



Wiltshire Youth for Christ Annual Report 2015-16

Wiltshire YFC Annual Report 2015-16

Wiltshire YFC is a project within the registered charity Bath Youth for Christ (1165745) and as such it operates within the overall charitable objectives for the public benefit set out within the constitution of Bath Youth for Christ.

This report reproduces relevant parts of the Bath Youth for Christ Annual Report as a standalone document for the purpose of informing those interested only in the work of Wiltshire YFC for the last financial year. A financial statement for the project is provided, which includes a share of the overheads for management and administration.

This report covers the period September 2015-August 2016.

Wiltshire YFC has an advisory group, which enables the work in Wiltshire to be shaped by people who live in Wiltshire. The advisory group meets regularly throughout the year to provide accountability, support and challenge to the staff team.

The advisory group for 2015-16 included:

- Rev David Howard (Potterne, Devizes)
- James Vaughton (Bradford on Avon)
- Alison Bennett (Trowbridge)
- Barry Blackford (Melksham)
- Barbara Meardon (Diocese of Salisbury)

The Wiltshire YFC staff team includes:

- Dan Webb (Trowbridge)
- Steve Dewar (Potterne and Devizes area)
- James Vaughton (Director)

Wiltshire YFC benefits from a team of about 20 volunteers who support the delivery of youth work and mentoring delivered by the organisation

Wiltshire YFC Financial Report 2015-2016

**Wiltshire Youth for Christ
Income and Expenses for year to August 2016**

	Notes	FY16	FY15
<u>INCOME</u>			
Individual Donations		5,362	700
Church Donations		1,699	17,833
Grants		26,197	
Fundraising		3,626	
Schools and Youth Work		4,400	2,550
Drawdown from previous donations	1	23,386	36,000
Miscellaneous		11	
Total Incoming Resources		64,681	57,083
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Costs of developing voluntary income	2	418	793
Wiltshire YFC staff		56,120	49,910
Training	3	629	334
Meals and Staff Welfare	2	329	164
Travel and Motoring Costs		333	
Total costs for Charitable Activities		57,411	50,408
Rent		1,200	
Office Admin	4	4,815	4,947
Telephone and Internet	3	742	373
Insurance	3	122	199
IT and Office Equipment	2	167	584
Marketing	2	15	793
Payroll	2	245	198
Gifts and Entertaining	5		101
Total for Administration		6,105	7,195

Total Resources Expended		63,934	58,396
---------------------------------	--	---------------	---------------

SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		747 -	1,313
--------------------------	--	--------------	--------------

- 1) From a one-off donation in 2012 of £100,000 made towards the costs for a three year period March 2014- Feb 2017
- 2) 20% of BYC expenses
- 3) 10% of BYC Expenses
- 4) 20% of Admin and Director staff time, including pension and social security costs

Wiltshire Youth for Christ Balance Sheet

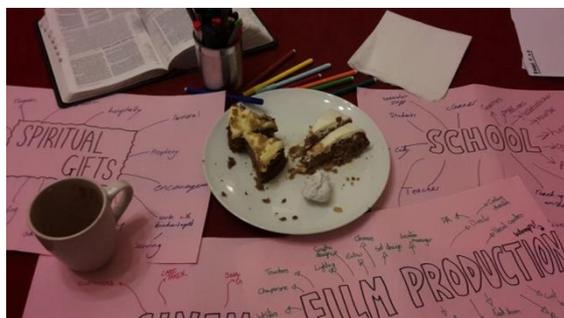
Restricted Fund Balance	5	29,947	53,333
--------------------------------	----------	---------------	---------------

- 5) Held in Bath Youth for Christ bank accounts at year end

A growing and evolving organisation

In October 2014 we launched Wiltshire YFC, initially with one full time staff member. At the beginning of the year we faced some challenges with regards to our partnership with St. Thomas' Church in Trowbridge. We are thankful that, although the formal partnership came to an end, we continued to have a positive relationship with St Thomas'. We continued to work with young people from the church and one of the congregation volunteered with us in Youth Stream.

The change resulted in the reshaping of Dan Webb's role - initially as a three day/week role, but then increasing to four days, enabling him to grow the work in Trowbridge. Steve Dewar has been in post for 5 years and carries out schools and community work across the Parish of Potterne area.



