



## Bringing Hope and Focus to Youth & Families of South Wight

email: [swayoffice1@gmail.com](mailto:swayoffice1@gmail.com)

office tel: 07880951243

[www.southwightyouth.org](http://www.southwightyouth.org)

South Wight Youth Partnership | Charity Registration 1160139

# SWAY November 2023 Update

Great news on the Hub front

It's been a long time coming, but we've finally received the green light from planning to build the South Wight Area Youth Hub in Chale, just off the main road, where the current hut is located. This has taken many twists and turns along the way, requiring persistence and patience from the Hub Management Group, but we seem to be through this most crucial of hurdles: planning permission. You have no idea what rejoicing there was among the Trustees when we heard the news.

We now move on to the more practical steps of securing the land for SWAY from Southern Housing and redirecting drains, with a view to start building in the spring.

This is an exciting move for SWAY, enabling us to have a physical base to work from at the heart of our area. It gives us the opportunity to create a community focus in Chale, where there has been none for several years. It can be a space where we can serve the community, but also offer a place of service for our young people and somewhere to meet.

The thoughts of the Management Group will also now move onto a consideration of managing and running the Hub, in terms of personnel and programming. Much of the funding is in place for the building, but there is still a little way to go. We shall now seek to find this remaining funding, as well as initial funding to staff and run the Hub when it is built.





Many thanks for all prayers offered and support given, no matter how large or small during the last few years, as we have sought to make this dream real. We were very pleased to hear that Ron Groves, one of our faithful supporters in Chale over the years especially in connection with the hub, was awarded an MBE recently. Well done, Ron!

## Young Leaders' Programme

Another development this year has been the re-commencement of our Young Leaders' Programme. We have up to 15 young people who have indicated their desire to be on this programme between the ages of 13 to 15, which runs from September to July next summer. We have met twice so far: at Pizza Hut for an introductory meal together and chat, then at Westbrook Centre for some team building on a wet and drizzly evening in early October.

Our next time together is a visit to Portsmouth and Harbour Church, where we hope to spend some time in Gunwharf on an exciting group activity, followed by tea at Harbour Church whilst listening to one of their interns talk to the young people about their experience of volunteering.



## Expanding River Project and Carols in London

This year our River Project has expanded from 12 to 16, as we take in a group from Niton Primary School, to add to our 2 groups from St Francis, Ventnor and one group from Brighstone. Each group has four Year 6 children who have been referred to us from the schools. We are meeting with them weekly and will have various get togethers throughout the year, to help with their transition into Year 7, to build their confidence and form new friendships amongst them. We hope to see these young people flourishing and growing through the year as we work with them.

In all, we have 7 leaders involved in this project, which is excellent.

Our Lord Lieutenant, Susie Sheldon, has given SWAY the opportunity to send three people to the Princess of Wales' Carol Concert at Westminster Abbey on 8th December. Peter Johnson, Jacob Mills and Lucy Peckham are making their way into London for this exciting opportunity and will report back in due time, I am sure.



SWAY begins a new year  
– groups, awards, families and Zoom cooking

Since the summer, groups have started up again in Ventnor, Niton (X2), the River Project and the Young Leaders' Programme. Roots enjoyed a good evening in September with a visit from the Royal Navy, who put on a Dragon's Den evening for them, which made them think and strategise carefully. A grand night was held at St Catherine's in Ventnor as we premiered the Lakes 2023 video and gave out various awards to those who had attended the Lakes trip. This included the Roy Bromley Young Volunteer of the Year Award to Pete Taylor (a young 62)!! Pete Taylor has been a fantastic volunteer over the last 9 years on camps, trips and all manner of events. Many of the things we have done would not have been possible without Pete's support with food and logistics. So, this award was much deserved.

There was a good turnout at St Catherine's, including our High Sheriff, Dawn Haig-Thomas, who presented the awards and spoke very warmly and positively about our work.

Looking towards the winter, which is now here, we turn to our work with families. Lynne, our Youth and Families' Support Worker continues her excellent work amongst our families:

"We are currently working with 8 families providing mostly a listening ear, enabling them to explore or persist in situations they're finding difficult, but also support with form filling and encouraging young people to join SWAY activities.

We are looking forward to running Zoom Cooking again through the winter months, kicking off with a Spanish Omelette on 16th December and Chicken Korma on 6th January. Other planned dates in 2024, will be; 20th Jan, 3rd Feb, 17th Feb, 2nd March and 23rd March. We are hoping to provide some fun cooking together, learning new skills and on top of that provide a healthy meal for families."

## Money matters

Our Treasurer, Andrew Gardner, gave us an update on our finances for this last year recently. In 2022-23 we have managed very well with giving and grants, but we do face some challenges in the next year or two, as various grants come to an end and our budget grows with our expanded team. It has to be remembered that God has provided all we have needed up to now, but it is obviously a matter for your prayers and thoughts as we look to the future at the end of this year. We are ever grateful for all the support and funding you have provided. We believe the work we do is vital and important and we trust that future funding will be in place to continue and grow the work in the coming years.

## Two students – past and present

Two final, happy notes on which to finish – one past and one present. Peter had the utmost privilege to attend the wedding of our former Trainee Youth Worker, Andy Evans, in Worthing in mid-October. Andy is fully settled at a thriving church in Worthing (Maybridge Community Church) as their youth worker. He has married Grace Smith (now Evans of course) who has just started working with young people in schools as an Educational Mental Health Practitioner. They make an amazing couple. Andy is very well respected and loved for his work in Worthing. It was a wonderful wedding and we wish Grace and Andy every blessing in their future lives together.





Turning to the present and our present Trainee Youth worker, Olivia Stemmet has this to say, "I have just started a degree in Theology and Youth Work at Moorlands College. I have almost finished the first term. There has been a lot to learn throughout the lessons, as well as the tasks that have been set. I am really enjoying building my knowledge. I am also really enjoying my placement work with SWAY and I am excited that I am able to continue volunteering with the groups that I have been with over the past year, as well as helping with new groups."

Olivia is very modest. She has submitted her first two assignments, gaining a 73% (a 1st I think) in her first assignment. Olivia is very busy these days and we are enormously proud of her. Please support and encourage Olivia when you bump into her.

And finally .... Thanks

So, keep praying and supporting the work where you can. If we don't do it, who else will pick up these young people or their families or bring them together to grow and learn? We are committed to this vision for young people and their families in the South Wight and we appreciate every token of support that you can send our way, in whatever form that comes. As always, thank you with full hearts.

Here are three ways to give to SWAY by donating straight to our account through our PayPal Giving Page- <https://www.paypal.com/gb/fundraiser/charity/3225911> or Community Hub JustGiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/swaycommunityhub> (or use the barcode) or a standing order for a one-off gift.



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