

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2020

What a year! If you had mentioned, even in January, what the year ahead held we would not have believed you. From the beginning of the year which was business as normal to an end of a year where so much had been cancelled or paused; and mask wearing, hand sanitiser and Track and Trace requirements have become the 'norm'. Despite the many challenges it has been great to be able to adapt, sometimes with less than 24 hours notice, to the situations as they unfurled. Despite the challenges we have been able to stay true to our vision and values and able to adapt and even grow our work and what follows in this Annual Report will show some of the changes but also some of the new and exciting responses that we have been able to develop

First a word of thanks to all those who have given time, money and energy to being part of shine. Whether that be the Trustees, the staff, the incredible team of volunteers (including many children and young people), the partner organisations who we work together with, all the fantastic Diocesan staff who have encouraged, equipped and supported us, the individual donors, or the foundations, companies and trusts that have given so generously towards the work we are truly grateful

Messy Saturday

Messy Saturday is our family focussed expression of Church which meets monthly in Pinetrees Community Centre centring around a first hour of messy, crazy, craft based on the theme of the month with colouring, painting, making, goo and gunk, banging or sticking its great to see all ages getting involved. In January we covered the theme of 'Our Incredible Universe' with planets hanging from the ceiling, February's Valentines theme explored what it means to love God, ourselves and others - even those who we don't know or like! By the time March arrived hand sanitiser was being broken out and there was an air of anxiety of what was to come. But despite this many families still enjoyed a fun afternoon of looking at 'Fixing our eyes on Jesus'

This was the last Messy Saturday 'in person' for what is now over 12 months. When Lockdown started we wanted to remain in touch with families and so looked for other ways to bring Messy Saturday to them. On Good Friday we went live on Facebook with people from various locations around Pinehurst and even Germany presenting stories, crafts and songs. Although we had a small number of people viewing at the time, the video has now had over 600 views. Due to the huge technical demands of presenting a live event we decided to take a different approach going forward.

Our first Messy Saturday "in a bag" was delivered in May with the theme of The Good Samaritan. Over 40 bags were delivered across Pinehurst and Penhill and wider afield with a combined 144 people in the households. Along with the resources in the bags we put together a YouTube play-list with songs, games and instructions for the activities in the bags - many of them led by the children!! Following on from the

success of this we did Messy Saturday in June (Noah), July (Olympics) and November (Advent) which followed a similar format.

In December we had Messy Christingle in person which was very exciting with 25 guests complete with giant Christingle!



