

PHOT KONZ

Street Art Projects

a guide to setting up

and running



Guidelines for Youth Organisations



Phat Kanz

"Phat Kanz recognises that our future depends on today's youth. It not only gives young people self esteem and confidence in their own abilities but it encourages a sense of social responsibility and citizenship. Young people learn that they can have fun without damaging the environment or themselves or others"

Police Sergeant Jon Taylor MPS

Introduction

Thames Valley Partnership has been working alongside Phat Kanz to support their work with young people in the High Wycombe area.

We are particularly pleased to be able to produce these guidelines - we recognise that "street art" is increasing in popularity with young people as a means of personal expression and we are keen to promote accessibility of this art form in a legal and appropriate way.

The information contained in this pack is based on first hand knowledge and experience during the projects led by the Phat Kanz group. All of these projects have been run with safety, appropriateness and creativity as uppermost issues, using close links with local police, youth workers and other key organisations.

We hope that the contents will enable you and your group to enjoy a creative, fulfilling project which will make you proud of your young people and the young people proud of their artistic work and their surroundings.

Jmunday.

Judy Munday
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Artists Point of View

As an artist I am committed to working with young people and the community. Over the past 10 years I have run projects from giant carnival puppets to making sensory gardens, huge mosaics to lantern parades and workshops in a myriad of guises across a wide spectrum of people. Even the numerous mural projects I have run have been in very diverse settings - from individual boards to huge 180m expanses, working with a broad range of ages and abilities, from art college students to young offenders and those with severe special educational needs.

But nothing NOTHING engages and inspires young people across the board like graffiti does. It taps into their current culture and the way they think - providing an opportunity for freedom of expression and along the way serves as a critical tool for some serious youth work.

I first discovered the medium of spray in 2004 when an in-depth community consultation process came up with the resounding result that 'we want graffiti!' Knowing nothing of this art form I invited Street Artist Craig D Spooner aka NATIVE to lead on the technical side of the project. And the success that was Graffiti Alley, a significant community mural project advocated by Thames Valley Police, was created: the results of which can still be seen and enjoyed near Desborough Road, High Wycombe.


From here on in my mural projects have almost exclusively been spray-work due to the enormous response it received from young people. Here was a medium that truly inspires and engages young people so much so that I found it hard to keep up with their demand for more projects. For the first time ever young people text me clamouring to know when the next project is...

This led me to help young people form the group Phat Kanz, which along the way has been supported and strengthened by various local partnerships, such as Thames Valley Partnership. We inspire people, build on their creativity, teach safe practice and legal issues. This helps distinguish graffiti as the varied and skilled art form it is, separating it from the illegal 'tagging' and vandalism it is often associated with.

With Phat Kanz Wycombe Youth Action aim to provide weekly opportunities throughout the summer for young people which has proven very successful and received support from YOS, Restorative Justice and Thames Valley Police. Artwork from these sessions has been installed on hoardings displayed in local car parks and made permanent murals - making quite a splash in the community.

Young people are constantly amazed that they are invited to join us and can take part for free. The sense of pride, confidence and esteem I see time after time instilled in these young people is incredible. And not least because alongside all the generally acknowledged benefits of an art project, such as sense of achievement and team-working, this type of project specifically reaches hard to reach young people. It gives them an opportunity to explore their creativity at the same time as other underlying issues; learning how and why practicing illegally puts them at risk.

We have a couple members who were referred to us specifically as they have ASBOs, for criminal damage. They say the project has kept them out of trouble because it gives them the chance to express themselves legally, in their own time, in a safe environment with good FREE equipment which takes illegal work right off the horizon for them. The continued success of this is in planning with a long-term strategy in mind; so these young people do not suddenly lose their prop.





Why is Graff so powerful? Because of the weighty street cred it carries - young people's confidence and self esteem rockets when they have succeeded in demystifying this potentially tricky art form. What speaks volumes is that we have seen a greater turn out of friends and family per participant at events celebrating Street Art murals than at anything else - which is significant when you bear in mind that these groups tend to be predominantly made up of youth at risk.

The medium is so instant, colourful and the scale is so refreshingly large that it's inherently satisfying. With the right guidance it can be successfully used with everyone regardless of their creative ability and skills base.

With my fine art background I really enjoy challenging people's perceptions as to what can be created with spray can art - taking it beyond what they traditionally know as the art form usually; Old Skool Lettering! I can personally vouch for the benefits of such projects for all those involved from the overview of reducing fear of crime in communities to providing the only positive and stable weekly input to one young person's life. As an artist, gaining the skills has opened up huge possibilities for me and even contributed to my confidence, skills, knowledge and has enabled me to relate more closely to the young people on these projects.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long, sweeping tail.

Sarah-Jayne Worthington
Visual Artist



Neighbourhood Police viewpoint

"Graffiti is becoming more and more of an issue for local residents across the Thames Valley Police region. We are rolling out Neighbourhood Policing which involves consulting with local residents about the issues they would like us to resolve. Anti Social Behaviour issues such as Graffiti dominate the list of issues that are agreed.

I am sure that people who cause Graffiti do not understand both the effect that it has on local residents and the possible consequences it can have on their own lives. I am not here to preach about the impact of a criminal record and how it can affect an individual's future but it is important that people understand the consequences of their actions.

Graffiti is classed as Criminal Damage which has the normal dull old fashioned definition. However in simple terms if someone's property is damaged without their permission, and there is always the odd exception, then the offence of Criminal Damage is complete. The punishment for Criminal Damage depends on the value of repair. This dictates where a case can be heard which will ultimately impact on the size of sentence that can be imposed. If the value exceeds £5000 then a case of Criminal Damage can be heard at the Crown Court and has a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment!

If there is a Racial or Religious element to the damage then immediately the maximum punishment is extended to 14 years. This is happening more and more across the three counties and undoubtedly has an impact on our communities.

Clearly this is only covering the consequences to the offender. Can you imagine how you would feel if every time you returned home you had some new abuse sprayed on the side of your wall? Every time some of your friends and family visited they had to endure the obscene pictures that regularly appear? The impact on the victims can be terrible and life changing for some. A big business can easily ask a caretaker to remove Graffiti but what about the pensioner whose front wall now has some foul racist language on it.


