

Overview 2021

Introduction and background

The BAD Youth Forum was created in 2001 to give young people a formal and recognised platform to express their views and make a positive impact in their community.

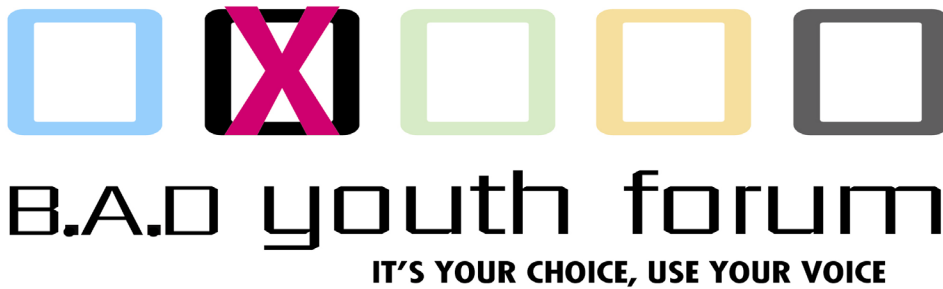
In 2021, nominations were captured online as we were unable to visit schools. The election process also took place online. The elections were hosted on One Borough Voice with 15 new members joining the Forum. Our existing active members opted to stay for another year with the hope of participating in the full Youth Forum experience following sessions returning to face to face. At the start of the Forum year, the country was still in a lockdown, so all of our induction meetings and sessions took place online. However, we had good attendance of at least 30 people at each of our sessions. 10 of the borough's secondary schools are represented.

In recognition of the effects the pandemic and the lockdown was having on young people, our returning members delivered a mental health session which was created by the Youth Forum in 2020 working in partnership with Kooth. The session focused on understanding your feelings, how to make yourself feel better and where to get support.

All members attended a session where we discussed issues affecting young people, just as we normally would in the Town Hall. The discussion was lively and had a clear focus on supporting learning at home and mental health. All Youth Forum sessions remained virtual until June 2021, when youth groups could return to face to face in line with National Youth Agency guidance and young people all had permission to attend in person. Forum members worked through 3 core sub-groups; the Community Action Sub-Group, Young Mayor Sub-Group, and Young Inspectors Sub-Group, as well as a variety of additional activities.



Community Action Sub-group achievements 2021



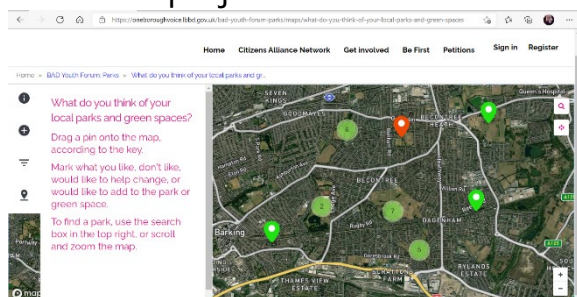
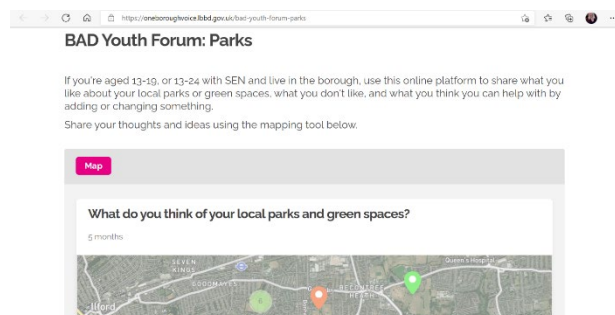
Introduction and background

The group meet every week and are tasked with working on the issues most affecting young people in their one year term. All sessions were virtual until June 2021. This was the time when almost all restrictions had been eased and young people were permitted by parents and carers to attend sessions in line with National Youth Agency guidance. As young people were not in school for some of their term, and schools were really busy on their return, the young people had limited opportunity to gather other young people's views. So, instead they used data from online surveys the Forum conducted in 2020 and by speaking to their peers and other Forum members. Using this, the group developed a list of areas they were most interested to address:

