

WE REDUCE VIOLENCE
WE SAVE LIVES



ST MARY'S CENTRE

Annual Report

June 2018 to June 2019





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St Mary's Centre (SMC) works with vulnerable young people aged 12-25 facing daily threats of violence, kidnap and death in northwest London.

We work in local housing estates, schools, pupil referral units and prisons.

We have 12 years' proven record of violence reduction.

We care for young people who have nowhere else to go.

Who we are

We have a Youth Work Manager, a Youth Worker and two part time Young Women's Workers. Our team is supported by young adult volunteers. Local professionals fund raise and manage our service freely.



Jason Allen
Youth Work Manager



Emile Libock
Youth Worker



Sara Beshira
Young Women's Worker



Camilla Ferdinand
Young Women's Worker

Our 4 promises

We are here for you

St Mary's Centre Youth Workers are on call 24x7x365 including Christmas Day.

1

We stick with you

St Mary's Centre will stay with you without condition until the age of 25.

2

We come to you

St Mary's Centre will come to meet you in your home, community, school or prison. Wherever you go, we follow you.

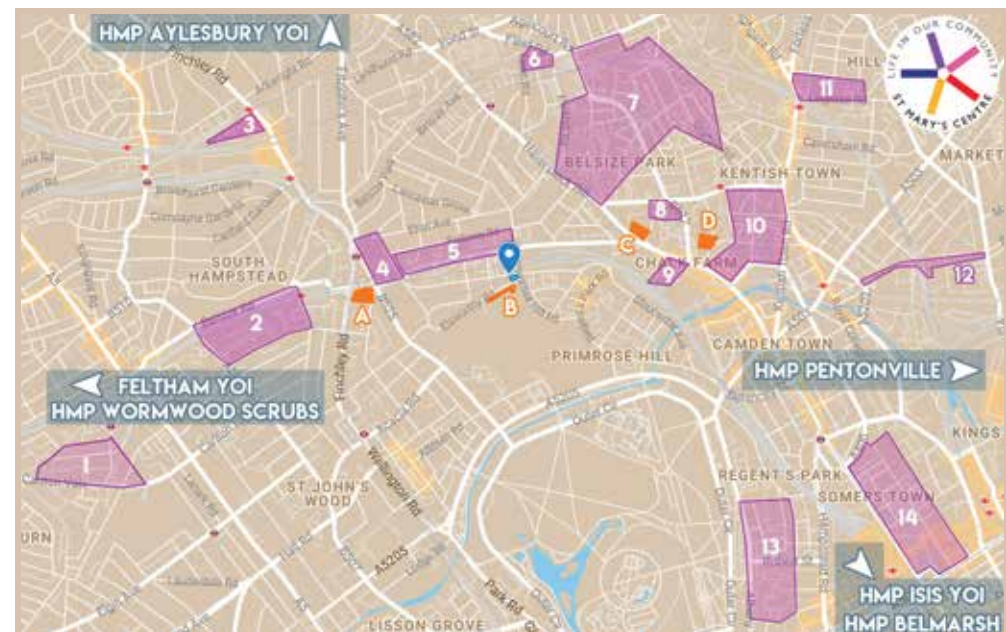
3

We do everything we can to keep you safe

Violence reduction is at the core of our work. We specialise in working with young people our Youth Work Manager calls 'not just the at risk, but *the* risk'.

4

Where we work



ESTATES

1	South Kilburn
2	Rowley Way
3	Lithos Road
4	Swiss Cottage
5	Chalcot
6	Fleet
7	Queen's Crescent
8	Denton
9	Chalk Farm
10	Castle Haven
11	Peckwater (Kentish Town)
12	Agar Grove
13	Combo/Regent's Park
14	Somers Town

SCHOOLS

A	UCL Academy
B	St Paul's Primary School
C	Haverstock School
D	CCFL (Pupil Referral Unit)

What do partner services say about us?

CAMDEN CENTRE FOR LEARNING

We talked with Jeanette Lowe,
the Centre's Director

How does St Mary's contribute to your work as a school?

St Mary's has been providing Health & Fitness and Drama sessions to the school this year. Through these they have been able to identify young people who are in need of targeted mentoring because of their vulnerability to criminal exploitation in the community. The mentoring service – the only one we are aware of which is available to young people 24/7 – has enabled St Mary's to keep our young people safe and divert them away from potentially high risk situations.

Why does it matter?

The service is so important for the young people at our school because many of them do not have a positive adult they can turn to when they are feeling vulnerable and unsafe. The mentors are very active in the local

community, and through this they are able to secure the confidence and trust of the young people and their families. Their presence and involvement in the community means they can often anticipate disputes and diffuse situations before they arise, avoiding the escalation of potential conflicts.

