



# StreetsAhead

Glasgow children paint the way

## project report



**StreetsAhead has been supported by:**

**Phase 1 + 2**



**Phase 3**



**Children's Parliament** gives children the opportunity to voice their ideas, thoughts and feelings honestly so that their concerns and opinions can be listened to and included in our social and political landscape.

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# **Contents**

<b>StreetsAhead: Glasgow children paint the way</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>StreetsAhead Phase 3</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Exhibition Tour</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Response from the public</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Legacy</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Next steps</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>16</b>

## StreetsAhead: Glasgow children paint the way



In order to learn about the issues of community violence and gang involvement in the East End of Glasgow from the perspective of children who live there, the National Violence Reduction Unit and the Community Initiative to Reduce Violence asked Children's Parliament to facilitate the StreetsAhead project.

Children's Parliament has long been interested in the health, wellbeing and safety of children and the relationships between children and adults in a community.

The initial phase of StreetsAhead saw Children's Parliament work with 200+ primary school children from three local schools in a creative consultation process. In a series of school workshops, the children explored the ideas of **children's human rights** and **human dignity** and talked about their experiences of growing up in their community.



To do this, the children built a model of a street, including the areas of their community that were important to their lives—parks, schools, and landmarks. (Often in these model streets, the police station ended up across from the pub.) Then the children thought about where they felt safe in their community and where they didn't feel safe, sharing with the group the reasons they chose these places and making drawings of these places to put along the street.

The workshop ended with the children creating a billboard with a key message to adults about making their community happy, healthy and safe. Some of the things children said were:

- Agree and disagree — everyone has their own opinion!
- I don't like when people fight. I don't even want to look.
- Every parent on Earth, look after your children and keep them safe.
- I came from Zimbabwe but the fighting was worse here.



During the workshops, the children shared stories of the many positive relationships they have with people in their community and emphasised how much they value spending time with their families. Community centres are seen as important and safe places. However, issues of violence and gang activity were common, with many children reporting that they were not allowed out at certain times or by themselves because of what was going on in the street.

The primary focus for many children during the workshop was the way alcohol misuse negatively impacted on their lives and made their community an unsafe and undesirable place in which to grow up. Discussions of alcohol touched on every part of life in their community and the children were acutely aware of the role alcohol played and the impact it had on their lives. The children repeatedly expressed **a desire to live in a community that is healthy, peaceful and safe.**



After this initial consultation process in the three primary schools, 20 children were selected from the schools to take part in the second phase of StreetsAhead—the Mural Week.

During this week, the StreetsAhead children looked at and discussed the material from the school workshops, designed an image that incorporated many of the ideas from the children's billboards and ultimately created a large-scale audio/visual mural. Additionally, the children worked with a poet to express some of their experiences in poetry. The entire process of the Mural Week was recorded in a short film which allowed adults to hear directly from children about their views on life in the East End of Glasgow.

In February 2012, the StreetsAhead children launched their mural and DVD at Glasgow City Chambers to an audience of 100 parents, teachers, community members, police officers, policy makers and politicians.



By Dylan Hart

Every one everywhere  
running about mad.  
You see all the kids  
and they always look sad.

After the match  
they start to drink  
Shouting, fighting  
and they never think.

The stuff makes me  
angry and a little bit sad,  
But I am lucky because  
I know I'm not that bad.



## **Outcomes**

The StreetsAhead project focused on creating safe spaces for children to think about their lives and their communities and helping children to develop the skills and confidence needed to express their views and experiences.

At the beginning of the project, Children's Parliament set out the following outcomes for the children who participated in StreetsAhead:

- Increased self-confidence and self-esteem
- Increased awareness and understanding of children's human rights
- Development of communication and public speaking skills
- Development of positive and mutually respectful relationships between children and adults

Additionally, participation in StreetsAhead contributed towards many of the experiences and outcomes outlined in Curriculum for Excellence, such as:

- When I engage with others, I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, show that I value others' contributions and use these to build on thinking. LIT 2-02a
- I am aware of and able to express my feelings and am developing the ability to talk about them. HWB 2-01a
- I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 2-07a
- Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through activities within art and design. EXA 2-05a
- By exploring the ways in which we use and need rules, I can consider the meaning of rights and responsibilities and discuss those relevant to me. SOC 1-17a.

