



Introduction from The Chair of Youth Scotland

We bring you this Impact Report during a period of lockdown in Scotland as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which sees some, but not all children and young people returning to what they were doing before March 2020.

Prior to March, Youth Scotland was successfully delivering and increasing our support for community-based youth work in Scotland. We were approaching the end of a three-year strategy and had recently published our new strategy for 2020-2023. This new strategy continues with a focus on supporting our members and that means supporting local youth work across Scotland. We want to see youth work grow in order to support our children and young people in their local communities where it matters most to them.

This report provides you with an overview of what we have achieved in the past year. It illustrates our work with youth workers and volunteers to support the delivery of good quality youth work. It provides examples of how we have enabled young people to develop as leaders in youth work and their local communities, and it illustrates our work with youth workers to continue that leadership journey throughout their career.

Our new strategy is about *Changing Lives* through Community-Based Youth Work. Our excellent Board of Trustees and staff team are committed to doing this and I would like to thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm as we embark on this next phase of our work. This year will be different. It may be more difficult to support the growth of community-based youth work when many of our youth clubs and groups have closed as a result of the pandemic. But youth workers are a creative bunch. and many have found new ways to maintain their relationships with young people during recent months. We have seen an emergence of digital youth work and more recently a resurgence of outdoor youth work demonstrating that youth workers will always find a way to support young people.

We face some interesting times ahead and there will be challenges that prevent us from returning to how we used to work. Our priority will be keeping our children and young people safe but also supporting their learning and development. We have young people's well-being at the core of our work, we have strong youth work leadership and a creative streak that comes to the fore when presented with a challenge. This is why I am confident that Youth Scotland will continue its work to support community-based youth work in Scotland and I hope that you will continue your support to

us. Our children and young people need it more than ever.

As the national voluntary sector campaign puts it #NeverMoreNeeded

Dona Milne, Chair



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2019/20

A Year That Ended Like No Other

At the beginning of 2019, we were planning an exciting year that built on the growth and success of one strategy as we transitioned into the next. Global events have ensured that while that plan did not change, how we did it very much did. This is the story of a year that ended like no other.

In review, the theme of our year 2019/20 was one of growth, in particular, growth in challenging circumstances for community-based youth work, and growth from one successful strategy into our positive vision of a new one. Changing Lives Through Youth Work 2016-19 delivered a framework to guide and focus that period on our continued support of community-based youth work, and in particular, what that meant to our member groups.

A period of unprecedented growth for Youth Scotland saw some impressive and encouraging numbers between 2016–2020:

- 43,000 young people have developed skills for life, learning and work through participating in Youth Scotland's national programmes, youth leadership training and our suite of SQA-accredited Youth Awards.
- 9,500 youth workers have increased their effectiveness in working with young people through training and workforce development opportunities.

- → 580 new members joined the Youth Scotland Network.
- → 12 new strategic partnerships developed.
- → 50,000 youth awards milestone passed as young people across Scotland continue to be recognised in greater numbers than ever before.
- → 20 quarterly Trustees' meetings (or strategic development days) were held with 16 quarterly Finance and Resource Group meetings.

During the past year, Youth Scotland consolidated its position as Scotland's leading charity supporting community-based youth work as well as one of the country's largest providers of accredited youth awards with a record-breaking 9,645 Youth Awards achieved by young people; the launch of the Youth Scotland Leaders' Forum for members: endorsement of our successful work growing community-based youth work in disadvantaged communities in partnership with Girlguiding Scotland, the Boys' Brigade Scotland and Scouts Scotland with confirmation of a new three vear agreement to deliver the Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities programme, now in its 10th year; as well as many other innovations and developments captured by our national training and leadership programmes for young people and

youth workers.

Our new strategy Changing Lives Through Community-Based Youth Work 2020-23 builds on our established and ongoing successes. Our strategy to grow and develop community-based youth work is built on four supporting pillars: Supporting Our Member Youth Groups; Training Volunteers and Youth Workers; Youth Leadership and National Programmes; and Accredited Youth Awards.

As we crossed from 2019 into 2020, Coronavirus was already a factor in planning and delivery. And, as our chair has said, youth workers are a creative bunch, so we met this new challenge collaboratively, looking to our new strategy as a guide. Ultimately, it wasn't what we did that changed, it was just the tools we used to do it. 2020 has seen our already solid support of digital youth work increase to include all our training and programme delivery. With greater membership numbers than ever in 2019/20, we have striven to support our community-based members in 'normal' times and the unforeseeable new 'normal' the world finds itself in.