Yes there are pockets of Graffiti that can be considered as Art and clearly there are some talented individuals out there. However it is not right that they use other people's property as a canvas for their work. The District Council spend tens of thousands of pounds cleaning property such as underpasses and public buildings this has to be funded from somewhere and no doubt will increase your council tax.

Phat Kanz is a project that can allow individuals to understand the consequence of their actions but gives them an arena to demonstrate and develop that talent in an arena which does not impact on innocent victims. There are a number of offenders going through the Police and Court systems at present and I am sure a range of sentences/convictions will be used. Some will receive Reprimands/Warnings and Cautions, some will be confronted by their victims and some will go to court. I hope some of them will benefit from a referral to Phat Kanz. It is a project that is fully supported and congratulated by Thames Valley Police."

Paul Gratton

Neighbourhood Inspector
High Wycombe

Those caught causing graffiti can be prosecuted under the criminal damage act 1971 and fined up to £5000. Young offenders may be given a community service order. Council enforcement officers can also issue fixed penalty notices to culprits of low level graffiti under the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act (2005)



Phat Kanz is about inspiring others, creating community art and passing on skills and knowledge



Phat Kanz

We do this through working with artists and youth groups, forging links with the community, teaching safe practice and legal issues.



The group takes its design work seriously working to get themes relevant, suggested and approved by the local community.



Phat Kanz promotes 'Graffiti' as the varied and skilled urban art form it is distinguishing it from the illegal 'tagging' and crime the word is often associated with.



Planning a street art project

'Graffiti' is a sensitive subject and despite the myriad of benefits it can be seen negatively by your local community. Think about your language - consider calling it **street or urban art**? To distinguish it from the illegal vandalism the word 'graffiti' is often associated with.

Involve all your local key partners for instance parish council, peso's, youth organisations etc from the outset - so they can be in on the planning and take ownership of it.

Use **positive literature** and other images to challenge people's preconceptions as to what could be achieved.

Prove you are approaching the subject **sustainably and responsibly**.

Show how you are planning to use the project as an educational tool - such as using the resources at the end of both this and the young people section, promoting discussions on legalities with young people, running inductions and divulging your health and safety plans!

Are you going to be able to provide more activities such as this for young people that are interested? Are you going to be able to keep up with demand?

It is important you establish early on what you want to achieve, who your team is, who your young people are and what their needs are likely to be.

All this will feed into your project format where it will be and who it affects.

Your team

Particularly for longer projects and essential for some young people it can be worth having a small pool of staff so that young people always have familiar faces regardless of any staff changes due to holiday's illness etc.

Here are some ideas of skills and roles you may like to consider in planning your project.

A skilled artist

Choose your artist carefully as they are key to your project and can make your job a lot easier if they have a lot of experience. It is important that the project is planned so that the artist is able to focus solely on working with the young people (rather than can security say) and ensuring they have all the help and support they need during spray time - which is only possible if they are given the correct support from the team. They should also be able to do their own work alongside the young people to help inspire them. Things you should look for:

Graffiti skills

Good level of knowledge of the medium and technical and artistic ability.

Should be able to provide you with all the specialist advice you need such as number of cans you will need and how long your planned project will take.

Project experience

Preferably with knowledge of health and safety issues, running projects, teaching and experience of working with young people.

An understanding of how to make the project fall-safe for young people.

People skills

Lack of experience is often replaceable by their personality - are they going to relate well to your group and inspire them? But even then perhaps you think your youth worker can bridge the gap?

Works legally

As a role model it is critical to the credibility of your project that they solely work legally with the art form and are keen to promote this to young people - even if in the past they may not have.

How to find your artist

The internet is a good resource for finding organisations (such as Phat Kanz) that will pair you up with an artist to suit your needs.

Ask about: Local arts and youth organisations and your District council are likely to have contacts - Personal recommendations should not be underestimated.

A competent youth worker

Regardless of whether the artist has experience you need at least one youth worker/responsible adult present throughout spray sessions to manage the project and young people; enabling the artist to focus on the artwork!

You may need more workers depending on the numbers of young people, their needs and the venue.

They may be responsible for supporting young people getting to and from projects as well as during them.

In a project running in a youth club situation, say, they may also be able to continue relevant youth work in-between spray sessions.

A project coordinator

To facilitate the project

This could be either of the above/someone else behind the scenes/or you may prefer to divide the tasks up between individuals but it is essential that individuals know who is doing what - particularly if the project is running over sometime.

They do not necessarily need to be onsite at every session.

Responsible for keeping in touch with and organising young people to attend a project, where necessary so young people need to know and trust them. This is an especially important role when working with at risk groups on a long term basis. For example texting and phoning young people each week and arranging transport for them has a huge impact on their attendance levels.

To promote the project - both to young people and the local community.

To liaise with partners and secure venues

Buy refreshments each week?!

And do all the organising! There's a huge amount that goes into these projects! Both essentials and extras: Organising permission, consultation, community buy-in and support, press releases, recruiting team members, sourcing funding, materials and in-kind support, altered access, documentation, installation, anti-graffiti glaze, unveiling/celebrations, portfolios of young people art work and accreditation of achievements etc.

Other specialist help you might use:

Local police, PCSO's add validation to the project and maybe to help with working on the legal side of things - providing the correct information including local bye-laws to young people.

Contractors for applying glazes and installing artwork.

Make sure you have a regular team de-briefing and that you are all saying the same things and putting across the same message, upholding the same boundaries and providing the same level of support to young people week to week particularly if there is staffing alterations.

Consultation and gaining support for you project

Purpose

Establish a need for your project – a need for your young people and possibly its output?
Are you doing it because your young people have requested spray can work or because there's a particular piece of wall that needs smartening up? Use these to sell the project!

Community Buy-in

It is essential the local community has buy-in especially if spraying affects their access eg in a subway/alleyway or if they overlook a project site or a proposed permanent mural site.

Residents and Businesses

Consultation is important if your project is overlooked by anyone, especially residents, although its good practice to consult retail owners as well (they may decide to help you out if you sell it really well) – at a minimum they need to understand the purpose of the project, its point, why it is a positive exercise and maybe even get them involved! But certainly tell them what is going on and how it may affect them.

Opportunity to comment

Ideally you should give people the opportunity to say what they would like to see in a mural or give them a chance to comment on a proposed design.

