



SAINTS NUNEATON



PROGRESS REPORT 2021/ 2022

THE STORY OF THIS YEAR...

2022 HAS PROVED TO BE OUR BUSIEST YEAR YET, AS WE HAVE ADAPTED TO THE CHANGING NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY, EMPLOYED ADDITIONAL STAFF AND EXTENDED OUR WORK WITH NEW PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES. NOT TO MENTION, WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH COUNCIL TO PREPARE FOR THE PURCHASE AND RENOVATION OF OUR BUILDING READY FOR 2023!

WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO BE IN THIS POSITION TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY AT THIS TIME AND ARE THANKFUL FOR THE VOLUNTEERS, STAFF AND COMMUNITY WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US AND ENABLED US TO ENGAGE WITH 450 PEOPLE PER WEEK AT SAINTS ON AVERAGE.



OUR PROJECT HAS ATTRACTED WIDER INTEREST AND THE DIOCESE OF COVENTRY NOW WISH TO ENGAGE WITH SAINTS AS A FLAGSHIP PROJECT, AND EXPLORE WAYS OF DUPLICATING THIS PROJECT IN OTHER LOCATIONS.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY READING SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR...

MEETING OUR STRATEGIC AIMS AND OUTCOMES

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS ARE AS FOLLOWS:



CREATING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES BY FACILITATING ENTERPRISES WITHIN THE BUILDING, AND ALSO PROVIDING TRAINING AND 'BACK TO EDUCATION' PROGRAMMES IN CONJUNCTION WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES. THIS IS DONE IN A CAFE-STYLE INDOOR ENTERPRISE AND TRAINING HUB.

WITHIN THE ENTERPRISE AND EQUIP AIM, THIS YEAR WE HAVE OFFERED WORK EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEER WORK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, SUPPORTED LOCAL BUSINESSES WITH STALLS AND HOSTED WORK SKILLS COURSES IN OUR TRAINING ROOM. WE HAVE ALSO SUPPORTED YOUNG PEOPLE IN RASING THEIR ASPIRATIONS, HELPING THEM WITH THEIR HOMEWORK AND WITH WORK AND LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS.



TACKLING PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SOCIAL HEALTH ISSUES THROUGH THE CREATION OF ACCESSIBLE SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND GROUPS

WE HAVE OFFERED SUPPORT WITH HEALTHY EATING ON A BUDGET THROUGH SLOW COOKER COURSES, AND MANY FOOD HAMPERS, AS PART OF OUR SPORT AND SUPPORT AIM. WE ARE LOOKING TO EXPAND TO MORE EXERCISE ACTIVITIES OVER THE NEXT YEAR.



ADDRESSING THE LACK OF ARTS, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION TO RAISE ASPIRATIONS AND TACKLE ISSUES OF LONELINESS AND ISOLATION THROUGH CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS MUSIC, THE ARTS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND DANCE.

AS PART OF CREATE AND CONNECT, THIS YEAR WE HAVE LAUNCHED TWO CREATIVE GROUPS THAT MEET WEEKLY.

THE OUTCOMES WE ARE AIMING FOR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- **INCREASE STANDARDS OF EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IN THE BOROUGH**
- **DECREASE THE EFFECTS OF CHILD POVERTY, SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS AND CHILDREN IN CARE.**
- **DECREASE LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT**
- **INCREASE LEVELS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**
- **DECREASE COMMUNITY ISOLATION**
- **CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOBS AND THE CREATIVE ARTS**
- **INCREASE SERVICE PROVISION, SUPPORT JOINING UP OF SERVICES AND PROVIDE A PLACE TO GO TO GET SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY LIFE**

WE HOPE THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT IT WILL BE CLEAR HOW WE ARE STARTING TO WORK TOWARDS THESE OUTCOMES,



VOLUNTEERS

WE'VE HAD 10 VOLUNTEERS AND WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS SUPPORTING US IN CORE DAY TO DAY ROLES INCLUDING WORKING IN THE CAFE AND MAINTENANCE, BUT FOR LARGER EVENTS ACROSS THE YEAR WE HAVE DRAWN IN AROUND 40 EXTRA VOLUNTEERS, FROM ALL AGES AND WALKS OF LIFE.

