



# Season's Greetings from The Swan Youth Project



## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Based in the heart of Berkhamsted, The Swan Youth Project's doors are open to young people aged 11-16 every day after school to take part in activities, hang out with friends or chat with one of our team. We offer a happy, safe, supportive and engaging place to boost their mental and physical wellbeing, build self esteem and resilience, and learn valuable life skills.

During 2024, we have welcomed an average of 20 young people each day after school – and cooked them a meal too. But we couldn't have done it without the help of our wonderful supporters.

A huge, heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported us, both financially or by offering skills or expertise. We wish you a happy and peaceful festive season and hope to see you again in 2025.



To help us to continue to support local young people, scan the QR code or visit [justgiving.com/theswanyouthproject](https://www.justgiving.com/theswanyouthproject)



In November, BBC reporter, Amy Holmes. visited us to report on the financial struggles facing charities.

Her report highlighted the value of our work to the young people we support. For example, Lex, who has struggled with depression and anxiety: "I don't think I'd still be here if it wasn't for The Swan Youth Project. The Swan has been one of my biggest supporters."



# 2024 Highlights

## TOUGH TIMES

While the Government's new National Youth Strategy and proposed funding is positive, it isn't enough to fix the significant decline in youth funding over the past few years. Access to grants is also drying up, so fundraising is very challenging – our success rate for grants and funding has gone from 62% to 11% in two years. Local authorities are also under pressure.

We're grateful that, Victoria Collins, Member of Parliament for Harpenden and Berkhamsted, has shown a close interest in our work, and recently invited the Prime Minister during PMQ to come and discuss our funding concerns and ensure organisations like us get the support we need.

"The Swan Youth Project is an incredible drop-in centre that intervenes to give hope and a better future to teenagers... who have struggled with anxiety and depression while facing long mental health waiting lists, as well as to families with SEND needs.

"They've written to the Treasury worried about getting the funding they need as the community faces a tough winter and grants have been depleting..."



## AND FINALLY...

Thank you to all the local businesses and organisations who have donated their time to share a new skill. Britannia Gym's boxing coaching sessions definitely packed a punch with our young people – and we loved the creative sessions making earrings and printing t-shirts with our local U3A craft group.

We offer a safe and non judgemental space, where young people can regularly check in on their mental health. Weather permitting, we also get out to enjoy our natural surroundings!

We can also signpost to mental health services when appropriate.



Find out more about us and our work at [theswanyouthproject.co.uk](https://theswanyouthproject.co.uk) or follow us on Facebook or LinkedIn.