

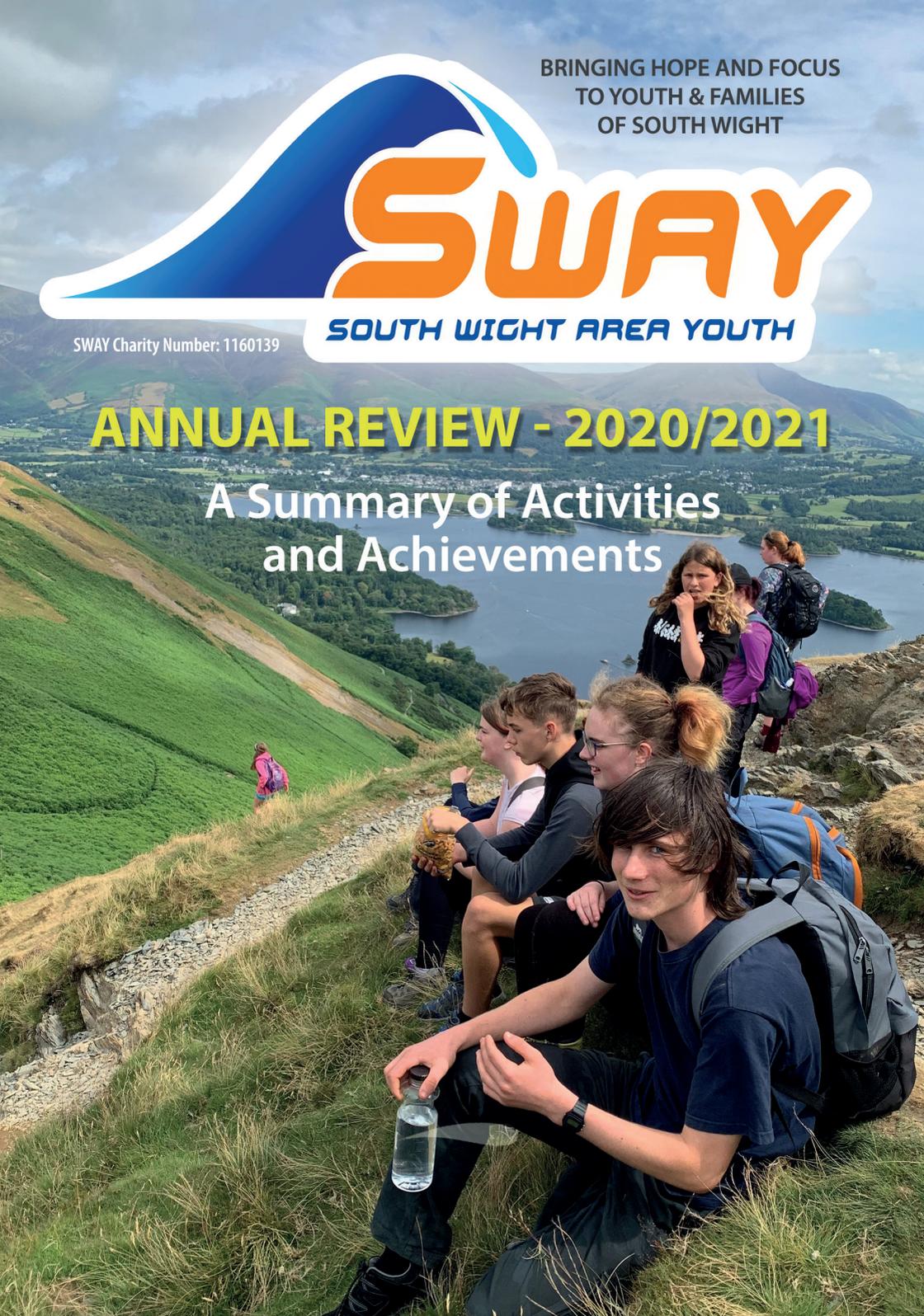
BRINGING HOPE AND FOCUS
TO YOUTH & FAMILIES
OF SOUTH WIGHT



SWAY Charity Number: 1160139

ANNUAL REVIEW - 2020/2021

A Summary of Activities and Achievements



AN OVERVIEW OF A CHALLENGING YEAR

Chair Persons Report – Jo Richards

It has been a very full and eventful year for SWAY considering the challenges of restrictions due to Covid and only recently have some restrictions eased.

There were some new additions to the staff over the year. Jack Norridge joined us in September for six months before taking a post in North Africa and Kieran, a second-year student at Moorlands, undertook a six-week placement towards the end of the spring term through to Easter.

