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Southwater Youth Project CIO Report Autumn Term 2025:

SYP continues to deliver on our commitment to provide a professional local community youth project, engaging with our children & young people to help them to become ***The Best That They Can Be***, to help and encourage them to develop and mature physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, both as individuals, and as contributing members of society and the community. As a local community charity our fully inclusive activities & events for any children & young people aged 8 to 19 resident in Southwater & the surrounding area is delivered through:

- Community youth work – subs based clubs, including DoE, plus free to access one to one support, mentoring, and detached work, as well as activities & trips (varying costs apply)
- Schools work: local secondary schools & feeder primary/junior schools

Southwater has the highest youth demographic in the district and our work has again been recognised by various local and community organisations. In the late summer HDC awarded us £2,500 from their Volunteer Support Fund to enable volunteer publicity, training etc. and a further grant was received from Southwater Parish Council for ongoing DoE work. Southwater WI also provided various resources including a new printer and the offer of volunteer support. An HDC Lottery Grant of £1500 was received in October and used for Christmas activities, and £1717.86 from the Co Op for arts & crafts materials. Following a visit to the Youth Centre by Hall & Woodhouse trustees we were awarded a grant for core costs from their Community Chest, and I can share that we received a cheque for £2000 at their awards evening (January 2026). In December we received a further boost to core cost fundraising when the Woodley Foundation Fund at Sussex Community Foundation gave us a grant of £9,240. We are thankful for these grants and for the ongoing, regular core cost funding from Southwater Parish Council, and Connect Southwater Community Church, as well as the one-off core cost donations received throughout 2025 from individuals and other charitable trusts/grant awarding organisations including Sussex Masons.

Local and regional governance changes mean that SYP Trustee Board will continue to seek reassurances regarding locally based and locally agreed funding, as well as looking to secure other funding streams, in what is increasingly, a challenging context. The Trustees are hugely grateful to all those organisations, groups, and individuals whose funding keeps the vital work of SYP going. We are thankful to the small team of dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to seek funding. We tell you of our successes, but we apply for many more – while we understand the challenging realities that are current in small charity fundraising it can be disheartening to do so much work and still not succeed. We celebrate every success!

Monies ring-fenced by SPC dating back to the covid furlough scheme have been released back to SYP as planned, and as a result this autumn saw our first paid sessional worker assisting with certain sessions and particularly on Fridays. Finding an additional p/t staff member utilising a further grant recently agreed by SPC as well as the grant awarded by Hall & Woodhouse is a priority and we are seeking to ensure we can find the rest of the funding for this role.

Please see our Sept – Dec Engagement Report for more detail regarding the wide range of youthwork undertaken by SYP this autumn/winter.

Like many local charities we are **always** in need of volunteers in all aspects of our work, whether in term time and/or holidays, as well as on the Trustee Board, so do please contact me or Angie if you have time and talents to offer us, even if for a limited time! Thank you in anticipation!

Kath Jones: Co Chair Southwater Youth Project Jan 1st 2026