What is being achieved?

The students at CCfL include some of the most vulnerable and at risk students in Camden. The mentors from St Mary's that have been attached to our students have been able to form highly effective and positive relationships with this cohort, some of whom are either on the fringes or are already embedded in anti-social behaviour and criminal exploitation. The mentors help our young people to develop their self-esteem, their resilience and the skills and confidence they need to make more positive choices. They have been successful in reaching our most hard to reach students and

“They have been successful in reaching our most hard to reach students...St Mary's never gives up!”

have remained engaged with them when other services have fallen away or have closed the case because the young person is not engaging. St Mary's never gives up!

What would you like to see happen next?

We want to continue to develop our partnership with St Mary's, working to ensure that our most vulnerable cohort – who we often lose to the streets, violence and criminal activity – are engaged in education, achieving and succeeding, and most importantly, safe.



Camden Centre for Learning is Camden's educational provision for secondary aged children and young people whose primary need is their social, emotional or mental health development.

It is made up of three specialist services:

- SEMH Special School
- KS3 Pupil Referral Unit
- KS4 Pupil Referral Unit

Why are we needed?

Statistics show that crime is worsening. Fewer safe places exist for young people on the streets of London.



30% of our local children and young people live **in poverty**

that's 4,600 youth living in poverty

20% of them are estimated to **need our services**

we could work with



young people

Poverty in our area

- 30% of young people live in poverty in our 3 local wards www.cuf.org.uk
- This amounts to 4,600 youth.
- SMC estimates 20% of the 4,600 would benefit from our intensive 1:1 mentoring.
- SMC could work with 920 more young people.

Crime

- 16% increase in knife crime in London 2017-18 [Met Police](#)
- 12% increase in homicide in London, costing the taxpayer £3.2 million [Home Office](#)
- Youth who experience 4 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences are 10 times more likely to be involved in violence every year by the time they are 18 [Commission on Youth Violence \(CYV\)](#)
- In the CYV Safer Lives Survey, only 46% of young people would ask the police for advice when worried about crime

Youth services

- 81 youth clubs have closed in London since 2011 [London's Lost Youth Services, 2018](#)
- Youth centres are cited as the number one factor that make young people feel safer [Safer Lives Survey, CYV](#)

What we do

Violence reduction in communities and on the streets

Why?

When crimes are committed there is a 'wall of silence' between 'young people and support services'.* SMC are among few professionals who are trusted by both sides and effectively communicate with young people in danger.

What?

SMC Workers work hard to communicate with residents and discover problems and dangers that young people face. We build relationships and strengthen young people's resolve so as not to give in to destructive peer pressure. Each Youth Worker mentors at risk individuals for around 10 to 15 hours a week.

Where?

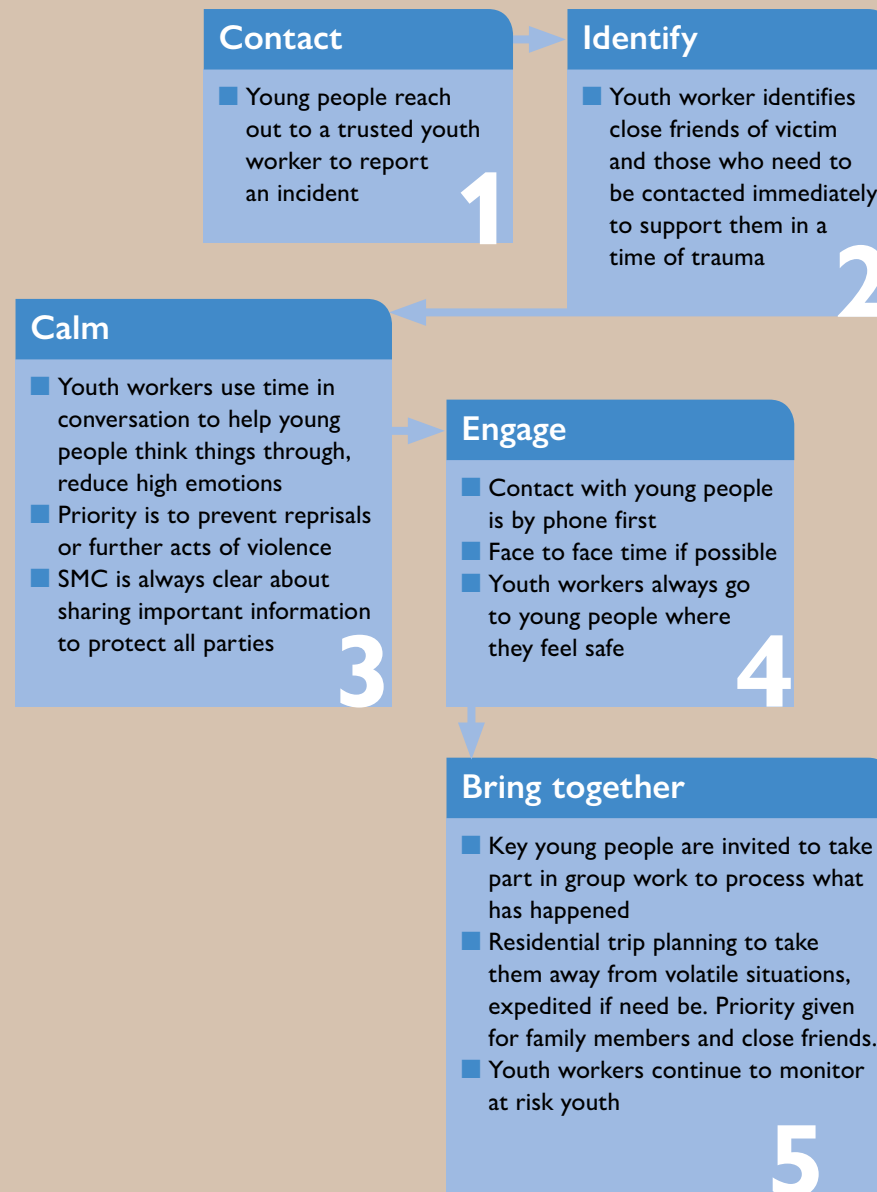
We meet and mentor young people in 14 local housing estates including the challenging Peckwater and Queen's Crescent estates. We host a drop-in session at SMC every Friday. We have an *Open Door* policy throughout the week.

