Generation CashBack

Year 3 External Evaluation Report

June 2023

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1. Introduction

1.1. CashBack for Communities is a Scottish Government programme which repurposes money recovered from the proceeds of crime into projects for young people who face disadvantage. In January 2020, the government announced £19m of new funding. Generation CashBack was successful in its application and received £1,700,000 to support the delivery of the programme over three years.

The Generation CashBack programme

1.2. The Generation CashBack programme is managed and delivered by a partnership consortium involving four of Scotland's largest youth work organisations: The Boys' Brigade, Girlguiding Scotland, Scouts Scotland, and Youth Scotland[1].

1.3. Consortium partners work collaboratively to deliver the programme, which provides capacity-building support for youth groups and enables and supports direct activity with and for young people.

1.4. Generation CashBack comprises two main strands:

- **Grow:** Development Officers help new and existing youth groups to grow their offer for young people. Using a needs-analysis approach, DOs support Grow groups to increase their focus on tackling anti-social behaviour and delivering diversionary activity. Their support includes helping groups recruit new volunteers, upskilling youth workers to meet these needs through training, delivering new activities, providing information and advice, as well as providing access to small scale capacity-building funding for essential resources and running costs.

- **Lead**: The Lead strand supports disadvantaged young people to learn and develop new skills which improves their educational and employability options. This is done through the delivery of a range of direct youth work sessions and programmes. Young people are supported to put these skills into practice in their communities, developing their leadership abilities, while gaining a range of youth awards through each consortium partner. These awards are designed to meet young people's needs; enabling them to develop their pathways into further learning and employment.

1.5. Each partner delivers the programme within its own realm of expertise and capacity. For example, Scouts Scotland focus on delivering activity within Scouts membership. Youth Scotland, as the national network for community-based youth work, has the capacity to work with and support a diverse range of local and national youth groups, but not those that are members of the uniformed organisations.

1.6. This Year 3 report provides findings and commentary on the performance of the full three years of the programme, as well as exploring the performance during year 3 only.

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[1] Terminology differs across the partner organisations, for example, The Boys' Brigade groups are called 'companies', and Girlguiding Scotland groups are called 'units'. To protect anonymity and for consistency throughout the report we have referred to all as 'youth groups' or 'groups'.

2. The evaluation

2.1. As a condition of receiving CashBack for Communities funding, consortium partners had to commission an external evaluator to gather evidence about the programme and report on progress towards its outcomes.

2.2. The Lines Between, an independent social research agency, was appointed to engage a sample of young people and stakeholders to explore their experiences of the programme and evidence of its impact.

2.3. This report is based on the following evaluation activity carried out between 2020-2023:

- Focus groups and interviews with 60 young people.

- Lead staff interviews at each partner organisation (five in Year 2 and four in Year 3).

- Interviews with 28 stakeholders (one youth services manager, 21 youth workers, one community development worker, three parents, and two volunteers).

2.4. Over the three years, the evaluation team has facilitated seven consortium workshops, exploring elements of the programme, e.g. the progress each partner has made towards specific strands of delivery, examples of impact, or the broader effects of their work on the community. During Year Two, consortium workshops adopted an Action learning approach, which enabled partners to share challenges and use the space to identify solutions and actions.

2.5. The evaluation team also reviewed secondary data sources including Generation CashBack's quarterly reports to Inspiring Scotland and the Scottish Government, and analysed self-evaluation and monitoring data collected directly from young people.

2.6. Generation CashBack uses a self-complete survey developed with the evaluation team at The Lines Between. The survey aligns with the programme outcomes that Generation CashBack aims to achieve.

2.7. Across the consortium, partners use various methods to administer the survey: providing it to young people online, distributing hard copy formats and supporting groups to form activities around its completion. The survey responses are collected by each partner organisation and collated centrally by Youth Scotland to present a single scorecard reflecting the overall achievements of the programme. The evaluation team at The Lines Between supported the collation, analysis and presentation of the monitoring and outcome data gathered.

2.8. While the ideal approach would be to collect self-evaluation data from all participating young people, we appreciate the challenges this involves. As such, the data collected represents a sample of participants. This sampled approach to quantitative data was used throughout Phase 4 and worked well.

2.9. When assessing performance against outcome targets for Generation CashBack, the proportion of survey respondents reporting achievement against each outcome has been applied to the total population of participants. For example, if 90% of survey respondents indicated they had achieved progress against an outcome, the Scorecard

data assumes that 90% of all Generation CashBack participants would have made the same progress.

2.10.   Over the three years, 9,340 young people engaged through Generation CashBack support, and 5,487 self-evaluations have been returned. This level of returns means that there is a 99% confidence level that applying the same results across the non-responding sample will return the same result to within +/-2% of the survey sample.

2.11.   Stakeholders (typically staff or volunteers from partner organisations) also provided an objective view of the programme's impact on participants in relation to relevant outcomes. Their feedback on the progress made by young people over the three years is included in this final report.

2.12.   It is also worth noting that much of the support provided to youth groups through Generation CashBack is designed and intended to support the sustainability, resilience, and effectiveness of the group's operation. Therefore, Generation CashBack support, particularly through the Grow strand, is often an enabling or contributing factor in outcome achievement rather than directly attributable to the support provided.

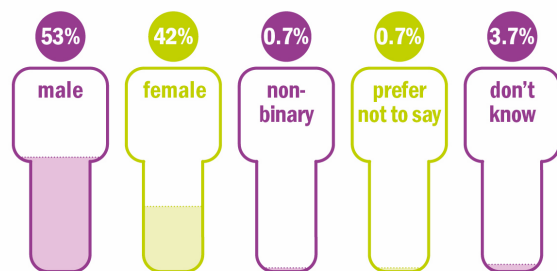*Trying out special effects make-up at the 2022 Reach Event*

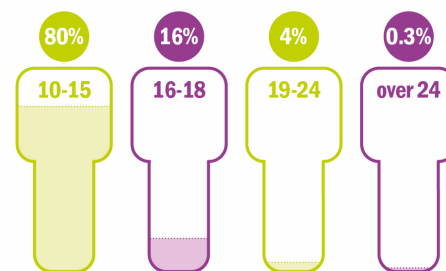### 3. Participant profile and impact on young people

Participant profile

3.1. Across the programme, 9,340 young people benefitted from Generation CashBack support, exceeding the target of 8,000 by almost 17%.

