



South Shropshire Youth Forum

Annual Report 2022-23



Who are South Shropshire Youth Forum?

Set up as an independent registered Youth based charity in 1997, South Shropshire Youth Forum (SSYF) have been aiming to support young people in their transition to adulthood. It offers a variety of projects, themes and activities that are delivered to help address and support the needs of young people within this sparsely populated area.

DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES, YOUTH CLUBS & PLAYSCHEMES

Youth activities outreach and detached youth work.

HERITAGE PROJECTS & WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

REACH projects at Church Stretton School and natural heritage projects with partner organisations such as Caring for God's Acre and Shropshire Hills AONB partnership.

COMMUNITY WORK

Local Youth consultations, Forum's, Young volunteer scheme at the Shropshire Hills Discovery centre & Political Speed Dating events.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

SSYF provide a South Shropshire Youth Network for any organisations that work or aspire to work with young people.

GENERAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

The Youth Forum provides opportunities for supported placements within the community or within the youth projects so people can apply their skills.

Our ethos

South Shropshire Youth Forum (SSYF) are an established and trusted youth based charity with a strong track record of delivering quality, value for money programmes for socially and economically disadvantaged rural young people.

The aims of SSYF are to support young people in their transition to adulthood. SSYF provides a variety of projects, themes and activities that are delivered to help address and support the needs of young people within the sparsely populated area of rural south Shropshire.

SSYF have different strategies and offer bespoke services depending on each market town area we work in (currently Bishop's Castle, Cleobury Mortimer, Craven Arms and Ludlow). More importantly young people refer themselves and so in effect they volunteer to get involved.

We have also been developing work for rural areas within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Activities are carried out through the normal channels of youth engagement but more significantly through less traditional approaches such as diversionary activities and youth participation schemes. These are shaped around new research carried out by the young people themselves through peer led consultations. We have established Youth Forums in the market towns, which have helped to improve local youth facilities, brought in specific activities and have given the young people a direct link to local decision making processes.



Our work 2022-23

Young Rangers

During 2022/23 SSYF continued to deliver Young Rangers in the Clee Hills and Church Stretton/Craven Arms areas. The project is delivered in partnership with Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty Partnership and aims to continue to the end of 2023. In September 2020 we negotiated the use of a 4 acre woodland site for use by our Young Rangers groups that is owned by SWT and work has continued to be developed on the site. Various activities including a survey of the fauna and flora have been conducted and a compost toilet has been built.

Between April 2022 and March 2023 we delivered 21 full day sessions; and a summer holiday residential in mid Wales. A total of **32** individuals participated on the 21 sessions. Sessions included coppicing, discovery walks, creative music, green woodworking, climbing, haymaking, apple pressing, storytelling, path clearance and footpath repairs. The residential included 3 days of mountaineering, and caving.

Craven Arms Youth provision

Weekly sessions were delivered in Craven Arms (Tuesday evenings). Access to the local Community centre was not feasible due to ongoing issues and a mixture of detached sessions and a pilot after school club for year 5-6s in the Winter. Activities during after school included den making, a night walk, pan cake making and making pizzas. In total 44 sessions were delivered from April 2022 to end March 2023. **646** contacts were made with young people with approximately 50 individual young people aged 9-17 participating on the various activities.

Ludlow Youth provision

The project aims to provide a safe environment for the young people of Ludlow. We are looking to provide a mixture of outreach/detached sessions including a youth cafe (whether indoors or out), and informal football sessions at Ludlow Town FC. We will aim to try to work to set up a small group of young people who are keen to get a Forum set up of their own to potentially attend Town Council meetings and address some of the concerns they have. 36 sessions were delivered in the period. Some sessions had to be cancelled due to the weather. **611** contacts were made over the period with over 50 individual young people supported.

We were pleased to work with local youths and the Town Council to install a replacement youth shelter for Wheeler Road. It took a lot of hard work to get the support we needed to get a shelter back, and thanks to Hands Together we were able to pilot a new drop-in session for young people on Fridays.



Bishop's Castle Youth provision

12 months funding was secured via Bishop's Castle Town Council for a youth work programme to start in the new financial year. A youth worker was appointed in May 2022 and the work has continued to be developed. The project is a partnership between the Town Council and SSYF. We are pleased to announce that a further 12 months funding was secured beyond May 2023. To date a weekly Youth drop-in has been running, and after school sessions at Bishop's Castle Primary School delivered during term time.

