

Youth Scotland's Impact Report 2021/22

Plain text version

[callout quote]

“It’s being everything for that young person at that time, you’re the one they look to if they have a problem with anything.

- Youth Worker, Enthusiasm of the Edge

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[callout quotation]

“It’s about widening their horizons, letting them meet different people from different backgrounds. Just being exposed to new things, making them wonder and ask questions.” – Hawkhill Youth Zone, Member Group

Introduction from The Chair of Youth Scotland

I am conscious that charities, small organisations and businesses were encouraged to adapt and thrive, in the midst of a pandemic that the majority of us had not experienced in our lifetime. I appreciate that some organisations weren't in a position to do this because of the restrictions put in place, but there were some who rose to the challenge and found ways of providing services and opportunities.

Youth Work has been no different during this period. The resilience and creativity shown by the youth work sector has been incredible. Staying engaged with young people has been challenging, but youth workers have found safe and effective ways of maintaining connections with young people. I've always maintained that youth work is not the total answer for young person growth and development, but it is a significant contributor and provides a relevance and impact for a proportion of young people who are not impacted by other interventions.

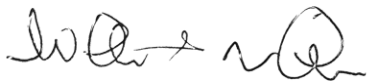
Youth Scotland has also faced its own challenges with regard to the wellbeing of staff, delivery of services and financial challenges.

We put in place additional support mechanisms for staff, but have been proud of the way they have managed their own personal challenges, whilst maintaining high levels of consistency in delivering on our four strategic pillars.

We shifted our services to a range of online platforms to ensure that services could continue and have maintained these throughout. As we moved away from restrictions, we have continued to utilise the best of these services whilst moving back to face to face contact.

We remained prudent throughout the year, but invested where we felt it was beneficial for the long term benefit of our members, young people and staff.

Finally, I think it is important that we haven't returned to a pre-pandemic position, but have embraced the lessons of our experience and move forward accordingly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Miller', with a stylized flourish at the end.

1 Chair's signature

William Miller

Chair of Youth Scotland

[callout quotation] “The resilience and creativity shown by the youth work sector has been incredible.”

A Pillar of Community-Based Youth Work

The year of this Impact Report began as Scotland lifted the 'stay at home' order and transitioned to the Protection Level system. The long process of recovery had begun. While a traditionally 'in person' activity, youth work had shown incredible resilience and adaptability during lockdowns and restrictions. Community-based youth work became digital youth work and detached youth work, finding a way through the toughest of times. Once meeting in person was possible once more, youth work sought out hybrid delivery and began to look at recovery and to address the emerging issues caused by nearly a year of impact on young people's lives.

Youth Scotland prioritised supporting its network to transition safely, regularly issuing updated advice, resources and seven iterations of the **Youth Scotland Post Lockdown Readiness Guide**. Having developed resources such as our **Guide to Detached Youth Work** and **Guide to Out and About Youth Work** we supported groups in implementing them and supporting the transition through the Protection Levels.

Accessing funds remained a key priority for member youth groups as they fully re-opened. We believe that the connection which Youth Scotland has to community-based youth groups across the country has been proven again as being an effective mechanism for reaching young people experiencing poverty and other issues.

Ours and our members' reach into communities, both urban and rural, their knowledge and understanding of local need alongside existing relationships with young people and families has demonstrated the impact that can be demonstrated of working this way and getting the funds to where they are needed most.

We were delighted to offer support through the following grant schemes which we operated in 2021/22.

- The Youth Work Support Fund, supported by the Guardian and Pears trust Youth which distributed £70,000 to 44 youth groups.
- The Youth Scotland Winter Fund, funded by Scottish Government through the STV Children's Appeal, distributed £120,000 funding to 58 youth groups who made 95 awards reaching children and young people.
- The Rural Action Fund, funded by the Robertson Trust and the Gannochy Trust, distributed £35,000 grants to 44 youth groups.
- The Stand Up to Sectarianism programme, funded by the Scottish Government, distributed to youth groups.

We also supported a number of our member youth groups to access funding through our partnership with UK Youth and Garfield Weston Foundation through the Youth Scotland Supporting Youth Work Fund.

We would like to thank all the funders of all our small grant schemes for their much-appreciated support of community-based youth work in the past year.

Youth Scotland continued to be a voice for our members and community-based youth work on a number of national groups.

