


# P.O.V. Teme Valley



Chloe (13) is an aspiring Make Up Artist and for the P.O.V. Teme Valley exhibitions she shared her experimental make-up looks which she creates at home, inspired by social media artists and influencers.



A young woman with curly red hair is the central focus, wearing a green V-neck sweater over a black top and a necklace with a tassel. She is standing outdoors in front of a stone building with a prominent tower. The background is filled with trees showing autumn foliage in shades of orange and brown. The entire scene is framed by a thin teal border.

Gwennie (14) is passionate about rugby but can't play contact rugby until she's 18 unless she travels to Worcester. She said touch rugby is frustrating as contact looks more fun - and the reason she can't play near her home in part due to the smaller numbers of girls & young women playing rugby locally.

Sisters Annie and Sarah live on a farm with their family and grandparents.

Annie says farmers find themselves in a state of constant disappointment because things do not always go to plan. But she wouldn't change her way of life for anything. Sarah studies History at Royal Holloway University and plans to work in historic houses after graduating.





# P.O.V.



You're invited to an exhibition and celebration of young people @ Wigmore Village Hall, HR6 9UW.

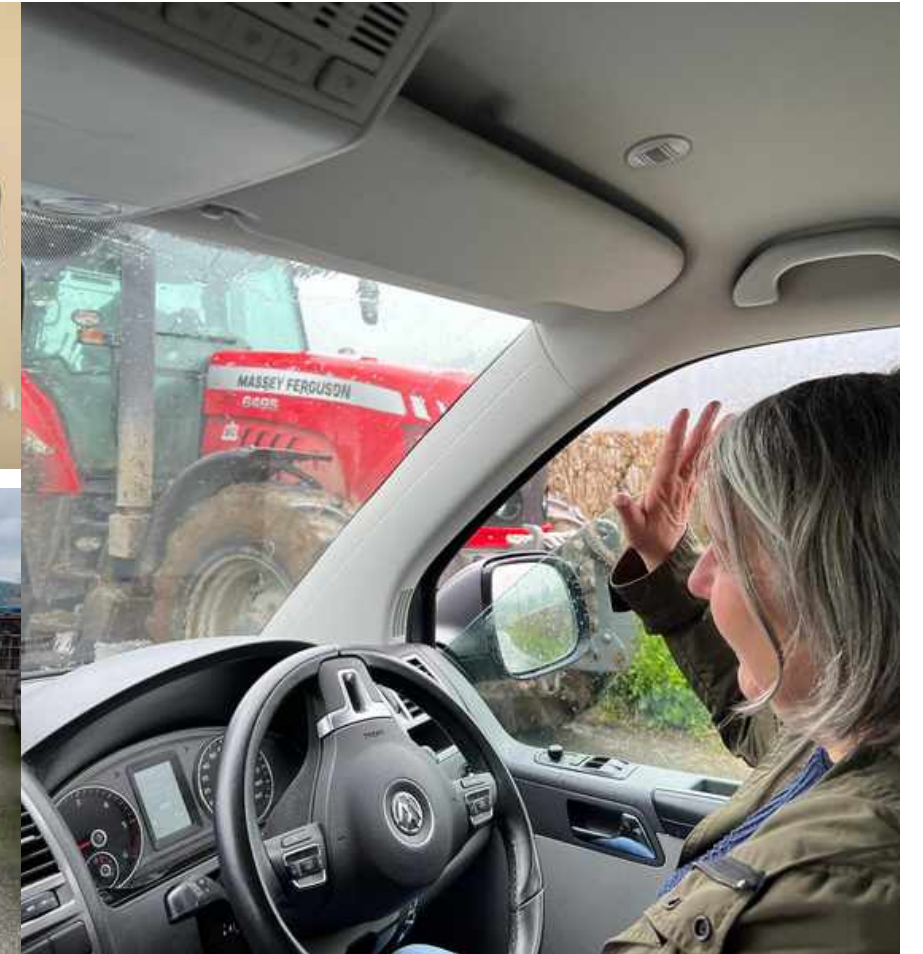
Thursday May 19th.  
12-6pm.  
Open to the public.

[www.pointofviewrural.com](http://www.pointofviewrural.com)



Part of Rural Media's Point of View youth voice and empowerment programme. Supported by Teme Valley Youth Fund, Herefordshire Community Foundation and Emma Fairbairn Foundation

# TEME VALLEY



P.O.V. Teme Valley was funded so that rural young people are heard and empowered to share their stories, experiences and needs; to develop creative skills, leadership qualities and digital confidence to put their views across, fight for what they believe in and forge a better life for themselves and their peers by influencing public perception and discourse. Between September 2021 and June 2022 we engaged 100 rurally isolated young people, aged between 14 and 18, and worked closely with a focused cohort of 10 who learned new skills and gained self-esteem through the production and sharing of digital content (including film, creative writing, portrait photography, digital illustration) that showcases their lived experiences, needs and hopes for the future. A further 60 people engaged in community activity (in person exhibitions) and 3,900+ viewed the young people's creative work online.