Who?

Our two full time Youth Workers work intensively with on average 20 young people each. Our Young Women's Workers have built a growing new cohort of 10 young women.

*Commission on Youth Violence

When things go wrong: how we respond to a crisis





Schools

Why?

Persistent disruptive behaviour and physical assault against adults and pupils are the most common reasons for temporary and permanent exclusions*. Research puts the cost of a school exclusion at £370,000** to society.

What?

Youth Workers work with local schools to identify pupils at high risk of exclusion and violence. With pupils we discuss relationships, choices, triggers, patterns of behaviour and how to pre-empt dangerous situations.

Where?

St Mary's Centre works in UCL Academy and Haverstock School twice weekly.

Who?

Our Support Youth Worker works with 15 pupils weekly. Our Young Women's Worker is now building a new cohort of 5-10 young women.

Research puts the cost of a school exclusion at £370,000

*www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017

**Institute for Public Policy Research, October 2017 www.ippr.org/files/2017-10/making-the-difference-report-october-2017.pdf



Pupil Referral Units and Prisons

Why?

St Mary's Centre intensive 1:1 mentoring support lowers the numbers of young people in danger of committing crime and reoffending.

What?

St Mary's Centre liaises with the Director and staff of Camden Centre for Learning, as well as UK Prison Manager Offenders and Probation Officers. We tackle problems in homes, anger management, self-image and peer pressure. Older SMC cohorts meet and share histories with young mentees. This peer mentoring is extremely effective.

Where?

SMC works with Camden Centre for Learning (CCFL). Our Lead Youth Worker visits offenders in ISIS, Feltham, Cookham Wood, Ashfield, Glen Parva, Swinfen Hall, Portland and Deerbolt YOIs. We also support offenders in HMP Aylesbury, Belmarsh, Pentonville, Wandsworth and Wormwood Scrubs. This requires our team to travel over 8,000 miles a year.

Who?

SMC works with 10 young people at CCFL. We work intensively with approximately 10 offenders in YOIs and prison, and maintain monthly contact with a further 25. SMC increases support close to their release dates and young offenders often come directly to SMC on their day of release. We supply clothes, food, toiletries and help with housing, employment and education.

ABDUL'S STORY

Youth Workers supported Abdul in prison and met with the two mothers of his three children. On his recent release Abdul came directly to SMC. Youth Workers arranged family meetings and helped him repair relationships. At our youth work summer party Abdul proudly brought along his family. Thanks to SMC he now has a stable job.



Group work in and out of London

Why?

SMC is a uniquely safe, neutral space where rival gang members can meet. Away trips offer time away from the daily dangers of inner London. All group work allows SMC Youth Workers to spot young people at risk of becoming involved in gangs and offer more intensive mentoring to reduce this danger.

What?

SMC welcomes young people to St Mary's Centre for drop-in sessions. They socialise, play sports and music and discuss problems 1:1. We take two cohorts of young people on residential to hostels and activity camps for in-depth workshops and structured activities.