3.2. The infographic below provides an overview of the profile of the 9,340 young people who have participated in Generation CashBack.
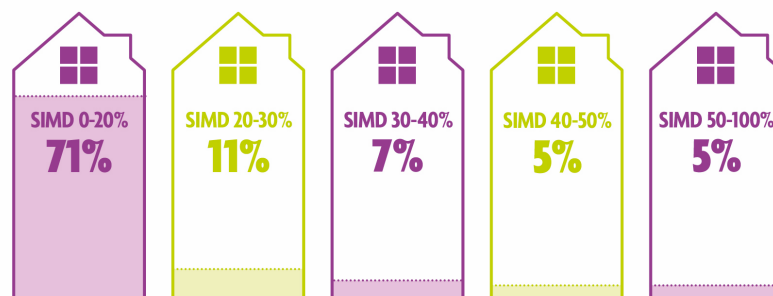
Participant Profile

Gender:

53%	42%	0.7%	0.7%	3.7%
male	female	non-binary	prefer not to say	don't know

Age:

80%	16%	4%	0.3%
10-15	16-18	19-24	over 24

SIMD Decile:

SIMD 0-20%	SIMD 20-30%	SIMD 30-40%	SIMD 40-50%	SIMD 50-100%
71%	11%	7%	5%	5%

3.3. As the data in the infographic demonstrates:

- Most supported young people were between 10 and 15 (80%), followed by those aged 16 to 18 (16%). The programme also supported smaller proportions of 19-24 years olds (4%) and those over 24 (0.3%).

- There was a higher proportion of males (53%) compared to females (42%), with less than 1% non-binary and 4.4% recorded as 'don't know or prefer not to say'.

- 71% of supported young people resided in the bottom 20% of areas in the Social Index of Multiple Deprivation, and 11% in the 20%-30% range, which has remained relatively consistent over the three years.

3.4. Additional demographic data is collected from participants; however, some may not be asked or answer for personal reasons. Among those for whom data was collected:

- 13.7% reported some form of disability, the most common related to social or behavioural issues (4.6%); and learning, understanding or concentration (4.5%).

- Just under one percent (0.9%) reported that their gender differed from that assigned at birth.

- Most described their ethnicity as White Scottish (83.5%), followed by White Other British (5.9%) and White Other (2.12%). 2.52% reported their ethnicity as Pakistani, while 1.33% reported their ethnicity as Mixed or Multiple and 1% reported African, African Scottish or African British.

- 45.2% reported their faith as Church of Scotland, while 33% had no religious beliefs.

- The majority reported being heterosexual (95.2%).

3.5. When comparing this to the profile of year 3 participants only, the results are within +/- 3% of those detailed above for the full three years of the programme. The only measure that has a greater than 3% variance is in relation to religious beliefs where 54% of young people in year three reported their faith as Church of Scotland compared to 45.2% across phase 5.

Coo Park, Youth Scotland member group

Participant outcomes

3.6. This section focuses on the outcomes delivered through Generation CashBack. The findings are informed by the consortium partners' self-evaluation data and qualitative findings from research carried out with young people, project staff and other stakeholders by The Lines Between.

3.7. The findings are structured around the following six programme outcomes agreed between CashBack for Communities and the consortium partners:

- Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk-taking behaviour

- Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills

- Outcome 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves

- Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability, and employment options (positive destinations)

- Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities

- Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system

3.8. The table below provides an overview of key outcome achievement against targets for year three of the programme.

Outcome 1: Young people build their capacity and confidence			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
YP report increased confidence	3,195	2,450	*+745*
YP report they are able to do new things	3,244	2,483	*+761*
YP feel more resilient	3,211	1,960	*+1,251*
YP report positive supportive networks	3,228	2,287	*+941*
YP report positive changes in their behaviour	3,198	2,124	*+1074*
Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
YP report an increase in their skills	3,231	2,386	*+845*
YP gain accreditation for learning and skills development	1,053	817	*+236*
YP complete training opportunities	1,665	1,241	*+424*
YP have taken on leadership roles	1,336	784	*+552*
Outcome 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
YP improve wellbeing against SHANARRI indicators	3,083	1,830	*+1,253*
Outcome 4: Young people achieve a positive destination			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
Young people achieved a positive destination	3,251	2,385	*+886*
Outcome 5: Positive contribution to communities			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
YP feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	3,225	2,614	*+611*
Participants have heightened sense of belonging to a community	3,123	2,614	*+509*
Participants have increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community	3,136	1,960	*+1,176*
Outcome 6: Diverted from criminal behaviour			
	Achieved	Target	Variance
YP participate in behaviour change sessions & diversionary activities	3,267	1,307	*+1,960*

3.9. The infographic on the following page provides an overview of outcome achievement against targets over the three years of phase 5 of Generation Cashback.
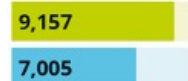
Phase 5 outcomes
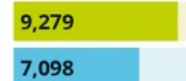
Achieved | **Target**
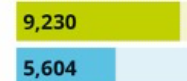
Outcome 1: Building confidence and resilience

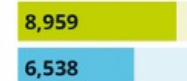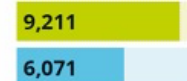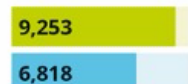| YP report increased confidence	YP report they are able to do new things	YP feel more resilient	YP report positive supportive networks	YP report positive changes in their behaviour
9,157	9,279	9,230	8,959	9,211
7,005	7,098	5,604	6,538	6,071

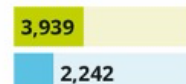## Outcome 2: Developing physical and personal skills