Design Consultations

If you are planning an in-depth community consultation to pull out design content from your community your artist/s must be involved in the process so they can get what they need. Consider using alternative agencies or specialists such as drama and story tellers but the artists must be on the scene. Other methods could be drop-in sessions, often local facilities such as village halls will offer up their premises for free for such events, even questionnaires and leaflet dropping have proven effective – there will be an appropriate method for your area – if in doubt use the advice of a local as to what and where may be suitable.

Ownership

If your project is a permanent mural community engagement is essential to ownership and subsequently pride and respect for the art work which helps preserve it long after you have gone – make sure you reach as many local young people as possible and give them the opportunity to get involved with it which will avoid it being 'ragged' by others not involved in the project.

Project format

There is a myriad of ways street art projects can work from make and take days to large-scale community permanent mural projects.

One off projects and taster days

What is the point? What is the value you are adding? Is it achieving brightening up an area/decorating a new youth club say or is it just a taster? Perhaps you are running them to establish interest? If you are working with a specific group or across organisations and hope to signpost young people to different projects ensure the age ranges tally across the board from the beginning or that you have an alternative exit strategy in mind.

Longer projects

Perhaps you are planning to run weekly sessions / maybe along the lines of a club? Is there an outcome? Are you working towards something in particular – a specific youth work goal, award, creating works for a particular location or an exhibition?
Perhaps it is a big community mural or a youth club that wants a big project – but you have the run in-time (and money) to build in all sorts of levels of skills development and consultations and really embed it into their scheme of work and give a real chance for young people to develop their skills and understanding – whilst also providing all sorts of other opportunities for young people not keen to get directly involved with the spraywork: community consultations, fundraising, design work, peer mentoring.

Free or fee paying projects?

Have you got enough funding to make participation free for young people?

So far all of our projects regardless of their format have been able to operate in this way. This has been central to attracting the particular young people we want to get involved on these projects - those that tend to be hanging about at a loose end that are a bit disengaged and perhaps do not have the financial support from home to attend out of school activities. This does not mean a contributory fee would not work with what you are trying to achieve.

NB

Regardless of the type of project you choose to run you will need to think carefully about the timing and duration of your project: Afternoon starts for holiday time may boost attendance! Do you have enough spray area for the length of time you plan to spray each session? How long is your group's attention span? How long is it going to take to achieve what you want to achieve?

We have worked with a variety of groups with varied make ups

However you decide to balance your group, you are looking at creating a non-threatening safe and fun atmosphere to be a beginner graffiti artist in.

We have worked with different

ages

backgrounds

areas of rural deprivation

young people excluded from school

referrals from yos and restorative justice

special educational needs

youth at risk

volunteers

art college students

With skills varying and developing from total beginner to seasoned 'pro'.

Make up

You will know what will work with your young people. Some groups will need to work with others like themselves and perhaps later on be confident enough to be integrated with a broader mix.

For example some young people will be intimidated working alongside very skilled people that know what they are doing, especially if they are younger or perceived to be of a different social standing.

You will have to work with your group sensitively on this - generally speaking we have found that after the potentially daunting initial sessions are out of the way and a basic skill level is achieved integration has worked really positively.

Age ranges

It is important that you decide what your age range cut offs are. The younger limit may be dictated by your insurance and also what you think is appropriate for your group in terms of them being responsible and able to take on the principles of legal and illegal working whilst also taking into consideration the use of hazardous substances with developing young people. Again it can not be stressed enough the importance of avoiding giving young people skills with nowhere to practice them: is there anywhere else they can carry on practicing their skills? Because there are very few legal opportunities for 8 year old graffiti artists .

Peer Mentors

As Phat Kanz has developed so have a core group of young people (the seasoned pro) and they have proven to be an absolute asset. We try to keep ahead of our young people's development providing a breadth of opportunities: such as teaching on new projects where everyone is a beginner... expert help finishing off other mural projects and the very crucial role of peer mentor.

This role is very significant, both ways, as often the building up of good working relationships and working with people very different to themselves is the most important part of these projects. Some have naturally grown into more challenging roles, some individuals won't be interested in roles with more responsibility whilst others just need coaxing and yet more are happy to have reached a proficient level for exploring the art form in their own way. When placing young people in these roles/positions you need to consider the reaction of the young people you are hoping to place these 'pros' with as well as their own feelings on the matter! It definitely needs to be done at your discretion and can work really well if the group is already comfortable in their skills.

Where to Spray

The simple answer is OUTSIDE as no graffiti projects can take place inside, even with masks, due to the excessive fumes created. You will need to decide on your spray surface which would normally be working direct onto walls or boards, but could be anything from heavy duty paper, banquet tablecloths and pvc banners to canvases. Which way you go will very much be determined by the format and purpose of your project and the facilities available to you. Whatever you decide to work on you will need to make sure your project venue is suitable.

Spraying Walls

Good for

Permanent mural, but not necessarily the only solution - see boards section.
For practice work or an ongoing venue if the right place has been discovered!
Installing boards on!

Permission

Needs to be sourced and which inevitably leads to a whole series of phone calls to find the real owner and the person with authority to say yes! Make sure permission is in written consent and not only from the owner but also from tenants and parish/district councils where relevant. If in doubt contact everyone! It is really useful to keep an audit trail of communications to avoid any misunderstandings.

Temporary walls

Such as hoardings surrounding building sites are excellent opportunities
- often Developers are very keen to key into community initiatives and are worth approaching.

Using a wall over and over again

An ideal weekly venue would have a wall that you can redo over and over again. This means there are no storage issues, as there is with boards, but the drawback is that the wall is rarely left looking good. Even if it is white washed at the end of the session, see below, the finish is not good which does not leave a positive impression of your project, however depending on the circumstances of your venue this may not be a problem.

Skateparks

Are an obvious choice for a weekly venue if you can negotiate a time where it is closed for painting. Do not work on the surfaces that are used for skating on as they wear very quickly and it is likely to dis-enamour you with the park users who do not like the distractions underfoot whilst trying to pull off difficult tricks.

Wall Surface: Check with your artist that the surface you propose to use is appropriate - in some circumstances it maybe necessary to render a wall smooth.

Spraying Boards

Good for

One off projects and mobile displays.
Murals that ultimately will be installed inside, which can not be sprayed inside because of the fumes.

Practice sessions and skills building prior to spraying a permanent wall.

