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Editor's Column by Jane Morgan

Hello readers! I hope you all had a fantastic summer watching the cricket, attending music festivals (we have our very own review) and catching the sun, but I'm afraid it's definitely passed, so until next year it's time to pack up those barbeques (they always prompted rain anyway), hang up those ridiculous looking sunhats and pull on your new scarf and matching gloves. It's the time of year again where you walk to school or work with rosy cheeks, the wind whistling through your ears, umbrella in the air wishing you could drive!

Ok, so most of you probably can, but we can all relate to those unfortunate souls who must rely on public transport. Do you remember the days when you were a learner driver? Or perhaps you'd rather forget those torturous hours of three point turns, correction turn in the road, and parallel parking.

I have been learning to drive now since last October, (I'm taking my time I know) but as for many learners there have been months where I just couldn't be bothered with it all anymore. Well last week I finally got into gear and went through to the Arnison Centre in Durham to take my theory test. After eventually finding the place, I'm happy to say I passed with flying colours so it's now full speed ahead to the dreaded practical test. Did anyone watch the BBC programme 'Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre'? It charted the progress of TV presenter Nadia Sawalha as she learnt to drive

makes drivers turn to jelly? So many people fail due to nerves and learning to drive is an expensive business!

From the 10th August 2005 the cost of taking your theory test has risen to £21.00 while the practical test is now a staggering £45.50 unless taken after 4.30pm or at the weekend when it is £55.00 that's £4 more expensive than this time last year! If prices continue to escalate in this fashion many young people my age, eager to drive but still in full time education will find it almost impossible to cover the costs without help from parents. Let's face it not many people have the luck, the skill or the nerves to pull it off first time so let's say it takes you four attempts that's a minimum of £182 plus theory costs plus the lessons.

But once you've passed, you've done it and driving is great! Well actually the problems don't stop there with the prices of petrol ever increasing and a plague of unnecessary speed bumps spreading across the county driving can sometimes be a nightmare, but as I don't have to worry about such issues yet I'll focus on the test, finding a car, paying for insurance and university beckons it's an expensive business being a young adult!

Happy reading!

Jane

together with members of the public and showed each test. What is it about seeing the tester that

NEWS UPDATE ...

Competence, convenience or control?

Over the last few months, I've been involved in a number of debates that, one way or another, have been about in what, when and how, children and young people should participate. People adopt a variety of positions, which then throws up a variety of interesting questions.

For example, I have been involved in a discussion with colleagues from around the country, about commissioning a series of seminars about, loosely, the human rights of children and young people.

The Investing in Children position is that we will be interested in contributing to this, but only if children and young people themselves have an opportunity to contribute to the design and delivery of the seminars. This position has caused some difficulty amongst some colleagues, who have argued that some seminars should be exclusively adult events.

We have also been working with young people who contribute to current policy debates, from transport to the Every Child Matters – change for children agenda, to the Youth Green Paper, to the induction of the new Director of Children & Learning at Government Office North East.

The Investing in Children approach to these, and other issues, is that it is up to children and young people themselves to decide what the important questions are, and how they want to seek answers. The resources of Investing in Children are then available to them to pursue their agenda.

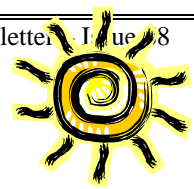
An alternative approach is for adults to identify the important issues, and to consult children and young people about them. Further, the way in which children and young people contribute can also be determined in advance, by creating templates which, when completed, can be submitted for consideration.

This approach is welcomed, and seen to be generally helpful – it simplifies processes, saves children and young people from going through all the boring bits. This has got to be a good thing, hasn't it?

And yet, as with the debate about the seminar series, it is worth asking what assumptions underpin these positions. Do we believe, for example, that we shouldn't involve children and young people in a debate about the ethics of participation or ask them to read the Green Paper because they lack the **competence** to understand? Or is it a question of **convenience** – i.e. it requires extra effort to include them? Or even, is it a question of control?

One of the principal benefits of the work children and young people have done on Every Child Matters, is that they have identified issues that the professionals haven't thought of. It is the very **unpredictability** of it all that makes it worth doing.

Liam Cairns



ISIE of Man?!

I'm not exactly sure how to start of this article to be honest so I'm just going to start from the beginning. Investing in Children have been asked by the Isle of Man Government to support some young people in a public enquiry that is going to be taking place on the island. As part of the work it involves three trips over to the Isle of Man to get to know the young people and hear their experiences of what it's like to live over there.

My first trip to the island was on 30th September and it was for 2 nights. As I had never been over before, I didn't quite know what to expect however it exceeded my expectations. It was very picturesque and all of the houses were painted different colours which I thought was pretty cool!! When you're coming into land, from England you can actually see the whole island out the window because it's so small. You can drive from one end to another in less than 40 minutes!