In addition to our role on the national youth work and Community Learning and Development (CLD) recovery working groups, the organisation has also represented the interests of our members on several groups during the past year, including: Scottish Youth Work Leaders Forum, YouthLink Scotland (YLS) Policy Planning group, Youth Work Covid Recovery Group, SCVO Intermediaries Network, Awards Network, National Youth Work Strategy Reference Group, National Youth Work Training Forum, CLD Standards Council, YLS Youth Work

and schools planning group and the National Youth Work Communications and PR Network.

Despite the challenges, Youth Scotland has been a key contributor in helping young people in their recovery from the pandemic, in particular promoting their mental health and wellbeing; their learning through our accredited youth awards; and in building the capacity of youth workers and volunteers; and in developing our membership base further while in support of the youth work sector in Scotland.

2021-22 in numbers

- Total Young People supported **82,454**
- Total Youth Workers **9,397** of whom **5,906** are volunteers
- Total Groups **1,730**
- Total awards **6,112** shows a **30%** increase on the 2020/21 numbers,
- Young People engaged in Leadership and participation programmes **4,014**
- Youth workers engaged in training **3,912**

Details of all this activity and development in 2020/21 can be found in the following pages, corresponding to our 4 pillars: Supporting Our Member Youth Groups; Training Volunteers and Youth Workers; Youth Leadership and National Programmes; and Accredited Youth Awards.

Our Strategy and Ambitions

Changing Lives Through Community-Based Youth Work is our strategy to support and develop community-based youth work across Scotland.

Our Mission

is to support young people to achieve their full potential.

Our Vision

is a country which values community-based youth work and its impact on young people's lives.

Our four pillars

Youth Scotland is the national charity for supporting and delivering youth work in the community. We believe in changing lives through youth work. We are the largest national youth work organisation in Scotland, supporting 82,454 young people, 1,730 youth groups and over 9,397 youth workers. Youth Scotland has been around since the early 20th century and has a diverse membership network – from small rural youth groups to large urban projects. The common goal that we all share is better outcomes for young people.

As a national youth work organisation, Youth Scotland's work is expansive and varied, but much of what we do can be put in four key areas of community-based youth work that we call our 4 Pillars:

1. Supporting Our Member Youth Groups

Our ambition is for all young people, regardless of their circumstances, to benefit from high quality community-based youth work through the Youth Scotland network.

2. Training Volunteers and Youth Workers

Our ambition is to establish ourselves as the leading provider of training and capacity-building for the youth work sector in Scotland, improving the skills and confidence of those who are supporting young people.

3. Youth Leadership and National Programmes

Our ambition is for young people across all 32 Local Authorities to have the opportunity to grow and develop their everyday leadership skills through iLead and other youth participation projects.

4. Accredited Youth Awards

Our ambition is that we will create more opportunities for young people to achieve and gain accreditation for their learning through Hi5, Dynamic Youth Awards and Youth Achievement Awards at SCQF levels 2–7. This will support national efforts to close the poverty related attainment gap and increase young people's skills for learning, work and life.

Supporting Our Member Youth Groups

Our ambition is for all young people, regardless of their circumstances, to benefit from high quality community-based youth work through the Youth Scotland network.

2021-22 continued the trend of sustained growth of our membership, despite a challenging landscape for community-based youth work. An additional 152 groups joined our network to access the full membership service of advice, guidance, resources, training, group insurance, PVG scheme and funding opportunities available through our membership package.

Of particular note was the continued support of members through frequently updated guidance, risk assessment resources and best practice guides during lockdown, digital youth work and the transition through the Protection Level system. Seven versions of our ***Youth Scotland Post Lockdown Readiness Guide*** covered the nuances and specifics of helping community-based groups transition safely from restrictions and in excess of 1.5 communications per day through email and social media kept workers and groups informed of support, guidance and opportunities as they arose.

These outcomes are also achieved through the support and membership services we provide centrally to our membership and in support of our Area Associations network of six infrastructure bodies that offer local services to our shared membership in Edinburgh & Lothians, Fife, Highland, Lewis & Harris, Orkney Islands and Scottish Borders. Additionally, our Youth Scotland Area Co-ordinators support member groups in Stirling, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire.

