

Youth and Opportunity

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THE SOCIAL CHANGE CONFERENCE 2008



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Produced by:

DIRECTORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

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Youth and Opportunity

The future of our society is in the hands of our young people. But does society support them in becoming active participants in communities and responsible citizens, or are we simply failing them? Is this generation of young people unworthy of trust, or are they scapegoats for a fractured society? What can we ask of the state and what can we do in our communities to create opportunities for our most excluded young people? These are the questions that you'll be able to discuss at the 2008 Social Change Conference focusing on Youth and Opportunity.

You are a leader or a key player in an organisation that works to improve opportunities for young people. The day will provide a sequence of excellent plenary speakers who will provide a strategic viewpoint as well as practical tips whilst encouraging open questioning and debate. There will be time in the programme to make new contacts and strengthen professional bonds.

About the Speakers



Andrew Phillips OBE is a solicitor and consultant for Bates Wells and Braithwaite Solicitors, specialising in charity law. He is founder of The Citizenship Foundation and was made a Liberal Democrat Life Peer in 1998. He has authored several titles including *The Living Law* (an introduction to law for young people).



Fiona Blacke has been Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency since August 2007 and has played a leading role regionally and locally in the LSC's work around the 14-19 agenda. She proactively promotes the place of youth work in ensuring young people develop to their fullest potential.



Annie Mawson, Founder and Chief Executive of the multi-award winning Charity 'Sunbeams Music Trust', Cumbrian Woman of the Millennium Year, and acclaimed member of the Royal Society of Musicians. Annie has uniquely combined community music therapy, inclusion and accredited learning for people with severe special needs.



Neil Wragg MBE, Chief Executive of Youth At Risk since 1994, worked extensively in the public and voluntary sectors before moving into community development. Previously a member of the Government's Crime Reduction Task Force, Neil has also been a trustee for the Camelot Foundation and was awarded an MBE this year for his services to young people.



Graham Leigh joined the Charities Aid Foundation in 1998 where he advised companies on social responsibility before becoming Senior Policy Advisor. He joined DSC in 2006 as Director of Development. His passions are innovation and social change.



Dr. Tony Breslin is Chief Executive at the Citizenship Foundation, an independent education and participation charity. He is a trustee of the Association for Citizenship Teaching and a non-executive director of ARC Theatre for Change. Tony works extensively with government departments and statutory agencies and is widely published on a range of educational issues.



Sarah Klueter As The Co-operative's Senior Community Manager, Sarah leads a team investing £10m in community. She joined the Co-operative Group in 2004 from Barclays Bank and has lived and worked in Germany, Malaysia and Russia. Sarah is Chair of The Co-operative Loan Fund and Trustee director of two charities.



Debra Allcock Tyler Since 2001, Debra has been the Chief Executive of DSC, which works towards an independent voluntary sector at the heart of social change. DSC seeks to help voluntary and community organisations become effective agents of change. DSC has contact with some 30,000 voluntary and community organisations every year, through its training, information and publishing programmes and earns over 85% of its revenue enabling it to speak with a truly independent voice.



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| 09.30 | Registration and Coffee |
| 10.00 | Welcome and Introduction – Conference Chair, Graham Leigh, Director of Development, Directory of Social Change |
| 10.10 | The Truth about Social Change – Speaker: Debra Allcock Tyler, CEO, Directory of Social Change |
| | Social change is supposed to happen when we all work together for a common goal. For many this is nothing but a pipe dream. In reality, challenge or even conflict between groups (be they organisational, generational or otherwise) are often the drivers. Thereafter, practical approaches such as ownership of a problem, responsibility for fixing it and the ability to speak up are what make real change happen. Debra Allcock Tyler sets a controversial tone for the day. |
| 10.30 | Is it any Wonder? – Speaker: Andrew Phillips OBE, Bates Wells and Braithwaite |
| | A culture of materialism and individualism, a politics of State centralism and regulation plus a resulting breakdown in cohesion in families and communities leaves ever more young citizens feeling powerless and disconnected. Andrew Phillips wonders ‘Where now?’ |
| 11.15 | Break |
| 11.30 | When Making the Grade is not Enough – Speaker: Dr Tony Breslin – CEO, The Citizenship Foundation |
| | Our education system has become obsessed with the pursuit of a narrow set of purely attainment-based targets. Tony Breslin argues that the pressure on schools to chase the next place on the league table is contributing to the very exclusion that so-called achievement-focused strategies seek to challenge. Such an approach systematically excludes those who need help the most, makes the job of schools in challenging settings more difficult and leaves other institutions and society to pick up the pieces. So what would an education system based on inclusion-first principles look like and why is it time to embrace such an approach? |
| 12.15 | Beyond the Classroom – Speaker: Fiona Blacke – CEO, National Youth Agency |
| | Every young person has an entitlement to facilities, activities and support beyond the classroom. For many affluent young people this is provided by the family unit and the community. For the less affluent, the state often has to act as surrogate family, but when it fails, young people feel neglected, bored and alienated – a cocktail that can lead to tense relationships with their community. Fiona Blacke gives examples of schemes that have worked and offers pointers for those that are failing. |
| 13.00 | Lunch and Networking |
| 14.00 | Playing for Respect – Speaker: Annie Mawson, Chief Executive and Founder, Sunbeams Music Trust |
| | Through its Music for Life programme, Sunbeams Music Trust stages concerts performed by young people with special needs. Participants on this programme are not just excluded from accessing the services, they’re often excluded from basic human respect. A member of the audience leaving one concert was heard saying “I used to think people like that should be locked away.” This is just one small anecdote but for Annie Mawson it’s indicative of the attitudes she’s fighting – even in 2008. Annie will give a multi-media presentation about the transformational journey that her students have taken through the Music for Life programme. We can see the positive changes in the participants but can her work really tackle problems of social inclusion, ignorance and fear in wider society? |
| 14.45 | Break |
| 15.00 | Everybody’s Business? – Speaker: Sarah Klueter, Senior Community Manager, The Co-operative Group |
| | Some companies’ CSR programmes are better known for lip-service and platitudes than for real social change, but when co-operation is in your company’s name there’s a lot to live up to. The Co-operative Financial Services are known for responsible investing but they also deliver £10 million of community programmes including one that promotes financial inclusion for young offenders and another that supports street games. Sarah Klueter explains why. |
| 15.45 | Scripting Success – Speaker: Neil Wragg MBE, CEO Youth at Risk |
| | We script our lives around our expectations of ourselves and others, perhaps with assumptions about class, race, age or religion. We then tell these stories or even play out the roles as if they’re true. But often these scripts are a poor approximation of reality; casting the talented and the hopeless; the villains and the heroes. Neil Wragg claims that we can help excluded and at-risk young people to explode these myths, build self belief and ultimately re-script their lives. |
| 16.30 | Conference Summary and Close |
| 16.45 | Drinks reception |
| 17.45 | Social Change Awards Event Presentation of Social Change Awards |



