

## **WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Leisure & Amenities Committee**

## **Grants Update**

### **1. Update:**

#### ***Toothill Youth Club Animation Club***

1.1 Mr Keith Philips – Digital Writes, received a grant of £1025.00 to create a digital arts club with participants at the Toothill Youth Club. Mr Philips has provided the following information as an update:

#### **1. Activities**

We had some great activities in both youth clubs. Participants did:

- story devising
- script writing and performing
- drawing and animation
- writing music
- DJing

They really enjoyed what they did and were really pleased and surprised by what they were able to achieve using the accessible processes I have developed using professional software.

#### **2. Outputs**

If you remember, the idea was to make a series of short animations inspired by the BBC3 series, This Country. The groups moved this idea along a bit, and made the characters anthropomorphic dinosaurs and renamed the series Tooth Ill (pun intended).

They planned wrote and recorded audio for 4 episodes in the series and designed and drew a number of characters and backgrounds. We have one virtually completed episode: The Adza Incident: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/fmp3mlrykkbv46u/The\\_Adza\\_Incident.mov?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/fmp3mlrykkbv46u/The_Adza_Incident.mov?dl=0).

Some other characters are:

Jamaraptor (young mother visiting the shops in her pyjamas): <https://www.dropbox.com/s/rvzk6wz1g2em5yi/Jamaraptor.jpg?dl=0>

Eden (who likes ice

skating): <https://www.dropbox.com/s/psdx1fj7mey3298/EdenWalksAndRoars.mp4?dl=0>

#### **3. Outcomes**

I need to talk to the people who run the youth clubs to get their take on how it went, but here are a few examples.

Toothill Community Centre Youth Club

Despite the noise and distractions at the youth club, I had some groups of young people sit

down quietly and draw and animate.

Another group separated themselves from the main hubbub and worked brilliantly as a team, developing a story, improvising dialogue, encouraging each other. After some initial training, they used the equipment independently.

#### Toothill Farm Youth Club

This was a quieter environment. They all knew each other and developed some great team working. There was initial enthusiasm for improvising and performing dialogue, but when it came to it, they were suddenly reluctant. But with perseverance, I was able to build their confidence and they produced some great performances.

One particular triumph was Isabel. She recorded the main part for the Adze Incident, but then said she didn't want it shown. So I contacted a friend of mine who is a BBC children's TV producer and he wrote:

*'I'm not just saying this but I really enjoyed that animation. It made me laugh and it was utterly charming and witty. The drawings are great and it has bags of character and the voices are a big part of that. As you say, it feels sincere and genuine. Also, there's a real balance between the voices and the drawings: you really can believe the creatures speak like that. Do you know what I mean? The voices don't jar at all with the animations. I liked the music very much, too. The whole animation feels bright and punchy. Top stuff!'*

Naturally this praise really buoyed the group and Isabel is now very happy to have the animation shown.

Just before lockdown, Digital Writes were planning a project in partnership with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. We were planning a promotional photoshoot in Jumanji costume and several members of the youth club were very keen to be involved, which demonstrates an improved self-confidence and the success I had engaging them.

#### **4. Lockdown**

At lockdown, the youth clubs closed, so I wasn't able to finish all the sessions. We have 2 more hours to do at the Community Centre Youth Club and 8 more hours at the Toothill Farm Youth Club.

Also, all our other funding disappeared so I had to be furloughed, which meant I couldn't compile the animations or work on the fund raising plan to continue the project. I also wasn't able to get the young people's parents to sign release forms for their involvement and to broadcast their work on YouTube and so on.

#### **5. Going Forward.**

Digital Writes had a grant from the Arts Council which meant I was able to come out of furlough and am now able to resume work on the project. We need to evaluate what we achieved .with feedback from both clubs.

However, we've received funding from the Arts Council to do a project in which young people will write, illustrate and publish an interactive fantasy gamebook. We've been in discussion with libraries about it, and they're hoping to get involved once they open again -

to host workshops and stock copies of the finished book. We've also been in discussion with Villiers Park, an education charity for less advantaged young people, and they have expressed an interest in working with us. Do you think it's something the Parish Council would be interested in supporting? We don't need any money - just your endorsement. You can read more about the project here: <https://www.digitalwrites.org.uk/immersive-authorship/>

## 2. Toothill Scout Hut

1.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> West Swindon Scout group were approved for a grant of £16,850. The group has made contact to say that work is now complete on the scout hut roof see pictures below:



## 3. Recommendations

3.1 That Councillors note the updates and consider any actions arising.

Paula Harrison  
Parish Manager