

Local children turn teacher this summer and give grown ups a lesson in how to look after the environment

Undeterred by the unpredictable summer weather, the Hyson Green based charity, the Partnership Council, has been running all kinds of fun activities for children in many parts of the city, helping them to have a say about where they live, as well as giving them the chance to actually change the things they don't like or want to improve. The activities, which have run throughout the six week summer holidays, have focused on the children's outdoor environments and green spaces; from their local parks and gardens to their streets and areas of wasteland. Many children have got involved, with half day activities taking part in local parks and community centres in St Anns, Hyson Green, Broxtowe, Bakersfield and The Meadows.

The unique thing about the Partnership Council's summer activities is that they have been led and inspired by local children from the very beginning, with children being invited to take photographs of the things they dislike and want to change about where they live. These photographs revealed that, very often, the children wanted to improve very simple things about their environment, such as reducing the amount of litter on the streets and in their parks. Another recurring theme captured in the children's photographs was the fact that they wanted to see local parks being improved and brightened up with more flowers for example.

Armed with first hand photographic evidence of how children saw their local environment, the Partnership Council got to work to act on the children's suggestions and change things for the better. Wherever possible, this involved the children themselves, with their photos informing the theme of each summer activity. For example, a group of children from Hyson Green got together to transform Bridlington Street Park, by planting large tubs with a whole range of summer flowers.

In addition, the Partnership Council has also acted on the children's behalf to get things changed, for instance, by working with Nottingham City Council to get graffiti removed from local buildings, walls and fences.

The summer activities have proved a huge hit with kids from throughout the city, as Jabran Ahmed from the Partnership Council explains; "children often get left out when it comes to planning or caring for their local environment, which is particularly unfair when it comes to facilities such as playgrounds which are, after all, designed for children! Our summer of environmental activities has aimed to change that, with children sending us their photographs and ideas and even more importantly actually getting involved in changing things on a very practical level.

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As well as giving children the chance to change things for themselves, the summer activities have also introduced children to the environment around them and given them a real sense of pride. The results speak for themselves and will benefit the whole community of course, not just children. Hopefully getting children engaged in caring for their local environment from an early age will stay with them into adulthood, giving us a cleaner, greener, more attractive environment for many years to come.”

If you would like to know more about the Partnership Council’s summer of environmental activities please contact Jabran Ahmad at the Partnership Council on (0115) 9708200.

If you require photography or would like more press information please contact Stephanie Robertson on 07939 144978 or email stephanie@13souls.com