

Annual Report 2023-24



“It makes me feel
recognised, like I’ve
got a special place.”

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Welcome

We are delighted to introduce SSF’s CashBack annual review, which captures an incredible past year for our charity and the young people we are privileged to work with. During 23/24 we committed to redoubling our efforts to leading change across Scotland to ensure more young people were better understood, supported and more physically active.

Increased emphasis was placed on engaging those who would benefit most, embedding trauma informed approaches throughout our team and beyond. We shared practice and learning across partners and sectors creating a ripple effect across the country.

We expanded our work to provide education and training to more young people and those who support them across Scotland’s Local Authorities. Providing high quality opportunities to gain skills and expertise to help address the widespread challenges faced by society. More impassioned young people have gone back into communities as a force for good supporting others to lead healthier and happier lives.

It has been an exceptionally challenging year for many as deepening poverty continues to rise. The response of our team has been truly exceptional, and this report outlines those achievements.

Dougie Millen, Chief Executive & Maureen McGonigle, Chair



Each year it never ceases to amaze me the fantastic work delivered here at SSF. I love hearing and seeing all the amazing work carried out each day and the real positive impacts that are happening in the lives of those we work with. This year we have continued to expand and develop our programmes to meet the needs of our young people, families and communities. We continue to see increased demand for our programmes and services, which are vital to those we work with as these sessions have real life changing impacts.

A highlight of my year was our annual SSF Awards night that celebrates all the amazing achievements of our participants and volunteers. The event this year gave a platform for people to not only be recognised but to share their amazing stories and serve as a reminder of the great work that continues to happen, as well as the work that is still needed.

Finally, I would like to thank the amazing young people who continue to come to our programmes and help us to grow and learn as people and as an organisation. I can’t wait for the year ahead and look forward to all the incredible things that are going to happen.

Andrew Marley, Youth Director



Our charity

Our vision & purpose

A world in which every young person fulfils their potential.

Our mission

We use sport as a catalyst to enable young people to be healthier, more confident and more resilient, so they are better prepared to combat the effects of poverty, trauma and adversity.

What we do

We enable young people, living in challenging environments, to become champions for good in society.

We are

Connecting, listening, and acting.
Educating and enabling others to expand our impact.
Creating spaces for young people to feel safe and welcome.
Harnessing the power of sport.

Our values

Empathy: We are compassionate, understanding, always listening.
Leadership: We are decisive, ground-breaking, experts in what we do.
Inclusivity: We are diverse, equitable and inclusive by design.
Passion: We approach our work with dedication, love and care.

Transforming young lives through sport

Our team

Staffing Changes

CEO Kirsty McNab went on maternity leave in December 2023. Strengthening our partnership with sportscotland, Lead Manager, Dougie Millen was appointed as CEO until January 2025.

Board Recruitment

The diversity and expertise of the board was strengthened with the appointments of new trustees, Nicole Flynn, Sally McCutcheon and Hollie Fullerton. Bringing additional experience to support our EDI priorities and corporate partnerships links.

Our new team structures were fully embedded in 23/24 and we moved all our sessional staff working in regions to contracts of employment providing additional employee benefits.

“They (SSF) have like this trusting thing about them. Like I really trust them, I trust them with my life. They’re the best, they’re actually amazing.”