- **Parks and outdoor spaces**- this was important to young people as many felt parks weren't well equipped for teenagers and during a time when it was only safe to be in open outdoor spaces, it was important parks were fit for purpose
- **Mental health**- recognising the detrimental effects the lockdowns have had on some young people
- **Physical health**- the young people participated in a workshop entitled The Silent Killer
- **Contextual Safeguarding**- the group were invited to participate in a consultation and share their views on a podcast led by University of Bedfordshire
- **Crime and safety**- young people were keen to ensure the borough was safe as we came out of the lockdown and also wanted to explore young people rights regarding stop and searches, this issues were addressed in Youth Independent Advisory Group meetings
- **Social Responsibility**- working with Be First

Parks and outdoor spaces

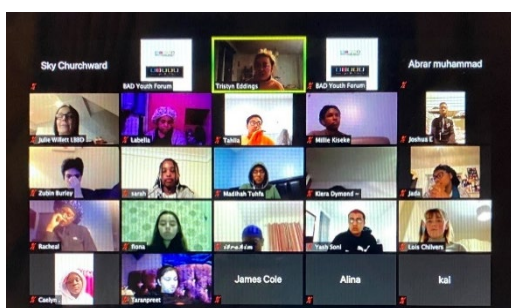
The group started looking at park facilities in their local part of the borough. The young people were sharing the problems they were finding in each park with the whole group. The group then decided to take photo's of broken equipment and areas of concern. Youth Workers made contact with Wayne Trevor, B&D Citizens Alliance Network, who was also working on a similar project.



An online map was created for young people to upload the photo's they had taken, pinning them to the relevant park. Having completed this exercise, the group met with Andy Johnson Lead Commissioner for Leisure, Parks and Heritage. The groups shared their concerns and discussed what they would like to see improved in the parks. Andy discussed the issue of

budget constraints and shared information about parks that had been improved and had a good range of equipment in the borough.

Mental Health



The group felt strongly that mental health was an issue that was of significant importance to young people. Most members of the group knew at least one person who was struggling with poor mental health. The group participated in a whole forum mental health session developed in the Forum in 2020 in participation. This session led to various discussions with the

group afterwards. Youth workers taught young people coping strategies and how to identify when someone they know is struggling, young people learnt how to access help and the importance of breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health.

The Silent Killer workshop

The Forum were asked to participate and evaluate a pilot workshop focussed on educating young people about health eating and avoiding chicken shops - the so called 'silent killer'. Public Health were considering funding this organisation to deliver workshops in schools, but first wanted to hear the Youth Forum's views. The young people participated in the interactive workshop and evaluated their thoughts at the end. Young people shared their views about how appropriate the workshop content was, whether it would have an impact on their behaviour and that of their friends, whether they enjoyed it and if they had any suggestions of how it could be improved. Youth workers also evaluated the session, offering their professional judgement. This feedback was shared with Public Health for them to make a decision around funding.



Contextual safeguarding

Young people were offered the opportunity to participate in a consultation as well as creating a podcast about contextual safeguarding. The definition of contextual safeguarding is recognising that as young people grow and develop they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family that impact on their ability to stay safe. For example in school or college, in the local community, in their peer groups or online.

The consultation enabled young people to share their thoughts about how to make safeguarding conferences better for young people (see additional events, consultation section for more details). In addition to the consultation, the research assistant from University of Bedfordshire visited the group again to involve them in a contextual safeguarding podcast. The University are working alongside LBBDD as part of a 'scale up' project to include Contextual Safeguarding in local practices. During the podcast, young people were asked to discuss their experiences of staying safe generally, safety in schools and neighbourhoods and the impact of peer groups around safety. The research assistant also discussed the new ways of working with young people, that shifts blame away from them and their parents and carers, and looks at how we can change contexts, so that they are safer. Five young people from a mixture of backgrounds, ages, cultures were chosen to ensure the feedback was as diverse and inclusive as possible.

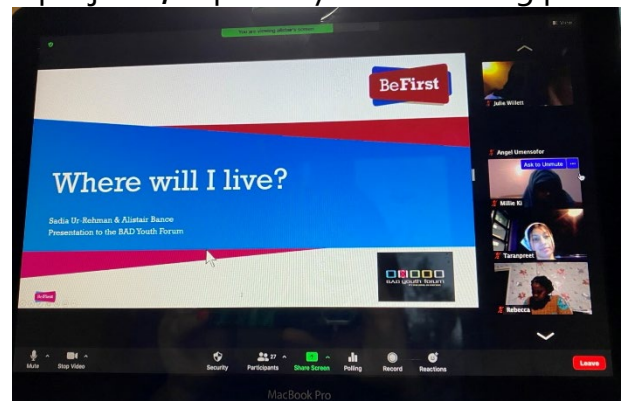
Be First

The Forum were invited to participate in 2 projects with Be First, the Council's regeneration company:

- 1) Making a children and young people's questionnaire more young people friendly;
- 2) Creating artwork for hoarding around new builds.

