

# OUR CHILDREN, OUR FUTURE

## Photo-essay

September 2006



We Research It Ltd  
The Office  
St Mary's Crescent  
Uttoxeter  
Staffs ST14 7BH  
01889 564739  
[helen@weresearchit.co.uk](mailto:helen@weresearchit.co.uk)



Bushbury Triangle Children's Centre  
Stanley Road  
Bushbury  
Wolverhampton WV10 9EL

01902 735839  
[Christine.Richardson@heantun.co.uk](mailto:Christine.Richardson@heantun.co.uk)

## **Contents**

Introduction	1
Education: Books and Libraries	2
Education: Computers	5
Education: Nursery Schools	6
Parent and Family Support	8
Family Friendly Services	10
Childcare and Money	15
Childcare and Play	17
Childcare and Toys	19
Childcare and Safety	20
Health and Food	21
Health and Gardens	23
Health and Parks	26
Health and Activities for Older Children	28
Health and Environmental Issues	29
Health and Litter	30
Health and Graffiti	31
Health and Poor Maintenance	32
Health and Other Environmental Issues	33
Health Services	36
Special Needs	36
Employment and Training	37
Information	38
Conclusion	39
Endnote	41

## **Introduction**

A photo-essay is a way of telling a story using photos and other artwork. This story tells what Bushbury's children and adults think about some of the important things in their lives.

Between April and June 2006, over 200 children and around 40 adults from the Bushbury area gave their opinions by taking and discussing photos, drawing and talking about pictures, making posters, answering questionnaires, putting wishes on a wish tree, and giving their views on video in the Big Bothered Diary Room.

Most of the children became involved through Bushbury Triangle Neighbourhood Nursery, Bushbury Nursery School, Northwood Park Primary School or Northcote Secondary School. Some of the adults were parents or carers of children at these nurseries and schools, and some others were members of two BIBS breastfeeding support groups. Other children and adults gave their views at a fun day in Stanley Road on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

The photos in this photo-essay were all taken by children and adults who live in and around Bushbury. The pictures and posters were made by children in Bushbury.

Words in italics in boxes were spoken or written by children or adults from the Bushbury area.

(Please note: if there is a picture and some words in italics in a box on the same page, they are not necessarily by the same person.)

Not everything in this photo-essay is important to everyone.

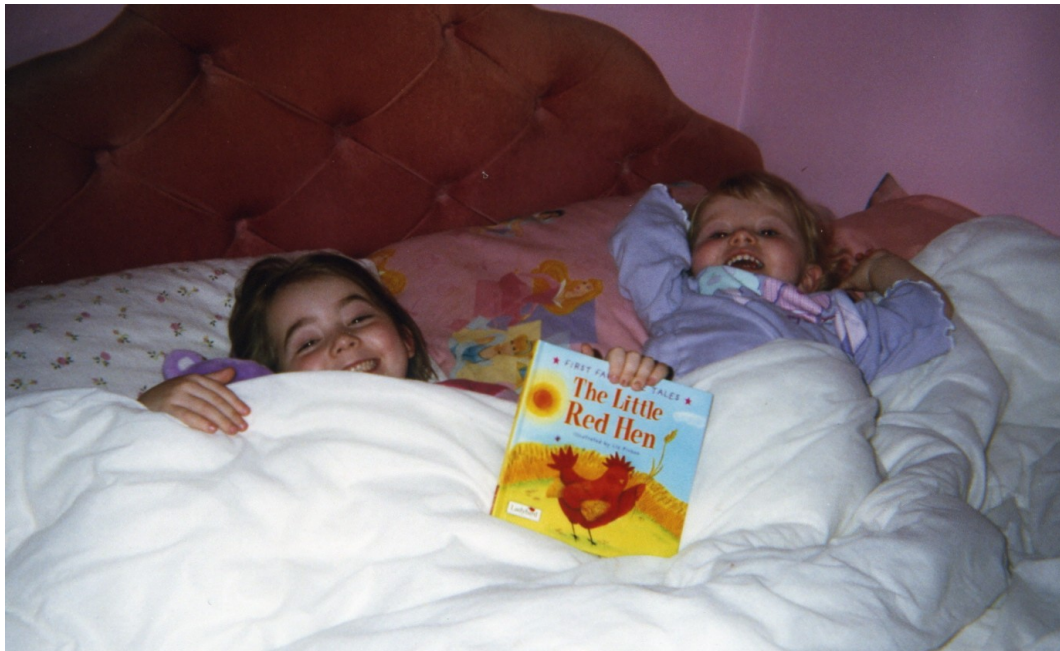
What is important to you?

