

Active Citizenship: Market Square Project

An exciting project that involved our four Leading Edge partner schools, Lancaster City Council and the London based company Amenity Space, has ended successfully. Four Year 9 pupils from each school have worked on a project to revamp Lancaster's Market Square.

The pupils first met, last June, at the Square and identified those areas where they felt improvements could be made. They then researched the history of markets, learned about the population of Lancaster and how the Square is currently used. The group decided that they needed the help of a professional artist. Liaising with the Public Art and Regeneration Officer at Lancaster City Council, Suzanne Dimmock, the pupils were given a short list of artists. The pupils themselves chose Amenity Space, after carefully assessing the merits and suitability of the artists.

Lancaster City Council is currently developing proposals to revitalise some of Lancaster's public streets spaces, the "Square Roots" project, and the pupils were asked to give their views on the Market Square in the form of a brief for an artist who might be involved. On a wet, cool and hectic day in February, the pupils met the 2 artists from Amenity Space, Tony and Nicky, in the Market Square. Ideas were discussed, plans made and by lunchtime they had decided on making a video to present their ideas. Some pupils wrote the script and recorded it, some made a film of key parts of the Square and some interviewed local people. This was a film that expressed their views of the Square and what should be done to it. They have taken into consideration the uses of the Square and the Lancastrians who use it, but the video reflects their ideas and vision of what the Square could be and how it can revitalise the city.

The video will be part of the public consultation on the future of what is the heart of Lancaster and its community.