



ANNUAL REPORT

★ 2025-2026

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THE SESSIONS **HELP ME RELAX** AND BE WITH FRIENDS
AND HAVE REALLY HELPED **BUILD MY CONFIDENCE**
AND **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**. EVERYONE SHOULD
JOIN SSF, IT'S THE **BEST PART OF MY WEEK**.





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AS A YOUTH PANEL MEMBER, I’VE INTERACTED WITH AND TAKEN PART IN MANY ACTIVITIES THAT WERE DESIGNED TO HELP ALL SORTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS SCOTLAND.

Welcome

We are delighted to present SSF’s annual CashBack for Communities review.

This end of Phase 6 report celebrates the incredible commitment and impact of the SSF team, who continue to work alongside young people to open up access to sport and physical activity, while providing positive alternatives to antisocial behaviour.

We are extremely grateful to the Scottish Government for their continued support, which has helped young people and SSF go from strength to strength. The learning from this phase, and the partnerships developed through it, will shape and strengthen our work over the next three years.

We have deepened our understanding of the complexities of inclusion and the importance of taking an intersectional approach to meeting diverse needs. This insight has reinforced the importance of inclusive practice within young leader’s programmes and volunteering pathways, particularly to address barriers such as cost, limited pathways, and inadequate support that prevent so many from accessing those opportunities outwith our work

We have also recognised the importance of strengthening multi-sector approaches with greater clarity on organisational roles so that young people and families can access the wider support they need.

Our focus remains firmly on engaging those who would benefit most, embedding trauma-informed approaches within our team and across our partnerships. Through this, we are creating safe, inclusive, opportunities that support young people to reach their full potential.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Kirsty McNab, former SSF CEO, who after 13 remarkable years with SSF, moved on to take up a new role with Glasgow 2026. Last year also saw our Chair Maureen McGonigle, step down from the board after 11 years, and we thank her for her inspiring leadership, expertise and unwavering dedication to supporting our mission. We also thank Robin Gilles, who stepped down as a trustee after eight years of exceptional service. Robin’s contribution has been invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for his dedication. At the same time, we were delighted to welcome Elle Covell and Martin Kelly as new trustees and look forward to the insight and energy they bring to the Board.

Finally, our Youth Panel continues to go from strength to strength. Their work to raise awareness of the impact of violence on young people and communities, alongside their leadership in promoting greater inclusion in and through sport, has been truly inspiring and remains central to everything we do.

Dougie Millen SSF CEO & George Walker SSF Chair

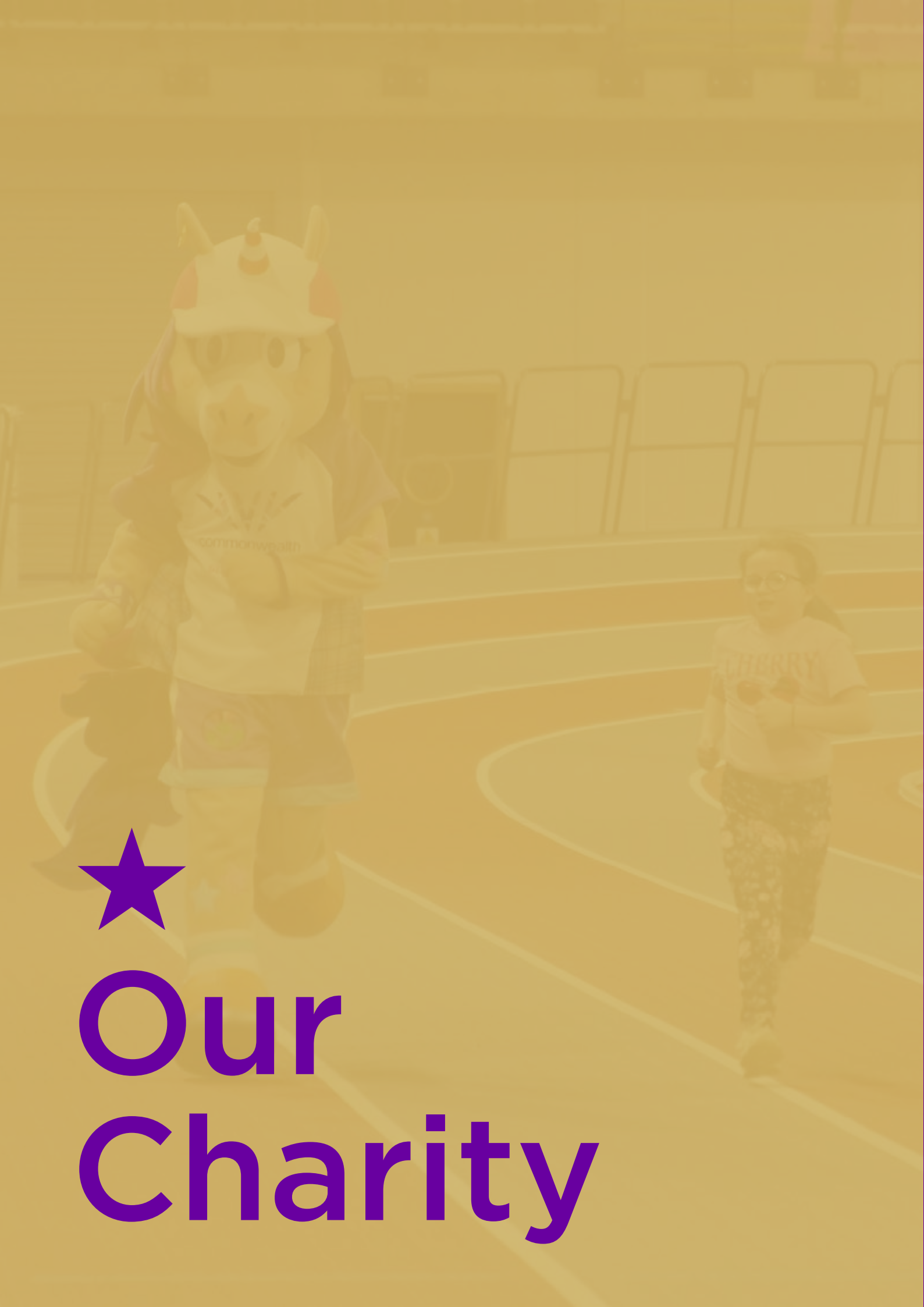
As a youth panel member, I’ve interacted with and taken part in many activities that were designed to help all sorts of young people across Scotland.

But what we do goes beyond discussions. The friendships gained and valuable lessons learned are imperative in shaping an innovative and creative youth panel that I’m proud to be a part of.

If I could give one piece of advice, it would be to join a youth panel in your area if you can, and take as many opportunities that they offer, because it’s helped so many across Scotland, including myself, to gain confidence, communication, teamwork and leadership skills and the opportunity to actually make a change for the better for others, which is really rare and special.

Lara Carroll, Youth Panel Member





★ Our Charity

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TRANSFORMING YOUNG LIVES THROUGH SPORT.

Our vision is a world in which every young person fulfils their potential.

Our mission is to use sport as a catalyst to help young people become healthier, more confident, and more resilient, so they are better prepared to combat the effects of poverty, trauma, and adversity.

We work to enable young people living in challenging environments to become champions for good in society. We do this by connecting, listening, and acting; educating and enabling others to expand our impact; creating spaces where young people feel safe and welcome; and harnessing the power of sport.

Our values guide everything we do: **empathy** means we are compassionate, understanding, and always listening; **leadership** means we are decisive, ground-breaking, and experts in our field; **inclusivity** means we are diverse, equitable, and inclusive by design; and **passion** means we approach our work with dedication, love, and care.



★ Our Programmes



SSF CHANCE:2:BE

Our 24 week personal development programme. A safe environment for young people who may be finding it hard to stay in school. This programme offers one-to-one support, personal development workshops on mental health and well-being, job seeking preparation, college visits, training and SCQF accreditations. Alongside our highly trained team, young people build connections with their local communities to introduce them to activities and support networks on hand. And of course, at the heart of this programme is lots of access to sport and physical activity to develop teamwork, social skills, problem solving, resilience and building confidence.



SSF YOUNG LEADERS

This programme empowers young people to take on leadership roles and become positive role models in their communities. For young people aged 14 plus, this programme includes a two day leadership training residential with the chance to meet young people from across the country.

There's regular leadership training on topics like disability inclusion and safeguarding, the chance to volunteer at sporting and local community events with lots of games, sport and physical activity along the way. When ready, young leaders are introduced to other community environments to influence them or to start their own projects.



SSF TWILIGHT

SSF Twilight is an evening, multi-sport and youth work programme. It takes place in communities where antisocial behaviour might occur and where there may not be financially accessible activities for young people in the evening. It provides young people with a safe environment to play games, meet friends and have a hot meal.

As well as sport, young people can take part in workshops on mental health, self care, well-being, conflict resolution and managing stress. On site, there are a range of community partners allowing young people to connect with other useful local services, allowing them to develop their support systems.



SSF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Our Education and Training is available throughout Scotland. It provides education, accreditation and well-being programmes for young people, and CPD training for practitioners working in sport and youth work settings. Our training modules support sport and youth work practitioners to create inclusive, supportive and positive environments so that young people have a positive experience of sport and physical activity, regardless of any other inequalities or challenges they are experiencing in their lives. Our tutors deliver learning that is practical, interactive and bespoke to the learners.

★ Our Team

Board of Directors

- ★ Maureen McGonigle retired as Chair and George Walker took over the role.
- ★ Martin Kelly and Elle Covell joined the board.
- ★ Robin Gilles retired from the board.
- ★ Succession planning is underway for upcoming board rotation.
- ★ Working groups with board champions in:
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
 - Business Sustainability

Youth Panel members by Region

- ★ **Fife:** Chloe Scougall, Erynn McGrath, Sophie Balfour, Lara Carroll.
- ★ **Stirling:** Kyra Morton, Zak Simpson.
- ★ **Glasgow:** Gareth Cuthbert, Kebba Sanneh, Junior Fitzpatrick, Nikita Templeton, Craig McIntyre, Andrew Gough, Wahab Ahmed.
- ★ **North Ayrshire:** Zara Kirkwood, Bryony Sharp.

Staff Changes

- ★ Dougie Millen joined the team as CEO in March following Kirsty McNab's departure in December.
- ★ Jude Reid appointed as the Interim CEO between December to March.
- ★ Keith Gravis appointed Head of Operations and Digital Strategy.
- ★ Rohanna Irvine returned from maternity leave.
- ★ Adam Szymoszkowskyj completed his secondment covering the Head of Programmes role maternity leave cover and returned to City of Edinburgh Council.
- ★ Mairi Lindsay took on a new role as People, Governance & Safeguarding Manager.
- ★ Andrew Shaw is on secondment with Scottish Athletics.

