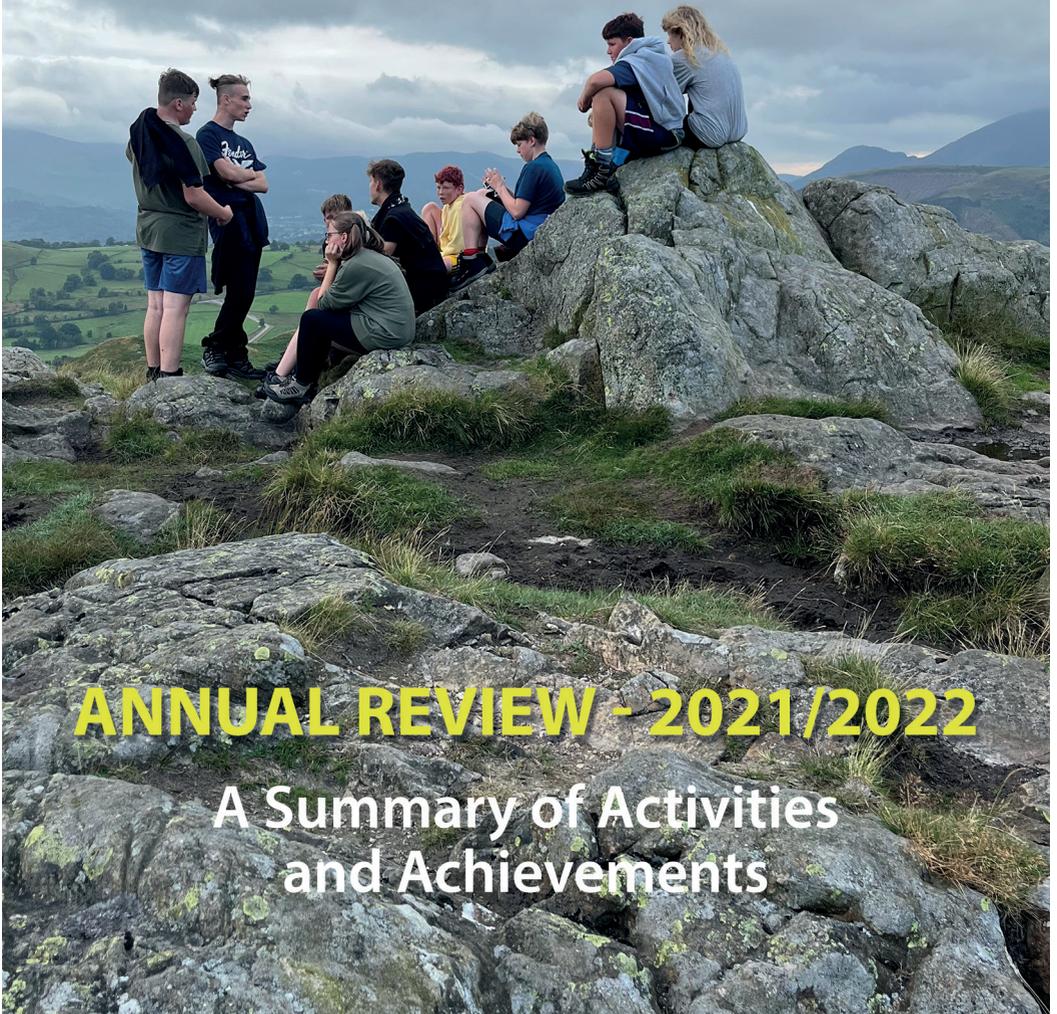


BRINGING HOPE AND FOCUS
TO YOUTH & FAMILIES
OF SOUTH WIGHT



SWAY Charity Number: 1160139



ANNUAL REVIEW - 2021/2022

A Summary of Activities
and Achievements

CHAIR PERSON'S REPORT Jo Richards

Welcome to the SWAY Annual Review for 2021-2022. This has been a year of two halves; firstly, several months under Covid limitations and secondly, with more relaxed restrictions. Through all of this, great fun was had, friendships made, new experiences enjoyed and memories forged.

Once again, our staff and volunteers have excelled and delivered a programme of regular groups, and a range of events and activities for the young people and families of the South Wight. The restrictions impacted on our access to Gap Year students and other workers which put pressure on our staff and reduced the variety of our activities in the 'real world'. Nevertheless, there were some notable successes, such as the 'Box Project' which we hope to continue with, but we also ran with a number of our favourites, not least, the 'Lakes Trip'.