Of course, behind them are a team of volunteers that allow SWAY to reach so many young people and their families in the area, as well as a team of active and energetic Trustees. Three new additions to the Trustees lower the average age considerably and I believe it has given us a new dynamic and energy. (Those new trustees are Katie and Dylan Brown and Emma Wells, for whom we are very grateful).

We are blessed with a tremendous number of (very adventurous) supporters, be that with prayer or finances. We have successfully applied for grants to meet the shortfall due to a lack of opportunities to raise funds. Our excellent standard of work continues to bring us to the attention of authorities and organisations, and our profile is climbing.

The vision is still burning, still relevant and still needed and although we have some terrific opportunities, we also have challenges; for this we trust in the God who we believe can guide, provide and inspire us as He has over the last year. The following review draws out the tremendous imagination and care that have been taken to develop all sorts of activities to keep young people and families connected and engaged.



SWAY'S 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. 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.



THE YEAR IN FOCUS

What a year it has been! Despite varying restrictions and set-backs at large in society, SWAY has maintained an active and busy schedule of events and contacts with both young people and their families. I think the team would say that during this last year they have worked harder than ever to provide hope and focus among the young people and the families whom we serve and with whom we work.

Before seeking to list and detail these activities, a word about the team. Jack Norridge, as has already been mentioned, who joined us in September and fitted in perfectly, made a big impression with the young people and soon became fully established in the team. Sadly, he left us at the end of March for mission work abroad to which he and Jocelyn felt called and we wish them well. Since then we have been on the lookout for a replacement part-time youth worker to work alongside Andy. We are very aware of the urgent need for that place to be filled.

In March we had the benefit of having Kieran Orr working with us for a few weeks on placement from Moorlands College. Having Kieran here simply underlined the importance of gaining a second worker alongside Andy.

The team of Andy Dorning, Jennie Burke (Youth & Families' Worker) and Catherine Hoare (Administrator), along with a variety of volunteers: Pete Taylor, Peter Johnson, Josh Osborn, Tom Wells, Dylan Brow, Ian Hoare and Jo Richards enable so much to be achieved than we imagined could be done. Our thanks to all who are involved in SWAY.

Here is a summary in table form of the activities and events leading up to Christmas 2020

Time 2020	Activity/Event	Who	What
Late summer 2020	Poetry group	5 people	A fine series of poems written
September to November	A series of weekly Fire-pit evenings	10 young people each time	These happened at Dunsbury Farm, Westover Farm, Stonelands and the Beach
September	Ride and Stride	12 young people + A Dorning and R Peckham	Cycling between 6 churches to raise money for the Historic Churches Trust
October half-term	Mountain-biking, aqua park and 2 kayaking journeys	33 young people involved	Phil Wells helped here and a lot of fun was had
November	IT training	3 parents	Accessing IT & parental controls
December	Niton star walk Mottistone Star walk	23 young people involved	Opportunity to get out as restrictions eased and see a night full of stars
December	Carol singing in Niton and Brighstone	12 young people in each village	Singing carols for elderly and vulnerable folk very much appreciated

So, January came around and with it another re-imposed lockdown and more home schooling via zoom. This was not an easy time for our young people, or indeed, for our families