New Team Members

- ★ Emily Waugh joined the team in Fife.
- ★ Lianne Muirhead joined as Finance Manager and Kirsty Pugh appointed as Fundraiser.
- ★ Eve O'Donnell joined the Glasgow Team.
- ★ Declan Hannah joined the team in North Ayrshire.



★ Our Approach

★ Relationships and Connection

Central and key to our work is relationships and human connection to ensure people feel seen, heard, and valued. Without connection, positive relationships cannot be formed.

★ Person Centred

Our approach is person centred, we work alongside people, we co-produce solutions with young people, giving them choice and autonomy. Things are done that way because it works for them.

★ Trauma Informed

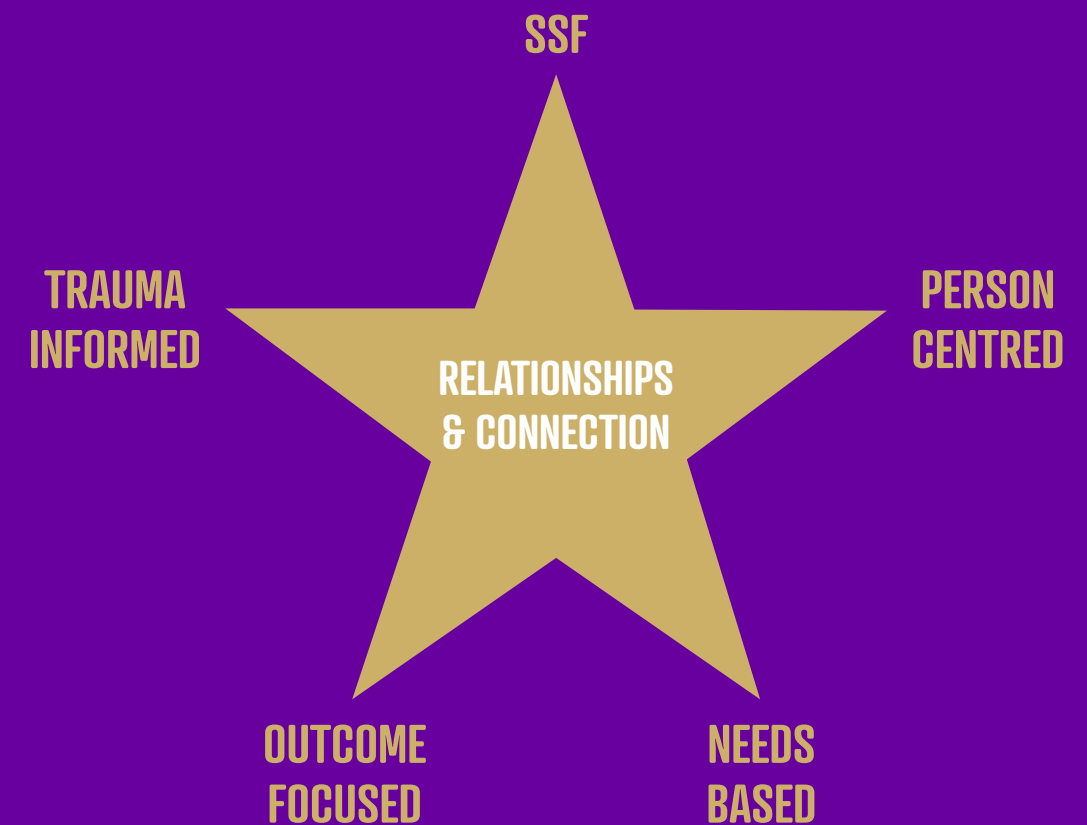
We recognise that trauma and adversity can have a significant impact on individuals and communities, affecting their ability to feel safe and build trusting relationships

★ Outcome Focused

We focus on the changes and differences we hope to make.

★ Needs Based

We connect with young people and communities to understand their needs, what is missing and what





★ Our CashBack Outcomes

1. Young People are diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system

CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED

Scotland has seen a recent rise in antisocial behaviour, with young people at the centre of many local concerns. The incidents that persist are increasingly complex and often linked to alcohol use, peer influence, boredom and a lack of safe, trusted spaces to go in the evenings.

National reviews highlight that young people are frequently both the perpetrators and the victims of antisocial behaviour, and that enforcement alone does not address the underlying issues. Local authorities report growing demand for diversionary youth provision during peak risk times, alongside rising pressures on services responding to trauma, well-being challenges and social isolation.

Overall, Scotland's antisocial behaviour landscape reinforces the need for consistent, community based, early intervention support that gives young people safer options and trusted relationships at the times they need them most.

ACTION TAKEN

Diversionary and safe spaces

Across all delivery areas, we provide consistent, high quality diversionary spaces during peak risk times. SSF Twilight programmes in North Ayrshire, Fife, Stirling and Glasgow offer safe, structured environments where young people choose positive activity over unsafe peer groups, street based gatherings or alcohol related behaviour. Consistently high attendance across several communities shows how much young people rely on these spaces for safety, stability and connection.

Targeted behaviour work

Staff across regions deliver focused conversations and workshops that address alcohol use, peer pressure, conflict and decision making. Young people openly discuss challenges they face in their own communities, building awareness and confidence to make safer choices. These interventions have resulted in clear behaviour changes—such as young people delaying drinking, leaving unsafe situations earlier, and choosing SSF Twilight sessions instead of risky weekend gatherings. Youth led discussions and scenario based activities strengthen problem solving and promote positive peer influence across groups.

Specialist and preventative inputs

Areas benefit from specialist partners who deepen the impact of our prevention work. This includes gender based violence awareness through the youth-led Kyniska Advocacy pilot in North Ayrshire, resilience building and outdoor learning with organisations like Venture Trust, and enhanced safety education through sessions on exploitation, knife crime awareness and well-being with Medics Against Violence. These inputs equip young people with practical tools to stay safe, challenge harmful norms and understand the risks they may encounter.

Community system building

Our delivery is rooted in strong multi agency collaboration. Teams in Fife, North Ayrshire, Stirling and Glasgow work closely with schools, youth services, local authorities, community organisations and sports partners to ensure young people receive joined up support. Leadership and volunteering pathways in every area give young people purpose, responsibility and regular positive commitments, further reducing the likelihood of antisocial behaviour.

HIGHLIGHT/RESULT

★ Young people took the decision not to drink, explicitly citing staff conversations on risks as the reason.

★ In Fife, Girls Only SSF Twilight created a trusted space for frank discussions on alcohol and peer pressure; participants also progressed to Duke of Edinburgh Bronze, adding structured volunteering and weekly physical activity to their routine.

★ Around 260 young people attend weekly sessions across Glasgow (Dalmarnock, Barrowfield, Parkhead and Govan), reducing time spent on the streets during peak antisocial behaviour hours.

★ Young people co designed G31 Basketball, a weekly, free basketball club, and supported delivery of this.

★ Five participants progressed into paid Assistant Community Coach roles, demonstrating clear diversion into employment.

★ New Scots provision in Glasgow added ESOL for parents/young people and school pathways (e.g. St Mungo's Community Interpreting course), reducing isolation and increasing safe participation.

2. Young People participate in activity which improves learning, employability & employment options

CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED

Many of the young people we work with are significantly affected by the poverty related attainment gap. Irregular school attendance, disrupted learning and limited access to meaningful opportunities all hinder their ability to gain qualifications or progress into positive destinations.

Young people across our communities face challenges including low confidence, poor experiences of school, and uncertainty about future pathways. This has contributed to a substantial rise in demand for our programmes, particularly for those furthest from education, training or employment. Increasingly, young people rely on SSF to provide the structure, guidance and practical support they need to re-engage with learning and to see further education and employment as achievable and realistic goals.

ACTION TAKEN

We have taken a targeted, relationship-led approach to supporting young people into learning, training and employment pathways.

Enhanced learning and transitions

Across all areas, SSF Chance:2:Be has been strengthened to offer clearer, supported pathways into college and further education. We have partnered closely with local colleges to help young people experience the campus environment in a positive, supported way. This has included college open days, course tasters, lecturer engagement and direct application support. In Fife, Stirling and Glasgow East End, staff have worked intensively with young people who have disengaged from school, providing learning support in community settings, on the school grounds and in 1 to 1 sessions that build confidence and readiness to return.

Work experience, employability and accreditation

Work experience opportunities have expanded significantly, with young people exploring sectors such as childcare, hospitality, sport, community work, car valeting and local gyms. In several cases, employers have directly encouraged young people to apply for modern apprenticeships. Across all programmes, young people accessed accredited learning including SCQF awards, Duke of Edinburgh, Dynamic Youth and a range of SSF Education & Training (E&T) qualifications. Stirling's partnership with Ceangail provided industry linked training that led directly to volunteering roles within the tourism sector.

Community-based employability support

Glasgow's team provided a wide range of employability inputs, including a careers day involving local employers and partners, outreach-based support for school reintegration, and structured routines for those who had disengaged entirely. The G31 Basketball programme, has also acted as an entry point for leadership and coaching pathways, contributing to several young people aiming to progress into paid roles with basketballscotland.

HIGHLIGHT/RESULT

- ★ Young people have progressed to college in every delivery area, Across all programmes, 64 young people reported progressing into further education this year.
- ★ 653 accreditations were achieved, including 410 at SCQF Level 5, demonstrating the breadth and depth of learning available across SSF programmes.
- ★ The Ceangail partnership in Stirling provided industry linked training, leading to volunteering placements and new skills that support future employment ambitions.

3. Young people’s health, mental health and well-being improves

CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED

Many of the young people we support experience poor mental health, low confidence, disrupted routines and limited opportunities to be physically active. Across our delivery areas, young people report anxiety, stress, low motivation and difficulties managing emotions, often linked to school pressure, unstable home environments or social isolation. A lack of safe, supportive spaces contributes to unhealthy coping strategies, including substance use, disengagement and withdrawn behaviour.

Parents, schools and community partners highlight growing concerns around young people's mental well-being and the need for trusted adults, meaningful activity and early intervention to support healthier choices and increased resilience.

ACTION TAKEN

We have prioritised a holistic approach that integrates physical activity, mental well-being and trusted relationships across all programmes.