The young people were excited to be involved in both projects, especially the hoarding painting!

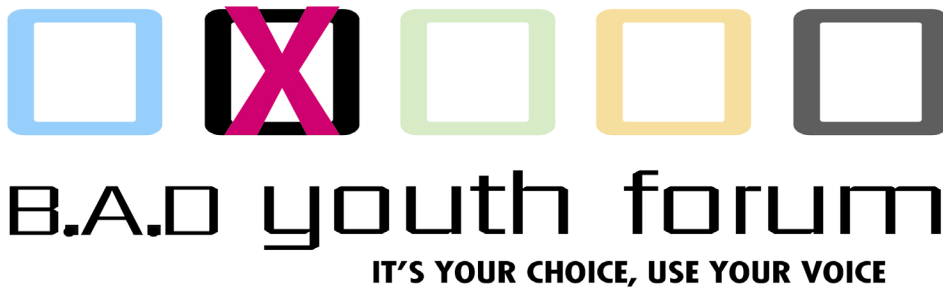
For the first project, Be First representatives visited the Forum during a virtual meeting and shared their current consultation questionnaire. Young people were able to give feedback on the language and the layout of the consultation.



The **hoarding project** was a great success, young people spent 3 sessions planning and drawing the designs and then 2 days during the summer holidays actually painting them. The young people enjoyed working with Studio 3 Arts and Be First, having the opportunity to brighten up the borough. Once the hoardings were installed in Dagenham, young people were invited to view them. They wanted this art work to act as an emblem to convey to the community that young people care for and have interest in for the future of their local area.



Young Mayor Sub-group achievements 2021



Introduction and background

The Barking and Dagenham Young Mayor is supported by a sub-group of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum. The group work alongside the Young Mayor, supporting their fundraising efforts throughout the year.

In 2021 the Young Mayor sub-groups saw many of our active participants from 2020 return. The young people were ready for another year of fundraising and committed themselves to supporting new members.

In 2021 Labella Anum was elected to be the borough's 7th Young Mayor. Labella delivered an inspiring speech to her peers during an online session securing the majority of votes. Labella promised to dedicate herself to the role and champion their chosen cause.



Choosing the Young Mayor's charity

In 'normal' times the Young Mayor, and their supporting sub-group, would conduct a public youth vote to ascertain which charity they would fundraise for the year. However, the group decided to continue the good work started in 2020 to support Refuge. The young people were increasingly aware of the dangers of being in lockdown with your abuser and just how many women and children were being affected. The group felt passionate about continuing to recognise this need and commit themselves not only to fundraising for Refuge, but also raising awareness of unhealthy relationships and how to access support as a young person. Being in another national lockdown when the group first began, helped to sway this decision.



Continuing what we had already started

New members of the group were made aware of previous fundraising events and set about developing plans for something different in 2021. The group wanted to focus a lot of their energy on educating other young people so began with understanding the issue more fully themselves. Youth Workers led sessions from the Women's Aid Expect Respect Health Relationships toolkit. These sessions gave young people the opportunity to ask questions and explore the complexities of domestic abuse. In addition, we had a powerful experience of meeting with a survivor of domestic abuse who was able to share their experiences and discuss 'red flags' and how much domestic abuse can affect someone's life. The young people learnt so much from this session, it gave them a real insight into how hard it can be to live with an abusive partner and how to get help. The survivor's story was one of hope as she had overcome all of the barriers and is now living a happy life.

In addition to these sessions the group also brainstormed ideas for fundraising, looking for new and exciting ideas that had not been tried before. It was a challenge to do this, especially while sessions were still online, however the group created a list of possible events which have developed over the course of the year. Please see the following pages for our fundraising events and amount raised.

