



Pictured: Chris Packham

Chris Packham becomes Patron of WYC

In July 2021, the BBC first aired Chris Packham: The Walk that Made Me on BBC One. This saw Chris walking the Itchen Navigation, reminiscing about his childhood and life growing up, whilst walking through the beautiful Hampshire countryside. During the walk, Chris also shared some personal history of difficulties with mental health during his younger days, with the walk concluding at the historic site of Winchester Cathedral.

More recently, we met with Chris and explained the work that we do with young people in the District of Winchester. Many of our clients are struggling with complex issues including anxiety and depression, self-harm, and suicidal ideation. Young people, parents, carers and professionals have huge difficulties accessing support with long waiting times. WYC services are under increased demand and we are doubling our free counselling and support provision in 2022 to support

young people as quickly as we can. Chris was very interested in the work that we do and we look forward to welcoming him to an event later this year, to highlight the importance of our work. As a charity, funding this is an ongoing priority and we hope that this patronage will help raise the profile on WYC and gain more public support. Chris Packham is a much loved UK Naturalist, Television Presenter, Photographer and Author. He is well known for the children's television series The Really Wild show, and more recently Springwatch, on the BBC. Chris is extremely passionate about wildlife and conservation and we look forward to continuing to grow our Nature Therapy and Walk and Talk therapy programmes over the coming years. We would like to thank Chris again for agreeing to be our Patron, we are incredibly grateful and hopeful we can achieve so much more with his support.

Image Left (from left): WYC CEO Erin McMurtry, Chris Packham and Trustee Sian Searles at Chris' recent Photography evening at the Conchord Club, Stoneham.

Image below: Chris Packham and Trustee Sian Searles





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www.winchesteryouthcounselling.org

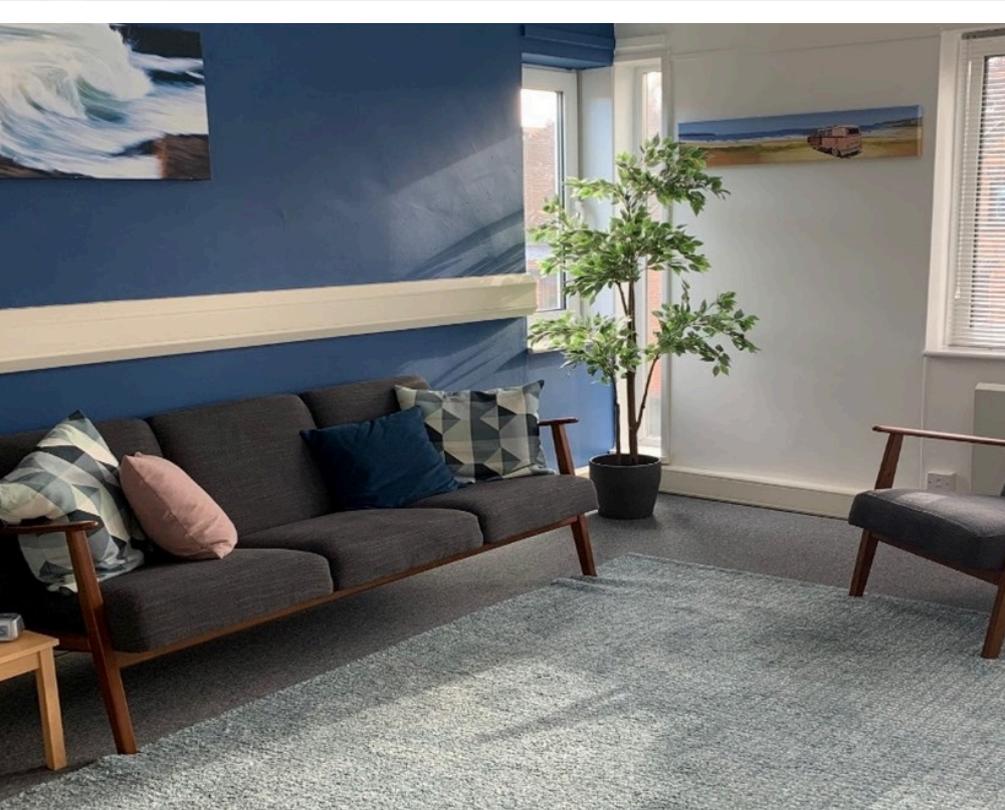


Image (above): One of the new counselling rooms at WYC.