After the official launch of the StreetsAhead mural, participating children reported back that the experience was positive, fun and interesting. They felt that they knew more about children's human rights and human dignity and that the project helped them respect and value others. In return, they felt that they were listened to and treated with respect.

'The best part of the StreetsAhead project was painting the mural and sharing stories with other children.'



'StreetsAhead was great because it let me get my feelings out. It helps adults understand what they are showing us and how unsafe the world has become. If we don't stop, it could get worse.'

The majority of children said that they were supported and encouraged during the project and felt proud of their accomplishments when their work was exhibited. Class teachers reported that children were enthusiastic and more confident when they returned to class.

'They enjoyed the mural week and it was clear they gained from the experience. All feel more confident in discussing alcohol issues.'

However, only half of the children felt more comfortable talking to adults about things that are important to them. This implies that we still have work to do in creating a culture where children are listened to and their ideas and contributions are valued and included.

### What do you think?



*I think the mural was  
good because the kids  
from St. Michael's, St.  
Anne's and Dalmarnock  
worked together!*

## Phase 3

After the completion and launch of the mural, Children's Parliament was eager to share the important messages from StreetsAhead with a wider audience. The Network for Social Change awarded Children's Parliament funding for StreetsAhead Phase 3, which focused on the promotion of the project and dissemination of these key messages.

StreetsAhead Phase 3 included the following areas of work:

### 1) Workshops in Schools

The StreetsAhead mural was exhibited at the three primary schools that took part in the project—**Dalmarnock**, **St. Anne's** and **St. Michael's**. At each school, the StreetsAhead children led short workshops with all P1-P7 pupils, as well as teachers and other staff members. This process led to the mural and DVD being seen by over 1,100 children and 75 adults within the schools.

### 2) Exhibition Tour

Along with visiting the schools, Children's Parliament saw the need to get the StreetsAhead mural out in the community so that parents, professionals and community members would have the opportunity to hear what children were saying about growing up in the East End. This tour included a range of venues, including churches, community centres, shopping centres and museums.



Glasgow Council on Alcohol's Red Carpet Event

### 3) **Publication Materials**

Children's Parliament developed promotional materials for StreetsAhead.

These materials included:

- Reprint of the StreetsAhead leaflet
- StreetsAhead Post Box
- Response postcards
- Pop-up information banners
- Banners of mural for schools
- Updates to the StreetsAhead webpage



Community event at Bridgeton Community Learning Centre



Glasgow Council on Alcohol's Red Carpet Event



## **xhibition Tour**

After the tour of the primary schools, the StreetsAhead mural embarked on an Exhibition Tour of the community, where it was exhibited at venues and events across the East End of Glasgow and throughout Scotland, including:

**Alcohol Summit (hosted by Strathclyde Police)** 25 January 2012

**Bridgeton St. Francis in the East Church of Scotland** 19—23 April 2012

**G31 Community Centre (WoSHA)** Multiple exhibitions

**Glasgow Council on Alcohol's Red Carpet Event** 29 June 2012

**The Forge Shopping Centre** 2—8 July 2012

**Helenslea Community Hall** 9—22 July 2012

**Bridgeton Community Learning Campus** 23—27 July 2012

**The People's Palace** 30 July—17 August 2012

**Platform (The Bridge)** 3—7 September 2012

**Victoria Quay, Scottish Government** 1—11 October 2012

**Violence Reduction Unit conference:**

**Scotland & Violence Prevention** 12—15 October 2012

**Alcohol and Drug Partnership National Delivery Event** 14 November 2012

Future exhibitions are scheduled for Edinburgh University, Lothian & Borders Police Headquarters, Whale Arts, North Edinburgh Arts, Edinburgh Libraries and more.