We continue to have reach across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland, providing universal youth work opportunities as well as more targeted approaches. Of our total membership, rural youth groups represent 27% of the membership and urban represent 73% of the membership. In addition, 64% of Youth Scotland members operate in SIMD 1-5 post codes

1,730 member groups	82,454 Young People in the 5 to 18+ age range	9,397 youth workers of whom 5,906 are volunteers
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- 64% of Youth Scotland member groups meet in areas of high to medium deprivation (SIMD 1-5).
- 73% urban membership / 27% rural membership

877,094 impressions on social media	217,929 e-news and ebulletins sent	101,525 unique visits to our websites
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- £120,000 grants made to 58 youth groups through the Youth Scotland Winter Fund
- £35,000 grants made to 44 rural youth groups through the Rural Action Fund

[callout quotation] “Thanks to funding from Youth Scotland, this summer we were able to offer funded EFL sessions for 28 children and young people ranging from age 5-25. These sessions focus on mindfulness techniques, promoting health and wellbeing...” Rural Action Fund, member group

From zero to one hundred; building community-based youth work capacity in New Cumnock

New Cumnock Development Trust (NCDT) was established in 2017 with an aim to regenerate New Cumnock and bring sustainable development to their community. NCDT work closely with local community organisations to support, co-ordinate and lead on local projects and developments.

In 2021, NCDT worked with Youth Scotland, via their STV Appeal funded Ayrshire Area Co-ordinator programme, to establish a new community-based youth work group and offer youth work experiences to local young people.

Taking advantage of Youth Scotland's support, training and membership package, NCDT developed a partnership with Youth Scotland through Ayrshire Area Co-ordinator, Stewart:

“New Cumnock were a new group to us in 2021 and we delivered a six-week youth work session which involved, Kelly Kettles, den-building, arts and crafts, special FX – just to provide a six-week input to show them different opportunities they could learn through youth work and show the guys at New Cumnock what they can do with different activities.

We came along and delivered to over 70 kids that came along every week. We were inside, we were outside – just so many activities and it was fantastic for us and fantastic for New Cumnock Development Trust as well.”

“I think it's absolutely amazing – we get to go in and see different kids, and young people come along and listen to their ideas on what they want, give new experiences [that] kids might never of had before. We look to go in and give groups some new ideas, some new content and just support them develop and

grow and sustain their membership. I think it's really important to build the partnerships..."

NCDT Community Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator, Tammy, described her experience of Youth Scotland membership and partnership:

"New Cumnock Development Trust has worked in partnership with Youth Scotland for about the past six or seven months. Youth Work a is brand new partnership and stream to our organisation and the support from Youth Scotland has been invaluable. We couldn't have progressed [but] we now support almost 100 young people a week and without the support from Youth Scotland and Stewart that wouldn't be possible.

I think it's great particularly if where you come from you don't have a stand out hobby, like dancing or football, it's really hard to find an interest for young people, so having sessions like this, it varies week to week and the kids get a lot of input in what we do every week – it's really important to them it gives them a voice, a wee bit of decision making as well; takes the pressure off us and it's always fun!"

To see about [joining Youth Scotland](#) or more of our stories on [how we support community-based youth work](#), see our [website](#).

[callout quotation] "[Youth Scotland] brought much needed support, guidance and knowledge to a group of young people who are either waiting for mental health input or not eligible for mental health services for various reasons e.g. addiction. It also upskilled youth workers and parents who are two groups of people who are often left supporting young people when services are unavailable." - Member Group

Training Volunteers and Youth Workers

Our ambition is to establish ourselves as the leading provider of training and capacity-building for the youth work sector in Scotland, improving the skills and confidence of those who are supporting young people.

Youth worker training has continued to thrive with 3,912 youth workers' abilities and skills developed further to support young people's emerging needs. Our training programme offered accredited and non-accredited training opportunities in Youth Awards (832 participants), Ready for Youth Work (497 participants), Trusted Adult (1,281 participants), PDA in Youth Work (54 participants), Leading in Youth Work (13 participants), Child Protection (411 participants) and other key training programmes, including delivering safe and effective digital youth work and specialist mental health training. 97% of participants rated the training as very good/excellent.

Our partnership programme with Place2Be continued to offer a Mental Health Foundation Training programme and ongoing CPD to over 800 youth workers, allowing them to increase their knowledge of children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing.