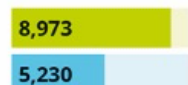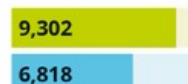| YP report increased skills	YP gain accreditation for learning and skills development	YP complete training opportunities	YP have taken on leadership roles
9,253	3,005	4,720	3,939
6,818	2,335	3,549	2,242

Outcome 3: Improving health and wellbeing

YP report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI indicators

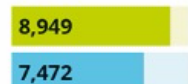|	
8,973	
5,230	

Outcome 4: Positive destinations

YP achieved a positive destination

9,302	
6,818	

Outcome 5: Positive contribution to communities

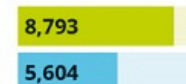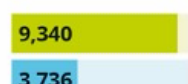| Contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	YP have heightened sense of belonging to community	YP motivated to positively influence community
8,949	8,790	8,793
7,472	7,472	5,604

Outcome 6: Diverted from criminal behaviour

Participated in behaviour change sessions & diversionary activities

9,340	
3,736	

Outcome 1: Building confidence and resilience

YP report increased confidence	YP report they are able to do new things	YP feel more resilient	YP report positive supportive networks	YP report positive changes in their behaviour
9,157	9,279	9,230	8,959	9,211
7,005	7,098	5,604	6,538	6,071

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.10.   The Generation CashBack programme has exceeded its targets in relation to **Outcome 1**, over the three years of the programme with participant feedback showing:

- 98% (9,157 out of 9,340, against a target of 7,005) of young people report improved confidence.

- 99% (9,279 out of 9,340, against a target of 7,098) are able to try new things.

- 99% (9,230 out of 9,340, against a target of 5,604) of young people feel more resilient because of the support they received.

- 96% (8,959 out of 9,340 against a target of 6,538) of young people reported having positive, supportive networks.

- 99% (9,211 out of 9,340, against a target of 6,071) of young people reported positive changes in their behaviour.

3.11.   Stakeholder feedback included:

- 95% observed increased confidence among their young people across the three years of the programme (compared to a target of 70%), and

- 95% reported improved positive behaviours (compared to a target of 60%).

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.12.   The Generation CashBack programme performed strongly against its **Outcome 1** targets in year three, with achievement statistics largely mirroring those across the lifetime of the programme. Participant feedback demonstrated that:

- 98% (3,195 out of 3,267, against a target of 2,450) of young people report improved confidence.

- 99% (3,244 out of 3,267, against a target of 2,483) are able to try new things.

- 98% (3,211 out of 3,267, against a target of 1,960) of young people feel more resilient because of the support they received.

- 99% (3,228 out of 3,267 against a target of 2,287) of young people reported having positive, supportive networks.

- 98% (3,198 out of 3,267, against a target of 2,124) of young people reported positive changes in their behaviour.

3.13.   Stakeholder feedback for year three included:

- 98% observed increased confidence among their young people across the three years of the programme (compared to a target of 70%), and

- 97% reported improved positive behaviours (compared to a target of 60%).

Increased confidence

3.14.   Increased confidence among young people was among the most consistently reported benefit of attending their youth groups, and it was interlinked with other outcomes, such as extending social connections, trying new things and taking on roles in the group that gave added responsibilities.

> *"It does help your confidence quite a lot, especially me because I've always been quite shy. But coming here, helping the girls, helping them, it's been great for my confidence overall. Especially in school, it's maybe kind of answering questions and offering to help teachers. It's just been great."* *[Young person]*

3.15.   Developing existing skills and learning new ones, for example, teamwork, problem-solving, and practical skills, is critical in enhancing young people's confidence and gives them a growing sense of self-belief.

> *"It helps you with like communication an' that, and it helps you build like your confidence, but it does that from a young age. Like build up people's skills and being able to communicate with people and how to be a good person in society."* *[Young person]*

Trying new things

3.16.   A core aspect of youth organisations is providing young people with opportunities to try new things that they otherwise wouldn't. Youth workers understand the importance of keeping young people interested and engaged as a pathway to developing new skills and enhancing personal qualities.

> *"The buses stop early, so you can't get a bus, if you want to go The Portal (leisure centre) for like swimming, there's no buses back for families. This gives them a chance to do different things."* *[Volunteer]*

> *"We try to offer as varied a programme as we can, because if we just focussed on one thing then some of the boys would drift off because that's not their bag, but if we're doing something that they think isn't really for them, then they know that the following week we'll be doing something different. It just keeps it interesting for them through the year."* *[Youth worker]*

3.17. Youth workers also highlighted the challenges presented by the current cost of living crisis and the impact that this has had on young people's participation. Youth groups play an essential role, helping to ensure young people have opportunities to experience new things that their families may be unable to provide for them.

> *"So there's nobody here has a pony, there's nobody does ballet lessons. These are people who have a very difficult life right now. It's difficult usually, but a lot more difficult just now. People with zero-hours contracts and so on."* [Youth worker]

> *"A lot of the kids down here can't access the mainstream football stuff, because of cost- a lot of good football players, were no getting in and their family backgrounds, they couldn't go to like Grahamston or even Falkirk because it was £40 a month standing order just for your kid to go along. And plus it's the travelling. They don't have access to go along with a parent."* [Youth worker]

3.18. Young people also spoke enthusiastically about the different experiences, places and activities that participation in their youth group had given them, describing the fun they had and the new things they learned. Parents also reflected on the value of young people being able to take part in new activities.

> *"He'd just be sitting watching youtube or something, wouldn't be out hillwalking or anything. It's just all the opportunities that he gets coming here."* [Parent volunteer]

> *"It's like an obstacle course up in the air. It's scary but was, it was just amazing."* [Young person]

Positive supportive networks

3.19. Young people can draw on the support of their peers through the social connections and friendships they establish and develop through participation in their youth group. It pushes them to do things they wouldn't have the confidence to do and recognising the support they receive from their peers encourages them to be there for others in the group. This creates a community of support for all the young people in a group.