Safe, supportive environments promoting regular physical activity

SSF Twilight and SSF Chance:2:Be sessions in North Ayrshire, Fife, Stirling and Glasgow continue to offer safe, inclusive spaces where young people build positive routines and increase their weekly activity levels. In areas such as Barrowfield, Dalmarnock, Bannockburn and Fallin, young people regularly report improved mood, better sleep, healthier habits and feeling more energised as a result of participating in multisport, athletics, gym and outdoor activities. Girls Only programmes have provided tailored spaces where young women can be active, talk openly and feel more confident in themselves.

Mental health and well-being support woven into delivery

Across all regions, staff have delivered structured well-being sessions focusing on stress, anxiety, healthy boundaries, emotions and self management. In Fife, exam stress workshops introduced tools like breathing techniques and goal setting, helping young people manage pressure more effectively. SSF Chance:2:Be programmes in Glasgow and North Ayrshire integrate daily check ins, 1 to 1 emotional support and reflective activities that strengthen resilience and positive self talk. SSF Young Leaders have also been supported to understand their own mental health needs and to apply strategies that promote healthier decision making.

Strengthening confidence, relationships and belonging

Consistent routines and relational practice have helped young people build trust with staff, form healthier peer relationships and feel more connected to their communities. Activities such as volunteering, mentoring younger participants, joining local clubs or taking part in leadership development have contributed to increased confidence, self-worth and a stronger sense of purpose. Across Stirling and Fife, young people have spoken about feeling more respected, responsible and ready to take on new challenges.

HIGHLIGHT/RESULT

- ★ Young people across all areas reported improved mood, confidence and motivation, with several describing activities as helping them “feel better,” “less stressed,” and “more confident” every week.
- ★ In Fife, exam stress workshops helped young people apply new coping tools, leading to better self-management and healthier daily routines.
- ★ Glasgow’s high attendance sessions, particularly in Dalmarnock and Barrowfield, created safe spaces where young people experienced improved well-being, with regular check ins, mentoring and trusted relationships contributing to reduced anxiety and social isolation.
- ★ SSF Chance:2:Be participants across regions developed stronger resilience, healthier coping strategies and renewed optimism about their futures.
- ★ Parents and schools reported noticeable improvements in young people’s confidence, energy levels, behaviour and social engagement.

4. Young people contribute positively to their communities

CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED

Many young people across our communities lack opportunities to feel valued, connected and involved in positive community life. Limited access to volunteering, leadership roles and meaningful responsibility can leave young people feeling disengaged, with few chances to contribute or be recognised for their strengths. This lack of positive identity and belonging often reduces confidence and can increase the likelihood of negative peer influence or isolation.

Communities, schools and partners frequently highlight the importance of youth contribution yet note that structured opportunities are unevenly available, particularly for young people facing poverty, trauma or disrupted education. As a result, young people often need intentional pathways and trusted adults to help them step into roles that build pride, responsibility and a sense of community connection.

ACTION TAKEN

We have developed strong, accessible pathways across all regions to support young people to contribute positively to their communities through leadership, volunteering, peer support and meaningful participation.

Creating leadership and volunteering pathways

Young people across Fife, North Ayrshire, Stirling and Glasgow have taken on active roles within sessions and community settings. Through SSF Twilight and SSF Young Leaders programmes, they support delivery, lead warm ups, help younger participants settle, organise games and represent their communities at local events. Stirling Young Leaders have contributed substantial hours at SSF Twilight and external organisations such as the Reuse Hub, while Fife’s Girls Only SSF Twilight has supported young women to lead games, volunteer with younger groups and progress into community based roles.

Strengthening community connections and sense of belonging

Across all areas, young people have increasingly taken part in local events, festivals and community initiatives. In Stirling, young people supported school and club events including inclusive rugby festivals, helping younger pupils feel more welcome. In Fife, young people got involved in Duke of Edinburgh and SSF Twilight established stronger links with schools and community settings, including primary school transitions and club taster sessions. North Ayrshire young people have supported local sport, community projects and gender based violence awareness work, building their visibility and influence. In Glasgow, young people across Barrowfield, Dalmarnock, Parkhead and Govan played a significant role in supporting community events and wider engagement. They volunteered at gala days, youth events and sporting activities.

Developing young people as role models and peer supporters

Across regions, young people have increasingly supported peers—whether helping younger participants settle into SSF Twilight, encouraging attendance, or acting as positive role models within their schools and communities. This includes leading physical activity, supporting mental health discussions, contributing to youth panels and helping shape local programmes. These opportunities help young people build confidence, communication skills and pride in contributing to the well-being of their communities.

HIGHLIGHT/RESULT

- ★ Young people in Fife volunteered weekly at Twilight Youngers, supported primary school transitions, and delivered activities as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, strengthening local connections and confidence.
- ★ Stirling Young Leaders contributed over 50 volunteer hours, supported inclusive rugby and community events, and acted as role models to younger pupils transitioning into secondary school.
- ★ North Ayrshire young people co delivered gender based violence awareness sessions, supported local athletics and community activity, and demonstrated increased pride and responsibility within their neighbourhoods.
- ★ Several young people across Glasgow progressed into paid Assistant Community Coach roles, showing clear progression from volunteering to employment and demonstrating the long term benefits of sustained community involvement.

5. Young People build their personal skills, resilience & benefit from strengthened support networks & reduce risk taking behaviour.

CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED

Many of the young people we work with face significant personal challenges that affect their confidence, resilience and ability to stay safe. Across our communities, young people report low self-belief, difficulties managing emotions, reliance on unhealthy coping mechanisms and inconsistent support networks.

For some, these challenges are compounded by exposure to harmful situations, including witnessing knife crime first hand in their own neighbourhoods, and struggling to process the fear, confusion or trauma associated with these experiences. Young people often lack safe spaces, trusted adults and structured opportunities to develop the personal skills and positive routines that help them cope with adversity and avoid risk taking behaviour.

ACTION TAKEN

We have taken a relationship centred, consistent approach across all areas to help young people build resilience, develop life skills and strengthen their support networks.

Glasgow: podcast on lived experiences of knife crime

In response to young people describing the reality of growing up in communities affected by knife crime, the Glasgow team partnered with a local organisation to support young people to create a podcast series exploring their lived experiences. Young people discussed community safety, trauma, fear, peer pressure and the impact knife crime has had on their lives. The podcast has strengthened their confidence, improved communication skills, provided a platform for their voice, and empowered them to influence peers and local decision makers with authentic, experience led insight.

Supporting emotional resilience and coping strategies

Staff provide regular check ins, mentoring and safe spaces where young people feel able to talk openly about stress, anxiety, relationships and difficult experiences. In Glasgow and North Ayrshire, SSF Chance:2:Be participants have developed coping strategies to manage personal challenges, improve emotional regulation and increase their confidence through daily well-being routines. Outdoor residencies with Venture Trust helped young people step out of their comfort zones, build perseverance and strengthen resilience in a supportive, substance free environment.

Strengthening support networks and healthy relationships

Across regions, young people are forming stronger relationships with peers and trusted adults. In Stirling, Young Leaders support younger participants to settle into new environments. In Fife, Girls Only SSF Twilight has created space for young women to develop supportive friendships and feel more included. Glasgow young people speak openly about the importance of consistent staff and describe sessions as places where they feel safe, heard and valued.

Creating positive routines that reduce risk taking behaviour

Regular participation in sport, volunteering, leadership roles and skill building activities gives young people structure and purpose. In North Ayrshire, participating in athletics, SSF Chance:2:Be and SSF Twilight have helped young people build healthier routines and distance themselves from unsafe situations.

HIGHLIGHT/RESULT

- ★ In Fife, participants gained accredited life skills awards, created CVs and developed healthier routines through cooking, budgeting and volunteering.
- ★ Stirling Young Leaders demonstrated maturity and adaptability through peer mentoring roles and increased responsibility in community settings.
- ★ Young people involved in the Glasgow podcast project gained communication skills, emotional processing tools and a deeper understanding of community safety, while raising awareness of knife crime realities.

★
Our
CashBack
Outcome Stats

Outcome 1 - Young people are diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system

Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced

Outcome 2 - Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)

- Young people gain an accreditation for a new skill
- Young people report an improved relationship with their school
- Young people's attendance at school improves
- Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/ taking up: Modern Apprenticeship/Employment
- Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/ taking up: Training/Work Experience
- Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/ taking up: College/University placement
- Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/ taking up: Volunteering

Outcome 3 - Young people's health, mental health and well-being improves

Young people report an increase in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion

Young people report their mental health has improved and they have a more positive outlook on life

Young people report they are more aware of the risks and impacts of harmful substance use

Young people report their confidence has increased

Young people report evidence of participation in physical and sporting activities

Achieved Year 3	Phase 6 total (2023 - 2026)	Phase 6 Target
211	643	647
435	1468	1302
258	681	647
221	585	647
55	99	66
5	34*	44
64	171	162
17	341**	1032
584	1763	647
555	1118	647
314	920	647
576	1794	647
590	1765	647



Outcome 4 - Young people contribute positively to their communities

- Young people report their perception of their neighbourhood improves
- Young people report a heightened sense of belonging to a community
- Young people report increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community
- Hours of volunteering contributed by participants

Achieved Year 3	Phase 6 total (2023 - 2026)	Phase 6 Target
234	701	647
212	667	647
256	702***	1066
11160	29425**	39000

Outcome 5 - Young people build their personal skills, resilience, and benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour

- Young people report feeling more resilient (e.g. believing in yourself, taking things in your stride, being determined, being self-disciplined, being optimistic, adapting to different situations)
- Young people report positive, supportive networks – including improved relationships with family, friends and peer mentors
- Young people report increased access to appropriate services
- Young people report positive changes in their behaviour (e.g. reduced risk taking/ increased understanding of risk/ better ability to make positive choices/ improved understanding of rights and responsibilities)

