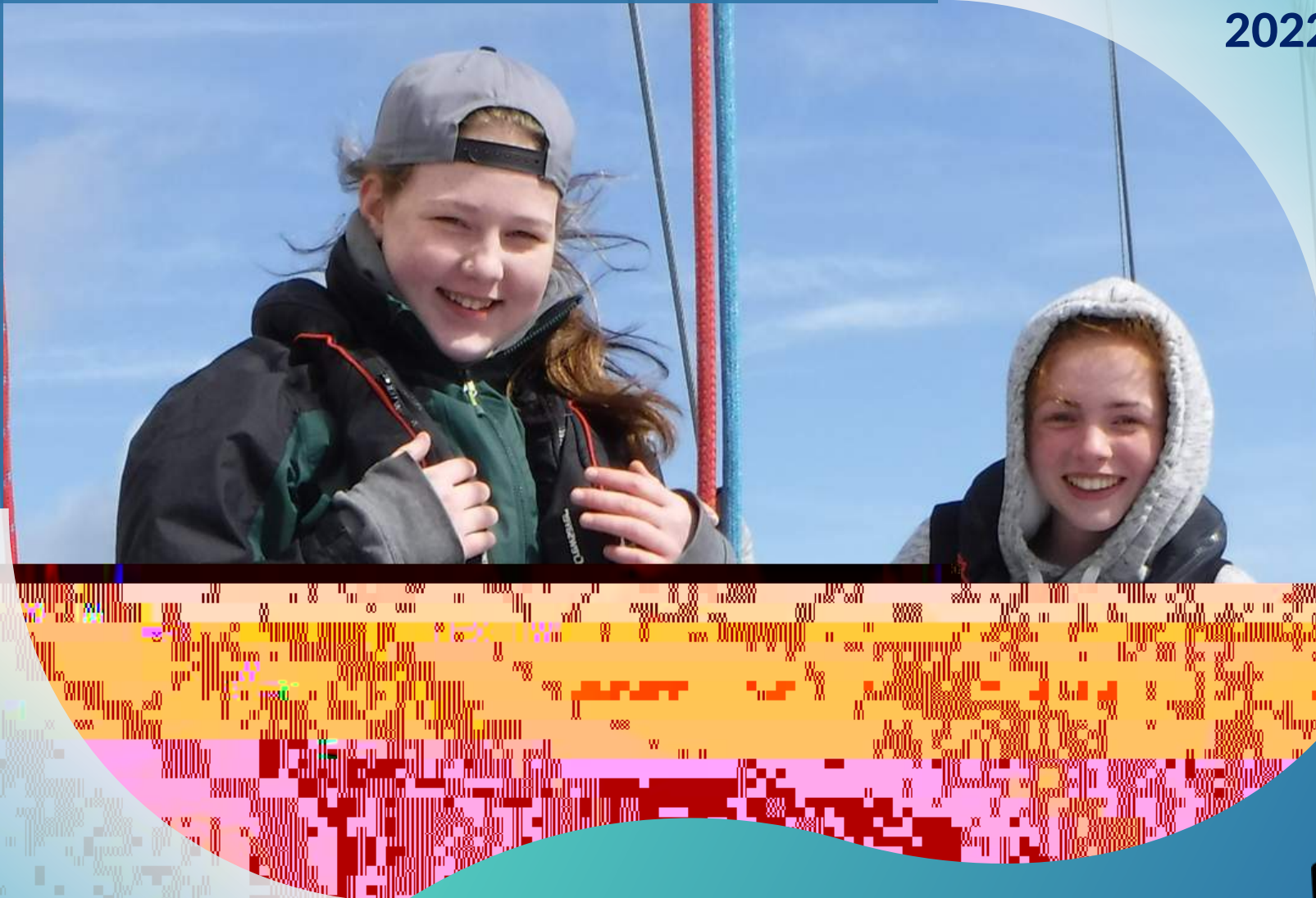


# OCEAN YOUTH TRUST SCOTLAND

# YEAR 3

## EVALUATION

### 2022 - 2023



Catch the Light



Funded by





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# INTRODUCTION

**Ocean youth Trust (OYT) Scotland exists to inspire young people through the challenge of adventure under sail. The voyages provide a uniquely powerful and extremely effective environment for the personal development of young people from all backgrounds.**

This report covers the third year of a fund secured by OYT Scotland from the Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities fund. The fund is designed to reinvest the proceeds of crime back into communities across Scotland. It contributes to a wide range of community-based projects aimed at young people. It prioritises young people most at risk of being involved in antisocial behaviour, offending or reoffending to direct them towards positive destinations.

This is the third round in which Ocean Youth Trust Scotland has received investment from the fund. In response to previous evaluation feedback, OYT Scotland decided to employ youth workers to deliver a series of land-based workshops that support the preparation of young people for the journey ahead by giving the support needed for a positive impact. A second voyage was also added to give more time to complete accredited qualification units and to build on learning from the first voyage.

OYT Scotland overcomes numerous challenges to achieve remarkable success. The report highlights OYT Scotland's impressive accomplishments in providing support to young people at risk of antisocial behavior, offending, and reoffending. However, recruitment from this population can be challenging due to a lack of awareness or reluctance to admit any history of antisocial behavior. This complexity makes it challenging to achieve outcome targets in this context. Furthermore, meeting unusual demands of recovering from the pandemic has made year three of the project demanding. Despite staffing changes OYT Scotland continues to work hard to secure partners that will contribute to the programme's success.

The report presents the results from data gathered throughout the year. It concludes with four case studies that detail the experiences of young people and stakeholders. An additional case study illustrates what can be accomplished after the program ends. Two participants were supported by OYT Scotland to take part in an ERASMUS+ training program, further demonstrating the organisation's commitment to helping young people succeed.



# ABOUT THE EVALUATION

An independent evaluation was carried out by Catch the Light on behalf of OYT Scotland, in accordance with funding requirements. The evaluation team conducted face to face interviews with young people and partner organisations at two different points in the programme to discover what changes were achieved by young people and affirmed by stakeholders such as youth workers, teachers and parents. An interactive digital survey was also used to get direct feedback from young people on how well they feel the outcomes were achieved.

The results presented therefore draw from multiple sources: Checklists that were gathered by OYT Scotland staff for all groups; Case studies made up of individual self-evaluations with young people, interviews with stakeholders and feedback from OYT Scotland staff.

The page of outcomes achieved provides a visual representation of OYT Scotland's success relating to each of the six outcomes. The bar size reflects the percentage of young people averaged over all indicators, with each indicator labeled a, b, c and d, and an indication of whether it is above or below the specified outcome targets set by Inspiring Scotland as the Scottish Government's funding administrator.

The indicators achieved demonstrate that OYT Scotland has mostly exceeded the targets. The results reflect that groups recruited a third of individuals from within the funding priority datazones. Around 47% of participants do not have a history of antisocial or offending behaviour, therefore, permission was granted by Inspiring Scotland to adjust to account for the subset of participants that say they acknowledge they are affected by these issues (an estimated 53%: 64 participants).

The numerical targets set by Inspiring Scotland are available in a separate scorecard. To provide more meaning to these results, the outcome report relates to percentages for the actual number of participants that engaged in the project (n=121).