> *"The good thing about that and the good thing about us all having good relationships with each other, even if we were terrified, and I was terrified, I hated it with a burning passion. They were all like, yes, you can do it, you're doin' amazing, and when we did the jump, I screamed from the top of ma lungs, and then when I got to the bottom, they were like, you did amazing. We all support each other."* [Young person]

> *"And because I get that from people in the group, I want to be there for them, and like, the younger ones as well."* [Young person]

3.20. Youth workers explained that a key enabler in helping young people develop positive social relationships and supportive networks was creating and promoting an inclusive, non-judgemental and welcoming environment.

> *"And so we've got a girl who has selective mutism. She's here. She was away for a wee while, so I sent her Mum a text saying, is [young person] coming back, and she phoned and said, 'I didn't think you'd want her back'. So I said, if she's happy to come, we're happy to have her. We know she doesn't always want to speak. But she speaks to the other girls. There's a lot of perception of parents of; you won't want her here because…".* [Youth worker]

> *"Because we can join in in the games, nobody's gonna judge you if you make a mistake, you can just be yourself."* [Young person]

3.21. The positive trust-based relationships that young people develop with youth workers and other adults involved in running their youth group were also evident, with young people seeing them as a source of support, advice and guidance.

> *"We trust them, you can talk about any problems with them, just anything."* [Young Person]

> *"It's the fact you get to know people on a personal level, it's not like the officer are your teachers, you can have a joke, have a laugh, it's not regimented, and you can be more open. It's just a really friendly place."* [Young person]

Changes to behaviour

3.22. Some youth workers reflected on their young people's circumstances and challenges, and the importance of providing them with good role models. They also acknowledged the benefit of giving young people responsibility in supporting behaviour change and encouraging them to be good role models for others.

> *"There's some real disadvantage in the families. People in recovery, in prison. That's what the whole Generation Cashback is for, that was the link, some of the kids had parents in jail. It's trying to break the cycle. The important thing is when it goes to this positive role models."* [Youth worker]

> *"As you work up through the group you will starting to help with other bits, they'll be helping with the younger groups. And then the stuff like taking them out and doing things, stretching them a wee bit beyond what they are comfy with. We look to give them tasks that can help them as individuals and getting them to work in teams."* [Youth worker]

3.23. Young people also acknowledged their role in helping to set a good example and how this influenced their behaviour during their youth group. Others described how their participation helped them improve and motivated them to do things for others.

"

"Well, let's just say I keep my anger cool in this place. If someone tries to start on me here, I keep my anger cool. In front of little kids, I dinnae want to traumatise them, they'll just end up doing the same as me, they'll copy me [and I don't want that]." [Young person]

"We'll help out making teas and coffees, and there's always stuff needing done to them." [Young person]

"It gives you good morals as well. It teaches you during the games, through if you do any badge work or anything like that. It's just good morals and how to be a better person." [Young person]
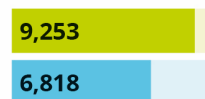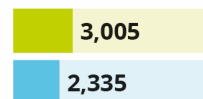

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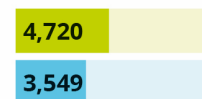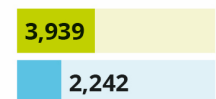## Outcome 2: Developing physical and personal skills

YP report increased skills	YP gain accreditation for learning and skills development	YP complete training opportunities	YP have taken on leadership roles
9,253	3,005	4,720	3,939
6,818	2,335	3,549	2,242

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.24. Almost one third of young people (32% or 3,005 out of 9,340, against a target of 2,335) achieved skills development recognised as accredited learning, while 5,422 participated in non-accredited learning. The stakeholder feedback across Years 1 and 2 saw 86% of stakeholders reporting skills increasing in supported young people, which exceeds the target of 65%.

3.25. Generation Cashback provided various accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities, with accredited learning spanning SCQF qualification levels 2 to 7. Achievement at level 2 comprised most of the accredited learning, accounting for 54% of the total, followed by level 3 (38%). These learning opportunities include:

- Dynamic Youth Award (SCQF Level 3)
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Youth Leader qualification and Young Leader award
- Patrol Leader training
- The King George Memorial course
- Queen's badge completion course
- KGVI (SCQF Level 7)
- Hi5 Award (SCQF Level 2)
- Youth Achievement Award (SCQF Levels 4 - 7)

3.26. Almost all (99% or 9,253 out of 9,340, against a target of 6,818) reported an increase in their skills more widely, and from the evaluation fieldwork conducted and the findings gathered, this area of development relates to personal, social and life skills.

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.27. In line with achievement levels for the Phase 5 programme, in year three close to one third of young people (32% or 3,231 out of 3,267, against a target of 2,614) achieved skills development recognised as accredited learning, and 1,726 participated in non-accredited learning.

3.28. The stakeholder feedback during year three saw 94% of stakeholders reporting skills increasing in supported young people, which exceeds the target of 65%.

3.29. Regarding accredited learning, most was completed at SCQF level 2 (71%) and level 3 (11%), with smaller proportions at level 4 and 5.

3.30. Reflecting the performance over phase 5, during year three almost all (99% or 3,231 out of 3,267, against a target of 2,386) reported an increase in their skills more widely.

Skills development

3.31. Youth work organisations recognise the role of engaging and fun activities in developing young people's skills and abilities. They also acknowledged that this does need to be overtly done or communicated as a skills development exercise. Instead, the skills development benefits can be realised simply through participation.

> *"We try to develop those things (different skills) but don't make it obvious that that's what we are doing. The whole point of [youth group] is bringing them on from P1 right through to the [award/qualification] and as they move through the [stages] they take on more elements of responsibility." [Youth Worker]*

3.32. Young people recognised that leadership roles and being given additional responsibilities in the group helped them to develop valuable life skills.

> *"I do think that COVID kind of, like, you're gonna gasp at this, but I feel like it kind of brought my confidence level down a bit. Because for two years, I wasn't interacting with people because I wasn't face to face with people. But I do think being a young leader and doing all this and talking to people every day, talking to people giving instructions, all that, it does help me. I do feel more confident." [Young person]*

3.33. They also described the different activities that they had been able to participate in, which had helped them develop and grow.

