



shelford & stapleford  
youth initiative

### A Year of Change!

It's that time of the year where I have to report to the local parishes about the work of SSYI. Upon reflection, it has been an incredible year of seeing young people challenged, making positive changes and seeing incredible transformation in our young people. We have made a conscious effort since September 2017 to really invest in individuals.

We have just seen two young people, who really struggle to engage with school, complete a qualification with us called Jamie Oliver Home Cooking Skills. Not only did they surprise themselves with how much they liked cooking, we were surprised by how willing they were to engage with the course and complete the written work. There was a strong sense of wanting to achieve in these young people, which has had a positive effect of their engagement in school. As a result of this, they wish to now do another course, which is likely to be themed around art.

We have been mentoring one young people who made a commitment of faith in the summer at Romsey Mill's Deeper residential. With our support, we have been talking to him about some big questions of Christianity, we have supported him in his work, been teaching him a new skill of learning the drums and encouraged him to start driving. This individual is really blossoming into adulthood and growing strong support networks beyond SSYI with our support.

Another success story is a young person who we have mentored. She is someone who had low self image and self worth and who would get bullied at school. She rarely gets bullied at school anymore but when she does, she feels more equipped to handle the comments and has expressed she feels more confident in her own identity with our support. Recently she told us that she is in the finals and performing live in front of an audience in Sawston Village College's talent show, which is a huge expression of how far she has come along as she never had the confidence to do such a thing.

One more story I would like to share with you is around the Christmas period, we wanted to bless individual young people / families with a Christmas hamper just to express our love and heart for them. We gave one hamper to a young person who has been struggling with self harm and mental illness for a very long time. When we gave this hamper to her and her nan, both of them burst into tears. This was because this year has



been difficult for them and this young person had isolated herself because of her depression. As a result of us communicating to her and her nan how wonderful we believed she was and we were here to support her, this individual has now been engaging with our weekly groups. Although this young person still has a long way to go, for her to just get out the house and be with her friends on a Friday night is a massive thing. Subsequently, we have also been able to speak positively into her life and help her share some of the pain she feels with us.

### Help Us Grow Our Monthly Givers

The needs of the young people continue to grow but so does our influence! We are really honoured that we get to work with these young people and we really would love to encourage you to get more involved and be part of these success stories! Come volunteer with us! But as our work increases, so do our costs. As a friend of SSYI, we would really like to ask whether you could encourage your friends and family to consider whether they would be willing to give £10 a month to SSYI. This would mean we can continue providing recreating amazing success stories in the local young people's lives and not turn anyone away. We want to see all young people in Shelfords and Stapleford to overcome challenge, live fulfilling lives and be a positive influence to our community.

### Staff Updates

It is with great sadness that I must inform you that I will be leaving SSYI as of the 13th March as my wife and I are relocating to Plymouth, where I will be working for the charity South West Youth Ministries (SWYM) where I will be supporting them to train and equip youth workers in the South West. Subsequently, Zac Britton will be taking over as Lead Youth Worker for SSYI but will managed and supported by our partnership with Romsey Mill. If you have any enquiries, please contact Zac who will gladly assist where possible.

*Ollie*

**(Former) SSYI Lead Youth Worker**

**Zac Britton**

**(New) SSYI Lead Youth Worker**

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