3,912 volunteers, youth workers and managers upskilled	832 workers trained in onward delivery of youth awards	1,281 youth workers completed Trusted Adult training
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- 98% who attended Child Protection training have increased understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting young people
- 100% who attended Internet Safety have increased knowledge of social media platforms young people use
- 97% who attended Youth Scotland training rated it very good or excellent

800+ youth workers participated in Mental Health Foundation training	54 youth workers gained a PDA in Youth Work and 13 managers Leading in Youth Work qualifications	497 youth workers completed Ready for Youth Work training
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[callout quotation] “Everything I have learnt so much and expanded my knowledge deeply of youth work so I am more confident in my abilities now so thank you so much” Ready for Youth Work delegate

Taking the next step, with Youth Scotland's accredited training pathway

In 2021, Morag identified a need for youth work in her local area of Portlethen, Aberdeen.

“I saw a gap in the provision of youth work activities in my local area and started to make enquires about how to set up and open a holiday project.”

This project soon grew into setting up a weekly youth club, leading Morag to look to Youth Scotland's resources, guidance and training pathway to develop it further and ensure its long-term success. She attended both our accredited Ready for Youth Work course and Professional Development Award in Youth Work, gaining an SCQF Level 6 qualification.

Morag attended Ready for Youth Work online – this is Youth Scotland's rigorous, practical and wide-ranging accredited induction to youth work. She found our hybrid offering, developed during pandemic recovery, an approachable entry point.

“Online, the course [has] all the structure of a formal course making it very easy to follow and join in. This I feel was because of the safety and security of being in your own in environment / safe space. This set up allowed many people from all over Scotland to join the training and share their knowledge and experiences.”

Morag then went on to complete a PDA through an in-person course, a nationally recognised SQA qualification which includes three formal assessments, a practical placement and an assessed observation of delivery:

“Taking the next step and moving onto the PDA was a big step and I feel this was reflected in the style of training. Attending the course in person really keeps you focused and ‘in the room’ and gives you a bigger opportunity to network.”

For Morag, attending was not only about personal development but also about securing respect and credibility in her local community to develop Portlethen Youth Club:

“I hoped... it would add value to my working starting the youth club and build confidence with the local community in my work to support young people.”

“I wanted to gain some new knowledge in youth work and the best practice to use. Confidence to know that my style and vision for my youth club match the current format, policies, and procedures... But really, I wanted some kind of back up and support to show that I was taking the project seriously ... and could show the wider community that youth clubs have a value and an important part in a community.

“I hope that having attended... it may gain support for funding and other support of this nature.”

This has given “me a real boost to know I can do this, and I will get my youth club open. I feel this gives an added value to the project and it will be run in much safer and supported way.”

Find out more about our [training pathway](#), [essential training](#) and more on our [website](#).

[callout quotation] “Take a chance, believe in yourself, this experience has changed my life.” – Morag, Ready for Youth Work and PDA in Youth Work recipient.

Youth Leadership and National Programmes

Our ambition is for young people across all 32 Local Authorities to have the opportunity to grow and develop their everyday leadership skills through iLead and other youth participation projects.

We have continued to offer young people a range of activities to meet their emotional needs, build their confidence and develop new skills. Our Area Coordinators in Ayrshire and Forth Valley and our National Youth Scotland staff continued to act as examples of good practice, delivering quality youth work sessions which produced positive outcomes for young people, whilst also building the confidence of the local workers and volunteers shadowing.

Through a mixed approach of outdoor youth work, digital engagement and a return to indoor face to face delivery, we are delighted to have again exceeded our yearly target with 4,014 young people having undertaken training and have been directly involved in our national leadership and participation programmes.

With health and wellbeing underpinning all our delivery, we have supported young people develop their skills and take action in their groups and communities. As a result, young people have reported an increase in their confidence, resilience and an improvement in their ability to; manage relationships; describe and apply their learning; participate effectively in groups; consider risks and make reasoned decisions; demonstrate social commitment and broaden their perspectives through their engagement in our national leadership and participation programmes.

1,224 young people participated in the Generation Cashback programme	500 participated in the Young Islanders Network programme	4,014 young people trained and involved in our national leadership and participation programmes
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- 98% of young people participating in Generation CashBack felt that it contributed to their wellbeing
- 99% participating in Generation CashBack reported a positive impact on their behaviour
- 99.5% of young people participated in a positive activity as a result of being in their youth group or completing a Lead opportunity

534 young people participated in Stand Up to Sectarianism	189 young people participated in the UPS Road Code programme	72 young people participated in the Audit Scotland Inform 100 programme
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[callout quotation] “It’s wonderful to feel like you might actually have the power to improve things in your own life.” – Young Islander

Wee blocks build big things – how Youth Scotland’s programmes support member groups to grow

Jordan has worked for the Indigo Group for almost 10 years, starting of a session worker before transitioning through a variety of roles to his current position of Lead Youth Worker for Indi Youth, who have been members since 2016, making use of various aspects of our membership package. We caught up with Jordan to talk about how they had accessed a number of our [national programmes](#) and young leadership opportunities.

