

# venturetrust



## **CASHBACK CHANGE** CYCLE PROGRAMME: YEAR 1 REPORT

The Venture Trust is a registered charity in Scotland (Number: SC038932) and in England & Wales (Number: 285891)

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## **1. Programme Overview**

Venture Trust was awarded funding from the Scottish Government's "CashBack for Communities" Phase IV funding. The three year grant (April 2017 to March 2020) is supporting an innovative employability programme 'The Change Cycle' which is delivered in partnership with the Bike Station, Edinburgh and Bike for Good, Glasgow.

Change Cycle is for young people aged 16-24 who are not in work, education or training, facing long term unemployment and disadvantage as well as potentially at risk of (re-)offending or anti-social behaviour.

Following outreach assessment and preparation, the three week course starts with two weeks of classroom-based employability training and workshop-based vocational skills development focused on bike building and maintenance. Participants then take the bike they have built on a 1 week wilderness residential which includes a volunteering conservation project and mountain biking training. Following the course, support is provided by Venture Trust's outreach workers guided by the participants' individual goals and personal action plans. Key components are:

- Hands-on vocational training in bike construction delivered by our partners Bike Station Edinburgh, and Bike for Good Glasgow).
- Safe cycling/mountain bike training in the city and in wilderness settings
- Employability training and skills development
- On-line health and safety training
- Practical voluntary work experience in the outdoors
- First Aid Training
- Personal action planning and CV completion.

Participants achieve accredited certificates in cycle maintenance, health and safety and first aid training as well as producing their own action plan and preparing their CV.

A self-constructed bike and equipment to take home and use for travel in job search, accessing services or training, getting to work and leisure.

The programme aims to engage up to 256 young people and offering places to 192 young people on one of 16 three week courses over the 3 years. This report looks at Year 1 of the programme.

### **CHANGE CYCLE PARTICIPANTS**

The programme is for those who are disadvantaged by:

- living in areas of deprivation and/or
- being unemployed, not in education or training; and/or
- being at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour, offending/re-offending

Venture Trust data shows the numbers in each SIMD<sup>1</sup> datazone for each participant in Year 1.

Data Zone	Year 1
1 to 1395	23
1 to 2092	29
1 to 2790	32
1 to 3488	33
3,489 to 6976	5
Total	38

Table 1: Change Cycle Datazone Analysis 2017-18

All Change Cycle participants in 2017-18 faced a range of challenges to getting a job.

Presenting Issues	% of participants
Mental health issues	52%
Criminal Record	42%
Low Skilled	42%
Literacy/numeracy problems	39%
No experience of paid work	36%
Living in a jobless household	30%
Homeless (or in unsettled / temporary housing)	27%
History of substance abuse	21%

Table 2: Change Cycle Participants Presenting Issues 2017-18

Participants from the following local authorities accessed the programme. Places are allocated according to need and demand and are available to those who can access the delivery centres in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Local Authorities	#accessing Change Cycle	% Allocation of Spend
East Lothian	1	£4,316
Edinburgh	6	£25,895
Fife	2	£8,632
Glasgow	14	£60,421
Inverclyde	2	£8,632
Midlothian	1	£4,316
North Lanarkshire	3	£12,947
Scottish Borders	1	£4,316
South Lanarkshire	3	£12,947
West Lothian	5	£21,579
Total	38	£164,000

Table 3: Change Cycle Participants by local authority and allocated spend 2017-18

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation



## 2. Programme Delivery

38 young people from 10 local authorities engaged with the initial assessment and preparation. 29 took part in one of the 3 week training courses and 26 progressed to the wilderness residential phase.

**Hands-on skills training in bike building led by partners Bike Station Edinburgh, and Bike for Good Glasgow**



**Safe cycling/mountain bike training in the city and in the wilderness**



**Employability training and skills development including on-line health and safety training**





**First Aid Training**

.....

**Conservation volunteering:  
Developing work skills in the outdoors**



**Developing confidence, aspiration, a sense of wellbeing**



### **3. Outcomes Achieved**

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITY WHICH IMPROVES THEIR LEARNING, EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS**

- Of the 38 young people initially engaging, 29 (76%) took part in one of the three week courses.

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE BUILD CAPACITY AND CONFIDENCE**

- 77% of the 26 who took part in all phases of the course reported increased capacity and confidence.

