

ATTACHMENT 2

“JUMPING AT SHADOWS” – REPORT INTO YOUNG PEOPLE AND PUBLIC SPACE WITHIN THE CITY OF JOONDALUP

SUMMARY

Due to issues surrounding young people and their use of public space within the City, Council commissioned Edith Cowan University to undertake research to develop a best practice framework and a range of strategies for managing public spaces in a way that promotes positive relationships between young people and other stakeholders. The outcome of this was the report “Jumping at Shadows” which produced a number of important recommendations for Council’s consideration. In order to implement these recommendations, a Youth Worker (Youth in Public Space) has been employed and a short term Action Plan developed.

BACKGROUND

The City has experienced some difficulties in recent times concerning how young people use public space. In attempting to identify possible solutions for perceived problems regarding young people and public space, the Edith Cowan University Youth Work Studies Programme was awarded a contract to conduct research that would help inform possible strategies. The brief given for this project was:

“To develop a best practice framework, together with a range of strategies for managing public spaces in a way that promotes positive relationships between young people and other stakeholders.”

The background provided to the consultants indicated that there are several ‘hot spots’ where difficulties arise. The major shopping centres of Warwick, Whitfords, Lakeside and Hillarys Boat Harbour, as well as areas in Woodvale, Kingsley and Mullaloo were identified in particular. Issues from those areas included large gatherings of young people, vandalism, graffiti, and inappropriate behaviour.

Youth workers had identified that young people used these areas to socialise and were often treated unfairly in their desire to do so. Youth workers did indicate that a few young people cause damage, there is generally a lack of opportunities for young people, and a perceived lack of compatibility between young people and other members of the community in regard to their use of public space. Youth workers had also identified that there was sometimes an inability or reluctance by stakeholders, including shopping centre management, libraries and leisure centres to positively address the needs of young people.

DETAILS

The research conducted by Edith Cowan University between June and December 2000, utilised a method of participatory action research, which included consultations with a range of stakeholder groups to develop strategies that are ongoing and realistic. The main methodology for this was to conduct a series of focus groups of identified stakeholders and a final forum where each of these groups was able to share ideas and suggest strategies.

The research process that was adopted incorporated several elements.

1. Literature Review

An extensive review of available literature was undertaken. The focus of this review was to identify issues in regard to young people and public space. Consideration was given to the role of local government and its ability to impact positively on the community.

2. Focus Groups

Edith Cowan University and the City's Youth Services conducted focus groups. The purpose of these groups was to delve into underlying factors that influence the way in which people utilise public space.

Focus groups were conducted with stakeholder groups including young people (from Anchors Youth Service, Joondalup South Youth Advisory Council, Ocean Reef Senior High School, Whitfords Church of Christ), shopping centre management, security agencies and police, seniors, community members, Councillors, and Council staff.

Focus groups attempt to gain a deeper insight into issues than a survey or other less intensive methods would do. With this in mind, the findings from this research are wide and varied. They relate to the perception of young people, the nature of public and private space, the changing community values and the sense of community that exists.

As a result of the literature review and focus groups the research report "Jumping at Shadows" makes the following recommendations:

1. Identify the different types of public spaces - particularly in terms of legal differences. It is recommended that this be a detailed process conducted area by area and overlaid on current planning mapping processes
2. Identify the vested powers and duties of local government with respect to different types of public spaces and different groups in society.
3. Identify the ways that local government can intervene in the management of different types of public spaces. Local government has only a few direct means of control in many public space situations. In the main, these include local laws (most of which do not apply to private spaces open to the public) and planning laws.
4. Identify and map out the key structural factors (social, economic cultural, legal etc) that shape individuals use and behaviours in different types of public spaces and how those uses/behaviours are valued by different stakeholders This is recommended to be done specifically area by area. (what happens in Kinross will not be the same as what happens in Woodvale)

5. Set out (perhaps in tabular format) the situation for local government with respect to legal issues, access rights and civil liberties for different groups in society, different types of public space, and possible models for local government intervention (directly or through third parties).
6. Investigate how built form influences, and can be used to shape, behavioural responses in 'public spaces'.
7. Acquire or obtain access to professionals with the understanding and skill to shape spaces to minimise problems associated with young people and public spaces through means of planning, the development of appropriate planning and building control laws and guidelines, and designing elements of built form for which local government is responsible (or can exert control over)
8. Develop a strategic approach that has a local area focus and includes macro and localised evaluation processes.
9. Develop a computer-based geographical information system that enables the mapping of incidents, and the display of information about key factors that shape individuals' behaviours in public spaces and other people's responses to those behaviours.
10. Develop clear and agreed systems and structures within the Council which allow Youth and community workers to have equal status in the consideration of planning and neighbourhood design issues.

