



2022-2023

CASHBACK

GATEWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

PHASE 5 YEAR 3

REPORT



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01

Project structure and aims

Cashback Gateway to Employment is a bespoke employability project focussing on engaging with young people from a variety of different backgrounds, aged 16-24 who are at risk of offending (re)offending or those living in the most deprived areas in need of advice and guidance to progress into positive destinations. Delivering a wide range of life skills, personal development, employability and physical activity and multi sports CFCF's aim is to assist those most in need of support in order to have an opportunity to change their lives and progress into positive destinations such as volunteering, training, education or employment. In addition to this, a key focus for young people engaging with CashBack GTE is to encourage them to maintain good structure and routine in their lives, give them the experience of being in a positive and supportive environment, set goals to work towards and achieve, and ultimately make positive steps towards a better future for themselves.

Gateway to Employment comprises three principal strands:

Strand One: Core Delivery at Celtic Park

Delivered at Celtic Park across six 10-week blocks each year. We aim to offer a safe secure environment where people feel free to be the best versions of themselves. Our person centred approach offers choice, chance and opportunities while supporting young people to move forward positively with their lives and reach their fullest potential.

Listed below are some examples of the bespoke topics we cover:

- Self-esteem, confidence and motivation
- Physical Activity and Multi-sport
- Personal Development & Life skills
- Action Planning & Goal Setting
- Drug & Alcohol Awareness(Certified)
- Sexual Health & Relationships(Certified)
- CRP Training(Certified)
- Taster sessions with external partners to maximise choices, opportunities and learning experiences
- Cooking on a budget and Pizza making
- Employability Skills
- Health & Wellbeing workshops and activities
- Volunteering, education, training and/or employment taster sessions
- Other experiential learning opportunities
- Tracking & Aftercare

Strand Two: Prison Outreach

CFCF's staff team will facilitate information and taster days in HMYOI Polmont, HMP Addiewell, HMP Barlinnie as well as other secure settings. The team will deliver an informative and interactive session in the morning followed by an outdoor physical activity/multi-sports session in the afternoon. The aim of these sessions is to highlight the opportunities available to prisoners or potential future participants on release who are eligible to sign up to engage in our Strand 1 core project based at Celtic Park.

Strand Three: Overarching Mental Health Provision

Our Trauma Counsellor will provide the following as part of our Strand 3 delivery:

- Trauma informed assessment of need for each participant
- Trauma informed risk assessment for each participant
- Care planning of treatment pathway - reviewed every 6 sessions of therapy
- One-to-one Counselling and Therapy - quantity determined by individual needs
- Wellbeing packs for each participant for use throughout the duration of Counselling and Therapy
- Continued engagement with participants attending counselling and therapy beyond the 10 week GTE Cashback project as per aftercare ethos of project
- Onward referral to other specific sources of support - such as, addictions, domestic abuse or housing/ benefit support
- Mandatory mental health learning modules such as Introduction to Mental Health and Self-Care and Mindfulness for all participants
- Additional tailored group work modules directed by participants themselves as per person centred self-determinism
- All mental health modules are interactive to reflect all learning styles – reflective observation (seeing); concrete experiential learning (hearing); abstract conceptualisation (logical thinking); Active experimentation (do-ing)
- Ongoing evaluation to reflect dynamic and fluid changes to module delivery
- Weekly Health & Wellbeing drop-in
- Tracking & Aftercare
- Day retreat opportunities