# PROJECT DELIVERY





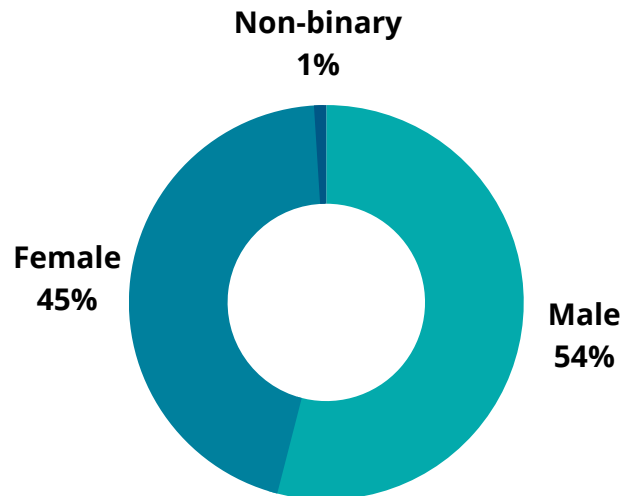
# EQUALITIES & NEEDS

Below is a breakdown of equalities data. Data is self-reported by individuals that consent to providing equalities information (n=37 in year 3) SIMD data is for all participants (n=121).

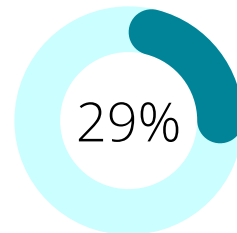
80%

The majority of participants are aged 10-15, with the remainder aged 16-18

## GENDER

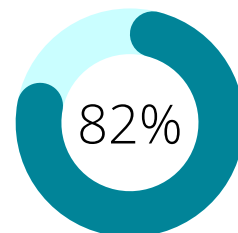


## HEALTH NEEDS

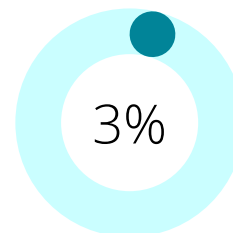


29% have a learning difficulty [dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D]; 82% are of White Scottish origin, 5% are Polish, 8% are of Ethnic Minority origin (Chinese, African, Other Asian). Most participants (81%) identified as heterosexual/straight. 3% are Bisexual, 8% prefer not to say and 8% don't know. 5% declared that their gender is different to that assigned at birth.

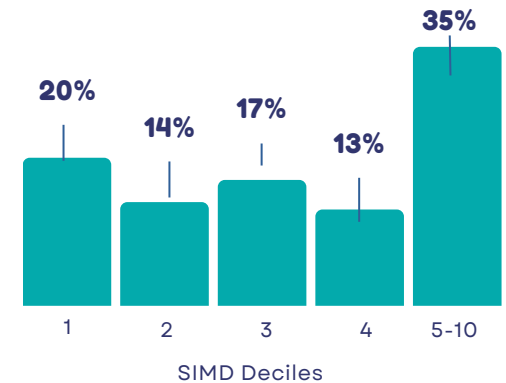
## ETHNICITY



## LGBTQ+



## SIMD



One third (34%) of participants live in the 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland - deciles 1 & 2.