Who?

20-25 young people visit SMC each week. Two cohorts of 12-16 and 17-21 year olds go away on our annual trips. At SMC we are proud that many of our referrals now come from other young people, such as their trust in our team. When our Youth Workers need extra support, 5 young adults who have benefitted from SMC mentoring now volunteer their time as paid session workers. Transformation of our young people from mentee to mentor tells how much we succeed with our local youth.

A YOUNG SMC VOLUNTEER



If I didn't decide to participate in the youth sessions, trips out as a volunteer, I don't know what I'd be doing; I ain't psychic, but I can tell you this for free, I'd be more involved in negative activities than I could imagine."

“

CHARLIE'S STORY

I have been fortunate enough to have been involved with St Mary's for over eight years and can easily say it has had a huge impact on my life and helped me deal with many situations. I first got involved with St Mary's through my secondary school at the time, as I was considered at risk and was referred to a St Mary's mentor.

As a teenager, I was heavily associated with local gangs and found myself getting in trouble both in and out of school. I believe my troubles were due to boredom and a build up of aggression with no real opportunity to vent them. St Mary's and Jason Allen gave me opportunities to turn my aggression into mentoring and sport and taught me to use my skills creatively.

St Mary's accommodated me and my other friends' needs by setting up sessions to spend our spare time constructively rather than hanging around the streets. We would have frank discussions about what situations we faced. St Mary's took our group on residential trips to different parts of England, places that we would never normally venture to, showing us there is more out there than just our local area. Trips gave us an opportunity to do fun things, which without St Mary's help, our group of friends would not be able to afford.

Setting up a football team with players that weren't in my direct friendship group helped my social skills immensely. I built new relationships with boys from different areas and broke down boundaries I had once been stuck in due to my gang mentality. Jason taught me to take responsibility and lead. I even became captain of the football team. These were foundations to great skills I still use and rely on at the age of 23. The more time I spent at St Mary's, the further I grew apart from gang associates and violence.

Unfortunately I found myself on remand and in prison at the age of 15 years old looking at a very serious charge. Not only did St Mary's stay in close contact with me by visiting me, my mentor would attend court and also communicated with my family about what was happening when they weren't able to attend. St Mary's are respected highly in my family and definitely helped everyone cope with the trauma of the situation. I was acquitted and released after being on remand for 18 months.

Upon release, I was almost immediately put into intensive care with pneumonia and tuberculosis. It was a very scary time for my family and me. Again my mentor would visit me at my bedside, bringing me food and magazines. His positive energy and laughter was what I needed to get better and rebuild my confidence. He helped me not to think too negatively as I was fearing for my life on the streets when I went back. He supported me to manage my feelings and anxieties to stay away from crime and violence.

Due to being in custody at the time of my GCSEs I wasn't able to attain the results that were needed to get onto a Level 3 course at college. As well as being very unwell, I became depressed and felt that I wasn't going to be able to achieve anything and would spend hours thinking of irrational and irresponsible ways to progress and make money as I felt the easier route was to turn to crime. My mentor sensed how I was feeling and feared I might make a drastic decision to go back to a life of crime and gangs. At this moment Jason and St Mary's welcomed me back into the group, sitting down with me and going

through numerous prospectuses for different colleges in order to keep me on the right track. At St Mary's I was helped to write the applications and to understand how I could progress with the grades that I already had. They helped me to write and sort out my CV as well as getting me work experience at St Mary's. I got a taste of real life work which I found very rewarding and was able to see just how hard Jason and the rest of the staff at St Mary's work to keep the standards of care as high as they do.

I was able to finish college and St Mary's helped me fill out my UCAS form for uni and started my first year aged 20. My past life of crime was still around me and my mentor would still carry on supporting me. It was basically my therapy to leave the streets and manage my trauma of friends that were dying. I dropped out of uni after a year and St Mary's supported me to get a job as a postman which I have been employed as for 3 years now and have moved away from violence and crime. I am also looking into becoming a teacher!

I see how St Mary's do this with so many other people from the community that I am from. I know that if my mentor didn't keep tabs on me for all those years I would have fallen back into violence and crime. I can only imagine I would be dead or in prison for a long time. It's scary when I think about it. St Mary's staff go above and beyond to provide and motivate the young people in our community and as mentors their support and help has saved my life. Their positive and inspirational attitude towards life continues to influence anybody who is lucky enough to get the opportunity to be a part of St Mary's.

Careers and social enterprise

Why?

SMC understands that if young people are truly going to break the cycle of violence and deprivation, they need to learn professional skills and find stable employment.

What?

