

Tired of hanging around: Using sport and leisure activities to prevent anti-social behaviour by young people

Burnley video transcript

Voiceover (VO): How do you tackle antisocial behaviour when it breaks out in more than one part of a wide spread community – like Burnley.

STEVE RUMBELOW

CHIEF EXECUTIVE BURNLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL:

I think in common with many councils we have particular issues and concerns about antisocial behaviour – not least because our communities tell us that it's one of their top concerns. And it can ruin the lives of both victims and perpetrators and so it's got to be important that we tackle it and we tackle it effectively.

VO: Determined to get to the heart of the problem Burnley Council commissioned a survey of over 1000 local young people and they found they didn't want a traditional youth club approach

SERGEANT PHILIP HUTCHINSON

BURNLEY MULTI AGENCY PROBLEM SOLVING TEAM:

They didn't want to go in and play table football – you know play pool – they wanted to go in and have access to computer games, to the internet – and it's pretty much the things that they don't have at home.

VO: The survey also suggested that young people don't like to travel outside their territories – so the best chance of reaching them had to be taking a project to them.

LYNNE BLACKBURN

THE PARTICIPATION WORKS:

They looked at a mobile youth facility that could cover the whole of Burnley and it started off as a mini-bus which then grew and spiralled to this what we've got now which is a double decker bus.

VO: The Participation Works is a 3rd Sector company that did the research and then worked with the police to interest the local bus operator. Business in the Community then brought in other private sector partners and - for 6 nights a week - the bus was ready to hit the road.

RUSSELL REVILL

MANAGING DIRECTOR TRANSDEV BURNLEY & PENDLE:

I think it's absolutely essential that private companies get involved with a partnership such as this because councils and police don't hold the solution to a lot of these problems by themselves.

VO: Guided by police intelligence the bus typically visits a hot spot for 6 weeks. Burnley can take its answer to anti-social behaviour wherever it arises.

LYNNE BLACKBURN:

The Youth Bus offers a variety of activities for young people. We have 6 computers which are free internet use on there. We have what the young people call the Big Brother Diary Room that they can go in and talk to a youth worker on a one to one.

SERGEANT PHILIP HUTCHINSON:

When the bus is in its location the Community Beat Officers and the Community Support Officers will be paying regular visits to the bus to break down the barriers that may exist between the police and the local youths.

LYNNE BLACKBURN:

And then the council's Sports Development Team support us 3 nights a week which they can then offer sporting activities if young people aren't interested in the things that we've got to offer on the bus. While they're watching a DVD – while they are chilling out – the young people get to know the youth workers and then they start to open up about any particular issues they may have or concerns which then we can help them with further. We have outreach workers which talk to young people about alcohol and drugs issues.

VO: Also on board a partner from the local Primary Care Trust.

DONNA-MARIE WELCH

BURNLEY TEENAGE HEALTH CO-ORDINATOR:

OK – so when we come on the bus we would offer things like general health advice information sign posting young people into sexual health services – in particular young people friendly. I get that contact with them – they recognise my face and it bridges the gap to them accessing young people services.

YOUNG WOMAN:

I've made loads of new friends on it – talking to people

YOUNG MAN:

Definitely – it's getting them off the streets – getting them doing something instead of just sat there – causing trouble.

VO: And youth workers are on hand to advise on employment opportunities and help prepare CVs.

YOUNG MAN:

... I came here and she said what are you doing at college and was on about engineering – so she's trying to get me an apprenticeship.

LYNNE BLACKBURN:

The aims from the youth workers point of view when they engage with the young people over that 6 week period is actually to signpost young people to other activities that are going on in that particular area

DARREN WRIGHT

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER:

A good example of our work on the sports side is that we try to get young people that are interested in taking sport further into clubs – we've got a comprehensive database of clubs whether its football cricket basketball lacrosse volleyball or whatever so that they can obviously sustain their activity in sport.

VO: But when the bus moves on to another part of Burnley – what sort of record does it leave behind?

LYNNE BLACKBURN:

In the first year we had over 7000 young people accessing the bus – over 900 young people were signposted into other youth services and other activities – and we supported over 1000 young people in RCT support and training and advice.

VO: Burnley's Youth Bus is a real public private partnership which has helped local police beat their target for reducing antisocial behaviour by almost 30% - and criminal damage by as much as 60%.

SERGEANT PHILIP HUTCHINSON:

The bus has so many uses – because it's a mobile facility – it's a way of getting people together – and for us it just delivers.

LYNNE BLACKBURN:

We've got that instant support and we've got that contact and communication with all those different partner agencies that we wouldn't have had previously. And I think that's also helped make it the success that it is.

RUSSELL REVILL:

Youths have a better relationship with ourselves – we find that there's less anti social behaviour, less damage caused – and therefore we all benefit out of that.

STEVE RUMBELOW:

We see our role as protecting communities but trying to do that in a way that ensures that the perpetrator of antisocial behaviour actually comes through it and becomes a better person.