



Annual
Report
2020

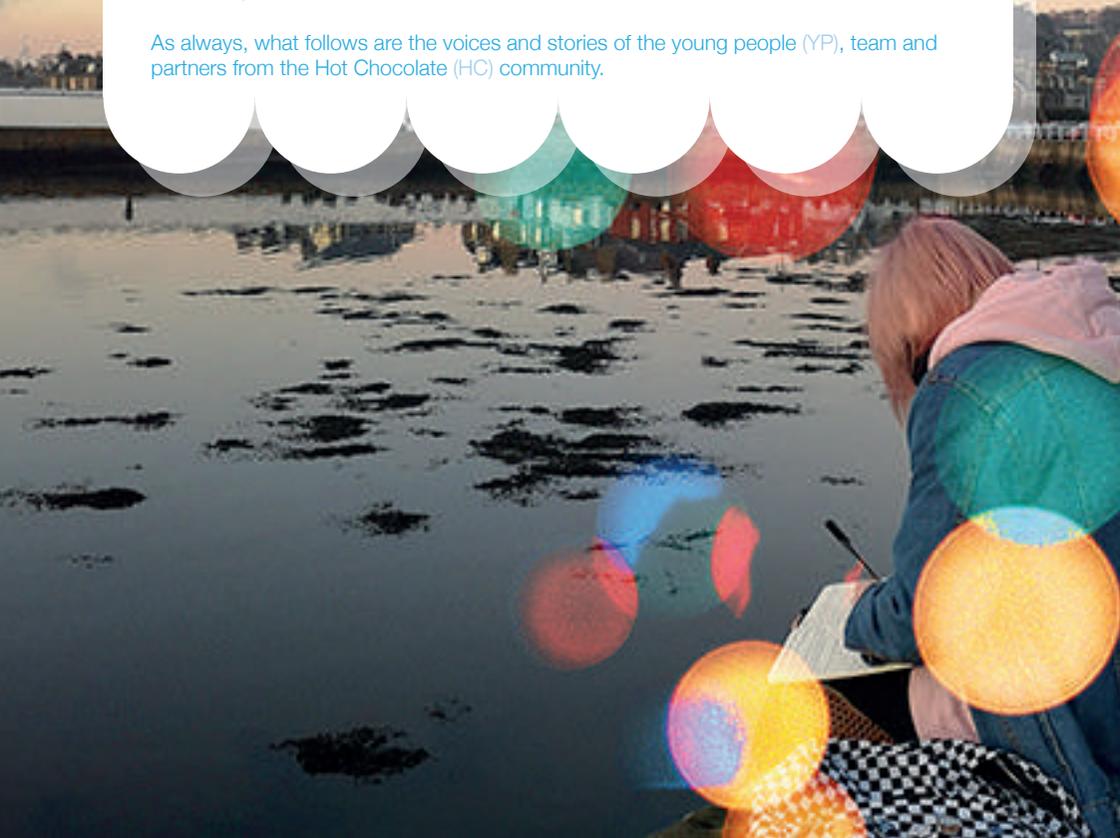
2020. A year like no other, eh?

Interestingly, we'd chosen the theme of 'imagine...' for the year, not realising just how significant that concept would become.

With pressing pandemic concerns, and with all our usual plans and ambitions out the window, we had to fundamentally reimagine our life as a community. So, for this year's annual report, rather than talking about all the big exciting 'stuff we've done', we're focussing on some much more basic questions:

Having conversations about what Hot Chocolate is and what it all means is really helpful. Like *'what have we actually done this year? What are our values? What do these actually look like for us?'* and bringing in the young people to design it and write it, too. The annual report gives us the chance to be reflective on the year. It's really good to have the time to do that. YP, 19

As always, what follows are the voices and stories of the young people (YP), team and partners from the Hot Chocolate (HC) community.





What have we experienced this year?

