



BRIDGNORTH
YOUTH & SCHOOLS PROJECT

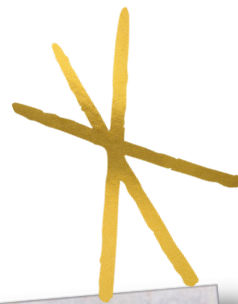


10th Anniversary
Celebration



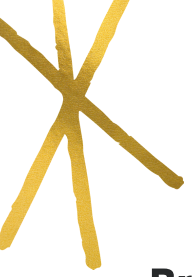
A warm welcome in the local newspaper

September 2011



New Year 7 students at Bridgnorth Endowed School enjoyed team building activities with Oakwood Leisure on the school's astro-turf and playing field. Pictured with students is John Prockter, the school's new youth worker, who joined in the fun.





Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project

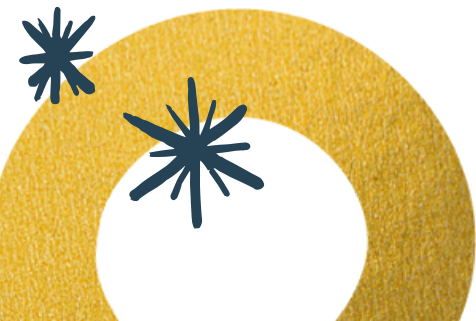
Welcome to the 10th Anniversary publication from Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project (BYSP). We're thrilled to have reached this landmark year. We're even more pleased to have made it here with such a wealth of stories to tell.

In this report, you're going to read about a project passionate about young people and the journey they're taking towards adulthood. Even if you know us well, you're unlikely to be aware of all the things we do day by day, and so as you browse through the pages, keep an eye out for the young people and team members who have been involved with us over the years.

Typically, we like to describe ourselves as helping young people move forward towards greater resilience, success and, where they seek it - faith in Jesus. Our hope is that you may be inspired by everything you read here. Maybe you'd even like to join us as we dream big dreams for these young people.

More than anything, we're just thrilled you're celebrating with us.

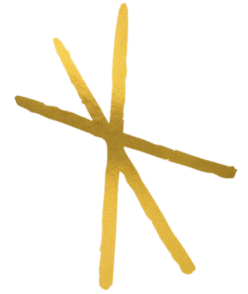
Here's to the next ten years of BYSP.



Writeway Music Event

February 2013





So what do we actually do?

In summary, we seek to support young people in our schools and in the community in every way we can, in their mental, emotional and spiritual development.

We do this through a number of specific programmes:

- Delivering transition workshops in our primary schools to help year 6 pupils prepare for the move to secondary school
- Delivering a reflective programme in our secondary schools as part of their curriculum, providing support with personal development and understanding of the Christian faith.
- Managing the Bridge Youth Centre, providing open-access youth club sessions for 10-16 year olds on Tuesday and Friday evenings.
- Providing mentoring support for individual young people
- Running discussion groups for those interested in exploring the Christian faith
- Networking with other youth workers in the area to encourage and support them in their work

The Project is one part of the work of the Bridgnorth Community Trust, which was set up by Christians in the town as a vehicle for community projects. Other current projects run by the Trust are the Bridgnorth Food Bank and Together at Christmas (the provision of a Christmas Day lunch for those who would otherwise be on their own).





Ten years of team



2011 - 2012



2012 - 2013



2013 - 2014



2014 - 2015



2015 - 2016



2016 - 2017



2017 - 2018



2018 - 2019



2019 - 2020

2020 - 2021





Where did it all begin?

It was March 2011 when I was approached to lead a project to recruit a Christian Youth Worker for our town. There had been talk in earlier years of such thoughts, but these had not come to fruition. This time the trustees of the Bridge Bar had combined with several church leaders in the town to agree to fund such a post, and I was asked to make it happen.

It was agreed that the Youth Worker would work with secondary age young people in the schools and in the community, and would also manage the Bridge Bar. The brief would be to build relationships with young people, to support them in their development, and to 'give them the opportunity to explore the meaning, value and purpose of life from a Christian perspective'.

There was a real sense of confirmation of God's hand on the Project when John Prockter was appointed and he and his wife Louise agreed to relocate from Devon in August 2011, bringing with them a wealth of youth work experience. Since then a number of trainees have joined the team for one or two years, and then 4 years ago we were further blessed when Becki Bunger joined us permanently as a youth worker.

Now we can look back and give thanks to God for 10 years of ministry to literally thousands of young people, and look forward to all that He has in store for us over the next 10 years.