PENNY HAS VOLUNTEERED WITH US SINCE JANUARY 2020. HEAR PENNY'S STORY *'I VOLUNTEER AT SAINTS BECAUSE I THINK IT'S A GREAT PROJECT. I AGREE WITH ITS VALUES & MISSION STATEMENT & WANT TO BE A PART OF MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO OUR TOWN. I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MANY ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT & IT IS A REAL PRIVILEGE WHEN PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR APPRECIATION FOR HOW WE HAVE HELPED THEM DURING DIFFICULT TIMES. WHETHER THAT HAS BEEN WITH FOOD DURING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, ADULT CONVERSATION FOR MUM'S, CRAFTING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & ADULTS AND THE COMMUNITY THAT IS BUILT THROUGH THAT, JUST BEING THERE FOR SOMEONE WHO NEEDS TO TALK & JUST FEEL CARED FOR, NO MATTER THE AGE OF THAT PERSON. THERE AREN'T MANY DAYS GO BY WHERE I DON'T FINISH MY DAY AT SAINTS WITHOUT A STORY OF A POSITIVE IMPACT THAT HAS BEEN MADE TO SOMEONE'S LIFE IN SOME WAY.'*

VOLUNTEERS ARE KEY TO MAKING WHAT WE DO HAPPEN, AND WE ARE KEEN TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE MORE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY TO GET ON BOARD AND HELP US SUPPORT OTHERS.



DAN'S STORY

DAN HAS BEEN A VOLUNTEER WITH US FROM THE VERY BEGINNING! DAN SAYS

'VOLUNTEERING AT SAINTS NUNEATON HAS REALLY HELPED ME THROUGH SOME ROUGH TIMES. THE STAFF ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR US ALL. I LOVE ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY THROUGH SAINTS NUNEATON. SAINTS DOES AMAZING THINGS AND I AM PROUD TO BE A PART OF THAT'

WHO WE'VE PARTENERED WITH



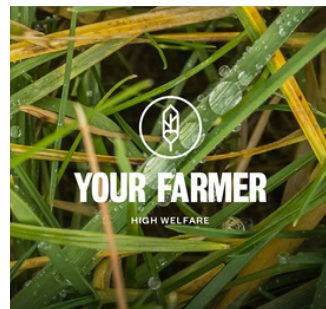
HOLY TRINITY
ATTLEBOROUGH
CHURCH



ST PAULTS CHURCH
STOCKINGFORD



HEATH END ROAD
CHURCH



FAIR TRADING





WARWICKSHIRE YOUTH FUND

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH YOUNG BUSINESS LINKS

NUNEATON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

COVENTRY YOUTH CRIME COMMISSIONER



A PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY TO USE

WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING OUR SPACE AVAILABLE FOR USE BY EXTERNAL USER GROUPS, AIMING TO BE A HUB THAT CAN BE USED BY THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, FULL OF ACTIVITY. WE HAVE HOSTED A VARIETY OF GROUPS, COURSES, MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES, COUNCILS AND CHARITIES THIS YEAR, SEE BELOW FOR A SNAPSHOT OF THE GROUPS WE HOST:

- **SOCIALLY SHARED BUSINESS NETWORK**
- **WAYSIDE WILLOW WEAVING COURSES**
- **QUBE LEARNING TRAINING COURSE FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS**
- **ADULT EDUCATION CREATIVE CLASSES**
- **THINKHIGHER EVENTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**
- **A PARAMEDIC TRAINING COURSE**
- **A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORKING DAY**
- **SAFER STREETS CONSULTATION DROP IN**
- **HERE TO HELP CHARITY**
- **FORGE CARE - A LOCAL CHILDRENS CARE RESIDENTIAL ORGANISATION**
- **YWAM**
- **SEW AND GROW CRAFT GROUP**
- **NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**
- **WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

WE HAVE ALSO BECOME A PLACE MANY CHOOSE TO MEET AND WORK, WITH PEOPLE USING US AS A PLACE TO HOTDESK FROM AND LOCAL COUNCILS AND BUSINESSES HAVING THEIR MORNING MEETINGS IN OUR CAFE.

OUR CAFE AND PLAY AREA

IN NOVEMBER 2021 WE RELAUNCHED OUR CAFÉ, WITH A LOCAL PERSON RUNNING IT AS THEIR OWN BUSINESS. THIS WORKED WELL FOR NEARLY A YEAR, HOWEVER AS THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS BEGAN TO TAKE HOLD, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT WE NEEDED TO GO IN A NEW DIRECTION. THE OWNER OF THE BUSINESS THEN HANDED IN THEIR NOTICE IN SEPTEMBER 2022, AND AT THE SAME TIME THE GOVERNMENT FUNDED KICK START STAFF FINISHED, SO WE LOOKED AT A FRESH WAY OF RUNNING THINGS THAT WOULD HELP BOTH US AS A PROJECT AND OUR CUSTOMERS.

