

Report to	South West Wiltshire
Date of Meeting	17/03/2021
Title of Report	Community Youth Grants

1. Purpose of the report:

To ask Councillors to consider the following application seeking funding from the South West Wiltshire Area Board.

Application	Grant Amount
Applicant: Seeds4Success Project Title: Seeds4Success - Open Access Youth Work and Positive Activities	£10000.00

2. Main Considerations

Councillors will need to be satisfied that grants awarded in the 2020/21 year are made to projects that can realistically proceed within a year of the award being made.

Area Boards have authority to approve Area Grants under powers delegated to them by the Cabinet member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding. Under the Scheme of Delegation Area Boards must adhere to the Area Board Grants Guidance 2014/2015.

Community Youth Grants will contribute to the continuance and/or improvement of cultural, social and community activity and wellbeing in the community area, the extent and specifics of which will be dependent upon the individual project.

Community Youth Grants give all local community and voluntary groups, Town and Parish Councils an equal opportunity to receive funding towards community based projects and schemes.

3. The applications

Applicant: Seeds4Success Project Title: Seeds4Success - Open Access Youth Work and Positive Activities	Amount Requested from Area Board: £10000.00
This application meets grant criteria.	
Project Summary: We want to continue the delivery and development of our open access youth work offer for young people in South West Wiltshire through a range of positive activities such as youth clubs in Mere and Wilton and a Health and Wellbeing Project at the Nadder Centre in Tisbury. As we emerge from this pandemic we want to respond to the changing needs of young people and engage them in a range of positive activities in face to face setting which enable them to regain social skills rebuild confidence and self-esteem and re-establish positive	

relationships with their peers and trusted adults.

Please tell us WHO will benefit and HOW they will benefit from your project and benefit your local community:

With the Coronavirus pandemic still prevalent across the country and the many restrictions we have faced during the past year there has been a detrimental impact on the lives and wellbeing of many individuals, children and young people, as well as adults. Face to face youth work has been suspended for large parts of the year and during these times we have been running open access sessions via Zoom although we know this has not reached as many young people as face to face sessions would have. We know there is a huge job to do as restrictions ease and we need to reengage those young people who have become withdrawn isolated and socially anxious. The lack of regular open access face to face opportunities has meant some young people have found other less positive ways to fill their time and we will reach out to those individuals through our targeted initiatives as well as ensuring an outdoor presence during open access sessions during the summer months. We hope that we would reach 100 young people during the year through our open access sessions and 50 of these would access more than one session of youth work a week. Aside from the specific challenges of the past year young people living in South West Wiltshire face significant challenges around their education employment training and leisure time activities. Appearing wealthy to outsiders there are pockets of deprivation within these communities and this combined with limited facilities and transport creates isolation. Young people's ability to socialise or access positive activities is restricted in rural communities and their mental and physical health and wellbeing are negatively impacted and opportunities to develop skills and independence are also limited. For those young people who face additional barriers such as learning needs disabilities, severe mental health issues, substance misuse, complex families, and poverty, the challenges are much greater. Seeds4Success provides a variety of opportunities throughout the week engaging a range of individuals with different needs including those hard to reach young people facing multiple barriers to participation using 3 key methods of delivery: Open Access Youth Work; Targeted Support; and Social Action Programmes. The Open Access element of our work is the hardest for us to fund as many grants programmes are only for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people or for specific targeted projects. However it is through these sessions and these approaches that we are often able to engage those young people who are on the fringes of anti-social behaviour or substance misuse who are looking for something to do that does not require huge levels of commitment on their part. The sessions also help us identify those young people who are facing additional challenges in their lives and assist them with support to access specialist services or move onto more targeted programmes where needed. By providing regular sessions where young people can come and meet their friends in a safe and welcoming space they learn about and discuss issues affecting their lives, they can gain experiences that support their personal and social development. These sessions also provide the opportunity for young people to access planned activities such as sports and games, cooking, arts and crafts, woodwork, bike maintenance and outdoor activities. We provide transport to all our sessions enabling young people living in rural isolation to access our services. Our young leaders and youth committee have continued to meet via zoom over the past year and we have continued to discuss ideas and the challenges we are facing with

young people during this time. When we returned to face to face delivery last summer young people gave us their thoughts and ideas about how it could work, how they would manage with the new safety measures, and what they wanted from the sessions. The drop in sessions and the use of the Nadder Centre are sessions they really value as they identify that it is the opportunity to meet their friends (often friendships made through S4S and not those they are at school with) and the chance to gather in a safe space and chat to youth workers about things affecting their lives are really important to them. Many of those who have not engaged through the Zoom sessions tell us they really miss the face to face opportunities as it is the chance to get out of the house and away from the pressures and stresses at home that they are really looking forward to. During face to face sessions there is regular dialogue about what we can do to improve sessions, what activities young people would like to try. The charity has young people at its heart, they inform and shape our growth and development and they are the greatest advocates and kindest critics of our work. We do not make a charge for any of our sessions as we feel that this is a barrier to some young people and it is also an effective youth work tool. We feel it is important however that young people understand that there are costs to the services they are accessing therefore we often have open conversations about what makes the charity work and how they are able to access these opportunities at no cost. We do have expectations around behaviour and respect and by not charging young people to access our sessions their engagement is completely voluntary. If behaviour does not meet our expectations we are able to have conversations with those individuals about this and the choices they are making without them feeling that they have bought a space at a session and therefore can do what they want. The social action element of our work enables young people to develop a greater understanding of how the charity is run and the importance of positive relationships between us and the wider community. The young people engaged in this aspect of our delivery are the ones who go on to actively fundraise to support our work, provide support to events in the local community in the name of Seeds4Success, support staff and other young people at youth work sessions, and plan and deliver junior youth work. During the past year opportunities to be out in the community visibly making a difference have been few and far between but there are young people who are keen to be able to get involved in this way. We know that many young people face additional barriers when it comes to accessing services and this is why we try to remove as many of these as possible. By providing transport to access our project which are free at the point of entry we are going a long way to address some of the inequalities that exist. We also know that young people with learning needs and disabilities face bigger challenges and these young people receive greater support through our targeted programmes however once these young people have gained more confidence and increased their social skills they are supported to attend open access opportunities as well. We are also mindful that many young people facing challenges may not feel able to just go along to an open access session. We work with local partners such as schools and specialist support workers to identify individuals who may need that extra support making contact and meeting up with them to reduce those anxieties. Our new mentoring programme will also provide an additional layer of support to some of these individuals enabling a growth in confidence and self-esteem through 1 to 1 support from a trusted adult volunteer. If these young people decide they would like to access our services we ensure we understand their needs and support them in attending the most appropriate session. We have peer leaders at all sessions who

look out for these particular individuals creating a safe and friendly environment for all young people.

Report Author:

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