Tom (16) made a dance film about his road to recovery following a serious head injury that left him unable to walk. Annie (13) made a documentary about the reality of growing up and working on a family farm that is a 15-minute drive from the nearest shop. Buchanan (18) wrote about his complex feelings towards home and hopes for other young people who grow up "always on the outside". Fred (15) wrote a poem about Herefordshire to capture his view on the duality of nature. Martha (19) used film photography to showcase the community spaces in Teme Valley villages, and also produced a photo essay called Baling Twine which considered the ties, seen and unseen, that are used to bind rural communities together. Creative production coincided with Point of View activity in South Shropshire including a South Shropshire Youth Network-led Residential Weekend upskilling young people in activism and campaigning. We were able to signpost P.O.V. Teme Valley participants to this and other opportunities, including job listings, creative courses, and cultural events.

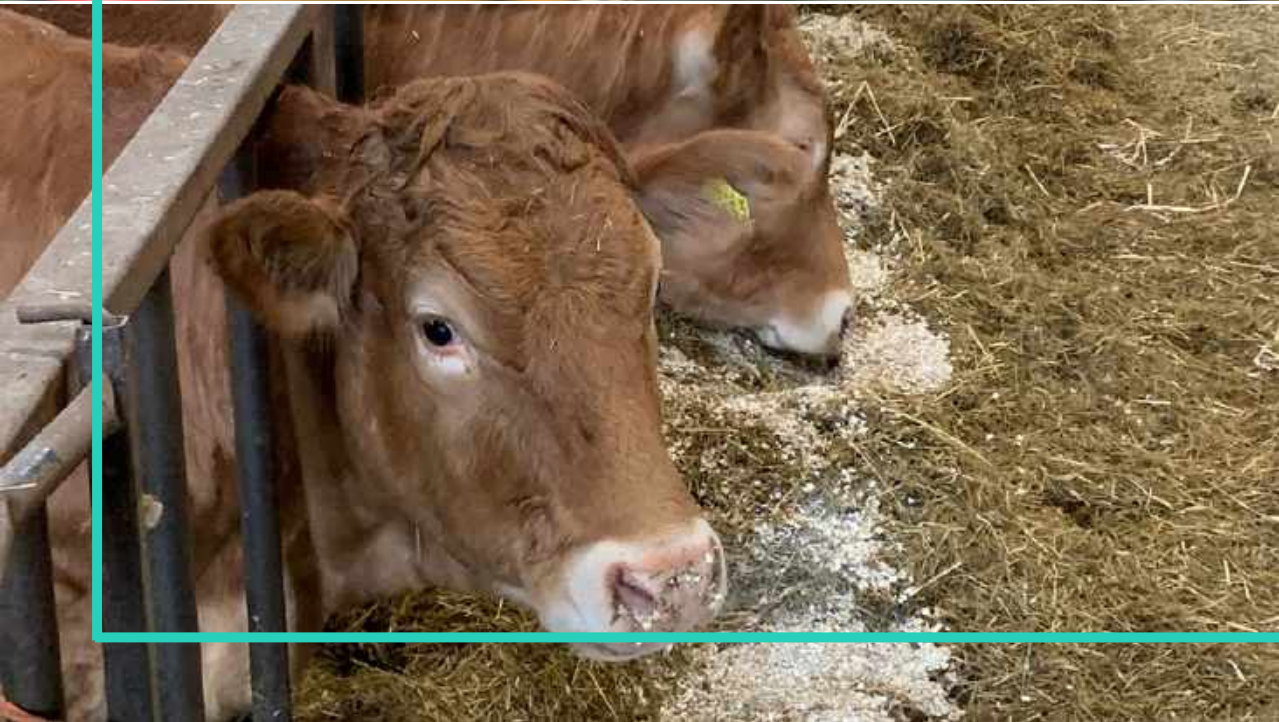
One participant stated: "Filming the choreography took me outside my comfort zone, but with the right support I was able to embrace this opportunity and produce a piece which I am really proud of."

Watch: Annie's Film

<https://vimeo.com/709028350>



# Behind the Scenes: Annie's film





Siblings Gemma and Edward grew up in Wigmore. Gemma is an artist, currently pursuing a Masters in Fine Art, and she commutes via train into Birmingham to study up to three times a week.

Edward is studying Level 2 Motor Vehicle at Hereford Technical College and is learning to drive. He says that it is not easy for him to get a part time job for an apprenticeship, and he “needs money to eventually run a car, but won’t be able to afford insurance to go to a job”.





“The countryside is not an empty patchwork of fields. The countryside is more than forests, rivers, farms, hills, sheep, and peace and quiet for retirement and holidays away from the city. The countryside is a society.” - Martha (19 )



"Farms are held together with baling twine. These blue, orange, and yellow threads join fences, hold gates or doors closed, and tie up feed sacks. My photographs reveal the isolation, mental and physical hardship farmers face, caused by the 'just get through the day' mindset embedded within farming culture. Farmers can struggle to release themselves from the farm 'bubble' to realise the unsustainability of holding a lifestyle together with baling twine. Eventually, the string will fray and break. This collection of photographs captures some of the baling twine knots on my family farm in rural Shropshire."