## Education: Books And Libraries

Children enjoy reading books.



Primary school pupil:  
*I was reading a book*



They like the stories.



Children enjoy going to the library.



So do some adults.

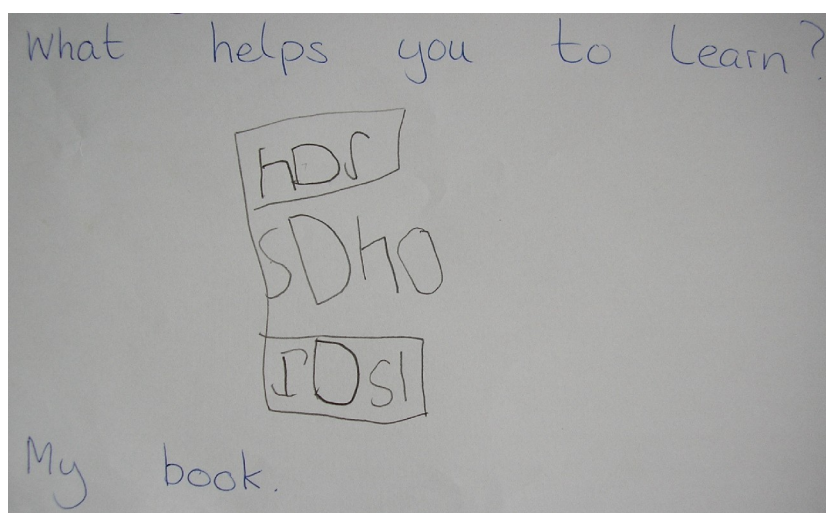
Adult: *It is a help because I get books out there, even though I've had two other children I still get books out to read up on the different stages of what they go through, and sleep and everything, and baby meals as well because everything's changed in the last five years, recipe ideas of what to give them. And then just to read books for leisure, when I get time.*

Adult: *I love the library. I can just go there and go on computers for ages, and it doesn't cost hardly anything. I get Aaron's quiet time reading books from there, you can have them for a few weeks and then change them. I like reading the magazines. For the children, it's brilliant, everything you want you can find.*

Children know that books can help them learn.



Nursery  
school  
pupil:  
*Books  
make me  
happy. I  
can count  
the owls.*





## Education: Computers

Adults use computers for finding things out, shopping, and keeping in touch with people.



Adult: *It's been great for information purposes, and about breastfeeding. And keeping in touch with people as well. Email. I use it for shopping when I've got both of them home, I hate going shopping with Sam, it's not so bad when it's just Jack. Things like eBay as well, I got his pushchair off eBay.*

Children use computers to play games. They are learning at the same time: about how to use computers, and practising their reading.



Primary school pupil: *My friend used to have a computer but now she has a laptop. I do like normal laptops like you can play CDs, and I love putting game CDs, like going on the Sims, I do like the Sims.*

## **Education: Nursery Schools**

Nursery schools look after young children and help them to learn.



Children enjoy themselves at nursery. They learn things too.

People who use the nursery schools in and around Bushbury like them very much.