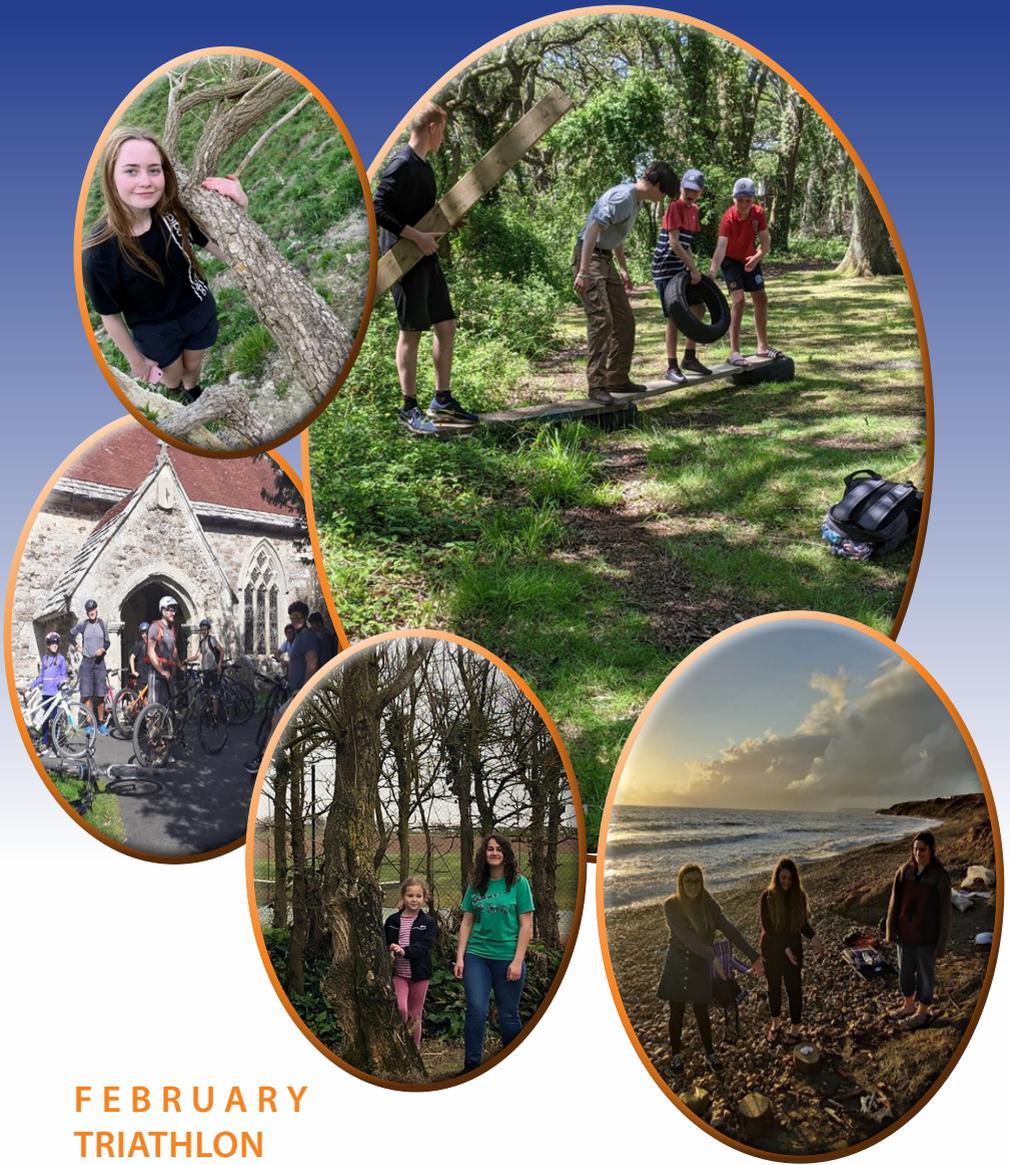
THE BOX PROJECT

Here is a good time to mention our Box Project, which started in early November. The idea was to provide the ingredients to make a meal and drop that off with families, then to lead the cookery session on Zoom for up to 20 families. This soon took off and reached capacity most weeks. It happened every 2 or 3 weeks from November through to April. A variety of shops and supermarkets provided us with ingredients and volunteers took round the food.



This has been a terrific project, due to be continued next winter, which gave families a sense of community at a difficult time.

In the early months of 2021 our Zoom groups began again in earnest: Rock Solid and a combined Roots/Attitude. Alongside this Jack and Andy had a number of 1-1 Zoom mentoring sessions with different young people that needed support.



FEBRUARY TRIATHLON

Come February we felt it was time to do something to aid the well-being of our young people; so was born the February Triathlon. We encouraged young people and their families to follow a Bible reading plan that took them through the whole of the Bible (well important sections of it anyway) in 28 days, write a journal and aim to complete 10000 steps a day. This was all to aid the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the young people. 9 young people (and often their families too) completed the challenge, but there were many more who attempted it and benefited from it.

Here is another table of events/activities post-Christmas.

Time 2021	Activity/Event	Who	What
January	Zoom Challenge evening event	14 young people from SWAY and 4 teams from Youth for Christ	6 Team challenges via Zoom using breakout rooms
February	Triathlon	14 young people/families	Read a passage each day, walk 10000 steps and write a journal
February	Minecraft model making	10 young people	Lead by Trustee Keith Plater
Easter week 1	Geo-caching Challenge	9 teams completed the challenge but more attempted it	Find 20 symbols around the South Wight
Easter week 2	Kayaking at Newtown	25 young people	Journey to Jersey Camp to see the seals
Late May	Re-opening of outdoor youth sessions	30 young people	Games in the local park and opportunity to hangout and chat as restrictions start to be lifted
June	Young leaders training morning	6 young people	Preparing for leading in the Lakes orienteering in Parkhurst Forest
June	Corf Day	30 young people	Kayak games, raft building and rope and plank challenges – plus a BBQ
June	Foot rally around Newport town centre	13 young people	Organised by Castlehold Baptist Church
June	Disc Golf x2	25 young people	At the Garlic Farm
July	Orienteering at Parkhurst	21 young people	Find the numbers in teams
July	Head-hunters	35 young people	Head-hunters
July	YFC Vibe BBQ	30 young people	Niton
July	Wildlife Walk	11 young people & families	Arreton Downs: Flora and fauna identification
July	Zoom Baking & Picnic	13 families	Picnic baking lead by Claire Critchison. Picnic at Medina Valley Centre



