

# Youth in Action

[www.britishcouncil.org.uk/youthinaction](http://www.britishcouncil.org.uk/youthinaction)

## Aunty Social

It may be known as the Las Vegas of the North, but for the teenagers of the surrounding area Blackpool used to seem like a cultural wasteland. Catherine Mugonyi saw her friends hanging around with nothing to do and nowhere to go. She knew if she didn't do something, then some might fall prey to the heavy drinking culture among young people and the educational underachievement and anti-social behaviour problems that frequently follow.

With six of her friends she decided to offer young people something different. Instead of being anti-social they could now join Aunty Social, a cultural club which allowed them to channel their energies into creative projects, develop skills to boost their cvs and build new friendships. Through funding from the Youth in Action Youth Initiative programme, she was able to turn her ideas into a reality.

Aunty Social adopted a 'pop-up' approach, setting up a variety of activities in different locations, from coffee shops to libraries, giving the club an element of surprise.

Events are promoted through their WordPress website, Facebook and Twitter reaching over

600 young people. Appetite for *Aunty Social* is evident from the interactions across these online communities. There is a real thirst for *Aunty Social's* film clubs, "crafternoons", DJ workshops and knitting groups.

"Crafternoon" sessions have enabled young people to come along and learn how to design their own jewellery. The monthly film club has given a group of movie-mad sixth-form students the opportunity not only to attend screening and discussions, but to help run the events, increasing their confidence and their organisational capacity.

'For me, the best aspect of *Aunty Social* is that we are offering young people a different kind of experience of the city,' says Catherine. 'We are inspiring them to unlock their creative side, develop skills, whilst having fun, bringing different sections of the community together.'

Youth Initiatives are projects that are initiated, set up and carried out by young people. They aim to have an impact on the young people's local community and to give them an opportunity to be creative, take initiative and develop their confidence.

To find out more please visit:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/youthinaction-action1.2-youth-initiatives>



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