

BRINGING HOPE AND FOCUS
TO YOUTH & FAMILIES
OF SOUTH WIGHT



SWAY Charity Number: 1160139

SOUTH WIGHT AREA YOUTH



ANNUAL REVIEW - 2022/2023

**A Summary of Activities
and Achievements**

INTRODUCTION

What a year this has been! The SWAY Team has grown not only in size, but also in scope, as we now include Ventnor in our area. There is so much to cover in this Annual Review, as each person in the Team gives their own outlook on the year.

But of course, there are many others involved in the work of SWAY and they are reflected here in these pages. Take your time to read about the considerable work being done this past year and give thanks for the progress reported here.

CHAIR'S REPORT **Jo Richards**

Now in its 9th year, SWAY continues to serve young people, their families in their local community, growing and building in amazing ways. We are blessed with tremendous supporters. Once again, our excellent standard of work continues to raise our profile. Our vision is still burning, still relevant and still needed and although we have some terrific opportunities, we also have some challenges; for this, we trust in the God who we know guides, provides and inspires us.

This Annual Review gives a picture of the tremendous imagination and care that have been taken to develop all sorts of activities to keep young people and families connected, engaged and proud of their achievements.

In September, SWAY added to our talented team with Marie Willis joining us as a full-time Youth Worker, Olivia Stemmet committing her Gap Year to us and of course, Lynne Stotesbury, who joined us as our Youth and Families' Support Worker during the summer of 2022. The Team has managed and run the events and activities in collaboration with our wonderful volunteers.



SWAY now includes a group for the 14+ age group (school year 9 and above), supporting the Ventnor Youth Club, and mentoring in Schools. We have received tremendous feedback from schools and families for this engagement.

We are still progressing 'The Hub' in Chale, a centre to facilitate our work, providing a meeting room, a multi-use room/café with a kitchen and a pop-up shop. This has been challenging but we look to the coming year positively.

Yet again, we are enormously grateful to the inspirational and energetic way Trustees, the Team and volunteers lead the work of SWAY. We thank all our supporters who enable SWAY to continue to exist. We look forward to the year ahead encouraging others to join us. All are crucial to our work, and we express our thanks to them for their work and endeavour.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aims and objectives remain unchanged from previous years: to serve the young people and their families of 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, but this has now been extended to include Ventnor and its surrounding area.

We continue to offer practical support and advice where requested. Our Christian values and mindset remain core to our approach in all things, though often quite implicit. We seek to meet young people and their families where they are, helping them to explore their potential and become more independent and responsible. This is done through conversation, relationships and mentoring.

As usual, 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

Activity/Event	Location/Area	Time	Numbers (YP)
Rock Solid for School Years 6-7	Niton	Monday during term time, 7-8:30pm	12
Roots for School Years 8-13	Niton	Thursday during term time 7-8:30pm	15
Ventnor Youth Group	Upper Ventnor	Wednesday term time	15
Mentoring River Project	St Francis Primary Academy, Ventnor/Brighstone Primary School	Lunchtimes term time and varied holiday & after school activities	12
14+ Group Evenings	Various: Pizza Hut/Sweet Charlies & Skates	September-Nov	13-19
Zoom Cooking	Home	November to March (9 sessions)	Ave 14
Princes Trust Team Games	Niton	December	5
Stars of Wonder	St Mary's CE Church, Brighstone	December	8+
Carol Singing	Niton/Brighstone villages	December	12+
Harbour Church	Portsmouth	February	10
Catalyst YFC & KFC	Bethany Church, Newport	February	9
Intro to 1st Aid	Niton	February	19
River Project Trips	Island: Pizza Hut/Sweet Charlie's & Skates/Snacks & Ladders/Disc Golf & off Island /Marwell Zoo	October to August	Ave 8
Bowling and Laser Quest	Ryde	February	25
Pancake Evening	Brighstone	February	11+
Archery	Tapnell	April	12
Escape Room	Ryde, Aspire	April	13
Royal Tea Boxes prep and delivery	Brook, Brighstone, Shorwell, Chale, Niton, Whitwell, Ventnor	May	26 (48 delivered)
Corf Camp	Shorwell	June	23+
Shorwell Summer Fayre	Wolverton Manor	June	16+
Disc Golf	Garlic Farm	July	22
Navy Team Building	Niton	July	13
Crabbing	St Helens Duver	August	14
Chessington Trip	Mainland	August	14
Crazy Golf and Chips	Shanklin	August	9
Lakes Residential	St Johns in the Vale, near Keswick	August	26