St Mary's Centre knows that we must always begin with listening to our young people. We learn about their hopes and their fears. We guide and support them to craft ambitious, realistic aspirations. We research new apprenticeships and social enterprise opportunities weekly. When our team find an opportunity, we help young people to prepare their applications. We

support CV writing, arrange mock job interviews and introduce them to local professionals who offer informal advice and guidance. We stick by their side whatever happens next.

Who?

Last year SMC helped 18 young people find apprenticeships and get into work. We continue to support young people with their start-ups/companies. Our new database of professionals in north west London who want to help at risk young people supports this work. We are proud that over 30 individuals have stepped forward to offer their time, advice and support networks to SMC mentees.

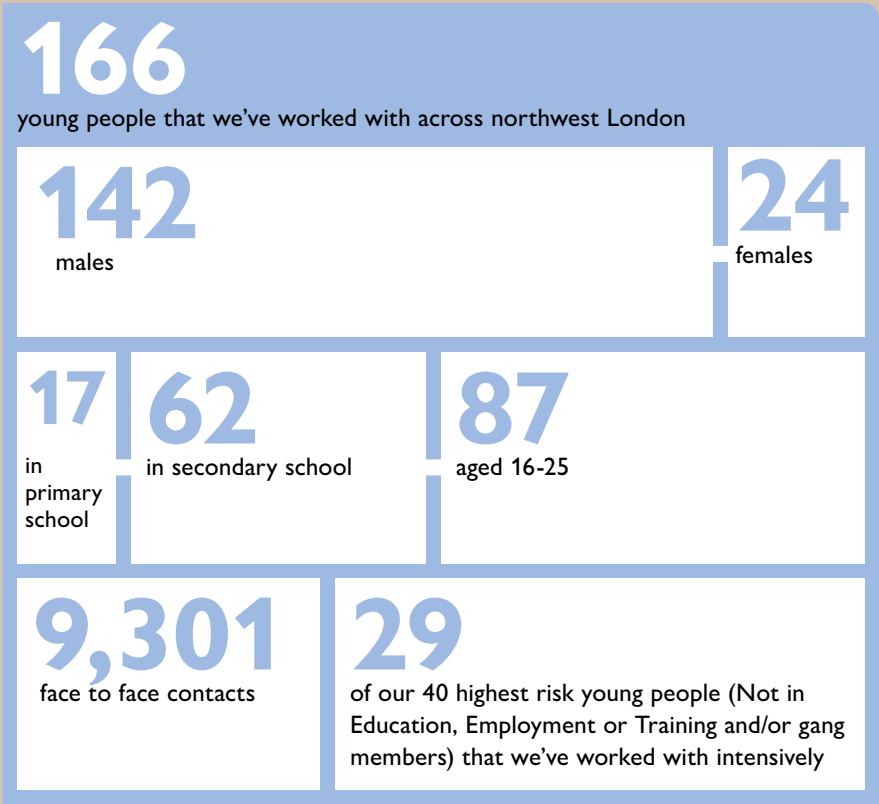
MO'S STORY: GANG LEADER TO MUSIC MANAGER

In 2008 Mo was a notorious Camden gang leader, excluded from school for repeated offences, under frequent surveillance by Police and refused help by Social Services. SMC mentored him for 10 years in school, in his Pupil Referral Unit and in prison. Mo is now both a music manager and on the verge of national success as a rap artist and supporting his two daughters. Mo also manages a young SMC mentee and comes to PRUs and YOIs to share his story and encourage young people to learn from his mistakes. He has now become a Trustee of SMC. Mo will have a unique insight to help us become better mentors to at risk young people.

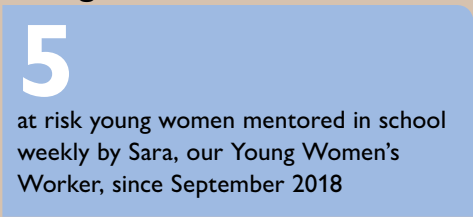
Our impact 2018-19

Our work in numbers

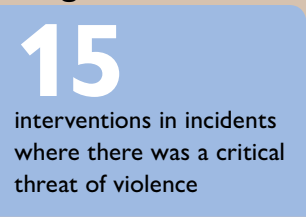
How many young people?



