

A black and white photograph of a young man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark t-shirt, sitting at a desk and typing on a keyboard. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. In the background, large, bold letters 'rease' are visible on a wall. A large, light-colored circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the report title.

CashBack Move Forward

Year 1 Report
2021-22



Executive Summary

shmu's CashBack Move Forward programme helps young people overcome personal barriers and avoid anti-social behaviour and (re)-offending, through three core projects. Our Youth Media project supports 10 to 18 year-olds from regeneration areas to participate in media related activities; shmu's Training Academy works with school leavers identified as unlikely to achieve a positive destination; and the Media Access Project works with young prisoners in HMP Grampian and those recently released.

The pandemic had a significant impact on the way shmu works. To keep people safe, we transformed our delivery model, and the turbulent time stimulated innovation and investment across our organisation. We had to temporarily close our headquarters in March 2020 and redesigned our services so that delivery could continue in online formats. From mid-September 2020, some face-to-face activities resumed, but were paused again for the second lockdown in January 2021.

In year 1, a total of 88 young people participated in CashBack Move Forward across our three projects. While this has been a challenging year, we have strengthened partnerships, extended our reach and learned that young people can benefit from a blended approach of both face-to-face activities and online sessions. Stakeholders recognise the impact and value of our work, and we have discovered that new pathways for participation have enabled us to enhance our reach and inclusivity across our communities.

Our Youth Media Project provided valuable opportunities for young people to develop skills and confidence, gain accreditation and enter further education, and created spaces for leaders and peer mentors to emerge. Through our Training Academy, we established effective partnerships which enabled us to deliver a successful

employability support programme that was tailored specifically to the interests and needs of disengaged young people. With MAP, young people in HMP Grampian have been supported to make changes they are ready for. Our team found effective ways of working and helped young people tackle a complex range of issues on release from prison. Crucially, our approach demonstrated young people's potential to stay engaged, gain employment, and turn their lives around.

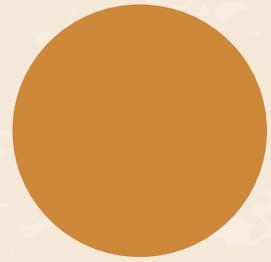
In year two, we hope to source funding to employ a Wellbeing Practitioner to bolster support to our volunteers and service users. The Youth Media project will expand activities to include Film/TV and music development sessions and deliver an extensive summer programme and we intend to develop a structured mentoring partnership to enhance inclusivity. In the Training Academy, we plan to work face-to-face again with young people in our own building and anticipate receiving referrals from a broader range of partners. Our priorities for MAP at the start of Year 2 will be focused on our return to HMP Grampian, introducing new tutors and new courses, and continuing to offer emotional and practical support to our young people in the community.

Other developments that will enhance our progress with Move Forward includes recognition for shmu – we were delighted to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Our team made a successful application 'for £30,000' to Creative Scotland's Youth Arts Access Fund to support and develop our digital music work with young people, and we secured £24,000 through Aberdeenshire Councils Young Persons Guarantee Fund to support young people on Community Payback Orders to engage with our employability service. The Award and additional funding will raise our profile and capacity; adding to the reach of our work and the depth of employability support we can offer.

“I loved being outside with the cameras, you seem to see things differently. I was looking at birds and trees by the river and saw things I must see every day but never really think about.”

Youth Media participant





“My son has so much more confidence since coming to shmu. He has struggled at school and finds fitting in quite difficult. He is a quiet boy, but he gets so animated when he is talking about what he did at shmu on a Saturday. I’m so pleased we found shmu.”

Parent



Introduction

CashBack for Communities is the Scottish Government's programme which repurposes money seized from criminals into projects for young people who face disadvantage. In January 2020, £19m of newly funded projects was announced; Station House Media Unit's (shmu) CashBack Move Forward received £292,500.

CashBack Move Forward was funded to work with over 500 young people in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire over three years. With a focus on creative approaches and media, the programme seeks to help young people overcome personal barriers and avoid anti-social behaviour and (re)-offending. The funding covers three projects:

- **Youth Media** project supports 10 to 18 year-olds from regeneration areas to participate in media related activities. The project provides person-centred creative opportunities for young people at risk of involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour from the regeneration areas of Aberdeen to actively participate across a range of media platforms, supporting transformational pathways in personal development and progression.
- **shmu Training Academy** works with school leavers who have been identified as unlikely to achieve a positive destination.
- **Media Access Project (MAP)** works with young prisoners in YOI Grampian and those who have recently been released. The CashBack investment aims to support young prisoners to take part in a range of media programmes run in our SQA accredited Creative Media Unit within HMP & YOI Grampian; encouraging,

motivating, and inspiring young prisoners, many of whom are prolific offenders with chaotic lifestyles, to begin the journey away from offending, towards a more positive and stable life post-release.