It was quite nerve racking on our first day because we had to rely on adults on the island to try and encourage young people to come and meet with us as we had no contacts from Durham, so we weren't sure how many young people would come to either of our meetings. The Saturday morning was the "younger" group and we had over 30 come along and the Saturday afternoon was the "older" group and again over 25 came along to that one, so it was a BRILLIANT turnout.

Both of the sessions were ran in the same way, the young people and I, literally sat down with a blank piece of paper and wrote down all of the issues and experiences they faced in their every day lives. A lot of the things that came up were very similar to the things that we find in Durham. For example: Teachers shouting a lot and transport being unreliable, which was quite interesting.

The next day, both groups came together and we discussed how we are going to move forward. We decided to make a list of questions that the young people took away with them to ask their friends, so we can gain even more comments and experiences than what we already have. (Hopefully that's what they're doing now!).

I didn't want to come home and leave everyone there because to me, it seemed as though there was very little on the island for young people and I almost felt guilty for coming into their lives and making promises when they didn't really believe me because they had never experienced anything like Investing in Children before.

Anyways, I'm going back over to support them while they write their report on the 24th October so watch this space and I'll fill you in on what happens and hopefully they will realise that we are serious in changing things for the better in their lives!!

Ashleigh Greathead ☺

Carling Weekend: Leeds Festival Review

The Background

Leeds Festival is part of the Carling weekend, the other festival being Reading. The festival takes place over the last weekend in August, this year from the 26th-28th August. The Carling Weekend festivals are notorious for being dirty, fun and full of top rock bands on the main stage and new and upcoming bands in the Radio 1/NME and Carling tents. This year at Leeds was no exception.....

The Site

The site actually opens on the Thursday before the first acts grace the main stage so that people can arrive early and get the prime camping spots. The campsite is split into 5 sites, I was camped in the Yellow Valley site which was a short walk from the Arena entrance and closer still to the toilets. Speaking of toilets, any self-respecting music festival wouldn't be complete without disgusting loos, Leeds definitely confirmed this stereotype.

The Music

Ah festival bands. Nothing compares to seeing a band live, especially at a festival. With over 130 bands and even cabaret and comedy acts it was impossible to get bored. If somehow you do manage to get bored you can always check to see who is at the signing tent for a chance to meet your favourite stars!

Friday on the main stage was rocky metal affair, with the likes of My Chemical Romance, NOFX, Incubus, Marilyn Manson and headliners Iron Maiden. My Chemical Romance proved to be a poor start to the day, but maybe it's just because I don't like emo. Later in the day however I caught the end of Incubus' slot which was much better and worthy of the main stage. Up after them was Marilyn Manson, a man who needs no introduction due to his "eccentric" ways and interesting performances and he didn't disappoint. Dressed in a black outfit and with the keyboardists instrument hanging from a hangman's gallows, the king of goth rock treated the crowd to an fittingly dark set list, featuring numerous costume changes throughout.

After the disappointing start to the day I experienced a band that exceeded my expectations by a long shot. Art Brut arrived on the stage to rapturous applause but, having heard only two songs, I was a bit apprehensive. I soon realised what the fuss was all about, lead singer Eddie Argos' basically spoken lyrics echoing across a lo-fi mesh of guitar and drums created a refreshing sound that you will either love or hate. Its a band that cant really be described, but the way they include the audience in their performance and their down to earth songs about everyday life as a young adult will ensure that they remain a festival favourite in years to come.

A great performance from Scottish outfit Sons and Daughters got me in the mood for some top indie pop and this was served up in bucket loads from Maximo Park. When the time came they provided the packed tent with one of the best performances of the day, blazing through a set list comprised of mostly album songs with a couple of songs from Ips, the band really got the crowd going and, after 45 minutes left them begging for more.

After Maximo Park I went for a wander around the arena and ended up catching the end of Iggy Pop's main stage slot, it was here that I experienced one of the grittier points of the festival. As the performance came to an end a lot people were walking past me, since I was stood close to the exit, and one group asked me if I wanted to go with them to do some drugs. I declined and thought nothing of it at the time but thinking back

I realise that this sort of thing could have been, and no doubt was, happening throughout the weekend. The worrying thing is that younger children were also experiencing the festival and they may not have acted as sensibly as I did. Festival organisers were adamant about clamping down on substance abuse, but it is evidently difficult to stop at such an event, especially as there were "legal" vendors selling what they described as herbal highs. This is maybe something that will be remedied somewhat next year.