General

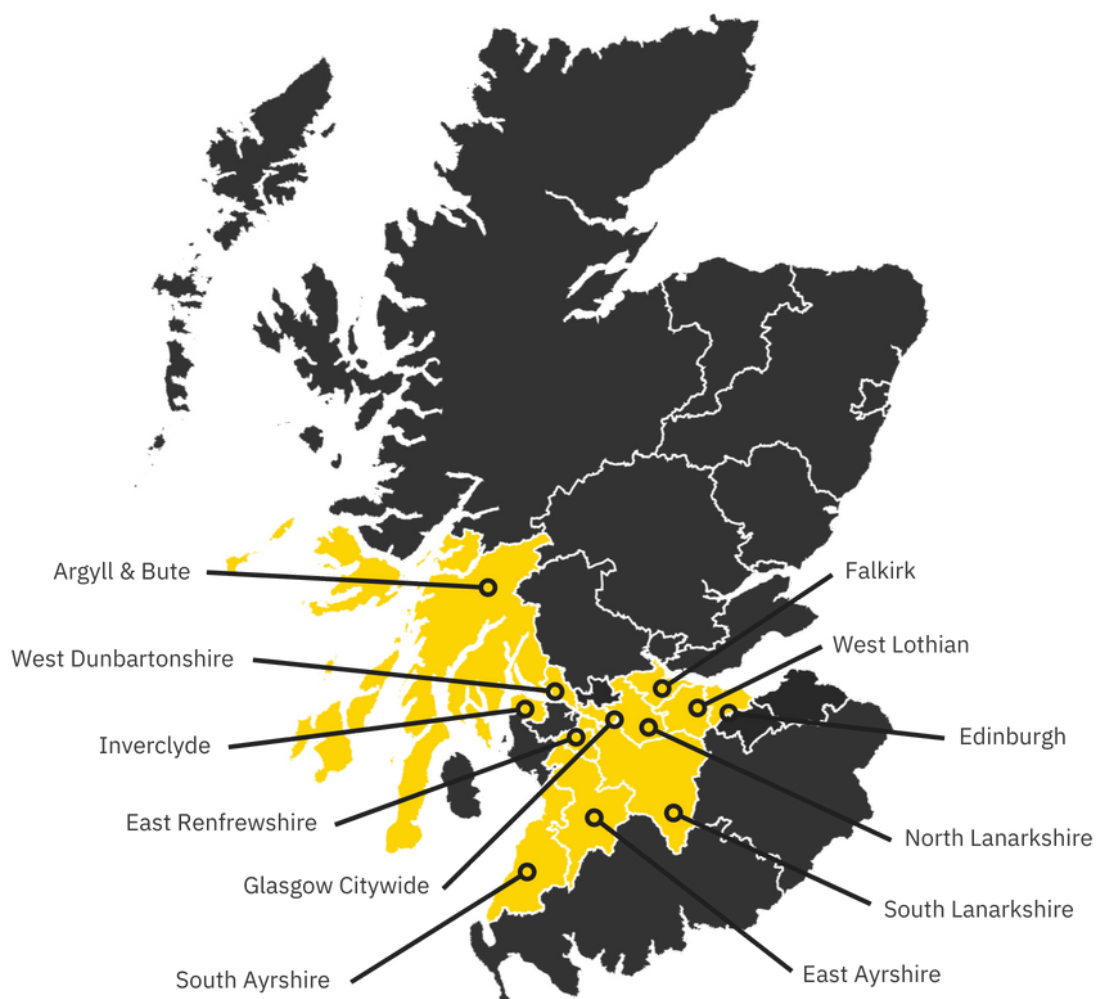
Across all three strands participants will benefit from working alongside various members of the CFCF team who will share a wide range of knowledge, skillset and specialisms to enhance their learning experience while on our project. This will include working with:

- CFCF Employability Advisor who will deliver sessions/workshops and provide one-to-one advice and guidance, including aftercare support
- CFCF Community Coaches who will deliver physical activity, multi-sports and health and wellbeing sessions/workshops

- Guest speakers – We have a number of guest speakers who will come along and share their own lived experiences, offering hope and inspiration to participants
- External Agencies present opportunities to participants to maximise their chances of progressing into positive destinations
- Liaising with local provision, who deliver educational topical based workshops to our projects to increase learning and experience
- Our Trauma Counsellor delivers a range of group sessions selected by participants from our 'Pic & Mix' options
- Our Trauma Counsellor also provides bespoke one-to-one sessions for the participants

Geographical Split

Local Authority Areas where project will be delivered:



Meet the CashBack team



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02 Annual Summary of strand 1, 2 and strand 3

Celtic FC Foundation are delighted to have completed Phase 5, Year 3 of our CashBack Gateway to Employment Project.

Within the Programme, the team deliver specific sessions around personal development, employability, mental health and physical wellness to 16 to 24 year olds with complex patterns of Trauma. Many of our participants have high levels of adverse childhood experiences as well as ongoing factors such as homelessness, offending, mental health difficulties, learning difficulties and/or physical health issues.

During this reporting phase, we have successfully engaged with 106 participants as part of our strand 1, 10-week core project delivered in Celtic Park, supporting many to make positive changes in their lives and move into new positive destinations, including many securing employment, some engage in training or further education courses, others started new volunteer roles and a few individuals re-engaged with education. As part of our tracking and aftercare a few people remained in 1:1 support appointments with our employability adviser after the 10 week course to ensure they could also reach their positive destination.

We continue to use a person centered approach, delivering a range of topical based workshops that have been designed and developed in consultation with our participants. The workshops included goal setting, personal development, self-care, employability, certified awareness sessions on drug & alcohol, sexual health & relationships and Growth mindset. Our Trauma counsellor delivers a range of psychoeducational health & well-being sessions and our coaches facilitate a range of team and individual physical activities/challenges as well as multi-sports.

Based in our Learning Centre and using additional venues for physical activity, multi-sports and experiential learning opportunities, the Team foster environments of trust, safety and empowerment, creating choices for our young people in collaboration with their goals or aspirations.

In addition to our strand 1 engagement figures, 287 people also engaged in a range of taster sessions and bespoke information days at HMYIO Polmont, HMP Barlinnie and a number of other secure care or education settings as part of our strand 2 delivery. This approach as well as us offering private 1:1 visits and appointments, hosting open days at the stadium supported many individuals to engage in our strand 1 core delivery.

Annual summary for Strand 3

Each young person engaged in therapy will take part in a robust assessment process in order that each will have their own unique care plan tailored to their individual circumstances. This care planning is designed to support their trauma experiences such as relational attachment, parental substance misuse or offending, developmental, abuse and maltreatment, war, refugee status, cultural and racial experiences, grief and loss, peer or sibling bullying.

Working with each participant, we seek to help their understanding of Trauma, make sense of their core belief system and identify their internal working model whilst introducing protective factors such as widening their window of tolerance of emotion, build resilience (hobbies and activities that foster secure base), increase positive social networks and support systems, challenge faulty thinking, increase motivation and solution focused thinking. Our participants express their needs and their Programme is shaped accordingly.