Keith Bowley

Chair of Management Board
Bridgnorth Youth and Schools Project





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RISEN

"I had a really good time in Bridgnorth. Thank you so much for organising this all. You have done a great job and are obviously developing a very healthy relationship with the local schools."

Neil Ruckman: Story Teller 2012





Building BYSP

I've been involved in developing schools based youth ministry from my 6th week in ministry. It's 1997, and my first boss had just dropped my friends and me on a farm in Mid Devon before turning around and driving home to Exeter. From that moment, we had almost free reign to build whatever schools ministry we could prayerfully establish, and that feeling of excitement has never really left me.

A long time passed before my family, and I landed in Shropshire, but the early days of BYSP weren't so dissimilar to those early years in Devon. We took the opportunities given us, made ourselves available for young people, and developed teams to journey and serve with us.

We're now ten years on, and I have a real sense that BYSP is making a lasting difference in Bridgnorth, in the lives of young people, and even in shaping the area. Our little youth and schools ministry has become a flagship of excellence for the region and has inspired churches and communities to invest more into the lives of young people and schools.

I'm thrilled to be managing this ministry and look with excitement to the future.



John Prockter

Manager
Bridgnorth Youth and Schools Project





"A very moving and thought provoking exhibition. The pictures somehow get to you in a deep way. But what moved me more was the response of the young people. They think deeply, care passionately and would change the world if they could."

Bridgnorth teacher 2013



What's in a number?

If you've ever seen a BYSP report, you'll know instinctively that we love numbers, and we record everything you could possibly imagine. Our own hours, the number of lessons we teach, the achievements of the young people. We even record how and when we renovate spaces in The Bridge building.

Here are some stats from the first ten years of BYSP which demonstrate the breadth of the work.

Since 2011 we've taken 203 assemblies, 474 lessons, welcomed 797 young people in to The Bridge, and seen a staggering 2500 attending events. In 2016 we introduced Christian exploration groups called Stir, and since then 130 young people have been involved with 25 young people coming through to faith. In 2018 we began our mentoring programme, and have supported 112 students through particularly challenging times in their lives. In 2018 we also began tracking the progress of individuals through the various aspects of our programmes, and we found that on average 211 individual young people engage with us significantly every year.

Of course the challenge with any statistic is trying to figure out what it means. For us these statistics (and the many others we collate) represent ten years of meeting every young person, following them through their entire education journey, and giving them opportunities to grow mentally, emotionally and spiritually.





A Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project Event For
The Bridge, St. Youth, Old Chapel Youth Club, Brown Oak Youth Club, St. Mary's Youth Project, The Friday Event.

THE MAIN EVENT

On Thursday 22nd May we're all coming together at Oldbury Wells School in Bridgnorth for an evening of games, competitions and music with all of our friends from around the area. Yeah that's right! Your youth club is mates with a load of other youth clubs from Alveley to Ditton Priors and Bridgnorth to Cleobury.

So... 6.30pm - 8.30pm is the time for all of this!

INFLATABLES
FOOD
COMPETITIONS
MUSIC
ACTIVITIES
PARENTS CAFE

FEATURING MUSIC FROM



LED

LED are a Christian group from Cornwall who tell their story through their music and work with young people in Schools, Churches & Youth Groups.

Thursday 22nd May 2014
West Hall, Oldbury Wells School
Bridgnorth
6.30pm - 8.30pm
£3



Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project | 52a Whitburn Street | Bridgnorth | WV16 4QP | 01746 218285 | admin@thebridgneyouthcentre.co.uk | Part of Torchbeavers Trust | Charity Number: 1000113



"Thank you to everyone who put this event together. The six young people we took loved it, and we had amazing conversations in the car about God on the way home."

Alison Armstrong 2014





What does success look like?

In January 2018 we commissioned the then administrator, Lucy Southcombe, to develop a central register of young people that would help us to track when we first meet them and how they progress through the six different aspects of our programme. RE teaching, transition from year 6 - 7, supporting students, activities in The Bridge, Christian groups and area events.

Once that register was established we met to discuss what success with young people might look like. After much prayer and discussion we wrote this statement which is now the bench mark of what we're trying to achieve.

The Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project exists to help young people move forward in:

1. Understanding of self
2. Resilience in changing circumstances
3. Experience of leadership
4. Development of faith in Jesus

With this framework we began to figure out which young people had made significant leaps forward and then built up a few stories.

Since using this method, we've been able to see how young people are growing, how we can best support them and crucially, we've seen where we can pray and celebrate their successes.





