

World E-News July 2013



empowering young people
SPACE | TRANSFORMATION | IMPACT



YMCA Change Agents Training
Norway

WORLD YMCA NEWS

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New part time staff appointed at World Alliance of YMCAs in Geneva

- July 30, 2013



Ian Green, until recently the National CEO of YMCA England, has been hired part time to work with the staff team in Geneva. He will work from his base in England and come to Geneva for staff consultations from time to time. We welcome Ian as a very experienced, resourceful and well connected member of the World Alliance staff team!

Ian has over 25 years of high profile leadership roles in the voluntary, health local government, housing and social care sector in executive and non-executive roles. He has been involved in YMCA for over twenty-five years and his most recent role was as Chief Executive of YMCA England. He also served a two-year term as Chair of the YMCA Urban Network.

For twenty years he was an elected member of the London Borough of Ealing Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Housing; and Mayor. He has also held a number of non-executive roles in the NHS - for five years he was Chairman of Ealing Hospital NHS Trust, a district general hospital in West London. He is currently a member of the board of West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the body responsible for commissioning health services for a population of over 500,000 where he chairs the Clinical Governance Committee.

He was a magistrate on the Hounslow Bench for sixteen years chairing both the Adult and Family Courts and is presently chair of the Professional Conduct Committee hearings at the General Chiropractic Council and The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

He has a particular interest in the provision of social housing and is Chair of Advance, a specialist housing association that provides housing, support and employment services to adults with learning disabilities and mental health issues. He is a non-

executive director on the board of Wandle Housing Association and Raven Housing Trust, social landlords with assets of over £500 million and housing over 30,000 people.

18th World Council - We are one year in advance of the World Council

- July 2, 2013



We are one year in advance of the World Council - Empowering Young People - in Estes Park, Colorado. We invite you to begin your plans to participate from June 29 to July 5, 2014. We anticipate the World Council will be a transformative and highly motivating experience of our global movement coming together to share, learn, celebrate, and build on the work of NEW WAY.

We are on a journey of change and discovery of our collective potential and impact worldwide as the YMCA. We are Waking the Sleeping Giant by learning where we have come from, what we had, what we can be, and seeing where our vision will take us. We are building a process for unity, visibility, and change. We are building momentum and we are engaging in new ways with our local and national YMCAs. We are moving forward from a NEW WAY to OUR WAY so that our collective of 119 national YMCAs reaching 58 million people worldwide will become more visible and recognised - through our YMCA change model of Space, Transformation and Impact worldwide.

Website: <http://2014.ymca.int>

A global week for Change Agents

- July 24, 2013



It was from June 19-26 that young leaders from Europe and the Middle East met for one more regional training for the new generation of leaders for the YMCA Movement. The Change Agents.

Gjøvik , Norway, was the host city of this important event for the World YMCA and as well the home of the Norwegian YMCA Global week. The activities were held in parallel and created a worldwide atmosphere since more than 20 countries meet together!

Together with the Change Agents, 65 participants have shared experiences, dreams and have had a great deal of fun!

The Change Agents had interactive sessions on the topics:

- **YMCA History/Structure**
- **Leadership Skills**
- **Global Realities**
- **Story Telling**

This particular training was possible as result of cooperation of the World Alliance of YMCAs, YGlobal Norway and Youth in Action.

As the last regional training activity before all change agents meet in Prague in August, it was fir for sure a special one. We have completed an important step of our journey that included stations in Sri-Lanka, Kenya, Uruguay, Canada, UK, Nicaragua and Hong Kong on top of several hours of on line activities and training.