- Martha Grubb

## Home by Buchanan

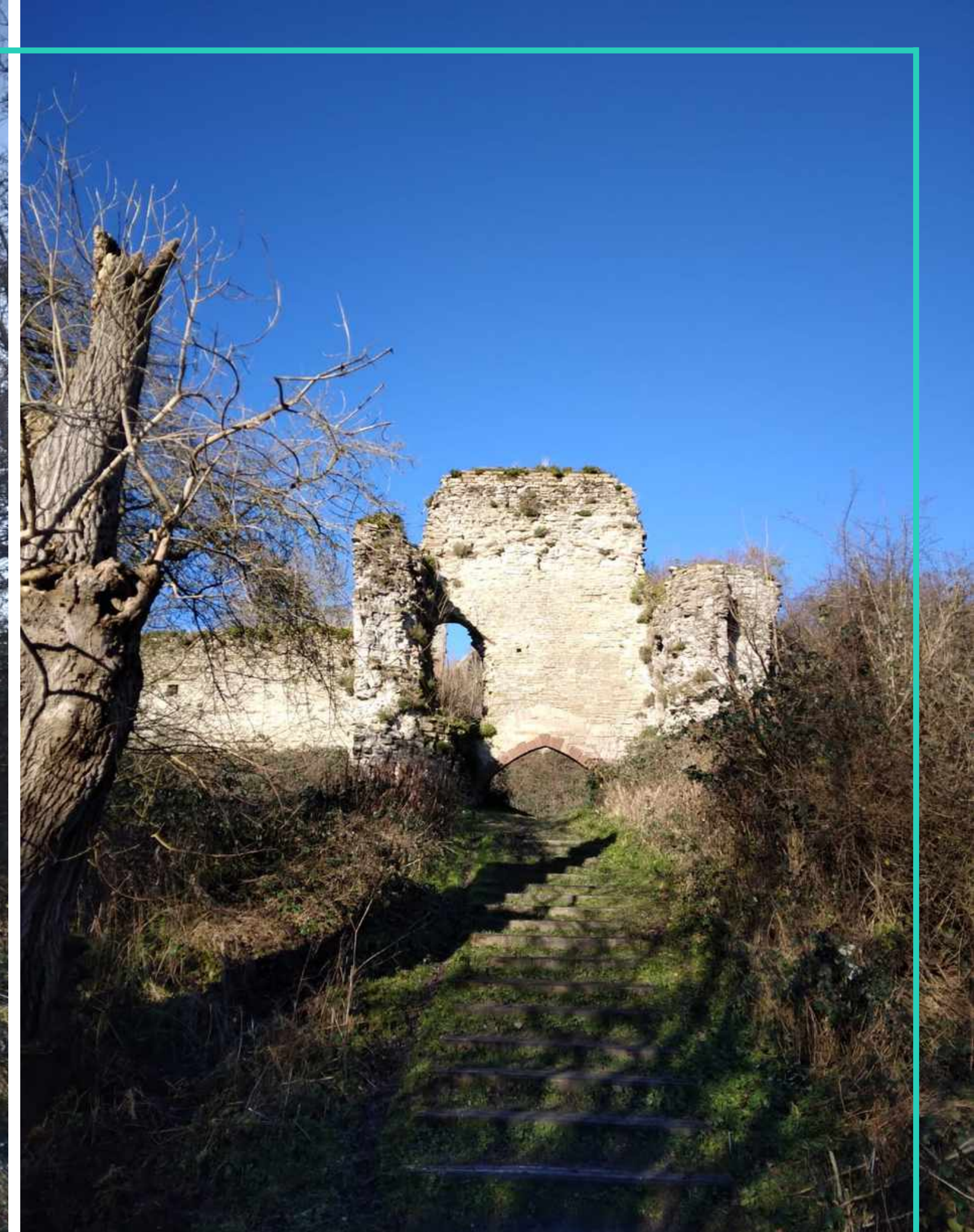
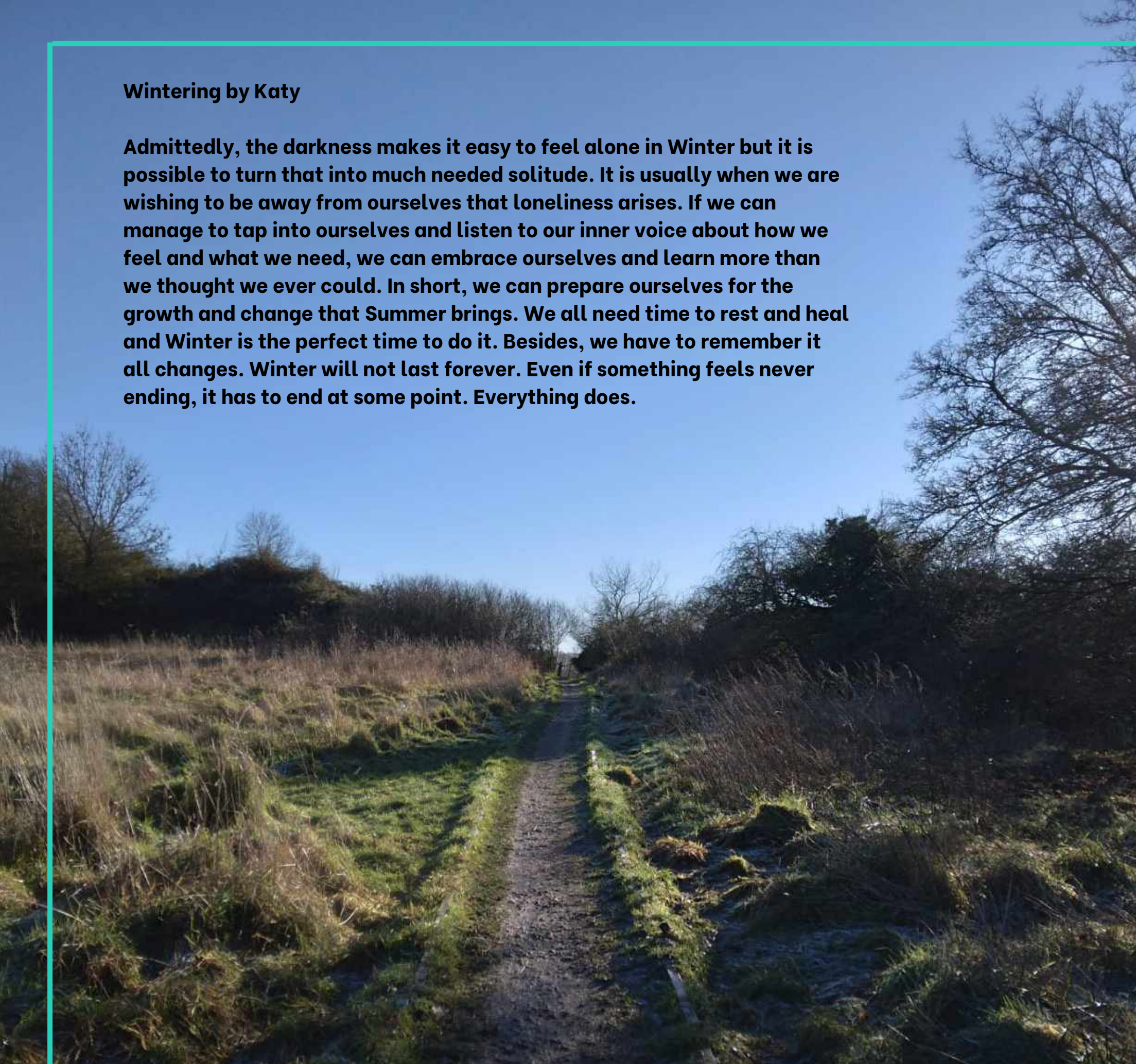
Growing up, I was always on the outskirts of things. When you live in a place like this, you don't have a choice in the people you meet or grow up with, and I think I got unlucky. The few people I knew were nothing like me, weren't interested in things I was interested in, and they were the only people I knew, so I found solace in other places. Books, artwork, video games, anything I could do alone. I'm sure I did myself no favours with that choice, but it felt like the only choice I had.

