

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL - PARISH YOUTH INITIATIVE

1. At the meeting of the Parish Council on 14th January it was agreed that Bishopstone PC should join with the parish councils of Broad Chalke and Fovant in supporting a South West Wiltshire Area Board project to promote out of school youth activities in the villages. It was agreed to contribute £500 towards the cost in 2025/26. I undertook to report further once discussions had taken place with the other partners. I have also consulted parents in the village who had indicated support for this project to Cllr Rigg.

2. The project is primarily for young people of 13 – 18 years. However, participation of some of slightly younger age is not ruled out. The aims of the project are to:

- (i) try to establish what types of activities are of interest to young people living in the villages and their preparedness to participate;
- (ii) provide a pilot programme of activities for 2025/26 and create a village led programme in future years;
- (iii) encourage the development of a group of parent/carers volunteers within the village to plan, organise and deliver activities.

3. The 2025/26 budget for the project is £5,000 (contributions from SWWAB £2,500, Fovant £1,500, Broad Chalke and Bishopstone £500 each). The parish council contributions will be met 50/50 by that from SWWAB, so **the spending budget for activities in Bishopstone in 2025/26 will be £1,000**. This money will be used to (a) engage professional youth workers to help deliver at least some of the activities and (b) to pay for events delivered by outside providers.

Initial Event

4. The starting point for this project will be the survey mentioned in (i) above. It is felt that a survey form distributed either by traditional or on-line media is unlikely to be effective. Instead the proposal is that each village should have a well publicised and appealing launch event. All young people in the village would be invited to attend (according to the 2021 Census there are likely to be more than 40 young people in the target age group in the village).

5. The event would be curated by professional helpers who would lead on engagement with those attending to promote a discussion on the future activities they might support, secure contact details etc. Discussions are already taking place with SMASH Youth Project - <https://smashyouthproject.co.uk> about their potential involvement. Whilst there will be costs associated with this it would have the undoubted benefit of bringing experience in

delivering youth projects and ensure all safeguarding etc requirements are met. Initial contacts could be followed up by on-line discussion, establishment of a WhatsApp group etc.

6. Councillors are asked to consider **what type of initial event and when should it be held?** One suggestion for the event is to have a Zorb session on the Recreation Field – see:

[Zorbing Football / Nationwide Hire](#)

However, **any other suggestions Councillors may have would be welcome.** Given the time required to plan the event and give it adequate publicity we are probably talking of Mid-May to Mid-June for a date. The view of parents I have consulted is

Publicity would be via the parish magazine (STaB), WhatsApp Network, village website and posters/flyers.

Further activities

7. The programme for further activities, later in the year, will depend on the feedback produced from the initial survey. The budget will probably allow for one or two follow-up events of a similar scale to the initial one. These might be in other locations and involve an organised visit. However, the aim would be to develop lower key, less costly, activities run within the village longer term. We could also approach those who run existing adult activities in the village to see whether they might run occasional events specifically for the younger age group.

8. Each of the three villages will have a similar approach, starting with a major event (Fovant are considering having a climbing wall). Whilst these events/activities will be primarily for young people in the village concerned, it is a joint project by the three villages so events will be open to residents of the other villages to participate if they are prepared to travel.

Organisation

9. A key issue for this project is the extent to which parents and carers are prepared to organise and help deliver the activities included in the programme. I consulted those who had been in touch with Cllr Rigg with a version of this paper asking that they indicate whether they are prepared to be part of a volunteer group to manage the project. I will report at the meeting on any comments received. More volunteers should be recruited when we begin the wider publicity for this project. It might also be helpful to establish a “sounding board” of young people from the target group who might be more closely involved in the planning of activities/events.

10. Any items of expenditure will need to be authorised and paid by the Parish Council. Other than that it is intended that the project should be run by the volunteer group, with reports to the Parish Council as required.

Conclusion

11. Councillors are asked to decide whether this project should go ahead as described. Are Councillors content to leave it to Cllr Rigg and I to decide on the event, timing and location in consultation with the volunteer group? A Zorb session might cost between £250 and £350. It should be possible to bring a precise budget for the initial event to the meeting in May for approval.

Mike Ash
Clerk
March 2025