# OUTCOMES & IMPACT

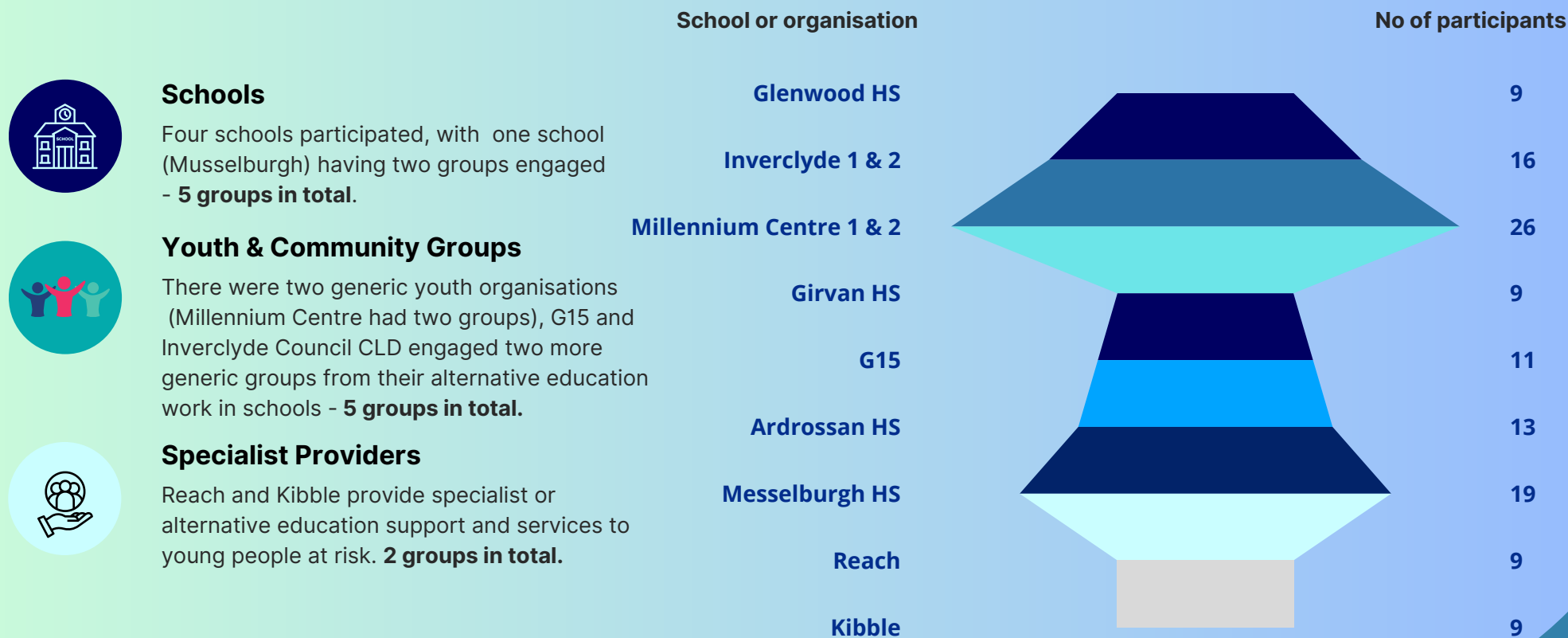




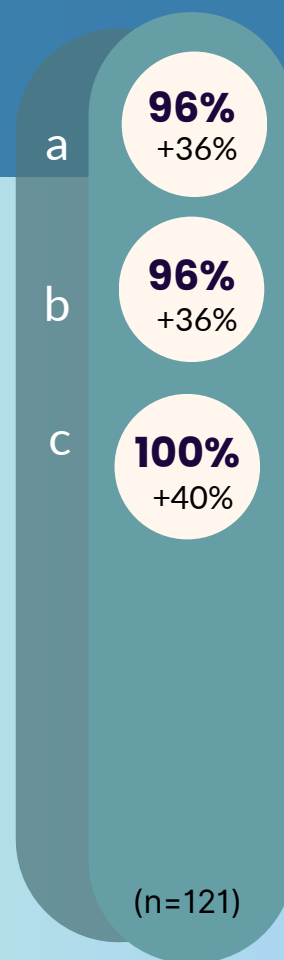
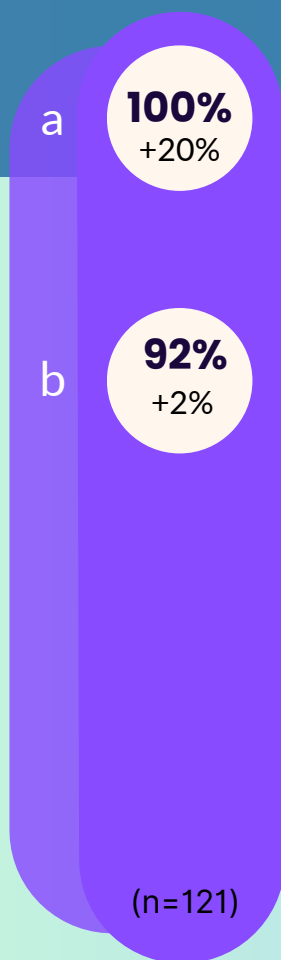
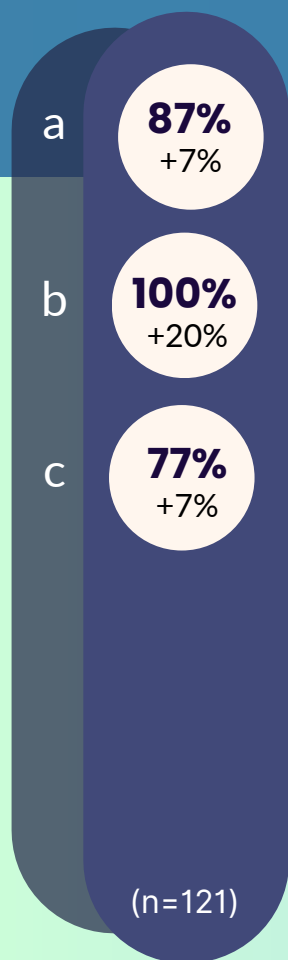
# PARTICIPANTS REACHED

## Overview

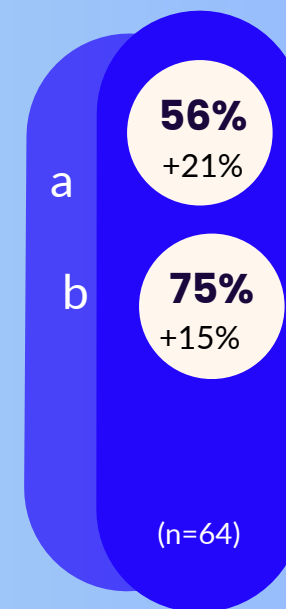
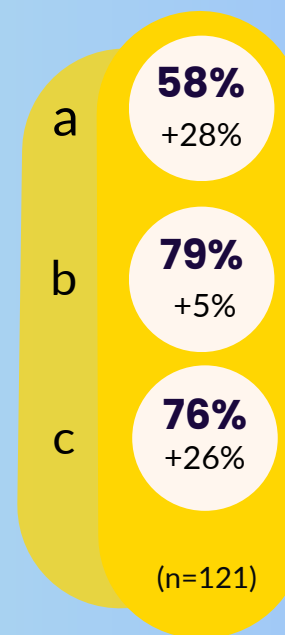
OYT Scotland works with either existing or new partners each year to secure participants for the programme. Each voyage has 10 places for young people and up to two places for workers/teachers. The groups are accompanied at all times by a qualified crew, OYT Scotland adult volunteers and the group's assigned Youth Worker. Below is an overview of the groups engaged and the number of participants. Those with higher numbers occurs if partner organisation booked two voyages – doubling the number of participants permitted. There were also instances where some dropped out after voyage one, allowing new members to join for voyage two.



# OUTCOME TARGETS



Outcome 6 is adjusted according to the subsection of those affected by ASB and offending (n=64)



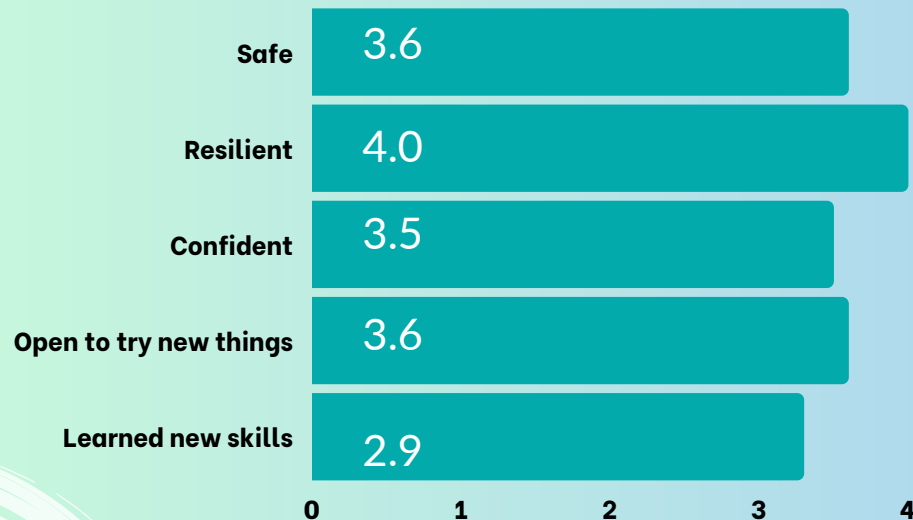
Confidence	Skills	Wellbeing	Education	Community	Behaviour
a) Increased confidence b) Able to do new things c) More resilient	a) Increased personal skills and accreditation b) Report increased skills	a) Increased well-being against SHANARRI indicators	a) Positive destination (remain or return to school) b) Improve school attendance c) Improve school attainment	a) Take on volunteering or leadership role b) Feel their contribution is improving c) A heightened sense of belonging	a) Reduced Offending or ASB b) Less inclined to participate in ASB or offending

# BREAKDOWN OF IMPACT IN YEAR THREE

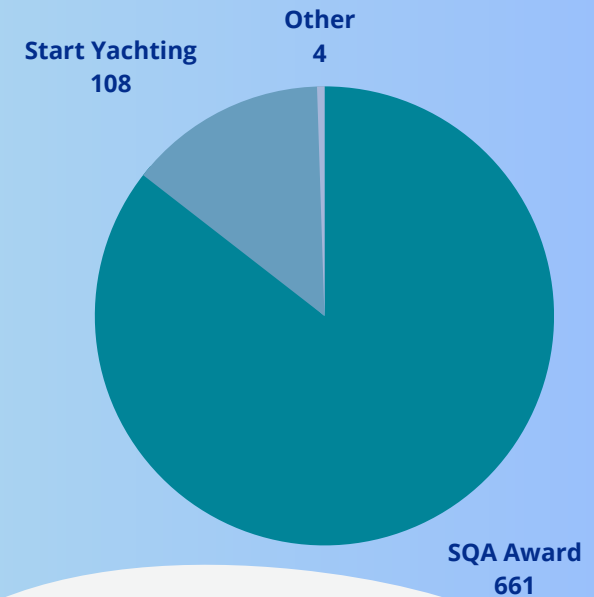
## Impact on the contribution made to the group and wider community (1=Not very good and 5= Very good)