In Year 1, a total of 88 young people participated in CashBack Move Forward for the first time. The inability to work in schools or have school groups visiting shmu for the majority of the year has of course impacted upon our target figures for CashBack funding. Quarterly progress on updates against targets are shared with Inspiring Scotland and are not covered here. This report provides a general update on activities in Year 1, covering:

- **An overview of the profile of participants and performance across projects**
- **Organisational update with a focus on efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19**
- **Updates on the three CashBack Move Forward projects (Youth Media, Training Academy and the Media Access Project)**
- **Three case studies that illustrate each project's delivery model and impact**
- **Communications Report**
- **Collaborative working through the pandemic**
- **Financial Report**
- **Evaluation summary**
- **Plans for Year Two.**

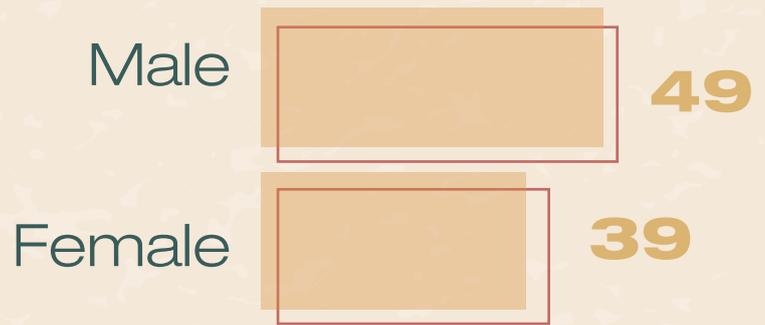
Year 1 Engagement

88 new participants in year 1

Age



Sex identity



18

18 young people with a disability; most common ones were:

5

Social or behavioural:

4

Stamina, breathing or fatigue:

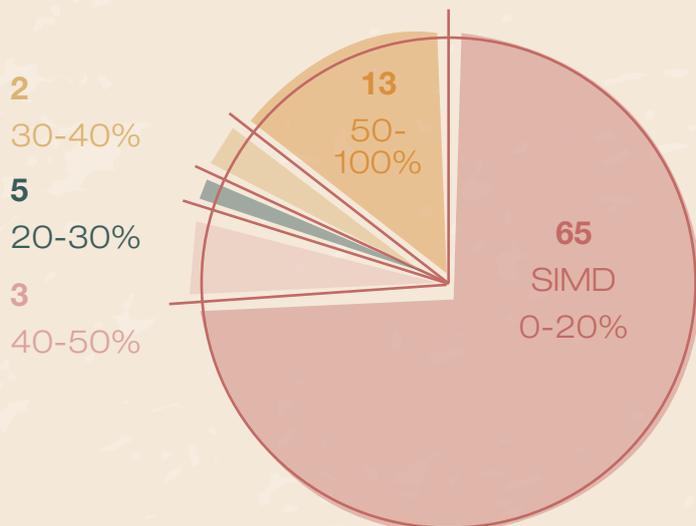
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Vision

2

Learning, understanding or concentrating:

SIMD Profile



74% of participants in year 1 were from the 0-20% most deprived Datazones within Aberdeen

Year 1 Outcome Progress

88 new participants in year 1



Outcome 1: YP build their capacity and confidence

81

Increased confidence

86

Able to do new things

68

Feel more resilient

45%

Of stakeholders report increased confidence

75

Positive supportive networks

73

Positive changes in behaviour

66%

Of stakeholders report perceived positive changes in behaviour



Outcome 2: YP develop their physical and personal skills

70

Increased personal skills, achieving accredited learning

77

Increased skills

66%

Of stakeholders report increased skills



Outcome 3: YP health and well-being improves

73

Improve wellbeing against SHANARRI indicators

30%

Of stakeholders report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators



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

33

Achieve a positive destination

Education 29
Training 1
Volunteering 3

53

Improve school attendance

12

Secure interviews (work, training or further education)



Outcome 5: YP contribute positively to their communities

47

Take on a volunteering role

11,276

Hours of volunteering

52

Improved social interaction, contribution & links with communities

38

Produce media tackling issues relating to their communities



Outcome 6: YP are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system

35

Feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour

14

Complete an individual future Learning Plan

36

Improved relationships within family and social circles

5

Feel more positive about the future post-release

“Our staff are really keen to have shmu delivering CashBack sessions in the next term. We have all missed it. I’ll be booking as many sessions as we can, the pupils need that creative outlet after all this disruption.”

Teacher

Organisational Update

A year transformed by Covid-19

The pandemic had a significant impact on the way shmu works. To keep people safe, we transformed our delivery model, and the turbulent time stimulated innovation and investment across our organisation. Throughout the pandemic, staff worked tirelessly to adapt and revise our projects based on short, medium, and long-term recovery from the pandemic.

This year some participants worked solely with us in an online capacity, and we recognised that the pandemic restrictions created opportunities to enhance inclusivity.

We believe partnership working and creative solutions that were developed during lockdown that respond to the needs of our communities are key for ongoing successful recovery.

A shift to digital delivery

The pandemic required us to temporarily close Station House in March 2020. Staff began working from home and we redesigned our services so that delivery could continue in online formats.

Staff undertook online safety training, and we performed an audit to ensure staff, volunteers and any project participants had appropriate resources to be able to join in and contribute.

Our team had to upskill technically while working remotely.

Working together to deliver our projects, achieve outcomes and look after each other and our young people, galvanized our resolve to maintain the sense of belonging that defines what we do at shmu.

