



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

DUNBAR
AREA
CHRISTIAN
YOUTH
PROJECT



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Background

The Dunbar Area Christian Youth Project was created in 2005 by a cross denominational group of Christians with the aim of bridging the gap between the local church and young people in the Dunbar Community.

Richard Taylor was appointed as a full-time Youth Worker who successfully established work in schools, the local community and alongside local churches. Approximately 50 volunteers support DACYP through face to face youth work, or behind the scenes as a Management Group, Trustees and fundraisers. We also employ Liz Henderson as a part-time Administrator.

Our aims

Through the use of an employed Youth Worker and with the help of volunteers from the local Christian community, the aims of Dunbar Area Christian Youth Project include;

- Responding to the identified needs of young people in the schools and community by demonstrating Christian love and compassion in practical ways and offering pastoral support where needed
- Enabling young people to explore the good news of the Christian faith, supporting them in the development of their personal beliefs, nurturing the faith of young Christians, and encouraging the acquisition of positive life skills.



YOUTH WORKERS REPORT

There's so much about DACYP that goes unchanged, partly because our input to RME follows the curriculum and the academic yearly cycle. But there's always space for new initiatives and ways to enrich existing provision. **The Lad's Group** I reported on last year has continued to thrive, with a new younger group opening, led by the S4 lads themselves.

In May I had the privilege of supporting pupils on the **DGS Battlefields** trip in Belgium. A very moving and poignant shared experience. We launched **Life Walks** where young people joined adults for a Bible based, reflective journey through some of the beautiful local countryside. In doing so, retaining our distinct Christian ethos to DACYP's work, and offering something relevant to the young folk.

Good food and conversation were an important element of this and one thing that has stood out this year is, that if we give people space to tell their stories and be heard, then they will talk. All of the above, along with Check-in groups, Seasons for Growth and more are about validating people and their experiences.

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This has been seen in the classroom too, where Primary 7's through the **Big Questions** sessions have been encouraged, without judgement to talk about their beliefs and the experiences in their lives that have led them to form them. For those with a faith, it affirms it and for those without then it enables them to identify what their own spirituality is. These conversations then lead to much deeper discussions, and for some the desire to learn more about 'spiritual things'.

Such practice was modelled by Jesus. He would see the person not



the label. He'd take time to listen to people and then, quite naturally, he'd turn to the more spiritual matters. And so it is with DACYP. There have been times in our 18 year history where we've tried to rush it and skip that relational part out. Lots of hot air and irrelevant, often elaborate attempts to 'make them understand' have been unsuccessful.

As we move into another year I look forward to creating more spaces for young people and adults to talk together and mutually develop and deepen their understanding of God.

Richard

CHAIRS REMARKS



Anne Harvey reflects on her first year as Chair

It's now one year since I felt called to the role of chair of the management committee and it's been a learning experience for me and others too. There's been a change of personnel among the Trustees and Management Group, and we have a new Administrator, Liz Henderson. The constant face throughout the last year is our stalwart youth worker Richard whose long and consistent service is foundational to our work.

We have encouraged and supported local churches in their ministry to local schools and have focussed our work from P6 upwards. Our focus as a charity, whilst never deviating from demonstrating the unconditional love of God through Jesus, has evolved.

Much of our work is alongside young people who are facing challenges in their lives whatever the cause or background, whilst continuing to provide in class support with learning activities and the RME curriculum. Our volunteer handbook, distributed within the last year, makes clear the breadth of volunteering opportunities within DACYP and the scope of work our 50 plus volunteers undertake. Of course we are keen to recruit more people to help, particularly as our schools no longer benefit from as many support staff as before. (see volunteering article)

Everyone involved with DACYP appreciates the prayerful support we receive from our donors, our families, school staff and the young people we serve. Please continue to pray for us and support us as we continue to discern the way in which we are called by God to live out the gospel alongside the young people in this area.

SCHOOLS WORK

Our Youth Worker is based in Dunbar Primary School and regularly visits the other schools in the cluster. He also spends a day a week in Dunbar Grammar School. Our volunteers also work in the schools offering practical and pastoral support to pupils and staff.