“[Generation CashBack](#) really helped because our service was really badly hit by Covid. We pretty much came out with a third of the group size we originally started with. Generation CashBack helped us in terms of funding, being able to spruce up some of the activities we had but also to do some taster sessions [with new young people] to see what life skills, what opportunities they needed to then help find themselves and get diversionary skills to get them off the streets, get them engaged with activities and things that they’re interested in. Within Generation CashBack there’s support for people within marginalised communities.

The Indi Youth has also participated in the [What’s Your Big Idea?! programme](#), where young people apply for a grant to undertake an activity in their group or community.

“We had a young person who applied and got it and they’re interested in doing branding and designing... so they’ve now designed the uniform for our service. Indi Youth still is all co-designed production and so now... the young person

designed the logo and got feedback from the CEO, from the manager, from young people and we've then made it into a uniform and they've designed it because we've never had a uniform."

Most recently, the Indi Youth young people have taken part in [Inspire 2022](#), an events based social action project led by young people for their communities. Young people pitch for, design and create their own social action events and then apply for support and funding to make it a reality.

"[The young people] are wanting to do a community event. So, the group has recognised that the community is not as close-knit as it what it used to be and they want to highlight other services in the area to help promote them – just to keep people connected. They've noticed that the older community members haven't got as much to do, so they want to put a wee event on for [them]."

Finally, we asked Jordan what he thought the biggest benefit was for Indi Youth being part of Youth Scotland's series of [national programmes and young leadership opportunities](#).

"I think it would genuinely be about the varied experiences and how much different things you tap into to. I probably didn't realise how much you actually do offer back to your members... all the events, the training the funding... the mental health stuff – there's so many people with such knowledge. That varied approach – you come from the young people's view right through to the staff."

[callout quotation] "One wee block can then build something much bigger because of the variety of stuff you offer" - Jordan, Indi Youth

Accredited Youth Awards

Our ambition is that we will create more opportunities for young people to achieve and gain accreditation for their learning through Hi5, Dynamic Youth Awards and Youth Achievement Awards at SCQF levels 2–7. This will support national efforts to close the poverty related attainment gap and increase young people’s skills for learning, work and life.

Covid 19 restrictions and lockdowns continued to impact on awards delivery in 2021-22. Despite this, we set an ambitious awards target of 6,000 for the year which represents 60% of our pre-Covid high of 10,000 and a 30% increase over our 2020-21 numbers. Pleasingly, this target was achieved, reaching 6,112 awards completed for the year.

Although we have delivered awards online during pandemic 2022-22 saw our first delivery via through e-sgoil (the national e-learning platform) and delivered two of four sessions (May and November) of our ‘Get Inspired by STEM’ workshops, accrediting online participation through the Dynamic Youth Awards. This was both successful and a valuable learning experience.

31% of all Youth Scotland awards in 2021-22 were delivered in the most deprived areas of Scotland, SIMD 1-2, with 60% delivered in SIMD deciles 1-5, demonstrating how our awards are being used to support young people in these areas.

Impact statements from young people, collected as part of the award process, show that 89% of Hi5 recipients, 83% of Dynamic Youth Award recipients and 85% of Youth Achievement Award recipients felt better or much better about themselves as a result of completing their award.

Our awards were delivered by a network of 314 Participating Units supported locally by 78 Operating Agencies. This increase in groups and organisations registered to deliver our awards was in large part as a result of the Youth Work Education Recovery Fund (YWETF) which included accreditation of activities as part of the funding criteria.

9,654 young people gained a SCQF levelled youth award	784 practitioners trained to deliver Youth Scotland awards	32 Local Authorities awards coverage, through 66 Operating Agencies and 208 Participating Units
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- 31% of young people achieving our awards live in communities considered amongst the 20% most deprived in Scotland (SIMD 1-2)
- 60% were achieved by young people living in the 50% most deprived (SIMD 1-5)
- 30% growth of awards participants in a single year

[callout quotation] "I enjoy building my confidence and self-esteem and helping others through my Youth Achievement Award and increasing my leadership skills. They're also great for my CV; they show employers that I'm keen." – Youth Achievement Award participant

Meeting young learners where they are with the Hi5 Award

Castle Douglass Primary School is a large rural school of 360 children, who are also the resourced learning centre provision for children with additional support needs in Dumfries and Galloway. We met with Mr Whan, Principal Teacher of the Learning Centre, Mrs DeSilva, the teacher running the Hi5 programme and Head Teacher, Susan Davies, to talk about their Hi5 experience.