Saturday was always going to be about the final three acts appearing on the main stage. Queens of the Stone Age were the first of the big three to perform and lead singer Josh Homme rallied the crowd by exclaiming his love for alcohol, most likely the reason he's had to pull out of follow-up gigs in Germany due to "exhaustion". The group ploughed their way through an extensive set, pulling tracks from the beginning of the career, thrashing through tracks from their acclaimed album Songs for the Deaf and also knocking out a few tracks from their most recent album, Lullabies to Paralyse. The band managed to attract a lot of people to the main stage with their unique rock sound and no doubt left everyone gasping for breath by the end.

Up after QOTSA were The Killers. The Vegas band that, after a relatively short spell in the business have become pop-rock gods, need no introduction. They treated the ever growing crowd to fantastic renditions of songs from their top selling album Hot Fuss. The night ended with The Pixies playing a vast selection of tracks spanning their enormous career. Even for idiots like me who had yet to really experience any of their music, The Pixies proved to be an excellent way to end the night. Other great bands also appeared on Saturday. The likes of The Subways and DFA 1979 were excellent.

Sunday I experienced another disappointing start to the day in the form of From Autumn to Ashes and All American Reject. Both bands were weak, From Autumn to ashes were another emo band, whose screaming you just don't need on a Sunday morning. Things looked up afterwards as I made my way to the NME tent to see Nine Black Alps. The nu-grunge boys from Manchester tore through tracks from their debut album, and sounded fantastic. Things are looking very good for this group indeed. After them I witnessed the raw sound of Juliette and the Licks and left the tent very impressed.

The day ended with amazing performances by Razorlight and the Kings of Leon paving the way for the Foo Fighters to close the festival in style on the Main stage. And close in style they did. Out of the silence rang Dave Grohl's voice screaming, "Can you hear me?" as they appeared onto the stage playing the first song of their new album. They then proceeded to entertain the crowd to electrifying performances of songs from all of their albums including classics such as Everlong, Learn to Fly and My Hero. The gathered fans were also treated to a vivid green laser show towards the end of the set. Having witnessed the performance from the front of the massive audience only one word can sum it up, surreal.

I was completely exhausted when I got back to my tent on the Sunday night and fell straight to sleep amidst the usual explosions of gas canisters being thrown into campfires. I managed to sleep right through the alcohol fuelled riots that took place throughout the night, but I was told that things got a little bit out of hand. So aside from the dire toilets and the minor drink and drugs problems, Leeds Festival is a fantastic, once in a lifetime experience, until next year that is.....

Kurt Scott

Respect Revisited

In his victory speech, following the recent General Election, Tony Blair announced that the most important problem he had to solve was lack of respect in society. The very next day the papers and the television were overflowing with horror stories of young people terrorising the world with their anti social behaviour. There is a campaign to re-introduce National Service for all young people . Forget Osama Bin Laden , the real enemy is children and their lack of respect. Government ministers are linking just about everything they do to a lack of respect in communities. Watch out. There is now a Minister for Communities, David Miliband, and he comes from the North East. He may turn up in a community near you and insist that you show some respect.

Well fine, and as with most things there is a grain of truth hidden somewhere in the ranting and raving of the great and the good. We all should work harder, in our language and behaviour, to value those around us. I would be much more impressed if adults started by putting their own house in order. We do not set a good example and, dare I say, some adults could usefully learn about respect from young people. Put plainly, we oldies do not set a very good example and it is hardly surprising that young people find it hard to take the medicine dished out by those in power. Let me give you an example of what I mean.

1. Adult Play - Modern sport is full of cheating, lying. Disrespect for authority, self interest, aggression, violence and contempt for rules. Name calling, bullying and winning at all costs is normal behaviour. Respect for your opponent is a sign of weakness. Watch a top football match and see how referees are treated. Witness amateur football matches played on Sunday mornings and I believe you will see more anti social behaviour, violence and lack of respect than most young people are capable of dreaming about.

2. Child Play - On the other hand when I watch young people playing games I see evidence of some of the most sophisticated and civilised behaviour found anywhere in society. Children learn respect naturally through play. Left to their own devices, without adult interference, a group of young people playing football will throw down some coats and seemingly by magic, penalties, free kicks and offside will be decided without a referee and with little argument. There are no goal posts but somehow there is agreement whether or not a goal has been scored. If someone tries to gain unfair advantage the rest of the group will gently impose the collective will to have fair play. Either you learn to show respect for the unwritten rules and your friends, or you won't be part of the group. The same is true of hundreds of games played by children, almost from the time they are born. Play is one of the most valuable parts of a child's education. It is through play that respect becomes part of a young person's character.