Number of lessons, groups and contacts

16 x Big Questions classes
20 x Primary 6 RME Classes
23 x P7 RME Classes
6 x Seasons for Growth Groups
3 x Check in Groups
2 x Lad's Groups

Approximately 190 Primary 7's
Approximately 150 Primary 6's
30 x lads at the Lad's Group
18 x children in Check-in Groups

Schools we work with

Dunbar Primary School
Dunbar Grammar School
East Linton Primary School
Innerwick Primary School
Stenton Primary School
West Barns Primary School



**59 X RME
CLASSES**

RELIGIOUS MORAL EDUCATION (RME)

A core element of our work has been contributing to the Primary 6 & 7 RME Curriculum. Each lesson is planned with the teachers to compliment and enhance the delivery of the RME curriculum. Often this will overlap to cover the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum too, enabling children to discuss subjects such as bereavement, bullying, friendship, citizenship, fears, morality, mental health and relationships.

Primary 6 lessons

- Awe & Wonder
- Christian beliefs about how to treat others
- Christian baptism ceremonies
- Christian marriage ceremonies
- Christian funerals

Primary 7 lessons

- The Big Questions (Our beliefs)
- The Big Questions (Faith)
- The Titanic - Who's to blame? (Suffering)
- Christmas & Easter (Christian beliefs and their significance and relevance to others)
- Transatlantic slave trade (Faith & morality)
- Parable of Wise & Foolish Builders

PASTORAL WORK

A substantial part of DACYP's work in schools is offering pastoral support to pupils and, occasionally to staff. This delivered through our Youth Worker and our volunteers in Check-in groups, Seasons for Growth Groups, Lad's Mental Health Groups, Paired Reading and one to one support. Read on to hear more about them.

CHECK-IN GROUPS & SEASONS FOR GROWTH GROUPS

Check-in Groups are safe spaces for children to share their stories, news and worries with others. They are weekly peer to peer groups so an important element of the groups is listening to others and validating each others experiences.

3 X CHECK-IN
GROUPS
(18 CHILDREN)

6 X SEASONS
FOR GROWTH
GROUPS
(35 CHILDREN)

“ To talk about things I don't get chance to talk about at home. Everyone is too busy there ”

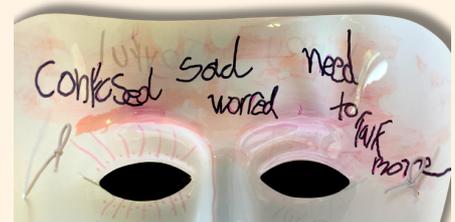
“ I have feelings that I need to talk about. ”

“ It's a safe space to talk. I barely get the chance to talk about feelings at home and I don't really want to either. ”

Seasons for Growth Groups are designed to help children deal with bereavement and other kinds of loss and unwanted changes, e.g. parents separating or care placements collapsing. DACYP delivered 4 of 6 groups that ran in Dunbar Primary School. Using discussions, crafts, games and journaling, the children have been able to express themselves and develop strategies to helping themselves and each other.

Example of activities

Using masks, the children portrayed on the outside how they wanted to be seen, but wrote how they actually feel and what they hide from people on the inside.



'Confused, sad, worried and the need to talk more'

ONE-TO-ONE

Working with the Guidance Team, Richard has been offering one-to-one support to pupils at Dunbar Grammar School. Often this is to respond to an immediate crisis, e.g. sudden death, or it can act as an intermediate level of support whilst waiting for professional assistance from other agencies.

PAIRED READING & CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Our team of volunteers have been supporting classes in Dunbar Primary School by doing paired reading and numeracy work, but also offering valuable pastoral support by being present for children who need to talk to an adult. At a time when resources for support staff are overstretched, the service these folk give is highly valued by class teachers.

We have also made great progress in training these volunteers in safeguarding and good practice.

YOUNG MENS MENTAL HEALTH GROUP



We have continued to run mental health groups for young men at Dunbar Grammar School. After the success of its pilot last year, demand for a safe space for people to talk has continued to grow. This weekly group is run by 6 of our volunteers, based in Belhaven Church Stables (over the road from the school). Some of the senior pupils have recently started up a group for S2 pupils which they facilitate with support from ourselves. There are approximately 30 lads on the books. Some attend occasionally but many are there weekly. The group are very supportive of each other as they discuss some very difficult things together and open up about their struggles, often for the first time.

