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THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE QUALITY LEADERS PROJECT –
MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SERVICE DEVELOPMENT



Barnet Oscar – our award-winning QLP participants.

Editorial

Welcome to the fifth issue of QLP News. I am delighted to have been asked to edit this issue and put the spotlight firmly on the scheme in Barnet. Having come to the project later than other authorities we have just completed our first programme of workshops, a film project. In this newsletter we will give a more practical voice to QLP-Y: what is happening in libraries, youth services and with young people as a direct result of the scheme? We report on the events of the film project, see the results and impact this has had on the library and youth service and hear what the young people involved have to say. Barnet's mentor and sponsor speak and we hear from one of the partner agencies involved. Finally, we discuss what's coming next. I hope you enjoy reading this issue and sharing in our success so far.

Catherine Lusted

Editor



The Paul Hamlyn Foundation



On location – the filming of *I'm Lovin' the Library*

Having joined the QLP-Y in July 2006, we began planning for our first phase of workshops. Since then things have moved on apace. Over the summer we recruited young people to the project through library publicity, a local secondary school situated next to a council estate we wanted to target and at Barnet's Youth MiniFest. Our first workshop took place in September and attracted nine young people, most of who had not been to the library before. During this session we talked about the project brief and looked at interviewing techniques in preparation for the interviews they would conduct with young people. We were delighted with the quality of questions the young people came up with; for example, 'If you were the manager of the library, what would you change?' and 'Do you think a successful library service should be the responsibility of librarians or society at large?'

In October, our excellent trainer ran a workshop using camcorders and tripods. He gave the young people lots of tips on filming to ensure they got a good standard of footage. They had plenty of time to practice what they had

learned on each other. We ran this workshop when the library was closed to the public, so the young people had a great opportunity to find their way around, to establish their own rules and atmosphere and to feel comfortable in the space. These feelings of ownership of the space progressed as the project went on. During October half term and after school we ran three filming workshops in different venues: a youth club, school and at the library. We invited a local charity (Inclusive Play Opportunities) which works with disabled children and young people to the library session, two of whom appear in the final film. This ensured that we interviewed a broad sample of young people for the final film.

During November, we began the editing process. Again, our trainer showed the young people how to use the software on Apple Macs and offered support as they put this into practice. Two young people discovered an interest in composing music, so we encouraged this and their scores were used in the final film. The last of our editing sessions took place on Barnet's new youth bus, *The Rolling Base*. The bus is fully

equipped with custom made sofas; duck feather filled cushions, four screens, two PlayStation consuls and desk areas for laptops to be used. As our group were the first to try the bus their response was important, their initial excitement and later comments showed that they loved it and felt particularly special to be the first to use it. Most of them invited their parents to have a look around at the end of our session, which we took to be a positive sign too.

The final film, entitled *I'm Lovin' the Library* is a 10 minute long look at the library from young peoples' point of view. It includes many criticisms of the services we provide for young people, such as the lack of services for their age group, the age of things and the smell. However, in the main it is incredibly positive as the title suggests. For instance, one interviewee said 'Well it's quiet so it's a good place to work and study'. Another said 'I like the different sections... and places to sit'. Finally another said 'It's especially a good place to relax and read... most of the time I like to come in here and go on the computer, read a book and magazines'.

To launch the film and to celebrate the young people's success, we held a premiere. After much debate we decided to hold this at the library, rather than at a local cinema. We felt that this would help meet the aim of increasing young people's interest in libraries by encouraging them to visit one. As news of the project's success spread, interest was raised from across the council at a very senior level. Senior managers were keen to attend the premiere and see the final result. Holding the

premiere at the library also embedded it as a library service event.

The premiere was itself a great success, over 30 people attended. Many young people who were interviewed came along with parents, family and friends. Two local councillors attended along with the Director of Education, the Director of Children's Service and the Head of Youth & Connexions. The Head of Libraries led proceedings and the directors

introduced the film. After the screening, a local councillor presented Library Service certificates to all the young people involved. Each interviewee was also presented with a *Barnet Oscar*. The directors were given Duke of Edinburgh certificates and 'best director' statuettes. As you will see in the photograph on the front page, the young people were really proud of their achievements. Senior council staff and parents were also very positive.

Why did it work?