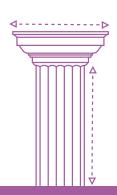
Details of all this activity and development in 2019/20 can be found in the following pages, corresponding to our 4 pillars.



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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.



The Youth Scotland network continues to increase its capacity and quality through the support and services provided centrally to our membership and in support of our Area Association network of six local infrastructure bodies: OAYC, LHYCA, Youth Highland, Youth 1st, LAYC and Youth Borders that offer local services in Orkney Islands, Lewis & Harris, Highland, Fife, Edinburgh & the Lothians and Scottish Borders.

2019-20 saw the culmination of a three-year communications strategy to modernise and update the internal and external com-

munications to be better aligned organisation strategic aims and stakeholder needs. The end goal was to increase our member and stakeholder engagement, something evidenced in the statistics.

We further supported community groups by managing two small grant schemes: The Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund, funded by the Robertson Trust and the Gannochy Trust, and Stand Up to Sectarianism small grants, funded by Scottish Government.



Youth Scotland's support has been invaluable. Whether that's to talk about awards, support for our policies, or to access free training opportunities for our volunteers, and the opportunity to have a case study of our work."

1,552
member groups



of Youth Scotland member groups meet in areas of high to medium deprivation (SIMD 1-5)





of Local Authorities regions represented in membership and youth awards **8,595**youth workers of whom 5,479 are volunteers

£40,909 grants made to 57 youth groups through our Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund £12,306 grants made to 18 youth groups through the Stand Up to Sectarianism programme

- Turf, member group

179,722
e-news and e-bulletins sent

113,298 unique visits to our websites

786,270

Supporting Community-Based Member Groups When and Where They Need It Most



2019-20 saw the second year of the Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund, strengthening community-based youth work in remote areas, and offering young people in rural communities across Scotland opportunities local to them. In year two of the Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund, the micro grant fund reached 2,690 young people and invested £42,909 of funding into 57 rural youth projects.

Like the previous year, the capacity of volunteers and youth workers remains one of the biggest limiting factors in groups' capacity to deliver youth work. One of the biggest ways in which the Rural Action Fund has helped has been through youth groups being able to attract new volunteers. Out of 544 volunteers involved in the groups funded activities, 23% (128) were new to the groups. While not all of these are regular volunteers, it is helping to create new connections between youth groups and people in communities.

With the sudden onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, the youth work sector was faced with the sudden need for a change in services to continue the vital support for young people that was more needed than ever. The Youth Scotland Action Fund was created to meet community-based youth work's immediate need for youth work across the

country to shift in approach, primarily to digital delivery.

The micro grant fund – which distributed £80,000 to 131 youth groups – was made possible thanks to the immediate response from some of our key funders to repurpose existing funds from the Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund, combined with the generous support of new funders. Youth Scotland was able to promptly launch the Youth Scotland Action Fund and to offer quick and flexible support for youth groups to meet emerging needs and purchase software licences, data top-ups, activity packs and other resources to support and stay connected to the young people and counter isolation.

About Youth was one of the first groups the Youth Scotland Action Fund was able to fund within an hour of launching.

In a short interview with About Youth on the immediate impact the fund makes for groups, Alan Ross explained: "The difference this fund will make, is it's about giving us additional resource that gives us what young people need, and it's easier to adapt to that than our existing funding can be.

"By aligning it with digital youth work, it gives the tools to bring it together and to enhance our meaningful contact with

young people. In general, at the moment, the needs of young people are not being well represented – this funding allows us to make sure they are represented.

"It's letting us reach young people who, let's be honest, are having a pretty bleak and monotonous day right now. We can reassure and keep our relationships built on trust and support."

To see about joining Youth Scotland or more of our stories on how we support community-based youth work, see our website



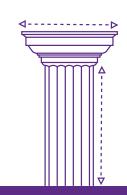
This is an ideal chance to accommodate a large group of young people who may otherwise feel their choices to participate are limited."

- Papdale Halls Youth 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.



Offering sector-leading youth worker training, supported by an accredited learning pathway for our volunteers, youth workers and managers, is central to our continued strategy. Training more youth workers and volunteers than ever, our revised and updated training offer supported members across a range of crucial topics and adapted to meet demand, particularly in with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Almost 3,000 youth workers and volunteers have increased their knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver high quality, safe and

effective youth work opportunities for young people through participating in Youth Scotland's training and capacity-building programmes. We provided 10 distinct training programmes including introductory, specialist skills training, awards, safeguarding and accredited training and practitioner learning.

