



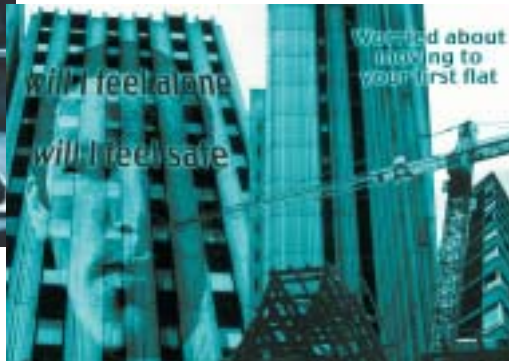
# INFORMATION

## Who Are We?

Soft Touch was set up in April 1986 to work with groups of under represented people, using the arts to enable them to express themselves and make positive changes for themselves and their communities.

Soft Touch has a core staff with a wide range of skills who undertake project work, develop new projects and partnerships and manage the company. We also work with a pool of freelance artists who are brought in when required.

We are a not for profit company limited by guarantee, run as a worker's co-operative.



## How do we work?

We use discussion, group work and skills development to enable people to present their ideas using a range of creative media. The majority of our work is carried out on a project basis, usually focusing on specific issues and often resulting in a product at the end of the project.

Our approach to working with people centres around encouraging groups to work together to inspire ideas and creativity. This results in creative ideas and artwork which comes directly from project participants. The process of being involved is of central importance and increased confidence and self-esteem, trying new things and feeling ownership are as important as the project's end result.

We always work in partnership with other organisations which provide the groups for us to work with and back-up in terms of staff and other support. Partners could be local government departments or services, schools/colleges, public sector agencies, community/voluntary groups or other arts organisations.

We work with groups, not individuals, and the groups we work with vary in size depending on the aims, outputs and complexity of the project. For example, a group making a video or postcard would normally comprise 6-10 people. The groups we work with may want to:

- \* Inform the public about what they do
- \* Express their concerns or opinions about a particular issue
- \* Challenge stereotyping
- \* Experience learning in a new and creative way
- \* Celebrate an achievement or event

Our particular expertise is in working with young people (14-25), especially those who are disaffected or socially excluded. However, we also work with adults and younger children on some projects.

## Where do we work?

Most of our projects are carried out at the premises or meeting place of our project partners. This is partly because at present our premises are not set up for heavy use by groups, and also because we prefer to work where the participants feel most comfortable, which is often on their 'home turf'

We have a wide range of high quality equipment, designed to be used on an outreach basis. This includes laptop computers with graphics and imaging software, digital cameras and camcorders, mobile music sampling and recording gear and musical instruments.

## Which artforms do we use?

The artform or artforms used for each project depend on what the project and the group aim to achieve. Sometimes a group will know what they want to use, eg they know they want to make a video. In other cases we advise groups as to which creative medium will achieve the best results to meet their aims.

Many of our projects use visual artforms, for example, video, photography, graphic design and websites or multimedia projects using a range of digital artforms.

Another main area of work is music and sound recording including music technology, DJing and using musical instruments and song and lyric writing.

We also have expertise in drama and construction/sculpture for celebration, exhibitions and installations.

## Project Examples



### "I luv the 70's I love 2001' - Opening the Doors

The Leicester City Museums Service contracted us to work on a project to encourage more young people to engage with and use museums. We worked with a group from the Saffron Lane Estate in Leicester comparing popular culture now with popular culture from their parents' generation (the 70's). We used collage, music and construction to make a multi-media exhibition which was housed at Leicester's New Walk Museum.



### Sexwise

We worked with six groups of young people to produce peer education postcards about sex and relationships, using photography and graphic design. Issues covered included teenage pregnancy, safe sex, responsible fatherhood and date rape. Over 200,000 of the cards have been distributed through local organisations and projects working with young people.

## To find out more

If you would like to find out more about the company's work, or would like to discuss a potential project, please contact Sally Norman, who will also be able to give you details of the costs involved for development and delivery of your project idea.

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