*“I feel more confident, definitely. I guess it helped me get more confidence about what I want to do and where I want to go in life.”*

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP THEIR PHYSICAL AND PERSONAL SKILLS**

- 90% of the 29 starting the three week course reported an increase in their physical and personal skills.
- 86% completed two iHASCO on-line modules in Manual Handling and Fire Awareness.
- 72% completed SCQF Level 4 cycling awards.
- 69% completed accredited HSE First Aid training.

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE’S BEHAVIOURS AND ASPIRATIONS CHANGE POSITIVELY**

- 81% of the 26 who took part in all phases of the course reported positive changes in behaviours and aspirations.

*“Talking to people face to face every day...has helped me to become more confident...I had quite a bit of anxiety, but now I feel... well different. I just do things now.”*

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE’S WELLBEING IMPROVES**

- 42% of the 26 who took part in all phases of the course reported improved well-being.

*“It was really good[working with others] I am usually a guy who works on his own, so it was a good experience for me to work with others. Yeah it helped – it feels easier to approach others now.”*

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE ARE DIVERTED FROM CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR OR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

- 50% of the 26 who took part in all phases of the course increasing stability in their lives and a reduction in the risk of future involvement with the criminal justice system.

*“It helped me to get back into a working routine, turning up five days a week from 9-5.”*

## 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

### SELF-EVALUATION

Venture Trust uses a tried and tested monitoring and evaluation framework which enables monitoring of participant progress over time. Participants are assessed and given a baseline score and then monitored quarterly for a minimum of 6 months. To complement this longitudinal monitoring we have piloted using an Outcomes Star to measure the immediate impact of the course.

### EXTERNAL EVALUATION

Rocket Science was appointed the external evaluator in 2017 and following a joint workshop the evaluation framework and methodology was agreed. This included: video peer interviews as a source of direct feedback; written logs from the Bike Station; use of an Outcomes Star and before and after self-evaluation tools; and follow-up interviews/focus groups with participants and others ( family/friends).

In Year 1 Rocket Science analysed Venture Trust's monitoring data; carried out four 3-month follow-up interviews and two six-month follow-up interviews; reviewed Bike Station / Bike for Good staff logs for 19 participants, reviewed 10 peer/staff video-interviews and conducted two interviews with staff members. A planned focus group was not successful in attracting young people participation. Going forwards in Year 2 Rocket Science is planning to increase the number of one-to-one interviews with young people rather than using focus groups and incorporate more views of staff and other professionals working with the young to gain an understanding of their perspective on the young person's development.

### KEY FINDINGS

**The overall key finding from the external evaluation is to confirm that the programme "seems to be making a significant positive impact on participants". The key findings and recommendations from the Rocket Science evaluation report are:**

**Finding 1:** The participant numbers are lower than planned for this stage in the programme and referrals are often unsuitable.

**Recommendation:** Investment in the referral network for the course (ie improving awareness and understanding of the CBCC course amongst Venture Trust partner agencies) could increase the number of appropriate referrals. Given the number of young people who initially agree to participate but do not attend, we recommend increasing the contact time during this period to provide reassurance and ease concerns.

**Finding 2:** The CBCC programme met three of the six outcome targets for Year 1 delivery, with the shortfall most notable in reported levels of wellbeing and positive destinations. All young people involved in the fieldwork conducted by Rocket Science emphasised how much they enjoyed the programme.

**Recommendations:** We recommend that Venture Trust review the performance data and identify appropriate responses. While the number of positive destinations reported could increase over time, it could also be an early warning sign that more follow-up support is required to help participants build on what they have achieved through the programme. The issue of wellbeing needs to be explored in more detail to identify potential areas for improvement.



**Finding 3:** Staff members felt unclear about who was responsible for providing continuous support to participants at each phase of the programme.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that Venture Trust develop clear guidelines for staff involved in course delivery outlining how and by whom continuous support is to be provided to young people who have been internally and externally referred.

**Finding 4:** Participants on Year 1 of the CBCC programme were predominantly male. Staff reported 'macho dynamics' which negatively impacted upon course delivery and one participant left because she was the only female.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that Venture Trust make a concerted effort to recruit young women to the CBCC course by liaising with partner agencies and targeting promotion. Effort should be made to ensure that each course has a representative number of young women for the client group. This may involve carefully presenting the programme to focus on transferrable mechanical skills.

**Finding 5:** Staff members reported that the employability workshops in the first two weeks and the residential week in the third week of the course were currently operating in silos. This was said to feel 'disjointed' and impact upon the continuity of support provided to participants.