SSF Young Person

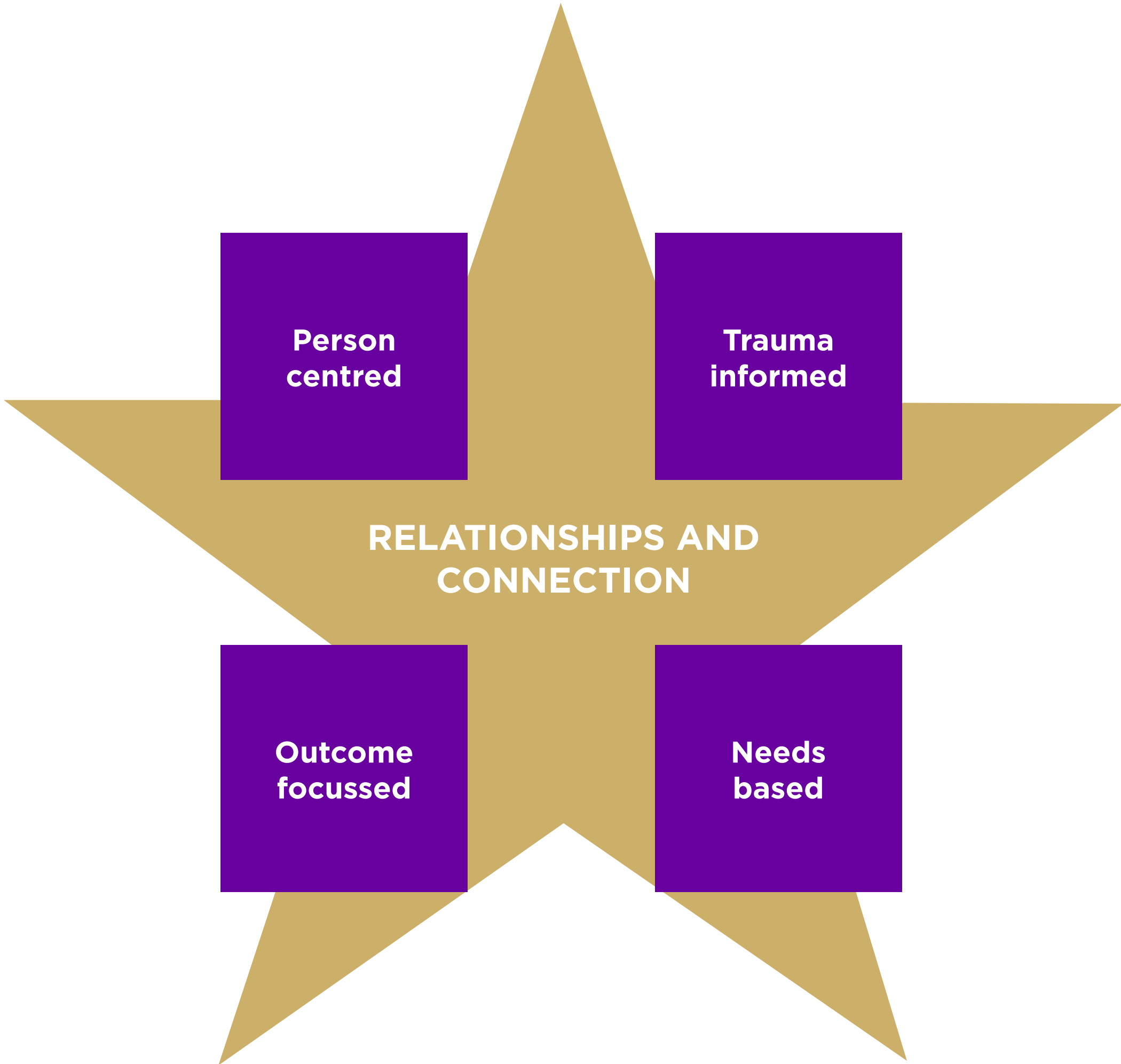


Our approach

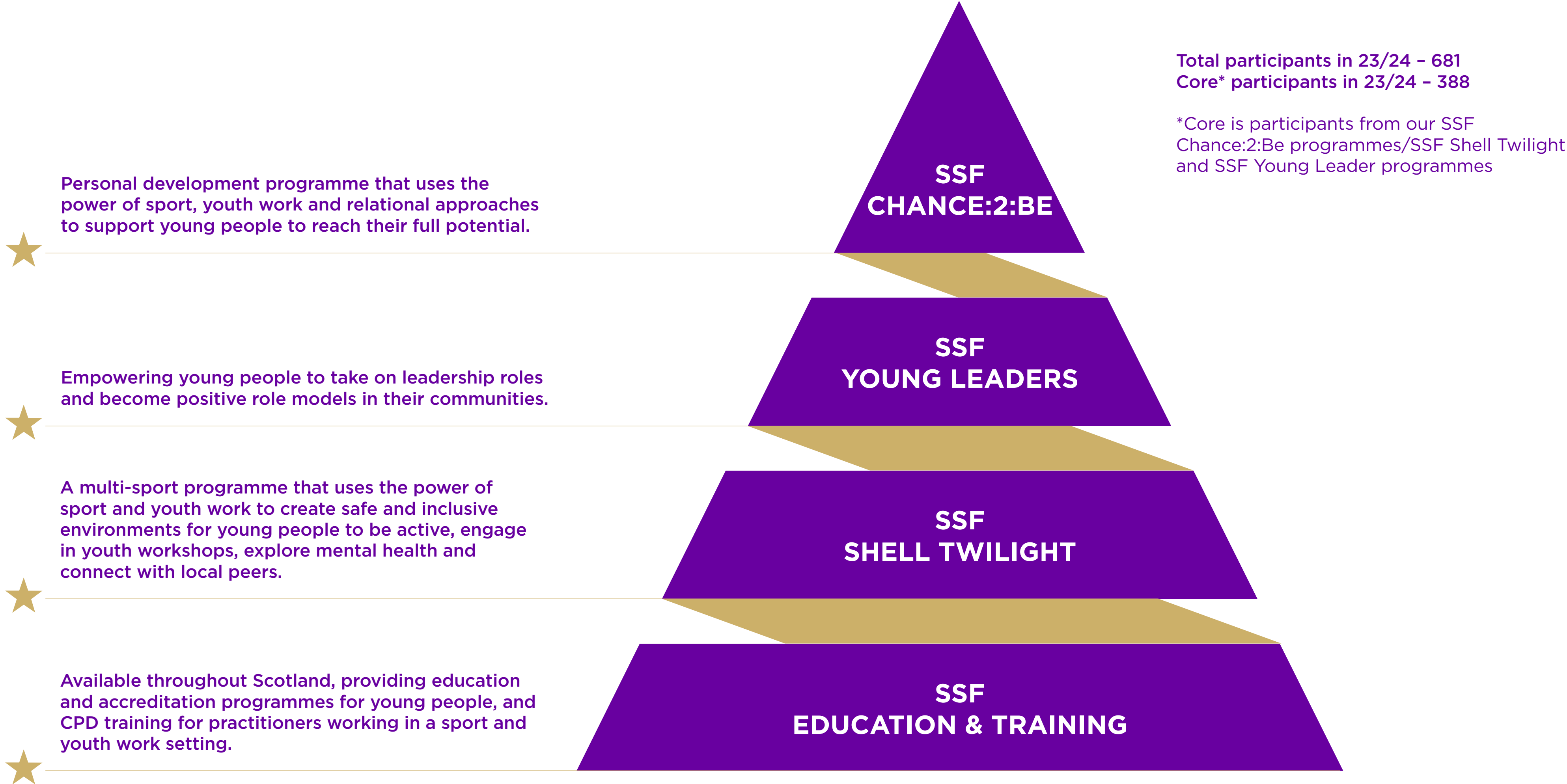
We do not rely solely on statistics to tell us about poverty and adversity. We position ourselves within the heart of the communities so we are present, building relationships and understand the needs.

We work with young people for as long as they require our support to reach and sustain a positive destination.

We create pathways for young people to become champions for good in their communities and society.



Our CashBack programmes



Our CashBack outcomes



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

85%

of core Young People reported a reduction in their involvement with anti-social and/or criminal behaviour



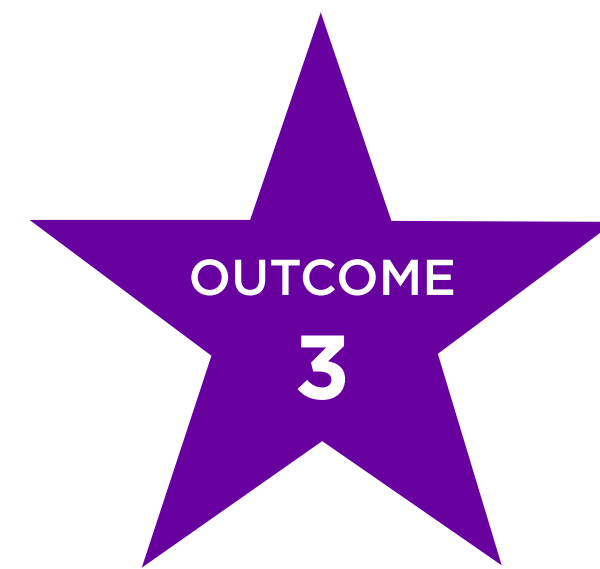
Young People participate in activity which improves learning, employability and employment options.

89%

of total Young People gained at least 1 accreditation for a new skill

72%

of core* Young People said their attendance and attainment at school had improved since being on the SSF programmes



Young people's health, mental health and wellbeing improves.

78%

of core* Young People said SSF programmes helped improve their mental health

98%

of total Young People said their health and wellbeing improved against SHANARRI indicators

88%

of core* Young People said they were now more physically active



Young people contribute positively to their communities.

66%

of core* Young People said they feel like they are making a difference in their community as a result of being involved with the programmes



Young People build their personal skills, resilience, and benefit from strong support networks, reducing risk taking behaviour.

85%

of core* Young People said they had reduced risk taking behaviour and were making positive changes overall

92%

of total Young People said they the programme helped them think more about their goals for the future

*Core is participants from our SSF Chance:2:Be programmes/SSF Shell Twilight and SSF Young Leader programmes

Our CashBack outcomes

Outcome 1:

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



23/24 Highlights

85% of young people have reported their own involvement in anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour has reduced which is a highlight. Our approach is to look beneath the behaviour, what is the behaviour telling us and connect with the young people to understand what support they need.

“My behaviour? It’s always good now, I listen to you’s and PEEK and don’t get myself into trouble. I don’t get into trouble at the weekend or in school either.”

SSF Shell Twilight Participant

“I think SSF provides an excellent opportunity for our young people who are the most disengaged from communities and education, and at risk of getting into trouble.”