Often our young people tell us what they respond best to:

- Opportunities to think and reflect
- Talking and being listened to
- Gaining strategies and coping tools
- Teams being person focused not problem focused
- Teams not giving up on them
- Teams having a sense of humour
- Being with a Team of genuine people – not just a ‘worker’

Across this phase, 35 young people engaged in therapeutic work, 27 psychoeducational workshops were delivered as well as 362 one-to-one counselling sessions conducted as part of strand 3. These contacts focused upon getting in touch with each participants' inner world and the pain that might be found there, to make warm, safe therapeutic relationship, whilst keeping professional boundaries and fostering self-compassion and hope for their future.

03 Annual summary of recruitment, engagement and collaboration

Celtic FC Foundation - Cashback Gateway to Employment Project has demonstrated success in supporting marginalised young people and those most at risk in our communities to make positive changes in their lives. By attending the project at Celtic Park and by utilising the power of the Club's brand as a unique engagement tool, young people who may not have previously sustained training programmes have engaged via word of mouth and through external referral partners.

The project has become increasingly popular through word of mouth, as well as through us continuing to work with other key organisations and establish new working relationships across the public, private and third sector sectors.

We had a number of new referrers across this reporting period and hosted a broad range of bespoke information and taster days in some new environments across a number of local authority areas.

Collaboration

We understand how important it is to work in collaboration with other members of the Cashback portfolio as well as other key agencies, this allows us to maximise our participant's choices, chances and opportunities to build a better future for themselves. By working with other partner agencies it also gives our young people increased skillsets, knowledge on a wide range of subject matters and a variety of options and opportunities that will allow them to thrive and reach their true potential.

Through our collaborative approach and with our person led design and development model, we work alongside participants to design our timetables and subject matters across strands 1 and 2. It is fundamental that we source the most appropriate partners for our young people to support them to access the best opportunities suited to their individual needs. Below are some examples of partners we have worked closely with, including co-delivering informative educational workshops/sessions, engaging in our opportunity days and delivered bespoke session for our participants as part of the strand 1 work.

- Police Scotland – Equality & Diversity, Social Media Awareness and Hate Crime sessions
- HMP Barlinnie – Supporting workshops/sessions in the new wellbeing hub
- HMYIO Polmont – Hosting taster days or supporting 1:1 visits/appointments
- Quarriers – Certified awareness sessions on Drug & alcohol and sexual health & relationships
- FARE – Hospitality and sports sessions
- Bluevale Boxing Club – fitness sessions and strength & conditioning sessions
- My Bnk – Money works workshops
- Citizens Advice Bureau – benefit and housing support
- British Heart Foundation – Certified CPR Training
- Princes Trust – Personal Development Awards, opportunities for young people
- Glasgow Kelvin College – Support participants through their CAA level 4 or 5
- SCVO/YPG – To explore funding options or employment for our participants
- Colleges, Training Providers and employers keen to engage with the group to present potential opportunities for participants
- Job Centre Plus – hosting information days
- Education services – hosting information days



04

Referral Organisations

CFCF's referral routes continue through strong relationships forged with organisations over previous delivery phases as well as other initiatives in our wider portfolio. Across the years our referral sources have increased by consistently networking and ensuring that our project information is circulated and communicated clearly to providers and case managers across a number of local authority areas in Scotland.

These referral routes and organisations include:

- Employment organisations including Skills Development Scotland, job Centre Plus and Jobs and business Glasgow
- DWP
- Police Scotland
- Community safety services
- Local authority services, including social work, youth justice and care leavers teams
- Towards Better Futures (Glasgow City Council)
- Education Services
- Secure care organisations including Kibble, St Mary's Kenmure and Good Shepherd
- Third sector organisations including Action for children, Quarriers, Includem, FARE and Princes Trust
- Mental Health services/teams
- Self-referrals
- Scottish Violence Reduction Unit
- National Autistic Society
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Project Scotland
- Glasgow Clyde College
- Access to Industry/S.T.A.R.S.
- Scottish Sports Future
- Elevate – Glasgow
- Through care support officers (HMYOI)
- NHS Scotland services including Local GPs, occupational therapists and community psychiatric nursing teams
- Local Housing Associations
- Scottish Prison Services including HMP Barlinnzie, HMP Addiewell and HMYOI Polmont
- Enable Scotland

Our network of referral agencies is constantly developing and we feel we are well-placed to expand this bank of referral partners and subsequently diversify our future network.

05

Case Studies

Name: Abbey Prior

Age: 18

Residency: Family home, Glasgow area

Referral Route: Social Worker Criminal Justice Team

Background: Criminal Justice

Participant Goals:

- Create routine and structure
- Meet new people
- Reduce offending behaviour
- Make positive choices
- To gain employment

Structure of Project for the individual:

- 10 week project, attending on Mondays and Tuesdays
- Morning sessions for personal development, topical based workshops and employability support
- Afternoon sessions that offer a variety of multisport opportunities and physical activity options and online learning courses
- Weekly one to one Counselling sessions if required/appropriate
- Weekly one to one employability support if required/appropriate
- Tracking and Aftercare if required/requested

Individual Journey/Personal Success

Celtic FC Foundation Coaching Staff – Physical Activity overview

Throughout the physical activity aspect of the programme, Abbey was a joy to work with. Engaging in all multisport activities, Abbey's fitness levels increased significantly.

