

Artswork has been fortunate in securing the Blagrove Trust's investment in our Portsmouth Creative Skills Programme which addresses employability and progression challenges that are experienced by young people in and leaving care. The Trust's investment has enabled us to enhance the programme and to also access the Trust's useful programme of peer exchange for funded organisations.

Artswork's Chair, Norinne Betjemann, and I were delighted to take part in the Blagrove Trust's annual partner event. It was a rich day spent with staff and Trustees from Blagrove and a diverse range of fundees and specialists, including young people. Together we reflected on who holds us accountable to our mission and, in particular, how we can enable youth leadership.

Powerful young voices added insight and expertise. These included Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson, Chair of the British Youth Council, who challenged us to dump the widely-held preconception that 'proper accountability' and 'youth led accountability' are two different things. Chloe Deakin of Beatfreaks gave us simple tools to transform how young people hold us to account. From an Artswork point of view, with our fundamental commitment to enabling children and young people to find their voice through arts and culture, we were delighted to hear that Chloe's answer to the question 'how do we get young people involved?' was 'through arts'.

By definition, all attendees are working to enable young people, especially those whose needs are greatest, to make a successful transition to adulthood. Starting from that commonality of commitment, we were facilitated by Practical Governance to interrogate our attitudes and approaches to genuinely enabling youth voice to drive our activities.

The day gave enormous opportunity to exchange ideas and practice with other organisations, to learn from each other and to forge new connections. We came away energised, enlightened and with a sense of excitement about how we can create even greater opportunities for youth voice to shape what we do.