Teacher of SSF Young Person

Challenges and action taken

We are seeing more young people involved in risk taking behaviour which in turn leads them to participating in antisocial behaviour.

To combat this:

- ★ We are connecting before correcting, ensuring we continue to create safe spaces for young people to connect with staff and not feel judged.
- ★ We are delivering more issue-based workshops.
- ★ We are having more 1-2-1 sessions with young people to support them.
- ★ We are bringing in external organisations to deliver different sports and activities to keep diverting them from engaging in negative behaviour.
- ★ We are speaking regularly about emotions, our responses to situations and how we can manage this.
- ★ We are delivering conflict resolution workshops.

Our CashBack outcomes

Outcome 2:

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



23/24 Highlights

We have supported 599 young people to gain an accreditation for a new skill in the last year which we are incredibly proud of. Many of the young people we are working with are affected by the poverty related attainment gap and as an organisation we are committed to closing this gap. We offer SCQF accreditations level 2-5 so young people receive tangible recognition for their work. Being able to provide recognised accreditations for young people contributes towards the poverty related attainment gap, building young people's skills for the future and supporting young people to gain employment.

"I canny believe how many certificates I got in one weekend. That was class man, can we do that again?"

SSF Young Leader

Challenges and action taken

Many of the young people we engage with have sporadic attendance at school affecting their chances of completing a full qualification. We see this first hand and have had an increase in demand for our programmes that support young people who are furthest away from achieving a positive destination to reach a positive destination. SSF work to provide education for young people who are at risk of disengaging from education and not reaching their potential by providing personal development programmes that support them to set goals, reflect and plan for their future.

This year we've had an increase in requests to deliver our SCQF modules to young people who are finding school hard, have low confidence and potentially going to leave school with no qualifications. During exam time we worked intensively with a group of 12 young people who were not going to achieve qualifications through the traditional school curriculum, and they achieved 3 SCQF accreditations in one week. It is key for us to deliver learning creatively to young people in a way that works for them and removes barriers.

Our CashBack outcomes

Outcome 3:

Young people’s health, mental health and wellbeing improves.



23/24 Highlights

To improve young people’s mental health and wellbeing, we have:

- ★ Embedded mental health and wellbeing content across all SSF delivery programmes. Regardless of which programme a young person joins they will receive workshops and learning on mental health and wellbeing.
- ★ Designed specific workshops on the SAMH 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- ★ Worked closely with SAMH to refine our mental health and wellbeing offer for young people and look at a long-term training plan for staff to ensure they are best placed to support young people.
- ★ Trained 17 of our staff in the intense suicide intervention course, ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) to respond to the needs of young people.

98% of young people reported an increase in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safe, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion.

At a recent session in North Ayrshire, staff delivered a youth work topic specifically focused around SHANARRI indicators to raise awareness with young people the importance of these to lead a healthy and happy lifestyle. The young people have increased their knowledge on what these indicators mean and how they can be met. Describing our work, a young SSF Shell Twilight Participant said, **“Twilight definitely hits every one of these (SHANARRI indicators)”**

Challenges and action taken

The decline of young people’s mental health and wellbeing is an ongoing concern for us. We are continuing to work with local and national partners to address this as well as continuing to train our staff to be able to respond to the growing needs of our young people.

Our CashBack outcomes

Outcome 4:

Young people contribute positively to their communities.



23/24 Highlights

In the last year, we have been doing different activities to support young people to feel more connected to their community and contribute positively.

In the last year, SSF Young Leaders have given over **6000** volunteer hours to their communities. For many of the SSF Young Leaders, this was their first time taking on a leadership role and prior to this didn't have a strong connection or positive perception with their community.

In Stirling, two SSF Young Leaders have used their learning about mental health and wellbeing to positively impact their community in Bannockburn. The young people were successful in receiving support from Sweaty Betty to deliver a primary to secondary wellbeing transitions programme for young girls in their community. Every week, they are taking the lead and delivering activities to primary school children. They have demonstrated their understanding but also actively contributed to the well-being of their community.

Challenges and action taken

Many of our young people don't always feel safe and have a negative feeling towards their community and people living there.

Within the SSF Chance:2:Be programme staff completed community mapping with young people to gain an insight into their feelings towards their community.

*"There is nothing that I like about living here...
The people, the shops are all terrible."*

Staff have been working hard to implement creative ways to try and re-engage the young people into their community positively. At one **SSF Chance:2:Be programme**, each morning young people led walks around the community and explained to staff and young people where they are in the community, what they like about the area and what they would like to change. Staff are recognising the attitude change as young people are speaking more positively about different areas.

"No way, I forgot this was here... so many memories here."

SSF Young Person

Our CashBack outcomes

Outcome 5:

Young People build their personal skills, resilience, and benefit from strong support networks, reducing risk taking behaviour.



23/24 Highlights

A significant element of the SSF Chance:2:Be programme is supporting young people to become more resilient, build self-belief and become more confident in themselves and their abilities.

“The work you have done with the boys has been amazing. You can see the change in them. They are more engaged, more receptive. They seem more confident in themselves and their abilities. They have a drive and a willingness that I haven’t seen in them before.”

North Ayrshire School Teacher

We have been supporting young people to pathway and access the different programmes SSF and local partners have on offer to increase their support networks and access to services. A key element of all our programmes is exposing young people to different organisations and the services they offer.

In the last year, we have delivered multiple young leader residentials, supporting the development of young people’s personal and social skills. We brought young people from North Ayrshire and Glasgow together for the first joint residential which a lot of young people were nervous about. Young people were able to adapt to a new place and new people very quickly which previously would have caused them to go into their panic zone.

“Hey, guess what! We made friends with some of the boys from Glasgow!”

SSF Young Leader

“We just spoke to the boys from Glasgow, they’re so nice.”

SSF Young Leader

Challenges and action taken

Our young people engaging in risk taking behaviour and the effect this is having on their wider community.

We integrated more needs based youth work content to educate and inform our young people about risk taking behaviour and the potential consequences of this. We have seen a significant change in the way young people speak about engaging in anti-social behaviour and think about their futures.

“I’ve stopped going out as much at the weekend, my friends do drugs all the time and I just don’t want to do that anymore or even be around it. I really want to get this apprenticeship so don’t want to do anything to muck it up.”