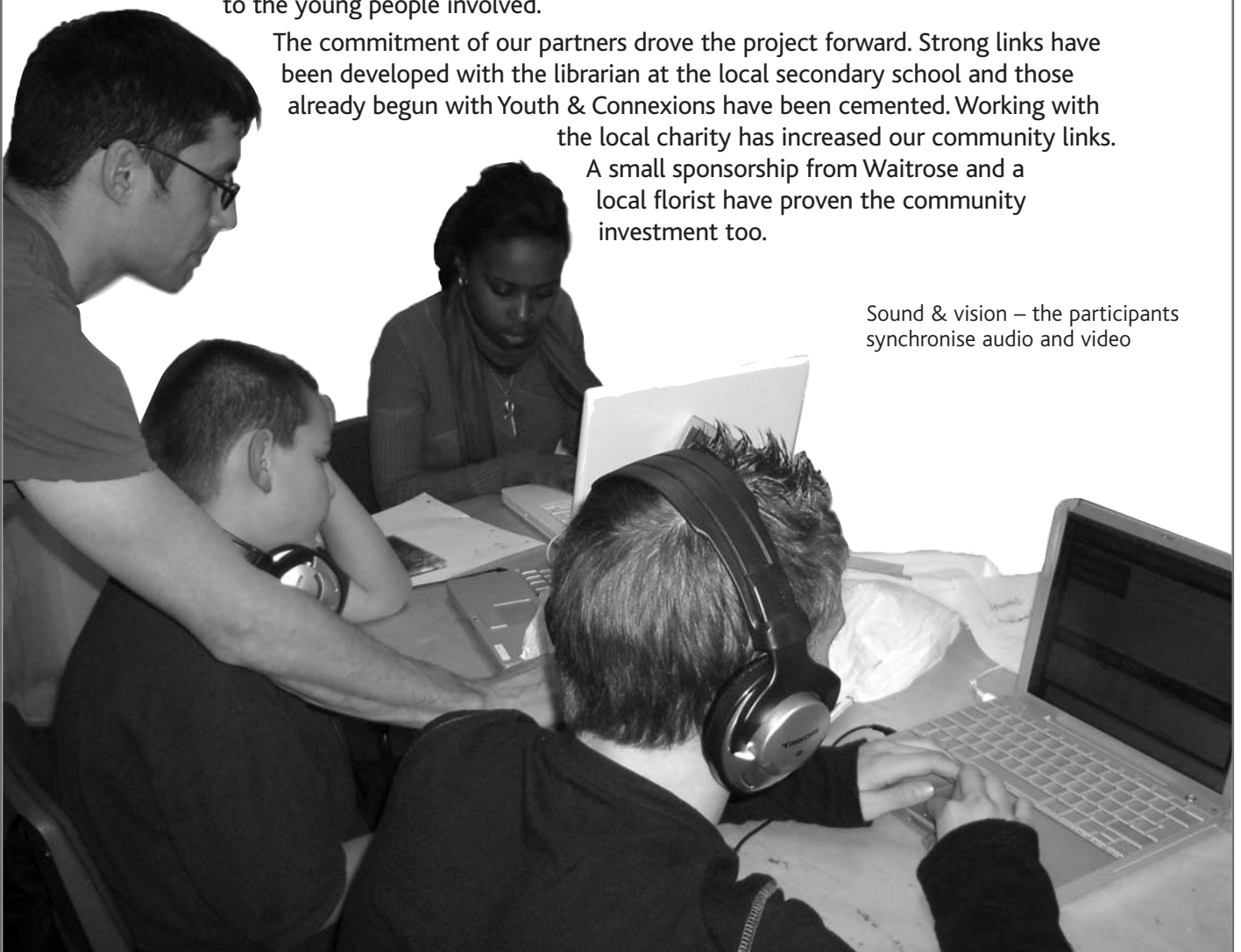
The council estate we wanted to target is located two miles from Chipping Barnet Library where the workshops took place. To overcome this, taxis picked up young people from the local secondary school and brought them to the library for the early sessions. This also counteracted concerns about finding the library for those who had not visited before.

The offer of free pizzas, gift tokens and Duke of Edinburgh certificates were all big draws to the young people involved.

The commitment of our partners drove the project forward. Strong links have been developed with the librarian at the local secondary school and those already begun with Youth & Connexions have been cemented. Working with the local charity has increased our community links.

A small sponsorship from Waitrose and a local florist have proven the community investment too.

Sound & vision – the participants synchronise audio and video



Results, analysis and the impact

During the project, I was amazed by the dedication shown by the young people. The amount of time they gave up, both after school and in their holidays, illustrates their commitment. At the end of the project, we wanted to formalise this anecdotal evidence and asked the directors to complete an evaluation survey. The results are very positive as the charts below demonstrate. Figure 2 shows at least one of the young people joined the library as a result of the project and two renewed their membership. 75% said they would use the library more regularly (see figure 3) and 50% said they would tell their friends about our services (see Figure 4).

On the evaluation sheet, young people were asked to name three things about the library that they didn't know before. The responses show a good awareness of library services and a positive view of libraries not held by young people in previous consultations. For instance:

- 'You can get PlayStation games'*
- 'You can play games on the Internet'*
- 'You can get CDs'*
- 'Teenage section'*
- 'Coffee machine'*
- 'They are people friendly'*
- 'They have a lot of resources that are useful'*
- 'It can be fun'*

One of our targets was to train young people to improve and develop their video production skills and enable them to continue film-making outside the project. Figure 1 below shows all the young people felt they had learnt new skills. 75% said they had learned skills in using a camcorder, 100% in using editing equipment, 75% in making music, 75% in tips on film-making and 50% in skills in interviewing people.