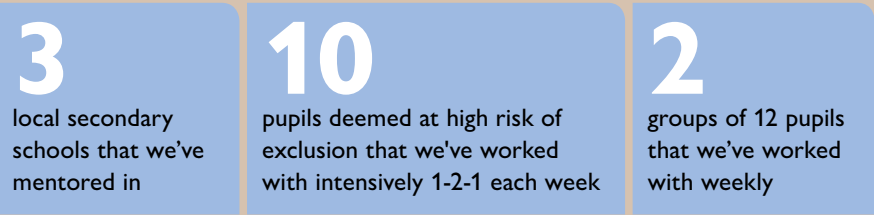
Young women



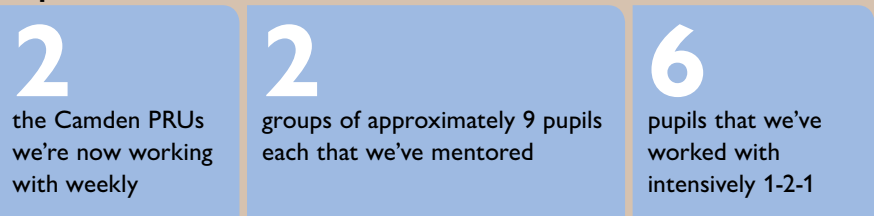
Gang interventions



Education



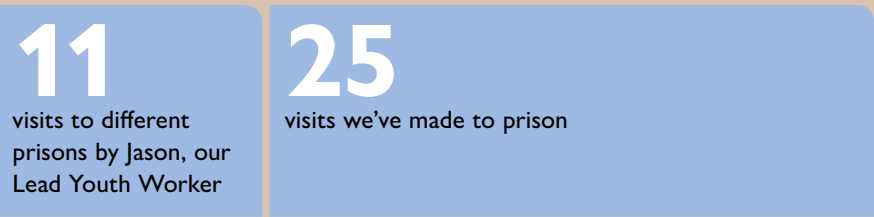
Pupil Referral Units



Employment and training



Prisons



We value our people

Why?

At St Mary's Centre we know that frontline violence reduction and mentoring is demanding work. Youth Workers need to be resilient, compassionate professionals who are experts in supporting young people with trauma. Our team have to process distressing events far beyond what most of us will ever encounter.

What?

SMC has built a close working relationship with The Tavistock and Portman, a world leading NHS trust 'committed to improving mental health and wellbeing' (tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/)

We now organise a 3 month programme for neighbouring youth services to meet us at The Tavistock and Portman to discuss challenging case studies using a trauma informed approach.

Who?

- Our Youth Work Manager receives professional support from a leading clinical psychologist.
- Our Support Youth Worker is studying a course in Child Development.
- Our team are now AMBIT trained through the Anna Freud Centre, focusing on trauma informed responses to youth work.



Reaching out

SMC is proud to be a local project. We visit schools, community centres and faith groups to share our work and grow community support. SMC is often reported in local news.

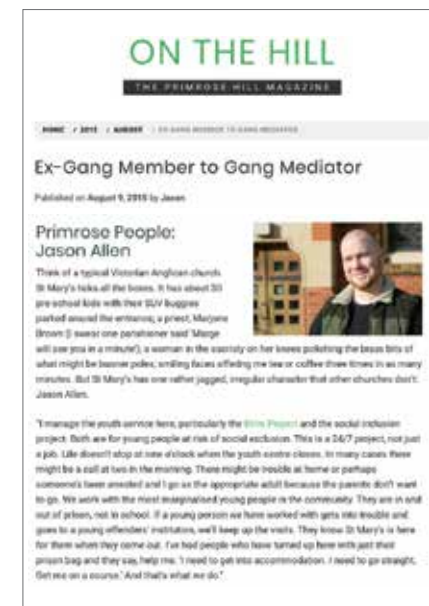
Young voices

Our priority is always to listen to and learn from our young people. We invite verbal feedback during weekly drop-in sessions. We are proud that our young people frequently speak to local people and supporters about the impact SMC has on their lives.

Speaking out

In 2017/18 our Youth Work Manager has been a member of Camden's Youth Safety Task Force working with MPs, councillors, police and local partners to create coordinated responses to tackle the Camden increase in knife crime. He now sits on bodies with Camden Council to coordinate key services supporting at risk young people.

SMC is represented on the Islington and Camden Citizens' Safety Commission. The local community invite MPs, councillors, Police, local faith leaders, headteachers and



with Keir Starmer MP



with Sadiq Khan

psychologists to learn ways to solve local problems.

In July 2018 SMC's Youth Work Manager spoke to 900 Police Now Academy graduates on a platform with Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick.

Knife amnesty bin

At St Mary's Centre we know that violence reduction always begins with prevention.

We host Camden's first knife amnesty bin part funded by St Mary's Church. Tens of knives have already been surrendered.



**'Learn from Jason –
he knows how to
prevent youth crime.'**

Met Police
Commissioner
Cressida Dick



We need to do more

We want to do more

We know SMC could mentor 4 times as many young people. But we are running at capacity. So now we're planning for the future.