See below one of the outcomes from the last meeting in Gjøvik. A video produced for YMCA Story telling. Check it out : **Photo Gallery** and **Video**

[Photo Gallery](#)



Youtube video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiNeyat7wec>

Get the road Jack! - Stories of Empowerment

- July 23, 2013



YMCA's around the world are giving space to youth in their communities to grow and realize their potential. We have countless stories of individuals being transformed into skilled, confident young people having a huge positive impact on their communities. This is one of these stories as told by Change Agent Jack Ahearn:

'My journey began in the YMCA around 4 years ago. There was a family breakdown, as well as the local authority making it very difficult for me to live at home. Initially I was aware that when I turned 18 and finished college my Mum would lose her benefits if I stayed at home, so the plan was to attend university. I applied for a beautiful university in the north, and was accepted. However when it came to it, I struggled with the concept of moving away due to leaving my Mum and sister who are my only close family. I 'sofa surfed' for a while, going from friends to friends, struggling with depression and desperation to cure the relationship with my Mum. Also suddenly having no responsibility was odd, being used to education all my life, to suddenly having nothing to do was torture! After a while the sofas ran out, and I felt my relationships with friends breaking down also. I just felt alone. I was unaware of what benefits I was entitled to so I went to the local authority for advice. They were very unhelpful, being sent from one place to the next, given the same dismal answer that being 18, there was nothing that could be done for me other than move into a hostel. The thought of moving into a hostel daunted me, you hear about what goes on in hostels: Hardcore drugs, crime and anti-social behavior etc. I felt like I was hitting a brick wall until someone suggested the YMCA, which I had briefly heard of, and was apprehensive to walk past, let alone go there to seek help.

The YMCA was the best thing that happened to me during that time and the future

that came afterwards. From first moving into the housing, I recognized the sense of family which I had craved all these months. I was in awe by the work the Support/participation staff did with young people, and when I saw the buzz through the building I was eager to get stuck in straight away. My second or third day I was asked to go to a theme park with some staff and residents to help build a relationship with the other young people. This was the first time the YMCA invited me into its safe environment where I was given space to develop.

From then on I formed a close relationship with the participation team, engaging, assisting and volunteering. Day after day my passion grew and grew, until I attended Regional and National events, in which I was amazed by the scale of the YMCA and the work it does. In this process the YMCA let me meet other people in the same situation as me, and it always gave me new opportunities to grow. Because of this I was transformed and it helped me realizing how I can help create positive change and give back!

It went up and up from there, locally I became part of the team, volunteering in projects and having active roles. Regionally I became involved in a project raising the awareness of HIV/AIDs and involved going round England delivering workshops to various YMCAs, as well as designing and producing a resource pack to encourage other YMCAs to train young people up to deliver the same workshop. I was gaining more and more skills until I became confident enough to run projects alone at my YMCA. I was regularly involved from a local scale to a national scale.

When I moved out of the YMCA, I secured a full time job, however this didn't stop me using all my holiday to part take and assist in various YMCA activities... I was hooked! So to my ultimate delight a post became available in the Youth Engagement team at my local YMCA, which I was successful in.

Finally I was able to help and engage young people like I had once been, and I was taught by the best! I did have natural confidence, but the YMCA taught me how to use that in an effective and positive way.

The moment I think it became part of my blood, part of my DNA, was when I attended my first international conference. I was absolutely shocked and in awe of not only how huge the YMCA is, but how diverse the work that is done. I was really encouraged when I saw YMCAs helping people all over the world whether it be with gang crime, poverty, the chance to engage in activities they would not have the chance to normally, global issues, power issues etc. The people I have met continue to inspire me today, and it is amazing how everyone has their own unique story, which has impacted me and many of the young people I engage. Since then I have continued to be involved internationally with Roots for Reconciliation, desperate to create positive change. Also I have and continue to adore being involved with Ten Sing. My Ten Sing group is like my baby, the reason and passion behind it is so unique, and the international scale and support again is phenomenal.

The YMCA has empowered me and it has let me realize my potential to empower others and to impact my community in this way. I am now in a position where I am very knowledgeable about the YMCA, and educate everyone I know about it, and the work it does! I will be part of the YMCA for life, and I am connected now, part of the family. And what better way to do this than by encouraging what I do best, youth empowerment!

By Jack Ahearn, England