



Room Sixty

Annual report 2020

Who are we?

Room Sixty

RoomSixty is a youth initiative at Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland in Ayr. We believe that young people are an invaluable and integral part of our community. We seek to provide opportunities, support and a space for young people to grow, to feel connected, loved, be included in their community and most of all have fun.

Room Sixty is a place you can go to get away from your troubles and the staff are very supportive, and I'm able to chat to them about anything

DARREN



Love



Do



Belong

Janet Bell

This has been an exceptional year for RoomSixty with Coronavirus and lock down restrictions shutting down our project as we know it. However, our Youth Worker assisted by our volunteers have come up with many initiatives to help us keep in touch with our young people from Zoom quizzes, Zoom cookery demonstrations and hill walks to name a few.

I would like to thank Phil for his enormous effort to maintain contact with many young people through this difficult time. His efforts have been greatly appreciated by the young people and their parents.

Of course, I must thank the tremendous support Phil receives from our Sessional workers, Josh Brown and Pauline Johnston assisted by Paul Algeo (TheGither Project) and our amazing volunteers. As the RoomSixty premises have been closed this has meant many more outside activities, often in inclement weather, so a huge thank you to everyone for their efforts. My sincere thanks also to our mini bus driver, and the church congregation for its ongoing support.

A project like ours depends heavily on funding and I must express my grateful thanks to Eleanor Kerr and her dedicated team for their valiant efforts in tackling the many funding applications needed to secure our annual budget. Many thanks also, to Joyce Fenton and Janis Meredith, for taking care of the day to day finances throughout the year and to the Youth Committee for their support and decision making.

This year has certainly brought many difficult challenges and changed working practises but I feel very privileged to be part of this worthwhile project.



Chairs Report

~~2020~~

That wasn't what we were expecting!

Youth work was turned on its head this year due to Covid-19 sweeping into our lives in March. All our plans for camps, trips, drop in sessions and other activities all came to abrupt stop.

During the national lockdown we tried to replicate our 'normal' working week online as best as we could. Using cloud based video conferencing services and social media we were able to keep a reasonable level of engagement with young people.

There were many barriers facing young people including access to internet, many were using phones with cracked screens, or sharing laptops with family members. With support from AHEAD we were able to give families new tablet devices and internet access to help during the lockdown.

Despite these challenges we still managed to engage with many of the regular RoomSixty young people providing drop in chat sessions, competitions, 1-1 support and chat groups.

My favourite trip was the mountain biking because I felt I had grown in confidence from the first trip that we went on with Room Sixty.



Weekly Family Quiz

WE RAN A WEEKLY ONLINE QUIZ WHICH SAW OVER 60 PEOPLE TAKE PART OVER 13 WEEKS. FOR MANY THIS WAS A HIGHLIGHT OF THEIR WEEK AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FRIENDS IN A FUN ENVIRONMENT.



Online Talent Show

WE TOOK OUR TALENT SHOW ONLINE WHICH GAVE YOUNG PEOPLE A CHANCE TO SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS AND A CHANCE TO WIN A GIFT VOUCHER. WE HAD 7 ACTS TAKE PART ON THE NIGHT.



Cooking Tutorials

WE MADE WEEKLY TUTORIALS TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET COOKING THEIR OWN TAKEAWAY DISHES.

Taking part in the zoom calls over the lockdown helped me keep contact with Phil, also helping create rounds for the quiz gave me a focus when I wasn't allowed out of my house.



Room Sixty

Staff

Phil



Youth & Community Worker

Phil joined RoomSixty in 2014 and continues to love his role engaging with young people and the community. 'It's been a hard year for RoomSixty with the building being closed for months. But it has also been amazing to see young peoples resilience and positive attitude to a pandemic. Our activity days have been amazing, being able to witness young people grow in confidence and trying out new activities has been great.'

Josh



Sessional Worker

Josh has been involved with RoomSixty for over 10 years. He continues to support young people through football, and has been invaluable in the groups that RoomSixty run. Young people love his fun and caring personality.

'My highlight this year has been the BBQs at the beach and the activity days especially the skiing.'

Pauline



Sessional Worker

After a successful student placement last year, Pauline is now employed as a sessional worker for RoomSixty. Young people have benefited from her craft skills, and her support over the summer with various activities that took place.

'A highlight for me has been getting to know the young people and building great relationships with them.'

Funders

A huge thank you to our funders with their financial support we could not run :

Darroch Charitable Trust

James Weir Foundation

The Baird Trust

Dr. Guthrie's Association

Souter Charitable Trust

Hugh Fraser Foundation

Church Lunch Bowl

Ferguson Bequest Fund

South Ayrshire Charitable Trust

St. James Place Foundation

Ayr North Decides

St Leonards Church

Ayrshire Housing

The Albert Hunt Trust

WE COULD ALSO NOT DO WITHOUT THE MANY VOLUNTEERS THAT GIVE UP THEIR TIME AND SKILLS TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF ROOMSIXTY. A BIG THANK YOU TO:
OUR FUNDING TEAM
GROUP HELPERS
PEER VOLUNTEERS
PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



Young People's Lockdown Stories

Callum

I've been coming to RoomSixty for over 3 years. This year I missed the camps because of the virus which was rubbish as I was really looking forward to them again.

RoomSixty has helped me over this year as it has helped me get outside. I was feeling worried about the virus hurting my gran and going out with RoomSixty helped me not worry as much.

One of my favourite memories was when I won a pizza during the lockdown for sending in a sunset photo.

I've really enjoyed going to Gowanbank for the activity days. I done abseiling for the first time and Phil helped build my confidence to do it and I loved it. It was good spending time with friends that I wouldn't have been able to see otherwise.