Young Women's mental health group - We have been working towards starting girls group but are just a few volunteers short of being able to run it sustainably.

OTHER SCHOOLS WORK

- Our Youth Worker and volunteers have attended the **Primary 7 Camp** in the Scottish Borders. This was part of the ongoing **Transition Programme** that prepares the children for the move to high school.
- In May, Richard joined the S3 pupils on their visit to the **WWI Battlefields** in Belgium and France. This incredibly powerful visit enabled folk time together and collectively to reflect on the value of life, on loss and the desire for peace.
- Some of our DACYP Team were part of the **Primary 6 Awesome Week** of activities, supporting pupils as they took on adventurous activities such as tree climbing and coasteering.
- Grahame Jackson (pictured with Helen Gillanders & Richard) retired from volunteering and was presented with the Elaine Albano Community Award for his services.
- We organised several Primary 7 groups to go on orientation visits to Dunbar Grammar School as an addition to the **P7 Enhanced Transition Programme**
- One of our volunteers has been delivering mindfulness sessions for his Primary 6 Class. Peter, who is blind has also been helping the class develop their descriptive writing skills



THE CUP OF KINDNESS

Jesus said... 'do to others what you would have them do to you.' Matthew 7:12

Local churches and DACYP have created a new award to add to the other prestigious accolades presented at Dunbar Grammar School awards night. The Cup of Kindness is given to folk who have demonstrated acts of kindness to others in the school community and beyond. It reflects the teachings of Jesus about how to treat other people. Pupils nominated their choice of candidate, and from this list of over 100, a panel of judges picked a winner. It highlighted just how many good news stories about young people go untold.



Photo: The new award was presented to S4 pupil Ava Black. Her friends had nominated her for endless ability to put others first, before herself.

VOLUNTEERS

Our team of volunteers have continued to serve the project and its different activities. They are key to the success of DACYP's work.



There are many different volunteer roles in DACYP. Some are behind the scenes as trustees, members of the management group and organising events. Some of it is at occasional events such as Life Walks, or weekly activities like Harbour Lights Xtra.



The majority of our volunteers are based in schools. These include paired readers and classroom buddies (Primary) who are allocated a class that they work with throughout the year, usually for around 2 hours a week or whatever they are able to. Often this leads to them being involved in other school activities, e.g. trips. By default it offers a tier of pastoral support too.



We have a team of volunteers who run the young men's mental health group at the grammar school and others who help out on an adhoc basis.

Safeguarding is paramount for the safety of both volunteers and young people. All volunteers need to be PVG registered and undertake safeguarding training. The Head Teachers at Dunbar Primary School have delivered this on several occasions throughout the year.

THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING?

You might be considering volunteering in some of the existing things, or you might have a particular idea of how you might be able to help. Please do get in touch and we can try and pair you up with something that suits your preferences.

Contact: liz.henderson@dacyp.org.uk

SUPPORTING LOCAL CHURCHES

We have endeavoured to support local churches develop their own work with children, young people and families, and giving them opportunities to get involved in our work. We are grateful to churches who host events for us, such as Harbour Lights Xtra, Prayer Breakfasts and Life Walks. But also for the support they give by keeping congregations apprised of our work, and for the occasional collections we receive from them.

We have tried to co-ordinate and promote the different initiatives and events churches are doing. Much of DACYP's work overlaps with these, leaving us in a good position to have an overview of what is going on locally and beyond.

GODLY PLAY *Godly Play begins with children's innate sense of the presence of God. It offers Christian language as a support for their ongoing spiritual formation.*

Val Hale has been running Godly Play sessions at St Anne's Church for primary age children. Godly Play is a movement that is rapidly growing in churches in the UK and beyond. Using a range of interactive and very creative techniques for storytelling, the children are taken on a journey through Bible stories in a new way.



The last session was on the school in-service day, offering families something free to do together and is building positive links with them and the local church community. DACYP is glad to support such initiatives and looks forward to seeing more of them in the year ahead.

