



## Didcot Town Council Grant Report 2017/18

May 2018

### **Our work in Didcot during 2017/18**

The Town Council's grant of £5,500 has been vital in helping us continue to support the increasing number of young carers in the Town.

1. BE FREE YC is now supporting 173 young carers and their families in the Town, 31% of the total young carers supported in the South Oxfordshire and Vale areas. During 2017/18, 43 new young carers were registered.
2. We continue to provide trips and activities and training courses for young carers all of which have been accessed by young carers from Didcot. These free trips and activities give young carers opportunities to socialise, make friends, and have time away from their caring roles, relieving stress and anxiety that so many tell us they feel. Demand continues to be high in line with increasing numbers.
3. The weekly individual emotional support we provide helps those young carers who are experiencing especially high levels of stress and anxiety that can border on mental health issues.
4. During the year we have arranged 4 training events in first aid, cookery and relaxation, skills to increase the confidence of young carers in undertaking their caring roles.
5. We continue to liaise with schools and UTC in Didcot and local health centres to raise awareness of young carer issues and our work.
6. A number of young carers from Didcot were involved in making a video about young carers linked with Be Free YC being chosen by the Coop as one of its community grant recipients. You can view the video here: <https://twitter.com/twitter/statuses/977077645090357248>
7. During the year we have noticed an increasing number of young carers being referred to us by Oxfordshire County Council both from its social care teams and its Young Carers Team. These cases are frequently very complex and require significant support work which we deliver but despite our requests to the County Council for a referral protocol or service level agreement, these referrals are made without any accompanying statutory funding.

Young carers are very vulnerable to exploitation. We have seen increasing incidences of exploitation across South Oxfordshire. It is vital that young carers receive the specialist support necessary to overcome the isolation and anxiety and flourish as confident young people. Just talking with other young carers can be so positive, knowing there are others in the same situation.

We are very grateful to the Town Council for its vital support.

John Tabor  
Director  
BE FREE YC