> *"Like there's, we do lots of art, and I wasn't the best at art, and I'm better now, and also the cooking and lots of different things that make you better at them. Friendship building. It's helped me and just skills at life." [Young person]*

> *"It helps you with like communication an' that, and it helps you build like your confidence, but it does that from a young age. Like build up people skills and being able to communicate with people and how to be a good person in society." [Young person]*

3.34. The importance of physical activity and practical skills was also stressed by youth workers and young people. They recognised the opportunity to participate in different sports, games and outdoor activities as essential to skills development.

> *"We've got a lot of exercise equipment, boxing and multi gym and stuff. I've had the older boys and they want to do boxing. So we've got a coach from Grangemouth, from that Spartans." [Youth worker]*

Outcome 3: Improving health and wellbeing
YP report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI indicators

8,973
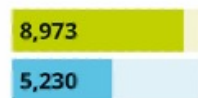
5,230

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.35.   Almost all (94% of young people or 8,793 out of 9,340, against a target of 5,230) indicated that the support they had received had improved their health and wellbeing (aligned to SHANARRI indicators). Similarly, 98% of Stakeholder feedback reported increased wellbeing among young people, well above the target of 65%.

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.36.   Year three achievement reflected that of the full Phase 5 programme, with 93% of young people (3,083 out of 3,267) reported that their health and wellbeing had improved (aligned to SHANARRI indicators). This was echoed by stakeholders with 99% reporting increased wellbeing among young people.

Improving health and wellbeing

3.37.   The outcomes discussed in previous sections also strongly influence improved health and wellbeing among young people. Building confidence, learning new skills, trying new things, and having strong social bonds and connections contribute to this.

3.38.   During the final year of case study fieldwork, youth workers reflected on the issues and challenges that young people face, and how the opportunity to just have fun is an essential aspect of a young person's overall health and wellbeing.

> *"But it's good that they get to do things; they get away. What they really love is going with their friends. I said to them, what do you like about Gravity? The kids were like, we're all together, and there's no mums and dads here. So they're getting to do something that's just having fun."* [Youth worker]
>
> *"Because they've been told since they were small it's too expensive. So we went, and they were amazed by that. And they thoroughly enjoyed it."* [Youth worker]

3.39.   For young people, the most common theme relating to health and wellbeing was being productive and having a place where they could socialise, enjoy themselves and experience new things. We also heard examples of young people developing their understanding of healthy foods and undertaking physical projects that involved growing and using their own fruit and vegetables.

"

"I've made friends with people that I wouldn't have known. And there's people I would know but I know much better by being here with them."
[Young person]

"The kids actually had a visit to [community organisation], and they have an orchard, and their own area where they plant trees and grow their own fruit and veg, and got the kids trying what was left over, which was rhubarb and carrots. Literally from the ground, scrubbed and eat them. So it gave them a taster of what they could do and that's where we got the idea. It wasn't long after that we started, plotting the land and getting the stuff we needed."
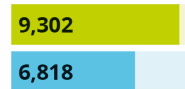*[Youth worker]*

Scouts Scotland Green Young Leaders programme

Outcome 4: Positive destinations

YP achieved a positive destination

9,302	
6,818	

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.40. Almost all young people (99.6% against a target of 73%) supported through Generation Cashback have participated in positive activities (9,302 out of 9,340, against a target of 6,818).

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.41. During year 3, as with the full three years of the programme, 99% of young people (3,251 against a target of 2,385) reported participating in activities that supported the achievement of a positive destination.

Achieving positive destinations

3.42. The feedback from youth workers and young people during case study fieldwork related to learning, employability, and employment covered three main themes:

- Volunteering opportunities in their group and the community.

- Developing skills that support their education and their ambitions for the future.

- Increasing aspirations.

3.43. Youth workers reported that giving young people opportunities to develop their skills and see what they can achieve increases self-belief and heightened aspirations for post-school life and career ambitions.

> *"I think we make a difference to how they fit in with everybody else and the ambitions they've got. When they're at school, and everyone is doing what everyone else is, like, 'we're all going to be hairdressers', and so on. There's no hairdressers next door, they're all "I can do this, I can do that". And that's what we do as part of the programme, raise their ambition." [Youth worker]*

3.44. Young people could also recognise how the opportunities they had as part of their youth group would benefit them in the future.

> *"Because when I'm older, I want to be a primary school teacher, so it'd look good on ma CV as well. So coming here, getting that kind of experience as a leader, that helped me build my CV, to be able to basically say, Look, I've done all of this work. That gives me better options." [Young person]*

3.45. Participation in youth group activities was also attributed to other benefits, such as positive engagement at school and developing skills that support progress in education.

> "*For him it is that opportunity, it helps at school, like teambuilding, getting on with people, just doing lots of different tasks that you wouldn't necessarily do on a Friday night.*" [Parent]
>
> "*The thing that we do in[youth group], we focus on the soft skills just now, about making and working in teams and negotiating and actually getting on with each other…And it's about working as a team, not always working with your friends. So all these different skills come into it…That's been useful for them.*" [Youth worker]

3.46. Youth workers reflected on the role of volunteering in supporting the development of skills and personal qualities, drawing attention to opportunities within the youth groups being on a par with those in the community. Young people recognised how volunteering could help them now and in the future and described the value of giving something back.

