

3rd September 2024

Dear Esteemed Trustees,

Thank you to The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights for your grant of £2,200 towards vulnerable young people attending their Coastal Camp in their second year of the Youth Adventure Programme. I am thrilled to share with you a project report, including some photos and a success story.

Our three-school-year Youth Adventure Programme is completely free to attend for young people, with all kit provided. Your continued generous support - both from previous years and now - will make a massive difference to these young people's lives when they need it most.

Thank you once again for supporting young people from Swindon and Wiltshire. If you would like any further information, please get in touch. Equally, if you would like to visit our project or take part in one of our virtual fireside coffees, please let us know and we can happily arrange this.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle van der Bliek

Trusts Fundraising Officer

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## Background to Project

**Summary of Activities:** We are delighted to report that the Coastal Camps you funded in May this year were a huge success for the young people, allowing for adventure, challenge and confidence building.

Our two Coastal Camps took place in the beautiful Purbeck Valley in Dorset. This marked our second year partnering with Cumulus Outdoors, who once again exceeded our expectations all round.

During the first camp, challenging weather conditions prevented us from coasteering. However this gave us the chance to road test our back up plan of tunnelling and high ropes, activities that were equally challenging and provided fantastic opportunities for building teamwork skills.



Both camps featured a thrilling variety of water based activities including:

### Stand up paddleboarding:

Young people used their own paddleboards - a great way to test their balance and independence!



### Raft Building:

Young people used barrels and rafts to construct their own rafts, encouraging team-work and perseverance!



### Jumbo stand-up paddleboarding:

Young people got into groups to try the massive paddleboards - this tested their communication skills while they worked together to stay afloat!





Young people also got to take part in non-water based activities, including rock climbing and high ropes. Many participants struggle with a fear of heights, and these challenging activities help them face their fear in a safe and encouraging environment. We always help them celebrate their successes whether big or small - even if they're only able to put on a harness today, the next day they might find the courage to climb all the way to the top!



The set up was fantastic and activities were delivered in an engaging, enthusiastic and empathetic way; their dedication to ensuring the young people got the most out of the opportunities was clearly evident.

As you can see, one young person was struggling to tie a knot during the raft building session, and an activity instructor knelt down to show her how to tie it. By ensuring each young person received individual attention, our staff and instructors helped the young people believe that they are 100% capable of achieving their goals, even if they struggle the first time!

Our volunteers were the backbone of our camp and did a fantastic job of keeping the young people engaged and enthusiastic. Volunteers were especially good at keeping track of their aims, ensuring there were opportunities for them to work towards achieving them.

Evenings were filled with either an evening at the beach, playing team games and learning about beach safety, or an evening walk exploring the surrounding woodland and playing games.

The activities allowed young people to challenge themselves and work towards achieving their personal aims. It was a busy and tiring few days that were action packed with activities, but definitely a memorable and rewarding experience for everyone involved.



## Outcomes:

The young people on this year's Coastal Camp made a tremendous amount of progress in several key areas.

### Confidence:

Participants improved in confidence & self-belief, helping them to develop a more positive outlook on life.

96% of beneficiaries said Coastal Camp had helped them become more confident (44% said it had helped them a lot)

*"I got on well with my aims by giving all the water activities a go and pushed myself a lot. YAT is really helping me boost my confidence."*



### Resilience

Participants improved in their resilience through increased commitment & control. The activities are all designed to build resilience by stretching the young people beyond their comfort zone, while making sure they're receptive to learning by staying motivated and having fun.

93% of beneficiaries said their resilience had improved (41% said by a lot)

One young person said: *"I was resilient today when I was kayaking - I kept falling in, but I kept going."*

### Communication Skills

Participants improved their interpersonal & communication skills, leading to positive relationships with family, trusted adults & peers. All the activities required teamwork in order to achieve the task and young people discovered that letting someone else help is more beneficial than struggling to do something on your own.

93% said it had helped their communication and teamwork skills improve (74% said by a lot)

One young person said: *"I've talked to other people in our group. I stayed calm even when I was frustrated so I didn't need to take time alone."*



### Positive Outlook to Challenges

More positive approach to challenge, leading to an increased ability to cope with change & adversity in their lives. The water activities on Coastal Camp are particularly hard challenges as many of them are scared of the water and it really pushes them out of their comfort zone.

96% said it had helped them challenge themselves and do more than they thought they could (63% said a lot more)

### Feedback:

*"Even when I was scared I pushed myself to overcome the challenge I am facing."*

*"I have worked on every aim and fixed mistakes better than last year and tried my hardest."*

One parent of a young person who finished Coastal Camp told us:

*“On the morning of the camp, my child wasn't wanting to go on the trip, refusing to leave the house etc.*

*But upon getting to the bus pick up, the staff being present helped her feel more at ease and comfortable in attending.*

*Since returning, she has stated that it was the best time of her life!”*



### **What's next?**

This brave cohort of young people just finished their next adventure - Forest Camp! They attended a 6-day residential camp this August in the heart of the Forest of Dean, trying their hand at archery, an overnight river canoe journey, caving expeditions, a high ropes challenge course, building shelters and cooking over a campfire. The activities stretched their comfort zones, taught them to problem solve and keep a positive attitude throughout.

In their final year of the programme, the young people will have four Pathway Days, with the final day in July 2024. These Pathway Days encourage the young people to reflect on the progress that they have made and take pride in their achievements as a cohort. After this there will be an additional year of 1-1 support in our Mentoring Programme for those who need it. The length of the programme allows us to support key points in their lives, and helps them develop a positive outlook that will go on to change their lives for the better.



*“Over this YAT experience I've learnt that I shouldn't not try something new because I am scared. Being scared is a reminder that after I would feel proud. Since the start and now I have become more out of my shell and I feel more comfortable meeting new people.”*

**Thank you so much for your support.**