HC let me have company during the pandemic. I live on my own, so socialising wasn't an option in lockdown. But HC was always on Facebook and when sessions started outside that gave me a chance to be my old social self. I'd have been way more depressed if HC hadn't been around. YP, 20

The worst part was definitely me losing my job. Steeple really helped with that, sharing jobs on Facebook and having group chats for finding work, things like that. YP, 18

Having to move home was a huge challenge. Losing my independence was quite a big step back for me. But having HC to escape home life sometimes was important. YP, 19

I've lost loads of friends in the past year, so I've lost a lot of support and trust. It's been tough. But I've gotten better communication with Steeple. With HC you can be as vulnerable as you want, and you don't have to worry. It's good to have an external source, someone who isn't friends or family, someone who can open the door to your brain and ask '*what are your thoughts?*' Because sometimes you need another person to help you level your head out. YP, 19

Supporting the team to deliver youth work as safely and effectively as possible within Covid restrictions. Team have their finger on the pulse about individual YP's circumstances, and respond to those circumstances. Funding has also been a challenge. Criteria have been in constant change, windows have opened for very short periods of time and have demanded a quick response and other funding has changed. However, team have been alert and proactive and the result is we have been blessed financially and feel taken care of. Board Chair

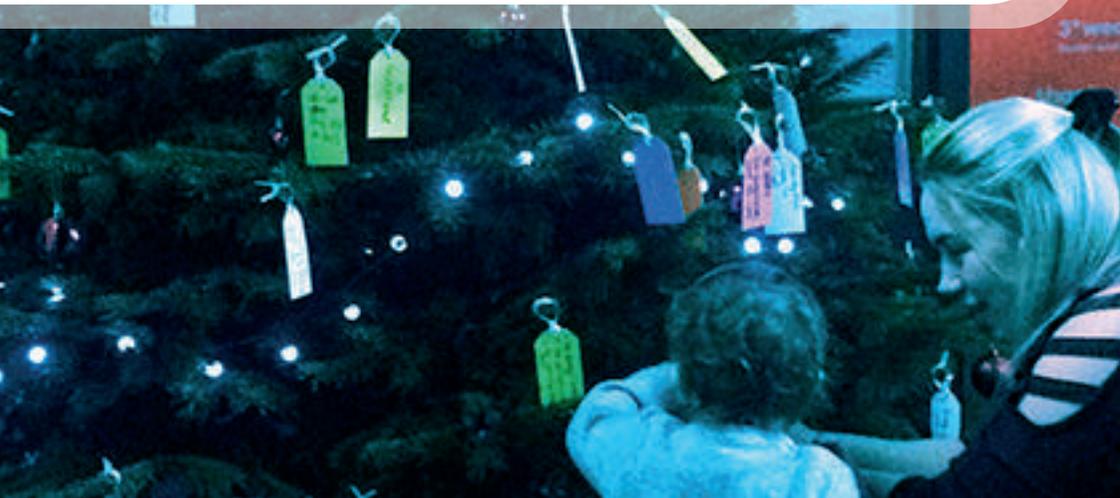


Going on Facebook in the beginning when I didn't know what I was doing just felt so awkward. Figuring out how to communicate with YP online who I didn't necessarily know, that was a big challenge. But it just took time and some support/ideas from other team. It just got better. Team

I lost a lot in terms of gigging. I wasn't able to rehearse. The fact that the industry I'm in is so dispensable, it felt horrible. That was one of the biggest challenges, coz I get a lot of fulfilment out of being able to gig. The fact that I couldn't do that was really hard. Nicole messaged me a couple of times asking if I wanted to record something and send it over, and try to get people to engage with it. She gave me that outlet to do that. YP, 19

Seeing like 50 different psychiatrists and going to hospital quite a few times and overdosing a few times. It's been p*sh. But also finally finding out what was wrong with my brain – that was good. I wouldn't even have been in a place where I was speaking to people without HC. It was Georgia that pushed me to go and find out about my referral. Genuinely, if I hadn't been coming to HC I think I would have been dead. I'm not even being funny. YP, 20

I'm not really a personal space guy - I'm all about the Dudhope handshake. So having to distance myself from everyone has been pretty sh*t. I remember talking to Glen about how sh*t the distancing thing is, but how it's keeping people safe. So, looking at the good aspects of it, and why I should continue to try to not be so touchy feely, that helped. YP, 16



Sean's story

(names and details have been changed for anonymity)

My dad died just before lockdown.

There'd been an altercation and he'd been hit by somebody. We didn't believe it til we went down and saw the police tent and everything.

My phone was going constantly for the next two weeks, with people wanting to know what happened. It was exhausting, but it was also distracting me. I suppose it was a way to stay connected to him.

We had to clear his house. That took weeks because of Covid – none of the skips were open. But at least we had a private space to grieve. We've got a bench for him, where the family would sometimes meet to share stories, but that's very public.

I chose to keep working in the mornings, then I'd come home and do funeral planning and the kind of jobs you don't expect to be doing at my age. If I didn't go to work, I wouldn't have a shower all day. You need to keep a normality, otherwise you sink lower and lower.