> "*Whether it is picking up some leaves, even sweeping up, they do a lot for us. They work with the young ones as well.*" [Youth worker]
>
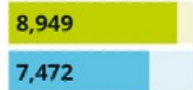> "*I'm looking forward to the opportunities for volunteering outside of [Youth group].*" [Young person]
>
> "*The older group, so sort of S4 to S6, a lot of them will be doing their advanced awards this year, and as part of that they need to do voluntary service within the youth group, so we are doing work with them just now to give some skills and ideas about how best to work with the younger age groups.*" [Youth worker]
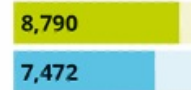
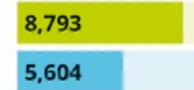## Outcome 5: Positive contribution to communities

Contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	YP have heightened sense of belonging to community	YP motivated to positively influence community
8,949	8,790	8,793
7,472	7,472	5,604

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.47. Generation CashBack has exceeded its cumulative target for the programme relating to the positive contribution that young people make to their communities. When completing the self evaluation form, young people are advised that 'community' typically refers to the group in which they participate. The results indicate:

- Young people feel their links with communities or social interaction are improving (8,949 against a target of 7,472); which equates to 96% of those participating

- 94% of young people have a heightened sense of belonging to their community (8,790 against a target of 7,472).

- Increased motivation to positively influence their community is experienced by 94% of young people (8,793 against a target of 5,604).

3.48. Across the life three year duration of the programme young people delivered a total of 85,580 hours of volunteering through the volunteering roles they carried out. This represents 87% of the programme target of 98,800 hours. This shortfall was reported to be contributed to by the COVID-19 pandemic which restricted volunteer opportunities, and also through a potential under-reporting by young people.

3.49. Stakeholder feedback on this outcome indicated 85% reporting improvement in young people's contributions to their community, compared to a target of 70%.

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.50. The performance against this outcome in year three was slightly above that for the full three years of the Generation CashBack programme, though not to a significant degree. Feedback from participants indicate that:

- 99% of young people (3,225 out of 3,267) feel their links with communities or social interaction have improved.

- 96% of young people reported a heightened sense of belonging to their community (3,123 against a target of 2,614).

- 96% of young people (3,136 out of 3,267, against a target of 1,960) reported increased motivation to positively influence their community.

3.51. Similarly, 88% of stakeholder's reported that young people's contributions to their community had increased, compared to a target of 70%.

Contributing to communities

3.52. Youth organisations play a pivotal role in communities, keeping them updated with their activities and building stronger connections between young people and their local areas. Some youth workers highlighted the benefit of communicating its activities in helping to attract new members and extend opportunities to other young people in the locality.

> *"We're really active on social media, posting up what we are doing and what we get up to, people see the pictures, see what we do and like it, they are liking what they see and wanting their kids to come here and be part of the group." [Youth Worker]*

3.53. Furthermore, we were told that activities that allow the wider community to get involved and feel that they are part of an inclusive and accepting organisation are also

> *"We've got a lot of involvement from the parents and the wider community and there's a real interest in what we're doing." [Youth worker]*
>
> *"It's important that the parents, the families, can get involved, come along and see what we are doing." [Youth Worker]*
>
> *"So we'll put stuff on, like family days but they are really open to everyone, and it builds the community we have here." [Youth Worker]*
>
> *"It's here for anyone, anyone can come. Most young people round here come, maybe not all the time, but they'll come here." [Youth Worker]*
>
> *"We had two transgender boys. Nobody is bothered here. It's just that simple. They know it's somewhere they can come." [Youth Worker]*

valuable.

3.54. Young people told us that membership of their youth group gave them a sense of what belonging to a community feels like and described their willingness to make a positive difference for their peers and contribute to the running of their group.

> *"I don't just come here for food and friends and all the stuff, but I want to help this place as well. I want to be a volunteer, but I've got a few years before I can sign up. I want to help so they can do more stuff, like get PlayStations. Let other young people have entertainment and people to play with." [Young person]*

3.55. One youth worker also spoke about the importance of exposing young people to parts of the community they were unaware of and making connections with community organisations trying to achieve social good.

> *"It was learning about what is actually in our area—I didn't even know the place existed, and I grew up here. We've grown quite close to [social enterprise] through this project" [Youth worker]*

3.56.   Stakeholders recounted several examples of the work undertaken in the community by youth organisations and their members, often as a way of changing the perceptions held about young people.

> **"We've spent days litter picking, cleaning up all the rubbish at the playing fields at the back of the primary school fields." [Youth worker]**
>
> **"We've got [community organisation] which is a community larder type thing, they do cooked foods for people that come in, and people pay what they can. We grew fruit and vegetables last year and gave them what we had left over so that they could use it." [Youth worker]**
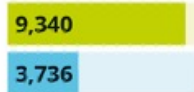

The Boys' Brigade 6/8th Dundee Company

Outcome 6: Diverted from criminal behaviour

Participated in behaviour change sessions & diversionary activities

9,340

3,736

Summary of phase 5 achievement

3.57.   Monitoring data demonstrates that all 9,340 young people have participated in behaviour change sessions and diversionary activities. However, there was limited evidence gathered during fieldwork about the extent to which the programme has contributed to young people being diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Year 3 contribution to phase 5 achievement

3.58.   Feedback gathered through the programme suggests that all young people 3,267 young people in year three have participated in behaviour change sessions and diversionary activities. This represents just over a third (35%) of the total outcome achievement for the life of the programme.

Diversion from anti-social and criminal behaviour

3.59.   Some young people described local challenges with anti-social behaviour and acknowledged the role of their youth group in providing alternative activities that reduce the issues, but reflected on how little the area has to offer at the same time.

> *"It helps to keep trouble down round here... it would be worse if this place wasn't open". [Young person]*
>
> *"There's nothing to do, like, you don't have nothing to do." [Young person]*
>
> *"There's not very much to do, we'll just go for a walk up the railway. There's no really anything else. We come here, whenever it's on." [Young person]*
>
> *"Just the same as what Sean said, other people my age would just be out drinking and daen drugs and everything. It keeps me out of trouble really." [Young person]*
>
> *"It is quite a deprived area and being here there is nothing." [Volunteer]*

3.60.   There was also acknowledgement that anti-social behaviour carried out by young people affects the reputation of all young people and contributes to stigma.

