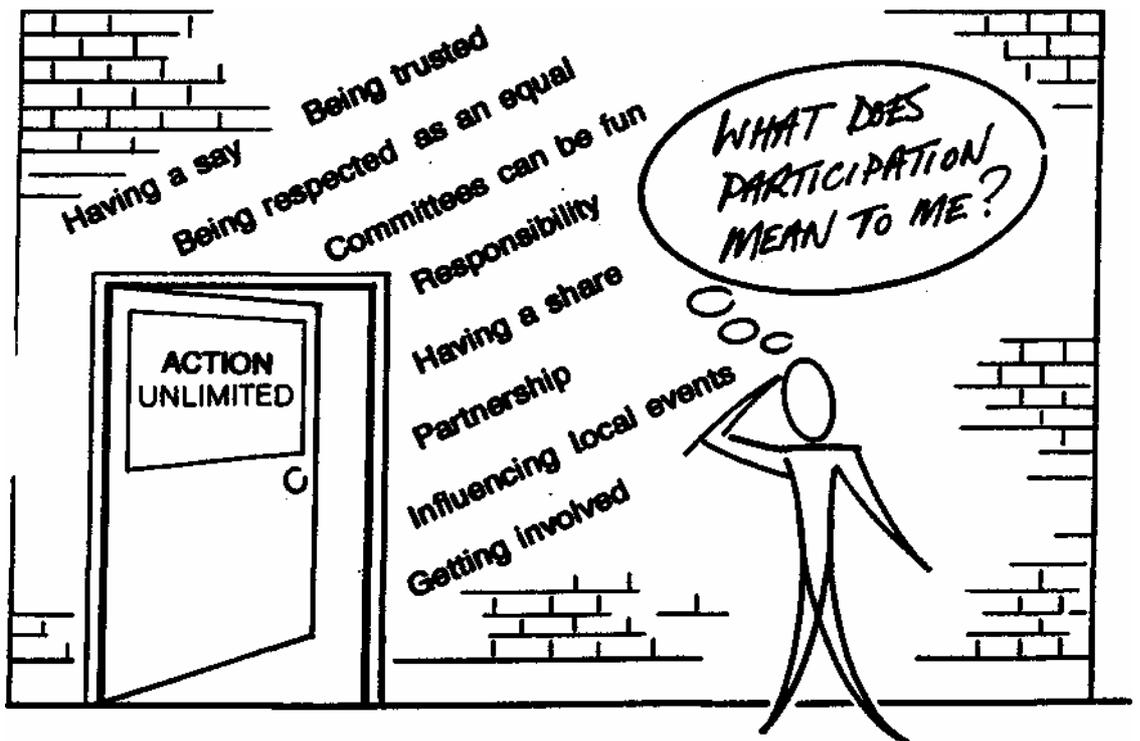
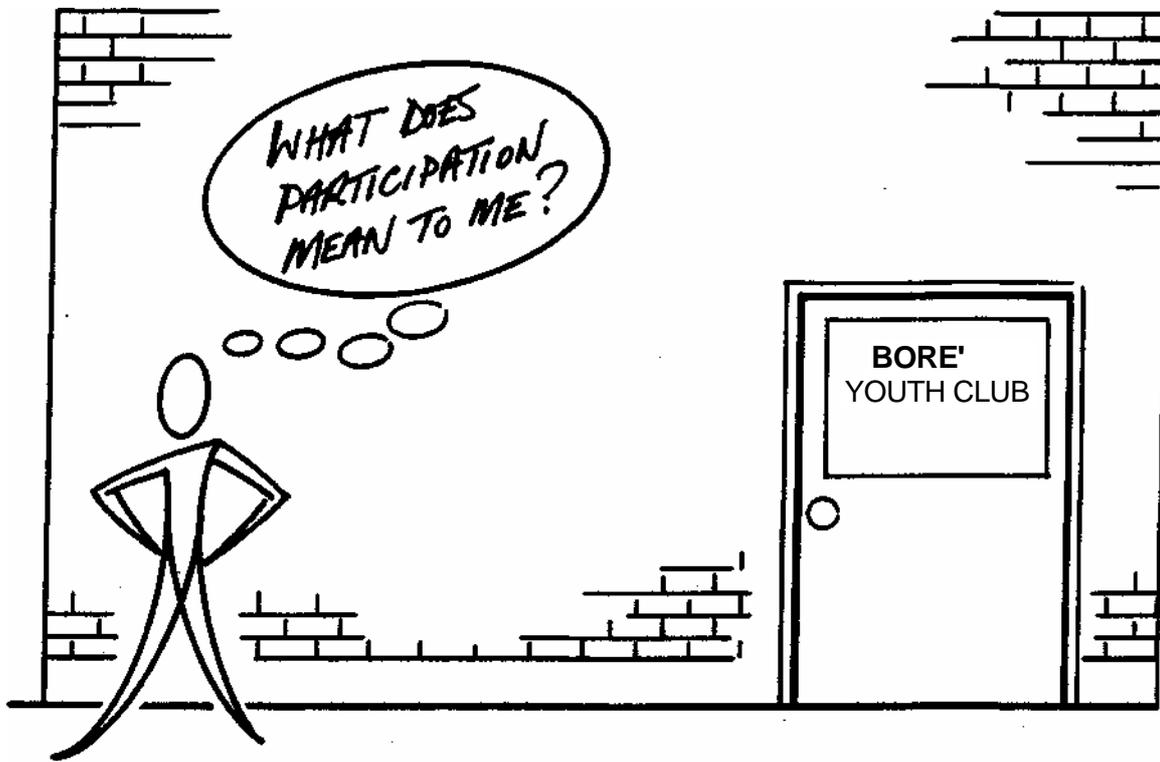


PARTICIPATION:

What's it got to do with me?

Guidelines for Young People by Young People



FOREWORD

These guidelines about Participation in the Youth Service are addressed to Young People in the Youth Service and were produced by the Participation Sub-committee of the National Advisory Council for the Youth Service. Two further sets of guidelines on participation, for Youth Service practitioners and Youth Service policy-makers have also been prepared by the sub-committee.

The National Advisory Council for the Youth Service (NACYS) was established by the then Secretaries of State for Education and Science and Wales in 1985 to advise Ministers and others on the needs of young people that the Youth Service is best fitted to meet. The Sub-committee's remit was to report on the contribution of the Youth Service to the best means of increasing effective participation by young people in society, focussing initially on all aspects of the Youth Service and framing guidelines for statutory and voluntary sectors to assist this objective.

The sub-committee worked between July 1986 and April 1987 and its Members* were:

Ann Davies (Chair)

Geoffrey Jones

Gavton Shepherd

Elizabeth Smith

Janice Smith

Phil Treseder

Ivor Widdison

Steve Howlett

Manjit Ghattaura

Jane Mills

Martin Notley

Jock Barr

* The first seven Members listed are Members of the National Advisory Council for the Youth Service.

To assist the Participation Sub-Committee, the following young people were called together informally from different areas and backgrounds to draw up these guidelines, based on their own experience of participation.

