My local area

You will need:
- A copy of the whole page illustration for each pair
- A survey form for each student
- Access to the internet – students on laptops or via interactive whiteboard

Summary
An illustration is used in Activity A for students, in pairs, to identify possible issues in the area around the school. In Activity B, possibly for homework or a holiday task, students survey their own neighbourhoods to identify issues. They vote on the three most serious problems and use www.FixMyStreet.com to report them.

How to use FixMyStreet: http://tinyurl.com/usingFMS

Learning outcomes
- Participants discuss the impact of the local environment on quality of life
- They are encouraged to want to do something about the local environment
- They learn who they can contact about problems, and how to do it.
- Citizenship curriculum: Developing an interest in, and commitment to, responsible action.

Method

ACTIVITY A
- Ask students to work in pairs and give each group a copy of the illustration of a neighbourhood. Ask them to identify any problems that they can see in the picture. Allow them just five minutes to find as many possible problems as possible and write them down.

Students should identify the following features from the map:
- A park with over-spilling litter bins, dog mess, broken play equipment
- A sign in the park ‘No ball games’
- A river/stream containing a supermarket trolley
- Dumped rubbish in a street
- Cars parked on the pavement
- Graffiti on walls
- Derelict factory building with broken windows
- Potholes in the road
- A dangerous road junction with no cycle lanes
- A bench with broken slats
- Closed-down shops
- Long bus queues
• Go around the class getting responses, one at a time, from the pairs; write these on a whiteboard or screen. Note the most commonly-spotted problems.

• Ask students, in their pairs, to access www.FixMyStreet.com to find out whether the problems they have spotted are similar to, or different from, problems reported via FixMyStreet in their own postcode area.

• If laptops are not available, the teacher could use a whole-class screen. It would be a good idea to check the results of the local reports in advance of the lesson. Discuss with students the kinds of problems they are aware of in the area around the school. Allow 15 minutes.

ACTIVITY B

• Give out the survey form and ask students to complete it for homework and return with it for the next lesson. You could suggest that students take photos of the problems they spot – but do be sure to warn them to be safe when conducting the survey, and to seek permission when taking photographs of private property, pets and individuals.

• With students working in groups who live in roughly the same areas of the town or county, ask them to discuss the real problems they identified. Tell each group to select the three issues that the students living in that area see as the most problematic. They might need to vote amongst themselves.

• Ask the groups to draft the text of an email reporting these problems to the appropriate person. Having agreed the text with the teacher, they use FixMyStreet to report the problems to the relevant person, uploading photos where appropriate.
A survey of my area

Choose four or five streets around your home and draw a rough map here of the area chosen, marking any notable buildings or facilities (e.g. place of worship, park, shops, cinema etc.)

Answer these questions and mark the problems in red on your map.

1. Did you see anything damaged or vandalised? If so, what?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. Did you see any rubbish? How much and where?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. Describe the conditions of the roads: wide or narrow, heavily parked on or not, potholes or not, busy or empty, dirty or clean, safe or unsafe.
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. List any other problems that you saw.
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________