557	1648	647
604	1744	647
203	730	647
555	1717	647

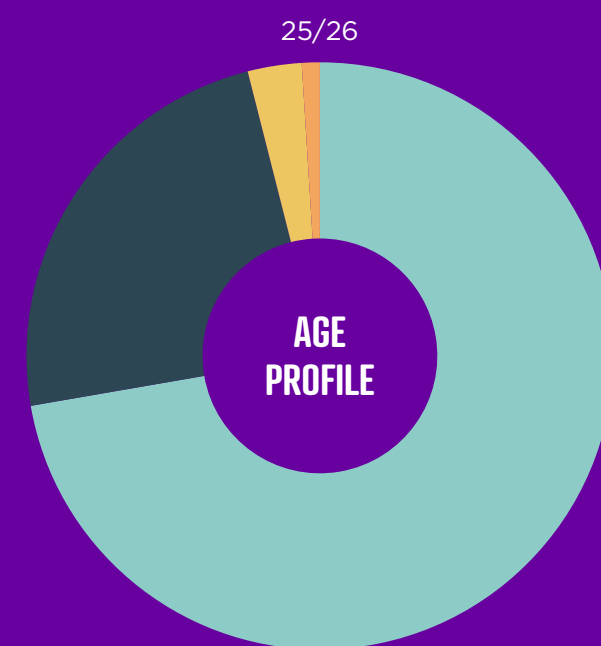
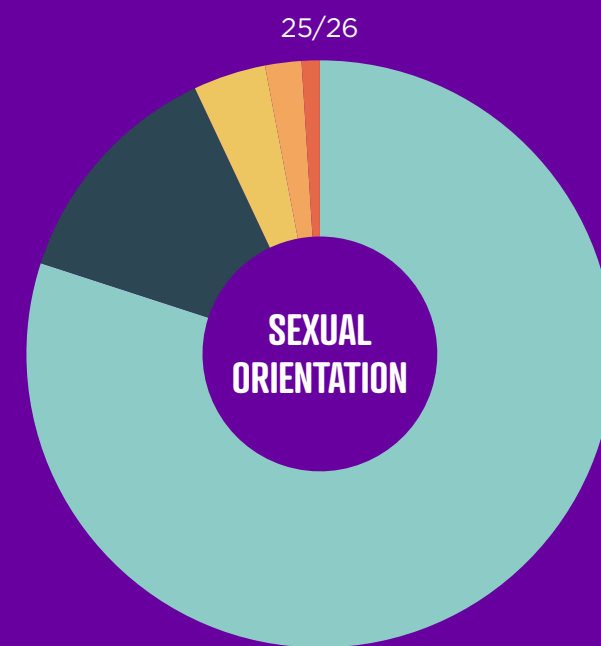
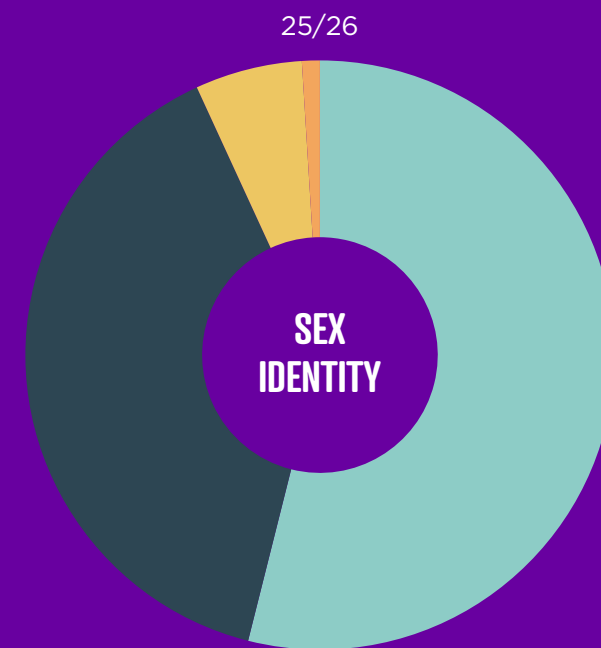
* The target above on Modern Apprenticeship/Employment was exceeded by 50% indicating that young people are more motivated to pursue a job/employment than training/work experience which accounts for the below target figure.

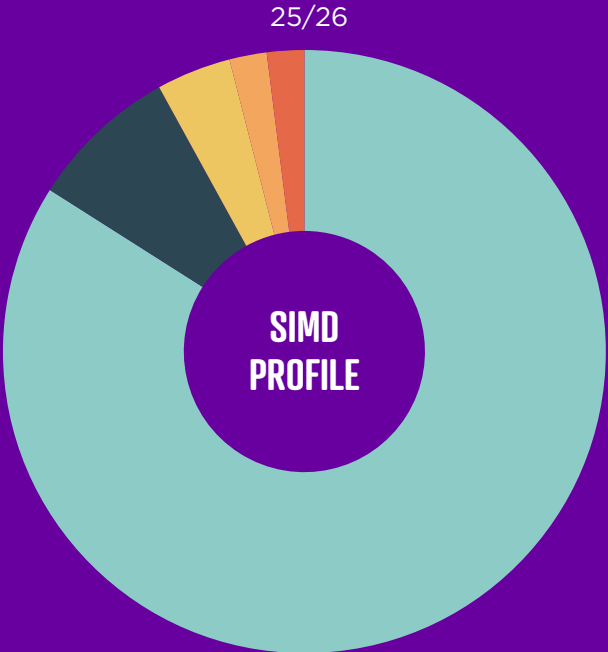
** Many of the young people we had anticipated transitioning into community volunteering through SSF Chance:2:Be and SSF Twilight indicated they were not ready to volunteer and their priorities lay elsewhere. However, the young people who did progress to volunteering roles committed a much larger volume of hours than expected and took on significant leadership roles in their communities with some progressing to paid work as a result.

*** Many of the young people we work with have faced significant adverse community experiences and many cited a concern that they wouldn't be listened to or welcomed into community centres or facilities significantly affecting their motivation to influence their community.



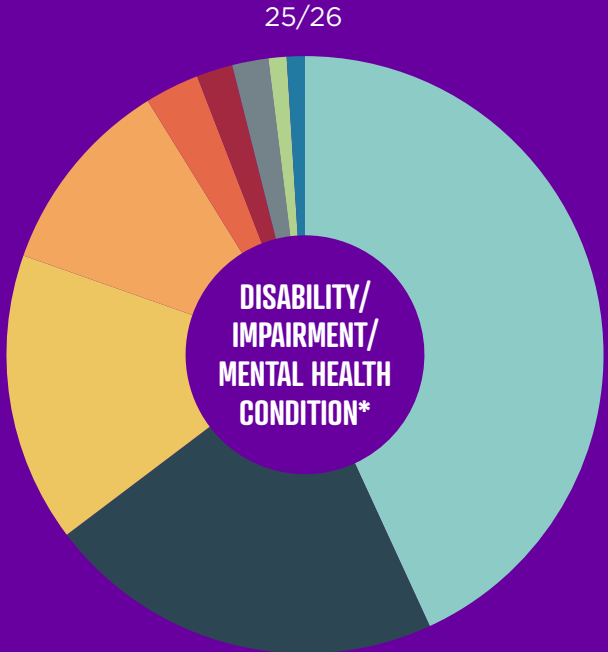
★ Our Participants





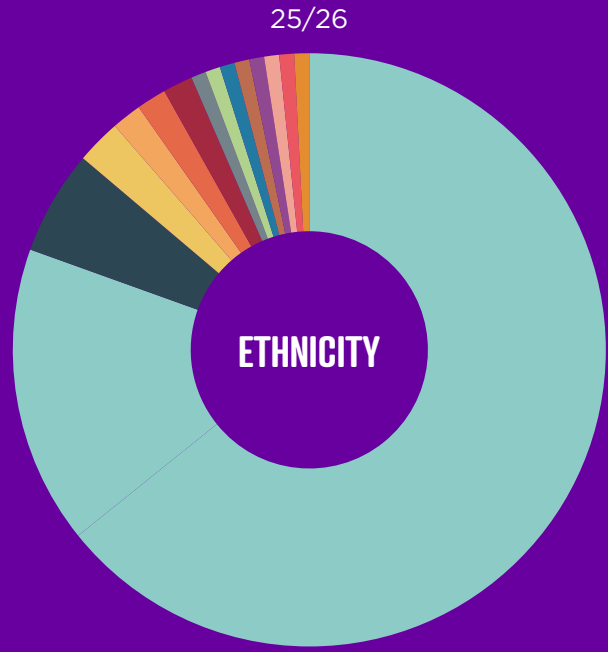
25/26 Phase 6

84%	87%	0 - 20%
8%	8%	20 - 30%
4%	2%	50 - 100%
2%	2%	30 - 40%
2%	2%	40 - 50%



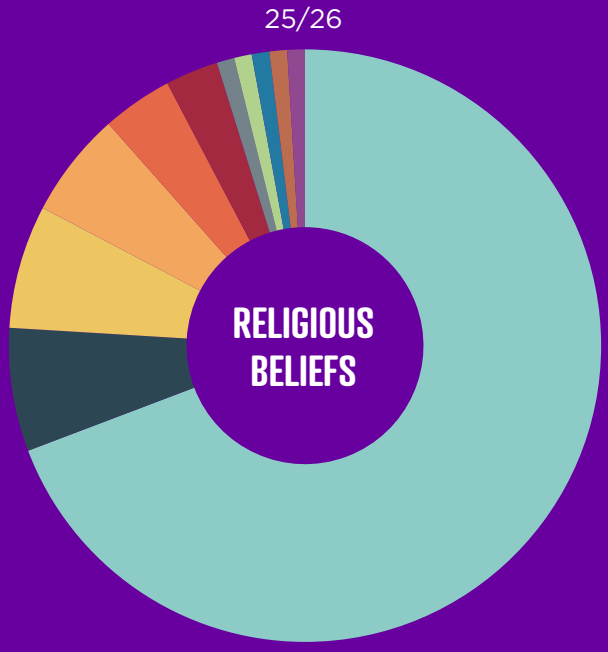
25/26 Phase 6

44%	57%	None of the above	2%	1%	Vision
22%	12%	Socially or Behavioural	1%	1%	Hearing
16%	16%	Prefer not to say/Don't know	1%	1%	Memory
11%	10%	Learning, understanding or concentrating	0%	<1%	Mobility
3%	5%	Other	0%	<1%	Dexterity
2%	2%	Stamina, Breathing or Fatigue			



25/26 Phase 6

79%	75%	White Scottish	1%	1%	Arab, Scottish Arab, British Arab
7%	7%	Prefer not to say/Don't know	1%	1%	Black - Other Black ethnicity
3%	4%	African, Scottish African or British African	1%	<1%	Other Asian ethnicity
2%	2%	Black - Other Black ethnicity	0%	1%	Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi
2%	2%	White - Other British	<1%	<1%	White Irish
2%	1%	Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani	<1%	<1%	White Traveller
1%	1%	Mixed or Multiple Ethnicity	<1%	<1%	White Roma
1%	1%	White Polish	<1%	<1%	White other
1%	1%	Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian	<1%	<1%	Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese
1%	1%	African - other African ethnicity	<1%	<1%	Black Caribbean



25/26 Phase 6

72%	64%	None	<1%	<1%	Other
7%	10%	Prefer not to say/Don't know	<1%	<1%	Hindu
7%	6%	Muslim	<1%	<1%	Pagan
6%	6%	Roman Catholic	<1%	<1%	Jewish
4%	4%	Church of Scotland	<1%	<1%	Buddhist
3%	4%	Other Christian			

25/26 Phase 6

20%	33%	Total from a minority ethnic group**
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*Note that young people may report more than one condition listed and so percentages against each disability will not combine to give the overall total. This figure is the total young people reporting any one or more disability, impairment, and/or mental health condition overall. This statistic excludes 'prefer not to say' and 'don't know' responses, and those who did not consent to their data being gathered for this purpose.