## Levels of improvement in skills and resilience



## Awards and accreditation achieved



### SQA Level 3 Awards include:

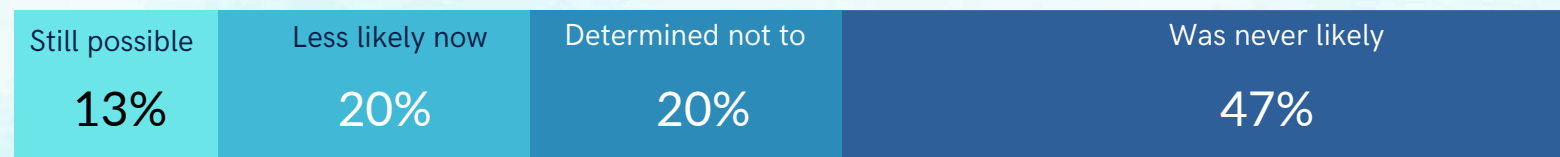
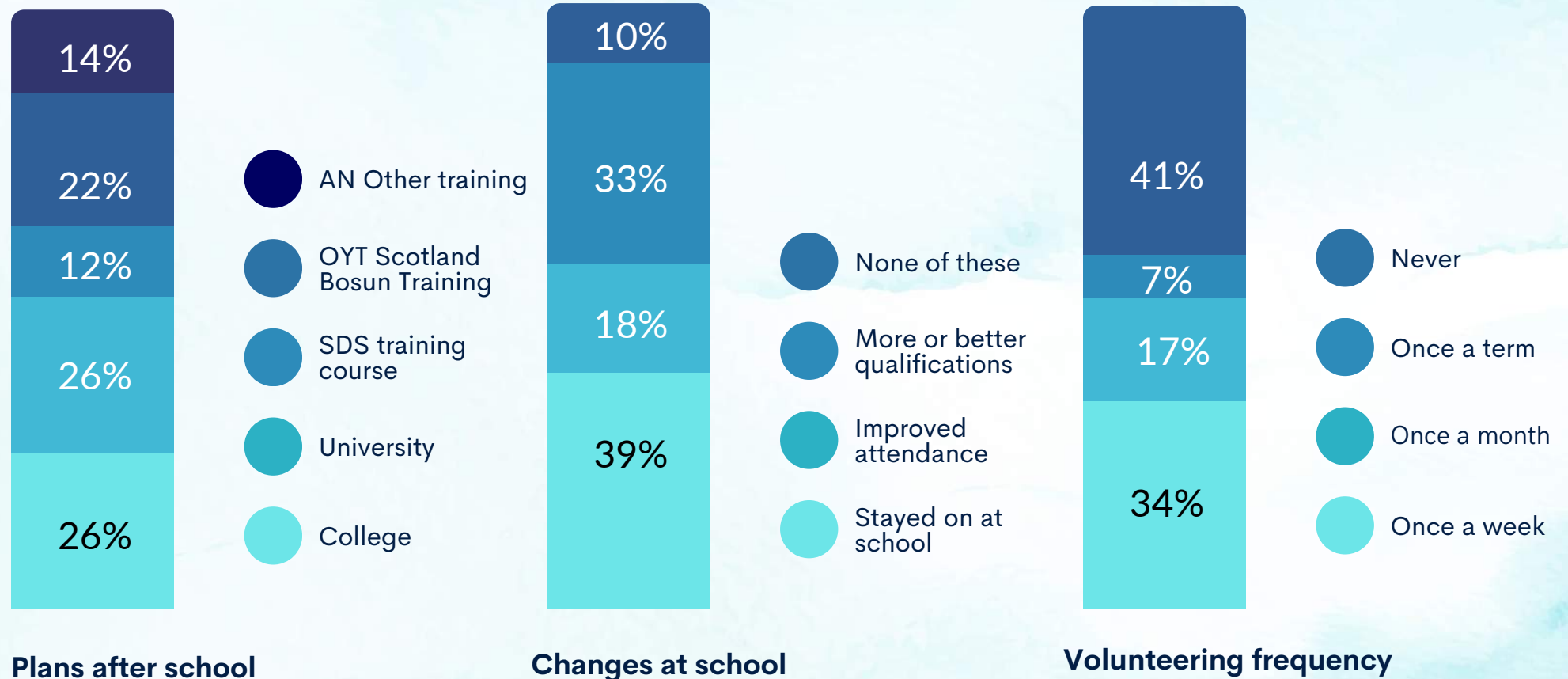
Communication: Listening  
Communication: Speaking  
Communication: Reading  
Communication: Writing  
Numeracy: Using Number - Measuring  
Numeracy: Using Number - Calculation  
Numeracy: Using Graphical Information  
Working with Others  
Problem Solving

Other awards included hospitality, photography, catering, farming and football.



# ASPIRATIONS & BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

The participants were asked what training they plan to do, either on completion of the programme or when leaving school. They were also asked about their likelihood to engage in antisocial or offending behaviour.



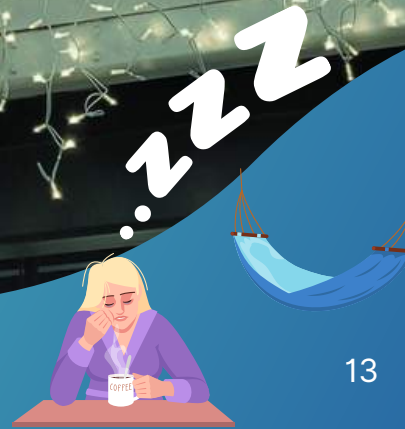
**Involvement in antisocial behaviour or offending**

# CHALLENGES

Case study groups identified the following challenges faced whilst taking part in the programme and voyages.

The wind, Sleeping, Washing up, Putting the sail up, Waking up, Pulling in the sails, Having no time to myself, Chores, Night shift, The anchor, Coming home, sleep space, Hunger, Missing family, Sea- sick, Socialising, Getting out of bed, The snake pit, Cooking, Tying the knots, Sun burn, trying new things on boat, Time away from my phone, Dinners - I'm picky, Cleaning the toilet, Wanting to leave the boat, Getting the life jacket on, Coping, Dealing with different opinions, Different task, Lack of privacy, Getting involved, Learning new things, Uncomfortable beds, Some bad food, Not feeling well on the boat, Working with new people, Being away from home, Storms!

***The biggest challenge is that it takes you right out of your comfort zone.***





“

***We got time away from school. We were given responsibility for everything. That doesn't happen in school.***

”

## OPPORTUNITIES

The case study group could clearly identify opportunities that were opened up to them through taking part in the programme.

A break from daily life. Good experience. Made me proud. Learned new things. Good team work experience. More self confidence. Feel healthier. Feeling part of a group. Getting out more. Feeling better about myself. Pushed me to try new things. Working together. Keeping busy. Being active. Good food and dinners. The OYT Scotland staff were amazing. No screen time made me feel healthier. Making new friends – Mates ! Feeling safe. Social connections. A better life balance. Problem-solving. Helping each other. Getting to know new places. Getting away for a bit, gave me a break from stuff going on at home. It felt like a real adventure. Self-improvement. I'm more interested in things. Friendships, Teamwork, Communication, Determination. It made me happy and I now enjoy life more. It was Fun!