ACTION PLAN

The above recommendations have been recorded as strategies under the Strategic Direction of Coordination and Development within the 'Future Directions' proposal in Attachment 3 (Future Directions for Youth Services) to this Report. The strategies identified are as follows:

1. Community Development – moving from one local area to another, jointly implementing, with other agencies, solutions to local problems.
2. Creation of more 'youth friendly' public spaces.
3. Coordination of a 'whole of Council' approach – planners, rangers, community development, leisure, cultural and youth services.
4. Support shopping centre management, police and security agencies to adopt non-discriminatory practices and develop further HYPE projects.
5. Research and building of knowledge base – legal status of different spaces – mapping of different spaces – local government powers – use of local and planning laws – youth behavioural patterns – influence of built environment – mapping of incidents and building of database.

A Youth Worker (Youth and Public Space) was employed by the City on April 30, 2001 in order to operationalise these strategies. In the short term, the following Action Plan has been developed and is in the process of implementation:

PRIORITY STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	INTENDED OUTCOMES
<p>1. Community networking and understanding of local issues that involve young people and public space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather City wide networks names and contacts from Council staff – contact lists gathered from Council staff. • Liaise with local agencies and stakeholders to provide information on the Youth and Public Space Project, to gather feedback about local issues and local directions, and to develop further local contacts – in contact with HYPE; Department of Family and Children Services; Hillarys Police; City of Joondalup Youth, City Watch, Urban Design, Mural Arts, and Recreation Services; Whitfords, Lakeside and Woodvale Shopping Centre Management; YMCA Mobile Youth Services; Youth Affairs Council of WA; Cloud 9 -Whitfords Youth Service); Jobs Placement Employment Training Program; Homestead; Joondalup and Wanneroo Services; Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs; Homestead; Balga Detached • Record and collate this information • Liaise with young people generally and via the Youth Advisory Councils • Identify areas of concern regarding issues of young people and public space – site visits with Council Youth Services, City Watch and Community Development staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of priority areas regarding issues of young people and public space. • Establishment of a connection with local networks and agencies involved in youth and public space issues.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in community service provision to young people that assist with issues of public space – liaison with a local youth service to discuss the potential of opening up as a Youth Centre on Thursday evenings. 	
<p>2. Develop and maintain knowledge of the HYPE (Hillarys Youth Project Enquiries) Program and other City of Joondalup Youth Activity Programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend HYPE meetings – in attendance at Woodvale and Whitfords debriefing sessions for HYPE stakeholders. • Ongoing liaison with the City’s Youth Services and City Watch teams. • Liaison with Family and Children Services – establishing background knowledge of the HYPE program, its job description and duties of the programs staff. • Liaise with stakeholders regarding HYPE program structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HYPE program and its stakeholders supported and advised regards to best practice intervention methods for working with young people in shopping centres on issues of access to public space. • City of Joondalup Youth Activity programs supported and advised in regards to best practice intervention methods for working with young people in public space.
<p>3. Build a Coordinated Council Approach to working on issues of public space that affect young people in the City of Joondalup.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, liaise with , and inform appropriate Council Departments and their officers of the Youth and Public Space Program, recommendations from the ‘Jumping at Shadows’ report, and the impact that this may have on their department - liaison with key departments occurring. • Provide these staff members with information regarding young people and public space that is relevant to their position with the City. – information provided to Urban Design. • Seek input and ideas from other Council officers whose positions are linked to youth and public space and suggest that we meet as a team in the near future to look at the report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a holistic Council approach in addressing issues of young people and public space. • Policies and practices developed across all Council activities, as they impact upon young people and their use of public space. • To work in conjunction with the City’s Urban Design staff to ensure that youth public space initiatives are in line with Precinct Planning, and that young people are involved in relevant processes.

	<p>recommendations – some future directions discussed with key departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop this team as a vehicle to develop a policy framework, strategies and recommendations to Council. • Liaison with the City’s Urban Design staff who are involved in the Precinct Planning. 	
<p>4. Research methods of best practice that have been employed to address issues surrounding young people and their use of public space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research available literature and liaise with those who have been involved in working in the area of young people and public space – Fremantle, Kwinana, Brisbane, Cockburn, Rockingham, Belmont, and Canning Councils; Parkerville Children’s Home (Ellenbrook); Ballajura Youth Project; Local Government Association of Queensland; Public Space Officer for Youth and Action Policy Association in NSW; South East Metropolitan Youth and Family Development Council; and accessed literature through these contacts and the internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of best practice models for Council in addressing issues of young people and public space.
<p>5. Establish and maintain a database reflecting knowledge of issues surrounding public space and young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop file names and transfer information accordingly – youth projects; legal issues; local issues; design; best practice; networking and the like. • All relevant information received to be placed onto the database • Print information to be filed accordingly. • Research legal issues relating to public space and keep on database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a knowledge base in order to inform and advise other Council departments and community members on issues of young people and public space.