

APRIL 2025

# THE PLAYFUL ACTIVISM TOOLBOX 2025 EVALUATION PACK

DEVELOPING OUR APPROACH, DEEPENING OUR IMPACT



# WHAT IS THE PLAYFUL ACTIVISM TOOLBOX?

The Playful Activism Toolbox is a youth climate advocacy project, by Toby Peach and Mel Frances, developed with Coney and Greenpeace. The aim of it is to empower secondary school students to develop resilience to eco-anxiety, and support them to take the lead in crafting meaningful climate actions at their school over **eight sessions**. The experience arrives in classrooms as an escape room-style box with locks, codes and secret compartments, leading to an interactive online platform. Together with a combination of teacher and external artist-led activities, students embark on a dynamic learning experience rooted in Coney's distinctive practice - Playful Activism.



From its initial pilot in 3 schools in Tower Hamlets in 2023, we have gathered detailed feedback from a wide range of students and teachers.

In 2024/25, we analysed all our evaluation data and together with our partners at Greenpeace, developed the project to deepen its impact. This focussed on new ways to support teachers to co-facilitate the sessions alongside our online platform, developing the game formats of the activities and implementing new tools to further the impact participating students could have on their communities. In January 2025, we released this second pilot into two schools in the borough and are thrilled to share the results below.

*"They were really empowered by the idea that they could enact change. Students from last year (Y9) have now started their own activism club which is going to start next half term - I just found this out and I think it's an amazing legacy!"*

**- Teacher at Swanlea School**

# 2025 DELIVERY

## Autumn term - September-December 2024

- The team worked with Greenpeace to review the content of the experience, and to develop the activities and project materials to better support students and teachers.
- The Project Director Toby Peach, worked with an access consultant, Anne Langford, to ensure there were clear pathways for teachers to support students with differing needs in their classrooms.
- Designer Kirsty Harris, worked in parallel developing the physical box to ensure it was aesthetically exciting, environmentally sustainable, cost effective at scale, and easily reusable for schools to use for years to come.
- Producer Eliza Cass, worked to recruit 2 local schools wanting to test this pilot with their groups; Swanlea School (Yr 12) and Wapping High (Yr 8).

## Spring term - January - March 2025

- We held an in-person CPD session taking 3 teachers through the beats of the experience, upskilling them in hybrid digital delivery and sharing playful techniques to spark conversations on the climate emergency.
- 3 Boxes were delivered to the 2 schools in Tower Hamlets - 2 to Wapping High and 1 to Swanlea.
- Accompanying assets were created and delivered alongside the boxes including a detailed teacher pack.
- The Toolbox was then played in 3 classrooms over 8 weeks across the spring. Their actions were delivered in their schools in March.
- Detailed feedback was gathered from participating schools.
- Planning and prospecting for 25/26 began!
- A video evaluation was created with reflections from the 2025 pilot teachers. You can watch it [here](#).



# THE PLAYFUL ACTIVISM TOOLBOX 2025 IN NUMBERS

- We engaged 3 groups across 2 schools.
- At Swanlea we reached a group of 10 sixth form students.
- At Wapping we reached 2 groups of 21 year 8 students. We have reached 52 students in total, across the 2 schools.
- Each group undertook 8 sessions, and delivered 3 different pieces of playful activism to their school communities.
- 78% of surveyed students reported an increase in their knowledge of the climate and ecological crisis.
- 78% of surveyed students reported an increase in the power they felt to make change in the climate and ecological crisis.
- 75% of surveyed students would recommend the Playful Activism Toolbox to their peers.

## THIS YEAR'S PLAYFUL ACTIONS IN TOWER HAMLETS

Playful activism is an accessible and intuitive tool young people can use to make lasting change in their communities. Focussed on the idea that using your voice to change a system for the better is a gift to that system and the people involved - students are invited to design their actions with people and communities in mind.

**1)** The first group of Wapping High students focussed on ocean health and their schools' responsibility to recycle waste responsibly. They delivered an assembly to the headteacher with posters and ways to update the bin designs across the school.

*"After my presentation, I feel I made a difference"*

*- Student at Wapping High*

**2)** The second group of Wapping High students explored the issue of food waste; both its contribution to the greenhouse effect when disposed of improperly, and the enormous amounts of natural resources that then go into producing more. They decided to deliver their 'gift' to the dinner team to begin a conversation on options to cut down on food waste in the preparation of their school meals.



**3)** Swanlea students focussed on the lack of knowledge amongst their peers about their roles and agency within the climate crisis. They lobbied their head of year, appealing to his love of football and team sports, with a framed photograph, poem and presentation with an ask to embed climate learning into their curriculum.