“

***It gave me some good memories that will stay with me, like seeing seals and dolphins close up.***

”





# STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON OYT SCOTLAND'S YOUTH WORKERS

*"The role of the OYTS youth workers was beneficial. They were excellent. They were down to earth and had a good understanding of where the young people were coming from. This was our sixth time with OYTS, but this was the first time we had experienced a pre-post-sail workshop programme and it was excellent. It helps to build relationships and supported us to extend our contact with young people after the voyages. Having the support of people who understand the unique approach of youth work practice is so important. Not only for the young people but for us as youth workers they were people we can connect with. "his was our sixth time with OYTS, but this was the first time we had experienced a pre-post-sail workshop programme and it was excellent. It helps to build relationships and supported us to extend our contact with young people after the voyages. Having the support of people who understand the unique approach of youth work practice is so important. Not only for the young people but for us as youth workers they were people we can connect with. "*

Youth Worker

*"Having a youth worker involved from the start gave us a link with OYTS who was able to answer any questions we had. The pre-voyage activities she organised were great and helped build a relationship with the young people and the staff. She connected really well with everyone, and the young people were really disappointed she couldn't make the second voyage due to illness. Their involvement was a valuable contribution to the success of the programme. "*

Teacher



# YOUNG PEOPLE'S FEEDBACK ON OYT SCOTLAND'S YOUTH WORKERS

*"I would like to thank everyone who has took me in and taught me new things. knowing what I know now I have a lot more value for activities I don't want to do and such. I thought staff were really supportive helping everyone to come together as a team. "*

*"Staff were amazing. Pablo was great for a laugh. Lewis was great helping us out with steering the helm and looking after us. the food was amazing. I felt very safe with all the staff there. I love Gillian!! "*

*Staff were unreal - total legends. The skippers made all the hard jobs more enjoyable and the easy fun jobs unreal.*

*I really liked it. The staff were good at explaining things and they were all really nice and caring they made me feel like I was doing a good job even when I made mistakes it was amazing and would just like to say thank you to all the staff on the voyage were all really nice and caring they made me feel like I was doing a good job even when I made mistakes it was amazing and would just like to say thank you to all the staff on the voyage..*

*Staff where good. We all bonded with them and they were really nice.*

*A great memorable experience that I would recommend to anyone.*

*The staff are amazing made us comfortable and laugh so much. So kind and supportive, it was so much fun I'm so great full for being able to do this."*



# REFLECTIONS FROM OYT SCOTLAND'S YOUTH WORKERS

*"One young person gained a place in football training and one gained employment in catering and in volunteering with MacMillan Cancer Charity."*

*"Members of this group have gone on to gain employability in hospitality and training in photography and drama."*

*"Many members of the group were on specific care plans due to the nature of the criminal charges up against them/convictions. We had staff meetings before sessions and daily during voyages - this ensured no serious issues arose during any part of the programme. A real success of this programme was that the young people felt they were allowed to be themselves, and in other places they have not felt this. It is evidence that OYTS provides a safe place and during any part of the programme."*

*"All of this group were engaged with social work at first. Partly due to the impact of the programme, two no longer receive that support. Since the 2nd voyage, six members of the group have had no police involvement - compared to regular incidents before which is a huge success. "*

*"Due to the nature of this client group, we had to take the process slower than other groups. We implemented basic team building techniques throughout the early stages and I believe the success of the partnership was a testament to these processes to other groups."*

*"Group members say that this was the first time in a long time that they felt they "belonged". Friendship groups were formed and this has continued back at school."*





# CASE STUDIES

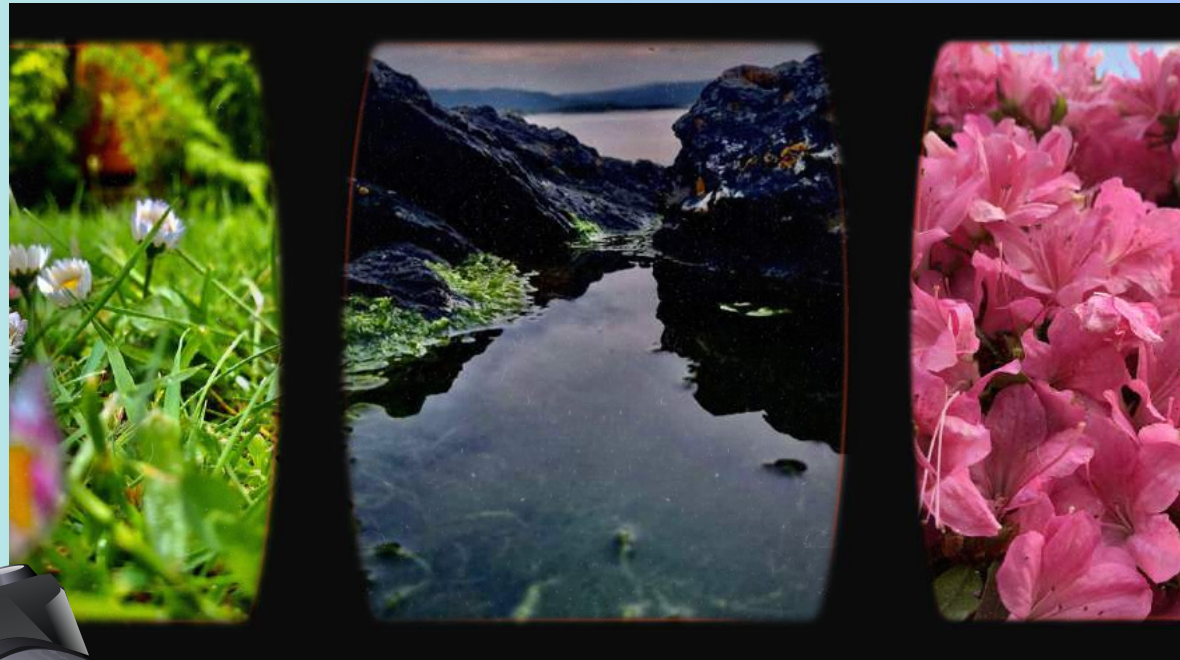


# INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

## Workshop Sessions

- Introduction
- Team building
- Outdoor activities x 3: raft building, paddle boarding, kayaking, archery, bush craft skills, high ropes courses
- Pre-voyage prep
- Voyages x2
- Post-voyage review

The following case studies provide insight what it is like for partner groups and their young people, as they undertake a range of preparatory workshop sessions, complete two voyages and carry out a post voyage review. The cases are written using the voices of the young people, stakeholders and parents. Some excerpts are highlighted to draw attention to the outcomes achieved. The photo images are random and do not relate to the individuals in the case study narratives.



Images from the voyage, photographed by Liam G15.  
Photography is one of many voyage activities.





# IMAGES OF LIFE ON BOARD







# IMAGES OF LIFE ON SHORE



# G15 YOUTH PROJECT

G15 is a community-based voluntary, youth organisation. It serves and supports young people aged 12 to 25 living in Drumchapel, (SMID 1). The project ensures that young people are supported, connected and provided with a safe space to meet and take advantage of a range of opportunities and activities as well as one-to-one in Drumchapel, one of the most deprived areas of Scotland (SMID rankings Area 1). The project ensures that young people are supported, connected and provided with a safe space to meet and take advantage of a range of opportunities and activities as well as one-to-one support. support.





# FEEDBACK FROM A YOUTH WORKER ON BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

**We knew we were taking a risk taking him on the voyage because of his explosive and unpredictable behaviour.**

He was part of an alternative curriculum group we support in school – where he spent his time wandering the halls, getting involved in fights with staff and other young people. He was also involved in very risky gang-stuff at the weekend.