The funeral was about a month after. Funerals are normally quite morbid, but at least when there's more people you bounce off of them, see people you haven't seen in a while, have conversations about other things. But when there's just ten of you it's really intense. When you're grieving, the main thing is having people around you. And we've not had that. It's been a really hard situation.

Court went on for a long time. He eventually pled guilty to culpable homicide, but we think it should have been murder. He's already out. I'm not one of these people that wants to spend time hating somebody. I don't ever want to see or meet him, but I hope he's had time to think, that it's taught him something. But I also wish he'd got a longer sentence.

It's hard to sum up because I feel it's not finished yet. Pre-Covid, it would have all been over in a couple of weeks. But there's still so many more things for us to do: scatter ashes, put a plaque on his bench, have a wake. There's so many parts of the process that haven't been done yet. I think when they're done it'll maybe feel finished, and then I can properly grieve. I'm doing ok just now, but I know there's more to come.



What have been our most memorable HC moments?

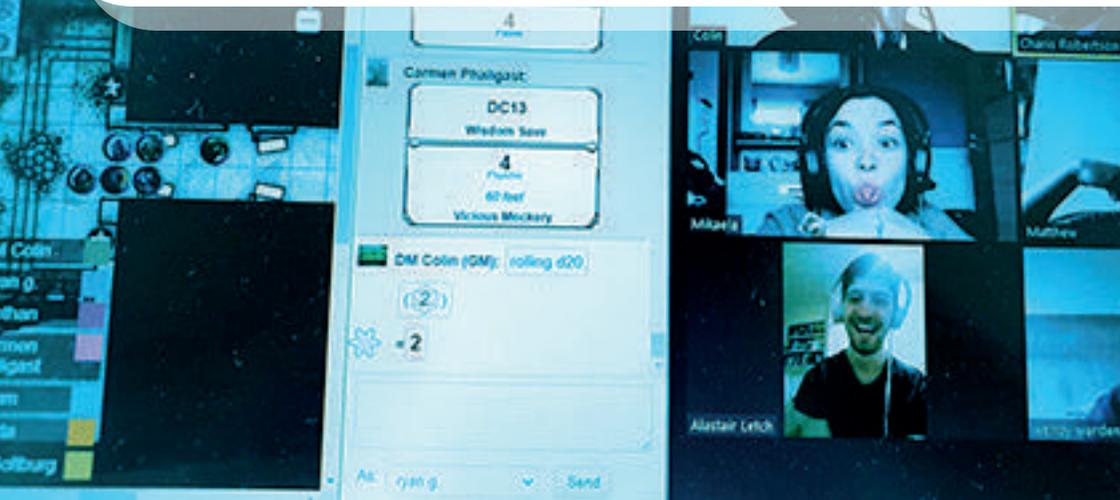
When we were locked in the house, having Glen on Facebook Live was so fun. HC always kept in contact, doing fun things. You sent us these little packages or fun things to do - being online, having fun, cook-alongs. That's helped a lot of people. YP, 18

In the earlier part of 2020, I'd have a catch up every week with Andy on the phone, while I was out walking. I can still remember the routes that I took. It's probably a daft answer, but it's stuff like that coz it was getting me out the house. Everything seems really detached right now, but HC feels more like a constant. And that's helped a lot, with the world changing so much, to have something so stable. YP, 19

Probably when the Table first started and I came down and was like 'aaaaah'. It was just good. Just seeing everyone in the flesh. It felt like it was kind of normal, really good. Obviously that then kept going and it turned into normal open sessions outside and I'm just waiting for it to start again after this lockdown. YP, 20

I remember sitting at that cold-ass table outside the front door. It seemed like it was always cold and raining, but the amount of people that were still there and still wanting to come – it was pretty mental! YP, 19

Dungeons & Dragons (DnD). It's a tabletop roleplaying game which can help team building skills, critical thinking skills, improv skills and characterisation techniques. It helps you make friendships and gain emotional depth, it helps you be more social by taking on different roles, and ultimately it's an escape from reality. Coz this last year's obviously needed it. I just love DnD. Do you have another hour? YP, 20





The night where I joined in with the lanterns, when I had to write stuff down about how I felt about 2020. It was the only night during the pandemic that something like that happened at HC, I think. YP, 19

Nicole's hot chocolates the first time back in the building – they were really good! YP, 18

