

## **Barnardo's Scotland**

### **Response to Consultation to Inform a National Youth Work Strategy**

#### **Introductory comment**

Barnardo's Scotland helps the UK's most vulnerable children have a better start in life, and therefore the chance of a better future. In Scotland our 62 services work directly with over 13,000 children, young people and their families every year. The services provided cover all age groups, in some cases into the early twenties. Services relating to youth work include providing support to young parents, assisting families affected by disabilities, youth offending and homelessness and working with young people leaving care. Each Barnardo's project is different although they all have the same goal of protecting, nurturing and providing opportunities for the most vulnerable children and young people, over the long term, enabling them to transform their lives and fulfil their potential.

We have not responded to every one of the questions set out, although we addressed those which were most relevant to Barnardo's for the production of a National Youth Work Strategy. We have set out our response in two parts:

Part 1 provides the Barnardo's Scotland organisational response

Part 2 provides the views of 32 young people that we consulted during the process. This incorporates comments from young people involved with Barnardo's services in and around Easterhouse, Glasgow and includes a session facilitated by the local elected member, Margaret Curran, MSP.

Barnardo's Scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation and we would be more than happy to make further contributions to shaping up the National Youth Work Strategy.

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## **Barnardo's Scotland response – Part 1**

### **General Comments**

1. Barnardo's Scotland welcomed the commitment in the Partnership Agreement to “develop a national strategy for youth work”. However, we are disappointed that, three and a half years later, the consultation document could present only a series of questions and no substantive proposals. Nevertheless the need for a National Youth Work Strategy is, if anything, more pressing than ever and we look forward to seeing progress being made following the consultation.
2. Barnardo's Scotland is a signatory to the YouthLink document ‘Youth Work in Scotland – An Agenda for Action’. We endorse this document and suggest that it forms part of the considerations as part of the National Youth Work Strategy. The comments offered through the consultation are in addition to those outlined in the YouthLink document.
3. While it is difficult to quantify the short-fall in funding because of the lack of precise information, it is widely accepted that youth work has suffered from significant under-investment over a long period of time and this needs to be considered under a National Youth Work Strategy. Too much of the sector currently survives on fragmented, short term financing and this is detrimental to both moral and effectiveness.
4. There is a need to consider minimum standards of youth work provision for each area in Scotland so that all young people benefit from universal services as well as developing services that can effectively target hard to reach groups.

### **Introduction – the role of youth work**

*1. Should it always be for a young person to decide whether they want to take part in a youth work activity?*

Yes. Barnardo's Scotland believes that much of the added value of youth work is that it is not statutory or obligatory but a voluntary opportunity which young people choose to participate in. As a children's charity Barnardo's is often commissioned by local authorities to deliver services on their behalf and one reason why we are able to engage with many hard to reach young people is because they understand that the nature of the relationship is different to that with statutory services. Youth work generally benefits from the development of relationships build on respect and engagement, and so do the young people who use these services.

*2. Do you have examples to share of good youth work?*

Barnardo's Scotland manages numerous services that could provide useful examples of good youth work. The following are a sample and we could provide more detail if required and the purpose was more defined.

- Street Team, Glasgow – provides street work and follow-on support, linking young people with relevant agencies. Used by young people who are homeless and at risk in the city centre, including those at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Levenmouth Links, Fife – a range of early intervention supports to young people to enable them to make informed choices and have an active role within their home, school and community. It works with young people aged 10-16 years living within the Levenmouth community.
- Youth Involvement Project, Easterhouse – works with 12-19 year olds in the west and south suburbs of Greater Easterhouse in order to enhance resilience in terms of health, education and citizenship and reduce risk taking behaviour, including drug and alcohol use, anti-social behaviour and offending.

*3. To what extent should youth work opportunities be generally available to all young people, or be targeted at those who are particularly vulnerable or disadvantaged?*

Youth work provision should not exclude any young people and there is a need to improve universal provision so that each local authority is providing youth work services up to at least a minimum national standard. We support the call that every young person in Scotland should be entitled to a minimum standard of youth work opportunities, regardless of geographical location, level of ability or financial situation.

However, youth work programmes can justifiably target certain groups e.g. young women, young asylum seekers, young parents or young unemployed. The need for specific outreach work to engage hard-to-reach groups is a critical point. In Barnardo's experience there is a requirement to use pro-active outreach to get to young people who would otherwise not use services. Barnardo's Glasgow Streetwork Team has extensive experience of working in an outreach manner.