A project with no fixed abode!

Where the venue does not have walls you are allowed to spray onto.

Where it is not possible to spray in situ and they can be sprayed elsewhere and installed on the wall at a later date, sometimes it is impractical and not safe/fair on young people to spray in situ - such as car park lobbies, areas that are overlooked or the side of a dangerous road.

Type of board

Take advice from a local timber merchant as to what would be best for your project, for example how long you want it to last and where it is to be installed.
- there are many different products appropriate for various circumstances and wildly varying costs. Eg there is no need to outlay for 1 inch thick exterior ply to install on an interior wall. Some timber merchants will throw in free delivery or a discount for a youth project.

Storage

Where are you going to store them? If they are exterior grade boards perhaps you could store them outside - if you plan to do this for any length of time cover them with tarpaulin to prevent mould/grass and other things making their home there.

Transport

Think about how you are going to transport them and how many times you will need to! The size, weight and numbers of boards make a big difference to who can lift them and if you can transport them? Do you have people that can safely handle them? If not cost in transport/handling costs?

Size

Generally speaking the commonly available 8 foot by 4 foot board (hoarding board size) is ideal for artwork as the very nature of graffiti requires a large work surface - but smaller boards will work for practice sessions and indeed can be joined together to be installed elsewhere - the bonus of this is that you could feasibly move them in a large car whereas 8'x4' will only fit in a transit van or some minibuses.

Hoardings

Can be a good free source of material but are very heavy, big and unwieldy making them difficult to handle - so think it through carefully before you agree to a donation of 37 boards from the local building site! Chances are they will also not give you much notice as to when they are coming down.

Propping your boards up

Has your venue got something you can lean them on? Better still can you secure them in anyway? Do you need to protect the surface from over-spray and white wash? Hardboard is great and brilliantly easy to secure to link fencing over plastic sheeting with a few drilled holes and heavy duty cable ties. If there is nothing to lean them on how are you going to keep boards upright to work on? Is there some ground you can hammer posts into and nail them to?

Preserve good work

If you are working on boards it is a good idea to have too many boards so that you can keep really good work especially if you are working towards installing them somewhere or an exhibition - instead of white washing all the boards at the end of the session - this also helps relieve pressure on young people to create great work on demand at the end of several weeks.

Installing boards

(another cost) The same permission and consultation considerations (to make it legal!) as the wall may apply to the installation of your boards. Perhaps you need to get in touch with your local authority, which may also be able to assist with the installation.

On hoardings

They can be installed on to hoardings or if they are hoarding boards themselves consider replacing whole hoarding panels with your artwork boards but get the building company's chippy to do it, in-kind if possible!

On a wall

Think about how it is going to be installed; is there anything you need to know about where it is being installed? Are there internal steel supports or electricians for example? What is the wall made of? Try to find out those useful things prior to installation and pass them onto who ever is going to install them.

With frames?

Either way they look best if you add a frame to them - bear in mind this is another budget/time/in-kind consideration.

Spraying Surfaces

These are some things relevant to spraying on both walls and boards.

Priming

Surfaces need to be primed before the start of a project. A very porous surface will produce substandard results, be depressing for young people and ultimately cost you a fortune in sprays: an un-primed surface soaks up the spray and requires far more to cover the same area than a primed surface.

Appropriate Surface

Whilst you do not want a totally porous surface, a small degree of texture or absorbency is helpful. A totally non-porous surface such as laminated board (backs of old wardrobes etc!) is asking for a confidence crushing number of drips and runs: so only use this if your participants have reached a highly skilled level of can control.

White washing

The spray surface at the end of each session is good practice to ensure the group has an area to work on the next week – but make sure this is fully understood by all participants from the beginning and that you check photos have been taken before you start any whitening out. Young people should be involved in this as it is part and parcel of the project.

Venue Capacity

Depending on the type of project you are running it could prove useful to ensure your venue allows for variable capacity – so the ceiling on participant numbers is only restricted by worker/artist to young people ratio rather than lack of spray space – eg a venue with a small wall may only be appropriate for 5 people so it is no good for a drop-in session as when more than 5 young people turn up some will be disappointed – a large stack of boards may open up the capacity or if you can not alter the capacity put a strategy in place to stop too many people arriving at small venues. Take your lead from your artist as to how much area each participant will cover/should be allocated per session.

Anti-graffiti glaze

Depending on where your artwork is and how long you want to display it for you may want to look into applying an anti-graffiti glaze over the top of it to protect it. There is a huge array of products available which do different things but the two key things to make sure are: It is appropriate for applying over spray paint and that will not damage your artwork! A glaze works well if a big song and dance is made over applying it and also that any additional 'artwork', ragging or tagging is removed instantly. After a few futile attempts where their work is removed we have found that people will stop. Equally importantly is that someone will take responsibility for monitoring and maintaining the glazed artwork after the project – get this in writing! : as staff change you may find goodwill could ebb.

Safe spaces

Your Venue – needs to enable you to run a safe non-threatening project – finding a suitable venue where young people feel safe and feel comfortable is paramount.

Getting there

Consider access for young people, how are they going to get to and from the project and what you are going to do about toilets and hand washing facilities?

Public access

Think about the public access to the venue – is it open access or restricted or overlooked? Is there anything you can do about it?

Can Security

It is absolutely critical to be able to control access to cans – as cans are tasty items – do not place temptation in the way of vulnerable young people and equally make sure cans are secure from passers-by. It is an excellent way to ensure your legal project never runs again if a can were to make its way from the project to end up with its contents all over the local neighbourhood! It maybe an access or venue issue but you definitely need a safe operational plan. Perhaps you decide to use a car as a mobile lock up unit on site? Consider how you are going to issue cans and ensure they are all returned.

Personal Security

Perhaps your project is actually going to make a place safer? In the meantime what can you do? This is where your PCSO contacts could come into play? We have even had temporary CCTV cameras installed in the past and arranged incident codes and phone numbers for project workers to use in the event of problems.

Weather

Can affect a project dramatically in terms of motivation so keep an eye on it and have some tricks up your sleeve. Young people can get incredibly exposed to the elements on these projects - they are outside for long periods of time and tend to get very absorbed in what they are doing forgetting about their well-being!