IN OCTOBER 2022 WE RELAUNCHED WITH A BRAND NEW OFFER, INCLUDING MORE SELF-SERVE OPTIONS, A SMALLER SELECTION OF HOT SPECIALS AND MAKING EVERYTHING IN ADVANCE RATHER THAN TO ORDER, CUTTING THE NEED FOR AS MANY STAFF, AND IMPROVING SERVICE TIMES FOR CUSTOMERS.



FURTHERMORE, AS WE ARE A CHARITY WE ARE ABLE TO ACCESS FOOD THROUGH FOOD WASTE CHARITIES EDIBLELINKS AND FARESHARE, HELPING US KEEP THE COSTS OF OUR FOOD LOW FOR BOTH US AND OUR CUSTOMERS, MEANING WE HAVE NOT HAD TO RAISE OUR PRICES AS OF YET DURING THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS. AS THE DEMOGRAPHIC WE CATER TO IS LARGELY PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED HOUSEHOLDS, WE FEEL THIS IS MORE IN LINE WITH OUR AIMS FOR THE PROJECT.



OUR CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA CONTINUES TO BE A SUCCESS, WITH MANY PARENTS COMMENTING THAT THERE IS NOT ANOTHER CAFÉ THAT OFFERS THIS KIND OF PROVISION FOR CHILDREN IN THE TOWN CENTRE.

PAY IT FORWARD SCHEME

IN OCTOBER 2022 WE HAVE LAUNCHED A PAY IT FORWARD SCHEME, WHERE CUSTOMERS CAN CHOOSE TO PAY FOR A DRINK OR MEAL FOR SOMEONE ELSE IN ADVANCE. WE HAVE SEEN INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY FROM THE COMMUNITY, WITH OVER £200 GIVEN SO FAR!



SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

ACROSS THE LAST YEAR WE HAVE SUPPORTED 10 SMALL BUSINESSES, WITH OUR 6 STALL SPACES WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO HIRE AT LOW COST, AND ALSO ENGAGING A LOCAL PERSON TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS PROVIDING FOOD AND DRINK IN OUR CAFE. AT CHRISTMAS 2021, WE RAN TWO SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS CHRISTMAS MARKETS, SUPPORTING 15 LOCAL BUSINESSES.

WE HAVE FOUND THAT IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE, MANY OF OUR SMALL BOUTIQUE BUSINESS STALLS HAVE STRUGGLED TO MAKE SALES, DESPITE OUR PROMOTION OF THEM. WE HAVE THEREFORE MADE THE DECISION TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF STALLS WE OFFER, AND HAVE GONE IN A NEW DIRECTION, AND WANT TO HOST SMALL BUSINESSES, SUCH AS OUR NEW RESIDENT BEAUTY THERAPIST. WE HOPE TO ENGAGE MORE BUSINESSES WHO COULD OFFER SERVICES FROM WITHIN OUR BUILDING AND PROVIDE AFFORDABLE RENT FOR THEM.

CASE STUDY: CASSEYS BEAUTY BOX

CASSEY WAS WORKING AS A CLEANER WHEN SHE JOINED US RIGHT AT THE VERY FIRST OPENING OF SAINTS, BACK IN JANUARY 2020, AFTER WINNING A BURSARY TO HIRE A STALL IN OUR CAFÉ AREA TO FURTHER HER BEAUTY BUSINESS. THIS ENABLED HER TO HIRE A CHAIR IN A LOCAL SALON, WHERE HER BUSINESS GREW EVEN MORE. THIS YEAR WE HAVE GIVEN CASSEY THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND HER BUSINESS BY PROVIDING AFFORDABLE RATES AND PROMOTING HER. SHE IS NOW OUR RESIDENT BEAUTY THERAPIST.

CASSEY SAYS:

'I WILL FOREVER BE GRATEFUL TO SAINTS TO ALLOW ME TO START IN 2020 WITH A STALL WHICH WAS KINDLY PAID FOR BY A GRANT, TO BELIEVING IN ME AND WELCOMING ME BACK WITH MY VERY OWN SPACE FOR MY SALON. SAINTS IS EVERYTHING I BELIEVE IN AND SUPPORT. THANK YOU.'