SSF Young Person

Our CashBack outcomes

★ OUTCOME 1: Young people are diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system	Target (Year 1)*	Achieved
Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	162	172
★ 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	325	599
Young people report an improved relationship with their school	162	226
Young people's attendance at school improves	162	173
Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up: Modern Apprenticeship/Employment	16	21
Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up: Training/Work Experience	12	20
Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up: College/University placement	40	44
Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up: Volunteering	258	154
★ OUTCOME 3: Young people's health, mental health and wellbeing improves		
Young people report an increase in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion	162	664
Young people report their mental health has improved and they have a more positive outlook on life	162	303
Young people report they are more aware of the risks and impacts of harmful substance use	162	288
Young people report their confidence has increased	162	635
Young people report evidence of participation in physical and sporting activities	162	602
★ OUTCOME 4: Young people contribute positively to their communities		
Young people report their perception of their neighbourhood improves	162	257
Young people report a heightened sense of belonging to a community	162	209
Young people report increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community	292	231
Young people go on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations	258	154
Hours of volunteering contributed by participants	9900	6,470
Community focused awards gained by participants	229	192
★ 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)	162	572
Young people report positive, supportive networks – including improved relationships with family, friends and peer mentors	162	618
Young people report increased access to appropriate services	162	317
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)	162	584

Our participants

Our participants

★ SEX IDENTITY

Male	53%
Female	40%
Non-binary	<1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	7%

★ SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Heterosexual/Straight	76%
Gay/Lesbian	1%
Bisexual	1%
Other	1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	21%

★ AGE PROFILE

Under 10	0%
10 – 15 years	64%
16 – 18 years	34%
19 – 24 years	1%
25+ years	0%

★ SIMD PROFILE

0-20%	88%
20-30%	6%
30-40%	2%
40-50%	2%
50-100%	2%

★ Disability/Impairment/Mental Health Condition*

Vision	1%
Hearing	<1%
Mobility	<1%
Dexterity	0%
Learning, understanding or concentrating	7%
Memory	0%
Stamina, breathing or fatigue	3%
Socially or behavioural	7%
None of the above	55%
Other	6%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	24%

★ RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

None	63%
Church of Scotland	4%
Roman Catholic	7%
Other Christian	3%
Muslim	5%
Buddhist	0%
Sikh	0%
Jewish	0%
Hindu	0%
Pagan	0%
Other religion	<1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	19%

★ ETHNICITY

Total young people from a minority ethnic group (including white minority ethnic groups)**	12%
White – Scottish	76%
White – Other British	2%
White – Irish	<1%
White -Traveller	<1%
White – Polish	1%
White – Roma	0%
White – Showman/Showwoman	0%
White – Other	1%
Mixed or multiple ethnicity	1%
Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani	1%
Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian	0%
Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi	<1%
Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese	<1%
Other Asian ethnicity	<1%
African, Scottish African or British African	3%
African – other African ethnicity	2%
Black – Caribbean	<1%
Black – Other Black ethnicity	<1%
Arab, Scottish Arab, British Arab	1%
Other ethnicity not listed above	0%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	11%

* 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.

Our impact

Case study: Our 'Outstanding Achievement Award' Winner



Aii

Case study: Ali

Ali (16), Glasgow, became involved with SSF programmes in 2022. Prior to joining SSF programmes, Ali was physically inactive and found it difficult to attend and engage in school and activities within the wider community including sports clubs, despite his passion for being active and going to the gym. Ali had caring responsibilities at home and needed support in finding his path towards a positive destination.

To support his attendance and provide him with alternative education opportunities, Ali was nominated by school guidance staff for the SSF Chance:2:Be programme in 2022. The hook was his interest in fitness and sport, which initially helped to build the rapport with the youth workers. Attending the programme helped Ali develop his confidence, interpersonal skills, gain valuable qualifications for employment and set him on a positive path. Upon leaving school early, Ali’s main goal was to find a full time job.

“Ali wants an apprenticeship with you at SSF.”

Hannah Hopper
PT Pastoral Care

After taking part in **SSF Chance:2:Be**, Ali volunteered to be a peer leader in subsequent SSF programmes. As a result of his passion for sport and helping other young people like him, Ali then joined the **SSF Young Leaders programme** in June 2023 which he is currently taking part in to gain more accredited qualifications, new experiences, and volunteer within his local community.

In addition, Ali participated in and completed the **Youth Scotland ‘HATCH’ programme** in June 2023. This involved an employability residential, followed by one month of paid placement at a KFC store within the local community.

Following this, Ali won the **Iain Reid Outstanding Achievement Award** at our SSF Awards 2024, for his progress and contribution to SSF programmes and his personal development. He has worked so hard over the past year making positive changes to get to his positive destination. Moving forward, Ali hopes to gain employment in coaching whilst he works towards his goal of becoming a mechanic.

“Ali’s journey from SSF Chance:2:Be participant to becoming an SSF Young Leader and then gaining employment on the HATCH programme has been extraordinary. His enthusiasm and willingness to tackle new challenges has been a credit to his personal development.”

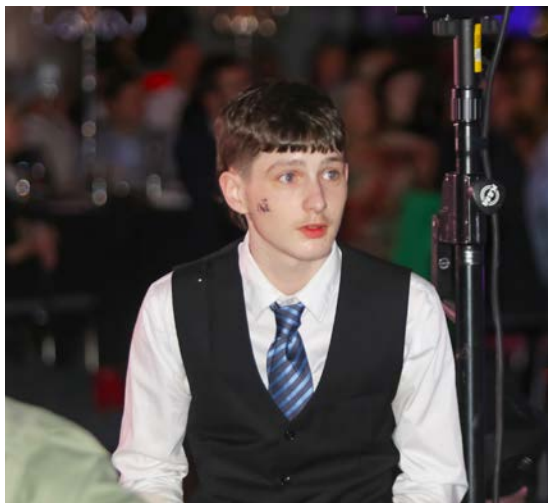
Ahmed Mumin
SSF Youth Development Coordinator

“SSF have helped me get into jobs and courses an’ that. Ahmed has been there for me if I have ever needed anything, he’s always there if I am down or if I haven’t got anyone to talk to at home... It’s defo something you wannado, especially if you’re no in a good place or kicking about schemes or that.”

Ali Lang
SSF Participant

Ali’s Outcomes:

- **Diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system.**
- **Improved learning, employability & employment options.**
- **Improved health, mental health and wellbeing.**
- **Built personal skills, resilience, and benefited from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour.**



Watch
video
here.

Case study:
Our 'Inspiring Journey Of The Year' Finalist



Spencer



Case study: Spencer

Spencer (15), North Ayrshire, became involved with SSF programmes in 2023 as he found school hard to engage and attend as he did not enjoy it. This led to Spencer displaying behaviour that the school found hard to manage. In the wider community, Spencer was getting involved in trouble with other peers and found it difficult to walk away from arguments, which often resulted in being wrapped up in conflict. He reported feeling no sense of connection or belonging to his community; as well as finding it difficult expressing himself and creating connections with adults, thus living with a lot of anger and confusion.

Spencer was nominated for the **SSF Chance:2:Be programme** through his pastoral teacher. They felt his involvement in a non-traditional learning environment would suit him well and support him to achieve accreditations, improve his mental health and relationship with school.

Since beginning the **SSF Chance:2:Be programme**, Spencer demonstrated a desire to improve himself and take up opportunities available to him. He had consistent attendance and thrived within a different learning environment. He threw himself into new experiences and continued to push himself out of his comfort zone, all whilst building impactful relationships with SSF staff, something which he had struggled with previously due to his lack of trust in others. These new-found relationships also supported Spencer to become much more aware of his emotions, and he now noticeably talks through his emotions much more openly with staff.

“It turns out I love stuff like this. Being outside, just getting stuck in. Who knew!”