Rain

What can you do if the weather is bad? (you can not spray if there is too much moisture in the air or the spray surface is damp) Have you got a rained off activity planned and venue/cover nearby. The good news is that in 4 years we have only been properly rained off once! Normally we have found it will rain for a bit, enough time to do some design work and then be dry enough later in the session. If it is likely to rain bring plenty of towels and cloths to speed up drying your spray surfaces off.

Shine

What can you do if the weather is horribly good?! It is important you encourage them to wear sunscreen and suitable clothing, provide plenty of liquid, enforce breaks and consider providing shade if there is none already at the venue - Lollipop anyone?

Seasonal Street Art

We usually only run our sessions when the weather is good - normally March to October (which is also BST so has the added benefit of longer daylight hours). We are in the business of providing quality and fun activities for young people and we feel strongly we should do all we can to ensure this. There is nothing more de-motivating than tackling a new technique that you expect to be a dab hand at in the cold! It is amazing how quickly that spray finger goes numb and is ready to drop off. We do make some exceptions if the weather is good/or the group is a bunch of old hands, that know the deal and are really clamouring to do it and can not be put off by the cold! In the same vein we have even run a few floodlit after school sessions in the winter. But when we make these exceptions we make sure there is plenty of hot chocolate and soup to go around!

Maximise the benefit for your young people

The type of project you run will have different effects on the young people but its success in reaching its objectives relate very strongly to your team and planning of the project.

Every Child Matters

Some of the benefits to young people are obvious, such as sense of achievement, but there are just as many much more subtle ones - in the funding advice section there is a list of benefits linked to the five Every Child Matters aims which could be relevant to your project. Whilst they can be useful for funding applications they require some practical consideration in terms of what you are trying to achieve and how this affects the emphasis and planning of your project. For example if your aim is to promote young peoples positive contribution to the community in brightening up a subway for example - get them out asking people what they want to see and get plenty of positive press releases out. Or if you want your young people to really gain an insight into earning a living as an artist, you may want to consider building in a talk from your artist about their artwork, or a visit to a street art gallery or significant other legal Street Art project.

Sessions

Spray painting is very enticing and young people will be chomping at the bit to spray. Bear this in mind when planning your sessions as they will not be interested in doing anything else if they perceive it to be time they could be spraying - so if it is a design session call it that. If you want to achieve something else with a session call it that and do it at a different time. At the same time it is important not to skimp on design work as it is critical for the development of their spray work.

No pressure

Avoid inadvertently putting pressure on young people to achieve - as in the preserve good work section. Working in small groups or in a large team helps with this.

Manage expectations

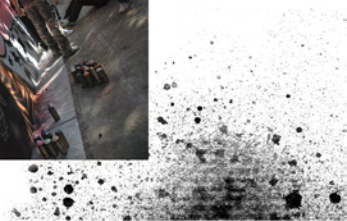
Involve young people in planning the project where possible and help them understand what it means to them in terms of what they will and will not be doing. Use an induction and writing of a participation agreement, see setting ground rules section.

Documentation

Ensure you take photos of all their work, especially if you are whitening out artwork at the end of sessions and they can chart their progress - consider making portfolios of their work. You may also want to make a display of the making of the project for a celebration day or unveiling. Apart from this it is an evaluation gem and funder's love it.

Community projects

You may be working towards artwork that is not appropriate to bear personal things such as names so discuss 'signing' it in a way that they know what it means but no one else does? Or getting a plaque installed. Remember we are promoting the art form not tagging - so scrawling names all over a project serves only to ruin good artwork and does not help our cause! There is usually some resistance to this as this is what they want to do so build in an opportunity in practice sessions for them to spray their names (in a big artful style NOT scrawled) and get a photograph of it! We have found it is very beneficial to spend sometime discussing what makes an artwork and the difference in quality between tagging and vandalism to full blown skilled pieces - not only does it foster an understanding of why their names are not appropriate in a community project but also paves the way to an appreciation of the art form and better quality work.



Setting Ground Rules

Always build in an induction session which covers the legalities and safe usage of cans as well as a demo of techniques - regardless of the duration of the project. We do not allow anyone to participant unless they have had this induction. Ensure your ground rules, such as in our participation agreement, and understanding of them is well in place before you introduce spray cans into the equation! This is a great way for managing expectations if you include all those things such as boards getting white washed after each session and not using personal stuff in the final work.

Our Participation agreement: Is a basic template we adapt to suit each individual project, see example copy.

On a longer project it is great to get the young people involved in writing it themselves. The basic approach we take with the group is that as everyone wants the project to go ahead we need to do everything we can to make sure it does and that each individual takes on the responsibility to ensure that nothing they do gets in the way of it happening. This stimulates a discussion around things that would get in the way of subsequent sessions continuing and things we need to think about - which is basically getting them to think for themselves about the project and discussing the legalities and health and safety issues, which is a great way to introduce a project and get them approaching it with the appropriate attitude. From this session we collate their thoughts and write their participation agreement in their words - which is usually far stricter than we would dare write for them anyway! It is also a good time to ask them what they want from each other and build these into their agreements.

It is good practice to create a staff agreement too, which includes what the young people want from the staff as well (usually very telling info comes out of that!) so everyone is in the same boat signing agreements.

This kind of documentation is very useful as proof of your project's responsible approach to the subject - useful for including in funding applications and presentations to parish councils etc...

Always ...

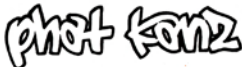
Read out aloud the agreement at the beginning of a project and discuss it/check it is what they wanted (if you have got the young people to write it)

Signing-in at the beginning of each session should be the formal agreement of following the participation agreement. Over a long project refresh young people memories as to its content as you see fit. For example getting the group to shout up examples of what is on it instead of re-reading it to them.

Have one or two laminated participation agreements on site with you to refer to if necessary, this helps avoid confrontation and also is a constant reminder - A3 is best!

Tailor it to suit each new project and taking into consideration all the elements from venue to individuals...

Partner logo here



OUR PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Project Name / Dates / Times

I (your name)agree to

Follow the instructions and advice given to me by the project staff. I understand they are given to me in order to make the project safe and effective.

Wear the protective equipment provided.

Be personally responsible for the safe and correct use of all equipment lent to me and will ensure that all equipment issued to me is returned at the end of the session.

Spray only on the areas provided for the purpose and take care not to over-spray onto anything else.