They were also ways to escape. The countryside is beautiful, peaceful, quiet and stifling. Everyone here knows everyone and even if you don't know them, they know you somehow. If you can't drive, you're trapped, unless you enjoy walking two hours through fields risking the ire of farmers in order to find the nearest shop. At school, you see people you've known since you were in nappies grow up and find themselves and broaden their horizons in every direction except yours, if you're unlucky.



## Wintering by Katy

**Admittedly, the darkness makes it easy to feel alone in Winter but it is possible to turn that into much needed solitude. It is usually when we are wishing to be away from ourselves that loneliness arises. If we can manage to tap into ourselves and listen to our inner voice about how we feel and what we need, we can embrace ourselves and learn more than we thought we ever could. In short, we can prepare ourselves for the growth and change that Summer brings. We all need time to rest and heal and Winter is the perfect time to do it. Besides, we have to remember it all changes. Winter will not last forever. Even if something feels never ending, it has to end at some point. Everything does.**



Watch: Tom's Film

<https://vimeo.com/709025806>

# Behind the Scenes: Tom's film





Buchanan (19) is spending time at home since taking a break from education. He is frustrated by social class divisions in the countryside and would like to live in a rural city.



Jacob (17)



Caradoc (16)



Gemma (21)



Edward (18)

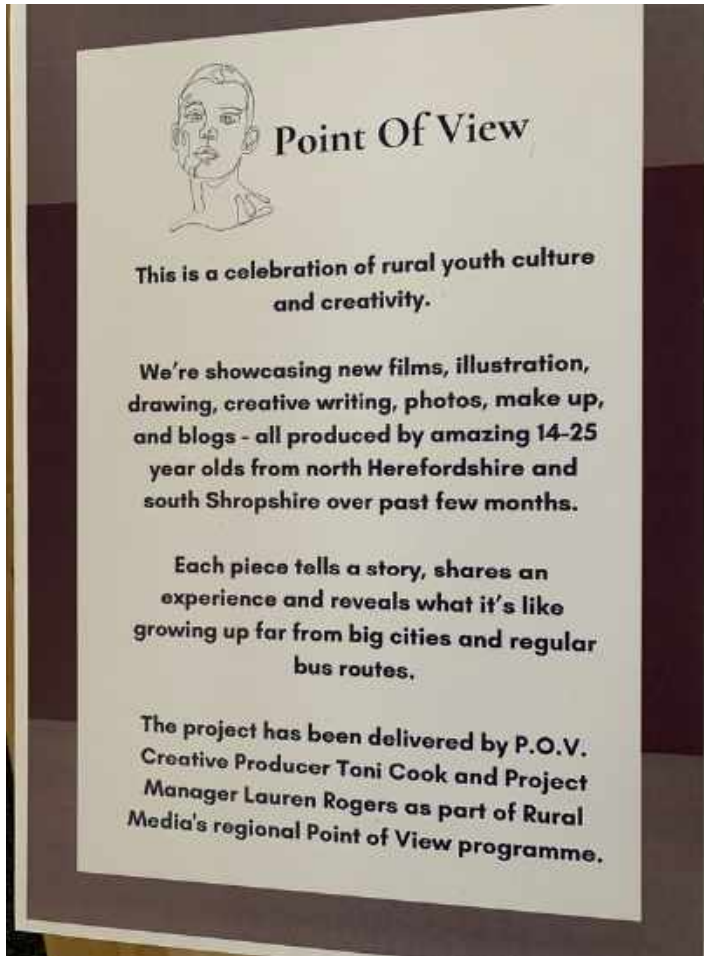


Fred (16)



Katie (23)



