

Brizen Trustees' Report 2024/25

It's been another fantastic year of youth work for local young people with our regular youth clubs and school holiday provision.

The sessions are facilitated by a dedicated core team of youth workers but have also been supported by a small team of young leaders who give up their time to support their peers and give back to their communities.

The intermediate sessions introduced last year have taken off incredibly positively with both young people and their families commenting on how well splitting the Junior session in two by age has worked.

There has been a strong focus on independent living skills this year and young people have continued to make new friends from outside their usual social circles which have carried over into their day-to-day lives. Young people who wouldn't usually have come together to form friendships have done so at youth club and are now meeting frequently in the community.

From the youth workers' regular engagement with families and in some circumstances other professionals supporting families, they are aware that their work is having a direct impact on improving social isolation amongst children and young people in the borough, as well as positively impacting their mental health.

Last summer's Summer Holiday Activity Programme was very successful with the youth team working with over 500 young people including those with additional needs. The aim of these sessions is to provide a base for young people to come and engage in meaningful activities, learn basic life skills and foster positive relationships with other local young people. Young people who attended were offered a varied programme across 6 weeks including arts and crafts, sports, cooking, gardening, coding and programming. Not only do the local children and young people benefit from attending the range of positive activities, but also their families who may not be able to afford privately run activities or may not be eligible for HAF schemes. Local residents also benefit from reduced anti-social behaviour during the summer holidays.

July 2024 also saw 6 members of the Seniors youth club travel to Germany as part of a group of young people from Cheltenham taking part in the International Youth Exchange. This was a very successful trip and more young people from Brizen have the opportunity to take part in the exchange this year.

In addition to the youth work, hall hire at Brizen remains popular with a mix of regular hirers and ad hoc bookings. Work begins shortly to replace the kitchen, thanks to a successful CIL bid, and we look forward to the positive difference this will make to not only our hirers but also our young people who really enjoy cooking and baking.

At our last AGM in July 2024, it was agreed to split the Chair of Trustees role into two co-Chairs with distinct responsibilities to help spread the workload – the Hall and the Charity. This has worked well so far allowing us to spend more time on our respective areas of work.

As ever, we are grateful to the Trustees and the Parish Council for their continued support.

Angela Swales and Jodie Underhill

Co-Chairs
Brizen Young People's Centre
April 2025