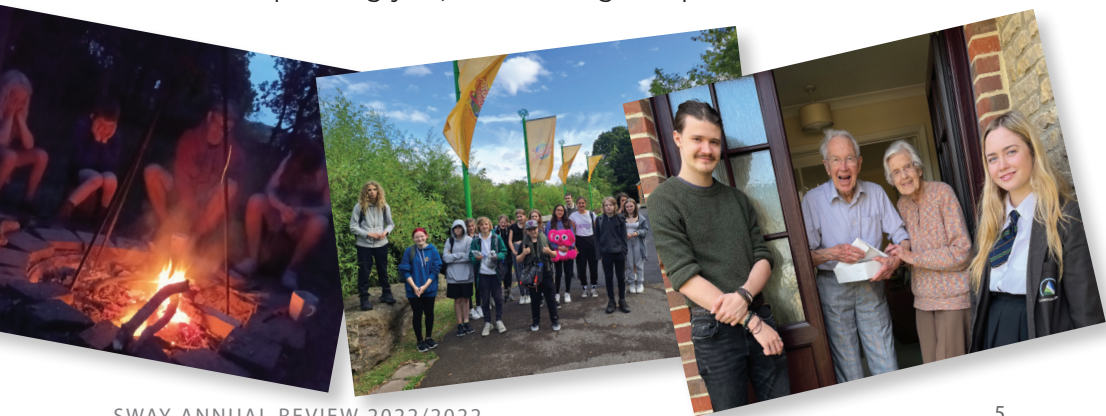
LEAD WORKER'S VIEWPOINT **Andy Dorning**

We started the year with the addition of Marie Willis to our team in September. This expansion of our team enabled SWAY to extend our work into Ventnor and also establish the Mentoring River Project within the primary schools across the area. This last year has presented us with various challenges, both personally for me and for the Charity. It has quite possibly been our toughest year yet.

However, it has also been a year filled with exciting and promising highlights. We have taken great joy in continuing to offer post-14 activities. We have witnessed the growth of the River Project and the 12 young people involved, from Year 6 in both St Francis Primary Academy, Ventnor and Brighstone Primary School. Additionally, we have been grateful for the opportunity to support young individuals through one-on-one mentoring sessions, providing them with our time, prayers, advice and support. In addition to all of this, we must acknowledge the hard work of Lynne and the Team, who diligently support families.

Looking ahead, I am excited about a number of areas of the work for this next year: the prospect of developing the work with the young people of Ventnor, in partnership with the Town Council and local churches, the re-launch of the Young Leaders Programme and the expansion of the mentoring River Project to include Niton Primary School supporting a new group of Year 6 children.

I must not forget to mention how proud we are of the ongoing development of our placement student, Olivia, and we continue to be grateful for the exceptional dedication of our team of volunteers and Trustees. None of this would be possible without this wider group of people involved in and committed to SWAY. Thank you for your continued support and prayers as we seek to fulfil God's will for our work in the upcoming year, commencing in September.



A RATHER BUSY FIRST YEAR WITH SWAY

Marie Willis

I can't believe that I have now been on the Island and working for SWAY for a year, it has gone really fast and has been very eventful. We have had numerous groups and activities going on, as well as some training for the team; it has been a packed year for sure.

The Mentoring River Project has been a major success and has helped these young people to prepare for the challenge of the transition to High School and gain the tools and confidence they need to move on in the next stage of their lives. Besides mentoring at lunchtimes, the group experienced a variety of trips (Marwell Zoo and Skates) and outings. This was a piloted programme we are continuing next year. Here are a few quotes from the young mentees: 'I now can think more positively about things.' 'The group was enjoyable and helpful.' 'The River Project helped me speak to other people.'

The Rock Solid Team had a great time this year with the young people. We have explored different themes throughout the year around the Christian faith and issues that young people face. We have had lots of fun activities from apple bobbing, to building structures, messy games, recreating Bible stories, drama and games; one of the favourites was the chocolate game... you might guess how that ended!

It has been fun to continue running collective worship in Brighstone Primary School; Peter Johnson and Jacob Mills joining the SWAY team three times a month. The children have responded really well to the worship songs and stories we have shared with them.