During the voyages, we witnessed a remarkable turnaround in his behaviour and attitude. At the start of the voyage, he refused to take responsibility or participate in the tasks that needed to be done. At one point he threatened to chuck it and said he would contact his dad to take him off the boat. We explained the difficulties of that given we were on a boat. So that led to some challenging, emotional conversations but eventually, he compromised and stuck it out. We spoke about this, and he acknowledged that there were ways to overcome problems and conflict positively rather than getting angry and fighting.

After exploring this further with him, it was clear that the experience of being on the boat with people he trusted helped him feel safe in a group. He spoke of feeling safe, being vulnerable and showing this emotional side of his personality which was something that he would have never done in front of his crew (a gang of pals). I am convinced that the unique experience of the OYTS voyage facilitated this change.

An example of how he'd changed came near the end of the week. One of the girls had an emotional breakdown and he was there, giving her support and advice on how to deal with bullies and how to cope with negative feelings. Because of his status as one of the cool hard guys his opinion had a lot of traction, and it meant a lot to the girl. The empathy, kindness and awareness he demonstrated were unbelievable and we were blown away by it. I still talk to him about it when I see him. His attitude in school has changed and he comes up to me, gives me a fist bump and asks me how my weeks going. That didn't happen before. When we got back, one of the younger girls was getting a hard time with a group of young people. He went and spoke to them to ensure they didn't harm the girl. This demonstration of empathy and kindness was great to see.

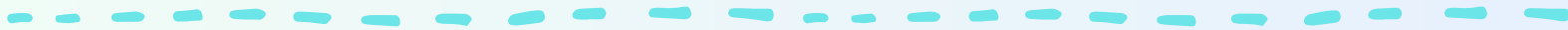
*"One OTYS programme isn't going to change them completely but because of the experience they get it goes some way to contribute to them feeling valued and worthy of praise. For me, if young people can walk away from the experience and they say they have enjoyed it that is a win-win for everyone."*

# FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PERSON ON MAKING CONNECTIONS

**"Before moving to my current school my experience in school wasn't great. I was bullied and as a result, suffered from anxiety and post-traumatic stress. I also had difficulties understanding what I was being asked to do as well as reading and writing. I am currently being assessed for dyslexia.**

I enjoy water sports like canoeing and waterboarding so thought I'd give it a go. The first voyage was so good. It was great to spend time with people, and realise the benefits of working together. Before the trip I wasn't good at working in teams and although I'd say that my experience of musical theatre helps my confidence the OYT voyages gave me a different sense of belief in myself. Part of that came from being trusted to carry out certain tasks, being given responsibility and my opinion is listened to. Before going on the voyages if I worked with people and I wasn't sure about what I was doing I'd get agitated and anxious. My time on the boat made me aware of different ways to overcome these negative feelings.

The skills I learned on the boat have transferred to other areas of my life. Things like problem-solving experience have helped me work out a homework strategy for my prelims. My mum and dad commented that they noticed a difference in my attitude, and I was more engaged with what was going on in the house."



*"Because I was new to the school I didn't know many of the young people taking part. I didn't talk to them. However living, sleeping, eating and working together on the boat has opened up new friendship groups and connections in the school and the community."*



## FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG PERSON ON FEELING GOOD

**"The most significant change for me was my confidence. Before the voyage I wasn't confident, I was quite insular and into myself.** Although I knew some of the young people I didn't really know the staff and I was quite wary of them. The experience of having to work with others, being trusted with responsibility, at one point I got to steer the boat and knowing that what I was doing contributed to making sure we achieved lots of different things helped to make me feel good, raised my confidence in myself and I now have an ability to achieve things that I didn't think were possible.

My mum noticed the change in me and commented on how confident and at ease I was. In the school apart from my Maths teacher, teachers said they noticed I was much happier, and I didn't dread going to school. So the experience has helped me deal with my anxiety about going to school. I just felt brand new, like a new person and these feelings have stayed with me. Connecting to and with different people: young people and adults who made up the crew, was amazing and the fact you are on a boat, and you had to communicate, work together, be responsible for yourself and others made this a life-changing experience."

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*"The experience raised my awareness of what is possible if you have the right attitude and put your mind to it. I now go out more and spend less time in the house. My communication skills have improved, and this is linked to being more confident. I'm not so frightened to express my opinion about things and it has made me feel really good about myself."*





# KIBBLE



Kibble is a specialist child and youth care charity and social enterprise that supports at-risk children and young people (aged 5-26). Many of the young people they care for have experienced trauma in their lives and due to their behaviour and social anxiety, they have significant developmental gaps and find a mainstream environment. Kibble offers dedicated care and support to help them move forward. With a robust support network and a wide range of integrated services, young people are given opportunities to believe in themselves, feel a sense of belonging, and realise their own self-worth.



# FEEDBACK FROM A TEACHER ON INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

I am a PE teacher and have been here for 3 years. I supported the OYTS group during the pre-sail activities, on both voyages and will be involved in the post-sail programme and act as the link person with OYTS and the school.

Those that showed interest were asked to prepare a written statement expressing why they thought this would be a good experience and how it would benefit them.

Given the backgrounds of the young people, we wanted to ensure that individuals could work in a group setting and any risks were mitigated in terms of their behaviour kicking off. So we also identified some young people whom we thought would really benefit from the experience.

To ensure the young people enjoyed the maximum benefit from the experience the primary challenge was identifying a group that would get on with each other. The nature of the school means some young people don't stay with us for long and then move on to other living arrangements or work placements and that can present us with a challenge if it affects a member of the group. We need to get consent from a number of other service providers. For example, some of those chosen for the programme were known absconders and Social Work wasn't keen to consent to them taking part. Interestingly because of the nature of the experience i.e. on a boat, this defused the concerns people had.

**When they are here the young people all talk about how they are up to all hours on their phones and moan when they are taken off them. On the boat, we had an agreement that they could have their phones for half an hour before bed. They put them off when asked and were sleeping by 10.30 which was unheard of.** As a result, they all were up in the morning refreshed. When it came to food initially there were moans about what they didn't like. However, when encouraged to try it, they ate everything put down to them and asked for seconds. It's amazing the effect of being out in the fresh air has. We chose G for the voyage to see if we could expand his social circle and break his dependency. We actually thought he would get to the boat and refuse to go. In school he didn't socialise and spent most of his time on his phone or his Xbox.

*"G became totally committed to the programme and went from someone who wouldn't pick up a badminton racket for the fear of getting it wrong and being judged, to a boy who went kayaking and high ropes - setting his own performance goals. On the boat, he surprised us all. He got stuck in doing everything people asked of him. When he was asked to put up the sails or cook he just got on with it. His confidence has skyrocketed."*



## TWO YOUNG PEOPLE ON CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR COMMUNITY

**"When I heard about the opportunity it sound like something different and exciting. Since getting back I feel much more confident and better about myself.**

On the boat, I was doing things that I never thought I'd be able to do, like having to work with others to put up sails. I'm not very good at talking to adults but the staff on the boat made that easy because they were nice and respectful. Normally I would have refused to do stuff I didn't like doing. There were lots of problems I had to deal with, like tacking back and forward to catch the wind and having to cook for everyone. There were times when I was putting up the sails in the wind when I felt like giving up, but I knew that I just had to get on with it and by doing it I got a sense of achievement and felt good.