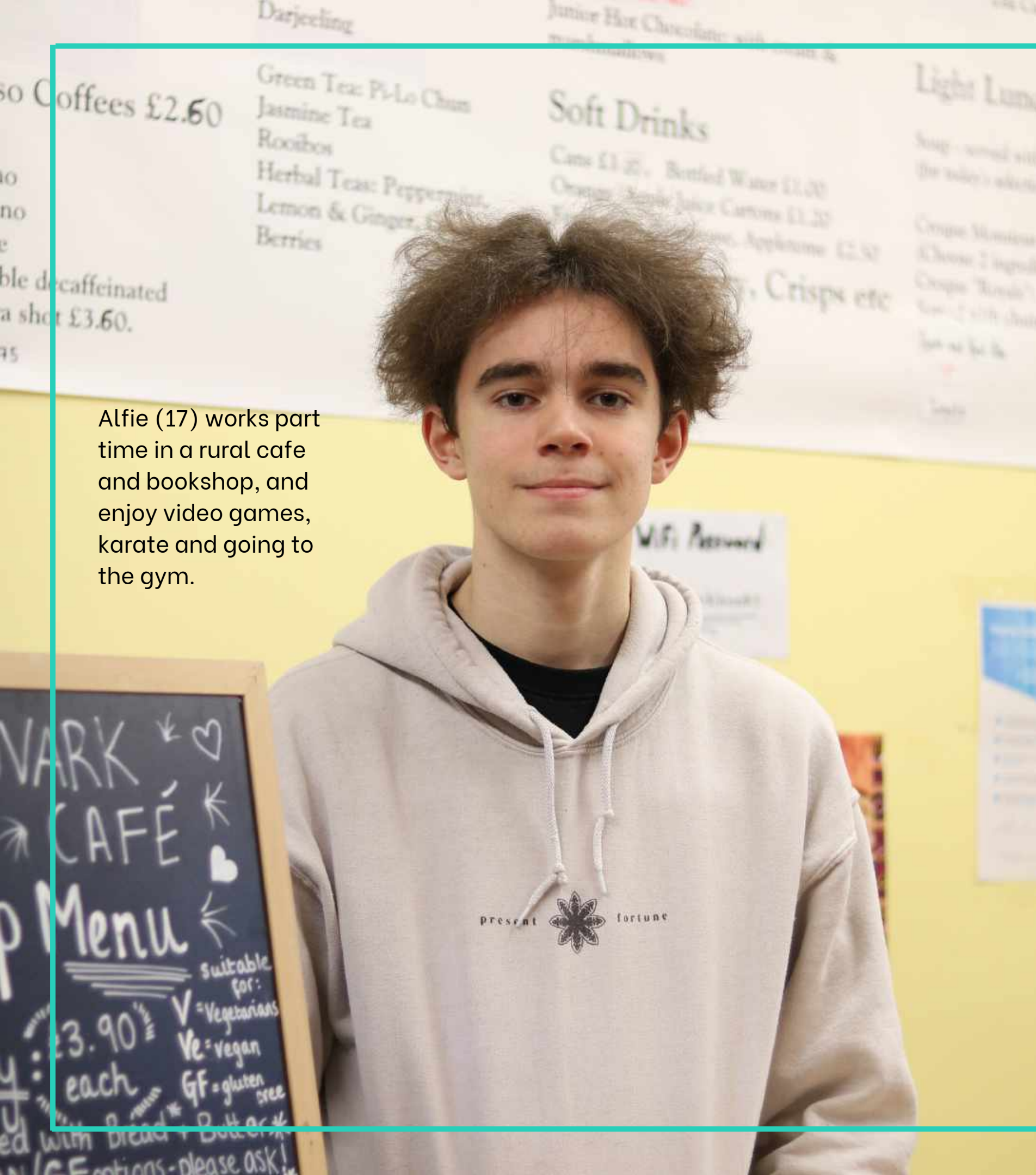


Creative expression improves young people's self-confidence, communication skills and sense of identity (Cultural Learning Alliance, 2018; Arts Council England Durham Commission, 2018; DCMs Culture is Digital, 2019). We have seen this during P.O.V. Teme Valley and the young people we supported to produce content (ranging from short film and creative writing to blogs and make-up art) are now better equipped to reflect on, identify, and express - in words, images, and creative responses - how they feel about their rural experiences, opportunities and collective needs as rural young people.