Manjit Ghattaura*

Steve Hewlett*

Phil Treseder*

Jeanette Rosenberg

Anne Rowe

Tony Baines

Steven Tulip

Darren Brooks

Rachel Kyte

Paramjit Chahal

Mark Riches

MicahGold

Lynda Hersey

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* Served on the young people's committee as Members of the NACYS Subcommittee.

** NAYC has now become Youth Clubs UK.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE — WHAT ARE THEY FOR?

DEFINITION OF PARTICIPATION

Participation is involvement and responsible powersharing by all those with a key interest in the service offered. Participation in the youth service is sharing responsibility with as many young members or users as possible at all levels. The aim should be to encourage them to initiate and carry through activities and projects and to give them an effective voice in decisions about aims, expenditure and programmes.

These guidelines are not meant as a set of rules but have been written by us to allow you to question the way your youth club/organisation works at present.

Does it let you have an equal share in the way things are run?

Who makes the decisions?

What is the role of adults in youth organisations?

Use these guidelines to start questioning things that are around you and then put YOUR ideas into ACTION.

PARTICIPATION — What's the official line?

Back in the '50s questions were being asked about the role of the youth service, in particular whether it should reach out to those who decided to participate in club activities or whether it should concentrate on those who were indifferent to what the youth service offered. In response to these questions, the Government set up a committee in 1958 under Lady Albermarle to review the youth service in England and Wales. Its findings were published in 1960. The Albermarle Committee was particularly conscious of those young people not attracted to club activity, the 'unattached' as they were described. One recommendation of the Report was that young people should be given opportunities to participate as partners in the youth service.

In 1981, a further review group was set up under Mr Alan Thompson. It developed and emphasized the theme of participation which the Albermarle Report had highlighted. Indeed, the Report of the group was called "Experience and Participation" and it had the following to say:

"Our view on all this, in brief,
is that participation should be
strengthened at all levels....."

As a result of the Albermarle and Thompson Reports participation has been developing in youth clubs and many discussion papers, books and packs have been produced to further the involvement of young people in their unit/club/project.

QUESTIONNAIRE

DOES YOUR YOUTH CLUB/ORGANISATION LET YOU PARTICIPATE?

What does participation mean?

"Taking part in decision-making."

"Having a say in what the club provides."

"Working together."

"Co-operation between groups of young people, adults and young people."

"Being taken seriously."

These comments came from young people consulted by the Subcommittee.

WHERE DOES YOUR CLUB STAND ON THE ISSUE OF PARTICIPATION?

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Circle the number which corresponds to your answer:—

1. Others make decisions, have responsibility.
2. Members join in decisions and share responsibility.
3. Members make decisions, have responsibility with support if necessary.

QUESTIONS

CIRCLE ANSWER

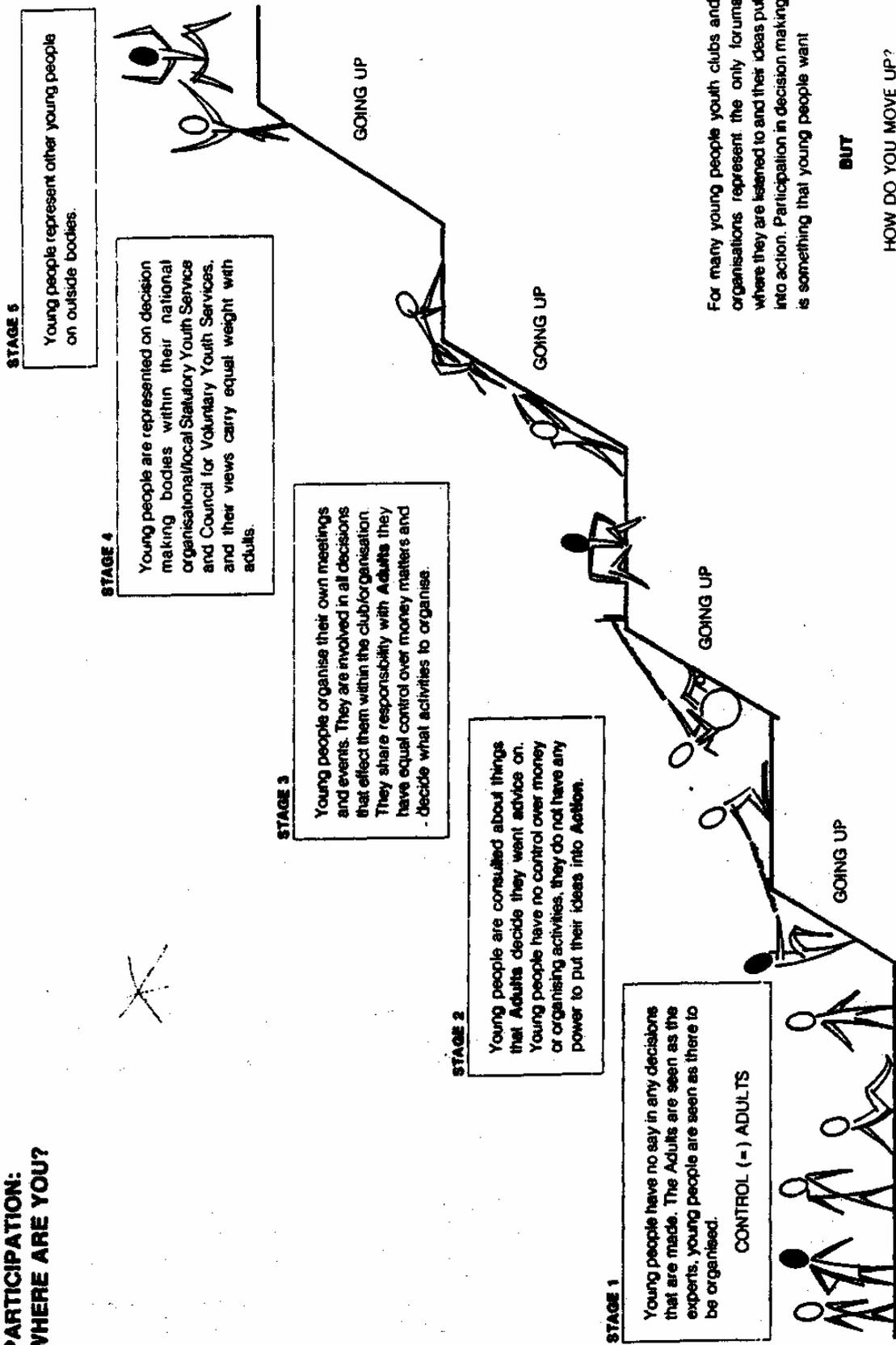
1. Who decides what nights/times the unit/dub/project will operate?	3	2	1
2. Who decides activities/programme offered?	3	2	1
3. Who decides what charges will be made for attendance or for special events/trips etc?	3	2	1
4. Who decides the rules for acceptable behaviour?	3	2	1
5. Who decides how the money is spent?	3	2	1
6. Who identifies training needs?	3	2	1
7. Who interviews and appoints staff?	3	2	1

Your answers to the questions should give some indication of where your youth unit/club/project has reached concerning young people's participation in decision making.

TOTAL SCORE

SCORE: 0-10 Club controlled by others.
10-16 Joint control and decision making.
16-21 Members make decisions with support where necessary.