Wear only suitable old clothes and shoes as I understand that the paint may permanently damage anything I wear.

Not use anything personal such as names on the finished artwork as this is a community project for everyone to enjoy.

I may spray anything I like during practice sessions as long as it is not offensive to anyone. I will be able to take photos of my practice work which maybe my name etc, but understand I can not keep it and it will be painted over at the end of the session.

SignedDate.....

Any misuse of the equipment could result in damage to property or health. We take this seriously and will ask anyone deliberately doing so or acting irresponsibly to leave and in some cases may cancel the project.

This is a legal graffiti session and we thank you for your cooperation in following this agreement: It ensures the continuation of these projects for your enjoyment.

Kit List

Your kit will vary depending on the type of project you need but there are some things that are always consistent.

Good quality equipment is essential to the quality of artwork and therefore sense of achievement for young people.

Use **specialist spray paints** designed by Graff Writers

Such as Montana, Beltons, Alien.

If you are running a big project of lots of smaller ones, or club together with other groups as if you order in bulk you can often get a hefty discount.

Use **specialist graded nozzles** compatible with your chosen cans.

Twin-filter face masks - They are expensive perhaps try your luck at getting discount as it is a community/charity/young person's project?

Latex gloves*

Disposable overalls* (especially if you are running a drop-in session where young people may not know they were going to be doing a messy activity. It is advisable to wear old clothes and shoes at all times as this paint does not come out and sometimes it is just not good practice to wear the overalls: young people can really suffer in heat wearing these! TIP: definitely make sure they are not plastic lined ones! Or they will boil in the bag!)

Goggles* useful to have some ones that go over glasses as well as cooler sleeker ones.

Dust sheets* heavy duty ones can be more economic as they are reusable.

Duct tape*

Paint wipes* if you use these make sure you have a facility for cleaning hands after use.

White paint*

Rollers and roller trays*

Rags* for stemming drips.

Inspirational resources* often from your spray paint suppliers...as well as free ones with this pack and the internet.

A design!

Stencils

Camera

Laminated participation agreement

Other things you might need

Boards* and practice boards* - These do not have to be high quality especially for practice work so consider off cuts? Rejects etc... leftovers from a shop refit? Or even old hoardings?

Anti-graffiti glaze and things appropriate for applying it and maintaining/cleaning it - see individual manufacturers. It is expensive so something else to try getting a discount on?

Hazard tape and laminated signs for cordoning off areas.*

Disinfectant wipes*

Disposable masks* for passers-by.

Laminated card and scalpel for stencils - for making stencils

Wire brushes and buckets for cleaning walls*

Pen and paper for designs

Bin liners!*

Cable-ties*

Stakes/Hammers

Gazebo

Refreshments*

Hand cream*

The *'d items are things you could blag!

As community projects are often short on funding we have found blagging very productive – either from young people's contacts (often parents in the building trade) or local businesses (perhaps in exchange for their logo on a community mural? Or a mention in the press release?)



Other things we have had in-kind support on before are:

Publicity

Volunteer support

Preparation of walls

Installation of boards

Storage boxes and spaces

Information panels/thanks and dedication plaques

Access to toilets

Use of a van for transporting boards

Lollipops

Even parking spaces!

Health and Safety Considerations

In this section we are just looking at those things relevant specifically to a street art project – you will of course need to look at all the risks you would normally cover for any event as well – location implications, number of young people, travel, safety of belongings, public spaces, lone working, weather etc ...

The Health and Safety briefing is integral to the project – establish rules from the beginning and stick to them – given the nature of the project it is critical there is no tolerance on certain behaviours, such as spraying on anything other than the dedicated spray surface, your participation agreement is an excellent tool for dealing with this.

Generic things to consider:

Insurance: Check that your insurance covers your proposed activity. Your insurers will also be able to advise you of any specific risks/concerns: for example they may want all participants to wear goggles.

Masks:

Make sure you use the correct filter masks as detailed on the COSHH reports for your chosen paints and comply with the maintenance, usage and replacement guidelines as recommended by the manufacturers. Monitor correct use of masks.

Decide on your 'hygiene' policy for usage of masks – are you going to mark them so individuals know which is theirs? Is it appropriate to use disinfectant wipes? Or do you need a separate mask for each participant for each project?

Consider agreeing an area that everyone must always wear their masks in.

Ask all participants to inform staff if they have any medical conditions. Pay particular attention to any asthma sufferers; perhaps encourage them to observe a larger mask wearing area.

Spray Paints:

Safe storage of paints as recommended by manufacture.

Secure storage of paints both on and off a project, where access is limited to, for example, staff members only. What procedure have you put in place to control issue and return of cans? Particularly in public places. Cover for paints on site? If they are exposed to different temperatures the pressure of the gas in the cans changes significantly making how they handle vary; which is very frustrating for young people, so try to keep them at a constant temp! And at worst they can explode if they get too hot! Make sure you have the correct fire extinguisher to hand, see COSHH report.

You can ask for COSHH reports to be sent to you from the manufacturers - ensure you have copies of these on-site in case you need to give the information to emergency services.

If it is too windy to control over-spray and people/belongings/property are potentially at risk then stop the project. Provide correct instruction on the safe use of cans - for example putting nozzles on correctly and facing away from your eyes and others. And then monitor this!

Boards:

Are best secured wherever possible

Hardboards secured to link fencing with cable ties are an excellent solution.



Heavy boards leant on a decent wall at a good angle with bricks at the base
Nailed to posts driven into the ground (works as both a temporary and more permanent fixture)...drive post in a decent way take advice from a grounds man if possible get them to do it!...
If they are not looking secure due to high winds halt the project.

Manual Handling - Consider the weight of your equipment, especially boards, and how they are to be moved and who is going to do it - eg Hoarding boards must NOT be carried whilst wearing flip flops!

Especially not by a young person!

Slips, Trips and Falls

Secure any wires from electrical equipment eg. Radio/extractor.

Secure any dust sheets you may be using to protect the ground.

Use a designated area for storing equipment/belongings and materials.

Keep individual cans in boxes whilst not being used and not lying around! This should also be taken care of by your issuing procedure!

Installation of Boards

Use an approved installer.

Application of Glaze

Follow COSHH reports/manufacturers guidelines or get an approved contractor.