Potterne, Worton and Marston Parish and schools work

During the year, Steve visited 5 Primary schools on a regular basis and was involved in 2 Secondary schools. This included delivering assemblies, the Accompanying Project (providing additional transitional support from year 6 into year 7), PSHE and lesson support in secondary schools.

In response to a question about the "Accompanying Project", two lads described how they had been impacted by the sessions:

"I have definitely changed my attitude to life and my aggression towards other people and my mood has dramatically changed my actions."

"I have changed my anger, it isn't as often anymore, so I feel way better. Steve and Mark you've made me listen and helped me a lot."

This year Steve also facilitated 15 members of Minnesota Youth for Christ as part of their UK mission tour. Steve arranged for the team to deliver some music lessons at Devizes Secondary School and visit some of the local primary schools, as well as carrying out some community work in the area.

Throughout the year, he managed a small but committed team of local residents and volunteers to help run the Potterne Youth Club, deliver weekly Youth Café sessions and organise and facilitate other community events including football matches and socials trips. Within the rural and isolated area he was also called upon to support some families affected by social and financial struggles or those who had been referred to social services. As a Lay Pastoral Assistant, Steve served the local parishes and sat on the St Mary's Church Parish Church Council. The area experienced major changes of local clergy and the unknown period of interregnum meant that Steve was called upon by schools and churches to help fill the void.

Wiltshire Council Connections

Responding to cuts in Wiltshire Council Youth Services, Wiltshire YFC was keen to help support and connect with young people and other organisations. Steve regularly attended Area Board meetings across the county and Local Youth Networks (LYN's), which kept him informed of ongoing changes and allowed him to be an advocate where necessary. Steve connected with Local Youth Facilitators within the surrounding area which led to a better understanding of each other and a good working relationship with Wiltshire Council. The support and endorsement of the Wiltshire YFC Pop Up was a positive way for organisations, churches and communities to work together serving our young people.

Wiltshire YFC Pop Up Youth Café Project



Steve Dewar organised these events, developing community links and signposting young people to local networks. The aim was simple - *to provide a safe and positive activity for teenagers (13-19) during the 2016 summer holiday*. The project was intended as a detached youth work event and we wanted to create opportunities for the local community to engage with and encourage local young people. The Wiltshire Council Area Boards provided funding and we

received practical support from Devizes and Trowbridge Town Councils. Local churches, including St James' Church (Devizes) and Kingfisher Church (Trowbridge), Devizes Youth Group, The Conservation Volunteers (local provider of the National Citizen Service) and local residents were involved.

In Devizes the *Pop Up* was located on the Green close to the centre of town. In Trowbridge, it was set up at Paxcroft Mead for 2 days and Stallards Park for 3. This helped engage with different young people across the community. On average, around 20 people came each day, with a high of 30 young people on some days. One highlight was being able to help resolve an argument between two lads during a football game. Encouraged to take some time out and reflect on what had happened resulted in an apology and the young people playing on the same team! Isn't this what life is like sometimes? And we are called to play our part.

Trowbridge

The work of Wiltshire Youth for Christ in Trowbridge over the last year has been a journey of steady growth and developing roots in the community, as you will see below in the various areas of ministry:

The Pulse

"Here, I can come as I am and experience God." – Tom, 15 years old.

Wiltshire YFC took the responsibility of leading this monthly worship event for 13-19 year olds back in February and more recently, relaunched it for September 2016. One of the biggest changes we made was to create a more "grassroots" approach, creating a young leaders team – a group of about 6 young people from different church backgrounds – who lead fundamental aspects of the event, such as prayer ministry, leading discussions and delivering talks. This participation is in addition to setting up the venue in a creative way, leading worship and playing an active part in the development of the team through biblical reflections and prayer for one another.

We also aim to make *The Pulse* an event to resource young people and youth workers in the local area – offering an additional level of discipleship and connection for these groups in this challenging rural context.

For the first meeting of the academic year, over 30 young people and volunteers from over 7 different churches met at Coffee #1 in the centre of Trowbridge to share highlights of the summer and encounters they had with God. The manager of the shop, who wasn't a Christian, enjoyed the evening so much that he waived the charge and offered us to use the venue again at any time he wanted!

Youth Stream

"I feel like I'm valued within the group, people want me to be there." – Lydia, 16.