**PARTICIPATION:
WHERE ARE YOU?**



For many young people youth clubs and organisations represent the only forums where they are listened to and their ideas put into action. Participation in decision making is something that young people want

BUT

HOW DO YOU MOVE UP?

HOW ARE WE EVER TO GET OVER THESE HURDLES?

Hurdle 1

"Adults just want to keep all the power, they don't want us to have any control in the club, especially when it comes to the money!"

1. Try discussing this with a sympathetic adult in your unit/club/project.
2. Find out if your local authority has any policy on youth participation.
3. When you have meetings with adults try and have them in premises where you feel comfortable.
4. Make sure you've got the facts right before you go into a meeting.
5. Try and put your ideas on paper and distribute these before the meeting, so that you don't get the excuse that there isn't enough time to discuss your ideas.
6. Don't be intimidated!

Hurdle 2

"Young people just don't have the confidence or skills to take control of their lives in the youth service or outside it"

if

1. Remember you are just as capable as the adults, work the way you want to and don't let anybody put you down.
2. Organise training sessions for yourselves about the way committees and funding etc works to put yourselves in control.
3. Find out what training your local authority/youth organisation offers and take it up. Getting training doesn't mean you're incapable, youth workers go on training courses all the time.
4. If training for young people to participate on the Youth Service isn't available in your area lobby for it, or get in touch with organisations like the British Youth Council, and Youth dubs UK (formerly NAYC).

Hurdle 3

"Most of the time participation of young people involves inadequate and tokenistic representation on committees. Even when young people get involved, participation most of the time means having to put up with no end of committees where no one listens to us and the decisions In effect have already been made."

1. Equal representation of young people and adults on all committees would begin to rectify this.
2. Adults need training about developing participatory ways of working. Suggest organising a training day on participation with adults and young people meeting separately and together to develop ideas on beginning to make participation something which is real.
3. Organise support groups for yourselves so that young people sitting on any committee can discuss their ideas with people from the unit/club/project beforehand.

Hurdle 4

'We can't do anything, we haven't got any money.'

1. Find out if your local authority has any money specifically to develop Participation in the Youth Service and to support young people's project.
2. Charities and grants can also make grants for a specific project or towards running costs.
3. Contact the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS), the Council of Welsh Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS), the National Youth Bureau, BYC, Youth Clubs UK or your local authority about this.
4. Remember fundraising can be fun. Why don't you organise events using your own resources and talents? For example, this could be a 'jailbreak' (a sponsored event where an individual is given a small sum of money and a time limit and you see how far they get).

Hurdle 5

*"Committee meetings are organised in such a formal manner that most of the time they isolate young people and prevent them from participating, **

1. Remember committee meetings are not the only way that decisions can be made.
2. **Make your meetings as informal as possible, allowing everybody to discuss their ideas.**

Hurdle 6

"When we do have any committee meetings, or we're organising events, it's always the same people."

1. **Many young people in society are disadvantaged by discrimination. Black, gay and lesbian, disabled and working class young people and young women face many problems in society which consequently means that they are often excluded from decision making structures and their concerns ignored.**
2. Make sure that all committees and activities are representative of all young people.
3. Organise events to make you examine these issues.
4. Establish links with organisations which represent such groups.
5. Found out the Youth Service policy in your area relating to these groups.

Hurdle 7

"We often feel isolated, and think we are the only people having difficulties."

1. Contact other local youth clubs, and organisations in your area.
2. if there is a local youth council/forum in your area, get involved, or set up your own. All you have to do is get together with other young people and start meeting.

3. Local Youth Councils/Forums can be a source of real support for young people no matter which group or organisation they work with. They can be used to discuss issues of concern to all local young people. As a representative body, they are more powerful in terms of lobbying,
4. Contact BYC, Youth Clubs UK or your local authority youth service. They offer information, support, advice and guidelines and can even put you in contact with other local groups, or tell you if there is a local youth ^council near you, or if there is any regional support structure.

CASE STUDIES

The following four case studies are based upon our experiences of participation.

CASE STUDY 1

Well, I belong to a uniformed organisation and I don't particularly like the idea of wearing a uniform. I thought it was outdated, so I decided to change it.

I got together with some of my friends to see what they thought of wearing uniform and I found that they weren't keen either.

So we decided to take our proposal to our local group. All the members of our local group agreed to our proposal.

We weren't too sure of the next step to take so we decided to ask an adult who had experience in these matters what to do next.

She/he explained that our proposal would have to go through all the channels — first to the local area committee, then to a wider area committee and eventually to the national committee of the organisation where a decision would be made.

She/he went on to explain that before our proposal could go on to the next stage it had to be agreed. So even if it got through to the first, and maybe the second stage, there was no guarantee that our proposal getting through all the committees. So at the end of the day any proposal coming from us would have to be passed by all the committees before actually being carried out.

"DO WE STOP THERE?"

CASE STUDY 2

We belong to a local youth forum, which is made up of young people from different organisations. We also have young people who are not members of organisations.

Our forum is run by young people who organise events for other young people in our area.

We don't go in for bureaucratic nonsense. We meet when we need to meet. Everyone is given a responsibility, depending on their own ability and willingness. For example, if one of us decided she/he could and wanted to organise a room for us to meet in and no one was against this, she/he would take this responsibility on.

You see if we said someone had to do this particular task, or we said we had to meet on a particular date every two weeks, this would put young people off.

So you see it's very informal and everyone is catered for. It works very well, because we use everyone's resources, whether it be through their own experiences or their contacts through their organisations.

The only problem we face is that adults don't take us seriously enough, because there are no adults involved in our group, even though we contact adults for advice on things we're not sure about.

"IF THIS IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR US, WHY ISN'T IT GOOD ENOUGH FOR ADULTS?"

CASE STUDY 3

I am a member of a youth council which is part of a national organisation. The youth council was asked by the national organisation to send a young person to each of their committees, because they had decided to put aside a place on each committee especially for a young person.

The youth council thought this was a very good idea and promptly sent representatives along to each of their committee meetings. I was one of those representatives.

When I sat on my particular committee, I found it very intimidating. The adults ignored me totally. They talked over my head. I couldn't understand what I was supposed to be doing there, never mind what was going on around me.

I finally plucked up enough courage to ask what was happening. I was pushed aside with "Don't worry," "You're doing fine," "It doesn't concern you", and so on.

I found that I wasn't alone, all the other young people who were attending the other committee meetings were feeling the same. So consequently we no longer turned up to meetings.

"WHY SHOULD WE BOTHER?"

CASE STUDY 4

We belong to a youth club. Some months ago we decided that we needed a minibus. So we decided to organise a meeting with the members' committee to discuss ways of fundraising for this.

At this meeting we discussed various fundraising events such as a disco or jumble sale. We realised that these events wouldn't raise the whole amount for the minibus, so we decided to ask our youth worker for advice on this matter.

Our youth worker told us about trusts, charities and funding agencies who gave grants for projects.

We decided that we would split up into smaller groups to work on each of the fundraising events. Our group worked on approaching the funding agencies and our youth worker helped us to fill in the forms for the grants, because we found them very complicated.