We have all benefited from increased confidence in being able to meet our working commitments online. This increased confidence is also reported by our young participants and adult volunteers.

The return of face-to-face work, informed by risk assessment

From mid-September 2020, in line with government guidance, and following the development of a comprehensive return-to-work plan and detailed risk assessments, some youth-based face-to-face activities resumed in Station House. Youth-based activities with Covid restriction adherence to numbers permitted, allowed us to offer face-to-face activities between September and December 2020.

Before returning to the shmu building and the prison in September 2020, significant work was undertaken in risk assessment and space adaptations. For example, perspex was fitted, spaces were redesigned for social distancing and stringent cleaning and health & safety procedures were established.

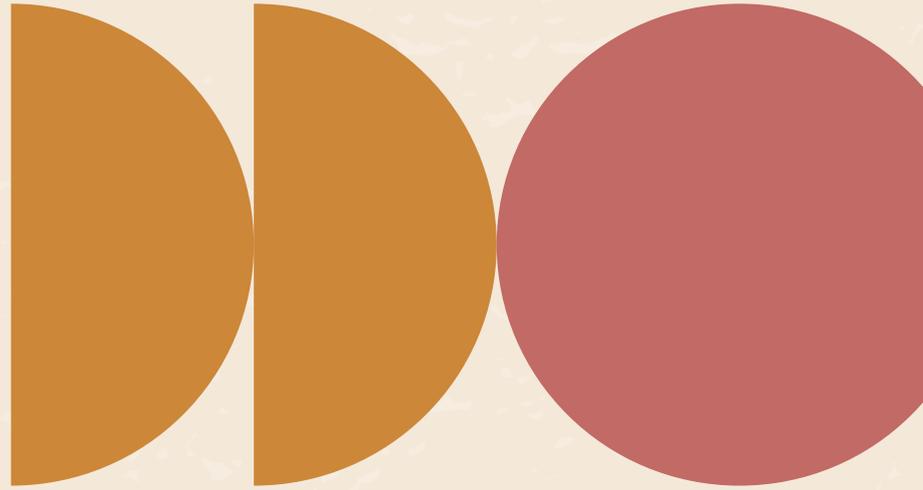
shmu is fully compliant and ready to open the building to young people, service users and volunteers as restrictions ease. All activities continue to be risk-assessed against current public health and tier-level guidance.

Evolution in our approaches

We can already see that several of our projects will continue to benefit from a blended approach of both face-to-face activities and online sessions. Increased opportunities for participation will enable us to enhance our reach and inclusivity across our communities.

As many of our programmes include digital elements, we have piloted a range of online learning initiatives. Staff provided remote technical support and encouragement to participants to sustain their involvement with shmu. This was an intensive investment and commitment by our team.

As an example, several participants highlighted that travel to shmu in poor weather or winter was a barrier to engagement that could be avoided if they were able to participate online. This was also the case for some people with disability/mobility and or transport issues.



“My son struggled so much in lockdown; it was difficult to watch. The only thing he still enjoyed was being with the shmu online. I think it was about the only time in the week I heard him laughing and sounding excited about anything.”

Parent

Youth Media Programme

Supporting participation by young people in lockdown

As lockdown began, we undertook a comprehensive audit of recording kit and IT requirements for all young people active in our Youth Media projects. This enabled us to identify and supply equipment they could use to continue to engage with us. With this support, young people were in a position to produce, record and broadcast radio programmes from home.

A return to delivery at Station House

When lockdown lifted, some of our youth-based services were able to resume activity at Station House. From September 2020 staff worked diligently to support the technical input young people missed out on and they were once again able to produce live radio broadcasts directly from our studios. We also injected opportunities to have fun and enhance team building to support the wellbeing of young people who had endured so much isolation. Staff arranged several events for participants, including a Halloween and Christmas party at shmu.

Temporary closure of Station House in the second lockdown

Unfortunately, further lockdown restrictions after Christmas resulted in our building closing again and all services returning to online only formats. We applied the learning developed earlier in the year. Staff were responsive to the needs of young people and found a balance between focusing on our project outcomes, while recognising that young people were experiencing online fatigue particularly during their online schooling.

Supporting young people to stay engaged in online delivery formats

Staff adapted the online sessions to promote social cohesion, teambuilding and included fun activities that all young people could get involved with. There was a focus on quizzes, competitions and access to free resources such as Boredom Boxes which provided craft materials to allow staff to deliver activities online that everyone could participate in. We arranged a mindfulness session focusing entirely on mental wellbeing and young people are keen to repeat this class and exercises working face-to-face with the tutor involved.