"I'm able to talk, discuss and learn God's Word with people at a similar stage of life as me." – Esther, 19.

Youth Stream started as an evening youth group connected with St Thomas Church in Trowbridge and has grown as those who attended started bringing their friends! It is now a weekly discipleship group that meets on a Tuesday night, consistently attracting around 10 young people. Youth Stream exists to meet the needs, in a small way, for a true sense of belonging and journeying together in this rural area. Over the last few months we have covered a number of themes, including "The Nature of Discipleship", "The Father's Love" and, most recently, "Spiritual Disciplines" (which aims to explore the importance of fundamental Christian practises like prayer, fasting and service).

Mentoring

Since April 2016 we have built on Alison Bennett's (local church leader) initiative - *Connect Mentoring* - in schools and have grown our volunteer team to 6 mentors who meet weekly with 1-4 students in 2 secondary schools in Trowbridge.

Here is what Alice, one of our mentors, has to say about her experience: *"I have been involved in mentoring for a few months and have found it encouraging. When I heard about the chance to help out youngsters in our local schools I offered to help, and I have been going along for a couple of months now. We sit and do stuff together, and slowly I can ask about how school/home is going and we just chat about options and what might work to change outcomes. It seems to have been helpful for the young person I met with last term, who feels they no longer need the help, and I am looking forward to meeting up with*

someone new this week. The school seems to value us, and it is great that the church is able to interact with schools in this way."

Church Support

An integral part of the vision of Wiltshire YFC is to build up and equip the local church to deliver effective youth ministry where needed. Through conversations with local church leaders and young people themselves, we realised that some churches in Trowbridge need help with the ongoing discipleship of their youth. Needs include issues such as young people not having a sense of "belonging" in church, a lack of skilled volunteers, session resources and a depth of understanding of youth ministry.

This led us to explore and discuss, with 2 local churches, ways in which we might make effective discipleship happen. We are working on the possibility of meaningful partnerships with local churches to be created where we can resource, train and equip volunteers in these churches to kick-start discipleship.

The Quest

During summer 2016, Dan and James took a group of four lads from the Youth Stream discipleship project on *The Quest*, our three day discipleship adventure in the Brecon Beacons. We had a fantastic time away with the group, who really grew through the experience. 'The Quest' intentionally has no real "programme", but aims to create space to allow God to speak to us in what may be different ways.

One of the young people, Dan, commented: *"The quest was great fun! I particularly enjoyed praying for each other on the walk and listening for words from God for another person on the team...I also loved how we had space to pray individually with God at times and really speak to him without having any distractions when we were down by the river. I'm so glad I went as I had such a great time!"*



For Ben, it was a powerful time of connecting with God and growing in his friendships with the others: *"The Quest opened up a "new" way of worship to me which turned out to be something strangely natural, yet almost alien to what I see in my current culture of Christian worship and praise."*

The campsite we used had a stream running through it and we were able to use this as a sacred place for prayer, thought and biblical reflection during the three days. After the first night one boy, talking to another in the group was overheard to say "That was amazing, I have never done anything like that!"

This remains an experimental and embryonic part of our work, but one we hope to repeat having now run *The Quest* for the last couple of summers.

Work in other parts of Wiltshire too...

As well as the villages and Trowbridge, there were other areas of development in the work of Wiltshire YFC. We continued to explore new opportunities and ideas to help make the work sustainable in the area and had a few opportunities to look at how we support local churches to reach children and young people in their communities. During the year James worked with a church in Melksham to explore the possibility of establishing the *Accompanying Project* in a local school and had conversations with a church leader in the Chippenham area about a possible new worker post.

Wiltshire YFC Youth Leader gatherings

Wiltshire YFC led a monthly gathering of youth workers, meeting in various locations in the county. The YFC team, along with workers from Trowbridge, Bradford on Avon, Warminster, Melksham and Chippenham met together with the aim of strengthening relationships, sharing challenges and joys, providing support, praying and growing together.

Bradford on Avon

James (Vaughton) developed a good relationship with the Community Youth Officer (council) in Bradford on Avon and worked to support the development of youth work in the town. During the year he joined the youth club committee for the town. Furthermore, James delivered the *Accompanying Project* in Fitzmaurice Primary School. The school are keen to develop delivery and so we hope this work in the school will grow in the coming year.