At uni, all our lectures are pre-written and tutorials are the same every week. HC could easily have done similar on Facebook, but there was a conscious effort to get on Zoom or get 1-1s happening or get groups happening. Things at HC are constantly different, so it doesn't feel so much like a robotic state where everything happens the same, week in week out. It feels a lot more personal. YP, 19

The non-Ardeonaig trip was really good. And I liked the 1-1s where we've done creative stuff outside. I find it easier to talk to someone about things if you have something to focus on, if you've got something to fiddle with or distract your head. It's easier to blurt out what you're trying to say. YP, 19

I didn't leave my house much, but I did do some music stuff, like when we went to the beach and no one else was there. Just getting the vibe with everyone, it was good. YP, 16

Doing the detached, where we left the comfort of our building to go and connect with YP on the streets. I'm quite shy, and with detached you really have to put yourself out there and start a conversation out of nothing. But you'd also bump into YP you already knew, and those connections were so valuable. Team



What we've been up to (in numbers)

It's interesting (though somewhat inevitable) that our memorable moments have all focussed on the simple things of life. We may not have flown to Zambia, or headed in packed minibuses to the Scottish Highlands, or curated largescale exhibitions in the DCA (unlike previous years!), but Covid has certainly not stopped the mighty HC community from finding other ways to stay active, at each and every phase of Government guidance. Here's a summary of what we've been up to (with 2019 numbers in brackets for a comparison). They include online, phone, outdoor, and indoor work, depending on the regulations at the time...

194 Open sessions (165)

462 1-1s (482)

124 Groups sessions (161)

2 Non-Residential Weekends
(5 Residentials)

10 Community meals (6)

8 Detached sessions (0)

291 Young people engaged (322)

85 New young people (125)

And some of the specific things we did through 2020 include:

Dungeons & Dragons // Study groups // Artefacts image project // Youth Forum // LGBT poster making // Sleep support // Community meals // Home Fae Home // Skate trip // Photography workshops // Drawing // Oil pastels // Christmas immersive experience // Avertical World // Skill shares // Wellbeing boxes // Building re-entry design group // Water colours // Deliveries // Postcards // Mr Potato Head // Band meeting // Lyric writing // Dream catchers // Slessor Gardens film-making // Collage // Litter picking // Cook-alongs // Pavement chalk // Cross-stitch // Not-Ardeonaig research trips // Riso printing at DCA // SQUIFF film festival // Music at the beach // Celebrate 20! // LGBT history art // Minecraft // Online Pecha Kucha // Ice skating // Walking // Leaf printing // Fruit & veg printing // Badge making // Bee box making // Slessor Gardens jamming // Zoom gig // Sticker portraits // Mark making // Music mapping // David Shrigley art // Digital consultation // Older YP picnic in Slessor Gardens // LGBT history party // Music recording // LGBT history community meal // LGBT bunting // Single line drawing // YLVT origami // Big wheel // Polaroids // Foodbank referrals // Mobile data provision // Counselling referrals // Mental health advocacy // Table sessions // Ice creams // Virtual tours // Conference presentations // Uni lectures





What's been important to us?

HC is founded on six core values – things that are really important to us and the way we work as a community. The following pages feature reflections on these values, and what they have looked like and felt like through 2020.

I've had situations in other places where if you're not in a good place, if you're sad, they don't want to hear about it. But it's not like that at HC. They're there for you through thick and thin. Like when Georgia came all the way to the Ferry for a 1-1. That was when we were just coming out the first lockdown and I was a bit funny about getting on a bus. YP, 20

Team have like different specialties in what they do. It helps that everyone's got a different focus. There's always somebody that you can go to for different parts of your development, or different issues that you have. YP, 20

VALUE 1:

Viewing YP as whole people: supporting their holistic development which realises physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual potential.

I think this value is the most important one for me. It's to do with every part of us being heard, not just one wee bit of our lives. I think that's really important in the age range we're in. YP come in when there's a lot of development to become the person they want to be, or the person that they are. It's a really big thing to be listened to and to be embraced. A lot of places don't do that, don't really listen to kids. But HC's like '*no, we want to embrace every single part.*' YP, 19

I've not experienced an organisation which does this in such spades and in such great depth. Board Chair

HC makes me feel respected, not like another statistic. YP, 20

The HC team have accepted me for who I am, regardless of my difficulties and social anxieties (I'm a selective mute). Every time I have visited HC in person or engaged with the team online, I've been treated as equal to everyone else, and I have always felt a part of the activities. YP, 18