We found this way of working very successful, although, we found some of our fundraising events were successful and some were not. We found we could learn from our mistakes, so when we were fund raising in the future, we would know where we went wrong last time.

After all the hard work we put in, we finally got enough money together to buy our minibus.

"IS IT ALWAYS LIKE THIS?"

REMEMBER

Participation is a learning experience for both adults and young people, it does not happen by just waving a magic wand. It is something you create, you make, together.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

These guidelines about Participation in the Youth Service are addressed to those who undertake face-to-face youth work with young people and were produced by the Participation Sub-committee of the National Advisory Council for the Youth Service. Two further sets of guidelines on Participation for Youth Service policy-makers and for young people have also been prepared by the sub-committee.

The National Advisory Council for the Youth Service was established by the then Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales in 1985, to advise Ministers and others on the needs of young people which the Youth Service is best fitted to meet. The Subcommittee's remit was to report on the contribution of the Youth Service to the best means of increasing effective participation by young people in society, focusing initially on all aspects of the Youth Service and framing guidelines for statutory and voluntary sectors to assist this objective.

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GUIDELINES ON PARTICIPATION FOR YOUTH SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

WHAT IS IT?

Participation is involvement and responsible powersharing by all those with a key interest in the service offered. Participation in the Youth Service is sharing responsibility with as many young members or users as possible at all levels. The aim should be to encourage them to initiate and carry through activities and projects and to give them an effective voice in decisions about aims, expenditure and programmes.

PRINCIPLES

We offer our thoughts as a starting-point for yours:

1. Participation is part of a process leading to a broader and more democratic base for decision-making in our society, and thus better decisions reflecting real needs and aspirations. Belief in greater participation by young people is an aspect of belief in a more participatory society. Those promoting greater participation in youth organisations should look beyond these organisations and recognise young people's ultimate need to play an effective part in the wider society.
2. Participation by young people is the base of good youth work practice and can only be achieved by involving young people from the outset in the implementation of Ms aims.
3. Participation is also only valid if founded on the acceptance of equal opportunities
4. Individuals must be allowed to participate in different ways appropriate to their circumstances, commitment and interest. Participation does not necessarily involve training for leadership roles, or progression to more status and power within organisational hierarchies. For many young people a greater say in day-to-day decisions at unit/club/project level is the form of participation which they themselves would choose. Their wishes must be respected, together with those of young people who wish to take greater responsibility.
5. The aim is to give opportunity to young people to make considered judgements involving realistic appreciation of all the circumstances. Part of the achievement of Affective participation is to be able to negotiate necessary change with those individuals and bodies who have authority. Effective participation by young people is not essentially about confronting adults or challenging existing systems.
6. A commitment and attitude of mind are involved, including a positive wish to take responsibility and have a greater say in shaping our own lives. Effective participation normally involves teaming skills (such as self-expression, co-operating with others, decision-making) and some useful practices (such as those of committees), but is also more than a set of techniques.
7. Introducing participation can never be a 'one-off' exercise. Explicit commitments and suitable structures in organisations assist greatly, but workers and young people must sustain, and be sustained in, these structures, ensuring that the spirit and the practice of participation is communicated to all those who join.

8. Participation involves a fresh look at institutions and their assumptions and practices, for both the adults and the young people involved. Benefits can be the introduction of new aims and activities for the Youth Service more suited to young people's current needs, the elimination of unnecessary "red tape" and over-formalised practices; and a reformation of basic ideals.

TOPICS COVERED

In considering how the principles of participation could be carried into youth service practice, we have looked at

Attitudes to Participation

- organisational attitudes
- personal attitudes of youth workers and others responsible for the delivery of the service
- attitudes of youth workers to young people's responses

Action for Participation

- needed at organisation level
- needed at unit/dub/project level

ATTITUDES TO PARTICIPATION

Organisational Attitudes

There is still a gap between theory and practice. Lip service is paid to the need for involvement and leadership by young people. Belief in participation may be part of the basic philosophy of a voluntary youth organisation, or the stated policy of a Local Authority Youth Service. But this is not enough, the facts still need to be examined. A "Where are we now" exercise could be important. Young people should of course be involved. This should cover, at least

- defining and assessing achievements: in comparison with 10, 5, 2 years ago has progress been made? Is the pace of change increasing or decreasing?
- assessing the proportion of current officers and workers who are committed to participation, and who have experience of participatory methods of work with young people. Undertaking some relevant "straw poll" surveys of the attitudes of Management Committee Members, officers and workers;
- reflecting on standard practices and attitudes in the organisation and identifying those which promote participation and those which can create barriers;
- discovering whether training courses address Participation fully and in the best way.

Individual Attitudes

Participation is about the types of relationships providers have with users and vice versa. Commitment to participation is crucial. Adults need to convince young people of their sincerity and determination to achieve change. The apathy which young people are often said to feel towards participation can be a reflection of adults' failure to show confidence in them

Youth workers, including volunteers, need to analyse why they are in the job, asking "What do I most value in my job or relationship with my organisation?". It could be useful for each person to record his or her honest responses, recognising that, for example

- they are involved in the Youth Service partly to satisfy their own social needs and not exclusively because of an interest in young people; •
- they may enjoy "leadership" and their concept of it does not involve devolving significant power/responsibility on others, including young people*;
- they are happy with a relatively routine job and with predictable patterns of behaviour, disliking the uncertainty introduced by measures of participation, which involve more work and which may fear could get out of hand;
- they wish to involve young people but may also have little confidence in young people's capacity to perform "adult" tasks well;
- they may have strong views on participation but these have not so far helped their organisation to resolve the issues; it is important to consider why some colleagues have opposite views on this subject; sceptics may unfairly dismiss the commitment of others as "woolly idealism"; enthusiasts can be insensitive, aggressive, or unrealistic about the pace of change.

Attitudes of Youth Workers to Young People's Responses

There is dear evidence of problems perceived by youth workers in relation to two main responses to participation by young people

- offered the opportunity for participation, young people may have shown apathy;
- the pace of change required by enthusiastic young people, and their choice of activities and issues, may appear to threaten the organisation.

The now extensive literature about introducing measures of participation in the Youth Service reveals that there is constant tension between the need to give young people "space" to make their own decisions, and their need for positive support and guidance. Different approaches have been made and can claim some degree of success. These are well illustrated, by, for example, ILEA youth workers' accounts in "Not Just a Time Out - This Is Really Serious", Steve Long's annual reports on his Bedminster Boys' Club's experiment, Mark Smith's "Creators not Consumers" and many others (see bibliography).

Much depends on the right measures and the pace of change, but youth workers' experience and skills should also guide them in avoiding wrong attitudes. One attitude which may bring some positive results but can be harmful concentrates attention on a few young people as "leadership material", assuming that the majority will remain apathetic.

* a useful exercise about assessing management style is included in Section 5 of the Nottinghamshire Youth Service Document referred to in the bibliography, Annex A.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

As well as an audit of attitudes, organisations and individuals should also undertake an audit of action. Final decisions will rest with policy-makers. Part A of Guidelines has been written for them. But practitioners may be given - and should certainly seek - a part in determining organisational change.