The introduction of a new training pathways programme in 2018 is now paying dividends with increased participation across our training opportunities.



Massive thanks for excellent training over last two weeks. Thoroughly enjoyable and excellent and informative."

- Understanding Autism Awareness training attendee

2,744
volunteers, youth workers and managers upskilled



who attended Child Protection training have increased understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting young people





who attended Ready for Youth Work training feel better supported and know where to access relevant information



Adult training

who attended Social Media and Internet Safety training felt their knowledge needs fully met

256
youth workers completed STEM training

537
youth workers completed Ready for Youth Work training

youth workers completed Trusted

workers and managers accredited on the Youth Scotland learning pathway

Adapting Essential Training for Community-Based Practitioners



Back in 2018-2019 Youth Scotland revised and updated our core training offer to be a comprehensive learning pathway for community-based youth work practitioners.

From volunteers just getting started, to managers and trustees who have years of experience, the learning pathway meets some essential needs; from Ready for Youth Work (SCQF LEVEL 3) to our Professional Development Award (PDA) in Youth Work (SCQF Level 6) and even on to the ILM Leading in Youth Work (SCQF LEVEL 9), there's something for everyone.

Supporting this, we have an extensive package of training – often free for member groups – that can provide key skills for youth work. Talking to Laura Kemp, who is a Development Worker in our training team, we discussed how the training package had impacted 2019-20.

"By having that pathway, it is really good to be able to illustrate what other developments people can make and also what other things we offer. What we find a lot of – and what I've experienced myself as a youth worker – is that a lot of people didn't have accredited training, or they've done the work for a long time but maybe didn't know about the theory behind it or don't have a qualification. Ready for Youth Work starts that journey, then you can go up to

PDA in Youth Work and up to the ILM."

Next, we talked about some of our core, essential training, like Child Protection training and Ready for Youth Work.

"I think it might be the most important training we do; you are literally looking at how to safeguard young people. It's an issue that cuts through every social strata, every geographic – it's really important that all youth workers know about Child Protection. It's really good to see so many of our members taking that up.

Ready for Youth Work is really good in that we see people who recognise that they have done it for a long time and have many skills and experiences, so they get to come together with other practitioners and share those experiences and then look at the theory. For us, any time we deliver the training, we always learn too."

With the last quarter of 2019-20 being heavily impacted by Covid-19, we discussed how the training team quickly adapted to meet our members' needs.

"It seems like a lifetime ago! First of all, it was about becoming comfortable with the engagement tools, like video conferencing, and getting used to that. What was nice was that we had a lot of training that

would have otherwise been cancelled in the restrictions that still went ahead because people were happy to go online.

As it went on, we quickly saw how to do training more effectively and more engagingly online with the tools we were using. It was really amazing to see so many of our member groups, who had to close or furlough workers, they used that time as an opportunity to upskill on training, where in normal circumstances they may not have had that time."

Find out more about our <u>training path-way</u>, <u>essential training</u> and more on our <u>website</u>

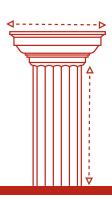


People tell us that when they come to Youth Scotland training, they expect it to be really engaging, that they are going to have time to talk and they are going have time to actually practice what they have learned – because we do scenarios where they implement their learning."

- Laura, Youth Scotland Training Team

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.



Young people are at the heart of participation, social change, leadership and engagement within Youth Scotland's national programmes and in the wider Youth Scotland Network of youth groups. Our youth leadership and national programmes address some of the most pressing matters young people face in Scotland today. Not only that, they often do so with some of the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach demographics, such as Generation CashBack, where a majority of delivery has reached young people facing the most extensive deprivation, with 81% of participants being in SIMD 1-2.

Over 4,000 young people across Scotland have a stronger voice in decision-making by participating and engaging in one or more of the national programmes aimed at supporting young people to build their capacity in the four learner capacities of being successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens; and effective contributors.

1,051

Spirit of 2012 Project

young people participated in the



We're keen to keep the digital youth work going as well...
They've helped us to put together a programme of activity, for example 'Be Internet Citizens' will help young people explore a range of topics from fake news to hateful content."

