

Dear James

28 January 2023

I thought I would send you an update from the last time I did it in February 2021!

We continued to be outside in the Recreation Ground until October 2021 as the club area was part of the Covid vaccination center.

Whilst outside, we provided football, including football agility tests, skateboarding, netball, volleyball, tennis and when able due to restrictions, food and drink. We were at the Recreation ground every Wednesday evening no matter the weather. We were lucky to have quite a few volunteers that gave their time to play games, talk and support. As we were outside in a public space we did end up with younger young people than we normally accept, our numbers became quite extensive.



Skateboarding lessons

There is a new Pétanque pitch and the young people were given lessons by the adult participants, they were really engaged by the sport and had a couple of weeks' worth of tuition.

I organized a BBQ one evening, and over 30 young people and a few parents came along, something that the young people were really keen to have. We had sausages and burgers in a bun, like a plague of locusts, not a crumb was left!



Once we were finally back into a club environment, we put on activities including biscuit decorating, bunting making, scotch pancake and cake making, Nutella pastries. The young people made newspaper containers, added compost and then planted sunflower seeds, topical as is the emblem of the Ukraine. They were given Viola plants to hopefully plant out in their own gardens or have on their window sills. We made origami tulips, decoupage cardboard eggs, which only when completed had a mini chick and easter egg inside. Pool competition, slime making, fridge magnets, glass painting, potato printing and fidget bracelet making.

Boom Active came in for 12 weeks to do soft archery and games.

For the Jubilee I brought in plain white tee-shirts, the idea was for them to decorate with fabric paints, pens and transfers but it soon became apparent that they were 'Jubileed' out so they were given free range.



For the Jubilee weekend, Ticehurst held a Fete and we offered our not particularly good, face painting services for free. We had 6 of us painting and didn't stop for the whole day adults and children alike. Anyone who wished too, gave a donation to Ticehurst Youth Group.



Matt who has a great interest in WW1 and WW2 brought in his collection of memorabilia and de-commissioned WW2 guns, gas masks, uniforms and medals. He gave a history talk but also on the crisis in Ukraine. The following week he brought in a young man called Connor and was going to the Ukraine in a humanitarian role, he also had a large collection of decommissioned guns, which he gave a talk on as well as his role going to the Ukraine.





We had Catherine from Luxe Beauty who kindly came and did the young people's nails with an assortment of coloured nail varnish. Just as many boys as girls had the nails done which was fun.



I borrowed 3 sock lambs to come into youth group, who behaved remarkably well. The young people were delighted, and they were able to bottle feed them.



During the Summer outside we had a two-week pit bike maintenance course. Under supervision the young people stripped a bike and put it back together, really impressive and as long as feet were on the ground, they were allowed to ride the bike around the recreation ground, a good sense of achievement and reaping the rewards!



We had the extraordinary luck of having DJ and record producer Goldie to visit. He was on a UK tour and took time to spend an evening session with them making pom-pom bugs and as a graffiti artist he drew their names in graffiti style. Due to his celebratory status, I could then raise the profile of the youth group using media to encourage more volunteers and also try and get people with skills to come into the club to share them to extend the horizons of our young people.



Weald Tennis Table Club donated two professional tennis tables to us.

Halloween saw us decorating the club with spooky decorations, we made clay ghosts, and bat mobiles had a donut eating competition, the donuts were hanging from string and you could only use your mouth, no hands!





A falconer called Ronnie came and brought his owls. Barn, Tawny, Long eared and Pygmy owls. Using gauntlet gloves the young people could hold the owls a great experience to be so close to such lovely creatures.



As we have an ongoing issue with young males with high levels of energy but are also the center of a bullying culture, which is much harder to handle when inside the club during the winter. To counteract this, Matt organized 3 aside football using a small sponge football, a total match time of 4 minutes. It is fast paced and energetic. Matt and the young people take it in turns officiating. The number of young men that took part was fabulous and also it introduced some of the other young men who would normally not be included or kept their distance from this group. It made it all inclusive and they are learning to work together. We will take it further and get other youth groups to play against us.



The last session before Christmas I brought in a small tree to be decorated. We played pass the parcel and decorated Christmas tree shaped brownies. Each Young person left with a bag of goodies.

I will be stepping down from my role of administrator and coordinator after 5.5 years. The work involved is quite time consuming and unfortunately working full time it is proving too much. I will still do the accounts, insurance, website and be a trustee but will have nothing to do with the day to day running. Matt will take up my role as well as being lead youth worker for a little more remuneration and we also hope to take on another youth worker.

We are so pleased that after all this time we still have such high numbers of young people coming through the door. We have been told that Ticehurst Youth Group is held up as a model youth group to other areas, and we couldn't be prouder.

I was kindly nominated for a volunteer of the year award which I received from the Sussex High Sheriff for the work done with TYG.



I would like to thank James Le Bourdec and all at Hawksford for your continued support, without the money you supply, Ticehurst Youth Group would not be the success it is. It has freed up time to spend organising activities rather than filling in endless applications for funding, and taken the burden away. We are all immensely grateful.

Your sincerely

Annie Alfille