



Bringing Hope and Focus to Youth & Families of South Wight



The King's Award
for Voluntary Service
The MBE for volunteer groups

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South Wight Youth Partnership | Charity Registration 1160139

The SWAY June 2026 Update

It is now eight months since the Lord Lieutenant, Susie Sheldon, opened the SWAY Hub on a glorious, sunny morning in late September. Whilst we are not quite where we want to be with the building, excellent progress has been made, which we want to feature in this edition of the Update.

But SWAY is bigger than the Hub in Chale Green and we want to share many of these other, vital aspects of our work, as well as feature some thanks and news of other matters.

Welcome changes

Firstly, we have two new additions to the team. Jack Norridge worked with us for a little while a few years back as a youth worker. He has now returned as our new part-time youth worker, which we are thrilled to record. Jack is a definite asset to our youth work team and he brings many skills and experience to the role. We look forward to his positive impact in the work. He has excellent rapport with the young people, which we saw in the Corf Camp weekend, as you will read about later.

Secondly, we have appointed a Café and Shop Supervisor, in the form of Dawnie Pearce. We are delighted to welcome Dawnie to the team at the Hub and we think she will make a huge difference to the smooth running of both the Shop and the Café. The role will be to develop the shop into a valuable feature of the community for Chale Green and its surroundings, but also to establish how and when the Café will be open. Dawnie will be responsible to build a team of volunteers to make all this happen. As Dawnie is a well established local resident, she will hopefully have all sorts of contacts to help with her role as Supervisor.

Grateful thanks

It is important to recognise the hard work and achievements of those who have contributed to SWAY in the last four or five years, which have not been without challenge and difficulty. Firstly, Richard Webb, who has been a Trustee from the beginning in 2014, and who has been overseeing the planning and building of the Hub since its inception in 2021. Richard has been meticulous and doggedly determined in his commitment to the project and we owe him much thanks for his sterling efforts.

Richard was our first Chair of Trustees from the beginning in October 2014 to



been Chair for the last 5 years. She has steered SWAY through some difficult moments in that time with grace, patience and steely determination and we are indebted to her faithful perseverance as Chair. She has now relinquished the Chair to Peter Johnson, but intends to stay on the Board of Trustees (thankfully!!). We are all grateful for that decision and look forward to her continuing commitment and wisdom.

September 2018. He turns a significant birthday later this year and intends to step down from being a Trustee at that juncture. It is important to recognise his major contribution to the growth of SWAY and the success of the Hub. His insistence on the importance of prayer has been greatly appreciated.

Secondly, Jo Richards has also been a Trustee from the beginning, but has also



Progress in the Hub

Returning to the Hub, allow us to give you an idea of developments since that opening eight months ago. Steph, our SWAY Manager, has been very busy, along with Abbi, our Admin whizz, in harnessing the opportunities the Hub affords us.

There have been regular Cuppa, Cake & Craft afternoons, a monthly Pantry for the community, Games Club on Thursdays,





and of course, our regular Chale Youth Group on Wednesday each week. We have continued to hold a monthly Café Church on a Sunday at 4.00 pm on the fourth Sunday of each month.

The Shop opened just after Easter, manned by a group of faithful volunteers, for a couple of hours each day. We hope to make this more regular and published locally, once Dawnie gets to grips with the role.

Equally, we are aiming to have the Café open at more regular hours once the team of volunteers is established. We aim to start small here, in terms of provision, but then build. In all of this, we are looking to involve and engage the immediate community. We are immensely grateful for the space that the Hub affords us to grow the community there.

Usual Groups

All of our usual groups have been running since the last Update - Rock Solid, Chale Youth Group, Roots, River Project Groups (4 groups in 3 primary schools), Zoom Cooking and Young Leaders' Meetings. We relish these regular opportunities to engage with young people from across the area. We remain grateful for all of our excellent volunteers who make these groups function for the benefit of our young people and their families.



We have begun a new group for older young people at the Hub on Tuesday evenings, as a chilled-out time to just chat, be together and play games. This has begun well with a small group attending, who would otherwise have nowhere to go in the evenings.