23 After School club ran sessions from May 22 - May 23 with **173** young people aged 8-11.

32 Drop in youth cafe sessions started in the Summer holidays 2022. **78** young people aged 11 - 16 years of age attended.

Youth forum - evening sessions have also been delivered once a month, **12** young people attended from October 22 - May 23

Cleobury Mortimer Youth provision

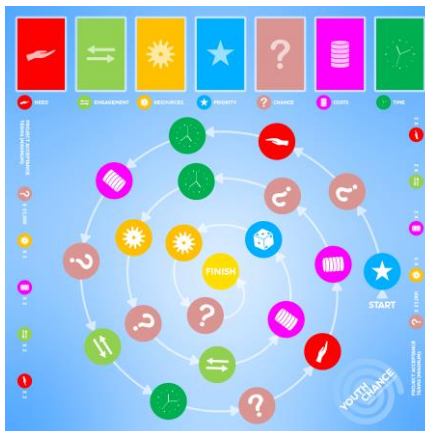
SSYF was commissioned to do a youth consultation in 2021 and as a direct result of this outreach sessions started in January 2022. Sessions developed over that time resulting in SSYF targeting year 6-7s. Working with Cleobury Mortimer Primary School the project was a hit with young people. Monday evenings are allocated to provide access to local sporting facilities and the local sports Social club was opened exclusively for this group for a trial period. The project is being extended into 2023 and beyond.

From April 2022 to end March 2023 we engaged with **56** young people aged 10-17 with 41 sessions being delivered. Totals of young people attending over those sessions was **443**.

Ongoing consultation with young people

We continue to listen to young people and try to respond to their changing needs. As part of our Infrastructure Support we have been able to bring together organisations and together we have pooled resources to continue structured consultation with young people.

Following on from last year's residential, where we trained 9 young people in campaigning techniques we worked on a series of workshops that would help enable young people to design their own 'realistic' services. In Spring 2023 we organised another residential and young people designed a game called 'Youth Chance' that others could use to design their own ideas. A prototype is currently being designed and has been tested. Young people from this group have also been actively involved in the designing of a Youth Conference for the area.



South Shropshire Youth Network

South Shropshire Youth Network is a peer network of individuals (paid/unpaid), community and voluntary organisations working with young people aged 8-25 in that area. The aim of the network is to exchange good practice, collaborate, put in joint funding bids, and for organisations to become stronger and more sustainable. The network is essentially a Youth Partnership for the south of Shropshire. It is now almost two and a half years old.

By the end of March 2023 we **38** network members.

Subgroups were developed over the last 12 months including; developing rural youth hubs, supporting young LGBTQ+ people, and building a volunteer base of young people, and a committee to work together to develop a South Shropshire Youth Conference.

Our work continues to support members, sending out newsletters & newflashes, organising network meetings, regular attendance at Community Connectors' meetings for Ludlow, Bishop's Castle & Clun, at the 0-25 Summit, at Strategic Youth Lead meetings for West Midlands, and irregular at the Community Connectors' meeting for Much Wenlock & area and Early Help meetings for both southwest and southeast Shropshire – we work with members in subgroups. This ensures member engagement in between network meetings.





SOUTH SHROPSHIRE YOUTH NETWORK

A PEER NETWORK FOR ANYONE WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

38 NETWORK MEMBERS OF WHICH



- 11 community organisations
- 20 charities
- 5 faith based
- 4 partnerships
- 2 sports clubs
- 4 individuals & 2 other

CONTACTS SINCE JULY 22

5 NEWSLETTERS, 8 NEWS FLASHES
3 NETWORK MEETINGS, 7 SUBGROUP MEETINGS

Attendance @ meetings: 169
 Newsletter subscribers: 84
 Twitter followers: 293
 Articles in other newsletters: 22
 Town & Parish Councils contacted: 2x 56



NEEDS

ALL MEMBERS NEEDS ASSESSED



- 13 Recruiting volunteers
- 9 Access to training
- 29 Working together
- 28 Networking
- 19 Access to funding
- 12 Covid & 6 Other