We provided Brighstone Primary School with an after-school club and a dance club however these have struggled to attract sustainable numbers, and we are working on connecting with the pupils and school in a different way for the coming year.



For the older young people who are Year 9 and above we have had some trips and activities out and about, with a trip to Pizza Hut, Sweet Charlie's & Skates, Snacks & Ladders and Harbour Church. This gives the older young people the opportunity to get together, socialise, to experience church and have a fun time.

The Corf weekend was fun-packed, with all the usual activities, in and out of the water, around the campfire and in Newtown Church, where SWAY led the service.

The Coronation gave us an excellent opportunity to serve in the community. We had young people from Ventnor, Niton and Brighstone make scones and pack them into boxes with cream tea items and then delivered them to the older generations within their communities ready for King Charles III's Coronation Day.

I have had a great time with the young people across the South Wight area this year, as I have come to know new groups of young people through fun activities and discussions and seen young people gain confidence. I look forward to seeing how these young people continue to develop and grow in the coming year and look forward to lots more fun together.

THE LAKES REPORT **Peter Johnson**

Each year away with a group of young people is different. We ventured to the Lake District again this year with 26 young people and 7 leaders, including Holly Garret, one of our former young people and Jeremy Lea, a former student of mine and excellent Mountain Leader. Jeremy and Holly fitted in perfectly.

The weather was rather wet for all but the last day, which was perfect because it enabled us to climb Helvellyn, which was a memorable day. The group had an enthralling, or perhaps nail-biting time up at Honister Slate mine,



ascending the huge via ferrata (involves ladders fixed to the mountain, ropes and harnesses) and traversing the infinity bridge. This was a great experience of pushing your boundaries for all of the young people and all the leaders, which will not be forgotten for a long time. Pete Taylor provided, as usual, ample sustenance. This year in our thoughts for the day we followed the progress of Jacob and Esau as they learnt some hard lessons, as well as the faithfulness of God's promises. This residential is always a very good experience for the young people, being in beautiful Lakeland, living together for 6 days and learning some valuable lessons in independence, determination and courage.

We are grateful for all the support that you give us which enables us to offer this residential, which is of incalculable benefit to the young people. Here is one comment following our Lakes trip: *'We just wanted to say a really big thank you to all the leaders and those involved in organising and running the Lakes trip. So much work and thought obviously went into it all. It sounds like there was a jam packed itinerary with many opportunities for fun, learning and growth. Despite the weather, you still had lots of positive adventures - culminating in climbing Helvellyn. X was buzzing when we picked him up. He absolutely loved all the outdoor pursuits. We got the occasional fuzzy photo from up various hills! It's nice also to hear some of the little stories and anecdotes too, like the wandering sheep almost entering the buildings, and the amazing food Pete cooked up! Thank you so much to everyone for looking out for him and for encouraging him. These last few days have really boosted X's confidence. He was also telling us about how his friendships have deepened.'*



FAMILY WORK Lynne Stotesbury

We have offered support to 10 families over the year, currently working with 7 families at the moment. Support has consisted of being a listening ear, attending meetings and encouraging young people to join SWAY activities. We will be offering support to our new group of Year 6 mentees in September and have updated our referral form on the website so it's more easily accessible for families or professionals to use.

We started Chat, Craft and Cake in Chale back in October last year thinking we'd only be doing it until Spring when building work began, but due to hold ups we continued until July. We had two Summer Arts days run by Rebecca Disney and funded by Middlesex University. The first one was held in gazebos out by the play area on Spanners Close and was fairly busy. The weather was wet and windy for the second one, so we set up in the hut. This one was less busy, maybe we were less obvious or maybe people didn't want to venture out in the weather. We had a model of the proposed building on display, made felts and painted wooden birds and insects native to the IOW which we hope to display in the new Hub.

I volunteered under the umbrella of SWAY to support Niton Primary School's Gardening Club alongside the very enthusiastic Julie Cox, Anthony Truckell and Nicola Fradgley. It was very lovely seeing the children enjoying the garden. We entered the Chale Show and came 1st in the Primary School section, which felt like a very rewarding end to our work.



GAP YEAR REPORT **Olivia Stemmet**

I have really enjoyed my gap year with SWAY. It has been great to work alongside the team. During the year I was given the opportunity to do first aid training which has given me certain skills I did not have previously. I have also been helping out with youth groups, mentoring groups, assemblies and various trips. I have run certain activities or games during the youth groups and I have led several of the assemblies throughout the year. This has helped me to improve my confidence. My faith has grown considerably over this year as I have been concentrating on it a lot more and I have had many people encouraging and helping me.