Abbey began by identifying a base level of fitness testing and was able to build on her scores by attending sessions such as Yoga, Football, Basketball, Badminton, Circuits and boxing.

Additionally, the sessions offered Abbey opportunities to try new sports, develop new skills, all the while increasing her confidence within the group. During the walks to and from physical activity, Abbey frequently expressed how much she was enjoying the sessions, in particular football.

At the end of the project, Abbey re-sat the fitness test to measure any changes in her fitness levels. Overall, Abbey increased her scores in every aspect including the bleep test, press ups, sit ups and squats.

Abbey was a pleasure to work with throughout and hopefully will take the skills and confidence she has developed to continue to work on her fitness in her own time.

Celtic FC Foundation Employability Advisor overview

Before joining Celtic FC Foundation CashBack project, Abbey found herself going from course to course resulting in little success. As a direct result of this Abbey found her days were becoming increasingly unstructured with no particular routine. Abbey felt she lacked motivation and often found herself engaging in negative behaviours on a regular basis. Abbey was keen to gain employment, however felt that due to her current circumstances she would be unemployable and had lost any hope of this in the future.

Celtic Football Club is something Abbey is passionate about so it felt like she was right at home and this was a right fit for her. Instantly Abbey felt motivated and keen to engage, expressing that it gave her a sense of belonging and the much-needed structure she had been seeking. Throughout the 10 weeks Abbey engaged with a variety of workshops that provided her with opportunities to learn more about her own skills as well as setting new personal goals.

Abbey took on the programme as an opportunity to press pause, reset and focus on what changes she wanted to make going forward that would give her the best chance of success. Abbey was a key team player, demonstrating excellent leadership and communication skills. Often other young people would migrate to her as she has such a lovely nature and was always smiling. No task was ever too much for her and Abbey fully embraced each workshop.

On completion of the project Abbey had gained a further 4 new qualifications including her community achievement award, CPR, health and safety in the workplace and her 1.1 coaching badge. Abbey had a new lease of life, much more positivity for the future, introduced routine and minimised engagement in negative behaviours within the local community.

In the final weeks of the project, Abbey attended our opportunities day to learn about what could be on offer for her beyond the 10-week project. The opportunities day included: employment, training, education and volunteering opportunities, which included Celtic FC HR department.

As a result of the opportunities day Abbey had applied for a warehouse assistant position within Celtic FC. With her new CV, increased confidence and her positive mindset, Abbey found herself newly employed. Initially, this was temporary for the Christmas period however Abbey made a positive impression on the warehouse team and has since been offered a permanent position.

Overall, Abbey has achieved and exceeded all of the goals she had created, moving forward in her journey.

Name: Stewart

Age: 23

Residency: Glasgow

Referral: Self-Referral

Participant Goals:

- Improve confidence
- Meet new people
- Be more active

Structure of Project for the individual:

- 10 week project, attending on Mondays and Tuesdays
- Morning sessions for personal development, topical based workshops and employability support
- Afternoon sessions that offer a variety of multisport opportunities and physical activity options and online learning courses
- Weekly one to one Counselling sessions if required/appropriate
- Weekly one to one employability support if required/appropriate

Tracking and Aftercare if required/requested

Celtic FC Foundation Coaching Staff – Physical Activity

During Stewart's time within the Cashback Programme we have seen a huge change in his ability to take part in physical activity. When Stewart first started on the programme he would find it difficult to keep up with the group just walking to lessons never mind lasting the duration of the session. Through patience, commitment and a huge effort we started to see a change to Stewart's application in sporting activities.

Each time Stewart attended one of the physical activity sessions one thing that was never in doubt was his effort, he always gave his all and this is why we started to see incredible changes. Stewart's mobility, stamina, flexibility and strength vastly improved, notably losing around 20lbs in weight. Due to participation and weight loss Stewart continued to grow from strength to strength, he began being able to keep up with the group while walking to physical activity lessons, during football, boxing and yoga he was able to participate throughout full sessions.

Stewart had a lot of incredible moments while involved in the physical lessons from hardest worker at boxing to playing in an 11 aside competitive football match but I feel Stewart's star moment came when we attended Pinkston Water sports. Without fear Stewart was able to paddle board and go canoeing which both are extremely demanding physically and require a lot of balance, coordination and strength. Stewart was delighted with his achievements and celebrated by jumping in to the water for a swim.

Personal Success/ Retreat

Stewart was referred to the project by a friend of his who has been on the course in a previous intake. Stewart has a very small circle of friends, and it was of great delight that we were able to offer him a place on our retreat to Loch Tay. Stewart, alongside his friend, joined a group of 10 participants on a 4 day retreat where they would have the opportunity to do various workshops including mindfulness, cold water therapy, yoga, meditation, abseiling alongside eating freshly prepared Vegan food for the duration.