The experience was much better than I thought it would be. I thought it would be boring, like just sitting and chilling not doing anything, but we were actually kept on our toes all the time. It was great. It's made a big difference in my confidence. It's helped me stand up for myself and more be confident about saying no to people who weren't good to me. Before this experience I would stay in my room a lot, on my own on my phone. When I got back after the first voyage I got involved in fund raising and went around doors to get support for McMillan the cancer charity. I don't spend time in my room anymore and enjoy socialising with people and now understand that staying in my room on the phone isn't good for you."

*"The experience has opened my eyes to what's possible and being part of this has really changed me. It has made me realise that instead of sitting about doing nothing I could actually be doing something with my life - like my fundraising for Macmillan. It has also made me think about my behaviour and realise that instead of doing things that are stupid and can hurt someone, I can do something good instead because I'll get more from it and feel better about myself."*





# INVERCLYDE



Community Learning and Development is part of Inverclyde Council and provide FREE services for all residents across Inverclyde. The Youth Service team run youth work across Inverclyde for young people aged 11-25 years old. They have a base in Greenock and Port Glasgow providing youth clubs. They also in work schools delivering attainment and senior phase programmes & run events during school holidays.



# FEEDBACK FROM A YOUTH WORKER ON IMPROVED WELLBEING

As a CLD worker within the local authority, I relate to the work around the Attainment Challenge in secondary schools. This aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, to close the equity gap. I work with young people across the S1 to S3 population covering issues related to confidence, numeracy, and literacy or health and well-being. I supported the young people pre, during, and post-voyage and still connect with them in school now. It is an ongoing relationship. The young people that took part had been significantly impacted by the isolation imposed by COVID and many of them have never been out of Inverclyde. Just managing the process of getting people interested was a challenge. Initially when we recruited for the opportunity, we had over 20 people who expressed an interest but as they became more aware of the potential challenges the number fluctuated and we ended up with 8 who went on to complete the programme. A common challenge across the group was their lack of confidence in their ability to do what was required on the boat and dealing with being away from home for an extended period.

*"One parent had said that because of their child's behaviour she wasn't going to allow them to go. But on reflection she realised that this was an experience that would be beneficial. She has since said that it was the best thing she could have done."*

The fact that most had expressed apprehension about taking part and the fact they overcame their fears had a significant impact of improvements in confidence. I was really impressed by the way relationships were formed and developed on board. This was helped by the activities set up prior to the voyages where people got to know one another, build relationships and prepare for the tasks they faced on the boat. A second voyage was beneficial in terms of young people's understanding of what is required on the boat, and this enhanced their experience. On a practical level as well, no one suffered from sea sickness. Being on a boat is a great leveller and connector.

*"Many of the outcomes are achieved because of the uniqueness of the OYTS experience. The physical aspects along with being active outdoors encouraged a healthy, regular diet and improved sleeping habits all of which had a positive impact on the young people's mental health. As part of the pre-voyage activities and the nature of the OYTS experience they constantly develop skills recognised as important by employers i.e. teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. We've also had feedback from schools who have recognised a difference in young people."*



## FEEDBACK FROM TWO YOUNG PEOPLE ON CONFIDENCE & RESILIENCE

*"The experience has made it easier and more confident to talk to people I don't know. Being on the boat it was easier to learn things. In school it's all about either passing or failing subjects. On the boat if you did things wrong people were more encouraging and understanding. They would help you until you got it right. I would say that before I went on the boat, I wasn't very social, I would mix with people or talk to people I didn't know. This has changed since being on the boat. I talk a lot more to more people and feel more comfortable with myself and being who I want to be.*

*A big change for me was not giving up when faced with something I found difficult. At the start I struggled with tying some knots and I got really annoyed with myself. However, I persevered and by putting in the effort and seeing it as a challenge by the time the second voyage came around, I was able to do all the knots and that made me feel really good. I even went on to help other people."*

*"My confidence has increased 100%. Before the voyage I was quite insular, I would overthink things and get anxious. I'm dyslexic and was bullied at school because of that. Teamwork and people getting to know me allowed me to be the person I wanted to be. I wasn't being judged by people, and my social skills improved. Since the voyage, I have been able to control my anxiety and I am more confident talking in front of the class and with people I've never met before.*

*I am now aware that the experience on the boat has helped develop lots of skills that will be useful to talk about when applying for a job. I feel proud of myself for going out and doing something different and getting out of the wee box I was living in where I would keep stuff to myself, not go out or talk to people. I am also more confident about asking for help with my reading and writing."*





# MILLENNIUM CENTRE

As a community and event centre the Millennium Centre provides space and activities to the local community. The facility gives young people a safe space to go, meet friends and get access to specialist services if required. Located in Stranraer, rurality impacts on young people's sense of belonging. Many of the young people involved in the OYTS experience had never been out of their local area, been away from their parents or even had sleep overs. Stranraer impacts on young people's sense of belonging. Many of the young people involved in the OYTS experience had never been out of their local area, been away from their parents or even had sleep overs.



# THE PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ON VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

For this project, I identified young people that attended the centre and I also reached out to Stranraer Academy. After I explained the experience and the potential benefits to be gained they brought a group of young people together and that gave us the numbers we needed to take up the opportunity, with two groups (four voyages in total).

When selecting the group we were aware that young people who are marginalised because of their behaviour would potentially benefit most from this experience. Some of the young people were deemed to be at risk of offending. The impact it's had on those young people has been significant.

We've had feedback from parents who tell us that their children aren't out getting into trouble and the positive impact this is making in the home. A primary factor for this change is that being part of this experience young people have been able to make new, more positive friendships and this has allowed them to break free of peer groups that had a negative effect on their behaviour

Without the OYTS Youth Worker we wouldn't have been able to deliver the pre and post sail activities that made the programme so successful. Also having that named person as someone I could contact if required was really important. Having that support took away a lot of potential stress as I knew I wasn't on my own. It's also so nice to see the trust that's been built with the youth worker and the young people. Also, having the same worker accompany us on the boat helped strengthen the confidence of young people.

*"We have created a pathway for young people. Before the young people went on the voyage many were apprehensive about going on the boat and some couldn't swim so we had RLNI do a safety talk. That helped young people be at ease. When they come back we check in with them and discuss the impact the voyages have had. As part of that we have identified young people who want to volunteer, and they are being supported to become youth leaders."*

*"I can't believe the difference in the behaviour of the young people who took up this opportunity."*

Teacher





## FEEDBACK FROM THREE YOUNG PEOPLE ON OVERCOMING THEIR FEARS

"At the start I wasn't sure how the crew would be. They were amazing. They were easy to talk to, a good laugh and they helped with things you struggled with the best thing I can say about them was they made sure you were safe, and you trusted them."

"When my mum received the email, explaining what a day on board would be like I thought 'oh my goodness - I don't think I'm going to like this!' But it's an opportunity that you may never get again and actually when you are on board it is absolutely amazing and so much fun."

"My mum said I'm now more responsible around the house, and I recognised that I was doing more things like tidying my room and helping with making meals."

"On the first trip I was ill, and I was worried about how people would react. But everyone was so kind and understanding that it made me feel good."

"The biggest change for me was realising there were things that I thought I would never be able to do but with support from other peers and the crew I achieved more than I thought possible. There were days when people were ill and we just helped each other out. New friendship groups formed, and we learned to trust one another."

"My confidence has grown, and I am much more comfortable around other people. I was really shy before going on the boat and I was scared no one would speak to me. Now I am more confident and comfortable in myself and in school I've made new friendships with people I didn't know."