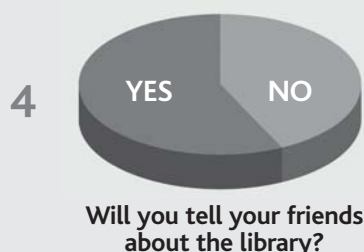
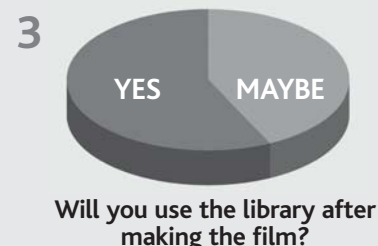
Historically, library staff have had issues working with young people as in most other authorities. Stereotypes abound in the minds of those with limited experience interacting with young people. The film project has made positive inroads in breaking down these stereotypes. Library staff have seen young people doing something productive and enjoying themselves in the library without causing problems. Staff showed a keen interest in the workshops and in the project's progression. As a result, staff are willing to give young people a chance rather than expecting them to behave badly.

Young people developed strong relationships with the QL and Detached Youth Worker attached to the project. Most of the young people are now keen and confident enough to pass on comments about stock and facilities. Many of them want to be involved in future events and have asked what we are doing next.

QL's Personal Development

A key aim of QLP is to develop the management skills of the QL. Working on the film project has given me the opportunity to learn several new skills and to fine tune existing ones. For example, I have developed my negotiating skills and become more confident in asking for things and chasing people when they don't deliver. I have built relationships with people in services and organisations outside of libraries. I have learnt some skills needed to engage with young people from colleagues at Youth & Connexions. My mentor has worked with me on my budgeting skills, helping me set up a spreadsheet and deal with the council's financial management system. Finally I have learnt how much I enjoy working with this client group.

1 Young people learnt new skills in:



I really enjoyed being part of the project. I love having more knowledge about film making and editing and using imovie. This was the first time doing a project out of school and since I had a great time I feel that I wouldn't mind doing something in the future.

I think that the project was fantastic & so were the people doing it. I learnt a lot about filming & editing I would love to do something like this again.

I think that the project was excellent and so was the people doing it. I've learnt a lot about Filming and Editing. Jason Kelvin is brilliant with helping us.

Editing! Film! Pizza! Really enjoyed it!

I really enjoyed my time spent on this project. I liked filming and I learnt a lot using the editing equipment.

A word from the mentor...

The buzz around the QLP film in Barnet is incredible, not only amongst young people and practitioners, but also at very senior levels of the Council. The Youth and Connexions Management Committee want to show it as part of their January committee meeting and we have even been asked if it can be included in the new year programme for the Saturday children's film club held at the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley – (for those film buffs amongst you, the Phoenix took part in the recent London Film Festival, so Hollywood here we come!). Such is the reputation of QLP that the Library Service has also been asked to join the council's Children and Young People's Participation Strategy Group, which helps to steer youth engagement in the borough.

Catherine has been doing a sterling job leading this project and is fast becoming recognised as the young people's expert! The next phase of QLP is now in the planning stages and Catherine will report more on that next time.

Hannah Richens

(QLP-Y Mentor, London Borough of Barnet)

And a word from the sponsor...

As Head of the Library Service in Barnet, I am delighted at the progress to encourage greater involvement and use of library services that the QLP has enabled. We are committed in Barnet to continue working with young people to make libraries relevant to them and welcome their ideas towards achieving this. The QLP initiative, the young people and staff involved with it, is a big step along the road to winning back young people who think that libraries are not for them. We intend to continue listening to and involving young people as we develop libraries in Barnet for the future.

Tricia Little

The view from Youth & Connexions

This project was a good example of joint work between services (Chipping Barnet Library, Ravenscroft School, Youth and Connexions) to the benefit of young people living in Barnet.

The young people involved in the sessions gained skills in film making and editing but also skills that we hope will help them in their life in the future i.e. interacting with others, interviewing skills, sharing their ideas and building confidence. This project has built a good relationship between the Detached Youth Team and the Library. We are now continuing into the second phase by involving young people from the film workshops to take more of a lead role in planning and organizing. This project also established good relationships between us, as youth workers and the young people. Since then they have been involved in other activities we have run, such as the Holocaust Project and PAYP activities.

Uzi Izchaki

(Detached Youth Team)

COMING SOON Our focus is now firmly on the next programme of workshops. Again working with Youth & Connexions, we have identified six areas with anti-social behaviour issues or gaps in youth provision and will be holding a PlayStation competition at each site. Names will be drawn from a hat and each winner will go through to the next round. The winner of each game at each site will be invited to a grand final and celebration event at Chipping Barnet Library. Various prizes will be given to young people and the finalists will be invited to our suppliers to choose PS stock for our loan collections, thus continuing our consultation objective.