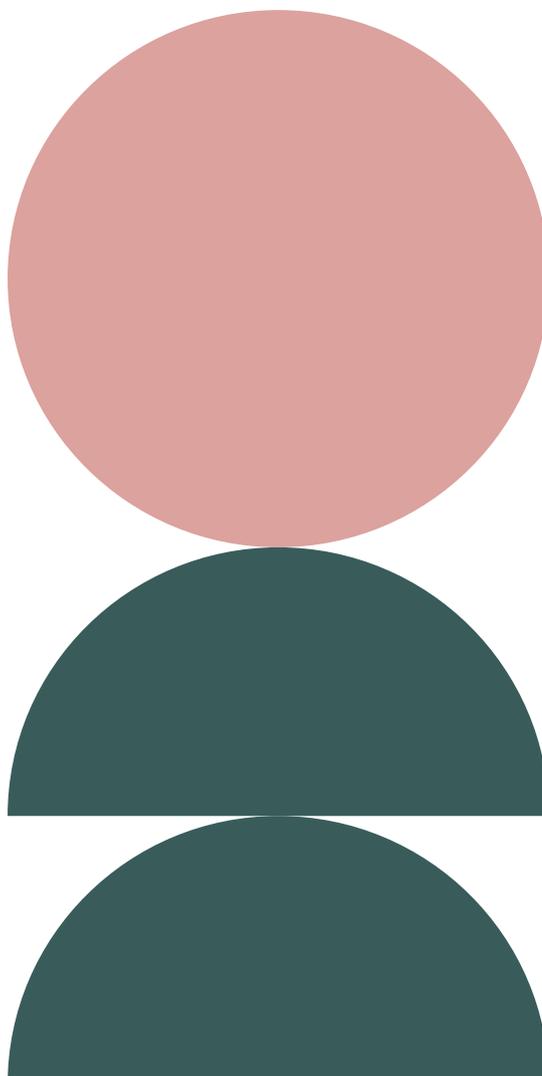
Additionally, young people undertook guest interviews online to include in their pre-recorded radio shows. This allowed the young people to engage with individuals they found interesting, who could inspire them to continue to learn and develop despite the challenges of the restrictions.

Case study overview

The case study that follows demonstrates the value of opportunities to help young people develop their skills and confidence, their role in supporting young people to gain accreditation and secure further education, and the spaces in which leaders and mentors emerge.

“Saturday at shmu is my best day of the week, I still get excited, and I have been going there for a long time now.”

Youth Media participant



“Even online, shmu staff found great things for us to do. Quizzes, treasure hunts, arts and crafts and just laughing about things and seeing people I missed made things better.”

**Youth Media
participant**



Youth Media Case Study:

Putting Young People in the Director's Seat

“Honestly, my life has changed so much. shmu has given me the confidence to break out of my shell and meet new people. It has also made me realise that I want to have a job in the media industry, like a TV producer or a radio broadcaster. Without shmu I wouldn't have had a clue what to do in the future.”

(Victoria, young person)

A range of referral routes to shmu

Referred by her mum, Victoria first enrolled on the shmuTRAIN Positive Transitions (PT) Employability programme. To begin with, Victoria was quiet; happy to participate but reluctant to share her ideas or talk with others. She was more inclined to talk to staff than other young people, rarely initiating conversation or contributing without being prompted, but always answering when asked. Sometimes she struggled to voice concerns or advocate for herself.

While attending PT media sessions, Victoria discovered a natural talent for using the equipment in film and, over time, planning and hosting radio shows. She stepped out of her comfort zone each week, creating media with a group of others. As her skills developed, she grew more comfortable. We suggested she may enjoy Youth Media and she started attending sessions in March 2019.

Discovering hidden talents

Victoria was encouraged to take part in our 2019-20 BFI Film Academy course. Her film was chosen by the group to be produced, with Victoria stepping into the role of director. This led to a dramatic increase in confidence, with Victoria finding her voice and learning to lead and work with others. Her film “The Jacket” was screened during the 2020 Fans Youth Film Festival and Victoria also appeared on some livestreams around the screening. She also took part in online Q&A about the film and contributed content for the festival's social media.

A quiet leader

Throughout this experience Victoria continued attending Youth Media and has emerged as a leader and mentor. She is our eldest member and regularly encourages younger and quieter members to engage by talking to them, offering help in the studio or taking the lead in interviews and helping others take part. Victoria's people skills have grown hugely. While she is still a quiet person, she is confident enough to use her skills and support

others. Since she started attending shmu we have observed a significant growth in her ability to lead and encourage others without ever being condescending.

Accreditation and next steps

Developing a keen interest in a career in film, Victoria was successful in securing a place at NESCol studying Creative Media (level 6) in 2020-21. She is currently nearing the end of this course and, despite challenging circumstances and disappointment that the course has not been as practical as anticipated due to Covid-19, Victoria has built up her skills. Many of these skills have been shared with others in the youth media group, encouraging younger members to think about attending the courses and consider their aspirations.

Victoria has secured a conditional offer for a degree in Media at Robert Gordon's University in Aberdeen and is confident that she will meet the conditions.

Victoria's reflections on Youth Media's impact

“Before I joined youth media, I was quite shy, I never wanted to talk to new people. I wanted to join as I'd never heard of a club like it before - I mean who lets a bunch of kids run a live radio show! I wanted to try something new, so I pushed myself to try it out.

I've been a part of the Saturday morning radio show. Through it I've learned loads. Like how to use a radio desk and how to write a script. My favourite part about it is getting to play my favourite music that's not commonly played on other radio stations.

In PT, I got help with CV writing and job searching. I also got more experience in radio and started to learn about filmmaking. In the BFI Film Academy, I continued to learn about filmmaking, and I am now with a group of people where we are making a 10-minute short film about two brothers who find a lucky (but extremely ugly) jacket that tests the strength of their relationship”.





