

Society



Attacked: Canning Circus police station was firebombed.

'Will we ever know causes?'

HOW did the young people who took part in last week's workshop perceive the riots? Here is what they wrote:

"What annoyed me was that they tried to make it a young thing, but there were big men and women there, with babies - everyone was involved."

"It was shocking but much less shocking and with less impact that what the banking system has done in recent years."

"Why did the media focus on the young people so negatively and not acknowledge the cultural and age diversity?"

"Will we ever know the causes?"

"These issues should have

been dealt with a long time ago. They happened because of frustration, antagonised, hopelessness, overlooked aspirations, for political reasons."

"JJB was smashed to get trainers - so they could run faster away from the police."

"Fighting is a waste of time, if you have an issue go speak to the police, go have a debate safely, but don't fight, war is pointless."

"Students were honest, intelligent and they speak clearly about how to make Nottingham a better place from what they have heard, seen and know - especially on the nights of the riots."

'Reaching out to unheard'

Saira Lloyd and Rhiannon Slade decided to dig deep behind the causes of the riots. They explain how they did it to **Winnie Agbonlahor**

WHEN the riots unfolded in Nottingham, Saira Lloyd, 42, of The Park, was on holiday in Devon.

However thanks to social media, TV and the internet, she understood - despite her distance - what a huge impact the disturbances have had in the city.

"Something undecipherable was happening to our city," she said. "So when I came back, I wanted to try to understand what went on."

"I strongly felt we had to get under the skin of what happened across the country last year."

To organise an event and encourage a discussion, Mrs Lloyd, director of Synapse Arts - a not-for-profit organisation which supports the work of emerging artists in the East Midlands - contacted Nottingham artist Rhiannon Slade earlier this year.

"I knew Rhiannon from various social projects we had done in the past and I knew she had experience in getting people to talk about sensitive issues," Mrs Lloyd added.

Mrs Slade - a doctoral re-

searcher at Nottingham Trent University doing a PhD in conversation as art practice - promptly agreed to take part in the project and gathered a group of around 30 young people as well as panelists.

The result was an organised debate between young people and adults, which was held at the New Art Exchange in Gregory Boulevard, Hyson Green, last Thursday.

A film which captured different people's views on the riots was also shown at the event.

Mrs Slade said: "I believe that I was able to reach out to the unheard voices by functioning as a context provider, facilitating and devising opportunities for people to talk."

"I wasn't interrogating them, I wasn't taking a position of authority or casting judgement, I just wanted to create a project that would provide people with the chance to talk, in different spaces and environments where they feel comfortable to talk."

"It is so vital that their voices are mediated and I provide the context and safe places for con-



Getting together: New Art Exchange hosts talks on the riots.

versations to unfold."

Inspector Gurmit Kaur, policing inspector for Hyson Green, attended the meeting as an audience member.

She said: "This was a great opportunity for the community to reflect on the disorder in Nottingham last August, as well as discuss the perceived causes."

"It was also a chance to watch a video, which captured the thoughts of local young people from the affected areas, on how it made them feel and how we can all move forward together in a bid to prevent further incidents of this nature."

Skinder Hundal, chief executive at the New Art Exchange, said: "It was important to explore and understand the UK riots and impact on Nottingham communities with a wide representation of people and hear reflections and solutions."

"Clearly this was a good start to seeking solutions to create a better place to live, work and play. And the whole event was stimulated by Rhiannon's creative approach."

■ For more information, visit www.rhiannonslade.co.uk/practice/mediatedriots.

■ What's your view on the riots? Tweet me @WinniePonderosa

Win a chance to meet Foggy & Whit!

The Nottingham Post has teamed up with Crowne Plaza to offer three lucky readers the chance to win a pair of VIP tickets to see superbike legends Carl Fogarty and James Whitham.

They are back on the road for their third Givin' It Gas tour and are in Nottingham on 24th October at Crowne Plaza Nottingham.

The lucky winner and his/her guest will arrive ahead of the show, meet Carl and James for drinks, a chat and autographs.

They will also receive complimentary seats for the show plus dinner or lunch and overnight accommodation at the Crowne Plaza Nottingham. For more information, please visit www.foggyandwhit.co.uk



For your chance to win, answer the question below and text in as directed;

Question: Where was Carl Fogarty born?

- A: Leicester
- B: Blackburn
- C: Southampton

Text: NP followed by BORN, your answer (A,B or C) your NAME, HOUSE NUMBER and POSTCODE to 65100
Example: NP BORN C MARTIN JONES 10 NG1 5FS
Closing date: Midnight, 27th September 2012

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What we want

Young people aged 13 and 14 wrote the following about their hopes and aspirations at last week's event:

- "I want Nottingham to have more money for schools."
- "Nottingham should be the best place in England."
- "Nottingham to have better parks."
- "Be a music presenter or radio presenter."
- "Get money, get going, get a nice car and a nice house."
- "I want Nottingham to have more out-of-school activities."
- "Be famous."
- "To be a successful car mechanic."
- "Nottingham to be a safe place."
- "To have community centres to play."
- "Nottingham to have better football facilities."

Thoughts on film

[MEDIA]TED RIOTS is an eight-minute film made ahead of last week's event, which captures the thoughts of people about the riots.

These include pupils at Djanogly City Academy; Rebecca Matter, lecturer at Clarendon College; Shad Ali, community and social activist; and Kevin Spriggs, youth facilitator at charity Catch 22.

One student talks about what he saw on the night of the riots and another one said he felt "really upset and sad" about the situation.

The film was shown last week and will be shown again at Hyson Green Library on Saturday from 12pm.

Much more to the riots than simply 'jobs and thugs'

First person

David Buckingham, professor of communication and media studies at Loughborough University, who was on the panel at the event



I HAVE done some research into last year's riots and how they were reported in the media, especially the tabloids.

Young people are very badly portrayed and were, as part of the riots coverage, referred to as "jobs and thugs".

This kind of language was used in many national tabloids, which fits in well with a bigger pattern of how young people are represented.

This leads people to be fearful of the young.

I think guidelines should be in place for the media regarding their portrayal of young people.

The reporting of the riots is also an example of how very simplistic arguments get made about the effects of the media.

We need to have a serious discussion about the events.

I've also looked into various people's ideas about the causes of the riots and, again, very simplistic arguments have been made.

One view was put forward

by Daily Mail columnist Max Hastings, who described the rioters as "essentially wild beasts", who "respond only to instinctive animal impulses - to eat and drink, have sex, seize or destroy the accessible property of others".

Events like this have unfolded and everybody was voicing their instant top-of-their-heads explanations as to why things have happened. But these are complicated events with complicated causes.

The reasons why people got involved are very diverse.

There have been some interesting documentaries made, such as the BBC's My Child the Rioter, which is a step in the right direction.

But we need to have a serious investigation into why people did what they did.

And I think journalists could play a key role in this.

■ Mr Buckingham's thoughts on the riots are summarised in his article There's a Riot Going On, published in The Media Magazine in December last year.