Working with us at the planning stage is a group of young people from the film project. We felt that we should continue to offer them development opportunities through QLP and maintain our relationship with them. So far they have taken on responsibility for publicity and setting out rules for the competition. We hope to involve them in the workshops too.

Filling the youth shaped hole in public libraries: the QLP(Y) experience

The following is taken from the Public Library Journal article: Overview by Shiraz Durrani Public libraries face major challenges in meeting the needs of young people. Fulfilling their potential sees the need for “nothing less than a fundamental change in focus for libraries”. That is precisely what the Quality Leaders Project – Youth (QLP-Y) aims for.

But the challenges are not easy to meet. Historical imbalance in services to young people is compounded by a lack of strategic approach to address the imbalance. This results in what a participant in QLP-Y describes as a “youth shaped hole in most of our libraries”. While there is no doubt that there are many examples of good practice in providing innovative services, these remain as pockets of excellence. An overall vision that includes the provision of relevant, creative and effective services to meet unmet and new needs of young people has not yet been developed and implemented.

The Project gains from being based in an academic institution. It is not an isolated project ‘doing its own thing’ within the Department of Applied Social Sciences. It is linked closely with various Modules being taught within the School of Information Management. One issue addressed in the teaching programme is seen as developing an appropriate learning culture among students even as they develop their knowledge, skills, and awareness. This is given greater seriousness by three linked challenges facing British society and the workplace today at a socioeconomic, pedagogical, and workforce development level.

Another issue is to incorporate reflective learning in modules and projects. This is done through “an open approach to learning from other experiences and ideas, used to ensure that latest theories are being incorporated”.

Thus QLP-Y brings together ideas and experiences from teaching within the Department as well as from the Management Research Centre. The contributions below provide evidence of the achievement and challenges facing not only QLP-Y but public libraries as a whole in their attempt to find new social relevance in a fast changing, globalised world.

Portsmouth – artwork project

Dave Percival

One of the benefits of participation in QLP-Y is that it gives the participants much-needed space for creative thought around the strategic issues of library service provision to young people. Whilst the money available for audience development projects is not insignificant, it is the processes leading to the activities that are almost as important as the

outcome. By learning reflectively we can judge the effectiveness of practices current and historical, good and bad.

The Quality Leaders Project also brings a welcome dose of politics into librarianship. There is a certain tendency in the profession to regard itself as neutral and this is learned in many library schools and is perpetuated by managers. Of course, this neutrality is a myth – if we were truly apolitical and were all things to all communities we would not be addressing the issues around social exclusion!

The neutrality myth often has currency amongst service users. In January 2007, I took some members of our Teen Reading Group to London Metropolitan University, where we met a librarian colleague Nick Jones, who works in a branch library in Varby, Stockholm. It is one thing to react to a policy document vis a vis social exclusion but another thing entirely to analyse, discuss and create correcting strategies around these issues. The young people who met with Nick had their eyes opened by the capacity of libraries to change the lives of their communities.

Library services are also beginning to wake up to the realisation that if they are to successfully engage (and continue to attract) young people, they will not achieve this in isolation. It is quite clear that one of the main barriers to library usage is that of increasingly low literacy levels. Britain is in the unique position of being one of the few nations in the so-called developed world where the adult population is more literate than young people. We need to look at creative, innovative methodologies to address this information poverty in our communities. As information professionals we are duty bound to combat this inequality. All this is necessarily political and a failure to engage politically will lead to a corresponding, and wholly deserving, failure of library services.

All library services are aware at a strategic level that they must engage with young people, but this awareness must be demonstrated in the actions of frontline staff. Those staff who may be reluctant for whatever reason to work with young people need the support of managers to deliver the level of service they deserve. Identifying this need, with the support of our QLP-Y Sponsor (the head of culture), a “working with young people” course has been delivered to all front line library workers.

We also need to seriously address to what extent service providers are engaging with socially excluded young people. There is a danger that a small handful of visible young people are singled out as “the community”, whilst the most needy remain unnoticed.

QLP-Y “raises the profile of work with young people in libraries” says the interim evaluation report

The team carrying out an independent evaluation of QLP-Y issued its interim report in February 2007. The team consisted of Jane Pitcher, Mary Eastwood-Krah and Maggie O’Neill carried out detailed studies in the London Boroughs of Barnet and Haringey as well as in Lincolnshire and Portsmouth. Some highlights from the report are:

- The most important aspect of the QLP-Y initiative was seen by participants as responding to the needs and wants of young people, particularly those who have not traditionally been library users, and ensuring that they are much more involved in delivery and design of services.
- Although the evaluation is still part-way through, some impacts of the project are evident already. Participating staff noted their personal development as a result of engaging in project activities at local level, (although development of specific skills has been more limited in some cases,

particularly where staff already had experience of project management and networking). The project has also raised the profile of work with young people in libraries.