*Adult: That's this nursery. The whole feel of it, it's just, it's warm and it's welcoming, you feel like part of the family. The support, I wouldn't have managed, they've been fantastic, and Aaron just thrives here. It's just so laid back, it's completely different to some different nurseries. And you can pop in any time if you've got a problem.*

Parents can go to work or do other things while their children are at nursery.



*Adult: You know they're in a nice safe secure place being looked after so you can go out and earn money and give them a better life, that's what the nursery's there for. She's settled in really well, probably about the first two days she cried, the first day she cried and the second day they said she screamed, then she settled in fine, and now she's crawling all over the place, they hear her scream and talk and laugh and even sing sometimes, then when you take her home, she's had a nice full day and played, she just wants to go to sleep, she's tired. The good thing about nursery is it tires her out as well, gives me more peace in the evenings 'cos she's knackered.*



## Parent and Family Support

People in families need support from each other, from their friends, and from professionals like nursery workers and health visitors.

*Adult: It helps to have somewhere to go, to get out of the house, with people to talk to to get advice so you don't feel completely alone with it. Outside support and outside the family, people who aren't related have other ideas and do things differently, you can pick up ideas from them and swap ideas.*

Parents particularly value the support of other parents.



Some mums say that dads are very helpful.



Older children can be very helpful in looking after younger children.



Primary school pupil:  
*I change a nappy  
sometimes – only the  
wet ones – I give him  
his bottle, sometimes  
I get him to sleep in  
his cot. I bring him  
down in the morning  
from his cot  
sometimes, I've  
undressed him and  
put his pyjamas on,  
and put him in his  
little toy thing. I've  
been learning how to  
burp him and sit him  
up. I do enjoy it.*

Grandparents are also very helpful and will often look after their grandchildren to give parents a break.



Adult: *When we go  
down to London  
Nita's parents look  
after him for a day  
or two to give us a  
break.*



## Family Friendly Services

People in families appreciate places like shops and pubs that are family friendly.

Adult: *Bentley Bridge shopping centre is a good example in the local area, it's well thought out in terms of access and safety.*





Family friendly transport is also very important to families. Some have cars.



Adult: *Honestly I could not live without a car as a parent, I don't know how people do it. It helps me ferry them around, to and from nurseries, anywhere we go it's so much easier with a car. I couldn't do buses. I went to go into town with her but all the buses were double-deckers or single deckers with steps, no low buses where you could get on, and the drivers wouldn't let me get on with the pushchair, so I ended up getting a taxi. With the car you just do what you're doing, I do everything in this car, I couldn't live without it. And we can do more things, go more places in the car, you don't have to depend on timetables and public transport. Felix loves trips to the zoos or farms in that car.*

But parking safely can be difficult, especially when people without children take the parent-and-baby parking spaces.



Other people use public transport.



Adult: *Because I don't drive everywhere I go is by tram or bus. She loves going on trams, it's quite exciting. And they're child-friendly. Because now we've got these new buses, they all have the buggy places, so the buses and the trams are.*

It is especially important for families with younger children to have places where pushchairs can go easily and safely.









*Adult: That's something I find very helpful, a nappy changing unit and toilet in one. If they're separate, do you leave your pushchair outside and take the baby in, how do you go to the toilet at the same time? So that's quite helpful. Because it can accommodate disabled people as well, the width of the door is very helpful because you can get your pushchair through easily.*