Since participating in the **SSF Chance:2: Be programme** Spencer has gained 5 accreditations SCQF level 2-5, completed a first aid workshop, participated in outdoor education activities, team building, and a careers visit to a local building company. He has also re-engaged in school, reduced his risk-taking behaviour and is now focused on achieving his goal of joining the Armed Forces. He has worked closely with our staff and has committed himself to re-engaging in education and gaining additional qualifications this year to support this ambition.

“I’m not getting into fights anymore and I’ve stopped vaping. I know I need to screw the nut if I am going to get into the army”.

Spencer was recognised at our SSF Awards 2024 for his outstanding commitment to his personal development and was a finalist in the “Inspiring Journey of the Year” category.

“Aye man its good I canny believe it, if you had told me I would be up for an award back in August I would have laughed at you. This programme has defo helped me to keep more calm about things – less reaction towards things I would usually flip out at. I know where I want to go after school and feel the staff at SSF have got my back to support me.”

Spencer was adamant he was leaving school however, throughout the after-care programme and our collaborative work with the school, he decided he would like to stay to achieve his goal of getting more qualifications for his future.

“Spencer has decided he would prefer to stay on to 5th year at school and gain more qualifications! He also spoke to me about becoming a Mentor/Volunteer for SSF’s new young people that come onto the programmes?”

Spencer Parent

Spencer’s outcomes:

- **Diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system.**
- **Improved learning, employability & employment options.**
- **Improved health, mental health and wellbeing.**
- **Built personal skills, resilience, and benefited from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour.**



Watch
video
here.

Our CashBack partners collaboration

Scottish Football Association

As a result of multi-year funding through CashBack, we were able to agree a 3-year programme of SSF Education & Training with the Scottish Football Association (SFA).

Having previously included our modules as part of their workforce education, the SFA recognise the value of our training, particularly our focus on relationship building and taking a person-centred approach and were keen to continue to embed our modules within their training programmes to add value and additional knowledge and skill development.

“100% recommend SSF modules to other governing bodies or schools just because the variety of modules they offer is brilliant. Working with SSF, they like to adapt things so much to the group as well – they put the person first which is really important.”

SFA Education Officer



This year we have delivered 11 modules to 131 participants on the Volunteer and Inspire Programme, which is for emerging football coaches. They have collectively achieved 189 SCQF accreditations and developed skills in areas such as communication, resolving conflict, teamwork and leadership. Improvements in confidence and engagement with local communities was also noted, with participants applying what they have learned into their own coaching and community work.

“The experience I’ve had with SSF has been great. I would really encourage other coaches to do it because you’re learning about real world scenarios that are tough to deal with that you might not be able to learn about in other environments. So, coming here and doing their modules is really beneficial because you’re learning new things that you will take into your coaching practice on a day to day basis.”

SSF Education & Training Participant



The Celtic FC Foundation

As part of a wider programme to improve employment prospects and develop transferable life skills, we worked alongside The Celtic FC Foundation to plan and deliver two of our accredited modules to a group of young people with additional support needs residing within the top 25% of areas of multiple deprivation in Glasgow. Their Project Manager highlighted that they had chosen us as a delivery partner because our approach of using sport and physical activity as a tool to deliver accredited learning opportunities and our ability to adapt and meet the needs of varying young people had really jumped out to him.

We had pre-prepared an educational framework incorporating a variety of SCQF level 4 and 5 modules. During the introductory session it became clear that the group were of varying abilities and that several of the learners might struggle to complete the work required to attain the accreditation. We worked together to adapt plans for the remaining sessions to increase the level of support available to the group by increasing the number of tutors and support staff, and adapting teaching methods and activities which would still achieve the learning outcomes.

The adapted sessions were successful and a total of 22 SCQF accreditations were awarded. The young people worked incredibly hard and were delighted to have achieved these qualifications. Their Project Manager was extremely grateful and impressed how quickly we adapted to ensure the group got the support they needed to achieve the qualifications.

“The dedication and commitment the young people showed during the modules was brilliant, they all did really well! The beauty of SSF Education and Training is that activities can be adapted to meet the needs of the individual and so long as participants are achieving the learning outcomes in a fun and safe environment, we’re happy!”

Shabaz Khan, SSF Education & Training Manager



We delivered three of our SSF Education and Training modules for SCOREScotland, a social justice charity based in Wester Hailes. They were looking for training to help empower young people facing racial discrimination in their communities. We delivered our Conflict Resolution, Communication, and Human Connection modules, supporting 11 young people to achieve 33 accreditations in total.

The young people participating in the modules were from diverse backgrounds and initially didn't know each other. Participating in the training allowed them to make new social connections and united them to collectively address shared challenges and foster community cohesion and resilience.

“The challenges we face in the community; racism and fighting is happening on a daily basis, if we arm the young people with skills and knowledge about how to connect, communicate and resolve conflict that will be reduced.”

Harry Economou, SCOREScotland



The modules provided participants with the opportunity to acquire practical knowledge, develop transferable life skills, form meaningful relationships, and gain SCQF qualifications in a non-traditional learning environment. Participants highlighted the enjoyable and engaging nature of the modules, which was a welcome change to the typical approach to gaining qualifications. We focused efforts on building human connection, delivering a dynamic learning experience and providing lots of opportunities to be active throughout.

“It doesn't feel like a qualification, we're just having fun, we're not worrying or stressing, we're really enjoying it.”

SSF Education & Training Participant

Each participant completed multiple qualifications accredited to SCQF level 4 and 5. These qualifications not only foster personal growth but also enhance participants' future prospects by equipping them with essential skills, with many of the group sharing that they plan to add the qualifications to their CV and higher education applications.

“This is the future of the community, and they can turn out to be great leaders and decision makers, giving them the opportunity to learn and get accreditation is something very rewarding for the whole of the community.”

Harry Economou, SCOREScotland

Strengthening Communities for Race Equality Scotland



Our events

Our events

Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Event

To celebrate Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week 2023, we hosted a girls-only, multi-sport event at Meadowbank Sports Centre, Edinburgh. After consultation with young women from across our programmes, it highlighted the need for events like this to help understand the barriers that young women continue to face in sport.

Sports Minister, Maree Todd MSP joined us on the day as well as partners from across Scotland including, sportscotland, Badminton Scotland, Basketball Scotland, Scottish Athletics and Scottish Disability Sport. The Minister joined participants as they took part in variety of different sports including wheelchair basketball and new age curling.

The young women and girls have attended a number of sessions throughout the year supported by the Sweaty Betty Foundation and met with the Sports Minister at last year's event. They were presented with sports apparel which included a sports bra from Sweaty Betty and Netball Scotland kit.

Comedy Night Fundraiser!

On the 6th December 2023 Barclays hosted a comedy fundraiser at The Stand Comedy Club, Glasgow, on behalf of SSF. The evening was hosted by SSF Ambassador, Chris Forbes, and joined by comedians Gita Blaze, Rosco McClelland, Stuart Mcpherson and Susan Riddell.

Having the support from the team at Barclays during the lead up to the event as well as on the night support with the raffle from four volunteers was an incredible help. The evening was a great success raising £2000.

We remain grateful to Barclays for their continued support with our fundraising efforts, both financially and through participation on our Business Sustainability Working Group.