When we're not in lockdown, it's all outside and distanced and it's good coz you're less likely to catch Covid. Team are pretty pernickety about social distancing, but that's ok. Emotionally, everyone's different, but if you're struggling you can make a safety plan with team which helps you think through scenarios you might face when HC's not open. I feel safe because I know when you'll be there. You can't be patchy if you're working at Steeple, you've got to be consistent coz it's what we need. YP, 20

Since lockdown, team are always messaging and being like oh we've got this on tonight, to make sure that people are still like staying involved, to make sure that like everyone knows that like we can still go to things. YP, 19

VALUE 2: Growing a community with YP which is safe, welcoming and affirming to all.

HC's a very expressive place. I really admire that about it. Even online, it's still the same vibe. You still convey the same message: "we're here for you". I feel like I've opened up more online than I have in person at the Steeple. It can feel a bit crowded in normal open sessions, and 1-1s are really good and are easier to talk about things, but sometimes that can be in a social place. So online calls have been good for more difficult conversations. YP, 19

I always feel safe at HC. YP, 16

Online stuff's been really good, doing cooking or whatever. It's been something to do, and we're still learning and developing. And when you're at the Table it's a good excuse to see your friends and stuff. There's always blankets, and the space outside is always warm and fun. If you don't have a good place at home or whatever, and you go to Steeple, there's always someone to talk to. And if you don't have friends, if you go to Steeple there's always someone who'll be your friend. YP, 18

There are lots of places where you'll shouted down or made to feel guilty by one side or another for what you think or say. Being able to talk about stuff like faith, politics, justice... human stuff, is a privilege at HC because it's always based in valuing the other person and the community we share, not in whether we agree or not. Team



You choose who you want to talk to. Every conversation feels good coz it's not forced. YP, 20

There's no shortage of people at the Steeple who are willing to help, get involved. It makes for such a good environment that everyone's so eager to do things. The variety of volunteers and staff there means there'll always be someone you feel you get on well with. It feels like a more personal relationship than just '*here's my problems*'. YP, 19

Team talk to us just as much as we talk to them. They're still our youth workers, but we're also getting to form bonds. You know, if we like the same music and stuff. When we know a bit more about team members, it feels like we can open up a bit more as well. YP, 19

VALUE 3: Building relationships based on respect and trust, relationships which are voluntary and two-way.

Through 2020, team have genuinely checked in on me. They've remembered that I've been struggling with this thing or that, and that's been so helpful and lovely. It's not a conditional thing. They just care about you no matter what. YP, 19

It's been a privilege for YP to invite us into their homes through online youth work. And there's a two-way thing going on there. The YP love seeing my cat. Those little things help the YP realise that the team aren't distant, or just pop up once a week for support around a specific thing, but that we also have our own lives and experiences to share when it helps. Team

We're not treated like a kids. Respect and trust is crucial for HC coz it needs to feel different from what we're trying to escape from. YP, 16

I feel like when you get given the keys, that's a mad moment of trust. Coz you could do a full sprint with them. YP, 16



VALUE 4:

Ensuring that plans and activities are owned by YP, adapt with the culture, and bring positive change for all involved.

We're always involved in what's going on. Especially when it started being horrible weather. Team asked us about not only the social distancing but things to make the place cosy, things to make it more fun, when we got extra gazebos and stuff. And you actually did take what we said and done it. It makes us feel more adult, it gives us confidence. Coz if you feel like you're a part of it, you can grow and do things like that in the future. YP, 18

The YP lead a lot. We have a lot of creative freedom about how we want our space to look or how we want a session to go. It allows you to grow confidence and faith in yourself. Like, 'my ideas are good, my ideas are valid, I'm part of HC'. I'm actually able to see my ideas out. It gives you a certain pride. I've grown all these random skills that I didn't have before. YP, 19

In October we went to different outdoor centres coz our usual one is closing. So we went to do a couple of activities and reflected on it and gave feedback about three centres. So we ultimately got to choose which one we're going to go back to. It's not like team are just going to pick the place that's cheapest or closest or most convenient for them. It's our choice. Our voice is getting heard. The one we chose is probably the most expensive and furthest away, but it's the best one. YP, 19

There's a sense of ownership... US, WE, OUR. Board Chair





Team are always reflecting on what we're wanting, and what could change. And it's not tokenistic where you ask us and you don't do anything. Everything gets actioned on. It makes you feel like you have a lot more power. And that helps outside of HC, coz you know that people listen to you.