Stewart was also able to have a lot of down time which he enjoyed and began to interact with more of his peers. During this down time the group visited a spa in which he confidently joined the group and used different spa features such as the ice bucket and the sauna. This reflects hugely on how far Stewart has come on his own journey. Initially, a very shy individual with low confidence and self-esteem, now fully interacting in a group setting in some mentally and physically challenges scenarios which he overcame.

During this time there has been such an evident change in Stewart's mannerisms, his confidence and his interactions with staff and peers. Since the retreat, Stewart's whole approach to life and weekly routine has changed dramatically. From someone who would spend 24 hours, 7 days a week in his room, maybe only leaving the house once or twice a month. Stewart would sit for hours, gaming online and this would be his only source of interaction with anyone from outside his household. Often eating quick ready meals, snacking heavily and having numerous takeaways each week.

Since completing the cashback course here, Stewart's weekly routine has changed hugely. He now starts his week with a long walk every Monday, sometimes with his friend. On a Tuesday, he takes it easy ahead of what is a busy Wednesday with a swimming session with a friend, followed by the evening spent at his new project. He uses his weekends to now go out on social outings and still gives himself some time gaming, which is now much less frequent sometimes going 2 or 3 days without playing at all.

During the retreat the participants were introduced to a Vegan diet, with a chef on site providing healthy options throughout the day. Stewart enjoyed the food hugely, and this encouraged him to have a much more balanced and proportioned diet since this experience. Following on from the retreat, Stewart has begun to use recipes which he got during cashback to introduce a more balanced diet to the household. He himself will cook meals using these recipes such as Spaghetti Bolognese twice a week. This has encouraged the family to cook more at home and eating more balanced dinners, dishes like fish which Stewart tried for the first time during retreat, cutting takeaways down to a weekly treat as opposed to a regular option.

Celtic FC Foundation Trauma Counsellor - 1:1 Therapy

Stewart recognised during the 10 week project that he would benefit from a period of 1-1 counselling and therapy. During this time Stewart was offered time and space to work through some of the challenges he had been facing. Stewart committed to this fully and has found it beneficial in helping him make some positive lifestyle changes.

Celtic FC Foundation Employability Advisor

During his time with Celtic FC Foundation, Stewart done various workshops around goal setting, job search techniques and application writing. To help with this, Stewart got support creating a new up to date CV. Stewarts goals set were about improving his confidence, meeting new people and being more active. Since finishing University online he had spent a great amount of time, especially with lockdown, at home. Stewart would like to eventually get to the stage that he is applying to go into work, however at the time he feels best to work on himself. With this in mind, Stewart has now taken the opportunity to join a new project that focuses on personal development.

06 Targets and Outcomes for strands 1, 2 and 3

Targets and Outcomes Strand 1 and 2

2021-22

Outcome 1: YP build their capacity and confidence		Actual	Target	Variance
YP report increased confidence	No.	393	367	26
YP report they are able to do new things	No.	393	367	26
YP feel more resilient	No.	393	367	26
Other stakeholders report increasing confidence in YP	%	100%	85%	25%
YP report positive supportive networks	No.	393	367	26
YP report positive changes in their behaviour	No.	393	367	26
Other stakeholders report perceived positive changes in behaviour of young participants	%	100%	85%	25%

Outcome 2: YP develop their physical and personal skills				
YP increased personal skills, achieving accredited learning	No.	102	61	41
YP report an increase in their skills	No.	106	61	45
Other stakeholders report skills increasing in YP	%	100%	85%	25%

Outcome 3: YP health and well-being improves				
YP improve wellbeing against SHANARRI indicators	No.	393	367	26
Other stakeholders report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators	%.	100%	85%	25%

Outcome 4: YP participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)				
YP will achieve a positive destination	No.	98	61	37
YP will improve school attendance	No.	2		
YP will improve school attainment	No.	2		
Positive destination breakdown, YP progress to:				
Employment	No.	20		
Further education (including remaining/returning to school)	No.	19		
Training	No.	53		
Volunteering	No.	6		

Outcome 5: YP contribute positively to their communities				
YP take on a volunteering role	No.	6	2	4
Number of hours of volunteering by YP	No.	80		
Number of community focussed awards gained by participants	No.	52		
YP feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	No.	393	367	26
Other stakeholders perceive improvement in YP contribution, links and social interaction	%	100%	85%	25%
Participants perception of their neighbourhood improves	No.	99	61	38
Participants have heightened sense of belonging to a community	No.	97	61	36
Participants have increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community	No.	369	367	2

Outcome 6: YP are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system				
Reported anti-social behaviour and/or criminal behaviour may reduce in area concerned	No.	103	61	42
YP report own participation in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	No.	97	61	36
YP feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour	No.	103	61	42
YP less likely to participate in risk-taking behaviour	No.	103	61	42
YP less vulnerable to being exploited/manipulated by others	No.	106	61	45
YP participate in behavioural change sessions/activities	No.	102	61	45
YP have a risk assessment and corresponding risk reduction plan	No.	84	61	23

Targets and Outcomes for Strand 1

Gender	
Male	87
Female	19
Prefer not to say	0
Total	106

Age	
Under 16	3
16 to 18	37
18	0
19 to 24	66
24	0
Over 24	0
Total	106

Disability	
Vision	0
Hearing	1
Mobility	3
Learning, understanding or concentrating	47
Social or behavioral	35
Prefer not to say	20
None	0
Total	106