Susan described how “for us, the Hi5 awards are a way of recognising attainment and achievement in a different format. We’ve got a lot of children in our school who don’t necessarily reach the benchmarks in terms of their academic progress... the Hi5 is a way of giving them the opportunity to achieve in a different way and also to learn new skills for their life.”

She explained that “post-pandemic, it’s not just about having a framework to work with other people but a framework to be more confident... and stepping into something that’s unfamiliar.”

Mrs DeSilva added that “post-pandemic... there is a real need for... an alternative way of accessing the curriculum because potentially some of these children didn’t access as much as we would have wanted them to.”

Her Hi5 groups “are a mixture of children that are accessing our learning centre as well as their peers... It’s a really good opportunity for all of our kids to mix together no matter their abilities or support needs.”

One of these young people was Seth. His mum, Tara, told us how “lockdown was not great for Seth. Home-schooling we lasted, I think, 2 months and...it was too much.”

“Before he started [Hi5] he was quite withdrawn, didn’t really talk a lot.” But when Seth joined the programme, “because he was excited about Hi5, he liked coming in on those days. We used to have to fight most mornings to get Seth to school until you mentioned Hi5.”

“You could just see he was more outgoing... and now, instead of trying to encourage him to talk, he doesn’t stop talking.”

Speaking with Seth, he proudly told us about his projects, showing us his Hi5 certificates: “It was really fun to actually go ahead and participate in this [Hi5] group”

“It made me feel excited and awesome... I felt as confident as I could to myself for High School coming up... I was so determined because of that award.”

Asking Tara what she would say to other parents, she expressed: “If you ever have the opportunity to go for a Hi5 Award with your child, it’s something you need to grab with both hands... because the difference we saw was amazing and I think if we didn’t have the opportunity for Hi5, Seth wouldn’t be as outgoing and confident as he is now.”

Mr Whan echoed this saying, “I would strongly encourage other schools to look into how a Hi5 programme could work in their own context... It really does allow for... freedom to deliver the Curriculum for Excellence and everything that it stands for.”

Find out more about our [suite of awards](#), including how to take part at home, on our [website](#).

[callout quotation] “For me, it’s what teaching is all about... when you see those little sparks and lightbulbs go off. I feel like I see that every week with the Hi5 because they get so much out of it. It’s hugely rewarding.” (Mrs DeSilva, Learning Centre Teacher running Hi5 programme at Castle Douglas Primary School)

Partnerships

We have continued to develop new and existing partnerships in 2021/22 supporting community-based youth work delivery across Scotland.

We are especially grateful to the following partners:

Scottish Government – The Young Islanders Network

Following a successful pilot programme in 2020/21, we started work on setting up a Young Islanders Network. This network empowers young people living in our island communities to have their say on the implementation of the actions in Scotland's National Island's Plan. In Phase 1, we have focused on recruiting Young Islanders Champions and on building the network through community-based youth groups and existing community networks. The Young Islanders Network will be fully launched in 2022/23 with young people co-producing the work plan and key outcomes.

STV Appeal and Place2Be

We have now completed Year 2 of our Growing Community-based Youth Work programme, funded by STV Appeal. During the course of the three-year programme, our aim is to demonstrate the impact of community-based youth work in helping young people overcome issues of poverty and the vital role which youth work has in promoting a prevention agenda.

We have also completed Year 1 of our connected partnership project with the mental health charity, Place2Be which is also funded by STV Appeal. This project is building the skills and resilience of the youth work workforce, including peer mentors, to support young people's mental health in the community.

Scottish Government & Inspiring Scotland - Generation Cashback

Youth Scotland continued to work in partnership with The Boys' Brigade, Girlguiding Scotland and Scouts Scotland in 2021 – 2022, during the second year of our current 3-year CashBack for Communities Phase 5 grant from the Scottish Government.