“My son loves his youth media sessions at shmu, and he missed going there during lockdown. I can’t get him out of bed half the time, but Saturday mornings - he’s out of bed and out the door!”

Parent

“I suffer from anxiety and get so nervous, I thought I’d be hopeless at things but even though I don’t always have the confidence to speak up, I am happy writing scripts and doing research, so I still feel I am part of something and that makes me feel good.”

Training Academy participant

Training Academy

Working with schools to increase our reach and impact in a challenging context

During lockdown we were prevented from delivering any school-based activity, either because the schools themselves were closed, or external contributors were not permitted at that time.

Online engagement was offered for our post-school Stage 1 participants, and in quarter 4 some of our participants came together in small groups online to work on shared interest projects reporting how this increased their confidence and made them feel more positive about engaging in group work in person once it was allowed. Participants reported that our engagement over this lockdown period has been particularly beneficial to their mental health and well-being.

New partnerships

We set up a system for schools to express their interest in our Speak Out Radio and TV programme with a view to resuming this activity once schools were ready. Our proposal was met with enthusiasm from the secondary schools who operate in the regeneration areas of the city, and we secured several notes of interest including from schools shmu had not previously worked with. This has extended the reach of our work with young people across communities. Schools recognised that their pupils needed to participate in activities that excited and inspired them after the long months of online learning, and if we were not already known to the school, we were recommended as providers of quality and enjoyable programmes for young people.

Aberdeen City Council produced a COVID-19 Routemap to guide schools in working safely with external agencies. Our risk assessments reflected this guidance and shmu

was named as a designated provider schools could work with. We were able to work with 12 pupils in Northfield Academy, but could not bring pupils to shmu, or to bring media tutors to the school due to the restrictions.

shmu staff engaged with education partners at strategic meetings allowing everyone to share ideas and plan our continued working. This ensured everyone remained motivated and involved in progressing the best outcomes for young people both educationally and socially.

Returning to delivery in schools in the city remains a challenge as there are strict rules regarding the number of schools a staff member may attend in any one week. However, we remain confident this work will gain pace as soon as we can reconnect with our in-school programmes.

Positive feedback from stakeholders

Some participants are supported by partner organisations who have provided positive feedback on the increase in confidence and engagement they have observed. Young people have been supported to identify the skills they already have; to identify skills that they need to develop; and to identify new skills they want to learn. Each has an Action Plan they are working towards to develop these skills and have been supported to work through SQA qualifications: Personal Development Award – Self in the Community, and National 3 Media at Level 3.

Case study overview

The case study that follows demonstrates the benefits of partnership working and the unique value of having an employability support option that is tailored specifically to the interests and needs of a disengaged young person.

***“I never thought
I’d get to make
a radio show.
There is so much
to learn and do
and you need to
be a team or it
doesn’t work.”***

Training Academy participant



Training Academy Case Study: From Confusion to Clarity

“I cannot fully describe in words how essential I feel shmu has been in creating a valuable and effective Employability course at Northfield.”

(Targeted Pupil Support Teacher)

Effective ways to spark dialogue with pupils who are disengaged with school

Brian attended Training Academy sessions at Northfield Academy, but was very quiet and made little to no eye contact. He would often complete art projects in employability sessions, and this sparked a dialogue on his general interests with initial career discussions around Graphic Design.

Some sessions at Northfield take place in the school library. This has fostered pupil engagement with SDS Careers Advisers in the library and enabled the Targeted Pupil Support Teacher (Gemma), our Employability Manager (Michelle), and the SDS advisers to work together to support pupils.

Young people supported through the programme tend to be less willing or motivated to attend scheduled careers appointments. However, by being in the library and supporting employability themes we have been able to work together to facilitate productive meetings with career advisors. Through this collaboration, with shmu starting the conversations and the Targeted Pupil Support Teacher building on them, Brian indicated a keen interest in working with animals

“Michelle [shmu Employability Manager], has supported me to get a pupil (Brian) to decide on a realistic and enjoyable career in Dog Handling. This is a huge success as initially he would not engage and had no idea about a future career. I was almost telling him what to do, but with Michelle, time, resources and perseverance through the course, I feel he has found a really positive next step. Michelle has also been fundamental in getting more of my class to complete CVs and consider work and future options.”

Gemma (Targeted Pupil Support Teacher)

Helping young people find options that reflect their interests

Michelle provided advice about possible college courses – in particular Animal Care – and introduced Brian and Gemma to the SRUC. The college has a campus in Aberdeen and deliver courses relating to animal care. Brian applied to the Into to Animal Care course at SRUC for an Aug 2021 start.

“The key benefit for me was managing to find the pupils I needed to see in one place – at your sessions! Also, if I was speaking to a pupil about post-school training options, having a member of the shmu employability team there to bring it all home was a real bonus!”

Natasha (SDS Careers Advisor)

Supporting young people to make positive choices

Brian was in his final year at school and had a part-time timetable. A positive destination looked unlikely. It was agreed by school, parents and the careers adviser that an out of school alternative would be beneficial and we introduced the option of shmu’s Employability Fund Stage 2 course. The course was discussed fully with Brian and his mum, and included a visit to HQ in Woodside, Aberdeen. Before the end of term Brian chose to leave school to join our course and a formal referral was completed by the SDS adviser. This seamless process shows high-quality partnership working and buy in from all stakeholders who recognised the unique opportunity offered through our programme.

