

Novemeber  
Update 2021



## Bringing hope and focus to Youth & Families of South Wight

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South Wight Youth Partnership | Charity Registration 1160139

# November 2021 SWAY Update

We approach a second Christmas with the shadow of Covid hanging over and around us. This pandemic has affected so many aspects of our lives and it has altered so many expressions of our communal living. And yet, the needs and opportunities that called SWAY into being in the first place remain as important as ever: the need for hope amongst our young people, the need for connection, the need for a safe place in which to meet and gather, the need for focus for divided and distracted lives in our shattered and fear-ridden society.

At the heart of SWAY is a Christian ethos and faith that seeks to respond to these needs. Therefore, we believe SWAY remains relevant and important for the youth and families of the South Wight in 2021 and beyond.

What has been our journey these last few months since our May Update?



# The Lake District

We enjoyed an energetic, action packed Residential in the Lake District at the beautifully situated Youth Centre in St John's in the Vale. 20 young people and 6 leaders spent 5 days together – walking, canoeing, clambering down Ghyll's and scree's and listening also to the ancient stories of Abraham's journey in his day and what we could learn for our lives today.

These were challenging, life-building times, that will live long in the memories of the young people. We are grateful to those of you who supported us with sponsorship for places, that made it more affordable for the young people; grateful for the opportunities to spend 5 days with young people and walk alongside them for those days.

We celebrated the trip in our Lakes Awards evening at St Mary's in early October, with various awards. The evening marked the first presentation of the Roy Bromley Volunteer of the Year Award, awarded to Jacob Mills.

Many of our parents came to hear about the trip and to see a film of the trip, which is now on our website if you haven't yet seen it. We challenged Jacob to write a poem, giving us his impressions of his first encounter with the Lake District.



# Jacob's Poem

## THE LADY OF THE LAKES

*Oh lowing hills of subtle greens, give way to the mantle of the wild  
mountain queen*

*Oh lady lavish, lady old, rising in layers like a deep curtains fold, light and  
dreamy, the horizon in your care, wisps of white doth make your hair.*

*See now her range, your flowering dress, what lies beneath I know even  
less, the garland of light you wear at night, sweet mountain queen my dear  
delight*

*The stars that drip in your darkened locks, the specks of white that shine  
from your rocks, oh lady midnight, mountain cold, your silhouette i long to  
hold*

*So vain thy lady, peering deep, your face in clear water, your beauty  
to reap, so constant you shine, dearest divine, such sweet viewing you  
make, young queen of the lake*

*Brooding you stare, your head forlorn, rising softly with your jealous  
storms, your mood away with the switching tide, your sunken stillness  
lapping inside*

*To claim and adore you my sweetest dream, to lay eyes on the gorges that  
I've never seen, my mind you've caught an you hold it taught, its you wild  
queen that my soul has sought*

*The trees that whisper of stories past, of myths and legend that you shall  
long outlast, the dappled shade of your swollen banks, to your sacred  
waters I give my thanks*

*Oh darling lady, my wild mountain girl, I fly away bitter as your beauty  
unfurls, your striking features left marred in shade, long distant the  
howling your keen curves once made, our meeting fleeting, our parting  
keen, soft indents in dust of where my boots once had been, imprints of  
my love, my deepest desire, the ash and smoke of thy smouldering fire, for  
you I ache and wish to return, for your quiet stillness i shall always yearn,  
so small traces I leave to you my wild mountain queen, your memory  
sleeping, where my heart once had been*

# Walk for the Planet

A suggestion by Rev J Maw prompted us to run the Walk for the Planet in late September, over a weekend. A group of 11 young people, along with a variety of leaders, walked 30 miles from one end of our patch to the other, punctuated by a variety of talks on aspects of the environment. This was a very worthwhile activity that helped the young people see a little more of their connection with the life around them in the environment. In the gentle early autumn we enjoyed the beauty and colour of our area, not to say mild nights (thankfully) under canvas and of course, lots of lovely food.