## StreetsAhead Post Box



Throughout the Exhibition Tour, visitors were asked to give feedback on StreetsAhead by writing a postcard and posting it into the StreetsAhead Post Box.

With the exception of a few events where attendees were specifically asked to write a postcard, this feedback was entirely voluntary. During the exhibition tour, over 500 postcards from both children and adults were posted through the StreetsAhead Post Box. Some of their comments are included on the next page. Because many people who viewed the mural did not write a postcard, the actual viewership of the mural during the StreetsAhead Exhibition Tour is unknown but assumed to be much larger than the number of postcards.



## **R**esponse from the public

Through the StreetsAhead Post Box, it was possible to capture the public's reactions to the mural and thoughts on what needs to change in order to make the East End of Glasgow (and Scotland as a whole) a safer, healthier and happier place to live. The response has been incredible, with many viewers describing the strong emotional response they had to the children's work.

'Very stirring. Makes you think can we do more to help children.'

'It made me glad my mum and dad look after me.'

'I cried when I read and looked at the mural. It made me think about how I parent my own son. The message that stood out for me is that what children want and need is love. Everything else comes from that.'

'I feel sad that so many children are frightened because adults drink. Adults need to think about how their drinking affects their children and communities.'

There is also a sense that these problems highlighted in the StreetsAhead mural are not new to the area and that something needs to change in the community.

'The mural made me feel sad as some of the children feel as I felt 40 years ago.'

'I would put a pub far away so my parents don't come home drunk.'

'I thought it was absolutely beautiful. I'm not usually like that as I could feel my eyes welling up. Some of the things still apply to me and I'm nearly 18.'

'The statements are true to life and made me think of how to better our community. The streets of Glasgow are not safe for children, but they could be with ideas like this.'

'There is a lot of fighting in my area and I hate it.'

'My favourite part was when there are two kids from different teams and they are pals.'



The feedback also shows that the public values what children have to say and think there should be more opportunities for them to be heard. There is also an emphasis on the responsibility adults have to listen to children and to act upon their suggestions and ideas.

‘A true meaning of the saying “out of the mouths of babes”.’

‘Give consideration to children and young people. Their views are important, particularly about safety, health and education.’

‘This helps adults know exactly what children think of issues within their own community. Every city and town should have something like this!’

‘Children have great ideas to make their lives better, if we listen to them and take action.’

‘The mural has made me really think hard about how we engage with children to get their views on policy development. We don’t do this effectively enough and projects like this show us how it should be done.’

‘An absolutely outstanding film with a really powerful message. It ticks all the boxes—alcohol, violence, sectarianism, football. Scottish Government ministers must see this as it will confirm for them that all the policy areas that they are prioritising are the correct ones, affecting not just this generation but the next generation. The people at Children’s Parliament have done a great job, again.’

John Carnochan QPM FFPH,  
Violence Reduction Unit

### What do you think?



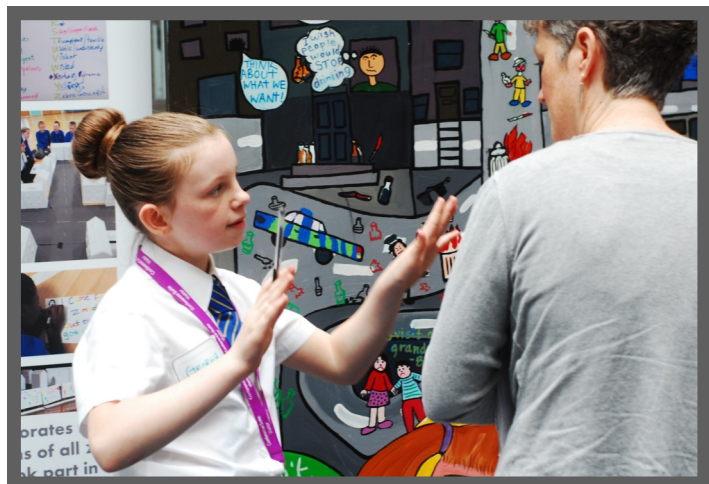
*Children want to live peacefully. Others actions have an impact on how we live our lives.*