THE COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT **Richard Webb**

The Community Hub Project has progressed albeit slowly in this last year. We received planning approval for the Hub early in 2023, with a footprint that included building on the Common. Despite having liaised with the IW Council and the Chale Parish Council we did not receive approval to build on the common land, so it was back to the drawing board! We currently have submitted a revised design for planning approval and are hopeful of receiving approval in September.

We have confirmed funding for 85% of the £650k budget and we are optimistic that the remaining £100k will be made available once we have planning approval.

In the mean-time we are preparing the detailed design ready for submitting for building regulations approval. Our goal is to commence construction in October.

During the summer we have held a number of activities on the site where the new hub will be built, engaging with the residents of Spanners Close estate and Chale Village. The feedback from the residents has been very positive, and through this we became aware of significant needs for support for young people and families across the area. The project has huge potential for SWAY to be Jesus's hands and feet in the Community. Prayers for this have been ongoing and indeed are necessary for it's positive conclusion.

Thanks for the funding

Throughout the year we have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from so many quarters for our work. There have been our major

funders: Niton Methodist Church and St Mary's, Brighstone youth fund, who have faithfully supported us since the beginning in 2014, Methodist District and Circuit, the Police Commissioners, the Violence Reduction Unit, Hampshire and IOW Community Foundation and the Swire Charitable Trust.

Of course, there have been individual sponsors who have supported us throughout the year and we are so grateful to these faithful folk. These individual supporters enable us to do so much and we do not take them for granted. The '3 folk in a boat' raised £630 by sailing in the Round the Island Race in June. Claire Critchison, as Chair of the IOW Council, had SWAY as her charity of the year and raised in excess of £500. We had a number of our young people involved in Stars of Wonder at Brighstone in December and then at the Shorwell Summer Fayre in July, both of which raised funds for SWAY's work.

Considerable funds were raised by Susannah Seely and Caroline Frew for the Hub, for which we are very grateful. The ladies' efforts and persistence in this endeavour have been most commendable.

FINANCE REVIEW **Andrew Gardener**

The notable feature of the year, as reflected in the finances of SWAY, has been the expansion of youth work into the Ventnor area. Costs have increased accordingly, largely with regard to employing an additional youth worker, and this has been funded by a grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and by donations from Ventnor churches. Consequently, the overall budget cost has risen to approximately £89,000 for the year and actual costs are expected to be largely in line with this, when final year end accounts are concluded.

However, income has exceeded this figure, largely as a result of grants being obtained from the Isle of Wight Council, the Hoare Trustees' Golden Bottle Trust, The John Swire Trust, Henry Smith Charity, Brighstone PC, Chale PC and Niton and Whitwell PC, besides regular financial support from Niton Methodist Church, St Mary's Church, Brighstone and from a number of generous individuals, all of which we are very grateful for. The expected surplus in the year's accounts will be carried forward to create a secure basis for the continuation of the charity's work.

The fund for the Community Hub project has continued to accumulate, mostly supported by individuals, including a donation of £50,000 from one anonymous donor, so that by the end of June this year, a grand total of just over £127,000 had been received. There are also significant amounts pledged, but will not be received until the work is commenced.

A NOD TO THE FUTURE

As you can see from this Annual Review, this last year has been an eventful and full one. It must be said that it has had its challenges and some quite considerable ones at that. However, in looking back, we believe much has been achieved and solid groundwork has been laid for the years to come. We are grateful for the way God has guided and blessed us as a charity and we remain hopeful that He will continue to do so in the years ahead. As we conclude this Review, we are hopeful that the Hub will finally materialise next year. We are hopeful that the River Project will grow to include and help more children. We are hopeful that the work in Ventnor will grow to include some older young people. We have a strong and talented Team, a committed group of Trustees and an enthusiastic set of volunteers and we look forward to what the new year holds for us in SWAY.

Thank you for reading this and for your own interest and support in the work of SWAY. Without this support we would never be able to do what we do and make the positive difference that we make in the South Wight. As we close the book on 2023, it is with thankful hearts to all who have helped us in our mission to bring hope and focus to the youth and families of South Wight.



Niton and Whitwell
PARISH COUNCIL



The **Methodist Church**



CHALE PARISH COUNCIL

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