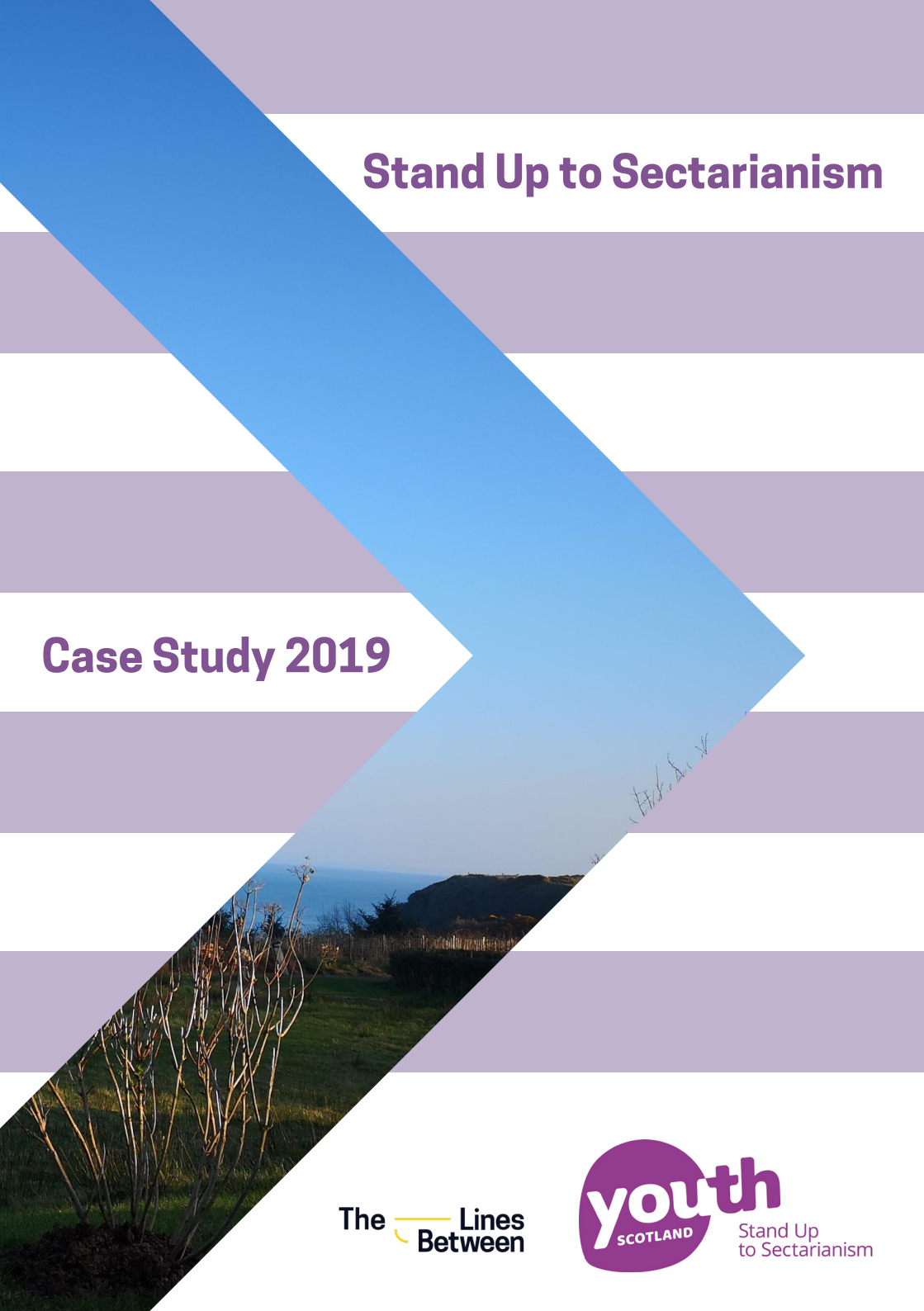


Stand Up to Sectarianism

Case Study 2019



The  Lines
Between



Stand Up
to Sectarianism



Peter Johnson

Stand Up to Sectarianism Senior Development Worker

Stand Up to Sectarianism is a Youth Scotland programme that tackles hate crime and sectarianism across Scotland in some of the hardest to reach communities. It delivers youth worker training, peer education, a small grants scheme, resources and networking opportunities for young people. The programme uses innovative methods like story-telling, film-making and residential trips to encourage young people to explore difference, break down barriers and talk about the issues that are present in their communities. Peter Johnson, Stand Up to Sectarianism Senior Development Worker describes the programme, the young people he engages with and its far-reaching impacts.