Fundraising

A Just Giving page was set up early in the year, ensuring funds would go directly to Refuge. The group shared the link throughout the year as well as holding specific events:

Non- uniform days:



£215.71



£367



£tbc



Planned for Jan 2022

Labella's Bake sale -

£25



Dagenham and Redbridge football match bucket shake- £280



A quiz night in partnership with her Worshipful the Mayor - £275



Movie night at the Vibe Youth Centre - £175

16 days of activism and Refuge 50 miles, 50 years challenge



The Young Mayor and BAD Youth Forum Members were proud to be part of the 16 Days of Activism in 2021. This follows White Ribbon Day, which is focused on raising awareness around violence against women.

The group created a range of inspirational quotes, along with messages of support for victims and survivors. The idea originated with a group member and grew to become our biggest event of the year.



The group worked in partnership with women from the We Rise Domestic Abuse hub to ensure messages were appropriate. The group walked from park to park, visiting 4 in total, all whilst walking 50 miles and collecting sponsorship. The group displayed 50 messages in each park, as recognition of this being Refuge's 50th Anniversary.

The event raised a total of **£263**

Total raised to date:

(Dec 2021)

£1699.71



The Leader and Young Mayor's video

The Leader and Young Mayor met on a monthly basis throughout the year. As part of their discussions they both agreed to participate in a music film to raise money for Refuge. In light of Refuge's 50th Anniversary, the Leader and Young Mayor decided to take inspiration from 50 years ago and have made a 70's themed music video. This has been filmed and will be available to view in January. We hope this will make a large amount of money as the previous video did, and we thank the Leader for his enthusiasm and passion to support the Young Mayor.

Raising awareness

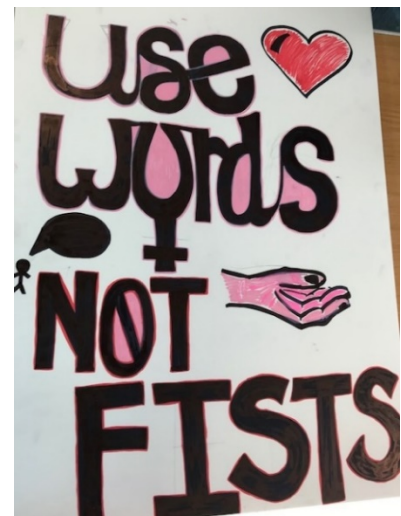
The group remained committed to raising awareness of domestic abuse amongst young people throughout the year. For some, this meant sharing what they had learnt in sessions and having a greater awareness of domestic abuse when discussing relationships with their peers.

As a group they learnt about the different types of abuse, how to spot the signs of an abusive relationship and where to get help. The group met with Jules Rogers, the Young Persons' Worker from Refuge, they discussed the low uptake of a workshop Jules offers to all secondary schools in the borough. At a later date, the group participated in the workshop themselves as part of a Forum session. Following this the group plan to speak with their Head Teachers to encourage them to invite Jules into their school for workshops across all year groups.



At the Youth Parade, the Young Mayor and the Youth Forum displayed placards they had created in sessions. The placards included messages of support, understanding and awareness of domestic abuse. The young people were proud to share their messages with residents.

Please see photos below.



TOGETHER
YOU DON'T
NEED TO
BE A
WOMAN
TO BE FEMINIST

Beaver
Right
LIVE
WARMY
WARRIOR
EDUCATE
STRONG
KIND
LOVE
BELIEVE
NIGHTY
EFFICIENT
ALLIES
capable

"Human rights are Women's Rights and Women's rights are human rights. Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely - and the right to be heard ♡ ♡"

~Hillary Rodham Clinton~

I am strong
I have Power



A GIRL SHOULD
BE TWO
THINGS SHE WANTS

LOVE IS NOT ABUSE

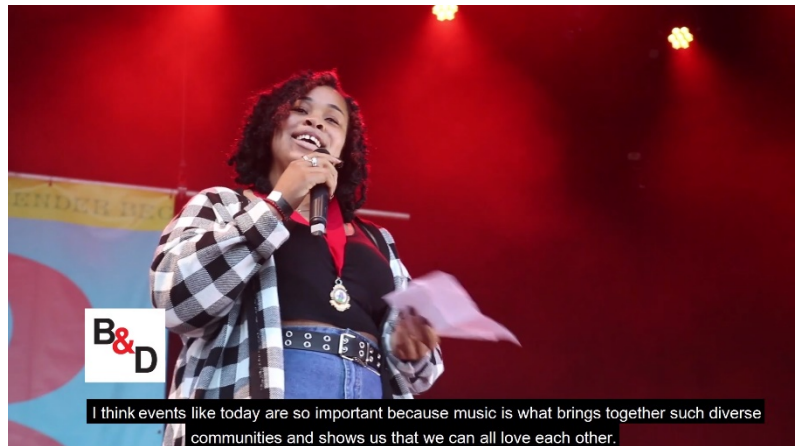
In addition to the Youth Parade, Labella was invited to a range of events throughout the year, many of which she was invited to speak at. Labella embraced her role as an ambassador for young people of the borough and ensured she raised awareness of domestic abuse at every opportunity.

