

Not In My Name

Burnley Youth Theatre



The outcomes of this project could contribute to the following performance indicators within the Local Area Agreement:

NI 35 - Building resilience to violent extremism

NI1 - Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

Not In My Name, written and directed by Alice Bartlett, is a newly commissioned theatre production performed by young people. It explores the aftermath of a terror attack in a small northern town.

Seventy-five per cent of the text is the actual words spoken by young people and community figures in the research phase of the project which made for real and cutting edge theatre. Performed by young people, Muslim and non-Muslim, the play explores the impact on the local community honing in on the stories of people at the scene, the authorities and the family and friends of the attacker.

At the play's ending we learn it was set a year in the future and we leap back to the present day and meet the attacker. Audiences were tasked with advising the young man on alternative steps he could take to make the difference he wants to see, which in turn allowed audiences to talk openly and productively about the issues.

The Arts Council contributed to the production and the second phase of the



Image from *Not In My Name*, Burnley Youth Theatre.

Photo: Burnley Youth Theatre.

project which sees the play tour to a variety of performance and non-performance venues across East Lancashire.

Lancashire Constabulary commissioned the piece and the idea was immediately embraced by young people at Burnley Youth Theatre. Lancashire Constabulary provided £10,000 towards production

costs, contributed to the research for the play and provided production resources.

Local schools, particularly Sir John Thursby Community College played an essential role in the research and writing phase of the play.

Young People's Service (formerly Youth and Community Service) played an essential role in allowing Burnley Youth Theatre to access a variety of groups of young people in the research phase and teamed up to provide target audiences from mixed cultural and geographical areas in Burnley.

The production engaged young people from a broad range of cultural and geographical backgrounds and succeeded in creating meaningful theatre and forming a cohesive, diverse group.

The impact on schools and public

audiences has been clear with a great deal of unprompted positive feedback coming to Burnley Youth Theatre. These include the following comments:

'It was great to get involved with Burnley Youth Theatre. I think this play has really opened up people's minds and it really makes people understand more about what's going on. I have gained more confidence and learnt so much about Muslims and Non-Muslims.'

'I am surprised I can actually talk to a white person about terrorism and even more surprised that we share the same views on it.'

The performances prompted community partners to make demand for the play in their own areas with groups they work with and there is a keen demand to see the play tour across East Lancashire.



Image from *Not In My Name*, Burnley Youth Theatre.

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