



Bridging the Gap

The Bridge Project (Charity number 1166825) was founded in 2001 to address the moral and spiritual vacuum in a community where the needs of the young people were not being met and shrinking churches struggled with capacity to reach them. Starting as an ecumenical project with all five denominations of the town involved, the project has seen several young people discipled and released into full time ministry. We now have an established youth centre and prayer room in the centre of Tadcaster and work widely across the community with youth and their families. Weekly drop-in sessions are the source of connection with many people who do not attend a place of worship.

We recognise the current need for support with mental health and spiritual well-being. Gender and sexuality are often key issues as young people seek to find their sense of identity. Working with them, many of whom have suffered trauma, requires us to be full of wisdom, sensitivity and inclusiveness.

Over recent years the youth project has developed a simple, visual concept that we call the Big Green Heart to illustrate the power of forgiving to bring wholeness and freedom to individuals whether people of faith or not. We see the potential for this concept to make an impact and seek to provide the basis for it to be taken to the local secondary schools as part of what we at The Bridge Project can do to empower and transform the lives of our young people. There are four secondary schools which local youth attend. We already have an established presence through Open the Book assemblies in several primary schools.

The work will be pioneering as Big Green Heart, formed as a charity in 2021 (biggreenheart.org - Charity number 1197237) and now operating with adults across the UK, only has one school model to work from, but we are confident that what we do will be significant. The methodology was developed and piloted in a secondary school in East Hull. The founder of the Big Green Heart charity, who also founded the youth project, will work closely alongside the appointed worker and will be keen to establish working models together. The established youth team in the town will provide the basis

for the growth of the concept and time will be invested in training the team for both primary and secondary working models.

Though the town of Tadcaster is not obviously an area of deprivation there is a generational impact from the presence of three breweries being the main employers and the resulting familial behaviour and depression. Our youth and community worker is well connected with several local families through having run the women's refuge for many years. The town is close to the major cities of Leeds and York. The villages are often homes to wealthy professionals and there is a big farming community. This provides a diverse cross section of young people with whom to work.

The project is well supported financially with grant funding though we seek to increase the local participation through fundraising events such as Total Warrior <https://totalwarrior.co.uk> with whom we are a charity partner. Our aim is to build community through these activities.

Local church leaders desire to work together to support the youth, aware that critical mass is vital when gathering young people. The appointed candidate will need to work closely with churches in order to grow volunteer teams. Living within the community will be important and a two bedroomed cottage is available in a nearby village if the successful candidate needs to relocate. Financial arrangements in lieu of rent will be negotiated.

The existing team comprises

- a Youth and Community worker who heads up Take Away Church and Open the Book assemblies in primary schools
- an Artist in Residence, who is also a musician and experienced with working with young people
- two part time administrators in charge of finance and HR/communications

Our website is under redevelopment and there is a skeleton visible at bridgeproject.info Facebook tells our story at The Bridge Project Tadcaster alongside The Bridge Project Tadcaster Encouragement page.

Our physical home is a community building managed by a Community Interest Company in the centre of the town where we live and work alongside secular youth provision. (Tadcaster and Rural Community Investment Company)

This post has huge potential to make an impact in this little patch of God's Own County and we look forward to the next stage in what has been an exciting and faith building journey!

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