GETTING PEOPLE INTO WORK

WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING PEOPLE GET INTO WORK, AND TAKE ON VOLUNTEERS AND WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO GROW THEIR SKILLS WHILST SUPPORTING THE WORK WE DO. HEAR FROM TOM BELOW, WHO STARTED OUT WORKING WITH US AS A VOLUNTEER:

TOM SAYS:

'I STARTED AT SAINTS BACK IN MARCH THIS YEAR, AND IT'S BEEN A REALLY GOOD EXPERIENCE. I'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF DEVELOPING MORE OF MY SKILLS IN MAINTENANCE. I WAS PUT ON THE DIFFERENT PROJECTS, PAINTING HALLWAYS AND DOORS, AND FIXING THE LIGHTING, WHICH I FULLY ENJOYED, AND THEY GAVE ME MORE CONFIDENCE, AS WELL AS DOING THE CAFÉ CLEARING TABLES, WASHING UP, DOING THE COFFEE AND SORTING OUT PEOPLES ORDERS. AND THAT'S GIVEN ME THE CONFIDENCE TO COME AND GET A JOB HERE, BECAUSE I LOVE TO IMPACT PEOPLE.'

WE ALSO TOOK ON 6 NEETS 18-25 YEAR OLDS THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT KICKSTART SCHEME, 4 OF WHOM HAVE GONE ON TO GET FURTHER WORK. HEAR FROM HARRIET BELOW, WHO WAS ONE OF OUR KICKSTART WORKERS, AND NOW WORKS FOR US FULL TIME!



HARRIET'S STORY

'I FOUND SAINTS IN OCTOBER OF 2021 THROUGH A GOVERNMENT SCHEME CALLED KICKSTART, WHERE FOR 6 MONTHS I DEVELOPED SKILLS IN HOSPITALITY AND IN THE KITCHEN. AND NOW A YEAR AFTER I STARTED I HAVE GOT A FULL-TIME JOB AT SAINTS WORKING IN THE KITCHEN. I ENJOY COMING TO WORK TO WORK AMONGST THE SAINTS FAMILY WHERE WE TRY TO MAKE CUSTOMERS THAT LITTLE BIT HAPPIER WHEN THEY COME IN!'

CASE STUDY: JOE'S* STORY

THIS YEAR WE HAVE TAKEN ON TWO WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS TO HELP THEM GAIN WORK SKILLS WITH US IN OUR CAFE.

JOE* ATTENDS ONE OF THE LOCAL SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOLS, AND AS PART OF THE SCHOOLS WORK PROGRAMME, HE HAS A LONG TERM PLACEMENT WITH US TWO DAYS A WEEK. SINCE JOINING WE HAVE SEEN JOE* GO FROM A SHY YOUNG MAN MAINLY DOING WASHING UP TO A CONFIDENT WORKER, WHO IS LEARNING BARISTA AND CHEF SKILLS. JOE'S FAMILY HAVE SEEN A HUGE IMPROVEMENT IN HIS CONFIDENCE AND HE IS EAGER TO WORK EVEN IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS.

JOE SAYS 'I ENJOY MAKING THE DRINKS AND ENJOY SERVING THE CUSTOMERS. WORK EXPERIENCE HAS HELPED ME TO TALK TO PEOPLE I DO NOT KNOW. HELPING ME TO SHOW I CAN WORK'*

JOE'S SUPPORT WORKER SAYS 'IT WAS FANTASTIC TO PARTNER WITH THE SAINTS CAFE, TO GIVE OUR OAK WOOD SECONDARY STUDENTS THE CHANCE TO CARRY OUT WORK EXPERIENCE. THIS PLACEMENT ENABLES OUR STUDENTS WHO WOULD LIKE A CAREER IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING, TO LEARN, PRACTICE THEIR CATERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICE WORK SKILLS. A JOB COACH SUPPORTS THE STUDENTS TO GATHER EVIDENCE TO SHOW AN EMPLOYER THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED. THE WORK PLACEMENT GIVES OUR STUDENTS THE CHANCE TO SHOW THEY CAN BE INDEPENDENT, SURVIVE IN A WORKING ENVIRONMENT, FOLLOW HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES AND COMMUNICATE WITH WORK COLLEAGUES AND CUSTOMERS'



HELPING FAMILIES

WE HAVE RUN SEVERAL INITIATIVES THIS YEAR AIMED AT SUPPORTING FAMILIES ON LOW INCOMES, INCLUDING THREE HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND LOW INCOME FAMILIES, FREE ACTIVITIES DURING HALF TERMS, A FREE LEGO CLUB EVERY SATURDAY, AND FREE MEALS FOR CHILDREN DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

LAURA IS ONE OF THE MUMS WHO HAS COME TO EVERY ONE OF OUR FREE KIDS ACTIVITIES AND FREE SCHOOL MEALS HOLIDAY CLUBS.