YP, 19

Our feedback 100% makes a difference. I feel like if a team member says something that pisses me off a little bit, that I could just say to them '*what are you doing?*' and they'd be like '*no, I'm so sorry*'. You'd definitely get an apology from team if they did something wrong. YP, 20

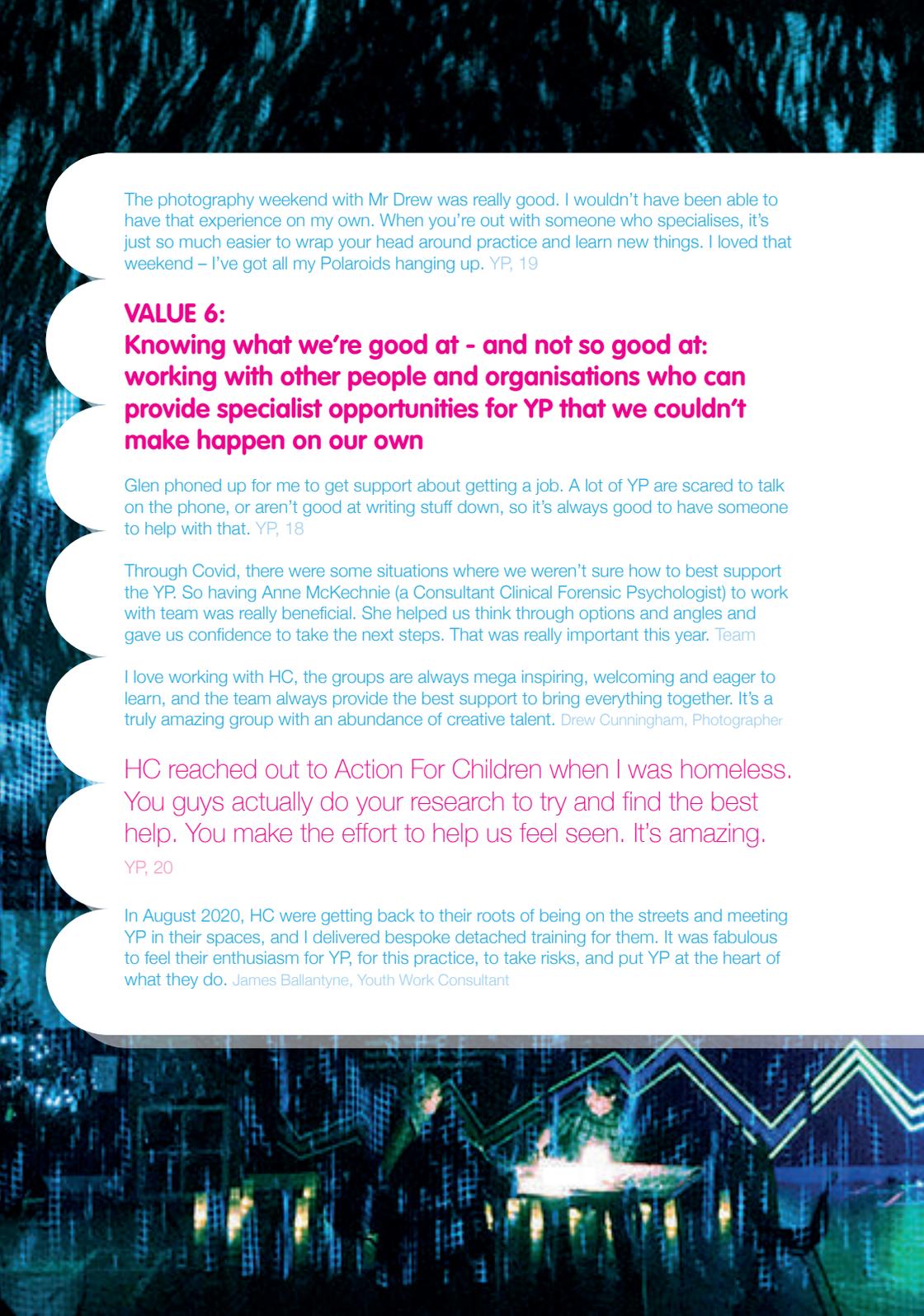
VALUE 5:

Embracing a culture of reflective learning where we learn from our own experiences (even our mistakes).