## **Childcare and Money**

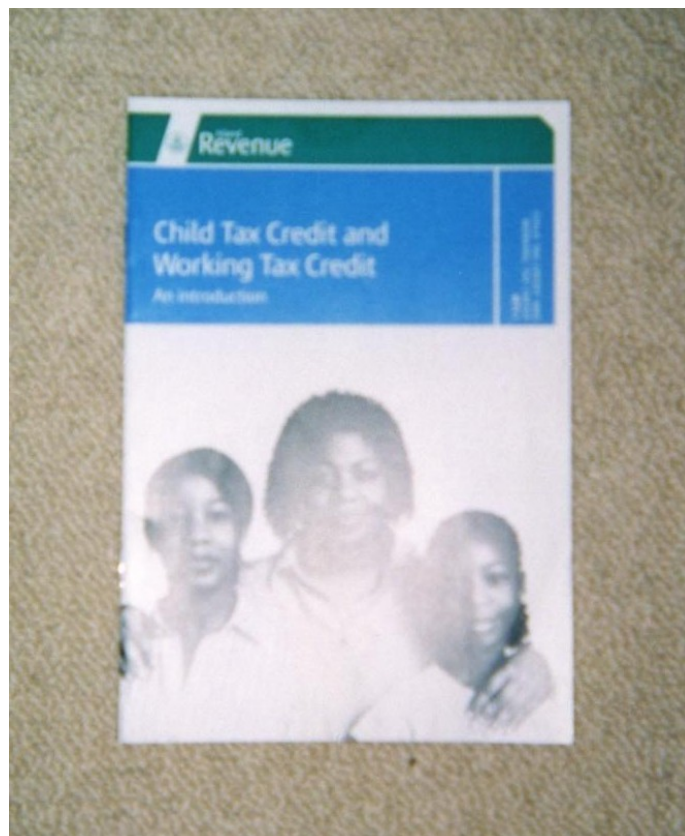
Childcare, like in nurseries, can be expensive. For some people it is not worth going to work to earn money because it will all be spent on childcare.

*Adult: What I would earn in my job I'd pay into childcare so it's not even worth it.*

For other people it is worth it.

*Adult: Going to work you get all the benefits as well, working tax credit and that, you're a lot better off working even 16 hours than not working at all. If I didn't go to work I wouldn't be able to afford it, so you can help with getting people into work, and I think that is a good thing, because it opens up so many doors when you do work and you get help in other ways as well, I get something towards childcare, I don't get too much but every bit helps.*

Tax credits can be helpful for some families.



In other families grandparents may look after children so that parents can go to work.





## **Childcare and Play**

Play is important to everyone, adults as well as children.

*Adult: I've always been young at heart, I always play daft with the children, do silly things and games... they love dressing up, she's got a lot of these play dresses, her sister has, Cinderella and all of those, we make a story up about it and she pretends to be the characters. Because I have to look after her sister as well when I'm on holiday, we always go out for a walk and play on the park.*

Young children learn a lot from playing.



Any type of childcare has to include play.





## Childcare and Toys

Toys are useful for play and learning.



Any type of childcare has to include toys.



## Childcare and Safety

Children's safety is extremely important to parents.



Many people help to make sure that children are safe.





## **Health and Food**

Many parents and children know about the importance of healthy eating. This begins with breastfeeding and breast milk.



Then comes the move to solid food.

Adult: *He's got his favourites, he likes spicy lentils and chicken rogan josh. Cauliflower cheese he loves. It tends to be for the taste now, he's gone through the bland phase with the mashed potato and baby rice, he likes more flavour now. And lots of fruit with his Weetabix, especially mangoes. I think his first solid food was bananas, I think it's still his favourite, they will smear everywhere.*



Nursery  
school  
pupil: *I  
like  
apples,  
oranges,  
pears and  
bananas.*



## **Health and Gardens**

Gardens and allotments can help with healthy eating by providing fresh fruit and vegetables.



Gardens are educational for children too.



Primary school pupil: *I am playing in the garden and I saw a caterpillar which turned into a butterfly.*

Gardens can also be safe spaces for children to exercise and play.







Primary school pupil: *I play in the garden with my sister*

## Health and Parks

Parks can be good places for children and adults to exercise and play.





There are lots of parks and open spaces in Bushbury and Wolverhampton.



Northcote Farm Country Park has just won a national award!



## **Health and Activities for Older Children**

Older children need things to do to keep them healthy, learning, and interested in life. They particularly like sport and creative activities.