We have continued to receive tremendous support, financially and prayerfully from organisations and individuals, without whom we could not function, and we thank you all so much. Now into our 8th year, we continue to grow as more people hear about us and we link to more organisations, which gives us even more scope to reach out and serve the people of South Wight.

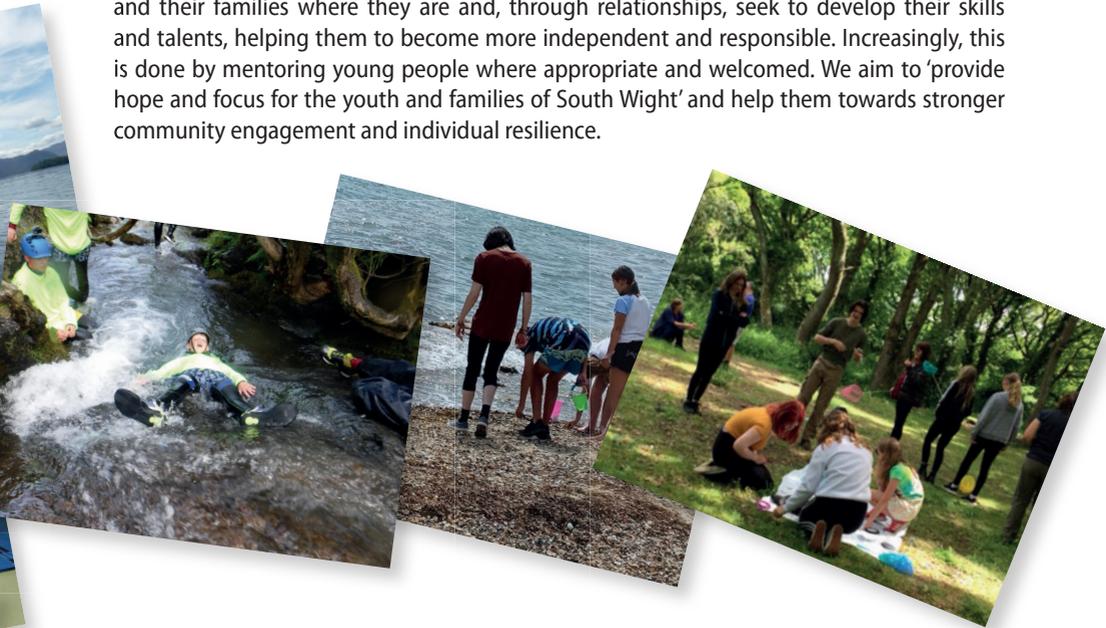
We have great dreams and plans for the future that include the South Wight Community Hub. This year has seen this project develop and become a reality as we go into our next financial year. This will substantially enable SWAY to expand its own provision and encourage other services to deliver to the rural area of South Wight. Our thanks to our blossoming Fundraising Project Group who have made this possible. Watch the progress of this in the coming year.

We give a hearty thanks to our Youth and Families' Worker, Jennie Burke, for her 5 years of tremendous work with us. We will be welcoming new members of staff in the coming weeks to take us into the next phase of SWAY. We know we are very blessed to be able to support so many young people and their families and to have such fun doing it. Thank you to all of you who make this possible. Here's to another year.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aims remain to serve the young people and families of the South Wight through activities that engage and grow them as individuals, as well as bringing them together to enjoy healthy relationships in a positive environment. SWAY also serves the families of our young people when requested, by providing practical support and advice. Our personal Christian values and compassion underpins all of our engagement. We reach out to meet both young people and their families where they are and, through relationships, seek to develop their skills and talents, helping them to become more independent and responsible. Increasingly, this is done by mentoring young people where appropriate and welcomed. We aim to 'provide hope and focus for the youth and families of South Wight' and help them towards stronger community engagement and individual resilience.



OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR **Peter Johnson**

This last year has been a year of moving tides. Movement has been key. We have seen the work with young people and families begin to connect face to face again after the disruption and difficulties of the Pandemic. We have seen our Youth and Families' Worker, Jennie Burke, finish her time with us as she moves into retirement. How grateful we have been for her pioneering work with families which has been exceptional. We have enjoyed seeing Jacob Mills, our part-time Youth Worker, who began his time with us in January and finishes at the end of August, develop and make a valuable contribution to the work. We are sure he will stay connected and continue the good work he has begun, as he seeks to finish his OU Degree in Creative Writing. Along the way we have benefited from his elegant poetry. We have continued to think, pray and plan for the SWAY Community Hub at Chale and the extension of our work into the area in and around Ventnor. There has been movement in both these areas; the journey for SWAY will hopefully become clearer in the months ahead and in the new year. As we say, a year of tides.

