Abstract. Let $G$ be a word hyperbolic group in the sense of Gromov and $P$ its associated Rips complex. We prove that the fixed point set $P^H$ is contractible for every finite subgroup $H$ of $G$. This is the main ingredient for proving that $P$ is a finite model for the universal space $EG$ for proper actions. As a corollary we get that a hyperbolic group has only finitely many conjugacy classes of finite subgroups.