> *"There's four primary schools here and roofs are being jumped on, windows smashed and you've got people on social media blowing up about the young people in the area." [Youth worker]*

> *"The kids know that they are being tarred with the same brush." [Youth worker]*

3.61.   The importance of inclusive approaches was highlighted, and of working with all young people and giving them the chance that others are unwilling to.

> **"**
> *"We tend to get a lot the kids that groups will not touch. They leave the house and get chucked out of youth groups, bombed out because of their behaviour…we give them a chance, we work with them." [Youth worker]*
>
> *"Now he comes to us. We gave him the kit, now he's integrated with us. That's the profile of the kids, the kids that nobody wants." [Youth worker]*

3.62.   One youth worker stressed the need to understand why young people are acting in a particular way and provide them with an alternative that they find interesting and appealing. Similarly, a young person reflected on how their behaviour inside the youth group differed when outside.

> **"**
> *"We know them all. Over there you get free wifi [if you are close enough to the building]. So sitting round the back carrying on but annoying the groups that were in with loud music. The whole reason for being there was the free wifi. I knew that I spoke to [Youth Scotland DO] who said there was (potential support from) Cashback. I thought 'Great idea!'. Hoover that lot up and bring them over here. And we'll call it Dark Skies Bright Stars, so it was all about music." [Youth worker]*
>
> *"[Outside of here] I do stuff I shouldn't do. See, when I'm here, I'm a nice calm person, but see, if you see me outside this place, you wouldnae like to see me like that." [Young person]*

4. Generation CashBack delivery

4.1.   This chapter presents feedback gathered from Generation Cashback lead staff. It provides insight into the aspects that contribute to its success as well as the challenges encountered in the past three years.

Responding to emerging needs

4.2.   The first two years of Phase 5 of the Generation Cashback programme were primarily focused on responding to the needs of youth groups and young people during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. This largely involved supporting groups to sustain their engagement and delivery with young people in new and different ways.

4.3.   During this final year, Generation Cashback support has helped groups overcome some of the legacy challenges that remain since the pandemic. It provided youth groups with support to:

- find and access alternative venues

- recruit new volunteers

- upskill youth workers to support young people who are struggling with mental health or aspiration and attainment

- re-engage young people and,

- attract new members.

4.4.   Providing activities that improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people was also a priority for youth organisations, and Generation Cashback support has helped them to meet this need.

4.5.   Over this final year of the programme, the cost-of-living crisis has brought about new needs and challenges that affect the operation of youth groups and directly impact young people.

4.6.   Youth organisations operate in an environment of increasing costs – staffing, energy, materials, and venues – which is often against a backdrop of static funding levels with increased expectations on what that funding is to provide. They are also facing increased costs in helping to ensure their young people can have a hot meal, or by helping them with travel costs, clothing/uniforms and subscription costs.

4.7.   For young people, the cost-of-living crisis puts their ability to maintain participation at risk. As described above, even small costs attached to participation can create an unsurmountable barrier to continued membership.

4.8.   Generation CashBack has made it possible for youth groups to respond flexibly to ensure sustained activity, and that young people continue to access opportunities to have new experiences, develop their skills and have positive social interaction and support. Occasionally, this has involved helping groups to identify and access additional support beyond that provided through Generation Cashback.

Involving young people

4.9. In Year 2, groups began to return to face to face engagement, supported by Generation CashBack DOs. In Year 3, there has been even more opportunities for face-to-face engagement with youth groups, their staff, volunteers and their young people. This has enabled greater involvement of young people in consultation and activities that explore their thoughts, ideas, and areas of interest for the types of projects that can be developed through Generation Cashback support.

4.10. Consortium partners feel that engaging young people in the design of activities can generate insights and ideas that young people engage with and take ownership of. One example of this was a youth group that brought together young people to develop ideas that could combat the stigma that surrounded young people in the local area. The resulting project involved engagement with a local social enterprise and the creation of their own fruit and vegetable patch. The youth worker commented that they were surprised by the ideas that were generated and the activity likely would not have been shaped in the way it was without the involvement of their young people. This has led to sustained interest and engagement amongst the young people and demonstrated the value of this approach.

Enablers of success

4.11. Reflecting on Phase 5 successes, the consortium partners highlighted the reach they had achieved and the outcomes generated for young people and youth groups overall. Acknowledging the challenging delivery context of the past three years, they highlighted the following factors as critical in the success of the programme:

- **Flexibility of Cashback support** – The flexibility of the Generation CashBack model, with the combination of financial and non-financial holistic support, enables the programme to meet different groups' specific and varying needs. There is such diversity across the various organisations' service provisions that consortium partners see the ability to tailor support as critical to the programme's success.

- **Proactive engagement** – Consortium partners recognise the ineffectiveness of general awareness-raising activity in the engagement of youth organisations. Each partner proactively identifies eligible groups and makes direct approaches, taking time to meet and discuss the programme with youth groups. They send a clear message that they want to collaborate and help them provide the best possible experiences and opportunities for their young people.

- **Understanding the needs of Youth organisations and their young people** – Spending sufficient time understanding the in-depth needs of organisations and their young people is essential in providing the most appropriate and effective support. This involves understanding their operating context, their local communities, and the challenges or opportunities they have. This work is underpinned by a process of community mapping alongside a robust needs analysis resulting in a bespoke package of support.

- **Removing burden** – Simplifying access to Generation Cashback support can help remove barriers for youth organisations. This may include helping to complete

programme paperwork and supporting activities to capture evaluation data and feedback.

- **Taking thinking beyond initial ideas** – Investing time in understanding the needs of a youth organisation enables Development Officers to strategically think about how the organisation can utilise Generation Cashback support to enhance the impact it generates.

- **Reach of the consortium** – Each consortium partner has areas of Scotland where they are less well represented with member youth organisations or have organisations that don't meet the programme's eligibility criteria. As a collective, however, they can ensure that Generation Cashback support is reaching and benefitting youth groups and young people nationwide.

