



'Challenging Stereotypes'

Local young people use art to tackle prejudice in new exhibition

Press release

Embargoed till 19 July 2018

Young people inspired by a charity project to tackle prejudice and discrimination in their local communities are behind a thought-provoking new exhibition which opens at the Riverside House in Rotherham today (19 July).

'Challenging Stereotypes' presents original artwork by the Youth Action Group: five 16 – 25 year-olds who through their involvement with anti-prejudice education charity the Anne Frank Trust UK in partnership with Rotherham Council have been given the opportunity and platform to use artistic expression to combat prejudicial thinking and attitudes.

The exhibition is the culmination of a 4-month programme during which the group have met weekly to debate and discuss issues surrounding stereotypes and explore how those issues can be highlighted creatively. Up to 30 original artworks - including painted canvasses and photography – will be on display throughout the exhibition, and two original songs, composed by the group, will be performed live by them at the launch event.

Arran, 18, from Rotherham said: "Through the Youth Action Group I've learned about the Holocaust, and about Anne Frank – I've learned about oppression and discrimination, and what can happen if people are stereotyped. Stereotyping is dangerous because it could lead to bullying and suicide."

Sian, 17, from Rotherham said: "I got involved with the Youth Action Project because I wanted to increase my knowledge about Anne Frank and what happened (to her) and get involved with things I wouldn't normally get involved with - like art and photography. I've learned how young people view discrimination: pre-judging people is dangerous, and false messages can hurt and alienate."

Rotherham Council's Claire Leary, who has worked closely with the group throughout the project, said: "The Youth Action Group have been given the opportunity to discuss and better understand the issues surrounding stereotyping that they as young people face – plus they've learned valuable new technical and social skills. As a result, their confidence and self-esteem has developed significantly. It's been a very rewarding project."

Nicola Strauther, Yorkshire and Humber project officer for the Anne Frank Trust said: "I feel so proud of what these young people have achieved: they have united with a joint aim to challenge the stereotypes they see as common place in Rotherham."

"This town has had a difficult few years, but I feel confident that if we continue to nurture and empower determined and passionate young people like these, Rotherham can overcome the tensions and divisions that have existed in the past and look forward to a more positive, united future."

Ends-

'Challenging Stereotypes' previews between 5.00pm - 6.00pm, Thursday 19 July.
Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE
The exhibition runs until 30 August 2018.

For further information contact:

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About the Anne Frank Trust UK

Prejudice and discrimination harms individuals, communities and society. The Anne Frank Trust UK is an education charity. We use Anne Frank's life and diary to empower young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination. We partner with schools, local authorities, criminal justice education services and others, to deliver education to young people in a variety of settings, predominantly in schools. Our interactive and impactful programme includes an exhibition of Anne Frank's life and diary combined with workshops, peer education and an ambassador programme. The Anne Frank Trust UK was established in 1991 by family and friends of Otto Frank, following his wish for an educational organisation to be set up in memory of his daughter Anne. www.annefrank.org.uk