Seniors' Tea

On the 25th April, which was happily a lovely, sunny day, we held our first ever High Tea for Seniors at the Hub. Our Young Leaders conceived, planned, prepared and served the Tea to a very appreciative group of 35 Seniors from across the area. With reliable help from Catherine, Jo and Olivia, the Young Leaders provided a wonderful High Tea, followed by some stirring music from Alex and Steve, Barry, Keith and Peter, Floss and Ruby from our young people.

There was a delightful hum of conversation during the Tea. The feedback from the invited guests was very positive. What a wonderful way to connect the old with the young! The Young Leaders themselves enjoyed putting the whole event together and are keen to repeat the occasion with a new group of Seniors in the early Autumn. It was a very special event, as you will see from the pictures.

One of our guests said the High Tea was "better than The Royal at Ventnor". Another sent us a lovely card saying "thank you for a very pleasant afternoon of fun, friendship, music and delicious eats. Very much appreciated."



Corf Camp

What a scorching weekend, full of fun, food and activity the last weekend of May was! 35 young people came to Corf to camp with us and enjoyed a fun-packed weekend, that included archery, canoeing all the way to the Ningwood bridge, an energetic game of capture the flag, campfire songs, an obstacle course, lots of lovely food and a brilliant service at Newtown Church on the Sunday morning.



It was an utterly splendid time, though quite exhausting. One young person, who had not been before, commented, " Thank you so much for letting me come on this camp. I have really had lots of fun. It is great that SWAY makes these trips possible."

One lady from the Church commented on how well-behaved and pleasant our young people were, who flooded their congregation on Sunday. That reflection was heart-warming to hear.



Raising awareness and raising funds - The Emerald Ball and the Ultra Challenge

Steph organised a themed Charity Ball (The Wizard of Oz) at Northwood House to raise funds jointly for SWAY and Teenage Cancer Trust. Steph managed to garner an attendance of around 90 - 100 at this fine event and raised £1,800 for SWAY, which was very commendable.





Dan Bell and Olivia's Dad, Jacobus Stemmet, took on the first half of the Island Ultra Challenge on 2nd May and completed it in less than eight hours! In doing so they raised another £1,200 for SWAY. Our thanks to Steph, Dan and Jacobus for their sterling efforts.

Summer Plans

As we move into the summer, we shall be planning a variety of activities for young people, not least our Young Leaders Celebration Party on Compton Beach, where we shall be making some awards that reflect the year of volunteering as Young Leaders.

On Friday 26th June, we are hosting a Cheese and Wine Evening at The Hub with a presentation of SWAY's work this year for all of our Friends of SWAY. Invitations to this event have gone out and we look forward to seeing many of our Friends there. There will be an opportunity to hear from our Young People, Staff and Trustees. Please let Abbi know if you are intending to come.

We will be starting a new project, 'Summer Fun', for Year 6 young people during July & August. This project is funded through the Isle of Wight Council Community Capacity Grant as part of a pilot to provide more support for Isle of Wight young people as they move from Primary School to High School. Our sessions will build on the success of our schools work, The River Project. Through fun activities, challenges, and learning

new skills we will build confidence, increase independence and build friendships ahead of High School. Sessions will run once a week throughout the school holidays. More information, and a booking link, will be shared soon.

Hector MacInnes, a visiting artist, has been commissioned to work on a project around St Catherine's Oratory (the Pepperpot). This is part of CAN YOU HEAR US?, an island based project, intended to give young people a creative outlet. Members from SWAY and Isle of Wight National Landscape's youth council will be participating in sessions making loudhalers and visiting the Oratory for some sound recording.

The Brecons Trip

We also look forward again to our Summer Residential in the Brecon Beacons. We are again staying near Llanbedr and are in the process of planning a great time for the young people. We have had no shortage of young people wanting to go on this trip. In fact, we have a waiting list. We can take 28 young people and there are nine adults, which makes 37 in total heading off to Wales on 30th July for five days of fun and adventure.