- To varying degrees, the QLP-Y initiative has started to involve young people who were previously non-library users in activities and draw them into the library. Interest in continuing use of the libraries has also increased as a result of the activities. Young people participating in the project are also seen to have developed personally, for example in terms of their levels of confidence.
- There has been some impact on service provision in some of the areas, although it is still too early to assess the impact of QLP-Y generally on services or on wider organisational cultures.

The full report can be downloaded at our website: www.seapn.org.uk/documents/QLP-Yinterimreport1Feb07-2.doc

Lincolnshire provides an early assessment of QLP-Y

Lincolnshire County Council has achieved a significant amount of added value from being a participant in the QLP program. A range of activities have been undertaken which have developed much closer links between Library and Youth Services than would have been achieved without the QLP.

Among the more intangible and less easy to evidence benefits which we identified were improved thinking, planning, confidence, dialogue and partnership working.

The Quality Leaders have developed their skills and competence through their involvement with the project team which they have managed over the past two years, and via interactions with each other, their mentors and other QLPs.

There has been a palpable improvement in the way that library staff interact with young people and this is helped to inform and strengthen our efforts to develop a Needs Based Library Service.

Director for Communities, Lincolnshire County Council (letter to QLP Project Group 21 June 2007)

Emily Sowter leaves QLP-Y

Emily has been working with QLP-Y as Lecturer in Youth Policy for almost two years. As the Project comes to an end, we wish Emily a sad farewell – yet not so sad as she has got a job which seems to suit her perfectly. Over the last two years, Emily has been the friendly, smiling face of QLP-Y, visiting authorities, contacting Quality Leaders and generally being helpful. This is in addition to her policy work where she produced Youth Ideas and Action, Youth Policy Review, and contributed to QLP News and to our detailed reports to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. She producing monthly updates for the QLP Project Group thus enabling us to evaluate progress of the Project in all the authorities and take corrective action when necessary. In a sense she was the eyes and ears of the Project. Emily is a cheerful person and always ready to help and support any aspect of the Project. She is keen to learn and reflect on her experiences and

courageous enough to admit her learning needs – indeed a rare quality in the workplace these days.

It has been a pleasure working with Emily. She will be missed by the QLP-Y team as well as by the Department. On behalf of the QLP-Y Steering Group, the Department of Applied Social Sciences and QLP participating authorities, I wish her all the very best in her new job and her busy personal life.

Even as Emily leaves, I asked her to do a last job write a few words about herself and her experiences with QLP-Y. With her usual cheerfulness, Emily sent in the following piece at a very short notice. Her words carry her sincerity and enthusiasm for developing services for young people – something which made her a valued member of the QLP-Y team.

Shiraz Durrani

27 July 2007

Library policy initiative

The Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has started a consultation process under the title *A Blueprint for Excellence – Public Libraries 2008-2011* (MLA, 2007a). The outcome of this consultation is likely to influence the future role and function of public libraries. The document sets out to achieve a 'shared universal understanding of the role of the modern public library and the core services the public and communities can expect'. The consultation expects there to be a "universal entitlement for children, young people, families and communities to an accessible local library and place of resource, a service working in partnership to engage with communities and a global, interactive information service". The Blueprint raises an important question which has been at the centre of the work of QLP-Y. It states:

A significant percentage of the population uses the library. But are they getting the service they need and want; what about others who are not using the service? At a time of increasing pressure on local authority budgets... it is time for the public library service to take a hard look at both its role in society and the services it can and should be providing.

These questions are at the core of QLP-Y and the final reports from the Project (from QLP-Y itself as well as the Final Evaluation Report) will attempt to see the impact of the Project from the above standpoint. The QLP model already seeks to meet new or unmet needs of local communities, especially those not already reached by the services. Again, its approach is to develop new services through active consultation and participation of young people.

As the QLP-Y experience shows, there is need for some fundamental shift in policies, organisational structures and cultures if the needs of young people are to be met in a meaningful way.

Out of the nine 'key challenges' mentioned by the *Blueprint for Excellence* (MLA, 2007a), two are particularly relevant for QLP-Y. These are:

- Staff – enabled and empowered to lead and deliver customer-focused services that meet the national entitlement.
- Innovation – exploring new service models and new partnerships better to meet changing customer needs and offer new approaches to service delivery and evaluation.

Developing management and other staff skills are again areas in which QLP-Y has placed increasing emphasis, while innovation in service development and delivery are key areas that QLP-Y seek to develop, hence the 'audience development' approach. Both these are summed up in our motto "management development through service development".

It would thus seem that QLP-Y is already pioneering the key areas that MLA has identified as requiring particular attention. The QLP-Y Evaluation is again another area where the approach we have taken sets new standards in managing evaluation. It is hoped that the final MLA report based on this consultation will incorporate the QLP-Y experience.