Some anti-graff glazes are highly toxic and the public must be kept away from the inhaling the fumes whilst it is drying ensure you know all about any project you are using/having applied and comply with the COSHH regulations.

Lone working.

Signage

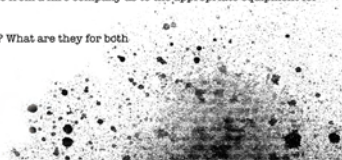
For locals/passers-by - do you need to provide any info? Reroute or consider providing disposable paper masks whilst people pass the spray area?

Ventilation

Is it good enough? Especially in semi covered areas like subways --- If it is not can you do the project elsewhere on boards and install them afterwards or could you hire an extractor that would provide the correct levels of ventilation? If so follow advice from a hire company as to the appropriate equipment for use with your spray paints and location.

Working at height

What is your policy? Any restrictions for this? What are they for both staff and young people?



Sourcing specialist products

The majority of your equipment and materials are available from any hardware store – small independent stores who often provide excellent deals before you have even mentioned it is a community project. If you are doing an especially large project or can club together with other projects it is worth shopping about on the internet to get good deals for bulk buys – for example 100 overalls can cost you as little as £1 a piece this way or you could pick them up at £4.99 a piece from your local chain DIY superstore – the choice is yours!

Spray Paints

Your artist should be a good source of information and may have a good relationship with a supplier, to get discounts for large orders of sprays or a bonus of something extra thrown in? Graphotism.com – does a discount for orders upwards of a half pallet – 522 cans! But you need some serious storage for this as boxed up this takes up an area roughly 85 x 85 x 75 cm

Anti-Graffiti Glaze

District councils and local trade suppliers should be able to advise on this and of course the internet! Dulux Trade do a good product called Anti Graffiti Clearcoat but it (and the pre-wash and remover products for maintaining it) – can only be bought and applied by an approved trader, contact your local ICI Dulux Trade or Decorator Centre for help on this. www.icipaints.co.uk/products (under Dulux trade and specialist products)

If you are applying it yourself try an environmentally friendly low hazard product such as easy-on <http://www.getridofgum.com/easyon.htm> www.getridofgum.com/easyon.htm which also comes with its own maintenance products.



Useful resources: An appendix

Sourcing materials and knowledge! Graphotism.com is the UK's leading force on all things Graff from around the world - it has everything you need under one roof including publishing the world's biggest graff mag - but do not neglect the huge variety of alternative sources of products and information out there. For example you may well have a local shop that stocks paints - it may not be their main line they may be linked to skate clothing, art, music or another subculture retailer. So if a spray outlet is not obvious ask around in these shops. Often these shops will know the local artist community and may even run their own youth opportunities programme.

Inspirational material

It is essential you are able to share a breadth of styles, ideas and techniques with your group. Such material is easily found on the internet and is also supported with a huge array of books and DVDs easily available - if your local (book or other relevant) shop does not stock them throw 'graffiti' into an Amazon.co.uk search! If you are supplying these to your group do check that you are happy with the content - a lot of the images may have inappropriate content and the majority are illegally created pieces. The roots of graffiti are undoubtedly illegal and the legends of the art form have made their name through working this way. Many view this as the essence of the art form and as such articles and interviews will often promote the glory and rush associated with illegal work. Indeed many young people get addicted to the adrenaline and fame associated with illegal and prolific tagging: 'bombing'. It is worth reading around the subject to understand this side if you are entering into youth work on these issues; as providing a legal project will not necessarily prevent young people re-offending if this is why they do it, but it does give you an excellent opportunity to tackle these issues... So rather than veto images of illegal work you may choose to use these as discussion points.

Information on events can often be found not only direct on graffiti sites but also on relevant culture sites for example www.bhhf.org are an excellent source of knowledge on both their own hip hop scene events, which include graffiti jams and exhibitions but also promote events outside of their area. Aside from Hip Hop graffiti is linked to other subcultures such as extreme sports and is often found at festivals supporting these sports such as skateboarding and BMX comps. Such as www.whiteair.co.uk Your local paint suppliers will also know of any up coming events.

Facts and figures - there are quite simply endless sites on the internet for sourcing which are excellent for sourcing your images. Here are a couple of the less run of the mill ones which might help furnish you with the information you need for setting up projects/getting others onboard.

www.graffitihotline.co.uk is an interesting resource for project workers - a lot of debate mostly from the 'all graffiti is bad camp' - but you may find useful bits and pieces on it - including their results of their survey '**The Use of Community Art Projects and Murals as a Means to Control Graffiti**'

wsgfl.westsussex.gov.uk supply a free DVD training pack 'Graff Life' which you may find useful information on even if the style is not particularly helpful: They advertise it as "offers young people information about the negative impact of graffiti, and also the opportunity to consider positive, legal and artistic options. It explores issues of "tagging", challenges the view of graffiti as art rather than crime and highlights the impact graffiti has on our community. Young people can work through the information individually or in groups, it includes interactive sessions designed to promote discussion, with worksheets and notes for teachers or youth workers."

Funding for projects Get in touch with your Local Authority for advice - they will know what is available on a local and national level and which funding stream is more appropriate to you and will have a whole host of other useful contacts for your project. We have found other sources to be youth organisations and groups, your local Community Volunteer Service (CVS - run a fund finder service for charitable organisations and even on offer advice on funding applications), volunteer bureau, community safety team, neighbourhood police, local businesses... They will all be able to point you in the direction of suitable pockets of money and may also be able to help out directly with funding, services or goods. You may also find the list of potential benefits of Street art projects included in this pack useful - it is laid out in relation to the **Every Child Matters** Aims.

Testimonial from graffiti artist Craig D Spooner

I always liked art but never liked being told how to draw or apply a medium! Graffiti was my cure, I started in '82 like many others at the time, sketching out ideas, working on lettering, colour schemes and characters.

I would go to London ALOT to check out new Graffiti artists & different crews (Graffiti Gangs) who started becoming known as Writers, My main man who I grew up with was also into Graffiti & MC'ing so it was not long before we were carving out a name for ourselves as up-and-coming Writers. We would hit (Graffiti spray paint) subway tunnels, backs of garages, alleyways, train tunnels, building sites etc...My pic (partner in crime) was at a different school to me, as far as I knew I was the only Graffiti artist in my school, pic met two other writers from his school and we formed a new crew which soon became the best in the area, me (an pic) got arrested twice with a slap on the wrist.