1,857
young people participated in the Generation CashBack programme

of young people participating in Generation Cash-Back felt that it contributed to their wellbeing

696

participated in the iLead leadership programme



of young people participating in Generation Cash-Back reported going on to a leadership or volunteering role in their communities - Allan, Y Sort It



and

368

93%

young people participated in the Breaking Barriers Polmont YOI programme

72

young people participated in the Audit Scotland Inform 100 programme

Youth Scotland Equips Youth Groups with Digital Youth Work Skills and Resources



In 2019, Youth Scotland launched two programmes to enhance the skills, tools and resources of youth workers and young people across Scotland, to enable them to deliver and access digital youth work.

Generation Code was developed by UK Youth in partnership with Microsoft and is designed to support young people to become digital creators in addition to consumers by equipping them with the digital skills to make the most of what technology has to offer them.

Through the programme, Youth Scotland has reached 262 young people, volunteers and youth workers and has supported them with upskilling training opportunities on online programmes such as Zoom, as well as online safety awareness training that expands on our interactive workshops on podcasting, filmmaking or STEM, and resources such as micro bits.

Youth Scotland also launched the first training session for Be Internet Citizens in 2019. The programme invites workers and young people to find out more about online behaviour, raising their awareness around online safety through train the trainer sessions for youth workers, as well as direct delivery to young people.

It splits the programme material into

themes that look at filter bubbles and echo chambers, how to spot fake news and emotional manipulation or how to deal with trolling and online hatred.

Youth Worker Allan Young, who has participated in the train the trainer session and is delivering the training to young people said:

"Most of the young people from my youth group knew about fake news but they realised they had never taken the time to think about it and how that impacts them."

"One of the young people said that it is quite easy to use fake news as a bit of a weapon and some of them realised that they can be quite bad for just dismissing things as fake news without taking the time to look at it."

"The group I was working with will definitely take away a lot from the sessions. Based on the discussions I certainly think that a lot of them will be more open to taking in other people's points of views. Especially for the ones who are more politically minded. We were talking about how some of them are following a political party and got caught up in a filter bubble and only saw specific kinds of messages. They took away that they want to look at other political parties and their policies and open up to other

points of views to avoid that."

Digital youth work certainly existed before 2020, but through the outbreak of the pandemic and the lockdown, the youth work sector turned quickly to embrace digital delivery. Youth groups and organisations across the country swiftly shifted activities and services online to stay connected to their young people, and even beyond the lockdown, youth groups continue to deliver elements of their programmes online.

Find out more about <u>Youth Scotland's programmes</u> and <u>read about the difference</u> they are making for young people and youth groups on our <u>website</u>

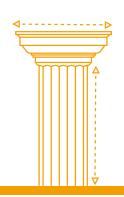
"Don't judge people by labels and that community is better than one person alone... that we all have our strengths and weaknesses, skills and qualities but despite that together we can do something great, together"

- young participants, Be Internet Citizens programme



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.



Throughout 2019-20, Youth Scotland continued to contribute to the Scottish Attainment Challenge with a record breaking 9,654 accredited awards achieved by young people who gained recognition for their achievements at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 2 to 7.

The huge increase of 32% volume of participants in our awards demonstrates the real growth and impact Youth Scotland is having on young people's achievement and Scotland's Attainment Challenge. With just under 10,000 awards certified in a single year, this

was the single biggest growth in the history of our youth awards.

Many of those young people have developed their skills for learning, life, and work while, at the same time, have improved their health and wellbeing by feeling better physically or feeling much better about themselves.



young people gained an SCQF levelled vouth award

practitioners trained to deliver Youth Scotland awards

Local Authorities awards coverage, through 66 Operating Agencies and **208 Participating Units**



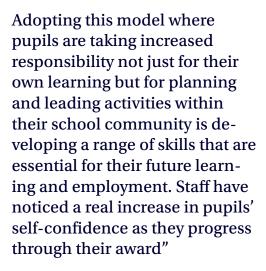
of young people achieving our awards live in communities considered amongst the 20% most deprived in Scotland (SIMD 1-2)



were achieved by young people living in the 50% most deprived areas (SIMD 1-5)



growth of Youth Scotland awards participants year on year



- West Calder High, Assistant Head of House

The Sustained Appeal of Youth Awards



Young people have a range of learning styles and community-based youth work contributes towards young people being able to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, which are not solely developed in the classroom. In combination, Youth Scotland's awards allow young people's non-formal achievements to be recognised in a meaningful way—particularly as they share the same SCQF levelling as formal qualifications.