Organisation Level

At organisation level, if Participation has not been effectively introduced or pursued, steps need to be taken to place this problem on the organisation's agenda, ensuring that the issues are thoroughly examined and not put aside by superficial arguments. Ready-made consensus may not exist for new measures of Participation. Those committed to such measures will need to consider

- In which forums proposals are to be introduced, and when;
- what data is available (or could be collected) to support the case for Participation;
- which groups and key individuals will give support.

In this process, a survey of progress can help

- how effective are any existing measures of participation;
- have young people and others been invited to comment about Participation within your organisation; is a new survey needed?*

When agreement to introduce new measures of Participation has been reached, a plan should identify

- the aims of Participation and a time-table for fulfilling short and long-term objectives;
- whether the plan should cover guidelines only for measures at local level, or whether specific measures which you require to be adopted;
- the decision-making bodies in your organisation, and how young people will be involved in each, and on what basis;
- the measures needed to overcome any constitutional or other barriers preventing young people joining committees (or other bodies), including time-tables and mechanisms for changing relevant rules, or for devolution of authority to bodies in which young people can have an effective voice;
- how relevant training needs will be implemented, covering Members of Committees, officers of the organisation, managers, workers (including part-timers and volunteers) and young people;
- responsibility: the person(s) responsible for implementation of each aspect, and the periods for review of progress;

* We took straw-polls of well-informed young people aged 16-20 and a group of younger youth club members. The questionnaire and analysis of results are at Annex B.

- the appointment of a senior person with overall responsibility for overseeing implementation, making it clear that this person has the support of, and direct access to, the highest decision making level of the organisation;
- the costs of implementation and what funding (including outside funding) has been earmarked for this purpose.

COMMENT

Each organisation is different and must work for the introduction of Participation at its own pace and in its own way. However, we would like to make some general comments arising from our discussions. We think there is a strong, objective case for participation and that measures of participation properly carried out will lead to sound practical benefits. We therefore suggest that those advocating participation place emphasis on clear, unemotional arguments, relevant data, and careful planning, with provision of adequate resources. On this basis, we believe a bold approach is also necessary — reflecting confidence in young people's ability to make an effective contribution. A desirable short-term target would be to reserve one third of places on all appropriate committees for young people under 25. This is much preferable to introducing young people to new responsibilities in ones and twos, which creates problems of unrepresentative selection and isolation for those appointed as "token" representatives. Majority representation for young people on some committees should also be given serious consideration for short-term implementation and, though constitutional and other barriers may need to be addressed, plans should be directed towards this. It is essential to select young people for committees on the basis of election by young people. The nature of committees and the reception given to new members should also be considered. Length of appointments of all members might need to be reduced, both to increase the feasibility of changing membership and to reduce the potential domination of one group on committees. We recognise that one means organisations have used to involve young people is to add parallel structures to their existing committee structure (eg committees composed wholly of young people, "shadowing" adult committees or serving different functions). We believe that this approach (while better than no action) is only acceptable as an interim stage in a programme committed to achieving substantial representation for all young people on main bodies.

Action at the level of Units, Clubs and Projects

These measures can contribute to participation

- an agreed Participation Policy Document or "Rulebook" which can be referred to when differences arise;
- the choice of a curriculum which will develop skills and attitudes in young members which facilitate participation*;
- discussions and training courses about Participation and the skills required, using resource materials developed for this purpose;

•There exist some very comprehensive descriptions of activities through which young people can exercise participation in its fullest sense. Mark Smith's "Organise" is a compendium of such activities, range from "Making Speeches" to "Getting Information from Central Government", and giving advice about the steps to be taken. The literature includes some instructive (and often amusing) accounts of introducing small-scale measures of Participation. There are also training and other packs which include a wide range of ideas. See bibliography.

- specific measures to involve young people in the management of the unit/club/project, and in relations with outside bodies (including representation on those bodies);
- issue-based work, undertaken either as the result of decision by the organisation or by young people themselves; this involves young people exercising initiative and learning relevant political skills; we have grouped in the bibliography (see Annex A) those publications which have most to say about Youth Service involvement in issued-based activities by young people;
- networking with young people from other dubs in the same organisation and from outside organisations can be a stimulus to Participation; this recognises that the introduction of real measures of participation to a demanding and problematic exercise for all concerned, and that the support of the peer-group is really important;
- at unit/club/project level it is particularly important to consider from young people's standpoint
 - mechanisms by which decisions are made (for example, to a particular Committee necessary, or can some decisions be made in group discussion or by one designated young person?)
 - rules and mechanisms for handling functions involving the exercise of responsibility (ie handling money, opening, closing and taking other responsibility for the building) •
 - discussion about Committee procedure may be a bone of contention, but procedures may not be the "dead-letters" they appear; unnecessary aspects such as the use of jargon language and the failure of "old hands" to explain terms and procedures need to be challenged; there are a range of booklets (see bibliography) which introduce this subject in a helpful way to young people.

COMMENT

The main difficulties which we perceive at dub and prefect level are finding the right timing and circumstances to ensure the introduction of effective measures of Participation. Those who are not committed will make "pressure of other business" an excuse for lack of action. Workers involved in the establishment of new dubs and projects may plan to start up on a participatory basis, selecting and training staff with this in mind. In established units and clubs it is also essential to make Participation an over-riding priority, seeking and, if necessary, requiring the same commitment in part-timers and volunteers.

Checklist

Have you taken action?

- agreed has some principles — it helps if everyone is clear why Participation is necessary and the values on which it is based;
- examined attitudes — those which characterise your organisation, and your own;

*** Helpful discussions can be found in Graham Joyce's "The Youth Club's Participation Starter Kit" (see bibliography).**

- decided what attitudes will support young people;
- undertaken a "Where are we now" exercise;
- drawn up a plan which will enable the organisation to change;
- made sure that the plan is going to be implemented effectively, taking into account achieving consensus; method and timing of introduction; clear designation of responsibility;
- considered what is needed at unit/dub/project level;
- made sure that at all levels progress is monitored.

COMMENT

After hearing evidence from young people on this matter the Subcommittee has agreed that some groups of young people have even greater difficulties than others in obtaining proper recognition of the contribution they can make to the youth service', and in gaining responsibility for decision making within organisations. This is as the result of general social discrimination affecting girls and young women, young people from ethnic and minority groups, disabled young people, and homosexual and lesbian young people. This therefore means that, before effective steps-towards greater participation for all young people can be tackled, any prejudice and discrimination in relation to these groups has to be addressed. This would include encouraging full and open discussion about their perceptions about any additional barriers which exist for them in relation to greater participation, and creating opportunities for any groups who wish to do so to meet separately to determine their needs; also where necessary setting aside resources to support this additional activity.

SOME USEFUL READING: A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Please note: While care has been taken to identify the source of each publication and the likely cost, those wishing to obtain publications would be advised to check with the publishers whether copies are available and at what price.

GENERAL HISTORIES, DISCUSSIONS OF PARTICIPATION AND ATTITUDES TO IT, REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN BY THE YOUTH SERVICE

A Democratic Voice? The Changing Role of Youth Councils

J Denham and M Notley

Published 1982, National Youth Bureau, 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester, price £2.50

Investigates the way in which youth councils work, and have traditionally worked.