Tenner to Tons

Tenner to Tons is an SSF entrepreneurial challenge encouraging teams to create a business with a focus on sustainability. Teams are provided with a starting capital of £10 and have an aim to transform their £10 into as much money as possible through any means of entrepreneurship.

This year, The University of the West of Scotland (UWS), 3rd year Sports Development students took on the challenge as part of their Enterprise module. The challenge saw teams raise £2000 for SSF with ideas ranging from bake sales to sponsored/guided walks. The support and enthusiasm from UWS has been incredible over the semester with plans to roll out the Tenner to Tons challenge again next year.

SSF Awards 2024

We welcomed young people, friends and partners to the voco Grand Central Hotel on Thursday 22 February 2024, for the annual SSF Awards 2024 sponsored by sportscotland.

The evening was undoubtedly the highlight of the year and was an emotional and inspirational reminder of what can be achieved through partnership working and putting young people at the heart of everything. It provided the ideal opportunity to recognise the successes and learnings of our young people, coaches, youth workers and partners.



Our recognition highlights

Our recognition highlights

Social Media

Over the last year we have been purposeful in using social media to raise awareness and profile of equality, diversity, and inclusion topics. As a result, we have;

- ★ Regular meetings with our EDI working group, working on our strategic action plan to ensure we are meeting the needs of our people.
- ★ Used social media to help gain our LGBT charter status (Silver level accreditation) through LGBT Youth Scotland.
- ★ Refined our social media themed campaigns calendar to reflect the needs and advocate for our people on socials. Campaigns such as; Pride, National Coming Out Day, #NoWrongPath, Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week, Challenge Poverty Week, Mental Health Awareness Week.

SSF Awards 2024 Press Coverage

- ★ Five North Ayrshire young folk up for major sports awards.
- ★ Unsung Hero of the Year award for Lochgelly's Erynn McGrath.
- ★ Irvine's Zara named youth worker of the year at SSF awards.
- ★ Young Fifer crowned unsung hero at awards for her commitment and dedication.

External Events

Scottish Government

- ★ Presenting and facilitating at the ACEs and Trauma Network meeting about our work and approach to trauma informed practice.
- ★ Ministerial acknowledgment at Parliament from Maree Todd, the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, who explained how the support of our SSF programmes and partnerships is helping to reduce barriers to participation and encourage the important conversations.
- ★ Presented at the CashBack Portfolio Partners Event.

Corra Foundation

- ★ Presented at the Corra Conference 2024, sharing SSFs story and experience of understanding impact and gathering learning to transform young lives through sport.

Stirling University

- ★ Presented to 3rd year Sport Management students about Sustainability in Sport and Policy in Action.
- ★ Presented to Msc Sport Management Students about Sport Management Challenges and Sustainability.

sportscotland

- ★ Presented at the Coaching Symposium about the culture of SSF, person-centred coaching and trauma informed practice.

- ★ Presented and facilitated a workshop for disabled people undertaking modern apprenticeships in sport.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

- ★ Presented at the DYW Partner Event for Glasgow.

Awards

We are proud to have been recognised nationally for transforming young lives through sport. We were finalists in the following awards;

- ★ The Glasgow Business Award for 'Fair and Healthy Workplace'
- ★ The Glasgow Business Award for 'Green Champion'
- ★ The Herald & GenAnalytics Diversity Awards for 'Diversity in Sport'
- ★ National Good Lottery Awards for 'Project of the Year'
- ★ The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) Organisation of the Month Award

Scottish Government policy areas

UNCRC

(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Young people’s views, rights and voices are integral to our work. Increasing awareness of the UNCRC and the impact that the UNCRC Incorporation (Scotland) Act 2024 will bring is essential, both internally but also with our partner organisations.

We have enhanced our policies and prioritised educating, training and developing our people:

- ★ Children in Scotland, Childrens Rights Training is completed at the point of recruitment.
- ★ Attended the recent Children 1st conference, “A Conversation about Children’s Human Rights in Sport”.
- ★ Our Child Protection Policy has been written in language that is accessible to our young people and includes trauma informed language.
- ★ Our previous referral process has been reviewed and now renamed to “our nomination process” This was based on young people’s feedback, that “referral” had negative connotations and associations and was not trauma informed.
- ★ Our SSF Young Leaders have participated in sportscotland’s “Safeguarding for Young Leaders” course. This includes a detailed examination of what rights they have as children themselves but also what rights they have in their role as a young leader.

To the right are examples of how we are ensuring our delivery is aligned to the UNCRC.

Article 12 Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

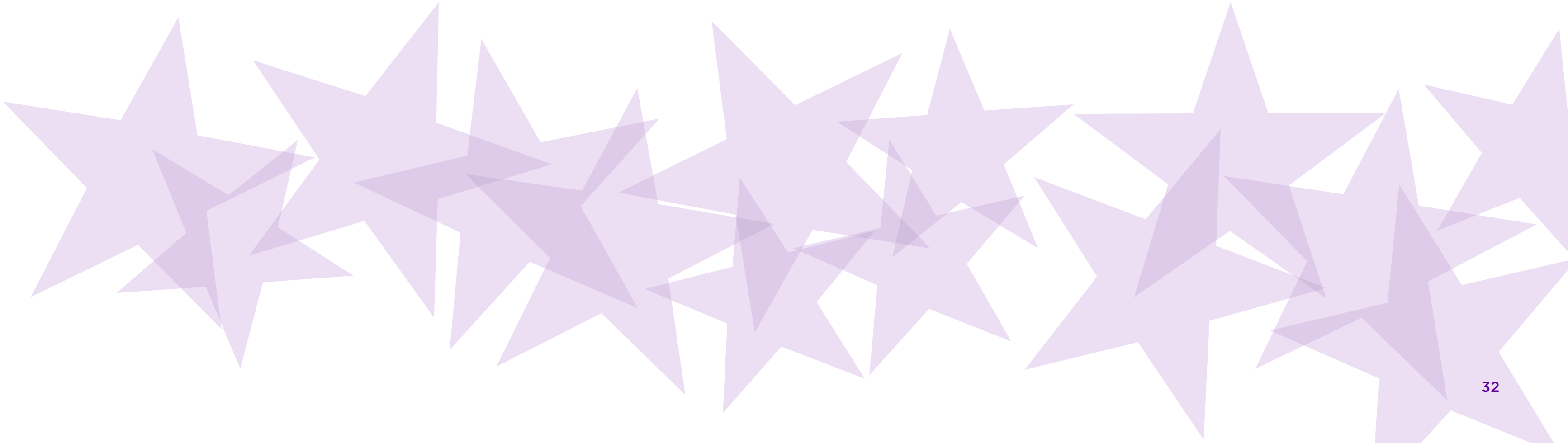
Article 13 Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

- ★ Consultation is built into each of our sessions and is also done more formally quarterly and yearly to ensure young people are having a say on matters affecting them.
- ★ We have commenced the process of recruiting an SSF Youth Advisory board to ensure that young people are involved in the decision making of the charity and their opinions are heard, valued and taken seriously.
- ★ Young People influence the location our services are delivered from to ensure this is a place where they feel safe both in the session and traveling to and from the venue. Our Govan sessions have recently been relocated following feedback from our participants.