With the problems of climate change much in our news of late, this was a valuable exercise for us all. One of the many high points was a guided tour round Northcourt by the owner, John Harrison, and an uplifting act of worship in Chale Church led by Dylan Brown. We sensed this walk is something we could usefully repeat again – when the weather is warmer!

## The Box Project

Jennie continues to trail-blaze the Box Project every fortnight, beginning in October and due to continue to March 2022. We have attracted funding for this from the Council, (Early Help Community Capacity Grant) who have seen the value and importance of this project. We are also very grateful to receive £1,000 from Tesco's Community Grant to support the project. There is regularly a capacity crowd joining us for these fun sessions. It is also an invaluable way to reach, meet and support families. Many conversations happen on the doorstep when we call and distribute the ingredients. Not only are our young people learning new skills and trying new food, but they are interacting as families and as a community.

## Groups and special events

During half term we had another Aqua Park session, always enjoyed by the young people – perhaps mainly for the opportunity to get leaders wet! We had a day out at Robin Hill, as part of the youth day there. SWAY met with around 12 there, enjoying a fairly empty Park with young people from across the Island.

Youth groups have restarted again across the area and we must say thank you to all our volunteers who ensure the groups happen in these difficult times. We could not run our groups without such committed support. If you wish to find out more about these groups, please visit our website.

Around 16 young people enjoyed a Bonfire night at the Burke's in late October. SWAY took 10 young people to Boscombe to see Rend Collective and had a very frenetic and inspiring night of worship by the popular band from Northern Ireland who wrote My Lighthouse.

We have recently started going into Brighstone School at lunchtimes, where young people can hang out, chat with youth workers, play games and build positive relationships. This is a great environment for those who are having trouble making friends, or who are struggling with social and emotional issues. with a view to establishing a group after school at some point.

We continue to take Collective Worship most Wednesdays at the school. These are very valuable times in which we get to share stories and songs with the whole school face to face.

SWAY continues to support local families/parents and mentor a number of young people. It is not easy growing up in today's world for young people and these connections are valuable times, a safe space that is not school and not parents, where young people know there are people who will get alongside them, listen and offer some guidance when asked.

Of course, we lack a second youth worker and we continue to be on the lookout for a part-time worker, but have not yet found a suitable candidate.

We have some ideas that might help in this search; please pray for a positive outcome here.

## Hope group

We are very aware that as our young people get a little older they need to decide what is their compass for life. Obviously, this is an area in which we feel SWAY can have an input. But this can be a difficult transition for a young person and so we are seeking to establish a hope group that looks into the matter of a faith and hope for life. This began with our trip to Boscombe to see Rend Collective. We have just visited Harbour Church in Portsmouth, building on this. We aim to make these trips to Portsmouth a regular occurrence again for this purpose of affirming faith.

We also want to gather together these older young people on a Sunday evening over the winter. This will not be every week, but we hope to begin soon. If you would like to support this endeavour with your prayers or with your practical support then please let us know.

## Community Hub

This dream to have a Hub as a focus of our work in Chale Green for the whole area is gaining momentum slowly. There have been many turns and twists in this dream, but we believe we are now beginning to see a way forward. By the time you read this we trust that the building plans will be submitted for a building to the planning department at the council. There has been a lot of work done so far and there is much still to be done, but we are hopeful of a positive outcome. We will be issuing a flier about the Hub soon that will tell you more and how you might be able to help us in this exciting venture. We really do believe this is the next stage in the development of our work in the South Wight area.

## The future

We have now entered the 8th year of our life as SWAY and so much has changed. We are grateful for every token of support we have been privileged to receive. We are thankful for every obstacle overcome in these 8 years, every worker who has joined us and every prayer that has been prayed. As Trustees, we are taking stock, along with the team, as to where we are and where we need to go in the next 8 years. Please pray for us and continue to be the faithful supporters you have been so far. There is still so much to do and we are eager to get on and do it, in the right way and the right time.



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