Consideration is given to some alternative models which the authors believe may have more relevance to the concerns of young people.

Give us a Say in Things. A Practical Guide to Youth Participation Published 1981, National Youth Bureau (for address see above), price £0.85 *Concerned not just with participation in youth work settings. Each section gives short examples of ways in which young people can take responsibility. Includes "a list of reading material, useful information and a tabled civic rights acquired between the ages of 16 and 18.*

Participation: The Youth Work Response

M Notley, M Ryan, D Smith and G Swain

Published 1985, National Youth Bureau (for address see above)

A paper delivered to the conference, 'Participation: Policy and Practice' organised by the British Youth Council, the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, and the National Youth Bureau.

Young People and Decision Making

Nottinghamshire Youth Service, published 1982 by the Leisure Services Department, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

A document produced as a guide to the greater participation of members in their lives and the running of their Clubs.

Helping Young People to Participate in the Youth Service and in Social Affairs...

Consultative Group on Youth Work Training, published 1984, National Youth Bureau (for address see above), price £0.25

A short but useful review of several aspects of the participation debate. Focuses principally on the obstacles which prevent it happening and on suggested methods for encouraging it.

Member Involvement

National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK)

Published 1982 in 'Youth Clubs' No 20, pages 11-22

Photocopies available for 5p a copy from the National Youth Bureau (for address see above). *Special feature on participation containing an interesting mix of members', workers', and officers' perspectives of the theory and practice of participation.*

Senior Member Development Course

North Eastern Education and Library Board, Northern Ireland, published 1982. Available from County Hall, 182 Galgorm Road, Ballymena, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland, price £2.00 *Detailed guidelines to help Northern Ireland youth workers plan a training course for senior members. The course seeks to involve young people more in the affairs of the club and to improve their practical and social skills.*

EXPERIMENTS IN PARTICIPATION

Not just a Time Out — This is Really Serious

Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) Inspectorate, published 1986, ILEA Publicity Centre, Thackeray Road, London SW8, price £1.50

A study of member participation in five youth clubs. Includes some comments from young people themselves and does not gloss over the difficulties.

Democracy

S Long

Reports published 1978-83, Bedminster Down Boys Club, Winford Grove, Bristol, B813 TOY
Probably the best known example of member participation in youth work, mainly because it is regularly recorded and publicised. The Reports outline the working of the club's 'parliament'.

The workers' reactions and interventions are also recorded which makes it possible to see some of the factors which operate.

Youth Participation — For them or Us

J Killick

Published 1982 in 'Youth in Society' No 65, pages 20-22

Photocopies available for 5p a copy from the National Youth Bureau (for address see above)

Looks at some of the drawbacks of local youth councils and proposes youth action groups as an alternative form of participation.

POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Politics of Youth Clubs

S Bunt and R Gargrave

Published 1980, National Youth Bureau (for address see above), price £3.45

A history book which tries to chart how youth work swims with the tide of political change.

M Smith

Published 1984, National Association of Youth Clubs {now Youth Clubs UK} (see above for address), price £1.10

Considers how individuals can present themselves and their views to the people they work with and spotlights issues of professional status, legal status of employees and how they are all connected,

Political Education in Youth Work. Some Common Questions Answered

M Smith

Published 1981, National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK) (see above for address)

Amongst the basic questions asked are; what is political education? how does it differ from social education? The implications for workers and employers are also considered.

Organise: A Guide to Practical Potties for Youth and Community Groups

M Smith

Published 1981, National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK) (see above for address), price £1.75

In three parts; "Getting Started", "Information is Power", and "Taking Action".

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR WORKERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Creators Not Consumers

M Smith

Published 1981, National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK) (see above for address) price £1.10

Identifies the ways in which youth workers can help young people to develop their knowledge, feelings and skills. Uses a practical example of young people organising an ice skating trip to demonstrate the everyday potential for more creative and participative forms of youth work.

Help Yourself! A Pack of Training Exercises and Materials for Youth Council Members

Published 1983

British Youth Council, 57 Chalton Street, London, £3.00

A pack comprising four sections, with exercises aimed at young people involved in youth councils, or starting new ones.

Young People and Decisions. A Resource Pack on Participation

A Foster and M Shaw

Published 1981, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, 28 Albion Street, Leicester, price £5.00

Mixture of training package and background papers on both the theory and practice of participation.

Be Outrageous!

Published 1986, National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK) (for address see above), price £5.95

Pack, including posters, pamphlets and a card game, designed to look at ways of encouraging participation other than by the traditional members' committee. Based on projects in five clubs, with workers and young people collaborating to produce the pack.

What's Youth Work, or. Can You Have a Youth Club Without a Pool Table?

J Shuttleworth

Published 1986, Westside Youth Club, Windlesham Grove, London SW19

Price £1.50 + SOP P&P

Report of a training weekend where participants looked at different styles of leadership and group structures, the ideal youth club and the role of the youth worker.

The Youth Club's Participation Starter Kit

G Joyce (compiler)

Published 1985, National Association of Youth Clubs (now Youth Clubs UK), price £7.50

Kit containing various items including posters, leaflets etc. designed to help get more young people involved in decision-making in their club.

The Questionnaire below, devised by the NACYS Participation Sub-committee, was completed by 30 young people attending a Conference organised by the British Youth Council for representatives of International Youth Year Groups and Local Youth Councils, in Edale Youth Hostel, Derbyshire 21-23 November 1988. The figures represent the numbers out of 30 who made a positive response to the questions put.

The young people were also asked to comment on each section, and their ideas were taken into consideration by the Sub-committee In drawing up the various Guideline*.

1. MEANING OF PARTICIPATION

Which of the following come closest to your ideas about participation?

22	a.	Getting involved
17	b.	Having a say
12	c.	Taking responsibility
9	d.	Getting power
15	e.	Being consulted
1	f.	Taking sole charge
9	g.	Having your ideas accepted by adults
8	h.	Having your Ideas accepted by young people
5	i.	Changing organisations
17	j.	Influencing local events
7	k.	Changing society
8	l.	Being accepted as an adult
9	m.	Using your brains
10	n.	Being trusted
4	o.	Taking over from adults
12	p.	Working alongside adults
8	q.	Training to be an organiser/leader

COMMENTS

2. EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATION

In which of the following circumstances have you been given a real chance to participate?