LAURA SAYS ABOUT OUR FREE HOLIDAY CLUB *'THEY (HER KIDS) JUST THOUGHT IT WAS REALLY GOOD. IT'S WELL RUN, AND THEY LIKED THE BREAKFAST. THEY LOVED ALL OF THE PARTS OF IT... THEY ALWAYS TALK ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME. ACTIVITIES ARE SO EXPENSIVE NOW, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU HAVE AS MANY KIDS AS ME'*

ACROSS OUR HOLIDAY CLUBS WE HAVE HAD NEARLY 1000 ATTENDANCES ACROSS 13 DAYS, INCLUDING 382 PARENTS AND CHILDREN AT CHRISTMAS, 171 AT EASTER AND 411 DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. ALL ATTENDEES GOT A FREE MEAL, SNACKS AND FUN ACTIVITIES TO SUIT THE WHOLE FAMILY.

WE GAVE OUT 170 FREE MEALS TO CHILDREN ACROSS THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS, RESPONDING TO THE RISING COST OF LIVING, AS WELL AS COUNTLESS FOOD HAMPERS TO FAMILIES STRUGGLING.

SARAH IS ANOTHER MUM WHO HAS ENGAGED WITH A LOT OF OUR OFFERS. SARAH SAYS *'I FIRST ENCOUNTERED SAINTS THROUGH ONE OF THEIR FREE HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES. THIS WAS GREAT FOR MY CHILDREN AS I COULDN'T AFFORD TO DO ANYTHING WITH THEM. WE CONTINUE TO ATTEND HOLIDAY GROUPS THAT SAINTS RUN, AND WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED FOOD HAMPERS.'*



CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

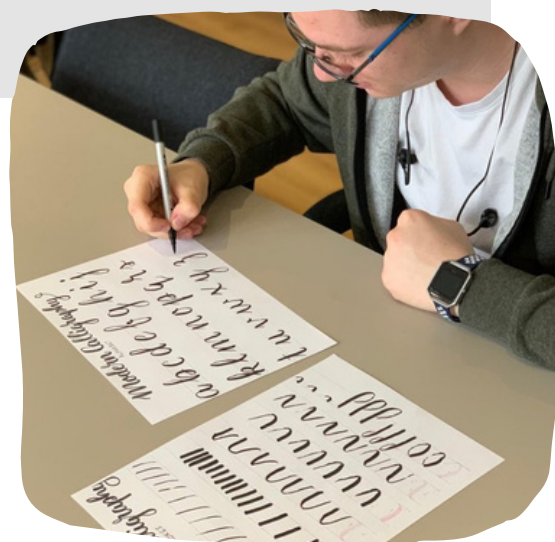
IN MARCH 2021, WE LAUNCHED THE FREE SAINTS STUDENT LOUNGE, RUNNING TUESDAY-THURSDAY FROM 3PM-5.30PM. WE PARTNERED WITH THINKHIGHER, WHO RUN THE WEDNESDAYS, AND WITH THE HELP OF WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL YOUTH WORK FUND, WE EMPLOYED 4 YOUTH WORKERS. STUDENT LOUNGE OFFERS A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO HANG OUT, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR THEIR HOMEWORK, LAPTOPS AVAILABLE TO USE, AND LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS, AS WELL AS A FREE HOT MEAL.



**FROM WHEN THE PROGRAMME BEGAN TO JULY 2022
WE HAVE GIVEN OUT 2001 HOT MEALS AND DRINKS
TO YOUNG PEOPLE**

**THE STUDENT LOUNGE HAS BEEN A HUGE SUCCESS,
AND THE TAKE UP HAS BEEN MUCH HIGHER THAN
ORIGINALLY ESTIMATED, WITH AN AVERAGE OF 40
YOUNG PEOPLE A NIGHT ACROSS THE YEAR. THE
NUMBERS PEAKED AT 90 YOUNG PEOPLE IN ONE
EVENING!**

SOME OF THE WORKSHOPS WE HAVE RUN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE INCLUDE MUSIC PRODUCTION AND SONGWRITING, BARISTA SKILLS, HOW TO COOK ON A BUDGET FOR UNIVERSITY, HOW TO WRITE YOUR UNIVERSITY PERSONAL STATEMENT, KNIFE CRIME AWARENESS, COUNTY LINES AWARENESS, MEET THE YOUTH COMMISSIONER AND SO MUCH MORE!