The events Labella attended included:



Adanna Women's Group during Black History Month

Becontree 100 festival, Love Music, Hate Racism event



Facebook Live session with the Leader

Women's Empowerment Awards



Colin Pond
Scholarships
Awards
Ceremony



We Rise Domestic Abuse hub launch





African Showcase event in Barking



Remembrance
Sunday parade



Other events attended:

- Women's Empowerment Month launch video with Councillors;
- Holidays Activities and Food programme delivery at St. Peter's Catholic Primary School;
- Chaired a Young Women's vigil supported by youth workers in the wake of the Sarah Everard murder;
- Rotary Club event.

Young Inspectors Sub-group achievements 2021



B.A.O youth forum
IT'S YOUR CHOICE, USE YOUR VOICE

Introduction and background

The Young Inspectors group have worked closely with the C-Card Condom Distribution scheme for young people for 6 years providing quality assurance visits. This is part of the Council's strategy to tackle historically high teenage pregnancy rates. At the start of the Forum year, the country was still in a national lockdown and it was many months before we could ask young people to travel to pharmacies to carry out inspections. Coupled with this, pharmacies were exceptionally busy, so it was deemed inappropriate to attempt to carry out visits in the first half of the year. Subsequently all members of the Forum either joined the Community Action sub-group of the Young Mayor sub-group.



In August, during the school holidays when young people had more availability, all members were invited to be trained as a Young Inspector. 15 young people showed an interest and attended one of two available training dates. As in all other years, young people were trained to assess the friendliness of the staff and the sharing of information regarding how to use a condom safely and information about testing sites and deadlines.

Adapting the process

During the pandemic, pharmacies were unable to invite young people into small consultation rooms so had begun signing young people up in the main area of the pharmacy, using as much discretion as possible. This meant that condom demonstrations by a member of staff were also not possible. During the training process young people were made aware of these changes and told to expect a video demonstration link in its place. Young people were made aware of each of the procedures and factored these changes in when assessing how welcoming and friendly the pharmacy was.

Resuming inspections

Following their training in the Summer young people began inspecting pharmacies with varying degrees of success. Some pharmacies had performed really well during the lockdown periods, while others had fallen into bad habits of sub-standard registrations. The inspectors were quickly able to assess and feedback which pharmacies were working well and meeting the needs of young people, and those which were not. In many pharmacies, there was a clear need for re-training as a result of young people's feedback and the Programme Co-ordinator sharing this feedback with pharmacies. This is just one of the successes of the C-Card scheme, as without the inspections, it would not be clear what the training needs in the borough are.

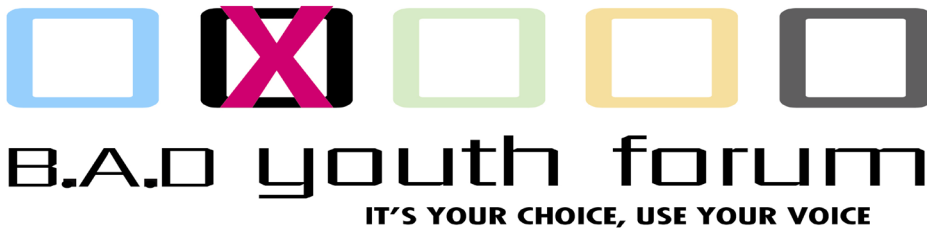
Inspections to date (December 2021)

46 inspections have been completed to date. Data around Barking and Dagenham's C-Card performance continue to demonstrate that it is the best performing programme in London, including during national lockdown periods where online registration systems were quickly developed and implemented. Hundreds of the borough's young people register and use the service every year and the borough's teenage pregnancy rates are currently the lowest they have ever been and no longer the highest in London.