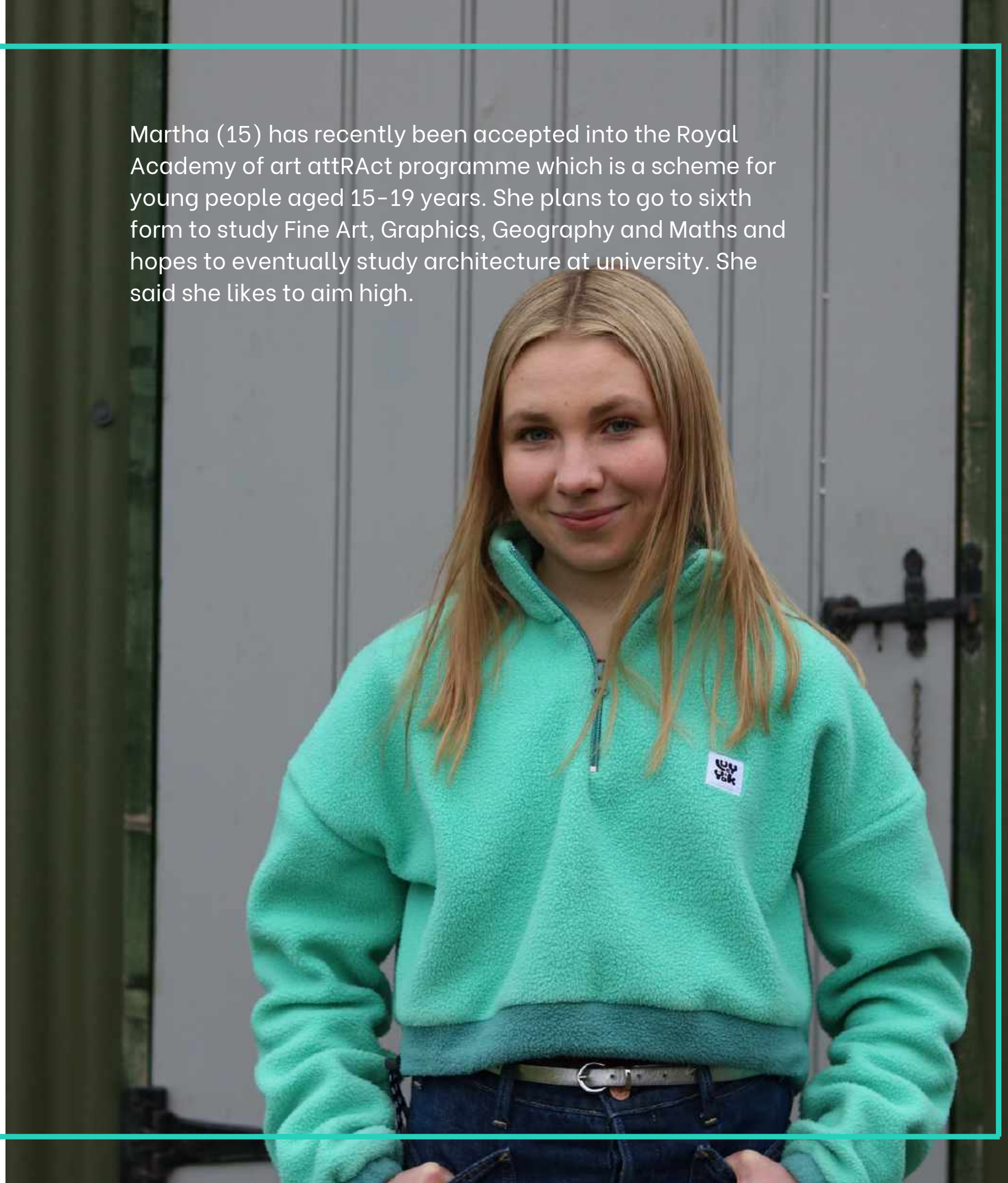
Participants have also been exposed to the views, experiences and ambitions of their peers - young people whom they have never met, but share much with. This has resulted in several rurally isolated young people becoming more aware of local opportunities and - unexpectedly - the potential power of rural young people as a collective to speak up for change. Rural residents and influential stakeholders have heard directly from rural young people, and as a result have a better understanding of the experiences, abilities, and needs of 14-18 year olds in the Teme Valley.