KAELI, OUR YOUTH PROJECT LEAD SAYS:
STUDENT LOUNGE LAUNCHED ON THE 1ST MARCH 2022 AND HAS ALREADY CONNECTED WITH OVER 180 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE LOCAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES - SOME EVENINGS WE HAVE SEEN 80 YOUNG PEOPLE IN ONE AFTERNOON!!

STUDENT LOUNGE SEEKS TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN COME IN TO ENJOY FREE FOOD AND DRINKS, WORK ON HOMEWORK USING OUR LAPTOPS AND PRINTER, SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS IN OUR COSY ENVIRONMENT AND MAKE USE OF OUR GAMES, XBOX, POOL TABLE AND MORE! WE LOVE THAT WE'RE ABLE TO INVITE THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND GIVE THEM A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN BE THEMSELVES WITHOUT FEELING JUDGED AND WITHOUT THE PRESSURES AND STRESSES OF SCHOOL OR HOME LIFE. WE LOVE BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM, REMINDING THEM OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE THEY PLAY IN THE WORLD, AND ENCOURAGING THEM TO DREAM BIGGER DREAMS!'

ANDRE IS THE COVENTRY YOUTH CRIME COMMISSIONER, AND REGULARLY ATTENDS TO MEET OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

ANDRE SAYS 'SAINTS STUDENT LOUNGE IS AN OUTSTANDING PROJECT IN THE HEART OF NUNEATON, I 100% SUPPORT THIS PROJECT WITH THE ECONOMIC STATE/COST OF LIVING CRISIS THIS IS A GREAT PLACE WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN GET ACCESS TO WIFI, LAPTOPS, PRINTERS AND FREE FOOD. BIG THANKS TO THINK HIGER, WCC AND SAINTS NUNEATON FOR CONTINUING TO FUND THIS PROJECT.'



BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

WE RUN A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK, WITH A PARTICULAR AIM OF ENGAGING DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES, AND VULNERABLE AND ISOLATED ADULTS.

MUMS DO BRUNCH

ON THURSDAYS WE RUN A GROUP FOR MUMS WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS, AIMED AT OFFERING SUPPORT AND CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY WHICH NEW AND YOUNG MUMS CAN BE WELCOMED INTO. WE OFFER FREE HOT DRINKS AND PASTRIES, AS MANY PARENTS WHO ATTEND STRUGGLE FINANCIALLY. WE HAVE JUST BEGUN OFFERING A FREE KIDS ACTIVITY AT EACH SESSION, TO OCCUPY THE CHILDREN WHILST THE MUMS CHAT.

WE HOPE TO EXPAND THESE SESSIONS TO START OFFERING FUN ACTIVITIES AND SKILLS COURSES FOR THE MUMS WHO ATTEND.

LEGO CLUB

LEGO CLUB RUNS EVERY SATURDAY, OFFERING A FREE DROP IN SPACE FOR CHILDREN TO COME AND GET CREATIVE WITH OUR LARGE COLLECTION OF LEGO.



WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE CREATIVE ARTS AND HOW THEY CONNECT PEOPLE TOGETHER. WE HAVE BEEN RUNNING TWO CREATIVE GROUPS A WEEK THIS YEAR, 'COFFEE AND KNIT' AND OUR 'CREATE AND CONNECT ART WORKSHOPS'.

CREATE AND CONNECT ART WORKSHOPS

THE CREATE AND CONNECT ART WORKSHOPS RUN FROM 1-3PM ON A THURSDAY AFTERNOON, AND OFFER A FREE CREATIVE SKILL EVERY SESSION. CREATIVE SKILLS HAVE INCLUDED CROCHET, PAINTING, CLAY, MACRAME AND MORE. THIS GROUP IS RUN BY VOLUNTEERS FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

COFFEE AND KNIT

COFFEE AND KNIT IS RUN ON A WEDNESDAY BY ONE OF OUR VOLUTNEERS HEATHER, AND IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ANYONE WHO ENJOYS KNITTING OR CROCHET, OR WHO WOULD LIKE TO LEARN, TO COME ALONG AND HAVE A COFFEE TOGETHER IN THE CAFE,



THIS YEAR WE HOPE TO CONTINUE TO ADD TO OUR LIST OF WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE, AND WILL BE ASKING THE COMMUNITY WHAT ACTIVITIES THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE US RUN AS WELL!