“Working closely with shmu meant Brian was able to apply for a college course which he is genuinely interested in doing. More importantly, Brian chose to leave school in Winter 2020 and due to his engagement with shmu at school, he will successfully move into a positive destination via shmu’s Employability Fund Stage 2 course.”

Gemma (Targeted Pupil Support Teacher)

A new pathway

In four months, Brian went from having no idea what he wanted to do, with little motivation or engagement, to developing a clear career goal, applying for college and starting an employability focussed course. shmu supported Brian through our EF courses at Stage 2, and we continued to support his college application including interview prep and travel support to get to the campus. Brian successfully completed shmu’s Positive Transitions Stage 2 course and has now moved onto Stage 3 provision with one of our employability partners Enable.



“I would tell anyone to come to shmu. Even if you think you don’t really like media, it’s not just about that. I love talking to people there and getting to know what other people like and think. The staff are good fun and they help you enjoy being there. Nobody puts pressure on you.”

Training Academy participant

Maintaining contact through lockdown in prison and community settings

Our CashBack funded Media Access Project (MAP) in HMP Grampian faced significant challenges in this first year of funding. The project was due to launch in April 2020, but due to the pandemic, the prison went into lockdown, and we were unable to access our Creative Media Unit (CMU) until the end of August 2020. This significantly delayed the start of this new and exciting project.

During lockdown we maintained contact with prisoners through the radio and email a prisoner. For those in the community, we linked in with via zoom, phone calls and socially distanced community visits were essential. Support in the community at this time was focused on wellbeing and practical support and assistance.

Delivering employability, personal growth and skills development courses

We were able to run our first 12-week, personal and skills development employability course in HMP Grampian between September 2020 and December 2020. This course was attended by five participants who took part in radio, film, employability, and life skills sessions five half days a week. They produced regular radio shows, created two films including a documentary about their substance use journeys, and took part in a mock employability exercise that had them apply, prepare and interview for a job within the National Trust.

Temporary closure of the Creative Media Unit in the second lockdown

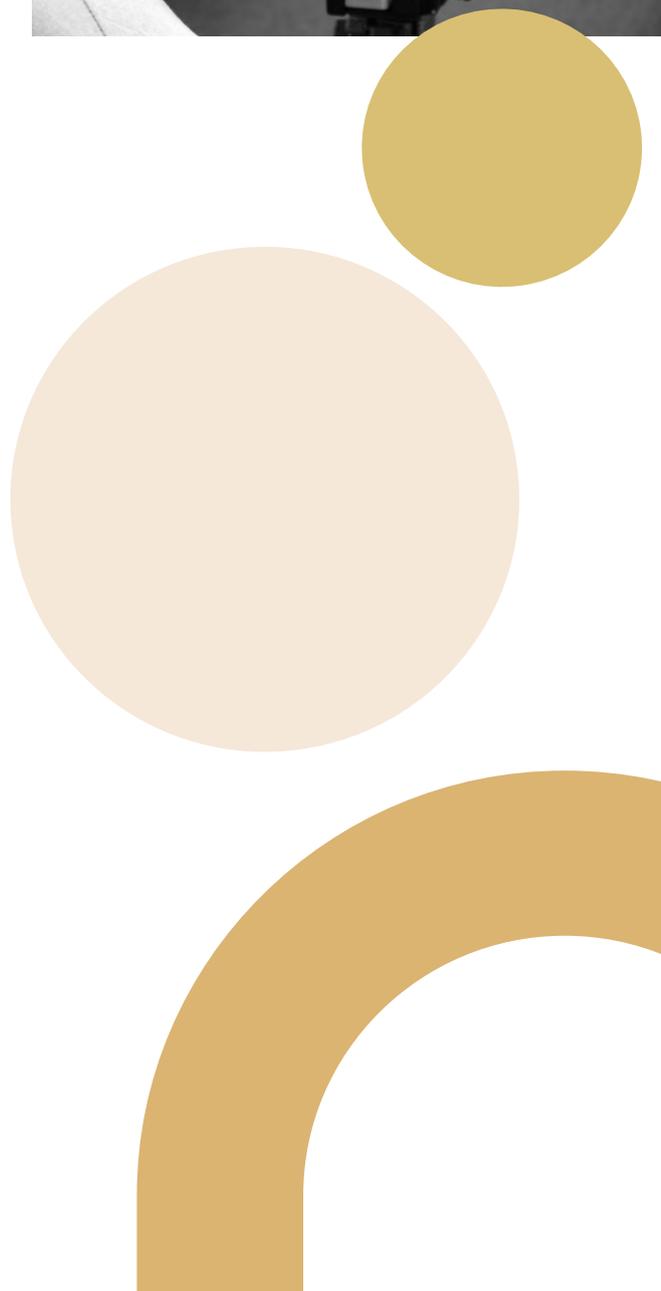
Unfortunately, in January 2021 we were forced to close the CMU again due to the second lockdown. Contact was maintained with the young people who participated in the first course via email a prisoner and phone calls. We were able to support the three participants that were due to be released over this time with essential pre-release practical and emotional support. Our team also supported them to access a digital device and data allowance. This enabled them to communicate with support networks, apply for jobs and access any online courses and meaningful activities.