## Health and Environmental Issues

A good environment helps people to live longer and be more healthy. Children from Northcote School are very concerned about the environment in and around Bushbury. They are most worried about litter, graffiti, and poor maintenance. They have made some posters to explain what they like about the area and what they think needs to be changed.





## Health and Litter



### Litter, litter, Litter

*Litter is every where in Bushbury, we don't like it, it is not nice living among crisp packets.*



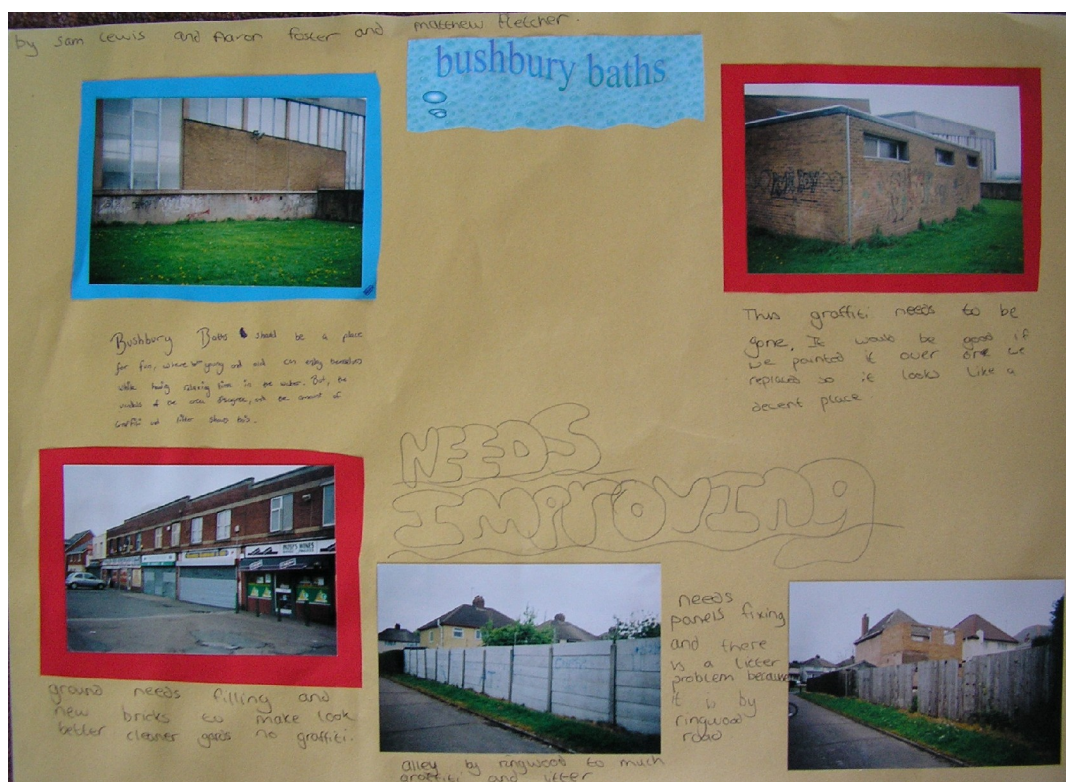
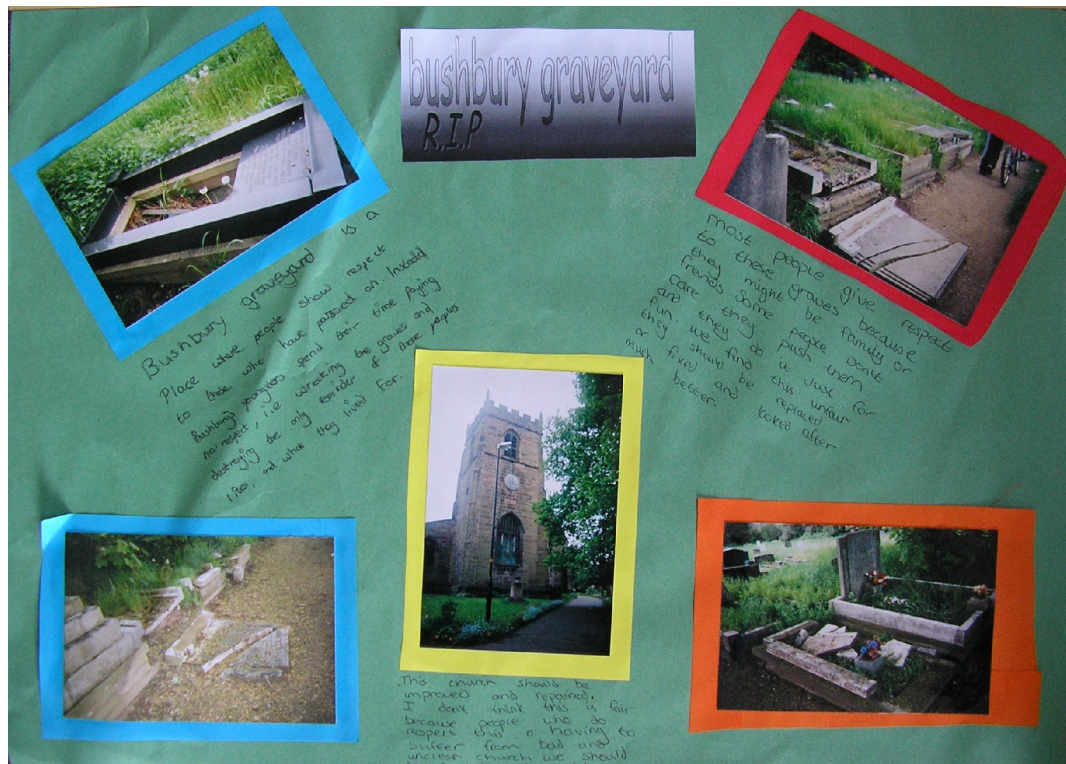
*Litter is also very common in our community; the cause of this is there are hardly any bins the bins we have got are not that good people wreck our bins, steal our bins and also put there rubbish in and we have no room to put our rubbish in so that's why we litter.*