SIMD Breakdown	Young People
0 to 20%	92
20 to 30%	13
30 to 40%	1
40 to 50%	
50 to 100%	
Total	106

Success to Date

106 participants engaged in strand 1, our core project based at Celtic Park, participating in a range of certified topical based sessions and workshops, including, goal setting, personal development, self-care, employability, CPR, drug & alcohol awareness, health & well-being and a range of team and individual physical activities/sports/challenges. Many young people also achieved their Community Achievement Award, level 4. SFA 1.1 coaching badge, as well as a number of online modules. It is also worth mentioning 102 participants gained accreditation for learning and skills development, with 52 young people achieve a community focused award, 5 young people went into volunteering or leadership role within community organisations, 80 volunteering hours were achieved. 84 Risk assessment & Risk reduction plans were in place

Young people also highlighted changes in:

- Self -confidence
- Self-esteem
- Improving fitness levels
- Cutting down use of substance/s
- Getting healthier physically
- Improvements to mental health
- Creating new positive relationships
- Changes to diet
- Being more active and engaging in new activities/sports
- Learning new skills
- Achieving certification and accreditation
- How they feel about their future
- Feeling more hopeful
- Being inspired by other
- Applying for future opportunities

Many participants moved into positive destinations, which included moving into employment, engaging in volunteering roles, sustaining education or training options or re-engaging in education.

Targets and Outcomes for Strand 2

Gender	
Male	254
Female	33
Prefer not to say	0
Total	287

Age	
Under 16	14
16 to 18	23
18	0
19 to 24	219
24	0
Over 24	31
Total	287

SIMD Breakdown	Young People
0 to 20%	222
20 to 30%	46
30 to 40%	19
40 to 50%	
50 to 100%	
Total	287

Disability	
Vision	3
Hearing	0
Mobility	11
Learning, understanding or concentrating	49
Social or behavioral	119
Prefer not to say	78
None	27
Total	287

In addition to the above outcomes for strand 1 it is worth noting we engaged with 287 people as part of the bespoke taster sessions and information days we hosted across a range of secure care settings, education settings and community setting for strand 2.

Outcomes for Strand 3

35 young people engaged in therapy sessions with our trauma counselor, 27 psychoeducational workshops were delivered as well as 362 one-to-one counselling sessions conducted as part of our strand 3 work.

We are also delighted to share with you below the Retreat evaluation report below as part of our Strand 3 provision.

07 Retreat Evaluation

Rationale

It had been identified that many of our participants would benefit from the opportunity to engage in a wellness retreat to intensively work upon their personal development.

The very word 'retreat' means "an act of moving back or withdrawing" and this is definitely what our participants experienced!

Without the distraction of their everyday lives, they found themselves focusing on positive elements of self-development that they might have normally ignored or attempted to cram into hectic schedules.

Each participant enjoyed:

- Time to focus and learn new skills through yoga and breath work.
- Eating well – healthy vegan meals and time to try new foods.
- Feel good experiences such as cold water therapy and abseiling.
- A digital detox – time away from tech to fully focus on the here and now.
- Time with likeminded people in a safe, positive environment.
- Breaking unhealthy thinking habits and make positive adjustments to their lifestyles.
- Energising themselves by taking part in outdoor exercise.
- Activities that pushed out of the comfort zone, created a challenge and maximized personal growth.
- Transferable skills to help deal with stress, anxiety, low mood and low motivation.
- Setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely goals for themselves – in short pressing the reset button.
- The shared experience of the retreat with their peers, championing each other throughout and creating strong friendships.

Outline of the Study

Research suggests that those who have attended a week long holistic retreat, showed substantial improvements in their psychological and physical wellbeing (Do wellness tourists get well? An observational study of multiple dimensions of health and wellbeing after a week-long retreat – PMC [nih.gov] Cohen et al, 2017). The most interesting statistic from this study was that six weeks later the improvements were still being displayed, suggesting that participants enjoyed benefits over and above the ‘vacation effect’.

With this in mind, baseline measurements of stress, anxiety, low mood, eating patterns and exercise had been taken for each of our 10 participants. These were revisited post 6 weeks and post 12 weeks. This helped provide feedback which may be used to inform the future use of wellness retreats for the cashback project.

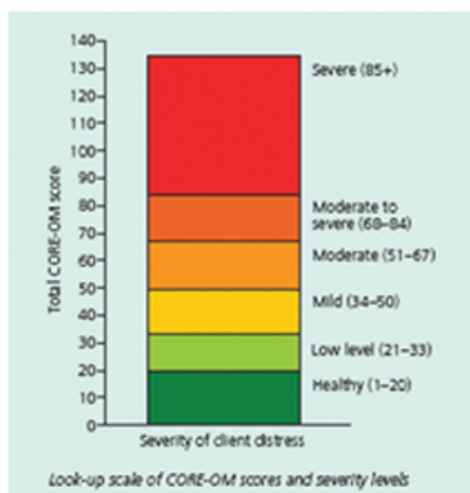
Our Hypothesis suggested that longer lasting positive effects may be observed beyond the 12 weeks post retreat, with participants reporting life style changes being maintained and incorporated into daily routines.

