

Turning Wheels

There is a shortage of qualified skilled pedal cycle mechanics in London, for cyclists seeking routine maintenance and emergency repairs.

We propose to deliver training to local young people in pedal bike repairs and maintenance, which would include developing their personal skills as well as technical skills.

This offers young people the opportunity to achieve something educationally, increasing the opportunity for career routes into employment, self-employment and/or social enterprise for those with appropriate skills/qualifications.

Embedded in the course will be numeracy and literacy skills, health & safety in the workplace, and training in employability skills.



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Financial Support

Financial contributions to support our work are always appreciated, and will make it possible for us to reach more young people with more types of programmes.

While we currently receive funding from a couple of government based initiatives and charities, we hope to reach out to individuals and the business community to supplement our work. If you can help us, we want to hear from you.

You can help by sponsoring a specific activity, programme or equipment or if you wish to, or you can simply donate to the general fund that keeps Sparkplug going.

For example, personal protective equipment for riding trips; body armour for £10, boots or crash helmet £50, gloves £5. We are always in need of Off Road Motorbikes for our workshop and riding trips a new or second-hand Yamaha TTR125. A new bike could cost £4,099 or a good second-hand bike for £1,500.

Sponsoring an AQA workshop and riding session for a group of local young people who usually cannot access our day-to-day provision costs £1,191.

You can donate however or whatever you wish, by simply sending a cheque or postal order to the office or by going to our website and clicking 'support us' to donate online. If you wish to donate by BACS please contact the office.

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SPARKPLUG Igniting the energy of youth!



The Sparkplug Project

Sparkplug is an exciting and innovative project offering alternative education, training and youth work for young people in Islington and the neighbouring boroughs. We primarily employ the mediums of motorbikes and pedal bikes to address the social and educational needs of children and young people that may have been excluded from mainstream education as a result of emotional behaviour disorders (EBDs), learning difficulties and or disability (LDDs) or a variety of other reasons. Initially starting up as a youth engagement project to reduce the levels of bike related crimes in the local area some ten years ago, we have now developed our services and offer a more holistic approach to our work with a focus on partnership with statutory and voluntary service providers. We have tailored our services to focus on engagement, using a preventative approach to address the wide ranging and complex needs that the young people we work with present. We acknowledge that educational accreditation is not always enough to turn a young person's life around.

Sparkplug now provides accredited courses to local education authorities and social services in motorbike mechanics (OCN Level 1 and 2), youth diversion and training projects (Loose Wheel and

Dr Bike) using motorbikes and pedal bikes and bespoke courses and riding trips. We also offer ad hoc Assessment and Qualification Alliance courses (AQA) for motorbike and pedal bike maintenance and riding. As part of our work, we have entered into partnership with Prospex, a long established and respected youth work provider, who deliver pastoral support and intervention work with all young people who attend our courses regularly.

Open College Network (OCN) Accreditation

OCN Is a vocational qualification, delivered in units. We offer both Level 1 and 2 courses to young people. Courses take place at our new purpose built facility, which is fully equipped with the tools and equipment necessary to undertake the range of learning and tasks required. Each term young people who achieve the required standards of behaviour and commitment are rewarded with off road motorbike training and excursions at purpose built venues. These away days also encourage team building, communications skills and develop a real sense of responsibility whilst also providing useful and transferable motorbike riding skills.

Numeracy and literacy skills, health and safety in the workplace and practical mechanical skills are all embedded within course content and our tutors focus strongly on punctuality and behaviour with the aim of preparing them for further education. Sparkplug is proud of the many young people who have gone on to further education through our courses.

Sparkplug maintains strong links with Hackney Community College, Waltham Forest College and Lambeth College to provide young people with a pathway into further education.

Assessment and Qualification Alliance courses (AQA)

Sparkplug offers a variety of tailor made short courses and taster sessions in mechanics, motorbike riding,

pedal bike repair and maintenance, bike safety and pedal bike riding. These courses enhance personal development and employability skills and can be delivered on or off site as required. We have successfully delivered courses for Hackney Community College, Regents Vocational College, New River College, Connexions and LB Lambeth.

Dr Bike

Dr Bike Project (8-13) – is a six week programme for younger children, using bikes donated from the local police station. The young people will strip the bikes down and then rebuild them, at the same time learn about the repair & maintenance of pedal cycles, the importance of safety equipment, safety on the roads and cycling proficiency. At the end of the programme the young people will be allowed to keep the bikes.



Loose Wheel

Offering sessions on motorbike and pedal bike mechanics and maintenance aimed at young people on local estates and surrounding areas, providing mechanical and recreational activities, in partnership with other youth activity providers, social landlords, community police and other organisations.