22 Advice & Support youth provision

ACTIVE SUPPORT SINCE JULY 22

22 ORGANISATIONS WITH 176 ISSUES

- Good practice: 6
- Funding: 18
- Volunteer recruitment: 11
- Networking: 38
- Training: 16
- Marketing: 18
- Partnership working: 21
- Facilitation: 5
- Signposting: 24
- Other: 19



IMPACT

HIGHLIGHT



SSYN helped Bishop's Castle Town Council gain £15k & another £5k in match funding, securing their youth services for at least another 12 months

FUTURE DATES

Residential: 5-7 May
 Network meeting: end of May
 Youth Conference: 24 June

INTERESTED?

 marinke.ssyf@outlook.com

 Newsletter

 @SouthShropYE

Chair's report 2022/23

This year we have consolidated and grown our trustee group to 6 and have started regular Officers Meetings with the Chief officer, Chair, Vice Chair and new Treasurer, who we welcome on board. We are always looking for new trustees however, with new skills and ideas, to cover the whole of South Shropshire, so please do get in touch if you are interested in supporting and developing the Forum and young people across the region.

We have said goodbye this year to our Infrastructure Support Officer and Finance and Admin worker, who have both moved on to other positions, and we thank them for many years' service to the Youth forum. We are now adapting and developing the Finance Officer role, thanks to extra funding from being the Mayors nominated charity and hope to appoint soon. We were pleased and surprised to be nominated as The Mayors charity for a second year running and thank the Councillors for all their hard work organising events this year and ones to come. We had a particularly well run and attended Quiz night at Ludlow Brewery and Mayor's Supper, which raised money for the Forum and increased our profile in the community. I was humbled and grateful to see how much support there was for the Youth Forum.

As a small charity with only 1 full time staff member, The Chief Officer and several part time and sessional youth workers, the range of activities, projects, events, residentials, networks, consultations and youth provision outlined in this report is amazing. It is testament to the dedication, hard work and flexibility of everyone involved. It is a strength of the voluntary sector that we can adapt, respond to need and be creative, succeeding even in times of great financial pressure and challenges with funding. I especially enjoyed hearing about our fantastic intergenerational gardening project, with young people working together and learning new skills to support those in the community who are not able to upkeep their own gardens. The board game developed by young people at a residential this year, called 'Youth chance' is also really impressive, as it aids learning about how services are funded and developed and has a lot of potential.

So I will end by thanking our Chief Officer for all his hard work, along with all part time staff, trustees, partners and funders and of course the young people, who have enabled all these projects and activities to develop and who keep the Youth Forum flourishing, moving forwards and making a difference to young people's lives across South Shropshire.

Mandy Furniss

Youth Forum **income** **expenditure** over the last 5 financial years (April – March)

	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
2018/19:	£58,998	£49,363
2019/20:	£51,461	£48,225
2020/21:	£53,065	£42,112
2021/22:	£67,236	£66,669
2022/23	£81,706	£76,313

Partners

Arthog Outreach
 Bishop's Castle Town Council
 Caring for God's Acre
 Church Stretton School
 Church Stretton Town Council
 Clebury Mortimer Primary School
 Craven Arms Mosque
 Craven Arms Town Council
 Craven Arms Youth Partnership
 Hands Together
 Hereford Diocese
 Ludlow Town Council
 National Trust - Cardingmill Valley
 Rural Media
 Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
 Shropshire Council
 Shropshire Hills Discovery centre (Grow, Cook, Learn)
 Shropshire Wildlife Trust
 Teme Leisure - Clebury
 The Furniture scheme
 Wesley's
 Westhope College
 West Mercia Police
YOUNG PEOPLE!

Funders & contributors

Anonymous
 Awards for All – Lottery Fund
 Bishop's Castle Town Council
 Churches Together – Ludlow
 Clebury Mortimer Town Council
 Craven Arms Town Council
 Craven Arms Youth Area Partnership
 Euro Quality Trust
 Hall Garth Charitable Trust
 Hereford Community Foundation (*Teme Valley Youth Fund*)
 Heritage Lottery Fund
 Ludlow Town Council
 Old Downton Lodge
 Shropshire Hills ANOB Partnership
 Shropshire County Council
 Shropshire Hills Discovery centre (Grow, Cook, Learn)
 Staffs Community Foundation
 West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner Fund

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Registered Charity number: 1068321

Company number: 3476766