Baseline Measurements Pre Retreat

All 10 participants had baseline measures via CORE 34, which was repeated 6 weeks post retreat and 12 weeks post retreat. The CORE Outcome Measure (CORE-OM) is a client self-report questionnaire designed to be administered before and after any therapeutic work undertaken. The client is asked to respond to 34 questions about how they have been feeling over the last week, using a 5-point scale ranging from 'not at all' to 'most or all of the time'.

The 34 items of the measure cover four dimensions: subjective well-being; problems/symptoms; life functioning; and risk/harm. The responses are designed to be averaged by the practitioner to produce a mean score to indicate the level of current psychological global distress (from 'healthy' to 'severe'). The questionnaire is repeated after the last session of treatment; comparison of the pre- and post-therapy scores offers a measure of 'outcome' (i.e. whether or not the client's level of distress has changed, and by how much).

CORE-OM Scores & Severity Levels



Initially, all participants self-reported symptoms of anxiety and low mood, resulting in low levels of subjective wellbeing as well as feeling affected in the areas of problems and functioning. Base line core 34 scores reflected these self-reported symptoms which ranged from 49 (*mild psychological global distress*) to 78 (*moderate to severe psychological global distress*) in our participant sample.

Additionally, the participants reported *low levels of physical activity* (ranging from no regular exercise to low impact movement such as walking to the local shop) and often preferring to stay at home, spending much of their time *gaming or using social media*. Very little time was spent on pursuing face to face social interaction.

The participant sample reported that much of their food intake was limited to *high carb, high saturated fat, low protein and low nutritional value diets*.

Much research has focused upon the impact that poor diet and low levels of physical activity can have on mental health and wellbeing. Therefore it was important to highlight to our participants that they can heal from psychological distress and improve their wellbeing by engaging in exercise and understanding the links between mood and food, empowering our participants to take action to protect themselves from mental ill health.

6 Week Post Retreat Evaluations

Participants had undertaken evaluation 6 weeks post retreat and the immediate findings suggested improvements in all areas.

Core 34 scores had reduced overall, now ranging from 21 (*low level psychological global distress*) to 46 (*mild psychological distress*) with participants commenting upon improvements in dealing with any problems that had arisen and functioning more effectively.

Participants reported *lower levels of stress, coping more effectively with anxiety and feeling their mood had improved generally.*

Additionally, participants reported that they had been *trying new foods*, had taken a more active role in food shopping, cooking for the household and had begun to *incorporate exercise into their weekly routines*. Some participants reported swimming, use of gym facilities and walking as new activities of choice as well as meeting *face to face with friends* and making a conscious effort to *reduce tech time*.

Participants Recalled their Best Moments:

- ‘The stone circle and campfire stood out for me – it was so emotional letting go of the things that had held me back’
- ‘Abseiling – still can’t believe I did that!’
- ‘The last night at the camp fire – it was a moment of coming together’
- ‘Learning to breath has been important for me – def. helps with my anxious times’
- ‘Learning to journal during the retreat – I don’t think I’ve ever written so much – I’ve written more now than I ever did in school!!!’
- ‘The cold water sessions in the loch was the best – but I have to say the walk down and back was a nightmare, trying to dodge sheep etc. – I’ve never seen sheep that close before!’

It was noted that the majority of participants had fond memories of the retreat and that did these memories did prompt a degree of sadness. Many felt that it was a turning point in their lives to let go of some of the negative beliefs they might have held about themselves and many stated that they did not want to lose the essence of what the opportunity had meant to them. Additional support was offered to think about ways that they could keep the positive momentum in their own day to day lives, to capture and anchor the essence of learning.

12 Weeks Post Retreat Evaluation

It would be fair to say that the post 6 week evaluations exceeded all expectations and it would have been anticipated that there would have been a degree of 'tailing off' or lowered momentum of impact.

Much to our delight, our young people went on to further improve on all aspects!

Final Core 34 scoring showed participants within the ranges of 8 (healthy levels of psychological global functioning) to 26 (low level psychological global functioning). All participants felt more able to cope with daily stressors, felt that they all had a core network of support around them and were living a more fulfilling life.

Participants made the following comments:

- 'I faced my fears [heights and water] and went on to do more activities in my own time'
- 'I'm still using the breathing exercises'
- 'I'm trying many more foods now and trying healthy options'
- 'I think I'm better behaved, less reactive, don't lose my temper as much as I used to'
- 'I'm more giving. What I mean is I am kinder to the people around me and I want to help other people'

In terms of physical activity, our young people reported frequent swimming, gym use, walking outdoors and football training. Many have moved into training opportunities as youth coaches, employment and further education and for the participants that scored the most high initially in psychological global distress, they have joined new groups that encourage connection and social opportunities. Participants cited improved confidence and less anxiety as reasons to pursue positive next steps.

Participants reported lasting connections with each other, meeting in social outings and keeping in touch.

Here's some of what our participants had to say about their experience overall:

- "It was like I had lots of pain, and this [the retreat] was my medicine. It was really good!"
- "The people. Being with people meant the most to me".
- "I think every day was just kind of fun – I couldn't think of a favourite moment! I just really can't express how grateful I am for the experience. To have went up there [Stucktaymore] and done what I done, the abseiling and stuff – stuff I would never have gotten to do - it was amazing – good times!"
- "I think this was a life changing experience....we've done a lot of good things. My favorite was cold water therapy – really wakes you up and gets you ready for the day! Brilliant – would do it all over again!"