Spree Weekend Camp

Testimony 2015

"During one of the evening sessions John asked if any of the young people would like to say yes to following Jesus and acknowledge their experience, he asked them to stand up and join the already standing leaders, if this was something they wanted to do.

I didn't think that any of the 4 young people I took from Alveley would respond, but after John said that, all 4 of them stood up and gave their first commitment to Jesus.

After the session I asked them what made them decide to commit tonight and they said it felt like the right time!"





Mark Bunger

2013 - 2014 Team

"In 2013 I came to the Bridgnorth Youth and Schools project from being part of youth ministry in Cleobury Mortimer. The project was very much in its infancy. There was a high value placed on supporting lots of different youth work across the Bridgnorth area and bringing communities together through events, trips and other resourcing.

We had the freedom to do detached work, which gave us opportunities to engage with various young people. We promoted events and found out what young people in Bridgnorth really wanted. We then met those same young people in assemblies and lessons in the local schools.

Being part of a project that was reasonably new was exciting and often hard graft. It felt like every opportunity was an excellent opportunity ordained by God."

Mark Bunger





Exhibition Reflect 2017

This was probably the largest and most creative Reflect project that we've ever undertaken. In the course of a week, every student in Oldbury Wells school came through a complete exhibition, fully equipped with a range of reflective experiences that were created by the team.

This exhibition version of Reflect was an amazing experience which took six weeks to prepare for.





Lucy Southcombe

2013 - 2020 Team

"In my time at the Bridgnorth Youth & Schools Project, I saw wonderful young people grow into independent, proactive, secure and successful, versions of themselves, and I had the honour of being a part of their journey. I encouraged creativity and expression through a writing club with a group of five girls in Bridgnorth Endowed School, deepened friendships on Friday Nights at The Bridge, and enabled young people to care for their youth club and community. I also facilitated the "WHAT R U DOING?" youth-led fundraising initiatives, including but never limited to: 24-hour gaming events, 8-hour sports events and bake sales.

At the same time, I created a role-playing game called Eternium, centred around developing young people's social skills through safe, encouraging role play. I also made resources and events to help build the young people's social skills and emotional literacy through problem-solving and team building. I give my heartfelt thanks to all who served on the board of trustees for BYSP throughout my 7+ years of service. Without their backing, I would not have had as many opportunities to help better the youth of my hometown."

Lucy Southcombe



STIR

"What's interesting about Stir is our ability to map out where young people were with God when we began and how they've moved and changed opinion as they've grown. It's a continual process but the key is that we genuinely love them and want to share the struggles and joys of life together."

Lucy Summers 2016





Lucy Summers

2015 - 2017 Team

“From my time as a placement student with BYSP I have learnt a lot of the theory behind a youth ministry that connects and builds relationships with other youth workers. I have learnt practical youth work skills, especially around schools work. This can be a tricky tightrope to balance on and the tips I have learnt from John have been golden. I have also learnt that building a youth ministry requires key focus on the core purpose and values of the vision. It is easy to do youth work but it is hard to do significant youth work. Personally, the spiritual focus of Stir and mentoring relationships holds significance for me and I love that BYSP holds this value too.

The initial training was scary to me as it’s the most in depth, serious youth work training I’ve done in a while but it reinforced that BYSP cares about the quality of youth work that the young people are receiving. I would describe the training as a blend of professional and informative and then authentic, real, on the ground experience.”

Lucy Summers





Crossfya Band 2019

On Friday 1st November 2019 we took 14 young people to an event in Telford. 6 of them made their first commitment to Jesus.



Charlotte Morris

2016 - 2017 Team

“The difference that this gap year has made to me has been immense! I have had the opportunity to work with young people of a wide range of ages in a variety of settings. Not only have I learnt a huge number of youth work skills but I have learnt so much about myself, about my personality, my work style, even my speaking style.

I have definitely grown in confidence and gradually I have been given more responsibility. Working with the team has been so enjoyable and the time spent doing team worship has been great for my faith. It has been a great opportunity to see if this is a career for me, and even though I have decided not to pursue this path I know that the skills I have acquired, especially communication and presentation, will not be wasted.”

Charlotte Morris





Leke - Visiting Evangelist & Singer

"Leke is such an amazing performer. I was particularly impressed with Jon Stark and his willingness to jump on board with changed plans and his maturity in dealing with those situations. My highlight of Leke was when he came and performed at the Bridge, the young people were so receptive to him and really loved his music. A personal development point for me that was highlighted with Leke was my confidence in lessons and in particular feeling more confident in a teaching role rather than a youth worker role."

