



Carluk Churches' Youth Project
"Investing in young people"

Street Level newsletter

CHRISTMAS EDITION 2020



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Due to the ever-changing restrictions surrounding the Covid pandemic, we are unable to provide opening or closing dates with any certainty. Please check our Facebook page for the most up to date news and information.

Back to our roots

One of the unforeseen symptoms of the Corona virus pandemic, due to the closure of many hairdressers, has been the sight of quite a few of our womenfolk (and even some of our menfolk) going "back to their roots". I have discovered that Carluk doesn't have as many "natural blondes" as I had previously thought. I wonder if anyone who rediscovered their natural hair colour decided that they actually quite liked it and decided to keep it?

What has all this got to do with Street Level? Well, due to some of the restrictions in place to try and beat this virus, the workers at Street Level have rediscovered their roots too, and as it turns out, actually quite liked it, and have decided to keep it. As some of you will be

aware, Street Level started out, over 25 years ago, as a Detached Youth Work project. We didn't have a nice, warm, purpose-designed building to carry out our work in. We met the young



Detached Youth Work at the skate-park

people of the town where they were: in the parks, up the woods, down the burn – wherever!

And now, because of the limitations in place on the numbers of people we can have in the building, we have rediscovered the benefits of

detached work. For the past few months we have been meeting up the Moor park and now we have a regular spot at the Crawforddyke skate park every Thursday from 5.30 – 9pm.

We pitch our gazebo, hand out pies, sausage rolls, savouries and cakes that Greggs kindly donate and get a chance to meet the young folk and have a chat – on their terms and on their territory. And even though the weather can be a bit of a nuisance, it's really refreshing to be back to where we were all those years ago. My favourite quote from one of our young folk: (Bearing in mind it's dark, 7.30pm and 3 degrees C) **"I got out my bed specially just to come here and see yous"!**

Merry Christmas x.

A message from the chair - Dr. John Wilcox

The Corona virus is still with us, affecting all of our lives, but the team at Street Level with Universal Connections continue to find ways to support our young people - inside, outside and on-line. Once again, we share stories with you that illustrate the work being done. In your thoughts and prayers, please give thanks for the expertise and efforts of the team, and for the generosity of those

who fund the work. We have one other request to make of you. One of the impacts of the pandemic is that our collecting cans strategically placed in shops and churches are no longer brimming with coins, and community groups that generously donate funds to the Street Level project are not currently meeting. So, like all charities, our income is reduced. These are difficult

times for many, but if you have some spare cash this Christmas season, please consider donating to Street Level. You can use PayPal or Bankcard via the "Donate" button on our [website](#) or the donate button on our [Facebook](#) page. or by bank transfer to: 80-11-00 06082505 For any other info on donations, please Email finance.streetlevel@gmail.com. Thank you!

A Street Level "Zoommers" meeting



"I have received support with food, household items & emotional support, the support has helped us immensely if it wasn't for them helping me with gifts for my little girl's birthday I would have had to wake up with my child distraught."

A very Happy Christmas to all who support our project either with their time, talents, prayers or donations.

A special thanks to CHOICES community shop for their continued and invaluable financial support even though they have been closed for a while. We hope it's not long before they are back providing a great service to our community.

"Blended Youth Work"

Since the initial lock-down in March of this year, we have had to look at different and innovative ways of working.

The first thought was how to keep contact with our regular group of young people. So, we set up regular Zoom meetings - twice a day, Monday to Friday. These have continued right up to now and it looks like we will keep using this as a way to stay in contact and make ourselves available to the young people.

We have also been using the Facebook Messenger app

which allows our young people to contact the staff and have one-to-one conversations with them. Again, this has continued on a daily basis for the past nine months.

When some of the restrictions were lifted earlier on in the year, we were then able to meet with some young folk outdoors: regular visits to the Moor Park involved some sports, flying kites, picnics but again, mostly just chatting and catching up with what was going on in the young people's lives.

As restrictions were relaxed further, and after introducing strict infection control measures, we were able to re-open the centre, albeit for much reduced times and with limited numbers of young people.

So it looks like this model of "Blended Youth work" - online, outdoors and centre-based - will continue for the foreseeable future.

And in spite of the odd "Technical hitch" there are definite advantages to this new way of working.

Helping the wider community

Our close working relationship with SLC's Youth, Family & Community Learning Service has helped Street Level to expand our activities from purely Youth Work, to include wider Community support.

What started out with delivering a few food parcels to a handful of families has developed into providing support and advice and just time to chat and build relationships

with around 30 families in and around Carluke.

The overwhelming response to our social media requests for help has allowed us to provide furniture, household items and toys for many struggling families over the past few months.

In conjunction with Social work, "*Carluka/Law/Braidwood-Supporting each other during Corona Pandemic*" and many individuals, we will be deliver-

ing toys and gifts to over 130 children and helping 50 families with £50 Tesco food vouchers.

One emergency request on Facebook - when a young person who lived on their own had a boiler break-down - resulted in us being able to provide her with four oil-filled portable heaters within two hours of asking! What an incredible show of community spirit. Well done you guys!

Back to our roots (part 2)

So, I was having a wee tidy out while "working" from home one day recently, and I came across something that took me back a bit.

And after writing the "Back to our roots" bit on page one of this newsletter about hair colour, I thought I'd share it with you.

It's my I.D card issued to me

when I started working for Street Level.

YES, That really was the natural colour of my hair when I became a youth worker over 25 years ago. (date of issue on the back: 20/9/95)

Coincidentally, A "young" man came to my door last week to ask if I'd sign the back of his I.D. photo.



How do I know him? Why did he ask me? Well, I met him when I was doing detached youth work, up the woods, 25 years ago; (He's now over 40 years old!) How time flies...