*5. How do we attract and retain more volunteers to help deliver youth work opportunities?*

There are opportunities to encourage the young people involved in youth work to move on to help provide services themselves. We would do well to promote a "grow your own" approach to volunteers, through fostering leadership development for young people, and recognise this as a useful service in itself.

There are issues regarding the sustainability of youth work services projects due to the uncertainty of funding in terms of: insufficient funds; short term funding; or changing funding streams. There are also issues relating to the increased burden of regulations and police checking that have impacted on numbers of volunteers coming forward, although this has not been systematically quantified. Addressing these issues will make youthwork volunteering a more attractive prospect.

*7. What particular skills can youth workers bring to work within or around schools, especially to keep young people engaged?*

Youth workers are skilled in encouraging voluntary participation amongst the young people they deal with and the emphasis on engaging with young people in a relationship based on mutual respect could be a useful complement for the more formal learning environment in schools.

Youth work can also help to bridge the gap between formal provision of services and while the style of contact in youth work is different to that in schools, each must be seen as part of the whole approach to young people. Barnardo's Levenmouth Links service operates extensively in schools and is a useful example of the complementary roles that can be played

### **National structures**

*8. What type of support is needed at national level to improve opportunities and outcomes for young people at a local level?*

Barnardo's Scotland proposes that there should be a clearly identified National Youth Work Agency, possibly with a Ministerial Steering Group. The agency would have responsibility for promoting the National Youth Work Strategy and be responsible for establishing the local framework for its implementation.

The formation of the National Youth Work Agency would require a consideration of the existing national organisations and be part of the proposals brought forward under the National Youth Work Strategy. The National Youth Work Agency should be complemented by a network of local youthwork partnerships in each local authority area, to which the National Youth Work Agency would provide support and guidance including information, networking, co-ordinating and possibly a conduit for additional funding. The National Youth Work Agency would be responsible for facilitating local partnership developments.

The local partnerships would consist of all relevant service providers in each locality. The partnerships would be responsible for maintaining the national standards for youth work at local level and any additional funds allocated to youth work should be distributed through the local partnerships. It should be possible to locate the youth work partnerships within the existing Community Planning Partnership, although this would need to be adapted at local level depending on the existing structures.

*9. Do you have any views on how YouthLink Scotland can best support and represent the range of youth work providers?*

YouthLink Scotland is one of the current national agencies and would be part of the considerations establishing a National Youth Work Agency along the lines suggested above. In terms of its current role, each of the following is useful:

- Updates on national policy and best practice
- Updated information on the sector
- Facilitating input on consultations, national and internal
- Support and guidance on evaluating outcomes
- Support and guidance on implementing monitoring systems
- Help with funding bids
- Representing, and campaigning on behalf of, youth work at national level

### **Better information for young people**

*11. What can be done to improve the information available to young people and their ability to access it?*

There needs to be a range of information content and formats to suit the range of young people. The use of e-mail, websites and text messaging provide increased and varied opportunities. It is advisable for information to be reviewed by young people so that it is appropriate and to avoid it being condescending or lacking credibility.

There is a need to localise information for young people. All local authorities should have a young people's website, complemented by written materials as and when appropriate.

### **Access to opportunities for young people**

*13. What do you think are the priorities for youth work in the 21st century?*

The following suggestions are by no means an exhaustive list:

- A sustainable revenue funding basis for a range of youth work services
- Capital works programme that provides a high standard and quality of facilities for the delivery of youth work services
- Improved training and qualifications framework for youth work
- Staff salary structure that is comparable with other social care services
- An approach that guarantees a minimum level of service to all young people
- A significant outreach element that supports young people who may have been excluded from mainstream services

*14. How do we make sure that youth work is accessible to all young people, including equality groups and those in rural areas, and respects their differences?*

Through the employment of a broad, varied, professional and appropriately supported volunteer staff group. Currently youth work is not generally held in high esteem, compared with other social professions, which affects the desirability of such work in the eyes of potential recruits.

Youth work is a wide and varied field, ranging in terms of size, focus and whether voluntary or statutory provision. Local youth work partnerships would help in bringing together this varied provision including local authority and voluntary sector, identifying gaps and ensuring a better co-ordinated strategic approach to local provision.

*21. What more can be done to enable all youth work providers to engage in and influence local networks and partnerships, including the community planning framework?*

National guidance should be provided to local partnerships regarding the involvement of young people in planning and designing youth work services to achieve at least set minimum standards. While there may be some good examples of involvement of young people, so far, Community Planning Partnerships have not realised the ambitions to have communities (including young people) at the heart of the process.

