Children’s and Youth Work April 2021

In common everyone else, the last year has presented challenges as the team have been unable to meet up with young people or other leaders from across the district.

Despite this, we have managed to continue with most things, adapting to work digitally. In some ways this has been a blessing as it has made geographically diverse meetings more accessible. However, we have been unable to run any residential weekends, which are a critical aspect of youth work.

One Opportunity has continued, with seven participants from across the district. Many, but not all, of the projects are based around website development or online worship. Others include outdoor family trails and the development of a mental health app. The group meet regularly via Zoom for both training and social sessions with previous interns.

Over the last few years, we have encouraged young people to shape the youth work on offer as well as participate in the governance of the church. We have a ‘youth seat’ on synod and continue to develop a youth voice project, empowering young people to contribute in meaningful ways

The team have run Aurora, a children’s and youth leaders training course. There are seven participants due to complete in May 2021. We hope to have a graduation as part of the Autumn synod.

In January the team ran a socially distanced sleep out to raise money for homelessness. Twenty-six people from across the district slept out in their back gardens and many more donated, raising £7000.

The lay workers community of practice has developed over the year through regular online meetings. This switch has made the group more accessible and has led to an increase in collaboration and wisdom sharing.

Other work has been focussed on maintaining community, mental health needs and providing support as needed to both young people and their leaders.