15	a.	in your close family
5	b.	In the wider family
9	c.	In school
7	d.	In college
4	e.	On a training programme
10	f.	In any paid employment you undertake
12	g.	In any unpaid employment
3	h.	In your trade union
17	i.	In a youth club or project
12	j.	In planning an outing/expedition by young people
14	k.	In planning a co-operative venture by young people (eg setting up an IYY Committee)
8	l.	In managing and controlling a budget
12	m.	In serving on a consultative group/committee
7	n.	In making staff appointments
14	o.	In contributing or writing a Report
10	p.	In a campaign about a particular issue
7	q.	In planning/taking part in a lobby or meeting with political representatives

COMMENTS

3. EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION

Has any instance(s) of participation changed you in any of the following ways

- | | | |
|----|----|---|
| 25 | a. | Increased your knowledge |
| 5 | b. | Increased your skills |
| 9 | c. | Increased your confidence |
| 7 | d. | Helped you to be more effective in giving your point of view |
| 4 | e. | Helped you persuade others to your point of view |
| 17 | f. | Made you have more respect for points of view which differ from yours |
| 11 | g. | Made you see the value of deciding things by committees |
| 7 | h. | Made you doubt the value of deciding things by committees |
| 8 | i. | Given you a better appreciation of the value of money |
| 13 | j. | Increased your concern about the shortage of money to do things which need doing |
| 10 | k. | Given you a greater interest in raising finance for causes you want to support |
| 11 | l. | Made you more skilful in dealing with a range of adults |
| 17 | m. | Made you more skilful in dealing with persons and organisations in authority |
| 13 | n. | Strengthened your wish to change society |
| 9 | o. | Caused greater frustration with situations you have found it difficult to influence |
| 2 | p. | Lessened your respect for adults |
| 9 | q. | Made you appreciate the responsibility others have |
| 11 | r. | Convinced you that today's society is worse than you thought |
| 6 | s. | Convinced you that today's society is better (eg more caring) than you thought |
| | t. | Convinced you that those in authority are |

14 i) ill-informed

14 ii) intolerant

12 lii) incompetent

2 u. Made you take the opposite view on (i), (ii) and (iii).

COMMENTS

4. PRINCIPALS OF PARTICIPATION AND NECESSARY STEPS

Indicate which of the following you consider are really important to achieve participation

- 17 a. "You cannot have genuine participation unless young people democratically agree what steps should be taken to introduce participation
- 15 b. Any measure leading to greater participation is useful — it is not necessary "to go the whole hog" at any one time
- 6 c. Small moves towards participation are useless: young people should not agree to be involved unless really significant changes are proposed
- 18 d. People chosen to sit on committees should be elected by young people, not selected by adults
- NIL e. It is best for adults to select young people to be on committees etc
- 22 f. All decision making bodies of organisations Involving young people should include young people
- 12 g. It is worth starting with one young person's representative on each committee
- 7 h. On any decision-making committee at least one third of the members should be young people
- 7 i. On any decision-making committee at least half the members should be young people
- 12 j. It is right that young people should graduate to more responsibility only by proving themselves
- 7 k. In order to introduce genuine participation adults must stand wholly on one side and let young people carry tasks through
- 18 l. It is essential to the success of participation that young people and adults work positively together
- 6 m. Young people need training before they can be given greater responsibility
- 4 n. It does not matter what strings are attached, young people should accept all increases in responsibility offered them
- 13 o. Young people should not accept responsibility unless they are fully consulted, and accept, the terms on which it is offered
- 8 p. Young people should not accept responsibility in organisations unless they accept the organisation's policies as a whole
- 10 q. It is alright to accept responsibility in organisations whose policies you do not agree with, because they can be changed
- 4 r. Young people with responsibility should act differently from adults
- 16 s. Young people with responsibility should not be afraid to act in the same way as adults
- 11 t. Change and participation do not necessarily go together
- 8 u. Young people should use opportunities for participation to seek major- changes in the society

[10] v. The best first step towards participation is attitude change

[17] w. The best first step towards participation is practical measures whether or not there is attitude change

COMMENTS

5. BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

What barriers do you think exist to the effective introduction of participation?

- [10] a. Young people are not interested
- [21] b. Young people lack confidence
- [22] c. Adults wish to retain responsibility and power
- [14] d. Young people have no access to the Information which would help them participate
- [14] e. The rules of organisation do not give sufficient opportunity for young people to become involved in decision making
- [10] f. The rules don't allow young people to handle money
- [7] g. Young people are not able to work effectively within committee procedure
- [18] h. The language used by adults is different from that used by young people — there are problems of communication v
- [17] i. Not enough advice or training is given to young people to help them participate
- [12] j. Not enough advice or training is given to adults to help them facilitate participation

OVERALL COMMENTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING HUMBERSIDE

The work of the 90's Project in Humberside is focused on the Development Team at Humberside Youth Association (HYA). The team has five members; Youth Work Officer Hazel Reaney is the full-time leader of a team of four part-time Development Officers. Part of each worker's brief is to work closely with individual village clubs to introduce the approach and ideas of the 'Nineties Project'.

In Humberside, the Project is concentrating on the particular needs and interests of clubs in rural areas. Despite being known for its towns and cities - Hull, Grimsby and Scunthorpe - Humberside is a 75% rural county with many relatively isolated rural communities.

Each member of the team works in a different part of the County. Glenys Hinchliffe and Liz Smith are based North of the Humber; they've both been in post since September '89. South of the Humber are the 'newcomers' to HYA - but not to youth work in the county - Phil Hunt and Anne Ellis.

In youth work terms, the main theme for the Development Officers' work has been 'Participation'. In practice, this has meant working directly with young people to take, more and more control over what their club looks like and in organising their own — events and activities.

A way of looking at participation

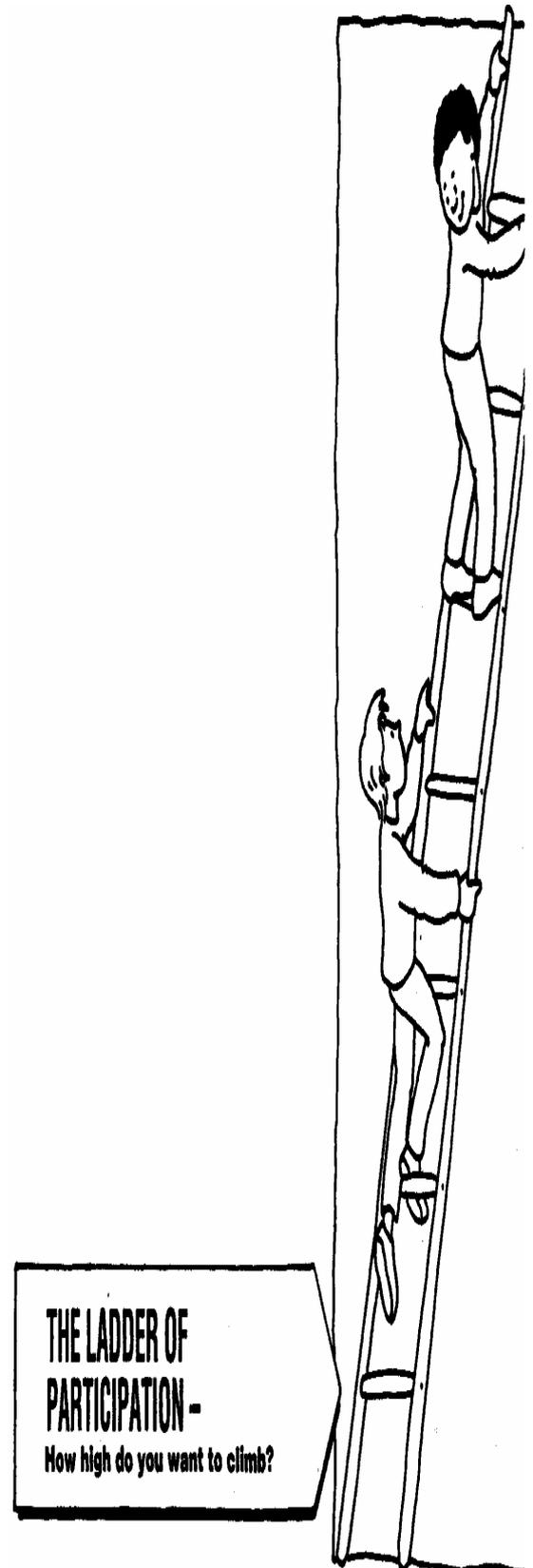
We often assume that we all mean the same thing when we talk about 'participation'. However, we rarely define it in ways that make it easy for young people to talk about the sort of participation they want. One tool that the team has found useful in discussing the theme of Participation with young people has been the 'Ladder of Participation'.