I was asked to take my art O level at school - when I asked if I could do Graffiti they refused! So I refused to take the exam, which at the time made complete sense to me! A few months passed and I got arrested a third time for intent to commit vandalism, though they did not have enough evidence and we were released until further notice (luckily I never heard anymore about that)...Shortly after leaving school we got caught again with two of our look outs and got a fine and a conditional discharge, things were getting more serious now we were older.

As the years passed Graffiti stayed with us, but we were not working as a crew any more. We would still meet up and go through new designs and photos but mostly worked alone or with others. PIC got arrested again and spent about two weeks in a cell and had a proper fine to pay. By this time there was another local crew on the scene, but we now considered ourselves as individual artists, the only trouble was work and life started to get in the way. I was unable to afford college so work and bills soon ran my life.

The whole Graffiti scene seemed to disappear (Acid house and Warehouse rave became the new fad). After the dust settled, in the mid nineties, I noticed an increase in Graffiti once again, better styles had been developed, better paint products and colours were available, Graffiti had transformed from big pieces of someone's alias into pieces of skilled art. There was a definite difference between Graffiti as vandalism and Graffiti as an art form. Graffiti always had small outlets of commercial space but now it was a major force on record labels, clothing, video and film backdrops, art backdrops for clubs, pubs, local teams, promotions and to top it all galleries were now displaying pieces and museums hold viewings. Back in the day all we had was two books two films and local writers to reference with, now you've got multiple DVD's books magazines and webpage's as well as festivals and galleries. Graffiti art as an art form is now viable.

I knew that the time was right to make use of all my years' previous experience. So I walked into a police station and asked to have a meeting with somebody about Graffiti Art projects ... The response was slow so I arranged another meeting at another station and another, I then started to approach councils (who were horrified) still determined I began to put together plans for local business's when a call came through asking if I would work on a project [Graffiti Alley 2004] as a bona fide Graffiti artist with Thames Valley Police, BCUC college, Wycombe Youth Action and Wycombe District Council. The project was to transform an alleyway which was filled with racist graffiti vandalism and sprays; it was a great success for the community and for the art form.

My future holds continued work with Graffiti / Urban / Street Art. It has become a useful outlet for other writers with the opportunity to show Graffiti's better side.



Craig D Spooner aka NATIVE
The Alter-NATIVE Art Foundation



Some potential benefits of Street Art projects for young people

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Being Healthy

Self Expression

Improved self esteem and confidence

Responsible for own health and others around them

Understanding of how misuse of sprays and illegal activities can be damaging

Staying Safe

Improved safety (perhaps the project is reducing fear of crime in an area?)

Improved sense of wellbeing

Being responsible - Trusted with responsibility!

Young People will feel valued

Improved awareness of issues relating to graffiti

Enjoying and Achieving

Trying a new activity/experience

Fun and long lasting proof of it

Building on skills, focus and creativity

Doing something creative or challenging

Interacting with other adults and young people from different backgrounds

Economic Wellbeing

Opportunity to work with artists - consider creative careers - raising aspirations

Educational element learning a skill - Working on a scale rarely available at school - fine motor skills and control.

Life choices and possible consequences

Positive Contribution

Make a positive behaviour choice

Opportunity to give something positive to the community

Showing what young people can achieve - Promoting the positive achievements of young people in the community

Pride of Place

Working respectfully and within boundaries

Show respect for property and consideration to others

Teamwork and/or peer mentoring

Challenging perceptions and understanding of graffiti

Learning legalities and Impacts of Graffiti

Promoting legal graffiti as an art form as distinct from illegal vandalism and tagging.

Legal Issues

Criminal Damage

1(1) A person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property belonging to another intending to destroy or damage any such property or being reckless as to whether any such property would be destroyed or damaged shall be guilty of an offence.

Value of damage below five thousand pounds -

SUMMARY: Three months imprisonment and / or a fine not exceeding level four on the standard scale.

Value of damage exceeding five thousand pounds (when treated as normal Either Way offence) -

SUMMARY: Six months imprisonment and / or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum

INDICTMENT: Ten years imprisonment.

Racially Aggravated

30(1) A person is guilty of an offence under this section if he commits an offence under section 1(1) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971 (destroying or damaging property belonging to another) which is racially or religiously aggravated for the purposes of this section. 28(1) An offence is racially or religiously aggravated for the purposes of sections 29 to 32 if -

(a) at the time of committing the offence, or immediately before or after doing so, the offender demonstrates towards the victim of the offence hostility based on the victim's membership (or presumed membership) of a racial or religious group; OR

(b) the offence is motivated (wholly or partly) by hostility towards members of a racial or religious group based on their membership of that group. Either Way:

SUMMARY: Six months imprisonment and / or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

INDICTMENT: Imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years and / or a fine.

Regarding the can possession it could leave kids open to the following legislation:

Possessing an article with intent to commit criminal Damage:

For an offence of 'going equipped' under section 3 of the Criminal Damage Act 1971, it must be proved that the person knowingly had custody or control of the article in question. Neither mere possession nor intent to use an article are sufficient unless there is also custody or control. For example - Demonstrator 'A' may be running towards a pile of bricks in order to pick one up and break a window with it, but until he picks up the brick, he does not commit this offence. If the offence charged is one of 'cause or permit' then it must be shown that the man ('C' in the example below) was in a position to have custody or control.

For example - Demonstrator 'B' asks bricklayer 'C' if he can have a brick to throw through a window.

'C' points to a pile of bricks and tells 'B' to help himself.

On *(.SPECIFY DATE..) at *(.SPECIFY TOWNSHIP..) sold an aerosol paint container to a person under the age of 16

Contrary to section 54 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

(i) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section in respect of a sale to prove that he took all reasonable steps to determine the purchaser's age, and he reasonably believed that the purchaser was not under the age of sixteen. (section 54(4))

(ii) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section in respect of a sale effected by another person to prove that he (the defendant) took all reasonable steps to avoid the commission of an offence under this section. (section 54(5)).

"Average amount of money spent per local authority in 2002-3 on dealing with graffiti was £75,000. It's the most widespread form of vandalism on the London Underground an estimated £10m per annum, £2.5m required to clear up graffiti"

KANZ

For more information feel free to contact:

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