Everything this year has felt like an experiment to learn from. You might put something up on the timeline which you thought was a great idea, and nobody interacts with it. You had to think: '*Fine, I'll try something different tomorrow*'. And once the YP saw that the team were willing to take risks, the YP were more willing to step forward with their ideas too. Team

This year has been about me getting to become comfortable with myself. Realising how I spend my time and trying to be my best friend before I'm anyone else's best friend. Coz that's a pretty important thing. I feel like not many people do things like that. It's been a really good time to reflect and grow in that aspect. YP, 19





The photography weekend with Mr Drew was really good. I wouldn't have been able to have that experience on my own. When you're out with someone who specialises, it's just so much easier to wrap your head around practice and learn new things. I loved that weekend – I've got all my Polaroids hanging up. YP, 19

VALUE 6:

Knowing what we're good at - and not so good at: working with other people and organisations who can provide specialist opportunities for YP that we couldn't make happen on our own

Glen phoned up for me to get support about getting a job. A lot of YP are scared to talk on the phone, or aren't good at writing stuff down, so it's always good to have someone to help with that. YP, 18

Through Covid, there were some situations where we weren't sure how to best support the YP. So having Anne McKechnie (a Consultant Clinical Forensic Psychologist) to work with team was really beneficial. She helped us think through options and angles and gave us confidence to take the next steps. That was really important this year. Team

I love working with HC, the groups are always mega inspiring, welcoming and eager to learn, and the team always provide the best support to bring everything together. It's a truly amazing group with an abundance of creative talent. Drew Cunningham, Photographer

HC reached out to Action For Children when I was homeless. You guys actually do your research to try and find the best help. You make the effort to help us feel seen. It's amazing.

YP, 20

In August 2020, HC were getting back to their roots of being on the streets and meeting YP in their spaces, and I delivered bespoke detached training for them. It was fabulous to feel their enthusiasm for YP, for this practice, to take risks, and put YP at the heart of what they do. James Ballantyne, Youth Work Consultant

What we've achieved (in numbers)

Through their involvement with HC, the YP reflect on their experiences and learning – and recognise how they're changing as a result. These reflections, along with the team's observations (and GDPR consents!), are recorded on our 'outcomes database', which helps us better understand the difference we make.

In the past year, HC has supported YP to develop in the following ways:

204 grew in self-knowledge
(190 last year)

196 increased self-worth (174)

241 improved social skills (218)

166 increased in their awareness that they can positively impact their lives and communities (187)

154 acted to positively impact their lives and communities (165)

128 improved their ability to look ahead, plan and stick to goals (140)

13 deepened their understanding of their spirituality and/or God (44)

Through 2020, 149 different YP were supported around education, employment and training (179 last year).

Specifically:

103 gained new skills, confidence and experience through volunteering (86)

19 young people started new jobs

22 young people begin new education placements and **2** re-engage with school (30)

2 young people start training placements (6)

32 young people sustained their jobs or education when, without support, they would have dropped out.



Lucas' story

(names and details have been changed for anonymity)

I realised I was trans when I was really young.

I mentioned to a friend that I'd like to be a boy. My mum found out and she was like: 'no, that's not happening. Forget about that.' I was only six, I didn't know any better than to listen to her. So I suppressed it. That was really damaging for me growing up.

When I was older, I came out to a friend and got really upset. I felt so much shame. I felt like it couldn't be, that it wasn't right, that I was going to disappoint so many people just for being who I am. But after a while I told other friends and they were really supportive. Then I told my family and that didn't go well at all. I had to leave the house until they calmed down. Some of my family still choose to use my old name coz they just can't accept what's happening. It's painful. I don't know how long I'll be able to put up with that. I'm just trying to be who I am, and when I'm misgendered, it doesn't feel like the love is unconditional.

I can't even see my old name written, or else I get upset. When I think back to who I used to be, I still love that person, but I feel sad because I was made to feel bad about myself for so long. If only someone would have listened to me, things could have been so different.

It's weird the things that bother you when you're dysphoric. Like my fingernails aren't masculine enough, or the way I stand doesn't feel masculine enough, or male clothes don't fit right. It sounds so silly, but it's real.

People say it's too easy for kids to transition. But it's really not. I waited for over two years to be seen. You need to have two professional opinions from gender specialist doctors and psychologists. They absolutely grill you. It's a horrible process. It's really not just something they chuck you into.