But in the meantime please sit down with a cup of coffee and have a read of what SWAY has done over this last year. It has been a busy, eventful and fruitful year.

Listed on the table opposite is a record of the different events, activities and groups we have held. This will give you an idea of just how busy the team has been over this year.

WALK FOR THE PLANET

The year began with our first Walk For The Planet in September. This weekend involved 12 young people walking from Dunsbury Farm to Stonelands in Niton and camping for two nights. Over the course of the weekend we had a variety of people talk to us about the land, the bird life, the plant life and the challenges modern living brings to our planet. John Harrison at Northcourt shared how the garden had developed over many years, Paul Davies on life on the Downs, Jackie Maw on the history of the church and its place in the community and Josh Osborn on working the land in a sustainable way. All gave our group plenty of food for thought.

HARBOUR CHURCH AND CAROL SINGING

We made a number of trips to Harbour Church in Gunwharf for our 14+ group. These were always fun times as the group enjoyed the food on offer in Harbour Church – popcorn, muffins, cake and pizza – as well as the lively worship and excellent teaching. Harbour Church is aimed at University students but very accessible to our group.

Carol singing around the villages of Niton and Brighstone is always something enjoyed by our young people and residents alike. This year was no exception. In the cold evenings just before Christmas there is nothing more cheering than to have a group of young people singing well known carols enthusiastically at your doorstep. We received some heart-warming feedback on this journey round the villages from folk we visited.



Activity/Event	Location/Area	Time	Numbers (YP)
Rock Solid for School Years 6 to Year 7	Niton	Every Monday during term-time: 33 sessions	Ave 10 each session
Roots for School Years 8 to Year 13	Niton	Every Thursday during term-time: 32 sessions	Ave 16 each session
Walk For The Planet	Brook - Niton	September	12
Robin Hill Family Day	Robin Hill	October	19
Rend Collective Concert	Boscombe	October & May	10 & 12
Aqua Park	Tapnell Farm	October & July	10 & 18
Box Project	Zoom Cooking	October, November (2), January (2), February (2) and March (2)	Average of 15
Bonfire evening	Ventnor	November	17
Harbour Church	Portsmouth	November, January, March and July	Average of 10
Carol singing	Brighstone & Niton	December	20
14+ Group – meal out & BBQ	Newport	January & July	12
Disc Golf and Bowling	Arreton & Ryde	February	12
Kayaking	Newtown Estuary	April	20
Fundraiser for the Hub	Northcourt	April	8
Corf Camp	Corf Scout Camp	May	18
Royal Visit	Chale	May	7
Royal Geo-caching	All over the South Wight	June	6 Families
Shorwell Summer Fair - volunteering	Northcourt	June	11
YFC/SWAY Vibe BBQ	Niton	July	14
Evening walk	Brighstone-Newport walk	July	6
Summer activities	Crabbing/Thorpe Park/ Rollerskating / Wall Climbing	late July – early August	75
Lakes Residential	St John's-in-the-Vale, near Keswick	August	29

KAYAKING AND CORF

We had a number of sessions of kayaking at Corf, Shalfleet in April and May. This year we also enjoyed some times of looking at the range of bugs and plant life at Corf, which gave the young people a different focus, following our Walk For The Planet weekend. This was quite an eye-opening activity for the young people.

Then there was the excitement of our first full Corf camp in May since before the pandemic.

For the first time ever, it was virtually all girls apart from Jacob, due to various reasons, including Rugby 7's and holidays. It was a great weekend that included some singing around the campfire, great food, a frenzied game of Capture the Flag and a lovely service at Newtown Parish Church. It was so good to be there again in that quiet and peaceful part of the Island. Once there, you never want to leave.