## Health and Graffiti





## Health and Poor Maintenance





## Health and Other Environmental Issues

Other issues that worry the children from Northcote School are fly tipping (which means dumping large items of rubbish such as car tyres, furniture, household appliances etc), dog fouling, damage to electric wires in public places, and damage to street furniture.





### Dirty Dog Mess

*Everybody knows dog mess is foul. In Bushbury you can't walk a street without seeing some it's disgusting.*

### LOOSE ELECTRIC WIRES

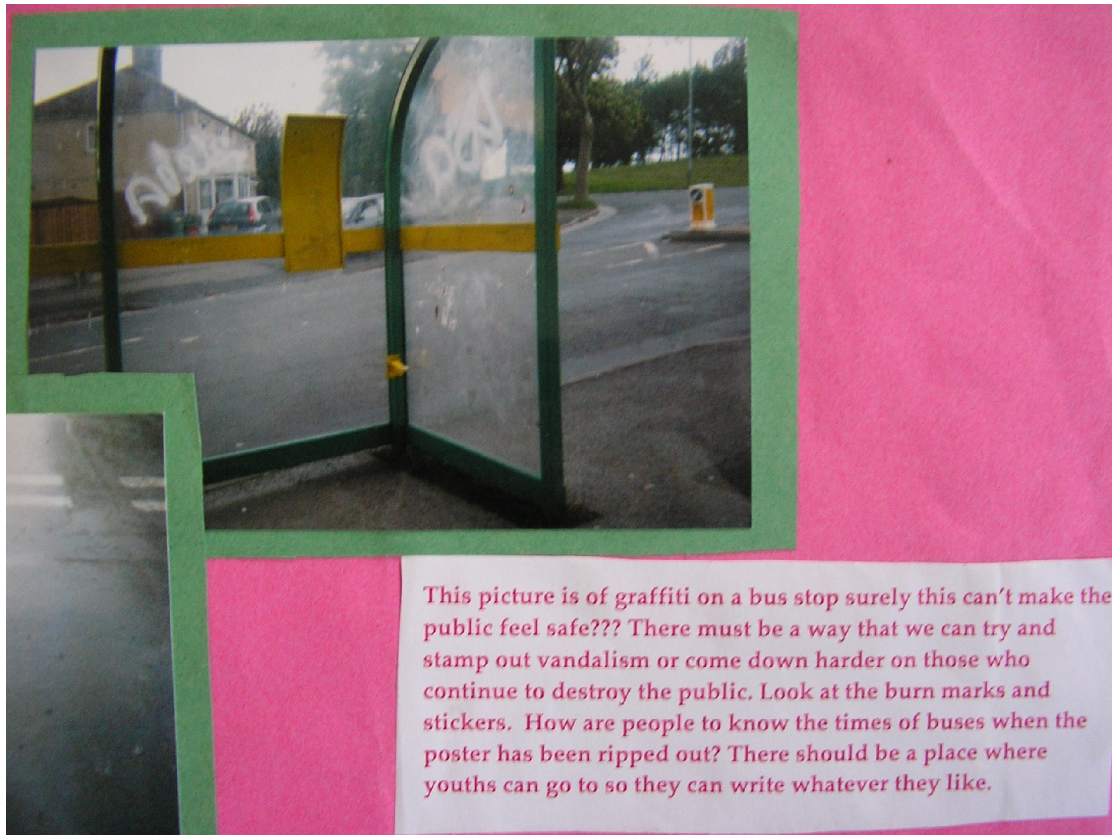
*Loose electrical wires are really dangerous especially when it is raining. It could cause a fire if it explodes. Children can reach them and it could cause to an electrocution which could cause to death.*

1



*This is vandalism to our facilities. Someone has tried to remove the pole to let in cars and other vehicles. Vandalism is very common in our area and it is ruining our community*





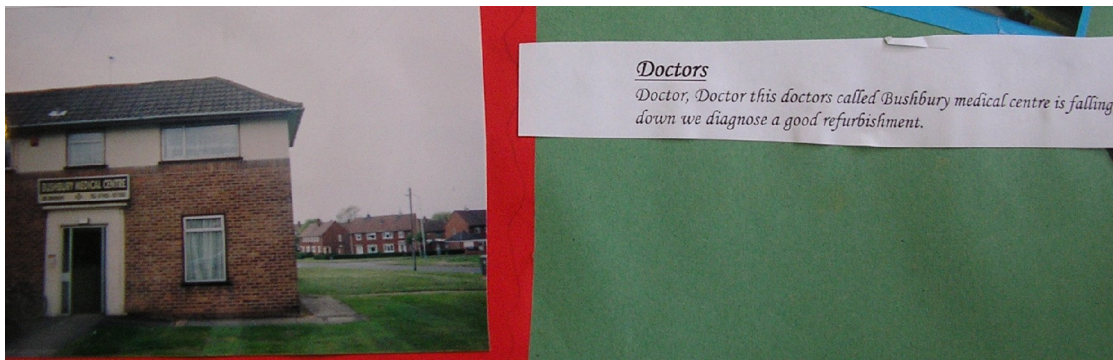
This picture is of graffiti on a bus stop surely this can't make the public feel safe??? There must be a way that we can try and stamp out vandalism or come down harder on those who continue to destroy the public. Look at the burn marks and stickers. How are people to know the times of buses when the poster has been ripped out? There should be a place where youths can go to so they can write whatever they like.

## **Health Services**

All adults and children in Bushbury use the health services: the doctor, the dentist, the hospital, health visitors, midwives and so on. Some people are happy with the health services they have used.