Article 31 Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Article 15 Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

- ★ We deliver services for young people which allow them to connect with people and their community safely, access physical activity and youth work and take part in a variety of activities which allow them to learn creatively.
- ★ Our commitment to ensuring young people have access to free, safe activity which supports their physical, social and emotional development is continuing to grow and recently we have started delivering Active Play across North Ayrshire in three school settings. Active Play is a proven programme which supports primary aged children to become more physically active and is designed to develop physical literacy and improve children’s fundamental movement skills (FMS). We are embedding learning from the Active Play programme within our current programmes.



Fair Work Framework

Payment of at least the real Living Wage

We are a member of the Living Wage Foundation and committed to paying at least the real Living Wage.

Appropriate Channels for effective worker's voice

- ★ All employees undertake a variety of “conversations” recorded in Clear Review – our People and Learning system. These will take the form of check-ins, quarterly objective settings, well being and annual performance review.
- ★ We undertake pulse surveys throughout the year on a variety of issues, most recently on employee wellbeing.
- ★ We hold quarterly all employee meetings after Board meetings to update on relevant decisions and gather feedback.

Investment in the Workforce Development

- ★ All employees undertake at least 16 hours of training every year. This objective was surpassed in the last financial year.
- ★ We offer learning loans to employees who wish to pay for more expensive training such as university/college courses relevant to their jobs and provide paid time off to attend these courses.

No inappropriate use of zero hours contracts

- ★ We do not use inappropriate zero hours contracts. We made the decision to restructure the use of sessional staff to ensure that there are guaranteed number of minimum hours where possible and these staff will be moved to contracts of employment.

Action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace

- ★ We have an EDI working group to help create a more diverse workplace which has representation at all levels of the organisation including Board.
- ★ We aim to ensure that no-one gender will represent more than 60% of the Board and workforce. This is currently being met.
- ★ Our staff are paid on a scale agreed with the Board on an annual basis and all employees join at the bottom of the scale unless there are exceptional circumstances. This ensures that all employees are paid equally.

Offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of their employment

- ★ We offer flexible working from an employees first day and in addition do not limit the number of times this can be applied for.

Oppose the use of fire and rehire practice

- ★ We do not use fire and rehire practices and will not consider it.



Best Start, Bright Futures:

Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026

A: Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain, and progress in work.

- ★ We offer SSF training and accreditations to adult learners across Scotland.
- ★ We have flexible work options for all staff including young parents to fit with childcare requirements.

B: Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs.

- ★ In Glasgow, the city’s public, third and housing sector partners have committed to tackling child poverty as the key priority in Glasgow, through person-centred and place-based approaches. To lead the way on this ambition, a multi-agency Child Poverty Pathfinder has been established, working in partnership with the Scottish Government and the city’s Community Planning structures and plans. SSF have signed up to the No Wrong Door network, which is a network of service providers and organisations that contributes to the Pathfinder. It promotes and develops tools for holistic working and case management to provide a person-centred approach. It will reshape how organisations in the city work together, ensuring that citizens can access support seamlessly from multiple organisations.
- ★ We continue to promote and introduce young people and families to local support services and continue to play a key role as “community connector”, ensuring communities are connected and aware of the services available to them.

- ★ We provide food, hygiene products, access to food vouchers and back to school packs after holiday times for young people in a dignified and person-centred way.

C: Supporting the next generation to thrive – Embed the Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

All SSF delivery is based on the GIRFEC principles and values.

- ★ We are supporting young people to grow and thrive by providing afterschool and evening physical activity and youth work provision, alternative curriculum provision, holiday programmes, wellbeing support along with providing clothing.
- ★ We offer intervention and prevention programmes for young people, meaning young people have the opportunities to engage in positive activity to improve their lives, wellbeing and develop skills.
- ★ Many of the young people we are working with are affected by the poverty related attainment gap and as an organisation we are committed to closing this gap. We offer accessible SCQF accreditations level 2-5 so young people receive tangible recognition for their work. Being able to provide recognised accreditations for the young people contributes towards the poverty related attainment gap, building young people’s skills for the future and supporting young people to gain employment.
- ★ We build connections, trust and relationships adopting a trauma informed approach. We will have activity on during the day as well as in the evening, to encourage young people to leave their homes, engage in positive activity and reduce isolation.

- ★ We provide young people with 1-2-1 personal development support, a safe place to talk about trauma and challenges, complete accreditations, and qualifications.

- ★ We use physical activity to regulate stress and buffer effects of poverty and provide young people with opportunities to take part in activities out with communities and comfort zones.

- ★ Young people, through participation in creative workshops learn about budgeting, financial awareness to increase their understanding and knowledge about their entitlements and support them to access these when required.



Climate change action plan

As part of our commitment to wider sustainability, we have been working to improve our environmental practices and reduce our emissions. Key to the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan is delivering a just transition to ensure that fairness is at the heart of climate action and that individuals and communities are not left behind.

The work that we do aims to combat the effects of poverty and buffer against trauma and adversity and we know that often the effects of climate change can impact more negatively on those living in poverty. For this reason a key focus of the goals and actions we identified through our Environmental Impact Strategy are to engage and enable young people to take climate action and live sustainably. By doing so we aim to reach communities and contribute towards achieving the outcomes outlined in the Climate Change Plan in a just and fair way.

We believe in collaborative working to make the biggest impact and have established some strong partnerships to help us to achieve mutual goals in tackling climate change and enabling young people to take action on this topic.

What we are doing

Climate Education for Young People

In order to engage on this topic in a meaningful way with our young people, we collaborated with Sustainable Pathways to create a fun, interactive and action-oriented workshop which will be embedded across all of our programmes. We recently secured funding to upskill all of our delivery team to enable them to deliver the workshop. This means that all our young people will participate in a workshop on the topic of climate change and they will learn about the problems caused by climate change, and sustainable solutions which they can embed into their daily lives which will have a positive impact on our planet. The workshop covers areas such as transport and travel; what we buy; recycling and re-use; how we eat and energy.

Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

We’ve been encouraging staff to use a sustainable travel hierarchy when thinking about how they travel. We are working towards reducing the number of miles traveled by car and promoting active and sustainable travel options where possible. To help enable active travel we secured funding for a secure bike pod and clothes drying unit for our Glasgow office. We have been working towards achieving the Cycling Friendly Award and this will help us to achieve that. Access to the bike pod and clothes dryer will be available to our young people meaning that all our young people in Glasgow will have barriers removed to travelling actively and this is another area where we will influence and encourage our young people to take climate action.

In addition to this, we support all of our young people to apply for their concessionary bus travel passes to enable them to travel using public transport.