**For analysis purposes, we have grouped all categories other than 'White (Scottish)', 'White (Irish)' and 'White (Other British)' as ethnic minority. This statistic excludes 'prefer not to say' and 'don't know' responses, and those who did not consent to their data being gathered for this purpose.

671 NEW YOUNG PEOPLE IN 25/26

★ Our Impact

Case Study

Becoming a Role Model: R's story

R's journey has been one of genuine transformation.

He has been part of the SSF Twilight programme for just over a year. When he first joined, he faced challenges with behaviour and building positive connections with staff and his peers. This was likely shaped by an unsettled home environment and having recently had to move from another local authority area. Despite this, he showed resilience and a willingness to keep coming back — a decision that has clearly paid off.

For R, SSF became a trusted and safe space; offering consistent support. Over time, R has grown into a confident and positive role model. He has developed strong leadership skills and now actively helps create a supportive and welcoming environment for others. Where he once needed guidance, he now offers it, encouraging other young people who may be facing similar struggles.

His weekly attendance highlights his dedication. His eagerness to contribute ideas has made a real difference to the sessions. R's input has helped shape a youth-led space where young people feel empowered to engage and make positive choices.

“

SSF SUPPORTED ME BY GETTING ME OUT OF THE HOUSE MORE. IT GAVE ME A PLACE TO STAY ACTIVE WITH MY FRIENDS WHILE KEEPING IT FUN - R



“R has come a long way – he's gone from needing support to being someone others now look up to.” SSF Community Coach.

“R's personal development has been clear for everyone to see. From struggling to make positive relationships with his peers, R now motivates and encourages others to turn up, engages positively while also offering ideas around the development of the opportunities in his local community. R has an infectious personality and we're pleased that we now consistently see this.” SSF Regional Manager.

At the recent SSF Awards night R won the “Spirit of the Year” Award which reflects a journey not only of personal progress but also a genuine commitment to lifting others up along the way. His positive attitude, perseverance, and impact on those around him have been a real asset to the session.

R's support network acknowledge the input provided by SSF - “Thank you. We can't thank you enough for everything you have done for R, we really appreciate the work you have put it to support him to where he is now.”

R is a powerful example of personal development, driven by his enthusiasm, determination, and motivation to part of something positive. SSF were able to facilitate and support this, providing a consistent, safe and trusted space.

**In this report 'R' is referred to by his initial to protect his identity*

Case Study

Finding Independence through Sport: Ellie's story

When Ellie first connected with SSF, her path was anything but straightforward.

Growing up with care experience and living with a learning disability, Ellie faced challenges that often made the future feel uncertain. Stability was fragile, confidence was low, and like many young people in similar circumstances, she struggled to see where she truly belonged.

Ellie's early involvement with SSF began through the Twilight programme, before she later stepped into the Young Leaders pathway. Her engagement, however, was not always consistent. At times, circumstances beyond her control, particularly restrictions from her foster parents, meant she was unable to attend sessions, leading to long gaps and a sense of disconnection.

After leaving school, Ellie found herself at a crossroads. Without a clear direction or strong sense of purpose, she felt lost. But it was at this critical moment that SSF once again became part of her story.

Reconnecting with SSF, Ellie returned to sessions and began volunteering through the SSF Young Leaders programme. This marked a turning point. Through these opportunities, she developed a meaningful connection with her local rugby club, something that would soon become a cornerstone of her life.

What started as participation quickly grew into passion. Ellie joined both the female and inclusive rugby teams, committing herself fully. Training two to three times a week and regularly taking part in game days, she found more than just a sport, she found a community. Within that environment, Ellie built strong friendships and a support network that gave her a sense of belonging she had never fully experienced before.



As her confidence grew, so did her independence. With the support of social services, Ellie took a significant step forward, moving into supported living. It was a milestone that once may have felt out of reach but now reflected her growing belief in herself and her ability to shape her own future.

Ellie didn't stop there. She began volunteering regularly at the Stirling Reuse Hub, dedicating her time and building valuable experience. Her commitment and work ethic stood out, eventually leading to a year-long work placement at the Stirling Highland Hotel, another major achievement that strengthened her skills and opened new possibilities.

Today, Ellie's life looks entirely different. She is more independent, more confident, and deeply connected to a circle of friends who support and uplift her. Through rugby, she has embraced her passion wholeheartedly, not only as a player but as someone who encourages others on their own journeys.

Her transformation has not gone unnoticed. Ellie won the Forth Valley Disability Sport Young Volunteer of the Year Award and was nominated for the SSF Inspiring Journey of the Year Award and the Inspire Volunteering Awards Young Volunteer of the Year. Recognition that reflects just how far she has come.

But perhaps the most powerful part of Ellie's story is what might have been.

Without SSF, Ellie may have remained stuck, uncertain, lacking direction, and without the belief that she could take control of her future. She may have continued living in a difficult environment, without the confidence or opportunity to move forward.

Instead, through sport and community, Ellie discovered something life changing, a sense of purpose. She felt valued. She felt needed. And most importantly, she began to believe in herself. Now, Ellie is no longer defined by her challenges. She is defining her own path; strong, independent, and ready for whatever comes next.



Case Study

From Participation to Leadership: Freya's inspiring journey

At the beginning of her journey 3 years ago, Freya was drifting.

School felt like a place she didn't belong. She was disengaged from her education, lacking confidence, and uncertain about what her future might hold. The idea of trying something new, or taking even small risks, felt overwhelming. She kept herself closed off, unsure of her abilities and hesitant to trust others. Relationships with teachers, career advisors, and community professionals were strained or distant, leaving her without the support network many young people rely on.

Freya wasn't just unsure about her next steps, she wasn't thinking about them at all.

A turning point came when Freya was introduced to SSF through a school nomination to the SSF Chance:2:Be personal development programme. At first, it was simply another opportunity presented to her, but it quickly became something much more meaningful.

Not long after joining, Freya made a bold decision that would mark a turning point in her life. She signed up for the SSF Young Leaders programme and attended a residential, before she knew anyone else involved. For a young person who once avoided new experiences, this was a huge leap.

From that moment on, something shifted. Freya began showing up, again and again. She immersed herself in SSF Young Leaders activities, gradually building confidence, forming connections, and discovering a sense of belonging she hadn't felt before.

Over the next 18 months, Freya gave back to her community in a remarkable way. She volunteered more than 300 hours, supporting SSF Twilight sessions in Dalmarnock and Parkhead. Through her efforts, other young people were able to access safe, positive spaces to stay active and engaged. Freya wasn't just participating anymore, she was leading.

She became a role model. Someone others could look up to. Someone who proved that change was possible.

At the same time, Freya began to reframe her relationship with education. Despite past negative experiences, she committed herself to achieving her National 4 qualifications, knowing that doing so would open doors for her future.

Now, Freya is preparing for her next chapter, progressing onto the new SSF Youth Leadership programme from April 2026 where she'll tackle issues that matter to her and support others facing similar challenges.

Freya's journey is marked by real, tangible success:

- ★ Completion of the SSF Chance:2:Be programme
- ★ Gaining four qualifications through SSF's Education & Training programme
- ★ Progression to college to pursue her future ambitions
- ★ Over 300 hours of volunteering in her community
- ★ Recipient of the SSF Award for Inspiring Journey of the Year.

But beyond the qualifications and awards, the biggest wins are less visible:

- ★ Confidence where there was once doubt
- ★ Purpose where there was once uncertainty
- ★ Connection where there was once isolation

Without SSF, Freya's story could have looked very different. She was at real risk of fully disengaging, not just from school, but from any positive activity or support system. Without intervention, that lack of direction and confidence may have deepened, limiting her opportunities and sense of self-worth.

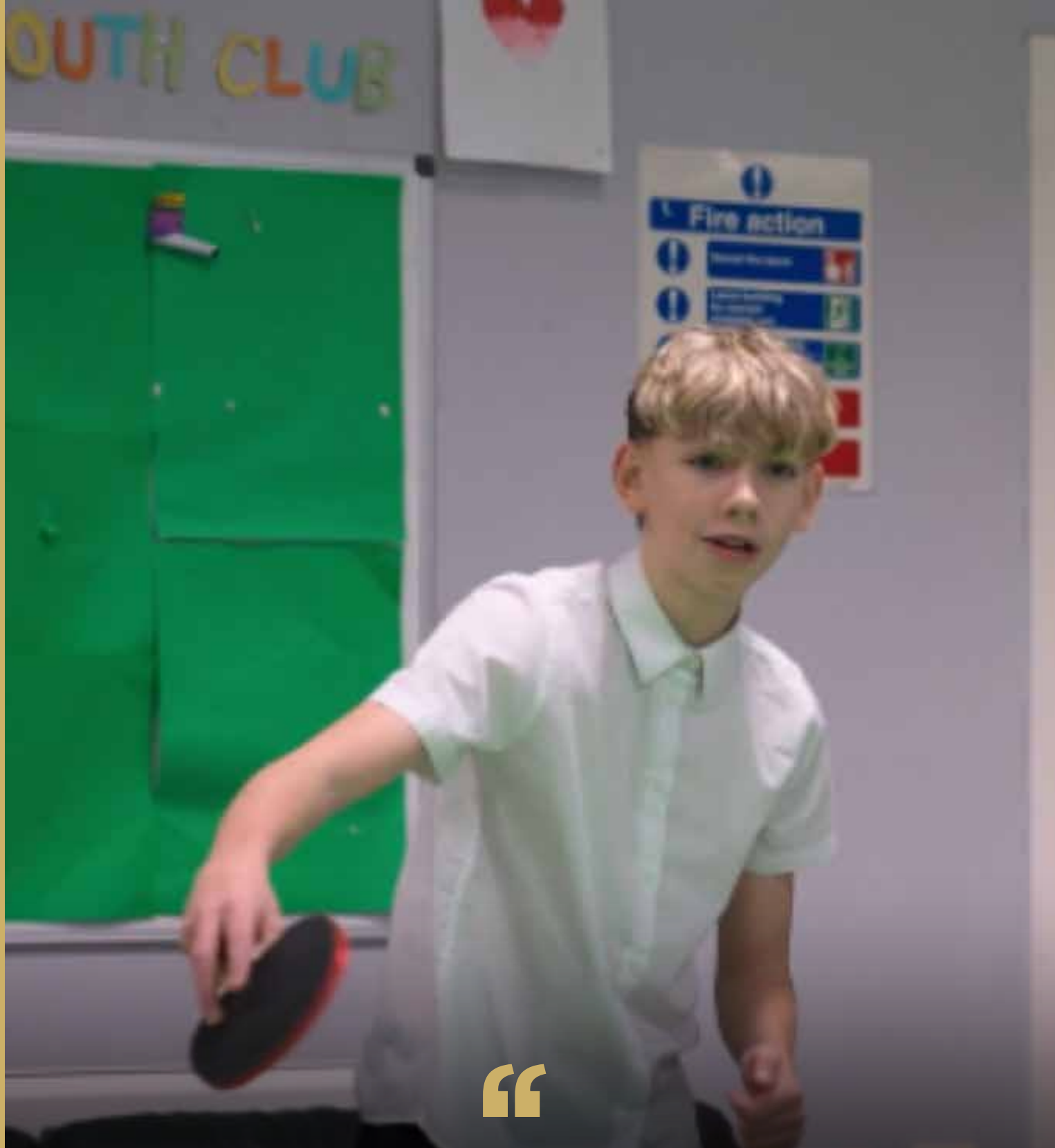
Instead, SSF provided something crucial. A safe space. A place where Freya could be herself, express how she felt, and take chances, without fear of judgment. A place where she was encouraged to try, to fail, to grow, and ultimately to succeed.