My parents are a lot more supportive now. They're excited that I've just started getting my T shots. They can see that I'm happy. They feel bad about how they first reacted to it. I totally believe that people can change, but it's hard to come back from that level of hurt. I never want other people to feel that way, so I feel a responsibility for helping other people on their journey. I wouldn't have been able to get through it without the support of others.

FINANCE

At HC, we couldn't do what we do without the generous grants and donations from our funders and donors. Most of our money is spent on salaries, as, in order to build and deepen relationships with young people, we need to spend time with them. As with most charities, we need to do a lot of fundraising so we can continue to work with the young people and respond to their needs. At HC, we have been grateful to receive funding, donations or donations in kind during the challenges of 2020 from the following funders, fundraisers and donors:

Analysis of Income for 2020 (£)

Restricted grants - 488,000
Unrestricted grants - 60,000
Gift aid donations and tax - 15,000
Other donations - 2,000
Donated services - 76,000
Wider impact income - 5,000
Total - 646,000

Analysis of Expenses for 2020 (£)

Charitable activities - 528,000
Fundraising - 26,000
Total - 554,000

Funds at 31 December 2020 (£)

Reserves:
Restricted - 144,000
Unrestricted - 145,000
Total - 289,000

AllChurches Trust
Balgay Children's Society
BBC Children in Need
CashBack for Communities Youth Work Fund
CashBack for Creativity: Targeted Fund
Comic Relief
Common Good Fund
Communities Recovery Fund
Corra Foundation
Creative Scotland: Youth Music Initiative
Dundee Bairns
Gannochy Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation (unrestricted)
Inspiring Scotland
Investing in Communities Fund
Life Changes Trust
Lord Armitstead's Dundee Trust
MAKE Trust
Miss AM Pilkington Charitable Trust
Northwood Charitable Trust
Postcode Community Trust
Robertson Trust
Scottish Government Community Wellbeing Fund
SCVO
St James's Place Charitable Foundation
Tay Charitable Trust
Tesco Bags for Help
The Baird Trust
The Listening Fund
The Ragdoll Foundation
The Ryvoan Trust
The St Katharine's Fund
The Steeple Church: Dundee (Church of Scotland)
Tillyloss Trust
Tudor Trust
William S Phillips Fund
WM Sword Charitable Trust
Young Start
Your Voice Your Choice Dundee
Youth Work Education Recovery Fund

And all our individual donors and fundraisers



TRUSTEES 2020

Mr Tony Boffey
Chairperson
died March 2020

Mr Piers Bowser

Dr Shona Dobbie
Vice-Chairperson
from May 2020

Mr Stephen
Elwell-Sutton

Mrs Debbie Fellows

Mr Alan Harper
Treasurer
appointed Feb 2020

Mr David Johnstone

Mrs Chris Lafferty
Chairperson
from April 2020

Mrs Amy McDonald
Vice-Chairperson
until January 2021,
resigned April 2021

Ms Pamela Mellstrom
Vice-Chairperson
from March 2021

Dr Ruth Murdoch
appointed Nov 2020

you can do it!

you got this!

Any positives we have gained from all this?

Being grateful for having a roof over my head

Finally being able to get 8 hours of sleep

Starting to play the piano

Not taking things like going outside for granted

Self reflection and nice walks

Not sweating the small stuff

That I'm still alive!

Making new friends

Figuring out what to do with the rest of my life

Spending quality time with my kids

Any final musings?

Remember to find the packet of salt in your salt n shake crisps, coz it's quite sad if you don't find it. And remember to shake it in all directions.

Just don't be a d*ck. That should be our seventh value. It's very important.

Rolling a natural 20 doesn't always mean you'll succeed.

Good work hot chocolate, stay hot, stay chocolatey

Yeah, I dunno.

HC's not about keeping you out of trouble. It's about supporting you in making trouble, so you can make trouble in the safest and most productive ways that'll help you grow. Know what I mean?

this way!



**Well, we've made it through
the rollercoaster of 2020.**

And if we could survive that, we can survive anything, right? The compassion, creativity, and resilience of the HC community has grown exponentially. Which is just as well, for the Covid challenges will clearly remain for some time to come.

But the future is always much bigger than the past. And that's our hope and prayer for HC too, as we enter our 20th anniversary year.

For it, we've chosen the theme '**Grit**'. It seems more than appropriate...

Nothing stops HC. We could go into a nuclear bomb site and HC would still be like: *"are you up for a zoom?"* HC'll find anything to keep people's morale up. Even through something so horrible. You know they're going to be there, no matter what. YP, 19

CREDITS

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