

## **Justice Committee**

### **Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Bill**

#### **Written submission from Playbusters**

Playbusters is pleased to submit evidence to the Justice Committee on the Bill and to set out what positive, non legislative work can be undertaken in local communities to promote tolerance, fairness and respect. We believe that by delivering projects and services, we can break down barriers between people and between communities which make a long term impact and avoid the need for legal intervention and makes communities safer and more vibrant.

Playbusters shares the Scottish Government's objective of tackling intolerance and violence in our society and we urge the Justice Committee to consider what non-legislative measures need to be in place to make a cultural and attitudinal difference in our society.

#### **About Playbusters**

Playbusters is a grassroots voluntary organisation based in Parkhead and working across 11 areas within the East End. We deliver a number of high quality services, interventions and educational projects to break down barriers across areas, age groups and backgrounds. The ethos of our organisation is to use the skills and experiences of the community (all ages) to bring about positive change and build more cohesive communities. At the core of our values is tolerance and respect for others.

Our activities include a highly successful intergenerational programme that allows for sharing of skills and positive dialogue between the generations. Our environmental workshops, outdoor play opportunities and youth activities provide positive benefits for young people.

We have developed a successful language programme and have developed our 'Easy Spanish Football programme' which promotes health and wellbeing and incorporates a cultural element.

We have strong progression routes for young people through volunteering, Dynamic Youth, Youth Achievements and Ambassador schemes. We connect with family units and see this as a means to address some issues that are carried down through generations.

We have developed a partnership with Glasgow University through a community development programme with over 300 participating. As a result many have undertaken further education with John Wheatley College and 9 have graduated at Glasgow University with a BA Community Development. We are now progressing an 'Activate' exchange programme in conjunction with partners in Belfast.

We have over 90 active volunteers (aged 11 to 90) - details on [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZMg\\_ZMBUTU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZMg_ZMBUTU)

### **What people say about our work**

The success of our programmes has been positively reported on throughout disciplines, from education services, Police, public organisations, housing organisations, young people themselves and the wider community. Many of our projects have been reported in local and national newspapers. Some of these comments are as follows:

#### *Head Teacher of a local primary school*

“We feel this is a very worthwhile project which promotes positive community relationships – fostering greater understanding and respect, in particular between our young people and more senior citizens. Playbusters clearly have some interesting and innovative activities and we are keen to continue to be involved”.

#### *A Communities Inspector at a local police station*

“Playbusters have been instrumental in helping us tackle antisocial behaviour in the Parkhead area and our community based officers work closely with you on a daily basis. This has had a dramatic impact in reducing levels of violence and disorder in the area and I would add my full support to Connecting Generations as another key measure to help improve the quality of life for residents in Parkhead”.

#### *The Principal of a local college*

“The college can contribute to your proposal “seeking to assist in the development of Youth work skills for Young Community Volunteers (aged 18 – 24) who might be acting as leaders of your local projects and, in part, be capable of certification”.

#### *Community Hall Management Committee*

“We have been keen supporters of Playbusters in our community, particularly the Connecting Generations initiative. This is a very worthwhile project greatly enjoyed by our hall users, old and young alike”.

#### *Comments from young people*

“I really enjoy getting to play games outside” (young female aged 10).

“I enjoyed making tents and playing outside” (young female).

“Playbusters are really fun...The people that work there are kind fair and they make our day better. So if I did not come there I would have had a dull day”.

*Comments from the Activate course (Glasgow University). Course content includes anti-discriminatory practice, community values, social justice and equalities.*

Some comments are as follows:

- A greater understanding of the importance of a community, the security it offers to individuals. The significance and strength of interaction between individuals and community.
- I have gained a different approach to the way I tackle situations, also and insight into the way other people think and to perhaps think out of the box.
- It made me self-reflect on every aspect of my life from an educational point of view to a strictly personal point of view. It was a journey of self discovery.
- I have gained an insight into things that I never knew about. The subjects discussed I found very interesting.
- I gained Knowledge and awareness. Knowledge of other people's views from their background and area.

Participation in this course has allowed people to progress as follows:

- 9 people graduated with BA Community Development at Glasgow University.
- 16 people have undertaken voluntary work leading on to sessional employment.
- 8 people have undertaken HNC Working with Communities and other courses at John Wheatley College.
- 2 people currently undertaking BA Community Development at Glasgow University –(2<sup>nd</sup> Year)
- 4 people currently undertaking HNC Working with Communities at John Wheatley College
- 1 person currently undertaking HNC Housing and Community work at John Wheatley College
- 5 people currently undertaking PDA Youth work at John Wheatley College
- 2 People currently undertaking NC Working with Communities at John Wheatley College

### **Difference Playbusters makes**

Playbusters is making a lasting difference to people of all ages within the communities where they operate. This is shown in the levels of participation at youth clubs and community activities. It is demonstrated by the amount of people volunteering with us, including entire families who volunteer. The difference is seen in the development of people including the progression for young people. Over the past year progression for young people are as follows:

- 17 young people registered as volunteers
- 22 young people participated in Dynamic youth awards
- 25 Millennium development volunteers – completing either 50 hours, 100 hours or 200 hours of volunteering
- 2 young people have become young ambassadors for Save the Children
- Young Volunteers won the East centre/ Calton Community Champions Awards and were Finalists for Glasgow wide
- Voscaw award winner
- Young Green List Winner

- Youth Board – 10 members aged 11/18
- 2 Young people undertaken Sports Leadership courses.

We work across schools, community centres, sheltered housing, parks and streets and connect with over 600 people on a weekly basis.

#### *Funders*

We have a mixture of funding including: Scottish Government, Big Lottery Fund, Children in Need, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Inspiring Scotland, Glasgow Housing Association, Glasgow City Council and a number of Trusts. (full details on our website: <http://www.playbusters.org.uk>)

We have also received many awards for our programmes (details in footnote)<sup>1</sup>. Most recently we received the Queens Award for Voluntary Service (equivalent of an MBE to voluntary organisations) and this was presented at a Civic Reception at the City Chambers.

Margaret Layden  
Project Manager, Playbusters  
1 September 2011

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<sup>1</sup> European Language Award, Spanish Embassy Award, Mary Glasgow Award, National Charities Award, SURF Award, Community Champions Award, Volunteer Friendly Award and Queens Award for Voluntary Service.