We show the young people what sectarianism is and how banter hurts, and how if you're called a "fenian" or a "hun" every day of the week, eventually you begin to believe that about yourself and then it pushes people into the extremes. Then as time goes on, people start to talk about sectarianism and then other issues come up, like homophobia or racism or gender...

Residential trips in Scotland and Northern Ireland offer young people and workers the opportunity to learn about sectarianism in an environment that gives context and where they can talk openly and ask questions in a safe space. These trips give young people a chance to travel, to meet new people from diverse groups and to get out of their comfort zones.

The kind of young people that community based youth groups are bringing, they are the ones that won't engage in school, they are always in the exclusion zone, and the only ones that will talk to them are their peers in the street.

Young people learn that there is more to sectarianism than football chants through exploring their own prejudices and the attitudes that surround them in their communities.

Through the Stand Up anti-sectarian programmes people have engaged in conversations that maybe they wouldn't normally have engaged in... and as a result of that they have looked at new ways of working that is bigger than just the subject matter.

REACH →

237

Young people took part in anti-sectarian awareness raising sessions

86

Young people trained as peer leaders tackling sectarianism and hate behaviour in their communities

77

Youth workers took part in anti-sectarian awareness raising training

51

Different local communities across Scotland participated in Stand Up events and grants scheme

28

Young people have completed Youth Awards in the context of anti-sectarianism

14

Youth workers graduated in Stand Up's Personal Development Award in Youth Work course

GRANTS

18

Small Grants of up to £500 each were awarded to local youth organisations reaching 849 young people

CONFIDENCE

100%

of the youth workers said they felt confident to deliver anti sectarian awareness raising sessions with the young people in their local communities

73%

of young people would like to create an activity to tackle sectarianism in their own communities

80%

of young people said they would feel confident talking to their peers about sectarianism

64%

of young people said that they'd feel confident standing up to sectarianism

OTHER IMPACTS

200

Dynamic Youth Awards were started by young people within the context of anti-sectarianism as a result of participating in Stand Up events.

3

New partnerships with BAME communities have been forged



Pauline and Carly

Young Movers

Pauline and Carly are youth workers who have been involved with Stand Up for three years. Pauline is a volunteer support officer; Carly started as a project participant, then became a peer educator and is now a youth worker herself. They have been delivering Stand Up training for young people in Scotland, and supporting the trip to Northern Ireland, for the past three years. Here, they discuss their experiences with the project, what sectarianism means to them and explain why they feel there is a need for projects like Stand Up to Sectarianism.

“ Seeing the passion from the young people realising what the similarities were between Belfast and Glasgow and seeing the young people that we went with were picking up on it and asking a lot of questions and just getting really into it, it was amazing. ”

Pauline and Carly have seen young people grow and learn about themselves.

Carly: The young people on this year's trip to Northern Ireland came from so many different backgrounds, so there was people from BAME communities, different religions, different needs, for example young people with autism too. That was the great thing about this year, you could understand their views and beliefs a bit more and that really supported the learning.

Pauline: Their development is incredible, even just getting away, the young people that we work with have never travelled before. We take them on a plane for the first time. One of the young people we took this year, we had to get a passport for. He'd never travelled anywhere apart from Glasgow. Getting them anywhere outside the city for some reflection and peace is great.

Carly: Corrymeela is a safe space too, it's so peaceful, next to the water. I think even the building, it's totally different. Whoever designed that place is a genius. All the young people totally bonded too, there was nearly tears at the end.

Pauline and Carly describe their own experiences of sectarianism and how those are often linked to the people around you.

Carly: I started going to football and that's where I developed that kind of sectarian language, but I didn't know what it meant. I was singing the words no matter what. Being on the streets as well and singing and shouting and that's when it kicked in for me and I realised that we shouldn't be saying those words. The project taught me what the words mean and how hurtful it could be to other people.

