



## • NEW HORIZONS •

**A**s we write this the global impact of the Covid-19 virus has, as with most organisations and charities, had its effect on **the gap\***. The prevention of meeting with others in any context has stopped the Venue drop-in operating and with schools closed, any chances of face-to-face meetings have also now gone. As a Charity, the Trustees have some serious discussions to have and some significant decisions to make if **the gap\*** (as a relatively small Charity) is to survive. The gap\* is looking to remain active in an on-line format where we can work out ways of communicating with young people (with parents/guardians permission where appropriate) and continue supporting as best we can... It will certainly require us being creative and resourceful, but with the support of our Trustees, our supporters, both in prayer and finance, the behind the scenes mechanics of our Fundraiser and a willingness to think and work outside of the box from our staff and volunteers, I am convinced God will be at work guiding us to continue building His kingdom. In these unprecedented and challenging times He is still the rock on which we stand.



As mentioned in our last newsletter, after almost nine years of developing and managing **the gap\***, David has stepped down from his role as Project Manager. This has been a decision that has not been taken lightly but one that he feels the time is right for. "Its time for the next phase for the gap\*, one that involves new blood with new ideas to further develop the work and to take things forward" says David. "I came into this role towards the end of 2011 and have always aimed to make **the gap\*** not just another youth facility but something that is part of the everyday strata of the community, an accepted, reliable and respected service that young people can access". **The gap\*** has gone through many stages in its development, helped along by others in support of David's role, Hannah Hughes was instrumental in setting up the HeadSpace project back in 2015. The Trustees membership doubled to six in 2016, part-time youth worker, Rob Jones, helped get the recording studio up and running in 2017 as well as taking on some outreach work, we still have two of our longest serving ladies as volunteers in Christine and Ella, both of whom have been doing their role almost as long as David has. Zabrina Wolfe (who started off with us as a volunteer back in 2016) will take on the role of overall Manager of the gap\* and will be robustly supported by Laura and Andrew as part-time youth workers. David says "I have every confidence in them and, yes, things may be done differently but as long as the motive is a passion for helping young people who find themselves on the fringe of things, the gap\* should maintain its reputation for being a positive place for these youngsters to go and belong to". He adds, "there is no doubt I will miss many aspects of the work, especially meeting and engaging with the young people and seeing some of them move on pro-actively with their lives". David intends to remain as a Trustee and consultant for the gap\* as well as acting as support through the present crisis. He also wants to assure all supporters of the work of the gap\* that their continued support, especially financially, is as always, vital to the continuance of the work in supporting and guiding young people into positive and productive lifestyles.



# The Word on the Street

## WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE GAP\*?

"My enjoyment comes from the support... I always feel valued and when asked if I am okay I know it's genuine"

"Gap is my happy place and secure unit"

"The gap\* has helped me a lot to explore my problems and has contributed to helping me explore my issues at home. I just wish I had a bit longer due to my mocks interfering with the sessions so I missed out. I really enjoyed the sessions because they were fun and I was able to get things off of my chest."

"The gap\* has helped me a lot over the past few months and has been a major contribution to my personal growth since I came to this school in year 10. My support worker has always been there for me during our weekly sessions whether it's a session full of laughter to allow me to de-stress for the day and lift my mood or to help me accept things about myself that I couldn't bring myself to do on my own. She has really helped me open up and become more accepting of my feelings and made me into a better person."

## Supporting the next generation

Do you have a passion to encourage and support young people positively on their journey through life?

We are looking for down to earth volunteers to join our team with a couple of hours to spare a week.



*Aimie*

our valued volunteer started with us in 2019 and tells us all about her desire to volunteer with The gap\*?

### Why did you want to volunteer for the gap\*?

Because I have been given support and encouragement in my life at several different points.

I wanted to give something back. What a better way to use my free time than to encourage and support young people who need a listening ear.

### What have you learnt from volunteering for the gap\*?

Yes I've learnt more about what its like to be a teenager in this day and age. It's also helped me relate to my own children even more because I hear young people telling me about their life from their perspectives. I have felt uplifted by the support and encouragement I have received from The gap\* myself too. They are a lovely team to work with.

### Would you recommend volunteering with the gap\* to others?

Yes of course, it's rewarding, encouraging, exciting and a blessing to be able to work with these young people. You could be the only person they have to talk to.

## Ain't no moutian high enough to keep us from... connecting!

Oh how times have changed and so very rapidly! Our girls group, **G1**, has now gone virtual and we would like to update you on all the fun.

From chatting about quarantine snacks and updating each other on how we spent another day 'bored in the house'. Skype has been a great way for Laura and Zabrina (youth workers) and volunteer Aimie to support, encourage and check in on how the young ladies we are connected with from The gap\* are doing. We have had some joyful moments of sharing heart felt stories and real life connections through the screen on how tough lockdown has been. We are so pleased we are able to keep the support going for these young people.

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