LAKES 2021 RESIDENTIAL REPORT

Having been prevented from going to the Lakes in 2020, we were very eager to go this year. Having secured minibuses from Ryde School and John's Club, for which we were very grateful, we set off to the Lake District with 20 young people and 6 Adult Leader's plus a van full of food and bags. We would eat nearly all of that food over the 4 days we were there, such was the appetite of the young people.

It would be fair to say that this was our most enjoyable and successful trip yet. We did one amazing mountain day which involved unscheduled scree slope walking, canoed on Derwentwater and scrambled down Stonycroft Ghyll, climbed Castle Crag and did some orienteering over High Rigg. It was a very busy and full schedule. The Youth Centre was ideal, though the lack of water a trial. During our thoughts for the day (morning and evening) we followed Abraham in his journey with God. Each Leader took a different part of the story and the young people listened eagerly as we tried to relate it to our lives and our trust in God. This really was a challenging and rewarding time for all present.

The team work of Leaders was excellent, the food was plentiful and tasty, the relationships between young people very positive. Our Young Leaders were responsive and so helpful. Thanks to the prayers and support of many, this year's residential was a huge success.

INTERVIEW WITH ANDY DORNING

What are your biggest frustrations of this last year?

It has probably been one of the strangest years I have ever experienced. The most frustrating part was how to plan activities and events, with restrictions changing all the time. However, I think we coped well as an organisation.

Coming out of lockdown, what are your main concerns for young people?

The pandemic has put a huge strain on many young people who were already struggling, and this pandemic has increased their struggle with mental health, their social isolation, their loss of routine, resulting in a breakdown in formal and informal support. Almost every young person has had to adjust to dramatic changes in their schools, routine and home life. Through our continued activities in SWAY we hope the families and young people have felt supported during the past 12 months. Our desire is to serve the community around us and we hope that we have done something towards that. My prayer over the next 12 months is that we can bring some joy and life experiences to support families and young people in their development and create opportunities to experience new challenges and activities.

How has the church coped with lockdown?

From a personal point of view the church has helped me keep going, knowing they are praying for the work of the charity and my family. It has been great having the opportunity to connect with so many over Zoom (Zoom does have some good points). The church support, financially and spiritually, has been amazing.

On the other hand, it has been very difficult to engage young people with 'online church'. It is not easy doing church over Zoom with young people. But over the last 12 months we have met with a number of families and young people either online or in person. We have offered prayer and practical support for these families and young people and I know the church has been standing with us during these times.



What are your greatest moments of joy these last 12 months?

I have a few highlights. We started our year with socially distanced Fire-pit evenings at a number of locations around the area and it was great to share these evenings with the young people. There is something special about sitting around a warm fire on a dark and cold autumn evening.

Our Box Project cooking together on a Friday evening has been great fun and I know, as a family, we love the community it has created. It was definitely one of the highlights of lockdown for us. Then there were the young people coming together, both in Niton and Brighstone, over two separate evenings to sing Christmas carols outside to the elderly and vulnerable.

There was the Easter kayaking session, after a winter of lockdown; it was great to be able to offer the young people the opportunity to explore Newton creek and we even got to see some seals.

The biggest surprise for me was being nominated and winning the Isle of Wight Radio Local Hero Award; but really it should be awarded to our amazing team and volunteers who support me in the work.

Six years into your time in SWAY, where do you see the charity going in the next 2/3 years?

I would like to see the charity grow and develop in it's support to young people and families. I'm excited with the prospect of a Community Hub to give the charity a base to offer and develop it's growing support to the rural communities.

How have you grown in your understanding of God's call on your life?

I have learned to become a little more patient, knowing that God has a plan for the work. Coming slowly to the understanding that we can't do it all ourselves, but can make a difference by showing God's love through our words, our actions and our deeds. This has been a slow process for me, but one which gives me peace when it all seems to be slow, or there are obstacles in the way or I get wrong. God is in charge of what we are doing in SWAY and that is good enough for me!