Since their launch in 1998, Youth Scotland's suite of awards have grown and adapted to meet the needs of young people across Scotland. That sustained popularity was celebrated in 2018 when we were delighted to recognise the 50,000th recipient of one of our awards. That milestone was reached in just 20 years, which makes the success of 2019-20 even more dramatic – with an astonishing 9,654 awards certificated in that short time, a growth of 32% on the previous year.

The latest addition to the Youth Scotland suite of awards is the Hi5 Award, which was launched in September 2017, aimed at primary school age children (5+), and sits at SCQF level 2. Hugely popular in itself, the Hi5 Award is already closing in or 10,000 recipients, making the award many children's first recognised entry on their Record of Attainment.

The impressive growth of our youth awards, like most youth work activity, was significantly challenged by lockdown and the closure of many youth work settings. Recognising this, and that many workers and parents faced months of home schooling and still wanted to recognise their children's learning and achievements, we quickly launched the Awards at Home campaign.

Senior Awards Development Worker, George Cherrie told us:

"Because of the pandemic with parents being at home, we have heard from them more directly. A lot of our groups have been emailing out the challenge sheets we made, but the workers and teachers were still in touch with young people at home during lockdown, supporting them with their award remotely. The parents could see what was going on, so the parents got involved. That was another positive – it wasn't just about parents being aware, it was parents actively involved."

One instance of this was Louise, a proud parent who emailed to say:

"I am so very proud of [my child]. He is dyslexic and dyspraxic and he has done absolutely wonderful job documenting his achievements. He has learned how to work better with others and now understands the importance of having a plan and organising how he would achieve that plan.

These are not the only activities they completed. They wrote to care homes, friends and family. Delivered kindness confetti (positive affirmations in a jar) to children who they go to school with and their teachers. They created a vegetable patch on their own and delivered potatoes and lettuces they had grown to elderly neighbours."

Find out more about our <u>suite of awards</u>, including how to take part at home, on our website



The awards have helped me to get more confident to take part in more youth work events and it really helped a lot. It's fun! I know it's also good to put on my CV to get a job or get into college or university. It will make things a lot easier."

- Caitlin, DYA candidate

2019/**20**

Acknowledgements and Thanks

The Youth Scotland Board of Trustees is most grateful for the support of existing and new funders in 2019–20, in particular for their sustained support and encouragement during the Covid-19 pandemic. The considerable financial backing the organisation receives from funds and funders, from third sector, public and corporate partners, has allowed us to continue delivering a wide range of programmes and projects in support of community-based youth work during 2019–20.

We acknowledge the support of the **Scottish Government** for ongoing provision of core funding from the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund (managed by Corra Foundation). We also acknowledge the support and provision of core funding from The Robertson Trust.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to all our funders and supporters of Youth Scotland projects and programmes including:

- Scottish Government Generation CashBack (managed by Inspiring Scotland)
- → Scottish Government Stand Up to Sectarianism
- → Scottish Government Skills for Youth

- Work from National Voluntary Youth Organisations Support Fund (managed by YouthLink Scotland)
- → Scottish Government Community Jobs Scotland (managed by SCVO)
- → Scottish Government STEM training (managed by Education Scotland)
- → Scottish Government Capacity building and Awards Network
- → The Robertson Trust and The Gannochy Trust The Youth Scotland Rural Action Fund
- → STV Children's Appeal, The Robertson Trust, The Gannochy Trust, Ponton House Trust, Cattanach and Scottish Government - Youth Scotland Action Fund
- → Audit Scotland Inform 100
- → sportscotland, The Robertson Trust, Spirit of 2012 and Scottish Government - Youth Work Through Sport & Let's Give Sport back to Girls
- → STV Children's Appeal Growing Community Based Youth Work
- → The Gannochy Trust Breaking Barriers and Awards Network
- → Google UK Be Internet Citizens (managed by UK Youth)
- → UPS Road Safe (managed by UK Youth) Microsoft UK - Generation Code (managed by UK Youth)

- → Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Government - Place Changers (managed by Greenspace Scotland)
- Coca Cola employability project (managed by UK Youth)
- Causeway British Irish Youth Symposium (managed by Youth Work Ireland)
- → Coach Foundation Dream it Real (managed by UK Youth)

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.



Just wanted to say a massive thank you for the power of work you and the team at Youth Scotland have done on behalf of youth work. The resources and training have been invaluable in enabling us to move forward with confidence. The proactive and unstinting professional support, solidarity and very high standards instil a huge pride in the care and professional standards of youth work and just wanted you and the Team to know it is hugely appreciated and empowering in very challenging times for us all.

- Dona, Elgin Youth Cafe