ROYAL VISIT AND ROYAL GEO-CACHING

A large surprise and privilege for us as a Charity was the visit of the HRH the Countess of Wessex to Chale in May. We had 7 young people there to meet her, as well as the team and a couple of Trustees. We shared with her our plans for the Hub, some of our activities through the year, our Box Project and our imminent Royal Geo-Caching Challenge. She liked the sound of what she heard and promised to open the Hub when it was built. This was an amazing turn of events which we had not anticipated at all. We presented her with one of the symbols for our Royal Geo-Caching Challenge. The piece de resistance was when Jacob read to her his poem 'Majesty' in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. She seemed particularly moved by this poem.



The Geo-Caching took place after a lot of thought and planning, but unfortunately collided with so many other events over the Royal weekend. However, it was enjoyed by a number of families and groups. The Challenge was actually won by a family not involved with SWAY at all (not yet anyway!), but who had followed our previous geo-caching challenges. This was the Colman family from Newport. They clearly enjoyed the Challenge and are looking forward to the next one.



REND AND THE NORTHCOURT LAUNCH

Andy took a full minibus over to Boscombe to enjoy a night of music and worship by popular Irish Band Rend Collective in June. This is the second time this year we have seen the band and it was worth all the effort of getting there and returning at unearthly hours.

The Project Group for the Hub (Richard Webb, Jo Richards, Susannah Seely and Caroline Frew) have made enormous progress in finding grants and funding for the Hub. In April we held a fund-raising drinks party at Northcourt, attended by around 40 invited guests. A number of people spoke about the work of SWAY and the need for a SWAY Community Hub in Chale. Leaflets were given out about the need for a Hub there and this really kick-started our fundraising for the Project. As we approach the end of the year we are now in a realistic position to begin the final stages of the planning for this exciting venture for SWAY, which will bring so many benefits for the charity and the area, not least the village of Chale. This comes after much hard work, careful and persistent prayer and numerous set-backs. All credit must go to this team who have managed to bring this dream so much closer to reality.



BOX PROJECT AND SUMMER FUN

The Box Project ran throughout the winter, every two to three weeks, finishing in March. It was a lifeline for some, a great learning point for others and a lot of fun for all. It is planned to start up again this Autumn.

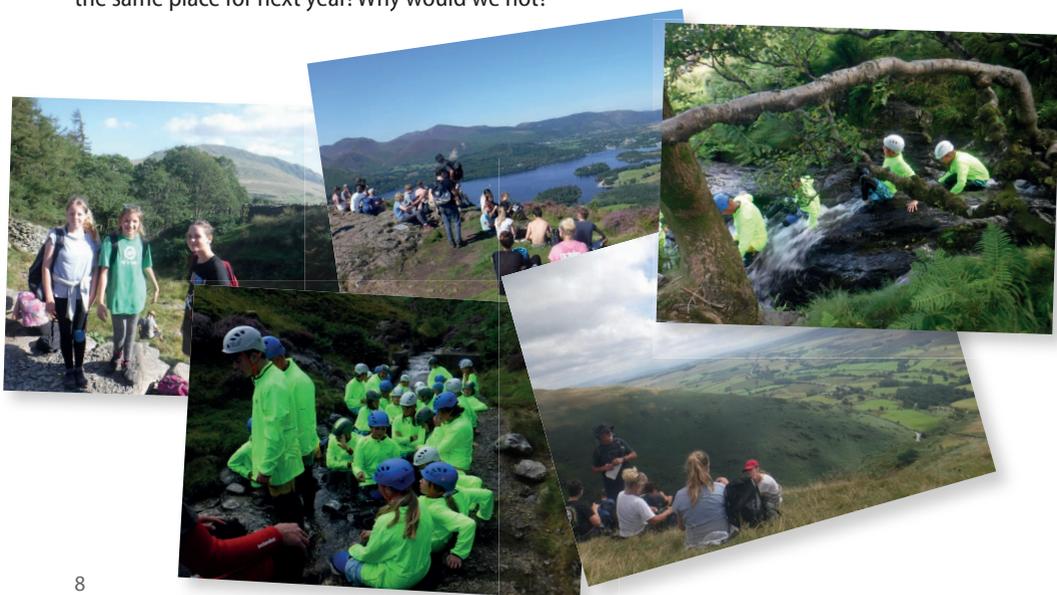
The summer programme of activities has been relentless, leaving Andy almost exhausted before he even left for the Lake District for our annual residential trip. This programme involved a frenetic trip to the Aqua Park at Tapnell, fun crabbing in Bembridge, an adrenalin-filled visit to Thorpe Park, roller-skating, beach BBQs and swimming and wall climbing at West Wight Sports Centre.