Freya's story is not just about participation in a programme, it's about transformation over 3 years. It's about a young person who went from standing still to stepping forward with purpose. From avoiding risk to embracing opportunity. From uncertainty to ambition. And most importantly, it's about discovering that her future is something she can shape, and believe in.



“I KNOW DOING THIS WILL HELP BY GIVING ME MORE CHOICE OF WHAT I WANT TO DO AFTER I LEAVE SCHOOL, SO I’M GOING TO WORK HARD TO GET MY NAT 4S.” THAT MINDSET, FOCUSED, DETERMINED, AND HOPEFUL, WAS A POWERFUL CONTRAST TO WHERE SHE HAD STARTED.

FREYA, 2025



“

OUR PUPILS HAVE BEEN DOING A NUMBER OF QUALIFICATIONS THROUGH SSF AND HAVE BEEN SHARING THE **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES** THEY ARE HAVING. THEIR CONFIDENCE HAS REALLY IMPROVED OVER THE LAST YEAR AND YOU CAN REALLY SEE THEM **THRIVING**. MY EXPERIENCE WITH SSF HAS BEEN **REALLY POSITIVE** AND I WOULD **RECOMMEND** TO ANY SCHOOL TO WORK WITH SSF TO GET **REALLY GOOD OUTCOMES** FOR THEIR PUPILS, WHICH WE HAVE HAD.

GARY SHEPHERD, PT PUPIL SUPPORT, BANNOCKBURN HIGH SCHOOL

Case Study

Bannockburn High School: Gaining Confidence and Qualifications

Supporting young people experiencing challenges engaging with the traditional curriculum.

This 15 week programme supported six young people aged 13-14 from Bannockburn High School in Stirling who were experiencing challenges engaging with the traditional curriculum. Identified by the school as pupils who would benefit from a different approach to learning, the group took part in weekly sessions designed to build confidence, develop key life skills and achieve accredited qualifications.

Sessions were delivered at Hillpark Community Centre rather than at the school. The young people described feeling more relaxed and better able to focus away from the school. The young people were also asked to travel independently to the venue which encouraged independence and autonomy. Although this did lead to some challenges with attendance, communication with the High School was strong ensuring ongoing support around each young person.

Three consistent staff members supported the group throughout, allowing trust and positive relationships to grow. This continuity created a predictable, safe and supportive space where young people knew what to expect and who they could rely on each week.

Each weekly session included 1.5 hours of structured learning followed by lunch, helping to establish routine and clear expectations. As the programme progressed, it became evident that the group responded particularly well to structure, calm environments and opportunities for open discussion.

Across the 15 weeks, participants achieved:

- ★ Five SCQF accredited qualifications: Conflict Resolution, Communication, Goal Setting, Human Connection, and the Youth Scotland Hi 5 Award
- ★ Five SSF Well-being Workshops focused on personal development, self awareness and well-being

In total, the group achieved 30 qualifications, giving each young person tangible evidence of their progress and a positive experience of learning outside a traditional classroom.

The qualifications and workshops helped rebuild confidence and re-establish positive learning habits. Group discussions became a particular strength, with young people openly sharing views, reflecting on experiences and supporting one another.

Sessions also created space to explore future pathways—discussing leaving school, setting goals and understanding how skills such as communication, conflict resolution and human connection can influence everyday life and relationships.

Although the participants did not begin the programme as a cohesive group, strong peer relationships developed over time. Their humour, energy and personalities shaped a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere that had a positive impact on the group dynamic.

Young people played an active role in shaping the programme. They provided regular feedback, which staff used to adapt delivery to better suit their learning styles. This sense of ownership strengthened their commitment and engagement. Where additional support was needed with the academic elements of qualifications, staff provided guidance and encouragement to ensure everyone could achieve success.

Beyond weekly sessions, the group also took part in an SSF recruitment process, meeting interview candidates and sharing their feedback—ensuring youth voice is embedded in organisational decision making.

To recognise their hard work and achievements, the group enjoyed a celebratory trip to Glasgow, taking part in activities such as interactive darts and bubble football. This celebration further strengthened relationships and provided a memorable end to the programme.

Staff were consistently impressed by the young people's commitment, growth and willingness to participate. Their achievements reflect not only their effort but also the strength of the partnership between SSF and Bannockburn High School. We look forward to building on this success and continuing to support young people through future programmes.

★ CashBack Collaboration

G31 Basketball: A community-led success

Developing a safe, inclusive space to participate

The development of G31 Basketball is a strong example of how community-led initiatives, created by SSF young people, can create meaningful and sustainable opportunities within local communities. What began as an idea from three SSF Young Leaders has grown into a thriving, inclusive programme that is now making a measurable difference within the local community.

G31 Basketball was established in June 2025 as a response to a gap in accessible, local basketball provision for young people aged 14+ in the Dennistoun area. Recognising this need, three SSF Young Leaders took the initiative to design and develop a free, weekly session. From the outset, the project has been entirely youth-led, with the young leaders responsible for planning, promotion, and delivery. Sessions run every Wednesday evening with support from CashBack partner Basketball Scotland for two hours, providing consistent and structured opportunities for engagement.

Over the past nine months, the project has demonstrated significant growth and impact. It regularly attracts over 20 young people each week, with peak attendance reaching approximately 30 participants. Central to its success is the creation of a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where young people feel supported to participate, build confidence, and develop social connections.

Basketball Scotland provide trained coaches who help the young leaders to deliver the session and are supporting them to gain their basketball coaching qualification.

Beyond participation, G31 Basketball has also created leadership and employability pathways, and via our partnership with Basketball Scotland we will transition two SSF Young Leaders from voluntary roles into paid employment, reinforcing the programme's long-term sustainability and impact.

G31 Basketball highlights the power of youth-led delivery, demonstrating how equipping young people with skills, trust, and responsibility can result in high-quality provision that benefits both individuals and the wider community.

Case Study



“

**MY END GOAL WOULD BE TO
BECOME A COACH AND BE ABLE TO
LIVE OFF OF BEING A COACH**

SSF YOUNG LEADER



“

**I PERSONALLY WANTED TO START IT
BECAUSE I USED TO GO TO A SIMILAR
SESSION AND IT HELPED ME GET AWAY
FROM THE STREET AND FIND A SPORT I
LOVED AND I THINK IT'S REALLY NEEDED IN
THE COMMUNITY TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE.**

SSF YOUNG LEADER

Case Study



Celtic FC Foundation

Celtic FC Foundation: A Flexible Approach

In 2024, we began a close partnership with CashBack partner, Celtic FC Foundation, integrating our accredited qualifications into their 'Gateway to Opportunity' project. This initiative supports individuals who have offended, are at risk of re-offending, or live in high crime communities. Celtic FC Foundation was eager to incorporate our modules due to our proven ability to engage young people—particularly those facing significant personal and social challenges.

We have delivered our 'Communication' and 'Planning Effective Physical Activity Programmes' modules to 14 separate cohorts. Delivery was facilitated by six SSF tutors across two distinct programme strands, one focusing on enhancing employability and personal development and the other designed to support young people with additional support needs.

Working with these groups required tutors with strong relational skills and the ability to create safe, supportive learning environments. Their expertise ensured that participants not only completed the modules but also developed meaningful skills, built confidence and improved their future employability prospects.

In line with our commitment to inclusive practice, we identified opportunities to strengthen our approach for groups with additional support needs.

To achieve this, we:

- ★ Increased the number of tutors involved
- ★ Extended the time allocated for module completion
- ★ Introduced tailored training methods to accommodate diverse learning styles
- ★ Designed interactive, activity based sessions to boost engagement and confidence

One example included setting up rotating activity stations, allowing participants to move through different tasks at their own pace. This approach significantly improved focus, enjoyment, and overall learning outcomes.

The collaboration has been highly successful, culminating in over 100 accreditations achieved by participants across the programmes. These accreditations represent not only academic achievement but also personal growth, increased confidence, and strengthened employability prospects.

We were honoured to attend the Celtic FC Foundation's celebration events, where participants' achievements were recognised and celebrated by families, staff, and community partners.

The partnership has deepened connections between our organisations. Many young people now engage with programmes across both organisations, creating a more cohesive support network around them. In addition, Celtic FC Foundation staff have completed our 'Trauma Informed Sport and Physical Activity' and 'Putting the Person First - Taking a Person Centred Approach to Coaching' modules, further aligning our shared commitment to high quality, person centred practice.