Photos: *The October event focused on Old Testament stories set in the desert.*

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church is a monthly event for families. Unlike traditional church it can be quite informal, interactive and sometimes quite messy! It also involves a meal together and is very popular. Around 40 people from all sorts of backgrounds attend the Belhaven Messy Church. DACYP supports it through Richard's input to planning and running activities. One of the young people joined him on the SU Holiday to Scoughall, and others on the Life Walks. It is another example of how DACYP connects people.



FIRST FRIDAY & SECOND SUNDAY

First Friday meets in West Barns village hall and draws in secondary age people. It is a small, fun youth event full of silly and not so silly games, crafts, cooking and food.

Second Sunday is also a monthly youth event and is designed to help young people learn more about the Christian faith. It is a joint initiative by Dunbar and Bel haven Parish Churches.

SUMMER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Our summer programme saw some significant changes. Having made the decision to concentrate our efforts on working with the Primary 7 and secondary age young people, we did not run a Holiday Club. Instead we ran additional Harbour Lights Xtra sessions, developed a new initiative called Life Walks and took a group of young people to Scripture Union Camp. We had also put into place additional activities for the Lad's Group. However there was no take up on this programme.

LIFE WALKS

Based on the model of pilgrimages, Life Walks gave young people the opportunity to slow down, take a break from screen time, get out into nature and to reflect on life as they walked and talked. Each of the 4 walks had a theme. We used Bible verses and the physical landscape to enable folk to reflect on their own lives and what God has to say. Adults from different churches joined the walks and there were some great conversations with all involved. Each walk concluded with a meal together and a blessing by one of the Ministers.



Photos (Left to right): 1. On top of Doon Hill. 2. Young people on their 'church' themed walk around Spott. 3. Pizzas and fellowship in Spott Village Hall. 4. Hedderwick on our way to East Linton 5. Brock Woods



SCRIPTURE UNION HOLIDAY



Richard accompanied 4 young people on the Scripture Union Holiday in Scoughall near North Berwick. We were able to subsidise the cost of this through generous donations to the project, allowing the young folk to have a very memorable holiday where they made new friends and learnt lots.



HARBOUR LIGHTS XTRA

Our Friday afternoon group meets at St Anne's Church and is open for secondary aged pupils. It is a welcoming space and the sanctuary of the church is well used for games, crafts, food and reflection. The young people are at home there and it is not unusual for all of these things to happen in one session.



Throughout the year the group have ventured into Edinburgh for the large worship event called Magnitude and 4 of the group went on an SU Holiday. But it is the relationships they are building with folk from the church that stands out. For example, the fun of crab fishing together at the harbour. The peer support shown in going to the Edinburgh Fringe to watch one of the group perform in a musical At Christmas being part of the Crib Service or being taught how to play pool by the Minister!



LOIS



One of the regulars volunteers at Harbour Lights Xtra is Lois. At 80 years young we asked her and the young people about the friendship they have built together.

Lois 'Having been a teacher it is exciting to be with young people again. You never know who will be there, what they will do or say. I enjoy the company and trying to learn their games like Exploding Kittens! After a long spell in hospital, I came out to find many friends had moved away and I had become quite isolated. Harbour Lights Xtra gives me a sense of belonging and I hope it will keep me young(er)!

“ *She is fun and you can have a laugh with her.* ”

Young people - *'We like having Lois here. She is fun and you can have a laugh with her.'*
She's good company and she is always willing to try new things out'
'Lois is kind and funny'

When Lois's longterm companion dog Misty (pictured below) died, her loss was felt by all at Harbour Lights Extra. In response the young people took it on themselves to paint her a picture of Misty. Recognising Lois would now be alone, one of the boys (Cameron) who volunteers at the weekly Dunbar Grammar School intergenerational dinners, invited Lois along as his guest. It demonstrates how youth work is not just about adults looking out for the young folk, but about the bond they have between them.