Our young people struggled during lockdown, both those who were already in the community and those who were released. Their engagement was at times sporadic and maintaining contact was difficult when we couldn't see them face to face. As soon as restrictions allowed, we introduced more face-to-face community visits which were hugely positive to for wellbeing and engagement. Despite the difficulties they faced, two of our young people who were released gained short term employment. We also supported two of them to move into permanent accommodation. One young person took part in an online song writing course we ran twice a week for 8 weeks.

Case study overview

The case study which follows demonstrates the importance of continued support for vulnerable young people, providing opportunities to help them when they are ready for change. It shows the value of finding ways of working that are effective and illustrates the complex range of support needs that young people may have on release from prison. Crucially, it demonstrates young people's potential to stay engaged, gain employment, and turn their lives around.

The Media Access Project (MAP) *in HMP Grampian*



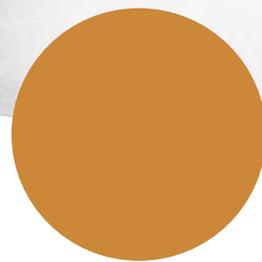


 **shmu**



“I look forward to the future now.”

MAP participant



MAP Academy Case Study:

A Launchpad for Life Outside Prison

“There are no words to describe how much I appreciate everything that it’s done for me, apparently prison is supposed to rehabilitate you, but I don’t think it does, but I would definitely say that the CashBack course has done that for me, I honestly feel a different person this time.”

(Luke, young person in HMP Grampian)

Ready for change

Luke had attended the Creative Media Unit (CMU) in HMP Grampian on and off for a number of years on previous sentences. He was always very keen but struggled to sustain any meaningful engagement due to problematic substance misuse and his erratic behaviour when around other prisoners. He wanted to take part in all the media courses and get support through our Community Integration Support Service (CISS), but he only dipped in and out and we couldn’t support him in any purposeful way while in prison or pre-release.

On a new sentence, Luke reengaged with the CMU, and we were just about to start our first CashBack under 25s course. We spoke to Luke about this course, and he was immediately interested. The media element would allow him to learn new things and get creative, but it also had the employability and support aspect. We felt that this course was perfect for Luke and would provide him the structured and supportive environment he needed to engage and work with us pre-release.

A model designed for effective engagement

The small group size and structured daily sessions worked extremely well for Luke. He had focus to his weeks (extremely important to him as he had only a few months until release and was really struggling managing this difficult period), he had daily support to discuss any concerns, he learned to build appropriate relationships and boundaries, and he had something to motivate him and give him a sense of purpose for life after prison. The course gave Luke the crucial support and structure he needed in the important transition from pre to post-release.

Growing confidence, accreditation and assistance with a positive transition into the community

Luke grew in confidence and became a core member of the team after navigating how to operate in a group

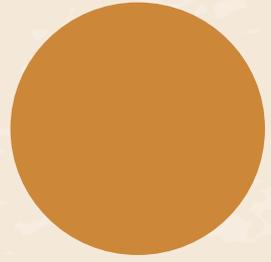
setting. He engaged extremely well in the employability element of the course (gaining his Level 3 Employability Award), taking part in the interview exercise, and receiving excellent feedback from our external interviewer. Luke used the support in sessions and worked with our Support Worker out of the sessions to plan for his release.

He was extremely anxious about his release, especially during lockdown, but he engaged in all the support that was offered and continued to engage with us once the course was finished and we were not able to access the prison due to the lockdown – he stayed in touch over the phone and through ‘email a prisoner’ – keen to continue building his community integration plan and support networks.

On release, Luke engaged with our Support Worker and other support networks in place to try and navigate the lockdown and manage his housing, financial situation, employment, and mental health and wellbeing. He struggled with the restrictions of lockdown, especially not having access to a digital device or internet. Understanding how important regular communication and support was to Luke and his successful release, we were able to source him a laptop and connectivity through the Connecting Scotland initiative. This allowed Luke to remain in contact with his support networks over video calls and enable him to apply for jobs. It reduced his isolation of having to stay home alone and provided him the opportunity to take part in meaningful activity.

Engagement through lockdown

Luke struggled through lockdown, but he remained in contact with essential support and tried to engage in activities where he was able. He was signed up for a number of our online creative courses but found the commitment to these twice weekly courses too intensive on top of his other activities and really needed the structure and support of a face-to-face group environment. He was able to secure short-term employment but is keen to continue his employability support with us in community once restrictions allow.



“The course has done a lot for me especially it has made me look forward to the future and its taught me new things that I know will help me with what I want to do with my life.”

MAP participant



Communications Report

The pandemic and subsequent periods of lockdown impacted not only our service delivery but also caused challenges for our PR and Communications as it created uncertainty around when programmes would start and also led to a lack of momentum, with services starting and then having to stop again due to the second national lockdown.