We want to:

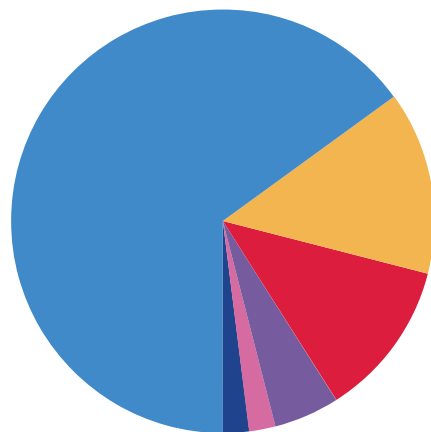
- Guarantee the incomes of our current Youth Workers (2 full time, 2 part time Young Women's Workers)
- Recruit a new full time Youth Worker

What will a new Youth Worker do?

- Identify and mentor 10 more young people at risk in streets and estates
- Take on a further 10-15 pupils in schools mentoring
- Organise an additional residential trip for the new cohort of young people
- Help an estimated 10 mentees find education, apprenticeships and employment

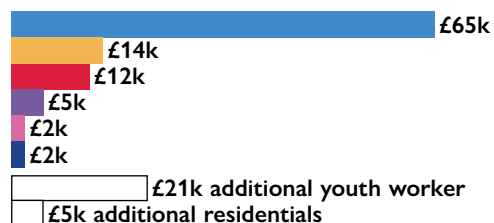
How much do we cost?

Current costs = £100k



£k	
65	salaries + NI
14	youthwork activities
12	sessional workers and part time mentors
5	training
2	expenses
2	fees

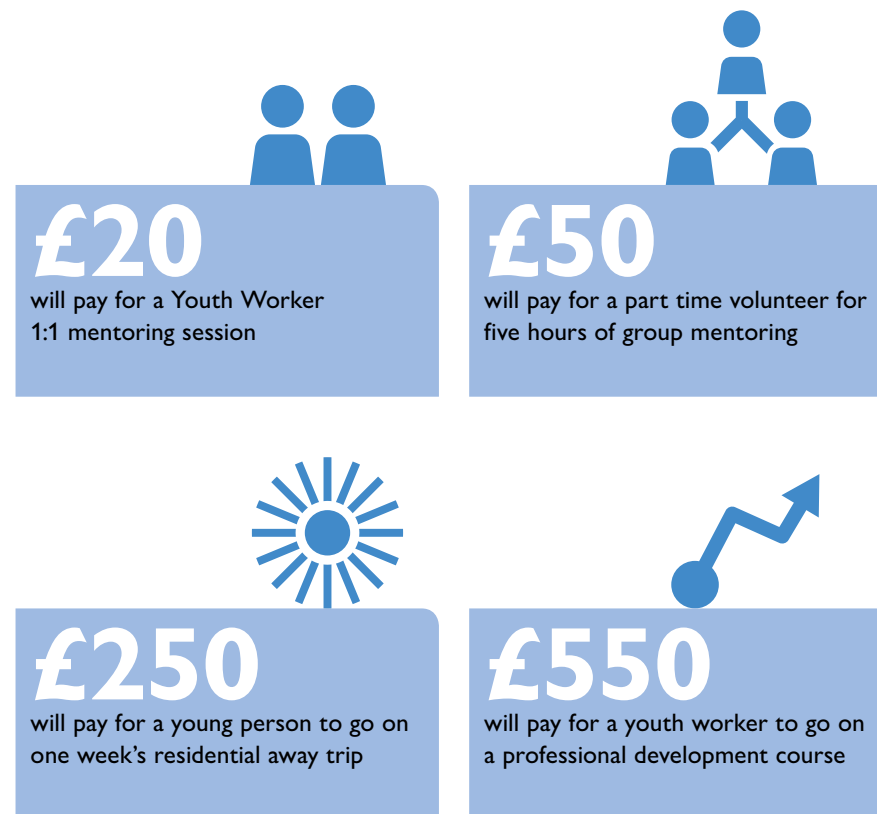
Future costs = £126k



Support us

All giving to SMC makes a big difference

Here's an idea of how much our work costs.



How can I give?

Regular giving by direct debit is the easiest way for individual supporters to give, or a one-off donation can be made online, by post or by bank transfer.

Online www.justgiving.com/smcct
Bank account Santander
Account number 04555171
Sort code 09 01 50

Thank you to our friends

- Expat
- St Mary's Church
- Hadley Trust
- Stephanie Free
- Jeremy Large and Julia Giese
- Anthony Wills
- Lottery Fund 'Awards for All'
- Artemis Funds
- Tula Trust
- Span Trust
- Friends of St Mary's
- Biss Davies Trust
- Shadworth Hodgson Bequest
- Primrose Hill Dog Show
- Susan J. Knight
- Curtis Brown
- Mrs J. Hawkins

and donors who wish
to remain anonymous

*St Mary's Centre also wishes
to thank Christine Ayre for
designing this report.*

'The Shadworth Hodgson
Bequest is proud to support
SMC because of the vital
work that it is doing with
disadvantaged young people –
work that is so valuable as it
has arisen from a direct and
first hand knowledge of the
needs and challenges facing
the local community.'

