

OUR

Thoughts from
Lillington
youth group

Freedom

@80




OUR

Freedom

Lillingston

80



An introduction to the project: 'Our Freedom 80: Then & Now'

In the summer of 2025, Warwickshire Libraries received an invitation to participate in 'Our Freedom 80: Then & Now,' a national initiative involving 80 arts organizations who are reflecting on what 'Freedom' means to people now 80 years after the end of WW2. Warwickshire Libraries NPO commissioned Arts in Action, led by Heidi Pendergrast, to execute the projects and collaborate with various groups throughout Warwickshire.

In Lillington a group of young people from the youth group participated in looking at what freedom means to them today personally. They were invited to contribute through drawing, art, conversations, poetry and photography included in this Zine as well as making a display of their work that included elements of street art.

The Our Freedom: Then and Now wider project has engaged thousands of participants across the UK in meaningful conversations about the concept of freedom—past, present, and future. Each project is paired with a photographer from The Socially Engaged Photographers Network to capture the unique essence of each location and its people.

Participants at the youth group were invited to create Cyanotypes with photographed Jo Gane a photographer who uses historical techniques and Heidi Pendergrast based on their ideas and poetry around freedom. This work will be part of a collection to be showcased across the UK in a touring exhibition. Our Freedom 80: Then and Now proudly announces:


“We are thrilled to reveal that Our Freedom: Then and Now will culminate in a national photography exhibition launching in early 2026, inviting audiences to see their own freedoms reflected through the stories of others.

In partnership with Open Eye Gallery, the exhibition will highlight the powerful narratives emerging from the Our Freedom program, captured through the lens of 22 photographers deeply embedded within the communities involved. Each artist is part of the Socially Engaged Photography Network and will spend the upcoming months engaging with local areas participating in the Our Freedom projects.

Spanning towns, cities, libraries, and arts centers, Our Freedom: Then and Now is fostering thousands of conversations across the UK about what freedom signifies—past, present, and future. This upcoming exhibition promises to be a profound reflection of that dialogue: diverse, grounded, and deeply human.

Opening in London before touring nationally, the exhibition (which will also be accessible digitally via the Our Freedom website) aims to elevate community-driven visual storytelling across the nation and celebrate the creative energy that has powered the broader initiative.”

This booklet is a record of the contributions the youth have made.



EIGHTY PROJECTS NATIONWIDE WERE ALL PROVIDED WITH A COMMON STARTING POINT-
A POEM SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED FROM SIMON ARMITAGE INSPIRED BY 80 YEARS OF
FREEDOM AFTER WW2

Freedom Road

A poem by Simon Armitage
© Simon Armitage, 2025

IF WE WANT TO WALK ALONG FREEDOM ROAD
THEN AWAY WE GO. IT'S A SLOG AT TIMES
BUT LOOK AT THE VIEWS: DESERTS, THE AIRPORT, A LAKE.

ON THE MOVE, PASSING THROUGH TOWNS AND CITIES
WE DANCE WITH THE LOCALS. COME AS YOU ARE,
THEY SAY, DO AS YOU WISH, SING US YOUR DREAMS.

OR IF WE DECIDE TO STAY PUT, FREEDOM ROAD
IS OUR HOME ADDRESS. A NEIGHBOUR'S WASHING
FLAPS IN THE BREEZE LIKE HILARIOUS FRIENDLY FLAGS;

IN THE HOUSE AND OVER THE GARDEN FENCE WE AGREE
TO DIFFER: SOMEONE'S GRAZING A HORSE ON THE COMMON
WHERE FREEDOM LANE BECOMES FREEDOM GREEN.

YOU CAN'T DIG UP FREEDOM LIKE A POTATO
FROM THE VERGES OF FREEDOM WAY, OR PAN IT
FROM FREEDOM BECK LIKE INKLINGS OF GOLD;

IT WON'T BE DELIVERED TO FREEDOM AVENUE
GIFT-WRAPPED IN SILVER STRING. WHERE IT GOES UNNOTICED
-THAT'S WHERE IT EXISTS. LISTEN, WHEN PEOPLE ASK

WHERE THEY CAN FIND FREEDOM ROAD, WE DON'T SAY
TURN RIGHT BY THE CHURCH, LEFT BY THE BANK,
WE STROLL WHERE WE WANT AND LIVE AS WE PLEASE.

AND THERE IT IS.

FREEDOM

*Yesterday was the past.
Today's the present.
Tomorrow is the future.*



World war 2
brought us Freedom



FREEDOM

Art

Joy

Light

Grace

Choice

Voice

Movement

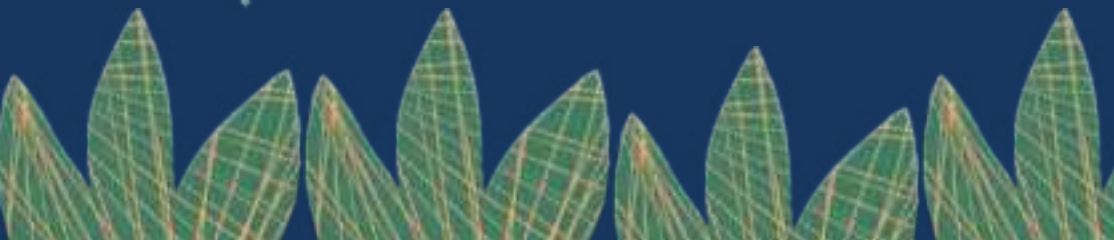
Love

Rights

Space

Expression

Momentum



FRIENDSHIP



Freedom in
Lyrics for the
duration of the
song.