Creative Producer Toni Cook, who led the project, said: *"This was a chance to amplify the young people's work and ideas on a wider platform. The digital/website aspect was very important as we could upload and continually share young people's engagement and signpost other young people to the website for inspiration and ideas. Many of the creative contributors came to the sharing events and all stated they would like to be involved in more project work."*

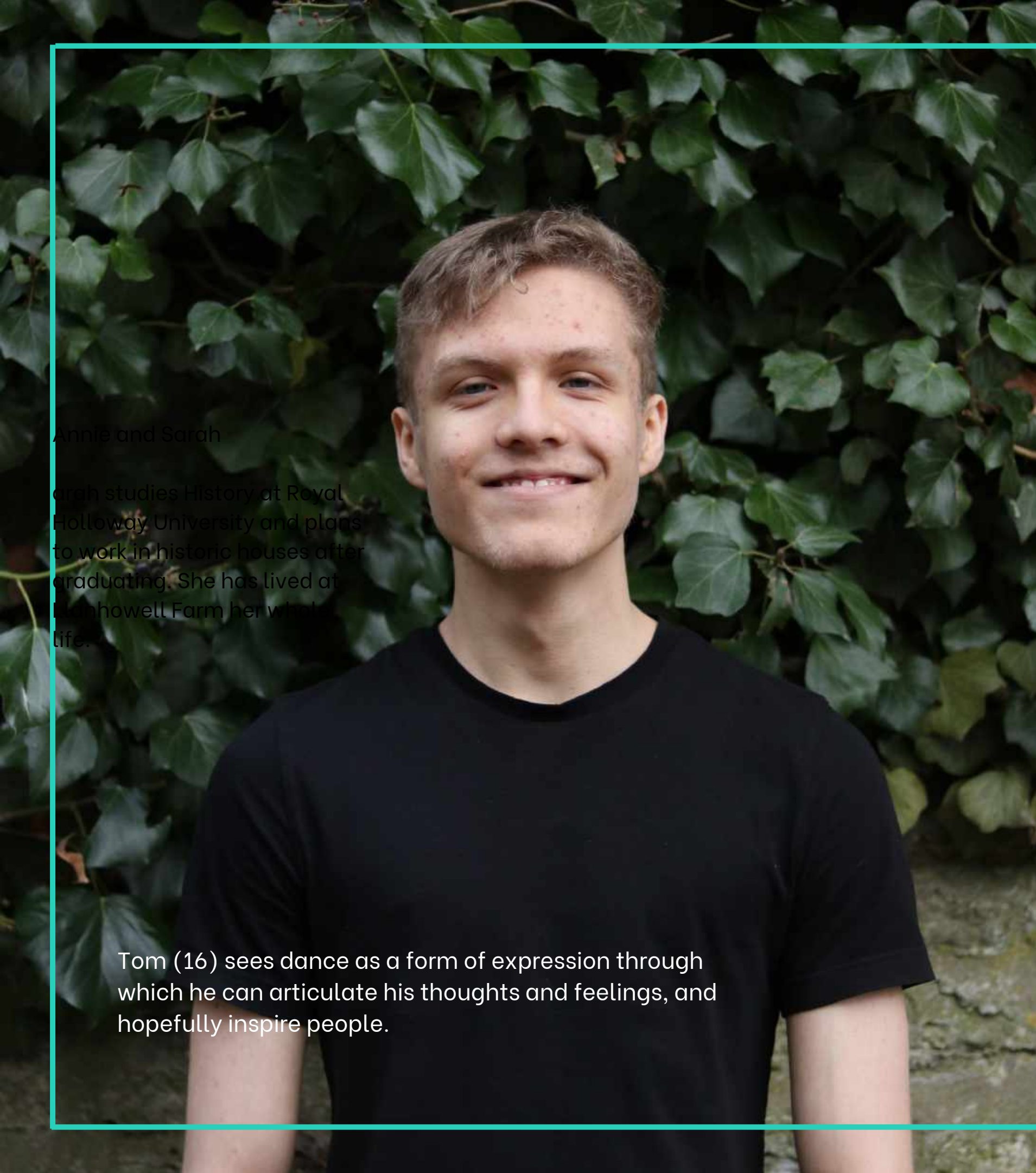
Work produced by young people is being shared at the South Shropshire Youth Conference 2022; at Birmingham International Dance Festival in Centenary Square; and by High Sheriff of Herefordshire 2022/23, Sarah de Rohan.



Alfie (17) works part time in a rural cafe and bookshop, and enjoys video games, karate and going to the gym.



