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### FIRST YEAR OF MASH-UP A BIG SUCCESS

MASH-UP has been providing positive activities for young people in Leicester since summer 2009, with a focus on the west of the city on Friday and Saturday nights. The take up has been fantastic, far exceeding our expectations - 341 young people took part in the nine months to March 2010. Here are some highlights from our evaluation of the first nine months of MASH-UP:

341 young people engaged in positive creative activities through a combination of street and building based activities on Friday and Saturday nights mainly focused in on the New Parks estate.

Of 78 young people we tracked in detail, 71 (91%) showed a marked increase in their confidence and skills and developed new aspirations and 79% developed and improved their relationships with others.

Of the 10 young people who were known to be at risk of offending, 9 (90%) did not re-offend.

The full year one report is available for [download here](#).

### First group of young people achieve their Creative Team Award - May 2010

Congratulations to the first group of 10 young people to achieve their Soft Touch Creative Team Award. The Awards were signed off by NCFE, the accrediting body, during a visit to Soft Touch on May 13. Lynda Knott, NCFE external moderator, said:

**"The centre is offering learning in a very unique style and is working well to meet the needs of these very challenged young people. The resources to carry out the practical skills are of good quality and the learners are encouraged to approach their tasks in a**

**professional and responsible manner"**

[Click here for more information about the Creative Team Award.](#)

**Congratulations Ali! - May 2010**

Ali Agayev is a talented artist from Azerbaijan who Soft Touch have been supporting. Ali's picture of Leicester Market has been voted by the public as the best painting in a competition sponsored by Gadesby's to coincide with Leicester Market's Artisan Festival, which took place on 25 April 2009. Ali specialises in portrait painting and runs weekly classes for adults at Age Concern and the Independent Arts Centre, both on Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/elibrother/>

**Front cover exposure for Soft Touch - April 2010**

A photo from our **Arrived!** project was selected as the image to go on the cover of a new publication co-authored by one of Soft Touch's voluntary directors. 'Europe's Established and Emerging Communities: assimilation, multiculturalism or integration' is edited by Carlton Howson and Momodou Sallah and it published by Trentham Books [www.trentham-books.co.uk](http://www.trentham-books.co.uk)

The **Arrived!** magazine will be appearing in our shop during April 2010.

### **Funding success - April 2010**

Soft Touch has been successful in securing funding from Connexions LeicesterShire for a two-year project with teenage mums and mums to be. We will be working with the young women to develop arts and crafts and enterprise skills. The project now has a name and it is: SHE-Stylers - follow progress in [Current projects: SHE-Stylers](#)

### **URBAN VIBES "Blow Out"**

The event went well, please visit the [Blow Out](#) page for pics and video when available.

Info and pics of December's Urban Vibes are on the [Urban Vibes page](#).

Click on the logo to visit Braid:  
**FUNDING SUCCESS FOR BRAID**



The Braid women's group is secure for another year through a grant from the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation.

The grant will mean the group can carry on meeting every week at St Matthews Sure Start Centre. Braid gives women who are newly arrived in Leicester the chance to socialise, learn arts and crafts skills and receive advice from midwives and other health professionals.

### **Young Brits at Art**

"Ben Clarke attended the Young Brits at Art launch, hosted by the Human Rights Commission at the Tate Modern in London in November 2009. Ben was invited as one of the 2009 shortlisted artists exhibiting work he



had produced at Soft Touch studios, to promote the competition and to share his experiences with other attendees.”



### **STREETDREAMZ AWARD**

On Thursday 22 October 2009 more than 50 young volunteers from across England who made films about important community and social issues were honoured at the MTV BOOM! Awards which took place at the Apple Store, Regent Street, in London.

Streetdreamz were awarded best camerawork. Soft Touch Arts have been supporting Streetdreamz throughout the production of their film with funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. We would like to congratulate the whole group on the success of their film.

You can see their film on the MTV Boom! Site with the link below:

<http://boom.mtv.co.uk/Video/BEST-CAMERAWORK--STREET-DREAMZ--/09EF6FFFF0099CB0B001700D2D820>

See our coverage of Mash Up in the [Leicester Mercury](#).

Also see our new [Press page here](#).