Waste and the Circular Economy/What We Buy

We collaborated for the second year with ApparelXchange (AXC) on our sportswear donation drive. Through this collaboration we want to reduce the amount of clothing going to landfill and increase access to clothing for those who need it most. We want to raise awareness of the problem of over-consumption and influence consumers towards buying pre-loved clothing. This is a topic that we pick up with young people through our workshop, and we have plans to take participants from our programmes to the AXC warehouse to provide education about the impact of fast fashion and over-consumption on the planet. Compared to 2022, our reach increased, and we had an over 500% increase in donations. The active wear that we receive is processed and re-distributed to young people from SSF and other partners, addressing the barrier of access to suitable clothing for participation in sport and physical activity.

We’ve started to establish a partnership with Scottish Water. They have pledged to donate 180 re-usable water bottles for distribution to our young people participating in our programmes. Part of our focus is on reducing the use of single use plastics, and the introduction of re-usable water bottles will support this. We also plan to use the opportunity to educate our young people about the negative impacts of single use plastics, the pollution caused by plastics entering our waterways, over-use of water and highlight potential apprenticeship and employment opportunities through Scottish Water.

Children's rights and wellbeing impact assessment

Children’s rights and wellbeing impact assessment

We are committed to protecting and promoting children’s human rights and ensuring that our young people are at the heart of and involved in our decision making. From our youth trustees to the involvement of young people in our program development, we use our [CRWIA](#) to ensure that children’s human rights are embedded in our policy and practice.

You can also view our own impact assessment [here](#).



Our future priorities

Our future priorities

We will further develop environmentally sustainable working practices creating a positive impact on people, society, and the environment.

We will continue to work towards Scotland’s vision where children’s human rights are embedded in all aspects of society. We will continue to recognise, respect and promote children’s rights. These include the right to be treated fairly, to be heard and to be as healthy as possible.

We will strengthen our strategic partnerships with local authorities and partners, aligning our regional resources and teams to place based working.

We will embed Mental Health and Well-being practice across all our programmes.

We will continue to enable greater inclusion and diversity across our programmes, workforce and board.

We will raise the profile of our work and target our EDI campaigns aligned to our beliefs and the needs of our young people.

We will support young people engagement with Scottish Government and elected members to action their ideas for change.

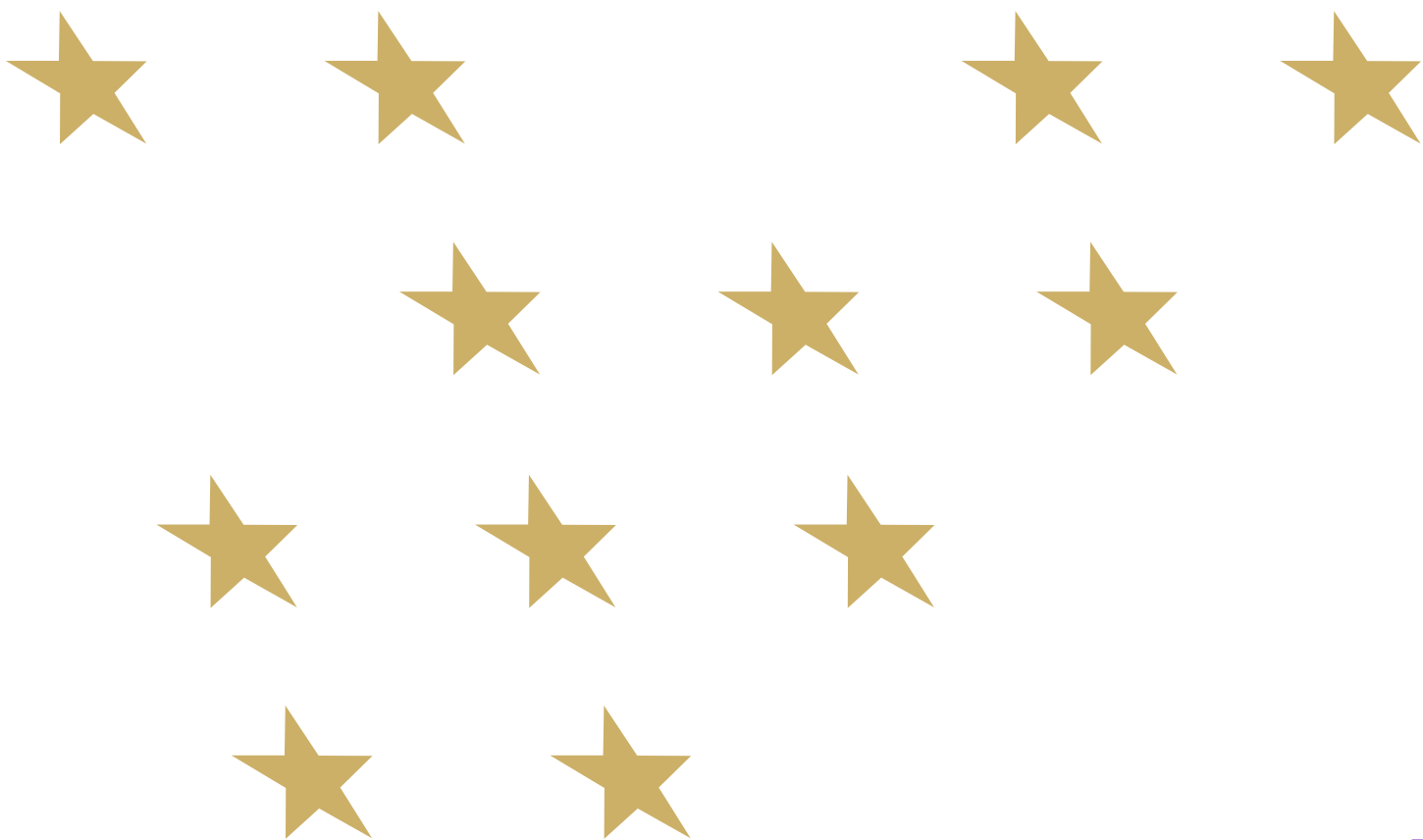
We will provide more young people with opportunities to enhance their learning, prospects, and employment opportunities by working with DYW and schools.

We will work with the sporting workforce to educate and raise awareness of trauma and adversity and the link with sport and physical activity.

We will co-produce conferences and learning events with partners including Actify, Evaluation Support Scotland, Spirit of 2012 and sportscotland.

We will share learning with the sporting system and partners around our approach to understanding impact and evidence-based practices.

We will continue to be a Fair Work First employer and ensure it continues to underpin our employment practices.



Our finances

Our finances and local authority spend




2023/24	Actual (£)	Target (£)
Delivery staff salaries & wages	274,470	274,470
Venue hire & participant food	43,000	43,000
Beneficiary training	45,555	45,555
Project resources & events	54,792	54,792
Contribution to core costs	41,782	41,782
Total	459,599	459,599

LOCAL AUTHORITY	Participants	Spend (£)
Dundee	7	1103
East Ayrshire	4	630
East Dunbartonshire	1	158
East Renfrewshire	4	8800
Edinburgh	17	2678
Fife	71	151933
Glasgow	250	97537
Inverclyde	2	315
North Ayrshire	223	101928
Perth and Kinross	14	2205
Renfrewshire	51	15598
South Ayrshire	1	538
Stirling	36	76177



“They invested
in me, involved
me, they cared
about me.”



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