LAKES RESIDENTIAL 7TH-11TH AUGUST

And so to the Lakes: 29 young people and 8 adults, the largest ever group, all staying at the Carlisle Diocesan Youth Centre in St John's-in-the-Vale. This was an eagerly anticipated residential, made possible by the generous donation of 2 minibuses, one from Ryde School and the other from Bembridge.

The Lake District was green and lush in contrast to the arid and dry south. We climbed majestic Blencathra, canoed on Derwentwater, scrambled down Stonycroft Ghyll and enjoyed great views from the top of Walla Crag over Keswick. The young people had a great time. We followed David in our thoughts for the day, as he made his way through being a lowly shepherd boy to king of Israel. The food was plentiful; no one lost weight, that's for sure. Hopefully this will be a trip the young people will remember for many months to come. Certainly, there were many memorable moments and numerous good conversations. We are grateful for all who made this trip possible with their giving or their prayers. There were 29 very satisfied and tired young people on the journey back. Needless to say we have booked the same place for next year! Why would we not?



FOCUS ON SWAY ADMINISTRATOR **Catherine Hoare**

It is a privilege to work with young people and their families as part of SWAY's dedicated team, infused with a strong Christian ethos. I like to think of my administrative role as an 'enabler': chiefly helping staff spend more of their time meeting with young people and supporting families, whether it is at activities, youth groups, mentoring individuals or providing guidance. A considerable amount of my work is communicating with our South Wight families, letting them know when and where future activities and events are taking place and inviting new young people to join our regular term-time youth groups. This is a rewarding task, especially when I see so many families respond; booking them on fun activities.

I minute the quarterly Trustees' Meetings and circulate reports. Through this, I know that the SWAY Trustees appreciate that they can offer their precious time voluntarily; focusing more on staying close to the community, continuing to improve the facilities in our rural areas and bringing people together.

As a charity, updating our website and Facebook is increasingly important to let supporters, funders and families find out more about what we do for the South Wight community. Social media allows SWAY to share photos, showcase our work and update the programme of activities. We also send supporters and families our Updates as well as this Annual Review, so they can see that SWAY is always active; welcomed by so many young people and families, offering multiple opportunities throughout the year

I enjoy the interactions with and getting to know our lively young people, as individuals with their skills and abilities, by joining them on some of the activities, such as the Corf Camp weekend and regularly volunteering at the Thursday evening ROOTs youth group in Niton. Over the years I have been encouraged to see them gain in confidence, sharing positive life experiences with friends in a safe and supportive environment, which makes my involvement with SWAY so worthwhile and rewarding.

Please do contact me if you want to ask about any of the activities provided by SWAY. I work part time (10 hours a week, mainly from home). You can leave a telephone message or email me and I will endeavour to reply promptly.

A YEAR OF CHALLENGE AND CHANGE **Andy Dorning**

Well, what a year it has been. We started the year learning to live with Covid in communities, but with the hope of better things to come. Once again, this year has been difficult for our young people and families with a number having to learn from home on and off right up until the New Year. To add to that they are now facing a sharp rise in the cost of living.

With a reduced team, this year has been difficult to cover all the activities and groups, so it was a relief that in January we welcomed Jacob Mills to our team on a short-term contract until the summer, which enabled SWAY to relaunch some face-to-face activities, grow our school work and plan for the spring and summer months.

Personally, I have found my time very busy and demanding this year as the charity has been without a gap year student or other youth workers for long periods – so Jacob's addition was welcome. In spite of these limitations we have endeavoured to provide more targeted support and 1-1 mentoring where it was most needed.

As I came to the end of the year, I found myself insanely busy with a full summer programme of activities that consisted of 71 young people (including 29 young people going to the Lake District), as well as preparing for our widened work to include Ventnor in the Autumn. The summer break for me was welcome like never before.

I look forward to the challenges ahead as we welcome our new Youth & Families' Support Worker (Lynne Stotesbury) and in September, a full time Youth Worker joining the SWAY team to help with the work in Ventnor and the South Wight. We are excited about this expansion of the work of SWAY to Ventnor in partnership with the churches and town council. So, watch this space: God has not finished with this project just yet and I really believe the team of volunteers, workers and trustees are beginning to see the start of something special over the next 5 years.