- **Connections with wider support** – Supporting youth organisations through Generation Cashback also provides the opportunity to make them aware of and connect them with other available support and resources. This includes support available through the membership infrastructure of each consortium partner, as well as through other organisations and partnerships. Groups who have participated in Generation CashBack typically have increased engagement with their membership organisation in the years that follow, allowing them to embed the development that they have achieved as part of the programme, and to continue to maximise the opportunities available to them.

- **Grow and Lead strands** - While the Grow and Lead strands of Generation CashBack work independently, they also operate in parallel, providing youth organisations and their young people with more holistic support and enhancing the opportunities available for young people. For example, a group may be identified for support through Grow, and receive support with worker training, volunteer recruitment, programme planning and some costs, but then also access the Lead strand and have programme Development Officers come to their groups and deliver programmes with their young people, as well as accrediting their achievements.

- **The youth organisations** – Consortium partners highlighted the determination and commitment of the youth workers and volunteers that manage and operate youth organisations. Their drive and passion for supporting positive change for their young people and providing opportunities and support that enable them to thrive are what makes Generation Cashback support so impactful.

Challenges

4.12. The identification of eligible groups can be a complex process. There are several factors that are explored to identify eligibility which includes:

- The postcode of where the group is based.

- Home postcodes of the young people.

- Local reports and information about antisocial behaviour.

- Youth worker insights about young people at particular risk of entering the criminal justice system and other factors that contribute to this.

4.13. This can present a challenge in terms of the time that this takes, with one consortium member explaining that identification of eligible groups was easier during the first two years. During the final year they found it required a greater investment of resource to identify and engage groups.

4.14. Another consortium partner spoke about a perceived stigma attached to the Generation Cashback programme amongst some youth workers. That it is funded through the proceeds of crime and is intended to divert people away from the criminal justice system and contribute to reductions in criminal and anti-social behaviour and activity can be seen in some cases to create a barrier to engagement.

4.15. Changes in staffing and fluctuating resource and capacity can also create challenges in providing a package of support. While consortium partners can provide input and support, success requires youth organisation staff and volunteers to fulfil their role and commit the time and resources. During times of change or reduced capacity, this can be difficult for youth organisations to manage.

4.16. In addition to the point above, the cost-of-living crisis has resulted in some groups focussing on delivering their core work while managing their various challenges. They do not have the thought-space for development activity.

4.17. The final challenge relates to capturing the required evaluation data. While continuous refinement has been made to the process and the support available to help youth organisations collect data, it can still be difficult and requires considerable resources from consortium partners to chase groups to return data.

Generation CashBack legacy

4.18. While Generation CaschBack support delivers direct benefit to the youth groups and young people it supports, it also leaves a legacy that will continue to benefit more young people in the future. For example, the upskilling of workers to deliver higher quality and effective services to young people now, will be sustained and will continue to benefit other young people over time.

Consortium

4.19. Consortium partners were positive about the consortium approach and perceived it to have grown in strength over time, adding value to the Generation CashBack programme. This included:

- A source of support and shared problem solving

- Sharing expertise, experiences, good practice, resources, and activities to inform ongoing development and improvement

- A better understanding of other sources of support that are available to youth organisations

- Drawing inspiration from each other's successes and ideas

- Extending the reach of Generation Cashback support

4.20. Partners acknowledged that each organisation works differently and recognised this brought insights and learning that they could draw on collectively. Generation

Cashback's flexibility also means that each organisation has developed ways of working that align with their own systems, processes, and approaches.

4.21. Some minor challenges or frustrations were raised. The first relates to the Reach events which were intended to be an opportunity to bring member organisations and their young people together. However, there is variation in the extent to which representation is achieved across each of the partner organisations, with some challenges in generating interest among their member groups. In Phase 6, they intend to have themes (e.g. climate action) underpinning these events, which consortium partners feel will make it a more attractive proposition.

4.22. As Generation CashBack is run by a consortium, with four partners and four different logos, it can be difficult to ensure that all partners have equal prominence across all communications and publications from Inspiring Scotland and Scottish Government. The consortium aims to address this by having a group or young person from a different partner as the featured case study for each quarter.

5. Conclusions

5.1. The findings enable us to confidently conclude that Phase 5 has been delivered effectively and successfully. All performance targets in relation to the programme reach and outcomes generated for young people have been exceeded, apart from one. The one that has not been met is in relation to the number of volunteer hours carried out by young people, with opportunities restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteering hours are also captured on a self-report basis from young people, and consortium partners suggest that it is potentially being under-reported.

5.2. Beneath the numbers, the stories captured through case study fieldwork has provided rich and in-depth evidence of the difference Generation Cashback makes to young people's lives and illustrates the impact of the programme.

5.3. Key to Generation Cashback's success has been its ability to respond swiftly and effectively to the changing needs of youth organisations and their young people. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed the operating landscape for youth organisations, which changed again as the cost-of-living crisis emerged. During this time the programme worked closely with youth organisations to understand the needs, challenges and opportunities that they and their young people faced. Providing tailored packages of support has enabled youth organisations to become more resilient and sustainable, and informed and enhanced the support and programmes of activity that they provide.

5.4. The capacity-building and wider wrap around support has meant that young people have sustained their engagement with their youth organisations, participated in a range of different activities and opportunities, built social connections and a network of support, while developing valuable skills for now and in the future.

5.5. Consortium partners have developed learning and used this to inform several areas of good practice which are now embedded in the programme delivery. This good practice is critical to the programme's success and reflects the culture of continuous improvement that has been created across the consortium. The consortium's Phase 6 delivery plan builds on the solid foundation of good practice which was embedded through this phase of the programme.

5.6. As well as continuing with the proven approach to providing support through Generation CashBack, Phase 6 offers new opportunities for the programme. This includes trauma-informed practice development opportunities for youth workers, activities and interventions that support young people's mental health and wellbeing, and thematic approach to the annual Reach events.

5.7. The success of Phase 5 of the Generation CashBack programme, and the consortium's desire to continuously reflect, learn, develop and improve strongly suggests that the programme will continue to generate significant positive impact going forward.