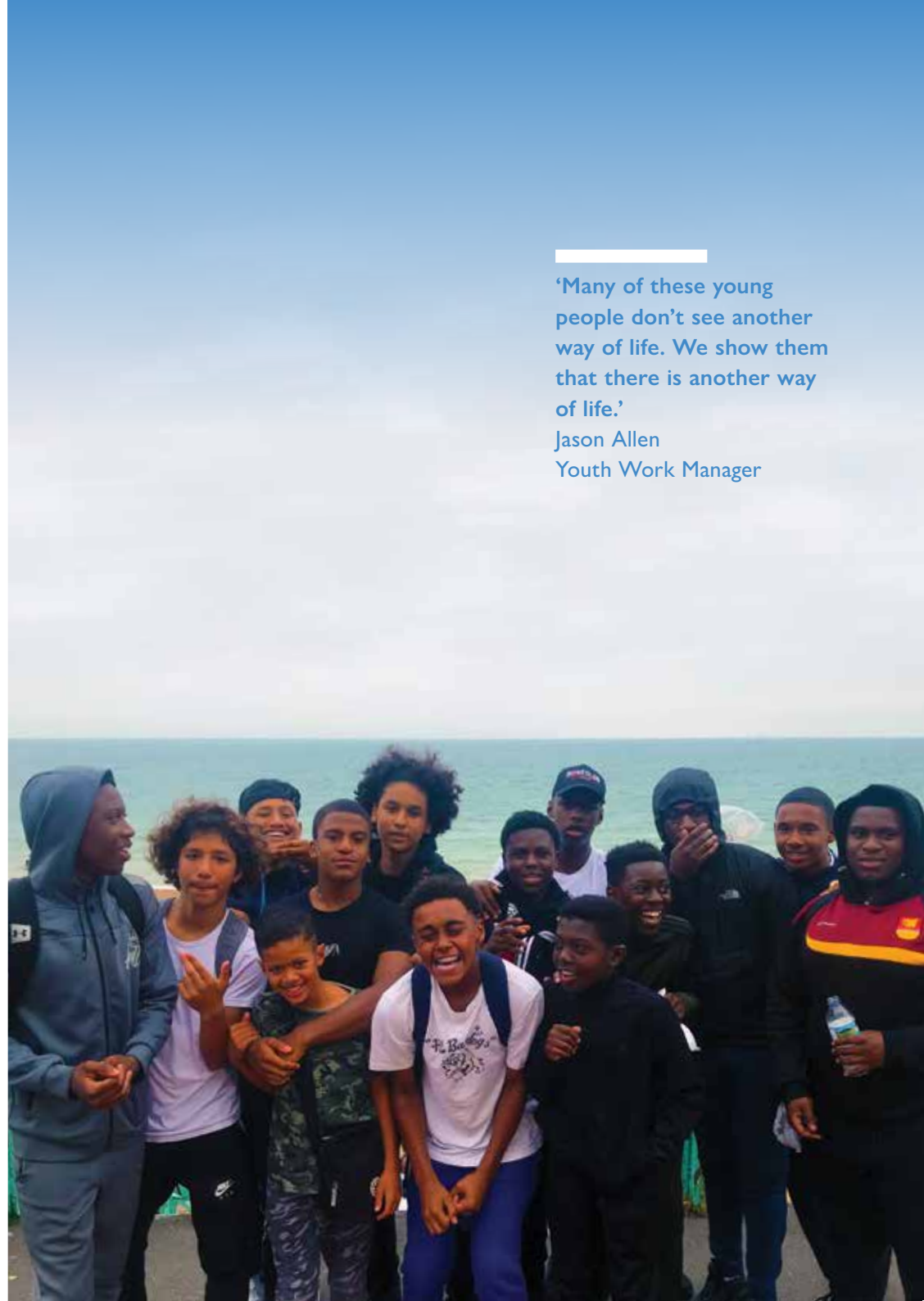
St Mary's Centre is the operating
name of St Mary's Centre
Community Trust

Registered Charity No. 1122054

www.justgiving.com/smcct
Bank account Santander
Account number 04555171
Sort code 09 01 50

'Many of these young
people don't see another
way of life. We show them
that there is another way
of life.'

Jason Allen
Youth Work Manager





Want to find out more?

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