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

THIS YEAR, ONE OF THE MOST POSITIVE THINGS WE HAVE LEARNT IS THAT WE ARE A GOOD PROJECT – CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAVE RELEASED 1.8M THROUGH THE LEVELLING-UP PROGRAMME SO WE CAN PURCHASE AND RENOVATE OUR BUILDING, AND SUSTAIN WHAT WE ARE DOING FOR THE LONG TERM EVEN IN THIS CLIMATE.

WE HAVE ALSO LEARNT THE IMPORTANCE OF PUTTING HIGH QUALITY PROJECTS AND BEAUTIFUL SPACES TOGETHER, WHERE PEOPLE FEEL THEY ARE WORTH INVESTING INTO.



ONE OF THE BIG THINGS WE HAVE LEARNT IS THAT THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, SO WE NEED TO BE READY TO ADAPT TO THE NEEDS AS AND WHEN THEY COME ACROSS. IN THESE UNPRECEDENTED TIMES INCLUDING COVID AND THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS WE HAVE HAD TO ADAPT AND RESPOND QUICKLY BY LISTENING TO THE FELT NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

FELT NEEDS DURING THE PANDEMIC WHERE ACCESS TO FOOD FOR ISOLATING FAMILIES, ESPECIALLY SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES WHO DIDN'T HAVE ANY SUPPORT. SECONDLY LOSS OF JOBS AND REDUCTION OF INCOME DURING THE FURLOUGH SCHEME SAW US DISTRIBUTING HAMPERS ON A WEEKLY BASIS TO FAMILIES WHO WOULDN'T NORMALLY ACCESS THIS KIND OF SUPPORT. WE ALSO RAN COUNSELLING SESSIONS FOR NURSES FROM THE LOCAL HOSPITAL, AFTER SEEING THE NEED FOR SUPPORT FOR KEY WORKERS. WITH THANKS TO THE BIG LOTTERY COVID IMPACT FUND WE WERE ABLE TO FACILITATE THESE EARLY INTERVENTION MEASURES.

A COUNSELLING ATTENDEE:

'I FEEL LIKE I'VE HAD A SAFE SPACE TO TALK AND LISTEN. FOLLOWING ONE OF THE COUNSELLING SESSIONS I DO FEEL A LITTLE MORE PEACE WITH THINGS'

HOWEVER ONCE VACCINATIONS BECAME PUBLIC, THE FELT NEEDS CHANGED WITH THE RISE OF THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS WE ARE CURRENTLY IN. WHILST BEFORE THE UNEMPLOYED WERE THOSE HARDEST HIT, THE WORKING POOR ARE STRUGGLING MORE IN THE CURRENT CLIMATE. WITH THE RISING COST OF LIVING MEANING RENT AND MORTGAGES, BILLS AND FOOD HAVE GONE UP, WE ARE HEARING MORE REQUESTS FOR FREE ACTIVITIES, FOOD AND WARM SPACE FOR THE WINTER.

IN LINE WITH THIS, WE ARE GOING TO BE LAUNCHING SOME WINTER INITIATIVES, PARTLY FUNDED BY GRANTS FROM THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS, THE HAF FUND AND THE WARWICKSHIRE WELFARE FUND.

THROUGH THESE ISSUES WE HAVE LEARNT THAT FAMILIES HAVE LESS MONEY AFTER BILLS HAVE COME OUT, AND THIS HAS IMPACTED OUR SALES AND OUR ABILITY TO COVER OUR RISING BILLS. WE'VE ALSO LEARNT THAT SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE ONES THAT ARE STRUGGLING WITH THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS, AND ARE THE FIRST ONES TO GO.

IN SUMMARY, WE HAVE LEARNT TO LISTEN TO THE FELT NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITIES WHILE UNDERSTANDING THE WIDER NATIONAL ISSUES, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTING THOSE WHO HAVE NO VOICE TO FUNDERS, COUNCILS AND PARTNERS WHO CAN HELP US MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE.