Writers and Joint Boardman



what does freedom feel like?





My

Freedom

Freedom means being able to live the way I want without feeling scared or controlled. I come from Pakistan where girls are often told what to do, what to wear, how to behave, it's different here in the UK. Here I feel like I finally make my own choices- Simple things like wearing what I like, going out without being judged and just speaking my mind. back there it always felt like people were watching and waiting to correct you for being 'too much' or too different.

.... Basmer Z.....

Facing
Real
Exciting
Energy
Developing
Out of
Miracles

Be brave enough to say:
'This isn't what I want'
and then change it.



FREEDOM



Free to learn

Freedom of education

Freedom of job

Freedom of family

Freedom of emotions

Freedom of religion



M

O

V

E



Freedom to move, spin and jump, to be with friends and have fun, to socialise and have time to be with others.....



F U N

N






My Freedom



To me, Freedom means being truly myself. It's about expressing how I feel, making my own choices & doing what makes me feel happy.

Freedom is waking up everyday & deciding for myself - what to wear, what to do & who to be. Its not about rules or control. It's about having the spare to live the way I want.... Bisma



Freedom is having my own way,
Doing what I want, my own say.
Standing on a level, calm and clear,
Choosing my path, no fence, no fence.

It's knowing right from wrong inside,
No need for rules to be my guide.
When I'm with the one I love,
I glow; a chestnut cat above.



That's when I'm calm, my soul at ease,
The world slows down, my heart can breathe.
Freedom to be, to make my choice,
To live, to laugh, to find my voice.


No need for orders, large or small,
I already know - I've heard the call.
Freedom is simple, soft, and true:
Snuggle in my bed, with you. ♡




MY FREEDOM : MY HEART




*FREEDOM IS HAVING MY OWN WAY,
DOING WHAT I WANT, MY OWN SAY,
STANDING ON A LEVEL, CALM AND CLEAR
CHOOSING MY PATH, NO FEAR, NO STEER.*




*IT'S KNOWING RIGHT FROM WRONG INSIDE.
NO NEED FOR RULES TO BE MY GUIDE.
WHEN I'M WITH THE ONE I LOVE,
I GLOW A CHESHIRE CAT ABOVE.*



*THAT'S WHEN I'M CALM, MY SOUL AT EASE.
THE WORLD SLOWS DOWN, MY HEART CAN BREATHE.
FREEDOM TO BE, TO MAKE MY CHOICE,
TO LIVE, TO LAUGH, TO FIND MY VOICE.*



*NO NEED FOR ORDERS, HARSH OR SMALL,
I ALREADY KNOW, I HEARD THE CALL.
FREEDOM IS SIMPLE, SOFT AND TRUE;
FREEDOM TO ME IS SNUGGLED IN MY BED WITH YOU.*





FREEDOM

To Be

MYSELF....



What freedom means to me...

Freedom to experience joy and all that life has to offer. Freedom equation

= Expression + authenticity!

The freedom to be us and to hope in tomorrow and for tomorrow to come true...to grow in the Sun.



Freedom is when I'm Alone

Freedom is when I'm asleep,
drifting in my dreams,
resting,
floating somewhere no one can touch me.

When I'm in my own space,
alone by myself,
there I am true.
Freedom is choosing my own path,
deciding what I want.

You see, freedom ain't about flags or fists;
it's about feeling peace in your own skin.

It's when I can choose what I want,
when I want, how I want.

Freedom—
it's the quiet moment where my soul exhales
and I belong only to me.





Shumail

FREEDOM

'Freedom' is a fundamental Human Right that allows individuals to think speak and act accordingly to their choice. The word Freedom is not only about being independent but also about living a life of truth, respect and faith. It allows people to express their thoughts and make their own decisions. Its a right which every human should have simply as a state of being independent and do such things on their own. It represents the ability to make independent choices and to live with dignity also to be treated ethically. It allows individuals to pursue their aspirations and live their lives accordingly to their own values and beliefs.

Freedom is often associated with liberty and autonomy in the sense of giving ones self ones own laws. As they say our freedom is the freedom to choose our attitude.

By Shumail

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FREEDOM:
THEN & NOW

OUR FREEDOM

In the summer of 2025, Warwickshire Libraries received an invitation to participate in 'Our Freedom 80: Then & Now,' a national project reflecting on what 'Freedom' means to people now 80 years after the end of WW2. Led by Heidi Pendergrast from Arts in Action Lillington Youth group have explored what 'FREEDOM' means to them personally, through drawing, art, conversations, poetry and photography.

This Zine collates their thoughts and contributions . Elements of the work will be featured in a national touring exhibition beginning in London in 2026.

Thank you to Lillington Youth group staff and a special well done to the youth involved, every contribution , thought and voice is relevant and important.