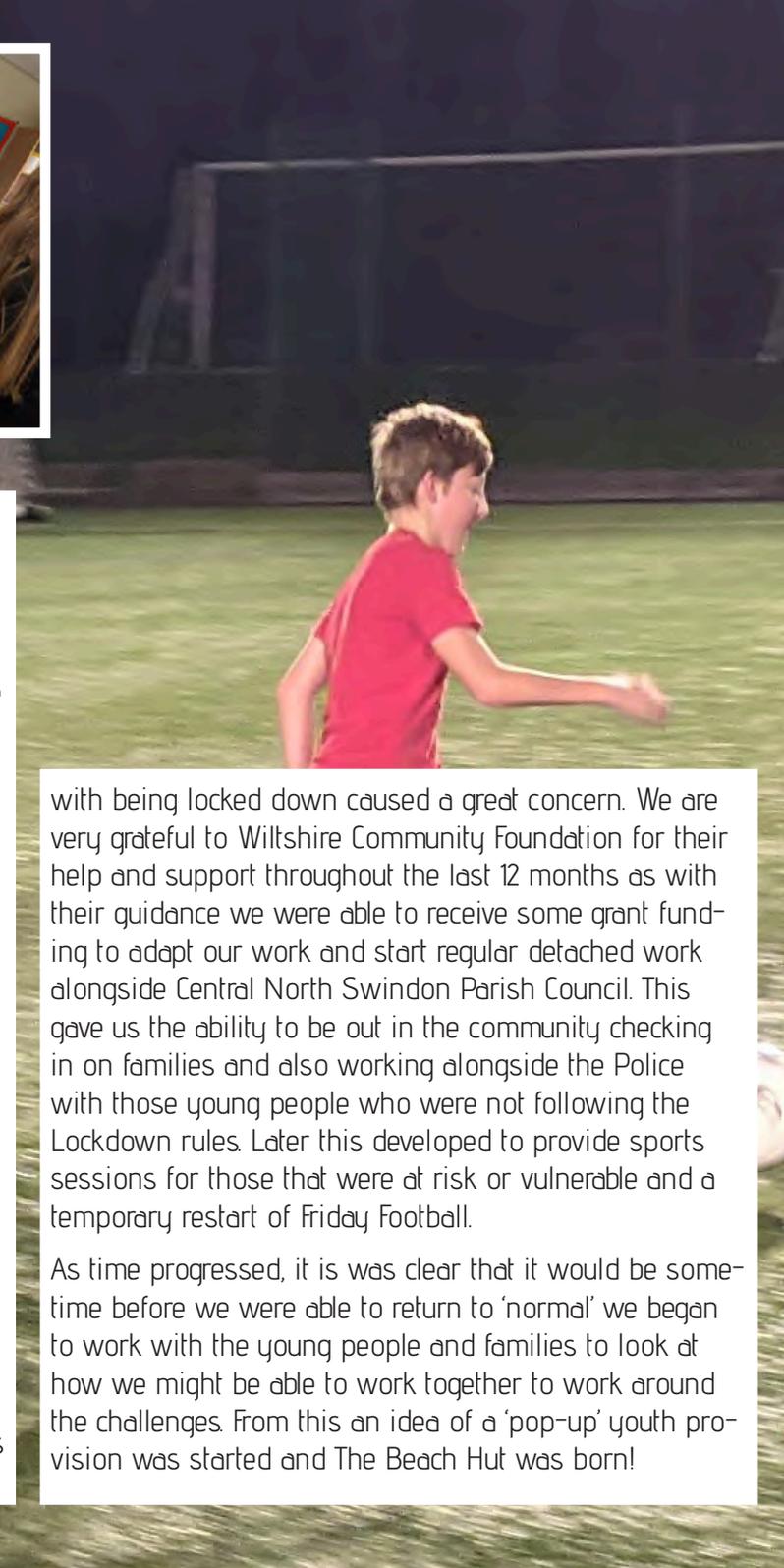


Youthwork

The beginning of 2020 saw a continued growth in the number of young people attending Youthie. Both groups were seeing new faces and we had been able to develop the inclusion of health and fitness sessions in the main hall while the 'normal' session was going on. Friday Football continued to go from strength to strength with up to 100 young people - despite the cold - coming to join in the sports session - many of them staying behind each fortnight to join in the Sports Cafe.

As the first Covid-19 Lockdown started Youthie, Friday Football and Friday Youth all had to close, and where possible move online. For some this was a move that they enjoyed and had the technology to engage with but for many this was not something that they wanted to connect with. Issues of self-esteem / self-image that being on 'camera' can produce whereas for others the lack access to technology - even a mobile phone - was a massive barrier, let alone the challenges of connecting to Zoom! Some of these we were able to overcome, and held up to 4 online sessions a week, but like many youth organisations across the country, interest waned after a month or so.

One big concern was the isolation and challenging home situation that many of the young people faced when life was 'normal' and the idea of many of the young people we work

A photograph of a young boy in a red t-shirt running on a grassy field. He is captured in motion, with a blurred background, suggesting he is running quickly. The field is green and appears to be an outdoor sports area.

with being locked down caused a great concern. We are very grateful to Wiltshire Community Foundation for their help and support throughout the last 12 months as with their guidance we were able to receive some grant funding to adapt our work and start regular detached work alongside Central North Swindon Parish Council. This gave us the ability to be out in the community checking in on families and also working alongside the Police with those young people who were not following the Lockdown rules. Later this developed to provide sports sessions for those that were at risk or vulnerable and a temporary restart of Friday Football.

As time progressed, it was clear that it would be some time before we were able to return to 'normal' we began to work with the young people and families to look at how we might be able to work together to work around the challenges. From this an idea of a 'pop-up' youth provision was started and The Beach Hut was born!