"WORKING WITH SSF HAS ALLOWED OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN SCQF ACCREDITATION IN A MUCH MORE ENGAGING AND INTERACTIVE STYLE, GIVING THEM THE SKILL SET AND CONFIDENCE TO DELIVER ACTIVITY SESSIONS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY."

MANDY BURNS, CASHBACK MANAGER, CELTIC FC FOUNDATION.



Cumnock Juniors Community Enterprise

Strengthening Local Ties

We have been working closely with Cashback partner Cumnock Juniors Community Enterprise (CJCE) over the past three years to engage with young people who are at risk of becoming disengaged from education or are known in the local community for involvement in antisocial behaviour.

Multiple cohorts of young people were nominated by the local authority and secondary school. A total of 41 accreditations were awarded across the SCQF Level 5 'Human Connection', 'Working with Young People in Sport', and 'Goal Setting' modules.

Our tutors were able to adopt a person centred approach and adapt their delivery to allow the young people to take part in football-related activities, which resonated well with the group as the modules were delivered at the local football stadium. While the young people were initially hesitant, they showed great resilience to complete the required assessments and lead physical activity sessions for their peers, to achieve the qualifications.

Our tutors were invited to present the young people with their certificates at a celebration event hosted within the local secondary school. This aided in strengthening the connections between the young people and teaching staff, as well as strengthening links between SSF, CJCE, East Ayrshire Council and The Robert Burns Academy. Since completing the programme, SSF is in discussion with the school and local authority to plan additional programmes to support more young people from the community.

Case Study



"IT'S BEEN GREAT WORKING WITH CJCE FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS. AS A FELLOW CASHBACK FUNDED ORGANISATION, IT HAS BEEN BENEFICIAL TO LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER TO IDENTIFY HOW WE CAN BETTER SUPPORT THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. THE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SHOWN GREAT ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT, AND IT'S CLEAR TO THE SEE STRONGER LINKS BETWEEN THEM, THE LOCAL SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY BASED CLUB"

SSF EDUCATION AND TRAINING TUTOR



"SSF PROVIDED OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN THE GOAL SETTING AND HUMAN CONNECTION MODULES. THROUGHOUT COMPLETING THESE COURSES THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE KEPT FULLY ENGAGED BY THE TUTORS. THEY WERE ABLE TO BUILD A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE AND ENSURE THEY GOT THE MOST OUT OF THE COURSES. THE COURSES WERE RELEVANT TO THE GROUP AND ALLOWED FOR THEM TO GAIN QUALIFICATIONS WITHOUT THE PRESSURE OF A CLASSROOM OR EXAM HALL, THE HANDS ON PRACTICAL APPROACH WORKED WONDERS FOR OUR GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE."

COURTNEY CARTER, ACTIVE SCHOOLS COORDINATOR, EAST AYRSHIRE.

★ Our Communications and Recognition Highlights

An award-winning year

Youth Empowerment Project Award

This year we were the proud recipients of the Youth Empowerment Project Award at The Herald and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce's Inspiring City Awards.

The awards recognise organisations or individuals who have made a positive impact to Glasgow. The Youth Empowerment Project Award celebrated SSF's ongoing work with young people; our commitment to offering sport and physical activity and supporting young people to thrive.

Youth Community Champion of the Year Award

Our incredible youth panel member Kebba Sanneh was awarded the Youth Community Champion of the Year Award at the Glasgow Times' Community Champion Awards 2025. The award was for Kebba's commitment to coaching young people athletics at SSF's weekly Twilight session in Dalmarnock. Kebba's enthusiasm for being a sports coach, role model and person that other young people can trust made him a very worthy winner of this award.

Social Media

This year we've been investing in visual content across our social media channels.

A key platform this year has been LinkedIn supporting our brand awareness across the sports and third sectors, our engagement rate on this platform has increased by 38% this year with followers increasing by 20%.

This year we contributed to online communication campaigns: Challenge Poverty Week, Youth Work Week, Developing the Young Workforce's #NoWrongPath campaign, Pride Month and Mental Health Awareness Week.

SSF 2026 Press Coverage



★ Our Events

Women and Girls in Sport Week 2025

On 8th October 2025, SSF delivered a Women and Girls Event at the Emirates Arena in Glasgow, engaging 50 young people from Fife, Stirling, Glasgow and North Ayrshire. The event aligned with the national theme of “Celebrating Being Active” and the “Find Your Fit” campaign, with a clear focus on increasing participation and reducing barriers for girls in sport.

The event brought together a diverse group of young people, including those with previous engagement in SSF programmes and new participants. A key outcome of the event was the meaningful involvement of young people in its design and delivery. Through pre-event consultations, participants shaped the activity for the event, ensuring it reflected their interests and needs. Young people participated in a range of sports, including athletics, boccia, basketball and cycling, alongside workshops exploring gender-based violence and the barriers faced by women and girls in sport.

The impact of the girls-only environment was significant. Creating a safe and supportive space enabled participants to engage more fully, particularly those who may feel excluded or lack confidence in sport settings.

The presence of female role models further strengthened outcomes. We were honoured to have: Louisa Mahon – Chief Marketing Officer, Glasgow 2026, Emily Nicholl – Team Scotland Netball Athlete & Scottish Thistles Captain and Nicole Flynn – SSF Board Member & Glasgow 2026 Programme Delivery Coordinator who shared their stories of sport and leadership throughout their personal lives and career. Their stories helped challenge perceptions, raise aspirations, and reinforce the message that sport is accessible to all.

Overall, the SSF Women and Girls Event 2025 delivered strong outcomes across participation, confidence and inclusion. The high levels of enjoyment and increased confidence in trying new activities demonstrate a meaningful and lasting impact for girls taking part in sport.

“

I HAVE NEVER BEEN ON A BMX BEFORE AND AFTER TODAY I ABSOLUTELY LOVE IT.





SSF Youth Panel Residential

The SSF Youth Panel Residential brought together 12 members of the SSF Youth Panel for an inspiring and impactful weekend at the National Sports Centre in Inverclyde. This created a space for young people to connect, develop their skills, and lead conversations about the changes they want to see within their communities.

A key focus of the weekend was building knowledge and confidence through a series of interactive and engaging workshops. Young people took part in a United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) session, which supported them to better understand their rights and how these apply in their everyday lives.

Further learning was developed through a decision-making and creative consultation workshop delivered by Youth Scotland. This session explored how young people can meaningfully contribute to decision-making processes and represent the views of their peers. The panel also completed Actify training, which introduced young people to the “plan, do, review” approach to goal setting and project development. This provided a practical framework to help turn ideas into action.

Through open discussion and collaboration, the young people led conversations about their experiences within their communities and the challenges affecting their peers. These discussions resulted in the group identifying two key focus areas: antisocial behaviour and inactivity, with a particular focus on young women and girls. By the end of the residential, the group had begun to take ownership of these issues, working together to explore initial ideas and identify the changes they would like to see.

Overall, this was a powerful and motivating experience that highlighted the importance of creating spaces where young people feel heard, valued and empowered. Young people are vital in driving change, and the SSF Youth Panel is made up of individuals with lived experience who are committed to improving their own lives and the lives of others. The level of passion shown throughout the weekend clearly demonstrated their determination to lead and influence meaningful change within their communities.



SSF Awards 2026

This year's SSF Awards, supported by headline sponsor **sportscotland**, was a fun-filled evening celebrating the incredible achievements of young people, coaches, youth workers and partners.

This year's event was hosted by Heart FM's Adele and Grado who handed out 7 awards across the night.

The SSF Awards acknowledge the journeys that young people undertake from beginning with SSF to where they are now. These awards recognise the support they lend each other, the leadership they bring, the challenges they've overcome and the commitment it takes to make real change to their own lives and the lives of others in their community.

This year's winner of the Ian Reid Outstanding Achievement Award was Kacie Inglis. Kacie, from Fife, has been part of SSF's programmes for several years and is a keen footballer. Kacie was diagnosed with Tourette's, Autism and ADHD which initially posed barriers to sport and education due to the misunderstanding of others. Kacie found acceptance and support at SSF and her incredible attitude, kindness and humour took her through a difficult time. And through it all Kacie was determined to volunteer her time and give back to other young people.

“SSF's helped me a lot over the past few years, they've helped me stay on at school, and they've still supported me even after turning 18. I was a bit nervous about volunteering because I didn't know if they'd listen to me, but they were really supportive and helped me through how to coach younger people with the sports that we were doing.

I've managed to get myself into college which I never would have thought I would have been able to do a few years ago and they've really helped me with that and basically just helped me build a future.”

The evening's other awards were given to:

Billie Fitzpatrick (Coach/Youth Worker of the Year, Freya Campbell (Inspiring Journey of the Year), Cheyanne Flannigan (Community Champion of the Year), R (Spirit of the Year) and Jett Dawson (Positive Destination Award). The Transforming Young Lives Organisation of the Year Award was presented to The Bike Station.

Thank you to our wonderful sponsors: **sportscotland**, Clyde Gateway, Scottish Water, Weightmans, The Wiseman Family Charitable Fund, Commonwealth Sport Foundation, Actify and Caledonia Gladiators.



Our Finance

2025/2026	ACTUAL (£)	TARGET (£)
Delivery Staff Salaries & Wages	311,894	311,894
Venue Hire & Participant Food	52,671	52,671
Beneficiary Training	26,386	26,386
Project Resources & Events	61,302	61,302
Contribution to Core Costs	45,225	45,225
Total	497,478	497,478

2023 - 2026 TOTALS	ACTUAL (£)	TARGET (£)
Delivery Staff Salaries & Wages	885,014	885,014
Venue Hire & Participant Food	144,031	144,031
Beneficiary Training	115,519	115,519
Project Resources & Events	174,597	174,597
Contribution to Core Costs	131,916	131,916
Total	1,451,077	1,451,077

LOCAL AUTHORITY	2025/2026		PHASE 6	
	PARTICIPANTS	SPENT (£)	PARTICIPANTS	SPENT (£)
Aberdeen	1	314.69	1	314.69
Angus	1	314.69	9	2,758.83
Dundee	13	4,090.97	46	13,137.43
East Ayrshire	0	0	24	6,740.35
East Dumbartonshire	10	3,146.90	24	7,276.63
East Lothian	9	2,832.21	13	4,054.28
East Renfrewshire	15	4,720.35	32	20,839.43
Edinburgh	13	4,090.97	51	13,184.84
Fife	49	91,885.31	182	340,938.25
Glasgow	287	177,212	763	449,107.24
Inverclyde	17	5,349.73	19	5,664.73
Midlothian	4	1,258.76	6	1,869.79
North Ayrshire	122	105,611	502	308,363.20
North Lanarkshire	0	0	3	916.56
Perth and Kinross	1	314.69	15	2,519.69
Renfrewshire	30	9,440.70	94	32,663.30
Scottish Borders	0	0	1	305.52
South Ayrshire	0	0	1	538.00
South Lanarkshire	12	3,776.28	20	6,220.42
Stirling	82	81,545.30	153	231,480.33
West Dunbartonshire	5	1,573.45	6	1,878.97
West Lothian	0	0	1	305.52

★ Scottish Government Policy Areas

Child Poverty Action Plan

We are committed to alleviating the impact of poverty on young people. We continue to meet young people where they are at, delivering support in the heart of communities and alongside those who live and work within them.