The consortium, led by Youth Scotland, built the capacity of 147 youth groups across Scotland, offering financial support, training for workers, and tailored advice and resources. Much of the support that was given focussed on enabling youth groups to return to face to face delivery safely, while understanding and implementing the government COVID19 guidance. As well as capacity building support, Generation CashBack staff delivered leadership opportunities for young people, and accreditation through Awards. The programme reached 3,292 young people over the course of the year, 70% of whom are based in SIMD 1-2 areas.

The Robertson Trust and the Gannochy Trust

We have now completed the final year of our current Rural Action Fund, funded by the Robertson Trust and the Gannochy Trust.

The Rural Action Fund continued to support opportunities for young people and building the capacity of youth groups in rural communities across Scotland in the past year. We look forward to working with both these funders to explore further ways to support rural youth work, particularly that which tackles rural poverty and disadvantage.

Future Plans

Having joined Youth Scotland as Chief Executive just at the end of year 2021-22, 2022-23 feels like a new chapter for young people in Scotland. As we emerge from the shadow of COVID restrictions and learn to live with the virus Youth Work is literally never more needed.

Despite a challenging financial landscape there are positives; the recognition of informal learning in Ken Muir's Future Vision for Scottish Education, and a clear commitment from Minister Jamie Hepburn signalling a timeline to the release of the National Youth work Strategy.

There is a lot of opportunity to get this right for young people and Youth Scotland is well placed to influence the policy landscape for young people in Scotland and help shape key decisions that will impact their local communities and beyond.

In 2022-23 we aim to realise the ambitions as laid out in our **"Changing Lives Through Community-Based Youth Work - A Strategy for 2020-2023"**. Despite the pandemic and restrictions as we exited lockdown, membership and young people involved in the network continue to increase and we have additional resource dedicated to growing our awards and recognising informal learning opportunities for young people.

We are embracing the best of our new learnt working practices and will settle on a hybrid working balance that works for Youth Scotland staff whilst offering the best possible support to our members.

Since joining, I have spent time getting to know the team, the invaluable work we do and meet with our partners and members to understand how we work together. Now, we look ahead to the development of our next strategy and

ensure that we are an organisation fit for the future, with the right tools and infrastructure to respond to the needs of our Area Association, Members and Young people.

During 2022-23 we will consultative process recognising the needs of key stakeholders in our strategy development, seeking to build on the success and learning gained from **“Changing Lives Through Community-Based Youth Work - A Strategy for 2020-2023”**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Strang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

2 Chief Executive's signature

Mike Strang

Chief Executive

[callout quotation] “Despite a challenging financial landscape there are positives; the recognition of informal learning in Ken Muir’s Future Vision for Scottish Education, and a clear commitment from Minister Jamie Hepburn signalling a timeline to the release of the National Youth work Strategy.”

Acknowledgements and Thanks

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- **Scottish Government** - Generation CashBack (managed by Inspiring Scotland).
- **Scottish Government** - Stand Up to Sectarianism, Capacity Building and Awards Network, Young Islanders Challenge.
- **Scottish Government** - Youth Worker Training from National Voluntary Youth Organisations Support Fund (managed by YouthLink Scotland).
- Scottish Government - STEM training.
- The Robertson Trust and The Gannochy Trust - The Rural Action Fund.
- STV Children's Appeal, The Robertson Trust, The Gannochy Trust, Ponton House Trust, Cattanach and Scottish Government - Youth Scotland Action Fund
- **Spirit of 2012** - Youth Work Through Sport

- **STV Children's Appeal** – Growing Community Based Youth Work, Youth Scotland Winter Fund, Y2Be.
- **Google UK** - Be Internet Citizens (managed by UK Youth)
- **UPS** - Road Safe (managed by UK Youth)
- **Microsoft UK** - Generation Code (managed by UK Youth)
- **Coca Cola** – Reach Up employability project (managed by UK Youth)
- **Causeway** - British Irish Youth Symposium (managed by Youth Work Ireland)

As always, we would like to make a special thank you to our Area Associations across Scotland, who we work in partnership with as part of the Youth Scotland Network:

- LAYC in Edinburgh and the Lothians
- Lewis and Harris Youth Clubs Association
- Orkney Association of Youth Groups
- Youth 1st in Fife
- YouthBorders
- Youth Highland

And finally, to all our members, volunteers and young people, with whom we achieve such amazing change and positive outcomes for young people across Scotland.

[callout quote]

"I like getting my opinion across and having a voice to tell them my side of the story, and having people there listening to it and getting it written down so that I could maybe change something."

- *Young Grantmaker*

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