## Legacy

The local community is keen to see the StreetsAhead mural find a **permanent home** in the East End of Glasgow. The G31 Community Centre is currently housing the mural when it is not on tour and the Helenslea Community Hall has expressed interest in displaying the mural on a long-term basis. We hope this mural will continue to tour the community and the country, but we are pleased to know it has a home when not on tour.

Additionally, the three participating primary schools have been given a **StreetsAhead banner** of the mural to hang in the school. These PVC banners measuring 2.5' x 10' will serve as a reminder of the schools' involvement in the StreetsAhead project and, ideally, as an inspiration for further thought, conversation and change.



## Next Steps

As a result of the StreetsAhead Phase 3, it has become clear that this project has provoked reflection and critical thinking among community members and policy makers. There is agreement that StreetsAhead has raised important issues and that something needs to change in our society in order to improve the lives of Scotland's children and for future generations.

Throughout Phase 3, the StreetsAhead children were eager to be involved in opportunities to share their mural with others. They spoke knowledgeably about the issues facing their community, took pride in explaining key messages and demonstrated a desire to do more work with Children's Parliament. Not only have

they developed the confidence to share their opinions publicly but they have greatly impacted all of the adults with whom they have shared their experiences. Children's Parliament is keen to maintain this relationship with these children and use StreetsAhead as a springboard to effect change in the East End community.

Additionally, it is an aim of Children's Parliament and has been suggested by other professionals to get the football clubs in Glasgow involved in work of StreetsAhead. This could involve work within the community, playing the StreetsAhead DVD at matches or displaying the mural within the stadium. Because the children often related drinking and fighting with football, it would be a missed opportunity to not seek the involvement/support of local teams.

Children's Parliament is currently applying for additional funding for StreetsAhead Phase 4, which would engage with many more children and their families, the local community and policy makers to create and implement ways of addressing issues on a local level. This phase of the work would be led by the StreetsAhead children and the local community, using the messages from StreetsAhead as a foundation.



## Appendix

# StreetsAhead Thanks

Children's Parliament would like to thank the following people, whose hard work, creativity and enthusiasm made StreetsAhead such a success!

### **St. Michael's RC Primary School**

Josh, Ciaran, Rachel, Natasha, Ashleigh, Scott

### **St. Anne's RC Primary School**

Persley, Kacper, Tia, Dylan, Kelsey, Amy

### **Dalmarnock Primary School**

Rebecca, Dylan, Georgia, Reiss, Ellie, Logan, Madison

And the staff at these primary schools for all their help.

Bridgeton St. Francis of the East Church of Scotland

Bridgeton Community Learning Campus

G31 (West of Scotland Housing Association)

Eileen Docherty—St. Mungo's Academy

Michael McCourt—Urban Fox

John Rowan—Dalmarnock Community Centre

Rosemary Robertson—BCLC

Jennifer Stoddart—Scottish Government

Hugh Farrell, Children's Advocacy Filmmaker

Joanna Boyce, Creative Arts Worker

Yonnie Fraser, Drama Facilitator

Mark Thomson, Poet

Johnny Gailey, Arts Educator

## **Where to find StreetsAhead**

For up-to-date information about StreetsAhead, visit our website:  
[www.childrensparliament.org.uk/streetsahead.html](http://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/streetsahead.html).

To obtain a copy of the **StreetsAhead DVD** or to enquire about hosting a **StreetsAhead mural exhibition**, please contact:

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‘This is a powerful piece of work—giving a voice, telling the message like it is and hopefully creating community leaders.’