JENNIE BURKE

YOUTH & FAMILIES' WORKER

Families' Work for SWAY continued to adapt throughout 2020 within the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. I began to explore how we might continue to support our community and IT, food and craft resourcing offered successful and sustainable outcomes.

Two technology mornings led by our youth worker Jack Norridge, gave basic advice on Social Media, accessing the internet and IT and computer skills to several of our supported parents. Craft sessions using the skills of one of our trustees brought parents and families together. The Box Project enabled us to meet, albeit remotely, but it allowed us to continue to engage with parents and young people in the community.

The Box Project was launched in October thanks to support from a number of local shops and The Isle of Wight Council's Connect4Communities Winter Grant. A recipe was chosen, food sourced from local shops and supermarkets and a 'Box' of ingredients was delivered to the doorstep of families who had registered an interest. The Zoom session that took place the following evening brought parents and young people together to turn the ingredients into a meal for four. From October we cooked a variety of dishes: Shepherd's Pie, Apple Crumble, homemade Burgers, Fish and Chips, Chicken Korma and Flatbread, Macaroni Cheese and homemade Pizza. As part of our summer activities we baked an 'afternoon tea' followed by a picnic in a beauty spot on the Medina River following the lifting of restrictions.

SWAY continues supporting or befriending as appropriate without threat of discharge or time limits. Frequently our involvement with a family arises through the young

person attending our activities. Support of families continued within the Covid restriction guidelines (telephone, Zoom, meeting outside). Our area of involvement includes: Child in Need meetings (CIN) - Social Care; Team Around the Family (TAF) – Early Help and Strengthening Families; SENDIASS (Advocacy group for young people with special needs), CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Frontline (Debt Counselling) and Family Therapy, to name a few.

I am grateful for the support of staff and trustee colleagues over the last year. I have been encouraged that families have been empowered to move forward, become more resilient, have addressed issues and confided in SWAY to draw alongside as support.

FINANCIAL REPORT ANDREW GARDNER

It is now the normal pattern for SWAY to enter each new financial year (September to August) with a funding gap between what we have planned to spend in the year and what we are reasonably certain of receiving in grants and regular donations. This year started with total costs planned to be around £70,000 for the year, but with expected income of just under £56,000, so the gap was £14,000. This was to be made up by finding new grants to be applied for and by prayer that our gracious God would inspire generous donors to support SWAY with their gifts. Both of these have come to fruition; grants have been received from IoW Council, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Fund, Asda Foundation and the Co-op Neighbourly Community Fund. Additionally, God has answered our prayers, and several very generous donations have been received

from individuals, for which we are extremely grateful. Consequently, the original shortfall in our budget at the start of the year has been more than made up and we are forecasting that we shall end the year with a small surplus to add to our reserves.



COMMUNITY HUB – RICHARD WEBB

The team, tasked with progressing this vision, have worked hard to make this move closer to reality. There is still some way to go, but we are getting there. Susannah Seely and Didi Nicholson made an amazing journey around the UK in their 26 foot sailing boat beginning in April and completing it in June. They sailed 1753 miles and have so far raised around £12000 for SWAY and the Hub, which is wonderful; our thanks to them both

TAKING STOCK AND LOOKING FORWARD

As we look at the year ahead, there is much that is uncertain and there is much that brings challenge. Some of our major grants come to an end after this coming year and we shall need to replace them somehow. Our budget for this coming year is a little bigger with different opportunities opening up for us, which brings its own challenges. Once again, we begin with a funding gap, which we shall be working to reduce.

However, there are exciting challenges coming our way; the community hub, finding a new worker to support the team, stretching our influence wider, developing the Box Project and engaging a new generation of young people eager to work with us, learning new skills and new truths for their lives. We trust you will join with us in prayer and faithful support as we seek to bring hope and focus to lives across the South Wight.

As we come to the end of our annual review for another year, it is only right that we thank those who have supported us through this most challenging year. We must thank, first of all, the congregations of St Mary's of Brighstone and Brook, St Peter's and St Paul of Mottistone and Niton Methodist who continue to support the work with constancy. We are grateful for the support, particularly for our Residential to the Lakes, to the Rotary Clubs of Shanklin, Ventnor, Ryde, Sandown and Vectis Sunrise. We have enjoyed the support of the Joseph Rank Trust for another year, which has been an enormous help in balancing the books.

Listed below are the logos of the other Groups and Awarding Bodies that supported us in this last year, for which we remain very grateful. Without such support, Andy, Jennie, Catherine and our team of volunteers would not be able to do the work we do, nor would the young people and families have the benefit and help of SWAY in their lives.



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