

## NEWS RELEASE:

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### **Birmingham's Young People descend on Town Hall for awards ceremony**

Last week saw over 200 young people attend Envisions *Truth about Youth* Awards Ceremony at Birmingham's Town Hall. The event celebrated the successful delivery of 88 innovative community projects designed and developed by young people over the last 9 months.

Over the last academic year over 500 young people aged 16-19 have volunteered to take part in the Envision School Programme in Birmingham. Working together in teams these dedicated young people devised community or environmental projects aimed to tackle issues they felt passionate about.

The projects also formed part of Envision's two year 'Truth about Youth' programme which is being run in partnership with the Cooperative Foundation. The programme aims to inspire young people to challenge the negative stereotypes of young people by promoting the positive contributions they make in their communities.

Guests young and old were treated to a whole array of activities and entertainment throughout the evening. As well as a chocolate fountain, Kripsy Kreme doughnuts and a DJ set from Bigger than Barry guests were able to try their hand at jewellery design, create personalised T-Shirts or be caricatured by a cartoonist.

The pinnacle of the event was the *Truth about Youth* Awards Ceremony which celebrated and showcased the achievements of the all the young people involved this year, to an audience that included representatives from local businesses, community organisations and community leaders. Ms Looker, Head of Sixth Form at Baverstock Foundation School said, "The Envision event was a wonderful celebration of what young people are capable of and I was extremely proud to see students from my school nominated for an award which recognises all their hard work this year."

Every young person who completed the Envision programme this year received a Certificate of Achievement. In addition 6 special awards were given to young volunteers who have excelled during the *Truth about Youth* programme, taken advantage of every aspect of Envision and will continue to make a difference. The award winners were chosen by a panel of judges including Cathy Butt, Manager of Third Sector Research Centre, Alun Thorne Editor of The Birmingham Post, Jess Moore, Cooperative Senior Community Manager and Saima, a graduate of the Envision programme.

The 6 Special Awards were for and won by;

- **Envision Water Award – Winners; King Edward VI Camp Hill Girls**

This year Envision have been running a Water usage and awareness programme in partnership with Seven Trent Water. Lots of Envision teams have been focusing on local and global water issues, looking at watery poverty and water wastage. The winners, King Edward VI Camp Hill Girls were concerned about fresh water scarcity on a global scale and decided to raise awareness of the issue in their school. They took part in Envision's Pitch 4 Change programme where they received advice from Severn Trent's Director of Waste Water Services and were awarded £250 to put on an awareness raising event at their school.

- **Envision Media Award – Winners; King Edward VI Camp Hill Boys**  
The Envision team at Camp Hill Boys School wanted to make young people more aware of the youth facilities that existed locally so that they could engage in positive activities. They developed posters, flyers and a website for young people to check out what's going on in their area. They also created a fun workshop for primary school aged children and have already made contact with local schools who are interested.
- **Envision Grad Award –Winner; Noorjehan Begum**  
All students who complete the Envision programme become Envision Grads and benefit from continued support from Envision through an alumni programme. Since completing the programme, Noorjehan has used this ongoing support to begin making a film about a young man who had a troubled childhood but is now working to benefit his community. She is also running a 2 month mentoring programme for those at risk of falling into negative lifestyles.
- **Envision Student of the Year – Winner; Alex Pike, Bishop Vesey's Grammar School**  
Alex took on a leadership role within his Envision team who tackled the issue of Homelessness. Alex designed, filmed and posted an awareness raising video about homelessness onto YouTube. Alex also represented Envision at the House of Commons where he attended a networking event with MPs, Councillors and 50 other youth organisations.
- **Envision Team of the Year – Winners; Great Barr School**  
Great Barr's Envision team felt that teenage pregnancy was a major issue in their area. They worked with the NHS to learn about sexual health and design a workshop for younger peers at their school. They delivered the workshop to 80 Year 10 students and thanks to the partnership with the NHS, the workshop will now become an annual event and rolled out to more year groups.
- **Envision Truth about Youth Award – Winners; Bishop Challoner Catholic College**  
Truth about Youth aims to challenge the negative stereotypes of young people through positive action. This team did just that and raised awareness about access to education in developing countries. They also did a sponsored walk to raise money for a Jamaican charity who they partnered with for their project. Their efforts were showcased on the online 'Treasure Beach' community forum where many members from Jamaica and Birmingham commented on how impressed they were with the project.

The Truth about Youth Awards also gave the young people the chance to sign up for Envision's alumni programme which will continue to provide them with opportunities to make a difference, meet and engage with decision makers and pass on their skills and knowledge to their peers by supporting Envision staff in delivering the Truth about Youth programme in their schools or colleges. Cara, Envision student said, "It was a great event and I want to continue making a difference, I've signed up for the Grad programme next year!"

The second year of Truth about Youth hopes to continue the success of the first, with the aim of inspiring more young people to challenge the negative stereotypes that surrounds young people in the media. Andrew Ridge, Partnerships Manager for the Co-operatives Truth about Youth programme, said of the event, "A truly inspiring evening made special by the enthusiasm and commitment of the young people who have completed the Truth about Youth Programme this year. They are determined to change the way they are viewed and the projects that were showcased this evening are testament to that."

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**Notes to editors:**

**For more information, photographs or to arrange an interview with Award Winners please contact :**

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**Envision**

**Notes to Editors:**

- **Envision Water Award presented by Alec Richmond, Director of Internal Audit at STW.**
- **Envision Team of the Year presented by Andrew Dick, Envision Chief Executive.**
- **Envision Truth about Youth Award presented by Michael Fairclough, Community and Campaigns Manager for The Cooperative.**
- **Student of the Year presented by Mita Desai, Envision graduate.**
- **Media Award presented by Envision Communications Manager, Emma Bird.**
- **Envision Grad of the Year presented by Graduate Coordinator, Anneka Deva.**
- Envision provides young people with the opportunity to make a difference. The charity was established in 2000 by four young people who wanted to challenge the stereotype that young people are apathetic and disengaged.
- Envision works with over 3000 young people a year in London, Birmingham and Leeds, helping them design their own local community projects tackling issues

ranging from street crime to climate change. The experience builds confidence, aspirations and skills – inspiring the next generation of young community leaders.

- Envision currently works from three regional bases in Greater London, Birmingham and Leeds. Envision Bristol will be operational as of Summer 2010 with a fifth office due to open in 2011.
- Envision has been recognised as a GoldStar Exemplar project for its best practice in recruiting and supporting volunteers.
- In 2009 Envision won funds to deliver The Co-Operative Foundation's "Truth About Youth" campaign, combating negative perceptions of young people and showcasing positive examples.