**Recommendation:** Efforts should be made to increase the level of communication and cooperation between staff involved in different phases of the course to ensure that the structure and content is complementary. It may also be worth considering whether one staff member could be present throughout the full three weeks of the CBCC course for better continuity.

## **5. Partnerships**

### **DELIVERY PARTNERS**

The programme builds on learning from earlier Venture Trust pilot partnership projects with the Bike Station Edinburgh and Bike for Good Glasgow. A shared ethos, commitment and expertise in working with young people facing multiple disadvantages has meant a positive partnership experience with a firm focus on ensuring an enhanced learning experience for the participants. Reviews following each course create opportunities to reshape future courses.

### **REFERRAL PARTNERS**

Change Cycle provides progression opportunities for those coming through other Venture Trust courses from our wide referral networks. Participants who have been referred internally have come originally -via: the courts, social work (Criminal Justice, Children and Families, MCMC), Skills Development Scotland, Housing Associations and third sector partners. Our aspiration for the programme is to develop new referral networks directly from Job Centres. This has been slower than we anticipated with 3 referrals in Year 1 but we are continuing to build direct links and target direct marketing.

### **CASHBACK PORTFOLIO PARTNERS**

The Cashback Portfolio Day led by Inspiring Scotland has provided really helpful opportunities to network and share thinking between the partners particularly discussions on measuring and communicating impact and reporting. Sharing social media "thunderclaps" and Cashback Selfie campaigns also helps to maximise publicity for the portfolio partners. Individual networking with partners has included presentations, visits and mailshots sharing information on the programme and start dates. Emerging referral discussions and links with Cashback Portfolio partners include: Celtic FC Foundation, Princes Trust, Impact Arts, the Wise Group, and Basketball Scotland.

## 6. Organisational update

### STAFFING THE PROJECT

The project draws on expertise and experience from all partners and on the shared ethos and commitment to working with young people facing multiple and complex challenges.

Venture Trust's Employability Manager manages all aspects of the programme with a full-time Venture Trust Employability Development Worker co-ordinating delivery and direct delivery of employability content supported by Venture Trust field and outreach staff. Workshop based vocational skills training is delivered by Bike Station and Bike for Good experienced staff and freelancers. The residential week is run by Venture Trust field staff and as well as conservation partners and Accredited First Aid trainers.

Detailed partnership agreements underpin the partnerships with Bike Station Edinburgh and Bike for Good Glasgow. These partnerships have worked smoothly and positively with a review following each course to ensure learning is implemented in subsequent courses. A project steering group comprises lead contacts from both partners and Venture Trust managers.

### COMMS AND MARKETING

Highlights during the year include:

- Participating in the CashBack Portfolio partners social media thunderclap to launch the National Programme in March 2017.



Proud to be part of the Cashback for Communities Phase 4 launch today. Funding so many fantastic projects of which we are one: watch this space for the CashBack Change Cycle programme in partnership with The Bike Station Edinburgh and Glasgow Bike Station, supporting disadvantaged young people to make positive changes.

**#tacklinginequalities**  
**#CB4C**  
**[www.venturetrust.org.uk](http://www.venturetrust.org.uk)**

- Launch of the Venture Trust CashBack Change Cycle programme in August 2017 with Lee Craigie, champion mountain biker and adventure cyclist. Lee has subsequently agreed to be an ambassador for Venture Trust and will work with us to promote the Change Cycle programme.

<http://www.venturetrust.org.uk/news/2017/8/breaking-cycle-disadvantage-young-scottish-people/>

*“Enabling young people to get a job and keep a job is a key priority for us to break a cycle of disadvantage and we are grateful to have the support of CashBack for Communities”* Amelia Morgan, Venture Trust CEO

- Participating in the #cashbackselfie campaign which was a fantastic opportunity to highlight the CashBack Change Cycle partners with images from participants and quotes:



- Building comms activities around the delivery of each of the courses incorporating celebration events involving the participants, partners and Venture Trust staff. These events are a great opportunity for participants to receive acknowledgement of their achievements as well as take ownership of their bicycle and equipment which will support them in future work and leisure. See for example:

<https://www.facebook.com/VentureTrust/videos/10156777309627437/>

<https://www.facebook.com/VentureTrust/photos/a.10150156719252437.335207.67826727436/10156600795917437/?type=3&theater>

- An article in the Scotsman by Stuart McMillan, Employability Manager “The Venture Trust helps break the cycle of destructive behaviour” emphasised the importance of the CashBack Change Cycle programme in helping young people achieve better futures. (March 2018)

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/stuart-mcmillan-the-venture-trust-helps-break-the-cycle-of-destructive-behaviour-1-4698012>

The article was also publicised on the Venture Trust website (March 2018)

<http://www.venturetrust.org.uk/news/2018/3/job-readiness-starts-life-skills/>

- Case studies are a key element of our work to promote and programme and demonstrate impact – short term and longer term. See David’s story in Appendix 1. As part of a wider organisational review in advance of GDPR we have been reviewing how we gather and store case study material. We have developed an additional consent form for participants to give permission for the case study to be used.