I could make similar comparisons in other areas of life. It is only when the adults can learn to respect each other and the young people around them that they will have earned the right to be listened to. Road rage, tabloid obsession with celebrity, politicians lying and cheating, workplace bullying, child neglect and abuse, overflowing prisons, drug dependence, the blame culture, environmental catastrophe, neighbours fighting.....the list is depressingly endless. Should those in power not put their own house in order before launching into the younger generation?

Maybe I have exaggerated slightly in order to make a point. Some young people do treat others very badly; and that can never be right and has to be dealt with. However, the vast majority of young people I deal with are naturally respectful, making some mistakes along the way, but that is part of growing up.

To end, I have two wishes. Firstly, restore opportunities for young people to play, in the widest sense of the word. Give them space, facilities and encouragement to learn respect naturally with the minimum of adult interference. Secondly, let there be a courageous acceptance in our adult leaders that we set young people a bad example when it comes to respect, and admit, just for once, that it might be possible to learn from our 'youngers'. Mr. Blair, Mr. Miliband take time out to watch the children at play. Be amazed.

Steve Harness

WANTED

Deputy editor

do you have an interest in journalism?
some spare time you're currently wasting
watching re-runs on tv?

Could you do with some extra cash?
why not fill the gap in your life by filling the new
position of deputy editor?

if you're interested write me a letter telling me
why you should be my deputy and send it to
the liC office or for more information email me.
All addresses are on the back of this edition.
good luck!

Malap (Multi Agency Looked After Partnership)

Hello,

I am consultant for the Multi Agency Looked After Partnership (Malap). We are filming a video that looks at a universal approach to services and the stigma attached to young people in County Durham. We are targeting looked after young people as an example of how services focus on status rather than their individuality as their individuality should be the main issue not their protective cocoon if you like.

We hired a creative writer to help us with the script and we have produced a script. We are currently filming the video, however we are not missing the main objective, which is for us to

St Hilds

St Hilds was founded in 1858 and has been a valuable and exciting learning experience for many different young adults in that time. We have had people coming from a variety of different countries and continents around the world.

We are all proud to be a part of St Hild's school. Our school is one of the four schools' in the northeast to achieve the Impetus Award. We work hard towards anti-bullying and citizenship. We also have a school council. Through this we have had many exciting experiences. For example recently a lady came in to talk to us about schools in South Africa.

We learnt a lot of things about South Africa that day but one thing stuck in our heads; 1 pencil can earn a child 1 years education. After that we sent out some packs of pencils along with some playground toys like skipping ropes and balls, which the children will make good use of, and hopefully will last for years to come. We now have pen pals which include teachers and classes from an under privileged school in South Africa.

Charlton Brown, Tamsin Woods , Helen Robson - Year 6 pupils

HOWZAT!

The greatest moment in English cricket, in my lifetime occurred recently at the Oval when we regained the Ashes from the old enemy (Australia). In footballing terms that is the equivalent of winning the World Cup. Expert opinion is that we have probably witnessed the

greatest test series ever played and cricket is on the up thanks to new stars such as Flintoff and Pietersen. The women's game is also at its healthiest as they also defeated Australia this summer. How long it will remain so is questionable as disturbing facts have come to light at the grass roots level of the sport.

Is cricket in danger of dying out in state schools? The Cricket Foundation revealed recently that less than 1 in 10 state primary and secondary schools give pupils the chance to play the sport regularly if at all.

It can be argued that if this trend continues, cricket could all but disappear from the state sector within a few years, severely affecting the opportunities of many young people to become future Andrew Flintoffs. The school pitch at Silverdale secondary Scholl, Sheffield, where England captain Michael Vaughn learnt his art, is to be ripped up and built over

Freddie Truman, the former England fast bowler has blamed the selling off of school playing fields as a major problem for cricket. Apparently since the Labour government came into power a total of 2,540 have been lost to developers.

Nick Gandon, director of the Cricket Foundation, has said that cricket in schools has been in decline for a long time. The Cricket Foundation is looking to reverse the consequences of children being deprived of the opportunity to take part in school sport and cricket in particular.

The seeds for the future must be set in primary schools with children learning the game with soft balls and plastic bats and developing an enjoyment of the game. This needs to happen and flourish now in conjunction with the success of the England team, to inspire a whole new generation of players.

When children move to secondary education cricket should be taught as a major sport. Kids should be taught the rules of the game and be allowed to play in proper matches having the opportunity to bat, bowl, and keep wicket and field. Only then will natural talent evolve and future stars emerge. If we are to retain the Ashes for years to come and cement the foundations of a national pride in the game and its success, these measures have to be taken now. Who knows, a future England captain might be in your school right now.

Paul Morgan

Full time

ic Newsletter – Issue 68

If you think you've something that you think everyone needs to hear, or have suggestions about what should be in the next month's newsletter, please write to our editor:

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