Lois - *'I really enjoy the meals and sometimes I even get a big hug from Cameron. He waves at me in the street and it makes me feel like I belong somewhere.'*

Cameron - *'I invited Lois along because she is good company and it would give her something to do. I would say that we have got a friendship.'*

Harbour Lights Xtra is on Friday afternoons 3.30-5pm at St Anne's Church.
If you are interested in volunteering at it then please contact us at:

Contact: liz.henderson@dacyp.org.uk



RESULTS FOR THE FINANCIAL PERIOD



To give to DACYP either scan the QR code or contact Fiona our Treasurer:
fionafleming559@gmail.com



The accounting reference date has been amended to 31 August for our new 'financial year.' To get things into sync we have extended the financial period to 14 months from 1 July 2022 to 31 August 2023. The table below summarises the sources of income and our total expenditure and accounts for this difference. The result for the 14 month period to 31 August was a surplus of £11,522 on unrestricted funds and net expenditure of £2,521 on restricted purposes a net surplus for the period of £9,001. Generous donations from individuals increased our income beyond our expectations. Overall, our income £58,671 compared to £51,389 for the previous 12 months.

The Project is funded by donations from members of the local Christian community and by grants from grant making bodies. The Trustees and Management Committee are very grateful to all supporters for their continued financial support and to the grant making bodies who have generously awarded funding: The Oldhurst Trust, The Amos Charitable Trust, KPE Charitable Trust, East Lothian Educational Trust, SSPCK, The Paristamen CIO and the Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership. We also receive grants and donations from local organisations such as individual local churches, Dunbar Community Council and Dunbar Rotary, usually for restricted purposes.

The main financial outgoings are associated with employing the Youth Worker, the costs of the various activities undertaken and administrative and governance costs.

Statutory accounts with full details of all income and expenditure, including grant funders are available from the Treasurer – fionafleming559@gmail.com

	%	2023 (31/8 - 14 months)	2022	%
Income				
Individuals	44%	25,740	23,049	45%
Grants	55%	32,146	28,191	55%
Other	1%	515	149	
Total	100%	58,671	51,389	100%
Expenditure		49,670	40,549	
Surplus/(Deficit)		9,001	10,840	

ANDY'S MAN CLUB



ANDYS MAN CLUB are a men's suicide prevention charity, offering free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups across the United Kingdom and online. We want to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of conversation.

Richard continues to support and facilitate the Dunbar group that meets in Dunbar Library, Mondays, 7pm. He says, "Most weeks we get around 10 men attending who want to get stuff off their chests. There's no pressure on them to speak but they find that talking helps themselves and others in the room."

It's amazing how our different stories resonate with each other and develop a sense of 'I'm not alone.' It has reconnected me with lads who I remember at Primary School who are now in their 20's, giving us common ground to help us talk about their lives.'

In the the last year, Andy's Man Club Dunbar has helped others go on to set up groups in North Berwick and Pathhead. They have also done promotional events at Dunbar United FC and at the RNLI Lifeboat Day (pictured). Both led to many conversations about the group and folk expressing their appreciation of it. There are now 155 x AMCgroups in the UK, with around 3500 men attending each week.



DACYP TEAM & THEIR ROLES

Trustees

Diana Mackie (Outgoing chair)
Nick Archer (Chair)
Neil Black
Moira Cockburn
Jim Watson

Primary School Team

Ruth Archer Grahame Jackson
Wendy Badger Julie Mackenzie
Lois D'Esterre Diana Mackie
Peter Davey Chris McArthur
Susan Dickerson Fionna Payton
Alison Elliot Jo Ramage
Christina Gray Moira Thompson
Dorothy Hilsley

Life Walks Team

Neil Black
Douglas Hamilton
Diana Mackie
Anne Harvey
Christine Gray
Helen Livie
Malcolm Payton
Keith Mills
Mariella Mills
Peter McIntyre
Helen Napier
Jenny Armstrong

Management Committee

Anne Harvey (Chair)
Fiona Fleming (Treasurer)
Dorothy Hilsley
(Safeguarding)
Suzie Fletcher
Robin Hamilton
Bill Stevenson
Fionna Payton

Young Men's Group

Jon Timms
Darren Kilfara
David Campbell
Nick Archer
Malcolm Payton
Bill Stevenson

Harbour Lights Team

Lois D'Esterre
Fiona Fleming
Diana Hall
Anne Harvey
Malcolm Payton
Jo Ramage

