



Hailsham
TOWN COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

20th Anniversary of Dedicated Youth Service

23 January 2020

Hailsham's most widely used youth facility and its associated projects is set to celebrate 20 years of dedicated service to local young people.

Youth project staff will join with town councillors and other invited guests at the Square Youth Café (1 Market Square) on Monday 17th February from 12.30pm, where they will mark Hailsham Youth Service's achievements with a multimedia presentation and tour of the facility, outlining the various projects undertaken during the past two decades.

Officially opened in January 2000, the 1 Market Square project was set up by the Town Council to improve the quality of life for young people aged 14 to 25 years in Hailsham and surrounding rural villages. Such benefits are achieved through the integrated provision of recreation, opportunities for personal and social development, information and advice.

The 1 Market Square building accommodates The Square Youth Café (a café-style meeting place) and Safe-hub (a drop-in facility set up recently to accommodate vulnerable young people on a Friday evening). Coordinated by Hailsham Town Council, the project has links with other agencies, including Hailsham community College and the Safer Wealden Partnership.

Hailsham Youth Service also offers a Sexual Health drop-in facility and a community minibus available for local youth groups to hire, in addition to organised recreational outing on Friday evenings as part of the Friday Night Project and sports activities on Monday evenings at the James West Community Centre.

Guests at the 20th Anniversary event will include representatives from local schools, youth organisations and businesses, as well as the Mayor of Hailsham, Councillor Paul Holbrook and local councillors.

Members of the public are invited to come along to the open day part of the event which takes places from 2pm to 4pm, where information on Hailsham Youth Service's activities, projects and achievements over the past 20 years will be available.

The Mayor of Hailsham, Cllr Paul Holbrook said: "Hailsham Youth Service aims to provide activities - which are both leisure and issue based - and meet the multitude of needs that the young people put forward us on a regular basis. The 20th anniversary of the youth project will mark two decades of hard work and solid achievement of these aims."

"As a long-term local councillor, I know that there have been problems for young people in Hailsham in the past, but since the Square Youth Café and its associated centres and activities were set up by the Town Council in 2000, these problems have reduced dramatically. During my previous visits to the Square Youth Café, the young people have told me that they always look forward to going there and they all seemed to be keen to take advantage of the many opportunities being offered by our youth project team."

Town Clerk John Harrison commented: "The development of the Town Council's youth projects over the last twenty years proves that there are ample opportunities for developing partnerships with other agencies to provide innovative work with individuals or groups of young people."

"The 20th anniversary celebratory event on 17th February will be a good opportunity for invited guests and parents to be able to see how successful the introduction of this youth facility has been and put forward suggestions for new ideas for future youth projects".

Mr Harrison added: "It has been a pleasure to work with the youth project team – their positive attitude and obvious enjoyment in working with young people has ensured that Hailsham Youth Service has gone from strength to strength since its launch."

Youth project coordinator Andy Joyes, who has been with the team from the very beginning said: "The 1 Market Square project exists for youth workers to support young people through their experience of social education and in their transition from childhood to adulthood."

"We have had great support from the Town Council, who have backed us all the way, and the various projects we have undertaken in partnership with other youth agencies have been particularly enjoyable too."

"I hope that young people will continue to enjoy everything the centre has to offer in years to come."

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