Youth service

There have been two key policy initiatives in service provision for young people. The first is the Ofsted Report (2007), *Building on the best: overview of local authority youth services 2005/06*. It is not within the scope of this Report to look at this important report in detail, but two areas need mention. First, one of its key findings is that "the quality of strategic and operational leadership and management is a key factor in bringing about improvement". Secondly, one of its Recommendations is to "seek to build upon the managerial and relevant experience of youth service officers and engage them in key strategic developments".

As with the earlier MLA consultation, the Ofsted Report highlights the management development aspect that QLP-Y has pioneered. As sections in this report indicate, we placed a greater emphasis during the period under review on this aspect (explained further below).

The second youth policy initiative is the Fulfilling Their Potential Conference held in February 2007 (MLA, 2007b) where a new vision for library service for young people was the theme. Beverley Hughes, Minister for Children, Young People and Families gave a keynote address at the conference. She urged local authorities to ensure libraries are treated as essential partners in helping young people achieve their full potential. Hughes underlined the role of public libraries in the context of social exclusion:

Libraries are uniquely positioned to reach out to those young people who typically find our services hard to access – young people in care, young people

with disabilities or young people from traveller families, who the typical one-size-fits-all approach to public services will do little to help. (MLA, 2007b).

While the approach that Fulfilling Their Potential is taking in meeting the needs of young people needs to be praised, perhaps it is rather limited in scope.

MLA (2007b) explains this role:

At the heart of Fulfilling their Potential is a commitment to involving young people in the process. From selecting books and other materials to training staff and designing library spaces, young people are getting actively involved in creating modern library and reading services which meet their needs.

The QLP-Y approach seeks a more fundamental role for young people by empowering them to inform policies in service development and resource allocation as far as services to young people is concerned. It also expects some structural

reorganisation and culture shifts if the new services to young people are going to be sustainable and welcomed by young people themselves.

An important contribution that the Project is already making is summed up by Durrani et al (2007):

"It is interesting to see them (Quality Leaders) making the crucial connection between theory and practice and moving from operational to strategic issues. The Project has given them opportunities not only to understand the dynamics of organisational change but to become active agents of change. In this, the Project is helping to develop effective leadership skills".

As the saying goes, "a journey of a thousand kilometres starts with the first step". QLP-Y is taking this first step with confidence.

Shiraz Durrani

31 May 2007

Barnet makes history

By Shiraz Durrani, Senior Lecturer, Information Management, Department of Applied Social Sciences, London Metropolitan University

This issue of QLP News marks a significant stage in the development of the Quality Leaders Project (Youth). For the first time, a Quality Leader has taken up the editorship of the Newsletter and has produced the entire issue herself. This signifies a major milestone in the work of QLP-Y, one of whose key aims is 'management development'. Catherine Lusted's achievements in editing this issue take her and the Project to new heights. The Project has afforded her a unique opportunity in giving voice to young people in Barnet.

At the same time, it is the content of the articles that Catherine has put together that is the real achievement. It is Catherine's work with young people in Barnet that sets a high standard for working with young people. This again fully meets the other aim of QLP-Y – 'service development'. The Project has given the young people in Barnet an opportunity to plan and help deliver services which they need,

as decided by themselves – with active support of the QLP Team led by Catherine.

It is not only the fact that young people were interviewed by other young people working on the Project that was significant. It was also the method used to consult them: by making a film about it. In the process they learnt new skills which will remain with them for life. It will also help Council managers in planning future services for young people. In the process, the project achieved an important partnership between the Library and Youth and Connections services.

All this could not have been achieved without the hard work of the young people themselves. Their interest and enthusiasm is what is often not allowed to influence local services. Far from being apathetic and cynical – the usual stereotype of young people – they took the opportunity offered by the project with open arms and smiles. Nor could the film activity have been a success

without the involvement of the Quality Leaders Team and other staff in Barnet.

However, another ingredient that made the Barnet experience a success is the active support and enthusiasm of Catherine's Mentor, Hannah Richens whose boundless energy and commitment provided Catherine with the best possible environment one could wish for.

But all the above would have been a wasted effort without the creative input of Catherine herself. Catherine has taken the aims of the Project with admirable enthusiasm.

Here then are all the ingredients needed for innovation and change so necessary if young people's needs are to be met. On behalf of the QLP Steering Group, I would like to extend our congratulations and appreciation to Catherine for her hard work, imagination and a determination to break barriers in the interest of developing services for young people. Young people in Barnet have a real champion of their cause in Catherine.

Finding and funding voices: the inner city experience

The launch event for the DASS Community Media Research Group will take place on Monday 17 September, 2007 (9.00am – 5.30pm) at The Graduate Centre, London Metropolitan University, 166-220 Holloway Road, London N7 8DB. The motto of the day will be: *Finding and Funding Voices: the inner city experience*. A one-day international colloquium on community media.