## **7. Plans and Priorities for 2018-19**

In 2018-19 we will be implementing the Year 1 evaluation recommendations through the Venture Trust management and outreach hub structures and with our partners Bike for Good and the Bike Station. We will be focusing on the following areas:

### **INCREASING REFERRAL AND ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS**

- Working with Venture Trust colleagues to increase internal referrals to the Change Cycle programme and with partners to increase external referrals from key partners including third sector agencies, CashBack Portfolio partners and Job Centres.
- Ongoing marketing and recruitment drive including: email marketing, increased social media presence and working to gain access, presence and publicity such as desk space and virtual space on Job Centre information screens.
- Reviewing our approach to pre-course preparation and engagement with the aim of increasing the % of referrals starting the programme.
- Working across all referral activities to address the gender imbalance on the programme.

### **STRENGTHENING COURSE DELIVERY INCLUDING POST COURSE SUPPORT:**

- Working with our delivery partners in Bike for Good and the Bike Station and our Venture Trust staff teams to create stronger links between all phases of the programme to ensure a greater % of referrals engage with all stages of the programme.
- Working within Venture Trust to develop a clearer programme of post course support including encouraging uptake of the ongoing 1:to:1 support services within Venture Trust.
- Encouraging participants to access the range of support services in their community.
- Working with partner agencies to place participants in volunteering, work placement and training opportunities.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION:**

- Reviewing the evaluation methodology and evaluation tools and planning longitudinal case studies.
- Working with our external evaluator to explore ways to improve measuring the impact of the course on participant 'well being'.

### **COMMS AND MARKETING:**

- Expanding the on-line and targeted mailshots to ensure the widest exposure for the programme.
- Developing new case studies and placing these internally and externally through social media posts, internal and external newsletters, websites and other media.
- Planning for and utilising publicity from a ministerial visit.
- Involving our new Venture Trust ambassador in social media promotion of cycling and the Change Cycle programme.
- Exploring ways to involve recent participants in publicising the Change Cycle programme and contributing to wider CashBack Phase IV publicity.



## APPENDIX 1: David's Story

His outreach worker referred him to the CashBack Change Cycle employability programme and after an initial assessment by the Employability Development worker, it was decided that David was an ideal candidate and ready for the commitment of a full time intensive three week course.



Within the first few days, the group took part in several activities that got them thinking about motivations to work, and essential employability skills. Two key things came forward from these group activities and discussion: the importance of time management and the importance of having a positive attitude. David did a brilliant job of proving both and demonstrated his commitment and motivation to get as much as possible from the programme from day 1. He showed up early and cycled in every day, six miles each way.

Venture Trust staff received feedback on a number of occasions from staff at the Bike Station to say how impressed they were with his engagement. Not only did he show up early, having cycled, but he also took part in both the employability and workshop sessions with enthusiasm and a smile on his face!

During the programme, David completed two Health and Safety certificates, a Velotech Bronze Cycling qualification, updated his CV, set some goals for after the course, took part in a path building day during the

residential week, an Emergency First Aid at Work certificate, and a day mountain biking at Glentress. David is a keen and confident cyclist, which became apparent particularly when the group took part in urban

cycling round Edinburgh city centre. More importantly though, he displayed supportive qualities towards those less confident, and happily cycled at the back with one of the leaders, to ensure they kept the group together and that the slowest were not left behind.



David is interested in working in mechanics, or within a position that allows him to cycle. Having previously worked with Deliveroo, he is keen to do this again. It will allow him to do something he loves (cycling) but also earn some money at the same time. He has since signed up for a further employability

programme with Kwik fit and Action for Children, which started the week after completing the Change Cycle course. David's journey to date has been far from easy, but with his attitude, skills and motivation he is breaking the cycle of disadvantage, and is building stability in his life. He has presented as a resilient young man throughout the Change Cycle programme and someone determined to make a fresh start and build a positive future.