★ Supporting Young People to Thrive

We partnered with organisations to support young people into employment through connected programmes.

Our programmes were co-produced with young people and communities, ensuring responsiveness to local needs.

We delivered personal development programmes for young people struggling to engage with school and at risk of not attaining.

We provided SCQF accredited training, that supports children and young people to build life skills and strengthen pathways into education and into work.

We actively amplified their voices and their contributions locally and nationally through our youth leadership programmes and SSF youth panel.

★ Focus on Prevention and Positive Futures

We provided fully-funded opportunities that enable young people to engage in sport and physical activity. Food was available at all our sessions.

We provided dedicated child protection and safeguarding support, ensuring young people are safe, supported, and able to engage with confidence.

We delivered targeted youth work sessions addressing key issues affecting young people, including violence, healthy relationships, drugs, alcohol, smoking, and vaping.

As a key partner in the Child Poverty Demonstration of Change programme in the east end of Glasgow, we helped ensure the needs of young people and families were clearly understood and shared. This contribution supported the redesign of services focused on early intervention and breaking the cycle of child poverty.



Climate Change Action Plan

We remain committed to creating positive impact for both people and the planet.

Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan

Over the past year, we have continued to explore and implement initiatives that reduce emissions and strengthen our environmental practices.

Focused on improving outcomes for people and communities experiencing poverty, we are well placed to support the Scottish Government's ambition of ensuring that fairness is at the heart of climate action. Our work is aligned with national and local government ambitions, including the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan and we continue to contribute meaningfully to a just transition.

Empowering Young People to Lead Climate Action

A key focus of our sustainability work is engaging young people in meaningful climate action. This year, we further developed our GameOn for Climate workshop. Working in partnership with involv (formerly Sustainable Pathways), we explored how to gameify the workshop to make climate learning more engaging and relatable for young people.

Together, we created an online game that places young people in real life environmental scenarios, challenging them to make decisions that lead to the most sustainable outcomes. The aim is to help young people identify practical solutions to environmental issues and feel confident applying these actions in their everyday lives.

“

“We've loved working with Scottish Sports Futures this year to develop the GameOn for Climate and Common Ground games. We share a passion for engaging young people in the issues that matter through immersive, interactive experiences and this project is exactly that. We're excited to see the impact it has and to keep building on it together.”

Ciaran Armstrong, Partner, involv Group



Reducing Waste and the Circular Economy

Our partnership with ApparelXchange (AXC) has now entered its fourth year, continuing to deliver both environmental and social benefits. This year's sportswear donation drive was another success, collecting pre loved items that AXC processes and redistributes. This work reduces textile waste going to landfill while removing financial barriers to participation in sport by providing low or no cost sportswear to young people and families.

We were supported by several organisations and businesses who hosted collection bins and donated large volumes of reusable clothing—demonstrating the strength of community collaboration in tackling environmental challenges.

“

“We were keen to get involved in the donation drive as soon as we found out about how valuable the initiative is for families in Glasgow. It's such an easy way to support those who need it and also fits in perfectly with our sustainability goals”

Erin Moncur, Employment Solicitor, Weightmans LLP

Embedding Sustainability Across Our Organisation

We remain committed to embedding sustainability into every aspect of our work. Staff continue to look for ways to improve their environmental practices, and we have seen increased uptake of active travel, public transport and car sharing for business purposes.

Recognising the need to track progress in this area, Boxfish supported us to complete a carbon baseline assessment as a key step in supporting our long-term sustainability and reporting requirements. This provides a clear and standardised understanding of our carbon footprint through the collection and analysis of emissions data and forms the foundation for future carbon tracking, reporting and target setting. This work will help us to take informed next steps on our sustainability journey and continue to develop new and longer term environmental goals.

“

“We were happy to support SSF in establishing a clear and credible carbon baseline across Scope 1, 2 and selected Scope 3 emissions. This provides a strong foundation for transparent reporting, funding applications, and future sustainability planning as SSF continues its climate action journey.”

Denisa Ogoyi, Sustainability Consultant, Boxfish

Fair Work Framework



Fair Work Systems (2026)

In 2026, we strengthened our commitment to fair work through the introduction of a formal Fair Work Policy, aligning our practices with the Scottish Government's Fair Work First criteria. This marks a significant step in embedding fair, inclusive, and progressive employment practices across the organisation.

Our approach is guided by the five dimensions of fair work—Effective Voice, Opportunity, Security, Fulfilment, and Respect—and underpinned by a commitment to continuous improvement as both an employer and a delivery partner.

Fair Work Policy and Governance

During the year, we developed and implemented a comprehensive Fair Work Policy, shaped through staff engagement and leadership oversight. The policy sets out clear organisational commitments and establishes accountability mechanisms to ensure fair work principles are consistently applied across all roles and programmes.

This includes a commitment to regular review, transparency, and alignment with national policy and legislative developments.

Real Living Wage and Fair Pay

In line with Fair Work First requirements, we continue to:

- ★ Pay all employees at least the Real Living Wage
- ★ Promote fair and transparent pay structures
- ★ Monitor pay practices to ensure equity and consistency across the organisation

We recognise fair pay as a fundamental component of tackling in-work poverty and supporting workforce well-being.

Effective Voice

We are committed to ensuring all staff have a meaningful and effective voice in the organisation. In 2026, we strengthened this by:

- ★ Expanding structured staff forums and regular engagement opportunities
- ★ Undertaking staff surveys to inform organisational development
- ★ Encouraging open dialogue between staff and senior leadership

We continue to foster a culture where employees feel confident to contribute ideas, raise concerns, and influence decision-making.

Workforce Well-being

Recognising the increasing importance of well-being in the workplace, we strengthened our support by:

- ★ Expanding mental health and well-being resources through our Employee Assistance program
- ★ Providing training for managers to support staff well-being
- ★ Embedding psychological safety within our organisational culture

Opportunity and No Inappropriate Use of Zero-Hours Contracts

We are committed to providing fair access to employment and progression opportunities. In 2026 we:

- ★ Continued to avoid the inappropriate use of zero-hours contracts, offering stable and predictable working arrangements wherever possible
- ★ Supported staff progression through training, mentoring, and leadership development
- ★ Promoted inclusive recruitment practices to widen access to employment

Security of Work and Predictable Contracts

We recognise that secure work is essential to employee well-being. During 2025/26, we:

- ★ Reviewed contracts to ensure clarity and predictability of hours and income
- ★ Strengthened our approach to workforce planning to support sustainable employment
- ★ Prepared for emerging legislation relating to predictable working patterns and workers' rights

Flexibility and Family-Friendly Working

In line with evolving employment legislation and best practice, we enhanced our commitment to flexible working by:

- ★ Supporting flexible and hybrid working arrangements where appropriate
- ★ Responding positively to flexible working requests from day one of employment
- ★ Promoting a healthy work-life balance across all roles

Respect, Equality, and Tackling the Gender Pay Gap

We remain committed to creating a respectful, inclusive, and equitable workplace. In 2026 we will:

- ★ Continue to uphold robust policies on dignity at work and anti-harassment
- ★ Deliver equality, diversity, and inclusion training for staff
- ★ Review our practices to support gender pay equality and reduce any disparities
- ★ Maintain our commitment to being an inclusive employer for all backgrounds and communities

Fair Work in Procurement and Partnerships

As part of our broader commitment, we promote fair work principles through our partnerships and supply chain, encouraging alignment with Fair Work First criteria where appropriate.

Looking Ahead

The introduction of our Fair Work Policy in 2026 provides a strong foundation for continued progress. We remain committed to fully embedding Fair Work First principles across all aspects of our work, ensuring that our people are treated fairly, supported to thrive, and empowered to deliver positive outcomes for communities across Scotland.

Increased awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

We have made significant progress in 2025-2026 in embedding children's rights across our work, highlighted by the publication of our Children's Rights and Well-being Impact Assessment Statement. This marked a key step in ensuring that all programmes are designed, delivered and evaluated with young people's rights at the forefront.

Central to this approach was the continued development of the Youth Panel, empowering young people to shape decision-making, influence policy, and share lived experiences that strengthen organisational practice. Their voice has been instrumental in driving meaningful change.

Alongside this, SSF introduced a child-friendly version of its safeguarding policy, making vital information more accessible and understandable for young people. This reflects a commitment not only to protecting children, but to actively involving them in understanding their rights and safety.

Together, SSF hopes these initiatives demonstrate a strong, practical commitment to well-being, participation, and rights-based practice across all levels of the organisation.

★ Our Priorities

In 2026/27, we intend to further strengthen and extend the reach of our work, delivering changes for young people, communities, and the systems that support them.

We will launch our new strategy, shaped through deep and deliberate consultation with young people, our Youth Panel, staff, Board, and external stakeholders, which will set a clear direction for future impact and sustainability. We will:

★ SSF in the Community

Deliver and continue to evolve SSF in the Community, test and embed new community based models, strengthening local delivery and improving connections to wider organisations and services.

★ Education and Training

Develop flexible, responsive models of education and training that meet the changing needs and barriers experienced by volunteers and practitioners working in communities.

★ Youth Voice

Support our SSF Youth Panel to progress their priorities, ensuring more young people are safe and healthy by tackling violence, knife crime, and exclusion, and by promoting greater inclusion for excluded groups in sport and physical activity.

★ Supporting New Scots (Glasgow)

Increase inclusion by enabling New Scots whose first language is not English to engage with SSF programmes, while strengthening links to redesigned childcare, ESOL and employability services to help tackle child poverty.

★ Deepening Understanding and Influencing Change

Raise awareness of poverty and disadvantage among decision makers, leaders, and developers, helping to build the shared understanding, commitment, and collective will needed to deliver meaningful and lasting change.





SSF ★

Transforming young lives
through sport



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