A new home for WYC



Last summer we decided that in order to see more clients, we needed more space, so the search began for new premises. We found somewhere suitable and negotiations to rent the space began in July 2021, we finally received the keys in December 2021, the week before Christmas.

It was all hands to the pump, we had decorators, carpet fitters, plumbers, telephone engineers, IT experts and all work needed to be completed by 10th January, when we were expecting our first clients. Staff pulled together, boxes were packed and unpacked, furniture assembled, computers were set up and what seemed to be the impossible was achieved.

We are now established and fully operational in our new home at: The Winchester Centre, 68 St Georges Street, Winchester, SO23 8AH.

We would like to thank Dan Bee for his creativity and support in rebranding WYC over the past few months.

We would also like to thank Brewers, (Winchester) for providing us with the necessary paint and materials, free of charge.

Visit from Steve Brine MP

On 11th February 2022, we welcomed Steve Brine, MP for Winchester and Chandler's Ford, to speak with us about our service. The visit aptly fell during Children's Mental Health Week (7th-13th February 2022).

Steve had recently spoke in parliament about how many distressed parents have contacted him about the lack of support available to them.

Included in attendance during the visit was the CEO, along with founder Jill Guppy, Jamie Robinson (Trustee) and other key staff members.

The group discussed the difficulties faced by young people in the area and the plans WYC has in place to expand services and better meet the needs of the community throughout 2022 and beyond.



Image (left), from left: Katy Seymour (Administrator), Caroline Hobbs (Operations Manager), Jamie Robinson (Trustee), Erin McMurtry (CEO), Jill Guppy (Therapies Lead), Sonia Carver (Ambassador), Eoin McNeill (Senior Counsellor), Steve Brine MP.

Image (right): Graphic designer and WYC Ambassador Dan Bee (left) and Katy Campling (right) installing brand vinyls in the WYC office.



WYC Ambassadors

The WYC Ambassadors organised a wonderful coffee morning on 11th January to raise money for WYC. The event was kindly hosted by Rick Stein, Winchester. The team at Rick Stein provided tea, coffee and a selection of delicious cakes for the guests.

The group sold tickets and provided some musical entertainment with a live pianist. Four beautiful Hellebores were kindly donated by Hillier's Garden Centre for the lucky dip.

The event raised in excess of £400.

Well done Ambassadors!

We are always looking for ambassadors to join our lively team. Visit the 'Vacancies' section of our website to apply.



Image (above): A happy coffee morning guest with his lucky dip prize, courtesy of Hillier's Winchester.



Get to know...

Erin McMurtry, Chief Executive

What is your role at WYC?

I joined WYC in May 2021 to help grow the organisation due to the increasing need for mental health support for young people in Winchester. My role is ensuring the charity secures enough funds to operate and that we have a strategic plan in place to expand in a sustainable way.

What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy successful grant applications, especially those that took a long time to prepare and present our case. It is motivating to know that others understand the need and impact of what we do.

What is the biggest career lesson you have learned so far?

To make the most of the staff, volunteers and trustees around you. Most of our success in the past year has been thanks to everyone's contribution. I will never underestimate the power of team work.

What three words would you use to describe WYC?

Professional, caring, & welcoming.

What advice would you give your younger self?

That's a difficult question! I had terrible anxiety as a teenager. I would probably try to reassure myself that the worst is very unlikely to happen, and if it does, it will become a distant memory before long!

WELCOME new trustees

We were lucky enough to welcome four new trustees to our Board over the past 6 months. Pictured (from left) are Jamie Robinson, Kayleigh Ryan, Alison Day and Debbie Lockett. We are hugely grateful to all of our trustees for donating their valuable time and expertise, and look forward to working with the new trustees as we develop the organisation.

Visit www.winchesteryouthcounselling.org and click the 'About Us' section to read more about our Board of Trustees and the skills, expertise and experience they bring to their roles.



At our March Trustees' meeting we said goodbye to longstanding trustee David Platt. David had been a trustee of Winchester Youth Counselling for 16 years and acted as Treasurer for 15 years. He reminisced about "spending many hours at car boots and bake sales in the early days". We would like to sincerely thank David for his support. David is pictured (right) with his wife Sue (Left), and former WYC Nick Bell (Centre).



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