**IMAGES FROM A RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE**



# ADDITIONAL CASE STUDY



## OVERVIEW

This section is added to share the story of what happened next. Often when evaluations are carried out for funding purposes, the wider context of the additionality brought by the organisations, their people and their stakeholders can be overlooked. This story is not a requirement of the funding, nor was it funded by it. OYT Scotland has a much wider portfolio of investors. They have been honing their skills of delivering youth work at sea long before the fund came along. Their skilled workers and volunteers bring a wealth of expertise which makes the experience for young people a door to many new opportunities.

A critical question for evaluators to ask programmes like this one is 'so what?' What happens when the voyage and funding ends?

Consequently, this story describes two participants from the CashBack programme (along with other volunteers) that benefited from an Erasmus+ funded opportunity. As part of her own professional development, youth worker Gillian McDiarmid went to Poland and Hungary for two separate training conventions, both of which were funded by Erasmus+. This led to a follow up connection with Tudatos Ifjusagért Alapítvány (Foundation for Conscious Youth) in Hungary where the two participants joined Gillian and fellow volunteers from OYT Scotland to attend an gathering of European Youth Groups in Hungary.

The story exemplifies ways that organisations like OYT Scotland can open a Pandora's box to many other positive experiences that are both directly and indirectly linked to their core purpose. Here are the young people's reflections, as interviewed and recorded by Gillian.





## A NEW FOUND LOVE OF SAILING

**I fell in love with Ocean Youth Trust Scotland and sailing.** I would have backed out of this kind of thing before. Sailing has changed me completely. The experiences I have had with OYTS made me say yes.

It felt a little awkward at times because when we were split into teams, if I was in it, people from other countries would start apologising for their English being bad. Actually, their English was fantastic. **I really had to force myself to take part sometimes, especially when we were asked to speak out in the groups, but I did and I'm proud of myself for doing this.** I learned that you can make a mistake, and it's ok, and you can laugh at yourself as well.

I really enjoyed the Scottish night. It was so nice that everyone seemed interested in our culture. No one thought we were bad, or that we lived up to any bad Scottish stereotypes. We were really welcome. Also, I enjoyed the reaction when we lied to them about Haggis being real. Some of the youth workers couldn't contain themselves and this made us all laugh even more. There was a time we were playing games outside and someone slipped and fell, everyone laughed first then asked if the person was okay. This is such a best-of-friends thing to do laugh first - that made it even funnier.

**I learned not to judge a book by its cover. To give people the time that you would like given to you.** That you are allowed to have and share your own opinions. I also learned that Scotland can have quite a bad stereotype, of being mean, I am proud that I was able to be able to represent Scotland well and people there now don't think the Scots are mean.

In future it will give me more confidence as part of the youth forum and I'll be able to share my new knowledge of team building.

*"If you had said to me a year ago that by now I would have been on two sailing trips, an outdoor residential and a trip to Hungary, I would have said absolutely not. My mum would say that too. I was so scared of leaving home or going places without people I knew. Even on the sailing trips I was with at least one person I knew. Now I'm not scared any more.*

*I was able to talk at an open day in school and about OYTS, how it's not just about sailing, you can get to do other things and it can lead to more opportunities.*

*I now want to go to Estonia, this is somewhere I would never have thought of before."*

# COMING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE CHANGES

**A year ago, before I started anything at all with Ocean Youth Trust Scotland, school was difficult.** I lost friends and didn't really have a group around me. I counted on my family. Now, not only do I have the friends I made through sailing, I have friends in Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, Turkey and Spain. It has made me realise that I am a nice person, I am likeable and people don't always judge.

I have never been to Hungary before, or knew very much about the country so I was excited about that. **The fact that there were people coming from all over meant that I could learn about different cultures.** It would mean I could also develop my skills in teamwork and learn more about how important it is.

I have never been away from my parents before so **this exchange has helped me realise that I can survive by myself and I actually now think better of myself.** I have made so many new friends, we talk to each other a lot through Instagram. We chat about daily life, ask each other how we are, support each other and send videos to cheer each other up. I really can't believe I have so many new friends from so many different countries.

I received some difficult news while I was there and at times I just wanted my mum, but I learned to be able to talk to other people and they are willing to support, you just have to ask. **I felt during the activities I really had to push myself out of my comfort zone and this was challenging, but I've done it.**

I'm now part of the youth forum and think **I can now help with supporting young people into the organisation who maybe wouldn't give it a try before.** The exchange has also made me realise that there is a real gender divide on the boats and I would like, somehow, to help change this.

*"It has given me more motivation to focus and take part in school. I was told if I didn't focus more, I wouldn't be allowed to go on the exchange. I have just had my preliminary exams and got A's and B's in them rather than failing. Randomly, I'm eating better, because I had to try so many different things in Holloko, I now try more food at home. I'm also spending more time with my family and actually asking them how they are. Me and my twin brother have regular 9pm reflection time. I have just started a new job in a chip shop. I have also been chosen to take part in the Young Ambassador programme at the end of July."*







# CONCLUSION

To conclude the three-year CashBack for Communities funded programme, there are clear strengths emerging and lessons for OYT Scotland to reflect on.

A notable change is a reduction in the proportion of participants from SIMD 1&2 datazones (34%, down a third on year two). This may be attributed to 5 of the 12 groups being schools, with the counter effect of reducing the reach into priority areas and funding outcome criteria and targets. Whereas some of the more targeted groups reached a higher proportion of SIMD 1&2 postcode participants.

Wider research concludes that proving the relationship between the cause and effect of programmes like OYT Scotland is challenging. It is difficult to prove in a short time whether the programme actually prevents participants from taking part in offending or antisocial behaviour, lifts them out of poverty or gets them jobs when they reach employment age. This is especially true when most participants have no previous involvement in offending (or do not acknowledge this being an issue), as with 47% of participants in year three. Permission to adjust the denominator – the percentage of those participants directly affected has enabled OYT Scotland to present a more accurate picture of the positive changes for participants likely to be affected.

In Round 6, it will be helpful if the target number is set for the number of participants recruited into the project (i.e. a minimum requirement or a target-range) with percentage targets relating to the overall population, and clear subsets of targets for denominations that fall into certain criteria such as SIMD postcodes and antisocial or offending behaviour.

In the case of OYT Scotland it is clear after adjustments are made that the combination of land and sea-based youth work achieved transformative results, especially among those that fit the target criteria. Stand out examples were that trying new things was achieved by all participants (100%). Everyone (100%) gains new skills and undertakes at least part of a recognised qualification in yachting and other core literacy, numeracy and practical skills qualification, which also translates into positive attainment results. Three quarters (76%) feel their contribution to the community is improving. Estimates show that 75% of those affected by antisocial and offending behaviour, now feel less inclined to do so.

The case studies give readers of this report a unique insight of the feelings and emotions that shift from positions of fear to elation upon perfecting difficult tasks on board. The added opportunity for two individuals to take part in an ERASMUS+ programme. Meeting other young people from European nations offered ways to consolidate and build on the experience gained, thanks to OYT Scotland's wider youth work connections.

The indication that around a fifth of participants intend doing the Bosun training in future, confirms how much sailing has opened new interests and passions. Stakeholders and young people affirmed that credit is owed to OYT Scotland staff and volunteers for making it such a memorable experience. Credit is also given to the new youth workers leading wraparound programmes which provide suitable preparation for the voyages and culminate in high levels of impact.



Report by  
CATCH THE LIGHT