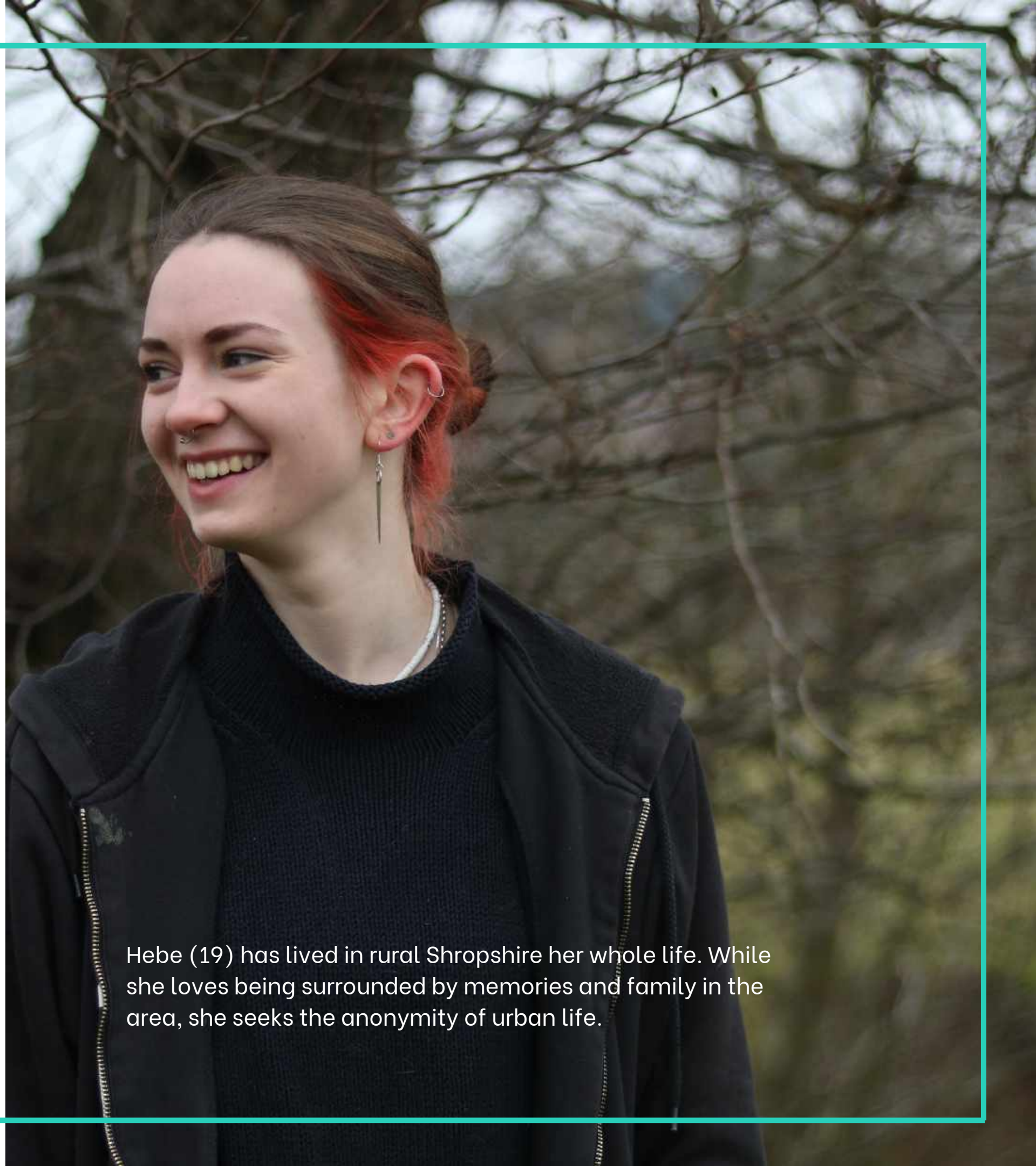
Martha (15) has recently been accepted into the Royal Academy of art attRAct programme which is a scheme for young people aged 15-19 years. She plans to go to sixth form to study Fine Art, Graphics, Geography and Maths and hopes to eventually study architecture at university. She said she likes to aim high.



Annie and Sarah

Sarah studies History at Royal Holloway University and plans to work in historic houses after graduating. She has lived at Monkhowell Farm her whole life.

Tom (16) sees dance as a form of expression through which he can articulate his thoughts and feelings, and hopefully inspire people.



Hebe (19) has lived in rural Shropshire her whole life. While she loves being surrounded by memories and family in the area, she seeks the anonymity of urban life.



**South Shropshire Residential Weekend**

- Walks, talks, games & workshops
- Learning new skills for youth-led activism and campaigning
- Delivered in collaboration with South Shropshire Youth Network

**South Shropshire Residential Weekend**



Abby



Finn



Jasmin



Emily



Rebecca



Wyatt

**South Shropshire Residential Weekend**

Emily



Flo



Orla



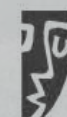
THANK YOU!



Point Of View



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FOUNDATION



RURAL MEDIA CHARITY



Esmée  
Fairbairn  
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**P.O.V. Teme Valley was kindly supported by Herefordshire Community Foundation. It is part of Rural Media's regional Point of View youth voice programme, supported by Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, which empowers 14-25 year olds across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire to use their voices and share their stories to influence change.**

**Youth Mentors on the project were Gemma Moore, Katy Cogswell, and Martha Grubb.  
All portraits were taken by Martha Grubb, and at the Shropshire Residential by the young people attending.**