Becki 2018





Jon Stark

2016 - 2017 Team

“During my two years working as part of the BYSP, I was presented with so many opportunities to step out in faith with Jesus and do things I never expected to do. From (what felt like) living on the GSUS Live trailer for several weeks, providing hundreds of children with the opportunity to engage with the Gospel in a practical way, through to being asked by a secondary school student to pray for them and their class before they went on holiday after a workshop (With permission from their teacher!), time and time again I found myself surprised but excited by the task that was set before me.

Of all of these opportunities and experiences, my favourite would have to have been the Stir groups I had the privilege of co-leading. Getting to spend intentional time each week journeying with young people as they explored and asked questions about the Christian faith was a true joy; and although I am uncertain as to whether they are still walking with the Lord today, having a handful of those young people say that they wanted to learn how to follow Jesus in their everyday lives, and subsequently getting to begin to disciple them, was one of if not THE highlight of my time serving in the BYSP.”

Jon Stark





Hikaru workshops 2020

"The students loved the whole concept of exploring faith through this story. They thought the use of Japanese names was great, and loved the characters. The posters and style of artwork is amazing! They all enjoyed the creative sessions, especially the consequences story writing and describing the characters. The storytelling sections were great, they all felt absorbed in the story."

Primary Teacher





Becki Bunger

2017 - Present

"Growing up in Devon, it was easy to feel isolated and alone. Although I liked school and I had friends, it was my Church youth club where I really found a home.

There was something so special about the times when we gathered. Those experiences were key in my teenage years, they helped me understand myself, the world around me, and, most importantly, being invested in helped me grow in my faith.

Being part of a project that gives young people those same experiences is so fulfilling. Although I never really saw myself being a full-time youth worker, my teenage experiences taught me that following God's plan for your life is better than anything else you can think up for yourself. That much is true, and giving young people opportunities for experiences really feels like what I was made to do.

I'm hugely grateful to have been part of the BYSP team over the last four years, and I look forward to seeing where God leads us in this next season."

Becki Bunger

Assistant Manager
Bridgnorth Youth and Schools Project






Quotes from young people we've known over the years

"I went to The Bridge basically throughout my whole time at secondary school. I was a very introverted young lad, but it became a very important part of my life... It helped me through mental health problems, losing family members, alcohol and drug misuse; they were with me the whole way through... I'm really grateful for everything John and the team have done for me."

"Even on my first day at The Bridge, I felt so welcomed and included. It was the first time I ever felt like I fit in somewhere. Over the years, I was always encouraged to join in with activities, mix with other people, and it really boosted my confidence... I wouldn't be who I am today without The Bridge, and It wasn't just the youth centre itself; it was other things like Stir. We met up once a week, and it was good being able to hang out with other people, be open with each other and be honest. It really meant a great deal."

"Being at the bridge during the summer has been a big help to me and my family. At home I have to be this calm reassuring person 24/7 which is difficult, but coming here has given me the opportunity to be myself without worrying."






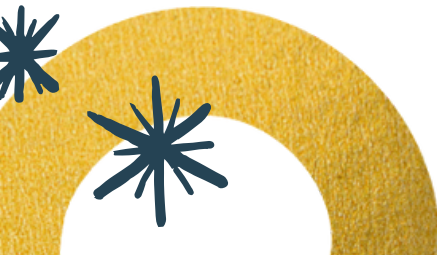
Looking to the future

When people ask us what we value, where we're going, or what we're trying to achieve, there are several things we like to say. For example, we highly value our ability to guide young people through their years in education, and we love it when we find out we've made a significant impact on someone's life. However, behind the scenes, we're actually using a comprehensive outcomes model that helps us stay on track with the vision of the project.

The truth is that young people change and grow over time, and as they develop, their culture and interests change. In turn, our delivery methods also need to change. This means that in the past ten years, our approach to working with young people has developed a great deal, and during the Covid-19 pandemic, our work looked very different again, with much of our provision online.

In the future, our delivery methods will almost certainly change to include things we can't even dream about today. But still, regardless of the activity, our hope for the future will never change. We will always value being part of the journey young people are on, helping them develop in: Understanding of self - Resilience in changing circumstances - Experience in leadership - development of faith in Jesus

And we'll do everything we can to inspire people like you to join in with us. If you would like to be involved in this vital work with our young people please get in touch using the details on the back. Or if you would like to receive our newsletters please subscribe at the bottom of our website.





Tenth Anniversary

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www.bridgnorthyouthandschoolsproject.co.uk | Part of the Bridgnorth Community Trust | Charity Number: 1154617