WHAT WE'VE CHANGED

A NEW APPROACH TO OUR CAFE

ONE OF THE MAIN THINGS WE HAVE CHANGED IS OUR CAFE OFFER. AS MENTIONED EARLIER. WE HAVE LEARNT THAT WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS WANT MOST IS QUICK SERVICE AND CHEAP FOOD AND DRINK. WE ALSO LEARNT THAT RUNNING A CAFE FOR A PROFIT WHILST KEEPING PRICES CHEAP FOR OUR CUSTOMERS IS DIFFICULT!

SO WE SWITCHED TO A PART SELF-SERVE, PART PRECOOKED HOT FOOD KEPT WARM METHOD OF SERVICE, WHICH ALLOWED US TO HAVE SMALLER STAFF NUMBERS TO LOWER OUR COSTS.

WE HAVE ALSO STARTED USING FOOD FROM AN ORGANISATION CALLED EDIBLELINKS. EDIBLELINKS RECEIVE FOOD FROM SEVERAL SUPERMARKETS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE DESTINED FOR LANDFILL. WE ARE ABLE TO PURCHASE FOOD FROM EDIBLELINKS FOR 40% OF IT'S ORIGINAL COST, MEANING WE ARE SAVING FOOD FROM LANDFILL AND REDUCING OUR FOOD COSTS, SO WE CAN KEEP OUR PRICES LOW WITHOUT MAKING A LOSS.



IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS NEW FOOD OFFER, WE HAVE REPURPOSED EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE DONATED TO US BY DEBENHAMS, TELENT AND THE KINGS ARMS PUB IN KNOWLE. WE ARE INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL FOR THESE DONATIONS, AS THEY HAVE HELPED US CREATE A NEW, HIGH QUALITY, FAST SERVICE FOOD OFFER.

MOVING FROM SMALL BUSINESS STALLS TO SMALL BUSINESS SPACES

THE OTHER THING WE HAVE CHANGED IS WE HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM HAVING SO MANY SMALL BUSINESS STALLS. AS WE HAVE MENTIONED EARLIER, WE HAVE LEARNT THAT MANY PEOPLE NO LONGER HAVE EXTRA INCOME LEFT OVER AT THE END OF THE MONTH IN THIS CURRENT CLIMATE. WE HAVE NOTICED THIS HAVE A HUGE IMPACT ON OUR STALLS, WITH SALES DECLINING DRASTICALLY. SEVERAL OF THE SMALL BUSINESSES WERE NO LONGER ABLE TO RUN WITH THE LACK OF SALES AND SADLY CLOSED.

BUT FOR ONE OF OUR SMALL BUSINESSES, CASSEY'S BEAUTY BOX, WE WERE ABLE TO GO IN A NEW DIRECTION. CASSEY HIRES ROOMS IN OUR BUILDING AT AFFORDABLE COST TO RUN HER BEAUTY BUSINESS, AND HAS US AS HER PERMANENT BUSINESS BASE. CASSEY IS ALSO KEEN TO SUPPORT THE WORK WE DO AS A CHARITY, AND HAS OFFERED DISCOUNTS ON HER BEAUTY TREATMENTS FOR PRIORITY GROUPS INCLUDING DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG MUMS. WE HOPE TO ENGAGE MORE SMALL BUSINESSES IN THIS NEW WAY IN THE YEARS TO COME.



WHAT'S NEXT?

THIS YEAR WE ARE THRILLED TO BE ABLE TO PURCHASE OUR BUILDING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL, AND RENOVATE THE NEXT FLOOR OF THE BUILDING, INCLUDING THE WONDERFUL ST GEORGES HALL.

THE OPENING UP OF THIS SPACE WILL BROADEN THE SCOPE OF WHAT WE CAN OFFER, WITH MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES.



IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE HAVE A FEW INITIATIVES AND GROUPS WE WANT TO RUN TO SUPPORT THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY THIS WINTER. THESE INCLUDE SLOW COOKER COURSES, WINTER COATS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, SUBSIDISED BREAKFAST FOR PENSIONERS AND IT SUPPORT DROP INS.

MOVING FORWARD WE WILL LOOK TO START UP FAMILY EXERCISE CLASSES, EXERCISE FOR MENTAL HEALTH, AND CREATIVE ARTS GROUPS AND PROJECTS, AS WELL AS CONTINUING KEY INITIATIVES WE HAVE BEEN RUNNING THIS YEAR.