Telephone inspections

In addition to the face to face inspections, young people have begun mystery shop telephone inspections. As with face to face inspections, this will assess how accessible the service is, how friendly staff are and how knowledgeable they are about sexual health services in the borough. A total of 22 have been completed so far, and the feedback is proving very useful for the scheme co-ordinator.

Additional Forum activities 2021



Engagement and Participation

During 2021 BAD Youth Forum members were involved in a range of additional activities and consultations. Some of these were during virtual sessions and others once we returned to face to face sessions.

Here is a summary with further details in the remainder of the report:

- A range of consultations
- Youth Independent Advisory Group meetings
- London Youth Assembly
- Street Doctor sessions- funded by the Community Safety Partnership
- Young Women's vigil
- Youth Parade
- Independent Scrutineer interviews
- East End Women's Museum project
- Safeguarding Comic book development session
- Safer Neighbourhood Board meetings
- Stubbers visit

Consultations

Youth Forum members have been involved in a range of consultations in 2021. These include:

- **Air quality consultation.** Colleagues from Care City met with Forum members to discuss the quality of air in their homes. The consultation focussed on whether young people worry about the quality of air, what do you people think makes it dirty, how they can make a difference to the air quality in their own homes and how to share messages about how to have better air quality amongst young people in the borough. Views the young people shared contributed to a report entitled 'Shaping places for healthier lives'.
- **Contextual Safeguarding consultation.** This discussion was led by a research assistant from University of Bedfordshire looking at what makes a contextual safeguarding conference better for young people who will be attending it, what powers young people should have as to who they want there and the content of the information letter sent to the young people to explain what's going on and the process.
- **East End Women's Museum (EEWM) consultation.** Members of the Forum worked in partnership with members of the children and young people in care and care leavers council Skittlz to deliver a consultation regarding the accessibility of the museum to young people, what will attract them to attend and what would they like to see inside. Views from this consultation were fed back to members of the EEWM board to help them shape the design and appeal of the museum.
- **Recycling consultation.** Emeke Okoroma, Waste Minimisation Manager, met with the Forum to deliver a workshop about waste minimisation and what young people can do to make a difference locally. Young people were able to ask questions and understand the impact poor choices makes on the environment. Young people found the workshop very insightful.
- **Safe Haven consultation.** This consultation was in two parts. The Community Safety Partnership were keen to gather young people's views about places they would feel safe to go to if they were out in the borough and were experiencing problems, or just felt unsafe. The group shared ideas and also discussed a logo design so people could easily identify a place that was part of the scheme.

Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) meeting

The purpose of the YIAG is to provide a regular forum for young people to meet, discuss and question the Police. In 2021 there were 3 YIAG meetings, the first 2 were virtual and the third was in person at the Vibe Youth Centre. There was a different theme for each meeting, these were:

- 1) Meeting with the **Territorial Support Group** who were setting up a youth engagement team amongst themselves to help reach out to young Londoners as a lot of their policing is often in volatile or violent areas. They are a specialist role and specialise in public order policing amongst other things such as surveillance and decoy operations as well as operational support to local officers. The officers met with Forum members to discuss their role and how they interact with the public.
- 2) **Q&A session.** This was an opportunity for young people to ask the youth engagement officer anything they would like to! The questions were varied with initial questions focusing on women's safety and what police are doing to make women feel safer in our borough. Other questions included safety in parks, hate crime, stop and search, reducing crime in schools, social media safety and domestic abuse and the police response during the lockdown periods.
- 3) **Stop and Search.** This whole session centred on discussions about how a stop and search should be conducted, what are young people's rights and what they should do if police are not following the correct procedure. The young people had a demonstration of the process and shared information on social media informing other young people of their rights.



London Youth Assembly (GLA)

Fiona Eagleson and Millie Kiseke were the representatives for 2021 for the GLA's London Youth Assembly. All meetings in 2021 remained virtual due to the pandemic. Both young people participated in sub-regional and full Assembly meetings throughout the year.

The young people enjoyed the experience and will remain in their roles for the 21/22 term to hopefully get the full experience of visiting City Hall.

Street Doctor sessions



Both Forum groups participated in Street Doctor sessions funded by the Community Safety Partnership. The 2 sessions delivered focussed on how to help someone who is unconscious and how to help someone who is bleeding. The sessions were interactive and engaging. They were

delivered in response to a growing number of casualties on the streets throughout London and aim to educate young people specifically about how to safely help someone in need. The young people really enjoyed the sessions and evaluated that they learnt a great deal and would feel confident to support someone in the future.