The organisers want to invite London-based policy-makers and funders, as well as community representatives. The event is free of charge but early registration is advised as places are limited.

For further details see www.communitymedia.eu or contact the organisers:

Peter Lewis

Email: p.lewis@londonmet.ac.uk and

Salvatore Scifo

Email: s.scifo@londonmet.ac.uk

A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The Department of Applied Social Sciences (DASS) organised a seminar on the future of youth training that took place 21 May. The purpose of the consultative workshop was to discuss the changes in youth work policies and practices, explore social issues affecting young people, look at current and planned changes in youth work qualifications and look at the possible opportunity for curriculum development in relevant youth services at London Metropolitan University.

There were various interesting presentations that gave an insight into the various issues, developments and needs that affect young people and the professional delivering key services to young people.

Quality Leaders liberate themselves

QLP-Y has offered a number of learning opportunities for Quality Leaders (QL) at events known as 'Development Days'. These have included presentations from the Project Group on aspects of developing services and skills with QLs presenting their progress reports. They thus provide opportunities to exchange ideas and experiences as well as developing new skills and learning. They have also provided an opportunity for reviewing the progress and direction of the project as a whole.

During the first phase of QLP-Y, six Development Days (DDs) were offered. In the current implementation phase, four DDs have been offered and a fifth one is planned for later in the year.

The fourth Development Day took a different perspective from the earlier ones. In May 2007, the Quality Leaders organised their own Development Day without direct involvement of the Project Group. This was an important milestone for QLP-Y which has always encouraged QLs to be proactive not only in developing new services but in being reflective learners.

At the 3rd Development Day held at London Met in February 2007, it was decided to organise a series of events in each authority on the theme of 'liberation'. The Project Team offered £2,000 to each authority to organise these events which would involve an active partnership with young people.

The QLs decided to organise their own Development Day and met at the Earlesfield Youth Centre, Grantham on 10 May. In attendance were Catherine Lusted (Barnet), Claire Stalker-Booth (Haringey), David Percival (Portsmouth), Ian Richards (Lincolnshire) and Selma Ibrahim (Haringey). They were joined by Emily Sowter (representing the QLP-Y Project Group) and Mary Eastwood-Krah (Evaluator).

The Quality Leaders decided that each authority will focus on one specific aspect of the overall theme of 'Liberation' and the following workshops were decided upon:

- Portsmouth – Drama
- Barnet – Music
- Haringey – Art/ Dance/ Creative Writing
- Lincolnshire – Art

It was agreed that each authority will organise their liberation event in partnership with local young people and deliver their workshops locally, with an option for young people to attend other authority workshops for "taster" sessions. All authorities will come together at the end of the workshops and take part in a final event to be held at a central location. As this issue of QLP News goes to press, all Quality Leaders are busy organising their activities – watch this space!

An Arsenal fan bids farewell to QLP-Y



My previous job was at the London Borough of Enfield where I was employed for six years. I worked for Enfield Training Services who offered work based learning opportunities, as well as basic skills training, to 16-24 year olds. My job role involved recruiting young people to the training scheme, interviewing and assessing their social and learning needs and starting them on the appropriate training course.

The range of young people I worked with was very diverse. I worked closely with refugees and asylum seekers wanting to learn English and lots of young people who had no qualifications at all. In other instances we had school leavers who were keen to do a work based qualification in a specific trade, eg Hairdressing or Electrical.

Many of the young people that we recruited have many personal issues and social circumstances that had potentially blocked their progress to gaining qualifications or getting employment. My job was to ensure that each individual had a mentor to support them through their learning and assist in helping where young people's personal issues were affecting their progress. This often involved liaising with other organisations, such as Social Services, Connexions, or the Youth Offending Team. Often, there were many stakeholders involved in supporting the young people. My job essentially brought it all together.

I also had to work very closely with local businesses and companies. A large part of the young persons training is to get them ready for work. This may be work experience or a longer term placement for the duration of an NVQ/ work based qualification and in many cases leading to a permanent job contract.

The greatest satisfaction was seeing students with little English or academic qualifications progress to high levels of achievement and move on to jobs, further education or work up to Apprenticeships.

It was a very challenging role, with many responsibilities, but a thoroughly enjoyable one.

I have since moved on to London Metropolitan University, which has been a very different experience for me. The academic environment and methods of working are very different from working in a Local Authority. In my previous job, even though we had our individual responsibilities, helping young people was a whole team effort and involvement on a daily basis. Working on QLP was a very different experience. The team was quite small, with only two dedicated full time staff. Although the team meet on a regular basis to discuss the project, much of the time is spent working on your own with a lot of email

correspondence.