8 MONTHS WITH SWAY **Jacob Mills**

My time with SWAY has been not only full of fun, but also challenging in all the right ways. Starting in January of this year, I began my work with SWAY, helping to run collective worship at Brighstone Primary, hosting Youth Nights and helping with camps and trips to the Mainland. There truly hasn't been a dull moment, but that is the lure of the job. Every working day is different. One day it may be meeting Royalty, the next, dragging kayaks through mud. The variation in activity has given me great joy and motivation in my work.

During my time with SWAY, my confidence has greatly increased. I always found it difficult to command authority and to speak out above the crowd. This job has changed that. The respect and trust I have been afforded by colleagues has helped me understand my worth as a leader, something I shall never forget, nor fail to realise the importance of.

But it has not been all so easy. The level of work and care that is needed to help run such an organisation is a behemoth task, and requires great resilience and attention to detail, which I did not fully appreciate before my employment. However, what also surprised me (if not more than the attention such a job requires) was the degree of love I experienced through my work. Whether from colleagues or the young people I had the honour to work with, there was always an environment of passion. Passion for the young people, passion for its workers and passion for God. SWAY is an organisation with passion at its heart and it's given me a tremendous joy to have been a humble part of its history.

THE COMMUNITY HUB **Richard Webb**

As we have planning approval for the Hub under our belt, we are working hard on completing the fund raising. There have been some great fund-raising events supported by the community and these have helped build momentum towards our target of £300 000.

As a result of recent rising material costs the project budget has risen to circa £350 000.

Recently we received a very generous offer from an anonymous donor which brings the current total of funds raised to £320 000. We are now pressing on with the necessary designs for building regulations and holding discussions with possible suppliers. This all means that we have a programme schedule, all being well, for a spring commencement of construction. In parallel with the fund-raising, we are negotiating with Southern Housing to purchase the land on which the Hub will be built. For all of this we are profoundly grateful to all who have supported and given towards this project and we look forward to 2023 being an exciting new beginning for SWAY.

FINANCE REVIEW **Andrew Gardener**

The year has been a little different from previous years, because alongside the normal operation of the youth project, plans and funding for the SWAY Community Hub building in Chale have moved on apace during the year.

In financial terms, the youth work operation has been similar to previous years, with a budgeted cost of approximately £66 000, and actual costs are forecast to come in at, or just below budget. In order to cover this cost, at the beginning of the year it was identified that around £19 000 of funding would need to be found beyond the regular donations and grants already expected. Additional funding bids were made and consequently grants were received that met the initial shortfall. We are very pleased to have received funding from IoW Council, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Fund, The Henry Smith Charity, The Joseph Rank Trust, John Swire Trust, The Methodist Church, the Tesco Community Groundwork fund, Niton & Whitwell PC, Brook and Mottistone PCC and Shorwell PCC. In addition, we have received generous donations from a number of individuals and continue to receive regular support from St Mary's Church, Brighstone and Niton Methodist Church, for which we are ever grateful.

At the same time, and following the very promising start made in 2021, funds have been accumulating sufficiently to make the Community Hub project emerge from being a hope and a dream into a very promising reality. At the end of June this year, a total of just over £40 000 had been raised, including a grant of £15 000 from the Herapath & Shenton Trust, but otherwise mostly from individuals. Since then, besides smaller donations continuing to be received, we have been pledged a further £250 000 from two specific sources that bring the final target well within reach.



THE FUTURE – SWAY’S 9TH YEAR

It has been an exciting, demanding and challenging year for SWAY. What of the year to come? We must always be thinking ahead and planning the next step. We have two new workers starting with us. We are extending our work into Ventnor and we have the promise of a Community Hub on the horizon. This promises to be a bold new chapter for SWAY, which we are very much looking forward to and excited about.

As we contemplate next year, it appears to us that never has the need been greater. Equally, it can be said that never have the challenges for young people and families been harder. Never has our resolve and commitment to meet this need and these challenges been stronger. There is much to do. We have dreams and hopes for this new year and we trust that we are right where we need to be; seeking to provide hope and focus for a searching, wondering and hungry generation of young people and for hard pressed families in the South Wight in the uncertain year ahead.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this Review and that you will join with us in supporting the work of SWAY in the South Wight. Through it all we continue to trust in a God who is greater than the problems and challenges and who answers prayer in His time and provides the means to do the work. To Him we remain forever grateful.



To donate or enquire about sway, please email Catherine at: swayoffice1@gmail.com