*22. How can youth organisations expand the numbers of young people they deal with?*

Firstly, by ensuring that provision is accurately mapped to needs and ensuring that infrastructure development takes place. Secondly, increased numbers can be achieved through the significant development of outreach services. Youth work planners and providers need to take steps to market their services to young people. Barnardo's Youth Involvement Project in Easterhouse, Glasgow is a useful example of how to engage hard to reach young people and their contribution to the consultation is provided at Part 2 of this document.

*23. What steps can be taken to make the best use of buildings and facilities to deliver youth work opportunities?*

The facilities for the provision of youth work have suffered from long term lack of investment. There is a need for a significant capital investment if we are to realise the high aspirations for young people through the complementary use of youth work. There are few dedicated facilities for youth work and needs to be addressed as part of a National Youth Strategy.

School buildings and grounds represent one of the few resources which exist in every community. While there are advantages in housing youth work services in independent facilities, the potential offered by the scale of the school estate should not be ignored.

It is worth considering piloting 'super youth clubs' that can provide a very wide range of youth work facilities from the one building as a way of moving youth work into a different scale of provision. This would require significant additional resources to pilot and evaluate the outcomes. It may be worth considering setting this up as part of a national demonstration project offering the opportunity for partnership working involving statutory, voluntary and private sectors on a large scale initiative.

*26. Are you getting enough support with self-evaluation and with identifying and measuring outcomes and impacts? If not, what would help?*

A comprehensive mapping of the youth work provision would help provide a national audit of what provision is there at present and where are the main gaps. This could be a starting point for the local youth work partnerships if this proposal was progressed. Research support would help in evaluating activity, building up a better picture of the sector and improving performance. It would help to have more assistance and guidance in carrying out external/internal audits and evaluations and setting up IT monitoring systems development.

*28. How do we make sure that young people receive recognition for informal learning?*

Young people should be supported in developing achievement records, which respect informal learning. This area needs further development and the activities around increased participation in decision making by young people may lend itself as a starting point for this.

*31. What skills, qualities and support does a 21st century youth worker need?*

- Knowledge and understanding of young people's local context and culture
- Acceptance of the society that young people are living in
- Motivational skills
- Ability to plan, prioritise and evaluate activity
- Knowledge of issues affecting young people
- Excellent communication and engagement skills
- Campaigning skills

## **Barnardo's Scotland response – Part 2**

### **Easterhouse Youth Involvement Project**

**Monday 30th October 2006**

Westwood Business Centre  
Easterhouse

Session facilitated by Margaret Curran, MSP

9 young people (4 male & 5 female) aged 14-17

#### ***What's good about my area?***

- Swimming
- Good facilities – like youth clubs
- Use of some schools (some clubs)

#### ***What's bad about my area?***

- Can be difficult going from area to area
- Too old to get into area
- Gang fighting places
- Don't feel that there's been enough money spent – need more money – vandalism etc.
- Not enough for people to do
- Too old to get into some club
- Nothing on in schools at night
- No lights at 5-aside pitches
- Activities like Braehead too expensive
- Facilities need done up
- Under age drinking
- Nothing to do at weekends in particular
- No access to schools at weekends

#### ***What would you do to make things better?***

- Survey young people
- Raise money for a new building
- Get people more involved e.g. young people hanging about the streets drinking
- Use community centres more
- Everyone should have the opportunity
- A youth gym
- Skateboard park, giving young people something to do.
- More youth facilities
- Get young people involved in sports

### **How do you make things better?**

- Complain to council/councillors
- Act as a group
- Get involved in the proposed regeneration of Easterhouse Township - Consultation events planned
- Join the Millennium Volunteer Programme.
- Volunteering in your community
  - Getting job references
  - Good doing things for your community
  - Building up confidence
  - Get to meet new people

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October**

19 young people – 10 males/9 females  
6 over 16 yrs  
13 under 16 yrs

Wellhouse Area, Greater Easterhouse

### **What does youth work mean to you/should it be available to everyone?**

- Helping young people to find work
- Getting you off the streets
- Taking you places
- Working in groups
- Clubs
- Working with young people
- Getting to go trips
- Take part in activities
- Should be more available

### **Where I live...Don't like.....**

- People using drugs
- Needles lying about
- Police – moving you on all the time – being harassed
- CCTV – watching you all the time
- Adults in the community – phoning police when you're doing nothing wrong/being nosey
- You can't walk about in groups
- Gang fighting – people getting hurt
- Alcohol – people drinking/being drunk
- No chip shops/Chinese takeaways
- No flood lights at football pitch
- Territorialism – can't walk through other schemes
- Having nothing to do