Others have criticisms to make.



### Doctors

*Doctor, Doctor this doctors called 'Bushbury medical centre' is falling down we diagnose a good refurbishment.*

## **Special Needs**

Some adults and children in Bushbury have special needs such as a physical disability, a learning disability or an illness like diabetes or asthma. These people may need extra help at times.

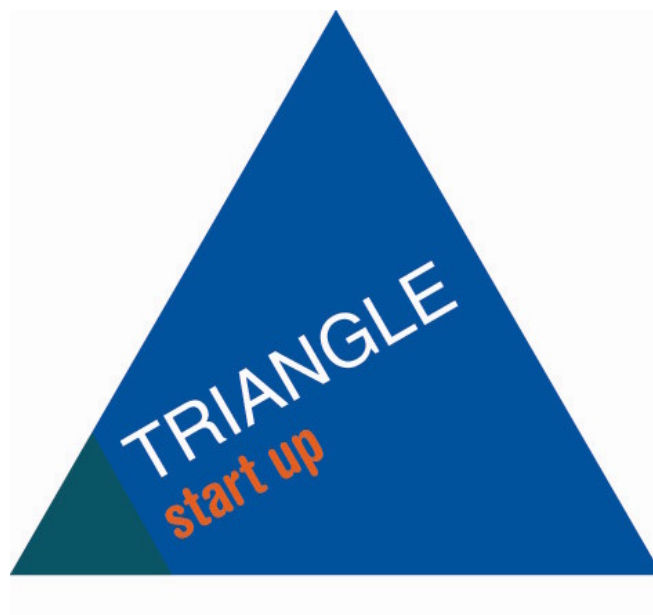


## Employment and Training

People in Bushbury's schools are working hard and the pupils show good rates of achievement.



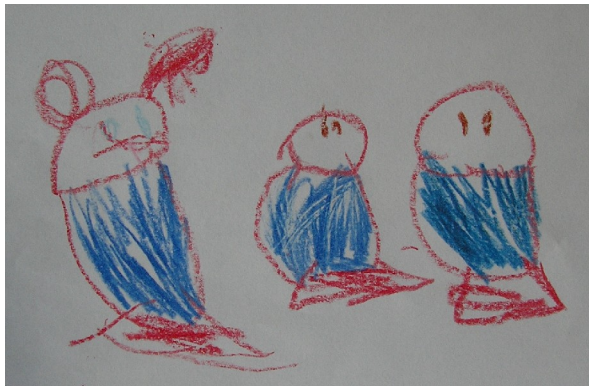
But some adults weren't so lucky when they were at school. There is a high level of unemployment in Bushbury. The new Start Up Project will help people who need training and work.





## Information

People need information about all sorts of things. The best way to get information is from other people.



Primary  
school pupil:  
*Listening  
helps me  
learn.*



Primary  
school pupil:  
*Miss Sanders  
helps me.*

## Conclusion

Some people in Bushbury look beyond the local area for things to do for themselves and their children.



Bushbury people have wide horizons.





The children in Bushbury today have big ideas about what they want to be when they grow up. They want to be doctors and nurses, vets and tree surgeons, firefighters and pilots, teachers, dancers and mechanics – among other things. The Children's Centre, Northwood Park Primary School and Northcote Secondary School are working with families to help Bushbury's children reach the heights they dream of.





## **Endnote**

This photo-essay presents the findings of research done in Bushbury in the spring and early summer of 2006. It gives the views of adults and children living in the Bushbury area who agreed to take part in the research.

A formal research report has been written for the Bushbury Children's Centre steering group with some suggestions about how to make things better in Bushbury. If you would like to look at the formal research report, you can get a copy from Christine Richardson at the Children's Centre on 01902 735839 or by email on [Christine.Richardson@heantun.co.uk](mailto:Christine.Richardson@heantun.co.uk).