The Beach Hut

The Beach Hut is a young person led initiative providing a 'pop-up' provision for local families and young people from a converted container located on The Circle, Pinehurst, Swindon. We approached Beard Construction to see whether they might be able to help supply a 'site office'. The young people met with Beard to tell them of their idea only to discover one of the managers was involved in mentoring some of the local young people and the person in charge of their site buildings lived just two roads away! Just a few weeks later saw the arrival of what is now known as the Beach Hut!



Started initially to provide Covid Safe positive community activities for local children and other young people during the summer holidays it has grown to become a hub for a number of different things while community facilities have been closed. Each weekday during the holidays the young people and workers provided some great activities including art, craft and sport workshops as well as Forest Schools and even boxing sessions. It has been a brilliant resource and enabled us to support over 100 young people and local families - particularly where locally there was significant issues with child exploitation, drug dealing and youth violence.

With Lockdown restrictions continuing Beard were kind

enough to allow us to continue using the Beach Hut and over the Autumn term with drop-in sessions after school, youthwork in the evenings several days a week and activities during the half-term and Christmas holidays. There have also been a number of other community projects that the young people, working with Pinehurst Initiative Forum, have run including the summer food project, the Uniform Swap Shop, a community Halloween Drop-in and a Christmas Toy project. We are really grateful to Wiltshire Community Foundation, #iwill (through PIF), Sovereign Housing, Wiltshire Sport Partnership, ASDA and of course Beard Construction for making this great project happen!



Shine 'Church'

Yet again the beginning of the year started with great fun and enthusiasm looking forward to an exciting year. January saw a group of our local women join a group at Pattern Church's Alpha Course, held at the Roundabout Cafe in town. It was a great time and produced so many great discussions both there and at shine breakfast. The Alpha weekend was a very special moment for many reasons - including our guys being part of a Spice Girls tribute!!

Shortly after the weekend the sessions had to move online as meeting in person was no longer allowed. Despite this we managed to finish all the sessions and got ready to start it again in April but this time fully online and lead by two amazing young women who had joined the previous course. Again it was a great time and worked surprisingly well online and made some great friends who continue to be part of shine.

While shinebreakfast has been online on occasions the lack of technology, accessibility challenges and having a huge amount of kids involved that 'Zoom Church' doesn't work that well. When Lockdown restrictions allowed we moved to being outside and had some great times exploring Church outdoors at various areas of the community including having a BBQ breakfast on the Venny and exploring God in nature at the Urban Forest!

All of what is contained in this report we believe is part of who we are as a Church and its great to continue to see the way that God is using shine in so many different ways.



Uniform Swap Shop

Our swap shop has steadily been gaining popularity since we began it but this year it came into its own!

With Covid affecting world-wide distribution parents were often unable to get hold of uniform. Which meant that we were inundated with requests. We set up the Swap Shop by the Beach Hut and at St. Peters Church, Penhill and we had over 40 families visit us we were able to swap over 300 items of clothing, saving families a huge amount of money and the worry of missing uniform.



Bridge the Gap

Our heart and passion to continue to support those most in need in our community has been critical this year. In February half term our amazing Bridge the Gap (BTG) volunteers helped provide some amazing food for 25 guests. As with all our activities when the pandemic hit we needed to rethink how we supported families whilst keeping everyone safe.

As we were unable to cook food for families as we normally would, we instead created Dinner in a Bag. With the support of ASDA and Swindon Academy we delivered 'Dinner in a Bag's to 35 families per week over the summer holidays. Each bag had a recipe card and ingredients to make a balanced meal to feed their family. Alongside the recipe cards we recorded Youtube videos of the amazing Jean Edwards (Catering Manager at Swindon Academy and BTG volunteer) making the recipe, teaching families basic kitchen skills and giving them the confidence to cook from scratch more regularly. Over the summer holidays we delivered 6 separate bags to each family with 7 recipes in total.