*"My favourite part was designing the delivery and actively finding a solution."*

**- Student at Swanlea School**

*"The best moments are the 'lightbulb' moments, where students all of a sudden realise they have been doing something fun which is actually making a big and complex point"*

**- Teacher at Swanlea School**



# PREVIOUS STUDENT ACTIONS

## 2023 - Swanlea School - Operation Strawberry Sweets

After learning about Melati and Isabel Wijsen's work on single use plastics, students at Swanlea School created a systems map of their school's waste disposal and used it to (1) convince their Deputy Headteacher to lobby local food packaging waste services to transform their disposal model, and (2) encourage sharing their progress with other local schools towards borough-wide collaboration and change.

## 2023 - Mulberry Girls Schools - Codename: Sick

Students at Mulberry School for Girls tackled their school's consumption of fast fashion by creating an on-campus swap shop building a sustainable student-led model for years to

# 2025 STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

## Ali, Wapping High

**How much knowledge do you think you have about the climate and ecological crisis?**

Before: 3/10

After: 8/10

*"Because my knowledge has expanded"*

**How much power do you think you have to change anything about the climate and ecological crisis?**

Before: 1/10

After: 8/10

*"[Because] after the presentation, I feel we made a difference"*

## Marqam, Swanlea

**How much knowledge do you think you have about the climate and ecological crisis?**

Before: 4/10

After: 9/10

*"Because [before] my only climate knowledge came from geography, but now I have gained more information from the activism club."*

**How much power do you feel you have to change anything about the climate and ecological crisis?**

Before: 5/10 - "I'm young and inexperienced"

After: 9/10

*"I already made a change to the school system about climate change."*



## TEACHERS SAID...

*"The playful activism toolbox has been an essential part of my students' last term and a half. It has brought them together as a group and honed their ability to work as a team. Students are now interested and involved with climate change through what some may consider simple play (if they had never experienced it themselves). It was an incredible experience shared by all involved here at Wapping High School.*

*- Jordan Collier, Teacher at Wapping High*

*"I've been involved with Coneu projects for the last 3 years. Their work is so creative, fun and engaging and I couldn't recommend them enough. They have packaged everything up into one easy to understand and deliver programme that you can pick up and run with so easily as a busy teacher. I especially love this project as the prep work needed for teachers is so small, but the interactivity and reward is so great each session it looks like you've spent ages planning it yourself! They have worked out a really unique way to capture young people in a really complex issue and break it down in a way which is bite-sized and manageable each week. Without even realising it, the students have deconstructed huge concepts and ideas by the end of every session."*

*- Rebecca Barker, Teacher at Swanlea*

## STUDENTS SAID...

*"It was a great experience, I hope you share this powerful yet fun experience and all for a good cause."*

*- Student at Swanlea School*

*"I found this both useful and fun and I feel it made my experience in learning about climate issues fun."*

*- Student at Swanlea School*

*"My favourite part was working together and thinking of what to do to convince our old head of year to include more information about activism and the climate in our personal development lessons."*

*- Student at Swanlea School*

*"As a student, I can voice out my opinions to those who can physically do something."*

*- Student at Swanlea School*

*"I would recommend other schools to do the Playful Activism Toolbox because it is a very fun experience."*

*- Student at Swanlea School*

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE PLAYFUL ACTIVISM TOOLBOX?

- The success of this delivery has strengthened our belief in the impact of this project. We're now confident we can bring the Toolbox to an even larger number of students in 2025/26.
- This project was originally developed by Toby Peach and Mel Frances with a team of brilliant freelance artists under Coney - an arts and social change charity in Tower Hamlets. Coney is set to close its doors this year, but we're thrilled the Toolbox will continue with the same team under a new venture, MOD, a collection of games & experience designers passionate about Playful Activism. Under this new umbrella the team is now seeking funding and distribution partners to produce more Toolboxes and significantly widen our impact.
- If you have questions or are interested in supporting us to take this next step, please contact: [info@modgames.co.uk](mailto:info@modgames.co.uk).





## CREATIVE TEAM

*Writers - Toby Peach & Mel Frances*

*Producers - Eliza Cass & Emily Davis*

*Access Consultant - Anne Langford*

*Actor - Rebekah Murrell*

*Filmmakers - DMLK Video*

*Designer - Kirsty Harris*

*Graphic Designer - Jessica Sanders*

*Programmer - Suzanna Hurst*

*Content consultants - Hannah Davey & Sandra Ata (Greenpeace)*

*All image credits - Ross Kernahan*

**A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS  
PARTNERS & FUNDERS:**

8

