

Thriving Together Grant Fund case study: Esteem: Our Voice, Our Community

Shoreham-based youth charity Esteem is helping young people develop important life skills with a new project that will see them organise community events and develop a helpful guide to encouraging involvement, participation and leadership from young people.

Thanks to £10,000 from our Thriving Together Fund, Esteem has developed a one-year project called Our voice, Our Community for young people in Adur aged 14 to 26 to learn leadership, teamwork and planning skills, and gain confidence, while also improving links with the local community.

Through weekly sessions that are led by the young people themselves, participants will create a simple guide for local groups on how they can better include and involve young people.

They will also plan and run at least four free or low-cost community activities, such as clothes swaps and intergenerational board game sessions. These events will help reduce isolation by bringing different ages and groups together, as well as demonstrating that young people are active and positive members of the community.

The first event called You Belong Here is already in the works and will take place this June.

Members of the community and local charities are invited to come together to make a mural around the words 'you belong here'. The event will also bring together food and music from around the world for a friendly afternoon of inclusive creativity.

One of the young event organisers said: *"This event is important to me because, as a person from a different background, I've been stuck in a cycle where I've felt very lonely at times. This event is to help people feel like they are supported, and to come together to celebrate one another no matter if you're someone who's LGBTQ+, with disabilities, or a different background. This is about embracing the community, which makes you feel less alone."*

The guide, which Esteem hopes will encourage greater participation between community groups and young people, will be ready to view by the end of the project.

Esteem regularly hosts a range of free group activities, creative projects, social outings and wellbeing sessions for young people to make new friendships and develop their skills, as well as one-to-one support and mentoring sessions.

To find out more, please visit: <https://esteem.org.uk/>

The You Belong Here event will feature as part of the Adur Festival. Find out more about the festival here: <https://adurfestival.org/>