Swindon Academy

We continue our Chaplaincy work at Swindon Academy. The first months of the year saw us support students to work on creating a piece of community art to remember Holocaust Memorial Day. Following this after several months work a small group of really passionate students helped run a whole week of activities highlighting the Climate Emergency including activities in 'The Street' and the students leading assemblies which they were so good at. When opportunity has allowed we have also been able to run a cake sale fund-raiser with the Young Carers club we run and supported two students (whose parents had experienced homelessness) do the Threshold Housing Link Sleepout with students in Azone (a unit for students who struggle with mainstream education) which was brilliant and during the night we were visited by the Threshold Outreach Team who responded to questions and discussions about the whole issue of homelessness.

March saw the closure of school for Lockdown. As it was Mothers Day that the weekend of the lockdown we gave out 120 bunches of flowers with a little verse and message of support as we knew how many were feeling very anxious. Just a few days later become a Front-line School for key worker children and vulnerable students with up to 300 children attending across the 3 sites. We were asked to help provide community activities that the students could engage with. This included making over 300 craft boxes on behalf of Scrapstore which went out to local schools and families, an afternoon gardening, and making over 100 food parcels to go out to families that were struggling because of Lockdown.

As various conditions were eased we were able to continue to do detached work in the school playground and able to do virtual assemblies for both Primary and Secondary and a 'live' remembrance assembly broadcast to the whole school! Sadly a number of children have lost parents or family members due to Coronavirus or other tragic circumstances and we continue to work with the school and parents/carers to provide emotional and practical support.



Team

Alongside Simon (Pioneer Minister) and the fantastic Becky (Support and Development worker), we were privileged to have two incredible young women from the German organisation GVS placed with us. Michele Trifonov (2019-20) & Noemi Werner (2020-21) have been an incredible blessing to us and so much of what we have done was made possible by their hard work and dedication. It was with great sadness that Michelle was recalled back home at the start of Lockdown however she continued to support the work through online sessions. She was able to come back in July for a few weeks to help with the Beach Hut.

We also waved a sad goodbye as both Jan and Andy left the Youthie team but it was great to welcome Rowan Kikke, Amy Cox and Emma Halls in their place as workers. We have also been blessed by a huge amount of volunteers who have helped with all areas of the work. To name but a few: Kass, Tara, Jean, Jenny, Crispian, Rob, Sam, Whitney, Kathy, Jodie, Joe, Andie, Carol, Curly, Lauryn, Haley, Jenny, all the youth volunteers and the fantastic trustees Keith Lamdin, Amy Cox, Phil Ashby, Andie Halls, Dave & Heather Blandford and our amazing Treasurer Chris Pope.

Finally it was exciting to congratulate Simon, the Pioneer Minister, as he was ordained Priest in a vastly stripped down service at Bristol Cathedral in October.



Partnerships

We continue to work closely with other organisations and agencies including Swindon Academy, St. Peters and St. Marys Church, Central North Swindon Parish Council, Swindon Youth for Christ, as well as being part of Pinehurst Initiative Forum (PIF). We were also grateful to Pattern Church with their help welcoming our group to Alpha.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding of all those we have the privilege of working with is core to our work. Throughout 2020 we worked both within shine and with other partners to ensure high standards of practice inc. Safely recruiting new staff and volunteers, a continuous programme of professional development and training. Due to the nature of our work with those at risk and on the margins we continued to ensure proper recording concerns and referring significant issues to statutory agencies inc. Police, Swindon MASH and working closely with Swindon Academy. We also continued to sit on the Multi-agency Partnership boards where we were able to work with Police, Housing, Fire, Youth engagement, local councillors etc to work together to tackle emerging issues. We were able to refer 5 young people to SWIFT the new Police programme working with young people at risk of criminal exploitation.



Thanks

We are grateful to the following organisations for their kind support and / or donation:

ASDA
Beard Construction
Bristol Diocese
Central North Swindon Parish Council
#iwill
Mother's Union (Bristol Diocese)
Sovereign Housing
Swindon Academy
Swindon Youth for Christ
Wiltshire Community Foundation
34SR.com
and to all those who have given so generously to the work!

A special thank you goes to Becky for running the Virtual London Marathon with 26 miles around Swindon - finishing at the Beach Hut raising almost £1000 for shine's work!

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