

Inspiring  
the Future

The  
**SMASH**  
Youth Project

## Introduction

At the beginning of any Open Space Technology (OST) event there is always an anxious pause, as the room (or at least those unfamiliar with OST) wonders what would happen if no one got up to post a workshop. Of course they always do because OST is fuelled by one of the most potent forces known to man, passion. What gets people up off their seats and posting subjects for discussion is their passion for the subject in hand. In this case for the question of how we might work closer together and do what we do even better.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009 the people gathered at the DeVere Hotel in Swindon shared a passion for their work with and for young people in Swindon. That passion was amply demonstrated by playback theatre as they retold stories from the audience. Stories of learning, achievement, care, excitement, sorrow and joy that we as a community share. What follows is the output of that day and the product of just a little of that shared passion. What will make it into a better future for young people in Swindon is the commitment and the willingness to take responsibility of the people who attended those workshops, several of them, young people themselves.

I believe my name is next to several of those action points so I have a lot to do. I can't wait to see how some of the other ideas and projects generated from the day progress too. I certainly have plenty of inspiration to be very hopeful for the year ahead for SMASH, for our community of youth workers, teachers, EWO's, social workers, coaches, mental health workers, counsellors and all the rest but most of all for the young people themselves.

We hope we have been able to inspire you just a little too. See you all next year I hope,

*Rob Chappell*

SMASH Youth Project



## **OST Workshop Minutes** **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Richard Roberts

**Workshop Time:** 2-2.30pm

**Workshop Title:**

Exploring Governments priorities re: mentoring and its intention to forward funds to LA's to support mentoring Projects.

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

Melanie Merrill – Mentoring & Befriending Foundation

Announcement advising that there will be funds available made directly to local authorities for the purpose of mentoring. MB&F holding a conference in November to disseminate further information to Directors of Children's Services in England & Wales.

Funding likely to be in the form of Strategy Commissioning.

**Action Points & Names:**

1. Research '10 Downing Street' website to locate the announcement by Gordon Brown of these funds being available – SMASH ADMIN
2. Contact MB&F re: further information about conference. – SMASH ADMIN
3. Contact Sue Wald – Director of Strategy and Commissioning – RR
4. Promote SMASH – capture positive quotes from referrers. From YP and SBC (particularly).
  - a. SCEP (Swindon Creative Education Project) – David Messam's Mentee attending) – positive quotes from mentee and SCEP – SMASH
  - b. Project promotional video – for local organisations – SMASH STAFF

**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Rob Chappell (SMASH)

**Workshop Time:** 2:30pm Space C

**Workshop Title:** Something adventurous

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

Looking for ideas for a profile raising, adventure experience for young people. General feeling of the meeting was that climbing up things or other “adventure” activities had a limited appeal and were likely to be seen as ‘Jollies’ in the current economic climate. Preference was for exchange visit or similar with some kind of volunteer work at the other end. Local businesses sponsor college students to do construction work in the Gambia for instance.

Also discussed tying up with media/celebrity such as Ray Mears /adventure providing company to pitch a TV programme or feature.

**Action Points & Names:**

Rob to...

Contact funders such as British council for voluntary Services overseas, UK  
Germany connections, co-op, etc

Contact foreign contact “Imagine Chicago”, Roz Tomkins has contacts in Kenya etc

Research other destinations

Prepare speculative TV pitch

**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Toby Robson/Alan Gladman

**Workshop Time:** 2.30

**Workshop Title:** Bicycle recycling

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

- Bikes are an important source of transport and independence for young people in Swindon
- Swindon has a very good cycle path network linked to quiet back roads
- Bikes are inherently green and cycling as a mode of transport usually attracts political and public support
- Cycling is a good way of keeping fit and active and encouraging young people to venture forth (away from the x-box and the PlayStation!)
- Bikes are aspirational objects in the eyes of young people
- There is a very successful project running in Cannock (name?) wherein people donate bikes which are worked on, restored and made available either to sell (to help fund the project) or loaned or donated to worthy causes
- A cycle workshop used to be employed to train youngsters on bike maintenance at the Parks Youth centre – however, this has now closed *although the equipment and space still remains* (Josh has contact within SBC Carol Hemms – who may be able to shed more light)
- The Police may be a source of potential donor bikes (unclaimed recovered stolen bikes)
- Marlborough House may well be a potential partner for SMASH if we were able to pursue a bike project – transport and bikes are of huge interest to their young people
- There is the option to train mentees on bike restoration and have them advertise a repair service (in return for charitable donations... subject to legal implications)
- Local bike shops a potential source of donor bikes / parts / expertise
- Set up a loan scheme for other local groups and charities?
- Smash project team member to train as cycling proficiency examiner?
- Barnfield tip and freecycle as potential sources of donor bikes (Mayor Wren used to be responsible for recycling – can we use his influence to help source)
- Bikes left at the tip (many of which are in very good condition!)



Cont/...