I found it quite daunting trying to settle into the University and to get to grips with QLP-Y initially. There was a lot of information, history and day to day running of the project to learn and understand and I think realistically it took me a year to really find my feet and feel comfortable working on QLP-Y and at the University. It was a difficult transition moving from a frontline job, to a more strategic job but I dug deep, and feel that the past year I've done very well in my job at QLP-Y and on a personal level, feel I have really achieved many things that I would not have done had it not been for the QLP experience. Working on QLP-Y has, without doubt, matured me as a person and boosted my confidence in my abilities in a work environment.

As for the QLP project itself, it's been a very interesting and complicated process. I've enjoyed having the opportunity to work with different authorities as this has opened my eyes to the different local issues that each face individually. No two Local Authorities are the same and that in itself is very interesting as it shows what works in one authority doesn't work in another. Perhaps one of the biggest challenges QLP has faced has been how diverse each authority is and perhaps the QLP model hasn't fitted some authorities as well as it has others. In terms of my job duties, I would have liked to have worked more closely with authorities on a more regular basis. Without physical presence and support I feel that authorities have been able to drift for long periods of time losing opportunities to develop their projects to their full potential.

A definite personal highlight has been the project visits to authorities, I've thoroughly enjoyed meeting QLP teams and working with them, discussing issues and problem solving and I feel confident that I have made some strong working relationships with individuals. I would have liked the opportunity to work more closely with the QLPs and the young people they have been working with, I believe that the more personal touch is important to bringing QLP-Y together. It's been fantastic to work with the authorities and especially to be involved with some of their projects and meeting the young people.

Before joining London Met, I had not had any work published and I am personally very proud that I have managed to publish some work this past year. This is something that would not have happened without the project.

As the project draws to an end, the time has come

to think about the future and what direction I will be taking in my career. I have missed very much working with young people directly and naturally this is something that I want to go back to. I'm seriously considering doing my PGCE in September 2008. I wanted to find a job where I could use all of my new skills and work with young people again. Luckily I found a great opportunity at Enfield County School for girls where I will be Careers/Mentor Co-ordinator. I will be starting a new careers service and curriculum for the school, delivering sessions to young people on their future options as well as linking in with the mentor team and supporting all young people who need extra support at school. It's a fantastic

opportunity and I'm pleased that I have been so welcomed by everyone at the school. I feel very excited and confident about my new challenge.

Aside from working, most of my spare time is spent being a Mum. That's a challenge in itself, especially working full-time. I divide the majority of my spare time/ weekends between London and Manchester. I'm a huge Arsenal fan and have been for all of my life, I love music and go to many gigs and concerts in the UK, (mainly New Order in the past), and abroad. With all these things, I don't have time for much else!

Emily Sowter

27 July 2007

QLP: Central tenet

The central tenet of QLP is 'management development through service development'. Pitcher, Eastwood-Krah and O'Neill (2007) sum up its approach:

The QLP-Y project is designed to address social exclusion of young people from libraries and other services through developing partnership between library services, youth services and community groups. Its aim is to create opportunities for young people to participate in society and to develop their

creativity, reading and life skills through developing staff skills and innovative services responsive to the needs of young people.

Pitcher, Jane; Eastwood-Krah, Mary and O'Neill, Maggie (2007): *Evaluation of Quality Leaders Project (Youth)* initiative. Interim report. Available at www.londonmet.ac.uk/londonmet/library/i29617_3.pdf

Accessed: 28 April 2007

Innovation and Development for Information Services

This is the title of a new Masters Module especially designed for participants of QLP-Y. It is expected to be delivered in November at Ladbroke House, where the Department of Applied Social Sciences is based. The timing is appropriate as we now have a Minister for Education with responsibility for innovation, among other things.

The need for the Module was identified by Quality Leaders (QLs) during Development Days. QLP-Y Sponsors and Mentors had also raised their wish to ensure that staff skills are developed in parallel with service development as part of their participation in the Project. Taking part in the Module will not only enhance the skills of QLs, it also provides them with academic credits and thus enhances lifelong learning and employability.

The module will explore the contribution that innovation and effective leadership can make in ensuring that information services play an active role in meeting the challenge of social development in the context of rapid globalisation.

The Module will run for six days in November – December. On successful completion of the module, students will earn 20 credits which can be used for

higher education, for example MA in Information Services Management at London Metropolitan University. Two components of the assessment will need to be submitted in January 2008.

The Module aims to:

- raise critical awareness of the role of information in society
- examine the concepts of 'innovation' and 'development' in their broadest sense and analyse factors that hinder or enhance development
- introduce participants to concepts of innovation, effective leadership and equality as they relate to information services and their role in organisational development
- provide critical awareness of the role of information in democracy and citizenship
- develop critical reflective practice

Each QLP-Y participating authority will be able to send three delegates (Haringey has negotiated for four delegates). They can send a Quality Leader or a member of the QLP-Y Team who, it is expected, will help sustain some of the services and initiatives developed as part of QLP(Y).