Conclusion and Final Considerations

Overall, the data gathered suggests that the use of retreat opportunities have had a positive impact to the subjective wellbeing for our young people well beyond the immediacy of the experience. The visual difference to how our young people carry themselves is obvious, moving from being quite physically 'closed off' to holding their head up high, walking with intent and confidence with open expressions.

The introspection each of the young people experienced appears to enhanced their understanding of 'self' and allowed them to reflect and explore new ways of being, evaluating what they want to project to their world, all reflecting in their final Core 34 scores and self-reports of changes.

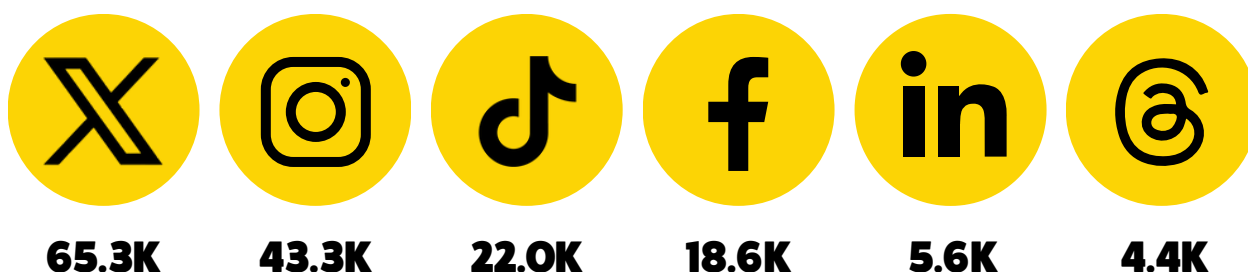
The opportunity to provide more experiences such as this is not only desirable but it is crucial. As the CashBack staff members were present throughout and had taken part in every task alongside the young people, consideration was given to the impact to their own practice and learning.

Each staff member reported a deeper understanding of the young people's past experiences and how these have shaped and often hindered their development. With complete unconditional positive regard, congruence and compassion for each individual, the staff have developed a heightened awareness of trauma and adverse childhood experiences. We have seen the devastating impact on how our young people form beliefs about themselves and how this translates into behaviours, emotions and thoughts of not being 'good enough' or 'bad'.

It would be fair to say that each staff member returned from the retreat with heightened vigor to help, support and understand our young people as well as considering and measuring our own impact in our learning environment. Modelling pro social behaviour has always been at the forefront of our agenda as professionals however, more thought has been given to how we walk alongside our young people on their journey, to encourage, to empower and sometimes hold their hand while they navigate the most difficult of circumstances.

Targets and Outcomes – Communications

We promote the success of the CashBack project through six different social media platforms, which in total, have just under 160,000 followers.



08

Ongoing Learning/Evaluation

Research Scotland have continued to support our work in Year 3 by;

- Developing an online survey that was issued to participants
- Developing an online survey that was issued to stakeholders
- Anonymised case studies – Our researchers held in-depth discussions with young people to explore the impact of the project on their lives
- Discussions with family member and other stakeholders about the difference they had seen in the young people
- Data analysis

This has allowed us to gather data from the participants and stakeholders to measure the success of our project delivery. Gathering this information also supports us to make any relevant changes suggested via the feedback we receive and ensure as we move forward we continue to work alongside the participants around the design and development of all future projects. Promoting inclusion and person centered learning and collaborative working.

We also evaluate each session we deliver across the 10 weeks, including direct quotes from participants and capture some in person feedback at the end of every project as well as record and measure the experience of service for each individual who have undertaken a period of 1:1 counselling.

Learning about creating a supportive atmosphere

Many young people and stakeholders mentioned that the positive, supportive and welcoming atmosphere created at Celtic FC Foundation was key to its success. Staff highlighted a range of ways that they build this atmosphere:

The space – Activity takes place in a large open plan area, with a TV playing music, table tennis, consoles, bean bags and games. Tea, coffee and snacks are available, and lunch is provided. This helps participants to feel safe within the space, and able to talk and build confidence.

The pace – Activities are relaxed and not rushed. Over the first few weeks, there is a strong focus on games, getting to know one another and building relationships.

Boundaries – Staff work to create a relaxed atmosphere, with a sense of respect and young people championing and supporting one another. However, there are clear boundaries too, with young people and staff working together to create group rules at the start of each cohort.

The team – Staff love what they do, and are caring and invested in supporting the young people. The team is also a good mix of male and female staff of different ages and experiences, providing a range of positive role models.

Listening – The programme is shaped by young participants, and based on what they need. Participants ‘pick n mix’ what topics they want to focus on, and provide regular feedback.

Removing barriers – Staff wear casual clothes, sit together with the young people while working and eating, get to know participants and emphasise that they are all on this journey together.

Learning - The approach is constantly refined based on what the cohort of young people wants and needs. Staff are able to be quick on their feet and adapt based on what is working or not working for each group and individual.



