with community groups, activists, and new Youth Offer staff in the district. Greater cohesion between partners in the approach to youth work in the district & funding partnerships.

Greater co-operation & referrals across agencies. There are some issues in M21 but we have raised these in the PAYP report.



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## Routes of Progression

Unity Arts would like to enable more young people to work towards the Youth Arts Award, a nationally recognised award (Trinity College/Arts Council) which has a higher currency and is more worthwhile for some of our participants. Using youth work methods

Routes...

and approaches together with the skills of professional artists, we are opening up access to the arts to young people who might not usually have this opportunity because of background and the lack of opportunity - financial, attitudinal, discrimination...

This is often a second accredited outcome as young people develop skills and can move on to more complex activities and tasks. We are concerned that second accreditations are not counted towards targets as routes of progression. This is a shame, as the only losers are young people who have the ability to develop, having realised their own creative potential and the future possibilities to pursue more formal opportunities and even possible employment in the creative industries. Even if a participant chooses a different route, we believe progression should be part of the youth work process and accommodated by youth work funders. We would welcome further discussion on this.

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#### MYPAS

We hope the MYPAS system 2010-2011 and the current philosophy around targeted work will become more young person focussed as we have been led to believe will happen rather than simply number crunching? We look forward to this development/progress in responding to identified needs of young people. We struggled initially at the beginning to input everything because of the increased data (PAYP) and we miscalculated the time needed as direct inputting was new.

We're disappointed that we can't easily get information like ethnic breakdown for VCSF as it seems all Unity data has been merged on the system rather than for each funding stream.

Unfortunately we have to report separately for each so this would be useful.

The true picture of outcomes may not be apparent due to second accreditations/outcomes. This year, we must comment very positively on the support received from the MCC Officer responsible as he has been extremely supportive, responsive and patient with us as we learned (learning) the system. He listened and responded with a solution where there was one and this was very welcome.

showcasing



#### Conclusion

Projects were successful with reference to VCSF targets & original application, with the exception of Fog Lane where we took a risk. This needed a more consistent approach to the one we could adopt because of constraints/targets that weren't appropriate for this group of young people at that time. They needed more time to share with new adults and we didn't have it, if we were to meet targets. They need provision and we have taken this to the south partners.

## Unity Arts Manchester (The Unity Organising Group) established 1994

We would like to thank all the young people, adults and organisations who positively engaged with Unity Arts during the VCSF year. We look forward to further developing these relationships in 2010-2011 which will be year two of the current funding.

We would also like to thank Manchester City Council's Children's Service (Youth) who funded these projects and local businesses and volunteers who further supported them.

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Unity is a not for personal profit, constituted voluntary sector organisation.