**Action Points & Names:**

- TR to contact Cannock scheme for tips and info
- SMASH to contact Mayor in connection with rubbish tip
- Alan to start posting wanted ads on Freecycle, Freecycle Café etc.
- Alan to contact local businesses to see if they have any unclaimed bikes in their cycle sheds.
- We could all post on our Facebook pages etc a wanted ad asking for bikes to be donated.
- Alan to speak to the local bike shops asking if they could donate either some bikes or parts or tools.

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**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Caroline Peirce

**Workshop Time:** 3pm

**Workshop Title:** Heritage Project

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

Large sum of money funded by Lottery Heritage Project looking at vulnerable young people and methods put in place to protect them. Aim of meeting is how to keep it interesting.

Project will include – visit to STEAM, training YP's in interviewing skills so that they can interview people from railway background. Visit to Big Pit mining museum, Southwell Workhouse. Arts project and drama workshop

**Action Points & Names:**

- Google Black Country Museum, Swindon Historian Dr Fuller
- Look at social housing – i.e. domestic violence, poverty and introduction of welfare system and how this impacted the life of young people.
- Contact Steve Wakefield previous Mayor re railway history
- Google Swindon's history i.e. David Murray John
- Investigate possibility of an upstairs / downstairs residential i.e. some living the "lord of the manor" lifestyle and others the servants
- Look at how the media has impacted the lives of YP's i.e. eating disorders, choices available
- Abolition of corporal punishment
- Look at what problems YP's face now i.e. social awareness, peer pressure
- Look at lifestyle changes i.e. introduction of Unions, religion no longer being the primary process
- Contact curator from Old Town Museum re a social photography display they held and the photographer.
- Investigate the possibility of using Playback for Theatre workshop
- Link up with Ian Prestwich at Platform re possible venue for drama group etc

Actions to be carried out by SMASH / Heritage Steering Group

**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Josh Chesterman and Toby Robson

**Workshop Time:** 2 – 2:30

**Workshop Title:** Accessibility of Trustee's

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

- Have a trustee page on the existing blog / new blog?
- A staff member at Trustee meetings...
- Should there be an open invitation to staff members to attend the trustee meeting.
- Look at what in the Trustee meetings is confidential and what can be released to the public.

**Decision**

- To have a careful summary of non confidential aspects/subjects 'coming up' and points of interests from the Trustee meetings on a designated page on SMASH website and to have it in SMASHing News.
- Agreeable trustees to have contact details on the webpage (for mentors or project members should they wish to discuss issues...)
- Potential for trustee to occasionally attend team meetings.

**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Ben Harman

**Workshop Time:** 2.00pm

**Workshop Title:** Video

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

A video about current provision for young people in Swindon, looking at

- What there is available for young people at the moment
- Where the vision of services / youth centre's for Swindon is going
- What young people want

**Storyboard...**

Ideas

- Interview key people around Swindon...service users...commissioners etc
- Video about Rob's adventure weekend
- Is the recession affecting young people

**Action Points & Names:**

- Charlie Lawer, Paddy Symonds, Ben Harman to apply for a grant to Mediabox...Ben to phone Charlie and Paddy to arrange on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009.
- Paul Brown has some resources that would be useful for the group
- Tony Neister has some equipment and expertise that would be useful, BH to contact
- Charlie, Paddy and Ben to form a 'working group' and identify potential members. The group will carry out preliminary research,



**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Patrick Law

**Workshop Time:** 2.00pm

**Workshop Title:** Inner Flame

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

- How to spread the message of the course and make links with other groups.

**Story board...**

**Ideas**

- Don't waste time with schools
- Use other charitable groups
- Networking lunch

**Action Points & Names:**

- Margaret Saunt, Robert Williams and Sharon Ryan
- Look into possibility of referring students and young people for courses.
- Create a better understanding of other groups and how all can interact.



**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Sandy Dillon

**Workshop Time:** 2.30pm

**Workshop Title:** Social Media Use

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

To discuss ways in which social media can help teenagers and smash as an organisation. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, etc.

**Action Points and Names:**

Recommend SMASH create profile on Facebook for kids to interact with other kids in SMASH or previously passed through SMASH ranks.

**OST Workshop Minutes**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July – De Vere Hotel**

**Workshop Organiser:** Laura Holmes

**Workshop Time:** 2.00pm

**Workshop Title:** Tobacco Marketing

**Brief Outline of Discussion:**

- How to use govt money to reduce children and young people from smoking.
- Perhaps using social networking sites to discourage smoking.
- Using youth clubs, school newspapers to educate children and young people about the dangers and effects of smoking.
- Maybe talking to Ben about making a video, which could link up with his project.
- Link making a video to enter a competition with putting it on a social networking site (Bebo/Facebook)
- Providing positive role models through older peers who are considered worth listening to, to visit younger ages and give their opinions on smoking and their experiences.
- Showing the impact of the consequences of smoking, through visits or videos from people who are/have suffered from it.

**Action Points & Names:**

- Contact Claire Smith from Youth Forum, OR maybe someone from STEP (Andy Parsons)
- Speak to Ben to talk about video project
- Speak to Caroline to combine with her Heritage Project
- Caroline Peirce, Alison Howe, Laura Holmes, Nichola Cozens, Sandy Dillon