

## CASE STUDY

### The Lilac & Whites Majorette Troupe

The Lilac and Whites Majorette Troupe in Dagenham received £2,600 from East London Community Foundation under the Local Network Fund to help meet the cost of vital equipment and costumes.

The members of Lilac & Whites are mostly from the Village ward in Dagenham. The area faces high levels of deprivation in education, unemployment and child poverty. Attainment levels at all Key Stages are significantly lower than in other parts of the Borough and in turn, considerably below the national average.

The majority of the children are from lone-parent families who find it difficult to meet the cost of expensive costumes, which are essential if a Troupe is able to compete. The troupe is managed by local mothers, all volunteers, who have had a chance to display organisational, management and administrative skills they never knew they had.

Cheyl Rex (Fundraiser) explained: *“Raising the money has allowed us to compete all over the country and meant so much to all of the girls and to all the Mums. It has boosted the girls’ confidence and has helped us as parents to meet, make friends and get involved locally.... Personally I have gained a lot from being involved and have learned how to form a group and committee, and lots about fundraising!”*

The troupe has 27 members and over 25 volunteers - all from the local area; through attending Lilac & Whites members have given the opportunity to interact with other young people and adults and to build teamwork and social skills. Parents recognise that participation in the troupe has built children’s general confidence and their confidence and participation at school.

Georgia (12) said, *“I’ve been coming here for 5 years. I used to be quite shy and it has helped me make a lot of new friends. I’ve got my bronze award and I am now going on to silver. I was also a finalist at the Camber Sands competition in 2007.”*

Like other areas of the Borough there are few facilities for play or mixing with our young people in the area. Holly (12) said, *“I used to be bored before coming here but now look forward to seeing my friends. I’ve just passed my Gold award”.*

Since obtaining the grant 5 members have been nominated for the Barking & Dagenham Sports Person of the Year awards. Four members received nominations for the under 16's and one received a nomination for the over 16's, finishing in third position. This recognition has provided all members with huge pride, encouragement, motivation and confidence to continue to improve and excel. The Troupe has been approached by Barking and Dagenham Sports Development Unit to perform a display at the 2008 Sports Awards Ceremony and are looking forward to taking part.