On Friday 10th July the young people and adults going to Brecons will be invited to take part in a Pre-Brecons Night Walk from Freshwater Bay to Carisbrooke Castle. This 17 mile trek is intended to prepare them for scaling the peaks of South Wales.

May we ask once again for your help here in sponsorship. Each place costs around £350 and we have increased the cost to the young people to £225 this year. If you can help sponsor a young person (£125 for each young person), we would be most grateful. Last year the cost to SWAY of this Residential, as a result of your help and a generous grant, was a mere £250. We are hoping that the same might be the case this year. If you can help, please let Abbi know. We would be most grateful.

Encouragements never fail to lift the spirits

We usually begin our Team Meetings on a Wednesday morning at the Hub, by going round the room and asking for any encouragements encountered in the previous week. This is usually a very inspiring moment before getting down to real business. Allow us to record here some of those encouragements.

- We have seen a number of young people growing in their faith and being prepared to vocalise that faith at gatherings.

- We have seen the Chale Group Youth Group adopting and treating the Hub as their own special place to hang out and meet together.
- We have seen really big numbers attending Roots and seeming to enjoy being together, in a noisy and energetic way! This has been preceded by good attendance at a Maths Club, run by Peter for the Year 11's in the group.
- We have enjoyed meeting our 16 River Project children and seeing them develop in their confidence as they approach the switch to High School, which is such an important transition for them.
- We have had some excellent Zoom Cooking evenings, with young people showing great leadership and confidence in leading the cooking.
- We are seeing the Hub being used more by the community, with volunteers helping in the Shop and acting as Hub Hosts in the mornings, which allows Steph and Abbi to get on with their jobs.

A few Volunteers

To sum things up, we thought it might be good to credit and name some of our excellent volunteers.

Firstly, there is Louis, who has helped us enormously to set up the IT at the Hub and numerous other important jobs to do with the Hub. Louis comes from Cowes and has been invaluable to the Team. Then there's Lorella, who lives locally, and helps with the Chale Youth group on Wednesdays. Baba, who lives locally also, has been helping with the River Project and really enjoys chatting with the children. Christopher, who wanted to volunteer with us and now helps out at Roots on Thursdays, attended Corf and is a friendly face for the young people to talk with. Of course, Catherine Hoare, our previous Administrator, still inputs a great amount of time and energy supporting the Young Leaders' Group and ROOTs. We are enormously grateful for her experience, wisdom and care. Finally, there is Pete Taylor, who cooks for us on our various trips and events. Once again at Corf, he provided us with great food that kept us going.

Of course, there are many more regular volunteers, who have been volunteering for years and we want to say thank you to all of them. We would not be able to do this without you. You are all appreciated.

It goes without saying that if you know anyone with spare time on their hands, wanting to 'give back to the community' or just looking for an opportunity to expand their CV, we are always happy to welcome more volunteers! Do get in touch.

Volunteer Thank You Picnic

To celebrate Volunteers' Week and to show our sincere appreciation for all the time, energy, and dedication they give, we invited all our volunteers to a Volunteer Thank You Picnic at Mottistone Gardens on Thursday 4th June. The Picnic itself was provided by SWAY. Abbi enjoyed the company of five of our volunteers on a lovely sunny afternoon at Mottistone.

Please keep us in your prayers and thoughts as we navigate another busy summer. We are thankful for all our supporters and grateful to God for His goodness and guidance in all we do.





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If you would like to become a **regular donor** please complete the Standing Order mandate below.

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To the manager (your bank name): _____

Bank Address: _____

Sort Code: _____ - _____ - _____ Account number: _____

Account in the name of: _____

Please pay to: South Wight Area Youth Partnership (SWAY)

HSBC Account no: 81783211 Sort Code: 40-34-26

Please pay: monthly / quarterly / annually *

Commencing (dd/mm/yyyy): _____ / _____ / _____

The sum of: £2 [] £5 [] £10 [] £20 [] Other _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

If you are able to **Gift Aid** your donation complete this form and return to: SWAY, The Hub, Spanners Close, Chale Green, PO37 2HY

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