**Do like.....**

- Like hanging with friends
- Playing down at the five aside football pitch
- Playing football
- Innerzone (local youth club)
- Cheerleading classes
- Knowing everyone
- New houses
- Family
- Facilities
- Basketball

**What is your idea of The Perfect Youth Worker? Someone who...**

- Knows how to find you work
- Knows about sexual health issues
- Will be respectful
- Will be able to motivate
- Is intelligent
- Has honesty
- Knows about young peoples' rights
- Is friendly
- Is able to share information
- Is patient
- Is helpful
- Is a good listener
- Is caring
- Is able to set a good example
- Is trustworthy
- Has a good sense of humour
- Is kind
- Is reliable
- Is happy

**How can the views of young people be heard well?**

- By talking
- Listening
- Building relationships
- Through working in a group
- Using surveys and questionnaires
- By having fun

## Cranhill Area – Greater Easterhouse

1 Female – 16yrs

### **What does youth work mean to you/should it be available to everyone?**

- Working with young people
- Trying to get young people to work together
- Working with the issues young people have/trying to help
- Keeping young people out of trouble
- Trying to stop people gang-fighting
- Activities
- Young people should have a choice in getting involved
- It is aimed at the people who really need it

### **Where I live...Don't like.....**

- Alcohol use – young people drink too much alcohol and when they do they end up fighting
- Gang-fighting – is bad in Cranhill because they fight most times with Springboig and it is dangerous and lots of young people get the jail for it
- Drugs – drugs are bad in Cranhill with people dealing them and people taking them. Lots of people look drugged up. Lots of needles lying about which is dangerous.
- Unemployment – unemployment is bad. There are lots of young people and older people who have got no jobs and no money
- Young people getting pregnant too young
- In my area some young people don't use some of the facilities because they need decorated and sometimes you can't get in because of your age
- There's not enough to do

### **What is your idea of The Perfect Youth Worker? Someone who...**

- Is really nice to talk to and you can tell them things
- Can drive
- Is a good listener
- Lets you choose what you want to do
- Lets you talk
- Is happy
- Up for a challenge
- Is fun
- Is able to handle young people with issues
- Gets on well with young people
- Knows how to talk
- Is able to find things out for you
- Is able to sort things that need done

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October**

Ruchazie Area – Greater Easterhouse

3 individual consultations undertaken – 2 male/1 female all 16 or over

***Youth Activities - should participating in them be voluntary? Should they be open to everyone?***

- Yes, I should have a choice about the activities I want to be involved in and so should other young people
- It should be open to everyone

***How can organisations better communicate with young people?***

- Hearing young people's views
- Setting up a meeting with YP and workers
- Discussion on what YP can and cant do
- Find out what's on, how often and if we want it or not
- Talk about things were not happy about

***Why young people take part in Youth Activities?***

- Something to do
- Keeps you away from gang fighting, getting blamed for stuff we don't do, keeps us out of trouble with the Police, the Housing and the Community.
- People learn new skills, do things they enjoy, have fun and get a laugh. Can meet new people

***How can we attract more young people to take part in youth Activities?***

- Get new equipment/ resources
- Get new activities, things on at the club
- Having a young people's committee and asking other YP the telling youth providers what we want

***Have young people heard about the Scottish Youth Parliament? How could they get more young people involved in the SYP?***

- Not heard of it
- Could ask YP if they'd be interested in it, take them to Youth Parliament
- Do some research, internet etc
- Ask someone involved in SYP to come do a talk to the Youth/Barnardo's

***What skills/qualities do young people think a youth worker/volunteer should have?***

- Knowledge: young people's issues, what young people want and like, important to know the young people
- Personal Qualities: Funny, smart, confident, intelligent, compassionate and brave
- How could they listen to the views of young people? : write them down, 1 on 1's, groupwork, watch us doing role plays

***About my area (Ruchazie)***

- Where I like to go: Hogganfield loch, Top street, Gilbertfield Street, Galdenoch Street to sit about, Round the backs playing football, Ashcraig Pitches, The youthy and The golf course
- Where I don't like to go: sometimes the golfy, Lowend gang fighting and Craigend
- What would I change if I could: paint the shops, if the off sale stopped selling alcohol, get a menshy wall and build a bigger better Community Centre