

Young people give Marlborough Way subway a makeover

The subway under Marlborough Way in Glascote Heath took on a new lease of life on Saturday 27 March 2010 when 15 young dedicated volunteers spent 6 hours learning the skill of graffiti art and transformed a public walkway.

Professional Graffiti Artist, David Brown supervised and showed the 10 – 19 year olds how to use the paints for the colourful chosen themes. One side of the subway features local Industrial heritage and the other shows Glascote Youth Centre along with young people's issues.

Historical pictures which inspired the artwork were provided by Chris Jones, a relative of Samuel Barlow the canal carrying company that operated in Glascote. Also featured is the Gibbs and Canning works, another local company which became world renowned for the manufacture of tiles and terracotta.

Stuart Etheridge from Tamworth Borough Council's Community Development Team says "It's great to see that the local industrial heritage of Glascote Heath has not been forgotten. It's also been a chance for young people to learn about local history and its thriving industrial communities".

The idea for the project originated from a visit Councillor Nicola Annandale made to Glascote Heath Youth Centre and forms part of the Council's 'paint out and replace the graffiti' with graffiti art on suitable underpasses.

Funded by Tamworth Borough Council, the authority also worked in partnership with Glascote Youth Centre to bring the project to fruition.

“Talking to local youngsters it was clear they wanted to help improve their environment and demonstrate that not all graffiti is abusive and an eyesore and that they could, and wanted to, help make a difference to the area”, explained Mark Matthews, Glascote Heath Youth Centre Manager.

“It was really motivating to see the youngsters’ enthusiasm and determination to brighten up the underpass. It is now far more colourful and will help people to feel safer. They all worked really hard, learned new skills and had fun doing so - they should be very proud of what they have achieved. The walls have now been protected so the great work the youngsters have done can’t be destroyed” said Chris Fitzsimmons, Street Scene Team Leader.

It really was a fantastic day – and the end results show just how much fun everyone had. Not only was it a great way to spend a day, but it means those who took part will now take pride in the underpass after all the hard work they put in”, said Stuart Etheridge.

The young people who took part in the project included members of the local Youth Club and others recruited via posters displayed in local shops.