The Ladder was introduced to the Project

...we rarely define 'participation' in ways that make it easy for young people to talk about the participation they want...

by Jo de Gournai, the previous Project Worker in Humberside. The concept comes from an American writer, Arnstein, who used it to illustrate different levels of community involvement in the design of housing... Jo adapted it for youth work use.

Maybe you would like to use the Ladder of Participation with young people in your youth group to find out their views?



What's been happening in the field¹

The club that's been worked with the longest has been Aldbrough, a village in the eastern part of the county in Holderness. Young people from Aldbrough were involved in the making of a video about themselves. The video is a history of the members discussions and actions as they began to get more involved in their

Level 8 - Control = young People

Young people are on decision-making Bodies in local and national organisations. They also represent young people on outside bodies.

Level 7 - Delegated power

Young people have decision-making power in their unit in all aspects; organising events and controlling resources. Adult workers support and give information as needed.

Level 6 — partnership A real step in distributing power. Young people's views hold equal weight to those of adults. Club organisation is a joint operation with members sharing all responsibility, including budget and policy as well as taking initiatives. Workers challenge, stimulate, facilitate and support.

Level 5 - Placation

Young people begin to have influence. Members may be allowed a committee, but lack independence in terms of policy and resources. They are often not accountable to other members. Workers initiate, challenge, supervise.

Level 4 - Consultation

Young people are consulted about the things that adults want advice on. Young people have no control over resources or any power to put their ideas into action. Workers supervise, discuss, question.

Level 3 - Informing

Options devised by adults are 'sold' to young people ('consumers') via posters, -leaflets etc. The flow of information is one way, with no negotiation. Workers inform members of their rights and supervise.

Level 2 - Personal development

Young people's lack of control is put down to their lack of skill and maturity. This can be remedied by adult-devised programmes. Workers look after young people, protect, supervise and instruct.

Level 1 - Control = Adults

Young people have no say in decisions. Adults are experts, young people are consumers. Participation is defined as numbers present. Workers organise, supervise, dictate.

own club - the changes of attitude as well as in power.

It shows how they organised events for themselves, such as a 'Clean-up Day' in the village and a disco which they opened up to the '90s Group' from neighbouring Long Riston. The video also includes some of the discussions about how much control they want and what they want from adults.

A small group of members was involved in editing the video. This was less fun than it might at first seem as, for example, it took over four hours to get the first six minutes of finished tape! But the group now have something to show for their work. It's something that other groups are being given the opportunity to see as well, so it could be an inspiration to others.

'Ten months on and we're still progressing - apart from going to meet our friends and have a laugh, we are forever painting and improving things the way we want. All in all the club is very much as we, the members, want it to be... not bad eh?!'

'Fund-raising - we had the idea, we organised it all ourselves.'

In other villages where the Development team are working, the emphasis has been on helping young people organise their own events, run their own sessions and fund-raise for the equipment they want.

The reality is that a shortage of adult workers often means that young people will have to do things for themselves if they want things to happen. Liz has worked with club members in Hotham to do just that! She has shown them how to keep accounts and do stock-checks for the coffee bar. The members are responsible for the monies taken; the group has agreed to increase prices and use the profits to subsidise transport costs for the activities they are organising.

Young people from various clubs involved with the Project took part in a county rural youth work conference and were vocal about their own interests and the importance they saw in involving young people in youth work - and in youth work conferences[^]).

'Adults listen but don't hear!'

'Our parents chose to live in a village, not us.'

'... why aren't there more young people here?!'

...members have agreed to increase coffee bar prices to subsidise transport costs for their activities...

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

About 'Participation' -----

The work in Humberside has confirmed the importance of being clear and open with young people about what we're aiming for - more involvement from them. We have regular open meetings with members about what we all want to do. The 'Ladder of Participation' is a useful tool to help this discussion.

We have found that the young people with whom we've been working have tended to want to aim for the 'Partnership' that is described in 'Level 6' of the ladder. They have said that they like to have adults involved and don't want all the responsibilities of running a club.

Our experience has shown that a 'one step at a time' approach has worked best. Young people haven't had a lot of experience in running things for themselves and just leaving them to it can lead to them feeling unsupported and isolated.

Much of the team's work has been done directly with young people. One area where we need to find out more is how we can best support the local adult leadership in taking and (earning from the risks that are inevitably involved in this approach. That's a priority for the future.

About young people's priorities...

We've given young people a chance to talk about and decide what they want for their clubs. Their priorities have been about improving the building where they meet and organising events that get them out and about.

Groups have wanted to fund raise for things like bean bags for sitting on, screening to make a quiet talking area and a better music system. It's important to recognise that games and activities - the old stand-by's, table tennis and pool - are not on their lists at all.

Part of the reason for this is that most village clubs share the use of the building - village hall or whatever - so there would be storage problems. More importantly, it's because a relaxed atmosphere for talking with each other is what young people have

said they want most of all. They want a more comfortable alternative to the bus shelter!

For rural groups especially, trips away are an essential programme element for their youth club. Even setting up visits to other clubs requires a great deal of planning, because of the need to book transport to get anywhere. Organising trips for themselves - to other clubs, to the ice rink, to theme parks etc., has been the focus for a great deal of learning for groups and individuals.

About the role of the Development Officer ...

An important function of the team is 'networking' - putting people in touch with people - especially in rural areas. Clubs have been put in touch with each other, joint events have been organised. Young people have been brought more actively into the youth service through their involvement in the recent county conference.

The 'phone has been a vital tool in keeping in touch with members of the various youth groups - and in putting them in touch with each other. Let's hope that no-one's parents read this and work out that they may be paying a contribution to the cost of youth participation to British Telecom!

Another idea currently on the drawing board is a barbecue which will bring together young people from all the clubs the Development Team has been working with in-depth. This kind of get-together is likely to be a regular feature of the Nineties Project in Humberside - assuming the young people want it and are prepared to join in the preparations!

Liz and Glenys from the team have also been promoting the work and aims of the Project at a recent county-wide conference on Rural Youth Work Development. Phil will also be meeting with workers in his area to discuss whether more clubs can get involved. The word about the Nineties Project is spreading around Humberside!

In order to support the team in carrying out their challenging work, HYA had developed a Development Workers' Training Programme, also within the Nineties Project. This is an exciting approach to training in an area where little has been attempted before - the training of people whose job it is to support others. ...and that will be the theme of a future Update!