

Appendix 13: Young Persons Event: Press Release

Winchester City Council asks young people about their vision for the future



Students got to work with stickers, maps and 'Monopoly' money in some hands-on workshops about how they see the future of the Winchester district.

About forty 11- to 16-year-olds representing Peter Symonds College, Kings, Westgate and Perins schools were involved in the project which took place on Wednesday 18 April at the West Downs Campus of the University of Winchester.

The day was organised by Winchester City Council who worked with partners Hampshire Youth Service, Winchester District Children and Young People Partnership, the Forestry Commission and Play England to make it a real success.

The students spent the day discussing what it is like to live in the Winchester district, what sort of things they want to do in their spare time and what should be done to make sure young people in the district enjoy a good quality of life. They also talked about what we can do to make our communities sustainable for the future and what will make it better place now and when they are older.

Mike Simpson of Winchester YMCA who chairs the Winchester District Children and Young People's Partnership said: "Young people often get overlooked when plans are being developed which affect them. This event was an excellent opportunity for us to hear directly from them. The students gave us some great ideas and interesting views. We will use all of this information to help make the Winchester district a better place for young people."

During the day the students took part in three active workshops where they recorded their thoughts and opinions, and at lunchtime had the opportunity to use a *Big Brother*-style diary room to give their impressions of the day.

When considering the Children and Young People's Plan they acted as policy makers, producing ideas and then choosing how best to spend their 'Monopoly' money on the various projects.

For the Winchester District Play Strategy they worked with representatives from the City Council, Forestry Commission and Play England and discussed what their ideal area to spend leisure time would look like. This will help Winchester City Council lead the development of the very first Play Strategy for the district, and should enable the authority to apply for National Lottery funding.

Throughout the day the students also completed feedback forms that will feed into the data already collected through the City Council's Live for the Future campaign that will in turn form the core strategy for the Local Development Framework.

Commenting on the event, Fern Calver, Senior Youth Worker for Winchester District, said: "This has been an excellent opportunity to empower and consult young people about what's important to them now and what they're worried about for their future."

Rob Gazzard of the Forestry Commission added: "We're really enthusiastic about getting involved with the Council's play strategy. We own a lot of land in the district and it's really great to get input from children and teenagers as to how they think we could make better use of it."

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