Birmingham young people will trace past times, work and play

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Young people in Castle Bromwich will investigate the automotive industry that has been the mainstay of the area's employment for many years whilst, in Ladywood, the childhood games of earlier generations of immigrants will be studied. The youthful researchers will be interviewing older residents and recording their memories for each project. Some will produce an exhibition while others will create a drama performance.

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: "Birmingham is a priority area for HLF and these two projects, supported by our Young Roots programme, will give the young people involved a vivid insight about their heritage covering both work and play in years gone by. They will also gather new skills in helping to spread knowledge to a wider audience."

The Leaps & Bounds Trust has received a £48,200 grant for its investigation into Castle Vale's motor heritage. Tracing the industrialisation in that part of the city from wartime production through to present day car plants, the project aims to recruit some 50 young people from the area to take on the role of history detectives.

They will delve into the Castle Vale and Castle Bromwich's beginnings as a 16th-century estate: its critical role as the site where Spitfires were built for the RAF in the Second World War after which the old aircraft factory was bought by Jaguar cars which continue in production to this day, despite changes in the company's ownership.

The young people's research will include visits to an RAF station, the Coventry Transport Museum and the Jaguar factory itself, now owned by Indian car manufacturer Tata. Past and current car workers will be interviewed and the whole project will be filmed for a special DVD documentary. The young people will also create based on what they have learned and this will be held in the foyer at Birmingham's prestigious Symphony Hall and also at Weston Park in Staffordshire.

For Leaps & Bounds Trust, Keith Horsfall, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for the young people of Castle Vale to understand the heritage of where they live, see really interesting places and through that to develop themselves as people and performers."

The Digbeth-based Urban Angel Project has received a grant of £31,400 for Playing in the Past which will look at the traditional playground and street games of bygone years as well as from other countries by targeting the older members of Birmingham communities who originated from overseas.

Centred on the Ladywood area of the city, the young researchers will interview their elders and help create a games-of-yesteryear website. But more than this they will create a portable collection of historic games and organise a series of 'fun days' where the games can be played by other young people. They will also publish their findings in book form. The finding from the project will be exhibited in libraries and community venues through out Birmingham.

Keith added: "The 'Playing in the Past Project' will enable local children in Ladywood to interact with the elders in the community. We are excited about the project as it will help to build intergenerational relationships as well as giving the children an insight into games from yesterday that they can help revive and promote with their peers."

Notes to editors

Leaps & Bounds Trust is a registered charity that works with at-risk young people to turn their lives round through a combination of intense and sustained personal development, ongoing pastoral support and the highest standard of artistic, cultural or sporting engagemen.

Urban Angel Project leads on innovative and creative projects to enrich, engage and empower children, young people, families and communities.

It has extensive wealth of experience, working with both the statutory and the voluntary sector, by tailoring a holistic and bespoke service to meet the needs of all. The main aim of Urban Angel Project is to benefit the young and the old in the common effort to achieve better outcomes for all.

The organisation offers services and activities to improve the life chances of the community by raising aspirations, ambitions and achievements. Key to our success has been collaborative working providing high quality service and activities to lead in developing innovative and ground breaking services.

Further information

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