Darren

RoomSixty is a place you can go to get away from your troubles and the staff are very supportive, and I'm able to chat to them about anything.

One of the highlights this year was when we climbed Tinto hill. I was scared at certain points. I felt that I had overcome a big challenge and it was a massive achievement for me.

It felt like I was free again after being stuck in during the lockdown.

During the summer holidays we went to the beach a lot and had lots of fun, and it helped me get out of the house. I was a bit scared at first coming out of my house because of the virus but I have got more confident going outside myself. It's also good to have a genuine face to face conversation. I feel lucky to be able to get opportunities through RoomSixty like the trips I have been on. It's good to see Phil in the school as well because he understands me more and knows what iv been through.

RoomSixty



Ellie

I loved the horse riding because I had never done it before and it was my first trip away after the lockdown and I still remember that my horse's name is Mojavi. It's been the highlight of my year as it felt like I was escaping from my worries.

I also went on the beach trips and I enjoyed learning how to take better photos.



A person is captured in mid-air, jumping joyfully against a vibrant sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and silhouetting the person. The person's arms are raised, and their legs are spread wide in a classic jumping pose. The background shows a beach with waves breaking in the distance. The overall mood is one of happiness and freedom.

Connie

During the lockdown I put on weight making me more self conscious about my body. RoomSixty helped me to get fit with the walking groups and the activity days.

I enjoyed the activities with RoomSixty this year. Having activities on during the day made me get out of my bed.

Going on the trips in the mini bus was good as I got to do fitness and I feel more comfortable in my body now.

Taking part in the online talent show was good as it helped me be more confident as a singer.

RoomSixty

Kai

The trips I went on with Room Sixty helped me get off my xbox and go outside because I had spent a lot of time playing it during the lockdown.

My favourite trip was the mountain biking because I felt I had grown in confidence from the first trip that I went on. I feel I can trust the youth workers and can chat to them about anything. Room Sixty is a place I feel happy and if I've got any problems I can chat about them there.



Room Sixty



Ebbonie

Room Sixty gives me something to do on Thursdays or else I would just be stuck inside because its safer in Room Sixty. I've liked the trips this year to the bowling and the beach.

I like Room Sixty because it's fun. I liked fireworks night when we had a bbq and set off fireworks. Also when we went a walk and got ice cream.



Paige

Schools Work

After the summer we were delighted to be invited back to continue our schools work. We are now providing lunch groups on a Monday and Wednesday, a craft group, mental health awareness group and one to one support. With thanks to North Ayr TheGither for supporting us in these groups.



Ayr Academy

'Over the last few years Phil has worked 1-1 with 'James'. Initially 'James' had very low attendance and was always being "sick." Phil was approached to see if he had any time available to work with him. Phil took on a mentoring role spending one period a week with 'James'. Through the years, the attendance of 'James' improved greatly. The confidence and positive attitude of 'James' was evident in the school. Classes became enjoyable rather than a chore and his peer group increased greatly.

Having such a consistent positive role made a huge positive impact on this pupil.

Thank you Phil, the input you gave at the time you gave it has been one of the pivotal points that helped turn things around for 'James' and provide belief that the future will be better.'

Audrey Macleod - Education Welfare Officer



Newton Primary



‘Despite the difficulties of this year Phil and RoomSixty have continued to effectively support Newton Primary School and its pupils throughout the pandemic. In June, RoomSixty provided beautiful boxes of stationery for Primary 7 children to help them with their transition to Secondary school. In addition, Phil socially distanced in the playground to provide a graduation photoshoot for our Pre-school children and Primary 7 children.

Due to the restrictions, the children were unable to attend their Harvest church service. Phil provided an excellent children's address for the children to enjoy virtually in their classes before their October break.

RoomSixty provide an emotional and spiritual support to individual children and we are glad we have been able to continue this work with social distancing measures in place.

Pupils who required 1 to 1 sessions completed some health and wellbeing sessions and learned some media skills in filming.

Laterally, Phil has been supporting the school to provide families and the wider community with some much needed Christmas cheer by filming and editing a virtual version of the Christmas School Show and Nativity. The links with RoomSixty and Phil continue to be a vital and meaningful support to the school.’

Nicola Killick - Principle Teacher



Activity Days

Residential camps are very popular with the young people that attend RoomSixty and the demand is always higher than the spaces available. Unfortunately this year all the camps were cancelled due to the pandemic. Many young people were asking when they will start again. So in partnership with SU Gowanbank and Teen Ranch Scotland, we were able to offer 9 activity days. These proved very successful and a great way to get young people outside and help build confidence again after being stuck inside their homes for so long.





"In a difficult time as this for young people, it has been a joy to work with Room Sixty over the Autumn term. Taking a group of young people into the outdoors regularly has allowed us to build relationships with the young people. Each day there has been an opportunity to share our faith, and listen to the young people share. We have seen the young people grow in their relationships with each other and engage in the opportunities to reflect on their purpose in life and their spiritual well-being."

Colin Campbell - SU Gowanbank

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping paint splashes in purple, orange, and green colors, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

Room Sixty

Family Support

Room Sixty has always been a great support and helped with my sons confidence within himself. Having someone and somewhere to go they feel safe. My daughter has started to attend and enjoys it also. Being a single parent out of work, Room Sixty have helped with cost of trips and also provided sim cards so the kids had wifi to do school work through lockdown.



2021

Despite the struggles of 2020 there have been so many amazing stories of growth, hope and love. The RoomSixty community has continued to develop partnerships and new ideas. We are already planning 12 activity days for 2021 and hoping that residential camps will be allowed to take place again. Whatever challenges we face we know that we will still be there for the young people of Ayr.



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