

# Case study: Cottonfield

## Young Film Fund, using the BFI National Archive

### Integrating archive film into creative community learning

First Light offered pilot and studio grants under the Young Film Fund to give young filmmakers the opportunity to access the free archive resources in the BFI National Archive.

Films from the BFI National Archive show Britain at various moments in the twentieth century, revealing a range of different and changing attitudes to social and economic issues. They provide a useful focus for young people interested in making films about the society in which we live.

### Using archive film in a creative filmmaking project

Cottonfield Films Community Interest Company in Liverpool was awarded £5,000 from the Young Film Fund, using an archive film called 'Queen and Housing Problem Daily Sketch Topical Budget'. The grant was used to teach film and music-making to young people in Bootle.

The project was run in partnership with Ykids – a local children's charity who operate an after school club at St George of England Specialist Engineering College as part of their REDI project. The REDI project is a mentoring service for 8–18 year olds, aiming to 'Reach, Empower, Develop and Inspire' young people, open to all children and young people but particularly targeting the vulnerable and at risk.



The film – called *Changing Face* – was produced after school, about the regeneration taking place in Orrell Klondyke, Bootle. Local residents discussed the regeneration work that has been affecting their lives for the last ten years in the area.

The young people gained skills, knowledge, confidence and enjoyment from working with professional filmmakers. They learnt simple, basic professional techniques, crew roles, the value of working as a team, enjoyed using professional equipment and interviewing each other, as well as the residents.

### Impact on young people

- The project has made the participants appreciate their school for running the after school club and allowing projects such as this one to take place
- During the project, the young people's concentration and problem-solving skills improved
- The young people learned to be more respectful of each other – they quickly learnt the value of team work and were quick to help each other out when necessary
- Seeing the film highlighted their sense of pride in what they were all doing

*"Doing this film has made me more confident and more social."*

Young participant

- Some of the participants expressed an interest in doing animation and working with a green-screen in the future

*“I really enjoyed working with this group of young people, I also learnt some of the history about the area I grew up in and none of this would have happened without the First Light funding so I am grateful and happy that we received the award.”*

*Project manager’s view*

### Long-term legacy

- New partnership with YKids. Cottonfields and YKids are in discussions about doing more projects together
- More details of the project and the archive films made available by the BFI National Archive can be viewed:
- [www.bfi.org.uk/education/teaching/firstlight.html](http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/teaching/firstlight.html)
- <http://vimeo.com/bfi/albums>

### Summary of the benefits of using film in education

- Building skills, knowledge, confidence and enjoyment amongst young people
- Teaching young people about the heritage of local communities through archive film
- Increasing motivation, improving concentration and problem-solving initiative
- Building team work and sense of shared interest in developing a quality film
- Improving attitude towards school and learning
- Improving technical filmmaking skills
- Building new local partnerships

### Facts and Figures

- 12 young people (ages 11–13)
- £5,000 from First Light