Young Women's vigil



Young women came together from a range of projects to discuss issues around women's safety and to show solidarity for those who have been affected. The event was set up in recognition of concerns young women expressed in youth groups and their desire to have a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings. The event was chaired by the Young Mayor, Labella. The meeting included spoken word pieces from Arc Theatre as well as practical tips for staying safe.

Youth Parade

17 young people represented the Forum at the Borough's Youth Parade.



Independent Scrutineer interviews

Young people from the Youth Forum, Skittlz (children and young people in care and care leavers council) and Youth Offending Team were invited to participate in interviews for a new Independent Scrutineer that would lead the Council's Safeguarding Children's Partnership. The young people worked together to develop questions that would challenge each of the candidates and ensure they secured the right person for the job from a young person's perspective. The young people developed confidence and interviewing skills as part of the work, and really enjoyed the opportunity to interview each of the candidates. Young people thoughtfully and impartially assessed each of the candidates and gave their feedback to the Head of Commissioning, who combined their feedback with the adult panel's feedback to ensure they offered the position to the best candidate. The young person's panel and adult panel agreed on who they felt was right for the position, the young people were very happy with the final result.

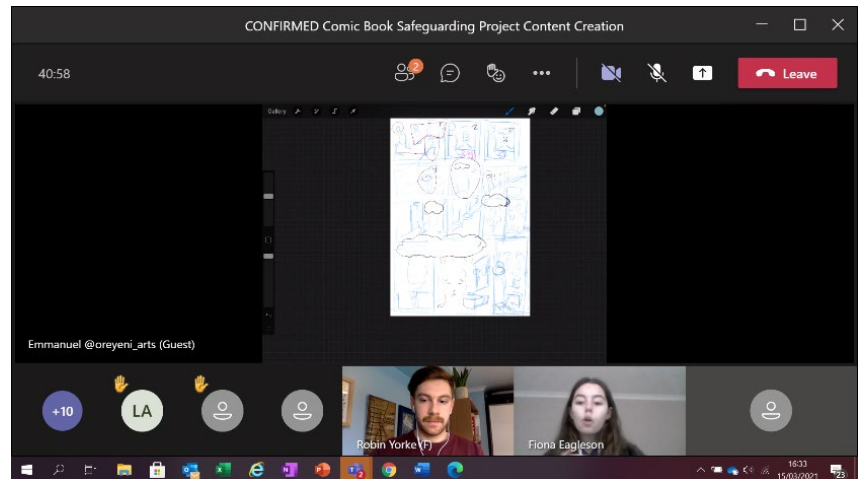
East End Women's Museum project

The museum's Community Engagement Lead approached the Forum to work in partnership. The museum were looking to gather the views of young people in Barking and Dagenham about how to ensure young people engage with the museum when it is opened in Barking in 2022. Rather than just conducting a consultation, young people were offered the opportunity to participate in leadership training to equip them with the necessary skills to lead the consultation themselves. Following the training, the young people finalised a set of questions to focus the consultation on. The consultation was conducted online to ensure everyone who wanted to attend were able to. Following the consultation, 3 young leaders attended a meeting with the museum board to share young people's feedback. This information will be combined with other young people's feedback and will help to shape the design of the museum. Young people are excited for the opening event!

Safeguarding Comic Book

In an effort to educate children and young people in B&D about safeguarding, artists from Green Shoes Arts were commissioned to make a safeguarding comic book. Youth Forum and Skittlz members were asked to contribute their thoughts about content and design. The session was interactive with artists sketching whilst young people discussed ideas. The comic book focussed on issues such as:

- Mental Health
- Witnessing Domestic Violence and Coercive control
- Drugs and Alcohol Awareness



Safer Neighbourhood Board meetings

In 2020 the Youth Forum committed to attending SNB meetings. This continued in 2021. The Chair and Deputy Chair have attended as many meetings as possible, interacting with discussions about community safety. Young people have enjoyed gaining a better understanding of how policing works in the borough and hearing from other professionals.



Stubbers Adventure Centre

In August 30 young people from the Forum were able to participate in a trip to Stubbers. This was originally booked for 2020, so everyone was really excited we could finally go! The group really enjoyed the day of team building and fun activities