Pauline: I didn't understand the word sectarianism at all before the Stand Up project. But as part of the project, you talk about the stories and it takes you back to yourself and how you were brought up and the language that was used in your home as well. My mum is Catholic and a Celtic fan, she used to say "Pauline you can do whatever you want, you don't have to believe in God but don't ever bring a Rangers fan back to my house!" I find it really fascinating because that's something I think is psychologically in there because I've never dated a Rangers fan in my life!

The trips to Northern Ireland made Pauline and Carly think about the ongoing need for projects like Stand Up to educate young people about prejudice, with current political events like Brexit creating societal divides.

Pauline: You still see it, the divide. It's everywhere. In Glasgow sometimes you see pure racism, it's a hate that comes through. But the platform for that was at football. It looked like sectarianism but when you broke it down they just could not tolerate people that were different. You think of the way Scotland is evolving now, and about Brexit and it's very easy to imagine how we could be in the same situation as Ireland soon.

Carly: That's the whole point of us going to Corrymeela so that the young people can bring all of that information back and start teaching the young people here about similarities.



Jason, Leo, Jake and Robert*

Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre

Jason, Leo, Jake, Robert and their youth worker John reflect on their involvement with Stand Up. They talk about what they thought about sectarianism before the project, and how their involvement with the project, especially the trip to Northern Ireland, made them see how it manifested in their own communities. They described the trip as 'amazing' and 'interesting' and have come back feeling motivated to do something about the divides they see in the places they live in.

“ It’s been as violent as one boy from the group was hit in the face with a hammer. Sectarianism is very much happening in these communities. ”

Robert: We all go to football, and when you’re in stadiums you hear racist comments on the pitch, sectarian chants, fans are singing. Before it was just words and now you know the meaning of the words. You can see how it happens in your own communities. There’s a big thing between Morden and Gilmerton and they are just up the road from each other, some of them, if they go into that area they are getting like battered and that just for being there.

Jason: Before I went over to Belfast I knew it was bad but I never knew that one place would be split up into different parts with fences and walls. It was an eye opener.

Robert: Even seeing the police stations surrounded by brick walls and big fences so bombs canny get chucked in. Mental.

John: *They were saying although they don't have the physical barriers here like they do in Belfast, there is definitely psychological barriers. There's a new Greggs up the road, and I was saying to Jack to go there and he said, "I canny go there because it's in Gilmerton". There's this idea that if they go into that area, they are going to get battered because there's a divide between two groups.*

Jake: I think what really kicked it off was there was a fight between two people fae each area, and since then, it's gone into something bigger. We used to all go up Gracemount and that when we were younger and just be pals, we used to be fine.

The trip to Northern Ireland was a learning experience for the young people, it encouraged them to think about how they might tackle sectarianism and prejudice at home.

Robert: We had to do a poster about what you like about your community and what we didn't like and what we wanted to change.

John: We have a big issue with racism here now. The boys said that if the flats that typically house BAME groups were more mixed up, they could integrate more, they came up with an idea to help that integration. We had a racist incident the other day too and the boys helped to sort it.

Leo: We told them this is a safe place to come, and you shouldn't be scared to come into this centre. We're going to have a football tournament too but there's going to be loads of different things, like barbecues and beat the goalie and fun activities for children. It's going to bring everyone together to talk. We're going to get people from the flats, people from the other community centres.

Reflections about the trip to Northern Ireland, especially Corrymeela.

Jake: It was really big and there was loads of different parts of the building for different things and I really enjoyed it, I would really like to go back again, it was next to the beach as well.

Jason: *It was bringing us all together, not even just our group. After the group work we done on the poster, we had a lot of other people coming up and saying how good it was. It was not as formal as school was, it was more relaxed and you could express your own ideas and opinions. Irish Breakfast was tidy too!*

Moving forward

John: We highlighted a lot of the trip on the social media, loads of people have engaged with our posts, there was over 200 people who liked and commented on the positive stuff the boys are doing and how they were inspiring for other young people. Even their teachers were getting to see them in a different light. It has given them an opportunity to have some positive dialogue with them, and it's inspired them to keep going.

Jake: I was in school the next day and my teacher came up to me and said I was a twitter star now!

*Pseudonym's have been used for anonymity