However, the importance of communications during this time was accentuated, especially at a hyper-local level, and a Communications Group was established within the organisation to develop and lead on this area of work, comprising of Senior Managers and several of our Development Workers. The group have worked with the full staff team and individual project teams to identify areas where 'communications' support is required and helped to implement communications plans where possible.

Whilst the group have had some success in progressing our external and internal communications, they also identified the requirement of a permanent

Communications Officer post within the organisation, which we are in the process of recruiting. The postholder will create and implement a comprehensive Communications Strategy for the organisation, including the promotion of our Year 2 & 3 CashBack programme across all of our platforms and social media accounts.

Examples of Web Stories

With reduced face-to-face delivery as a direct result of lockdowns, there was not as much social media activity as we would have anticipated, however we did promote CashBack content on our website (examples provided below).

- [5 years of MAP – posted 30-4-2020](#)

- [Molly's Story – posted 1-5-2020](#)

- [Youth Media Summer](#)

- [School story – posted 3-7-2020](#)



Further Developments Linked to CashBack programme

Further Developments Linked to CashBack programme

This year shmu received important recognition and additional funding which will raise our profile and capacity; adding to the reach of our work and the depth of support we can offer.

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Our organisation secured the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in the summer of 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to attend the awards ceremony, but we were invited to an online presentation hosted by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen that same year. The award was an enormous boost to our volunteers who worked tirelessly to maintain their contributions working remotely and often alone throughout the pandemic.

Making Waves

Our application to Creative Scotland's Youth Arts Access Fund resulted in an award of £30,000 for our Making Waves project to support reinstating our music programmes for young people over a 12-month period. The project will allow the following activities:

- **Group Music Making Saturday Sessions with young people (11-18 year olds) from the regeneration areas of the city**
- **One-to-one and small group sessions for 16-19yr olds linked to our employability programmes**
- **Music making sessions with prisoners in our media unit in HMP Grampian and follow up sessions in the community following release.**

Creativity Connect

We secured £24,000 through Aberdeenshire Councils Young Persons Guarantee Fund. Creativity Connect will support under 25 year olds on a variety of orders with Aberdeenshire Justice Social Work to engage in creative employability focused group courses. This course will be pre stage 1 on the employability pipeline, supporting those furthest from the job market to engage in meaningful and upskilling activity to enhance their employment outcomes, as well as improve their confidence, personal development and wellbeing.

“Having seen some of the filming and cameras and stuff and what can be made, I’d love to think I could do more of this and maybe even get on one of their courses like the BFI one, that would be amazing.”

Youth Media participant



Financial Report

With agreement from our CashBack Performance Advisor, there have been some changes to our budget as a result of the reduction in face-to-face delivery over Year 1 and a focus on pandemic support and recovery.

As a result of the disruption to our services from the pandemic, including our inability to work in the prison and schools at certain points in the year, we had an underspend of £26,768 in Year 1, which we have agreed with CashBack will be brought forward and split over years 2 & 3 to allow us to achieve the original target outcomes set out in our application for the full three years of the project.

Project Activity	Actual	Target	Variance
Youth Media Project			
Operational staff costs	13,682	13,682	0
Freelance Tutors	3,361	3,361	0
Running costs, materials & general expenses	4,164	4,164	0
Participant expenses (refreshments, travel etc)	1,784	2,230	446
shmu Training Academy			
Operational staff costs	6,658	9,283	2,625
Freelance Tutors	420	1,266	846
Running costs, materials & general expenses	777	1,125	348
Participant expenses (refreshments, travel etc)	264	1,055	791
Media Access Project (HMP Grampian)			
Operational staff costs	14,565	29,998	15,434
Freelance Tutors	1,956	4,424	2,468
Running Running costs, materials & general expenses	1,144	1,875	714
Across Programmes			
Audio IT Technician	2,500	2,500	0
Recruitment costs	0	1,875	1,875
Contribution towards equipment across all programmes	4,716	4,750	33
Total Project Activity	55,990	81,575	25,580
Other Project Costs			
Management and Marketing	9,500	9,500	0
External Evaluation (per agreed guidelines)	4,750	5,938	1,188
Total Other Project Costs	14,250	15,438	1,188
Total Expenditure	70,240	97,008	26,768
Matched Funding	5,250	13,500	8,250

Local Authority Area Spend and Activity

The majority of our CashBack programme take place in Aberdeen City, however there are a number of beneficiaries that live in Aberdeenshire.

- Youth Media focusses on supporting young people in the regeneration areas of Aberdeen City.
- Training Academy focusses on supporting senior phase pupils in Aberdeen schools, but also provides some one-to-one support to young people in both local authorities.
- MAP support prisoners in HMP Grampian who are released to either Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire.

Analysis of spend across both local authorities;

Analysis of spend across both local authorities;

Local Authority Area	Expenditure	Young people supported
Aberdeen City	£ 57,469	72
Aberdeenshire	£ 12,771	16



Evaluation

During the first year of delivery, we have worked with The Lines Between to establish a clear plan of support for the evaluation processes throughout the three years of the project, as set out in the Foundation Report.

The Lines Between have met with the managers and delivery staff for each the project and have been provided with our evaluation tools and methods to ensure our self-evaluation tools, approaches and processes are:

- **Capturing robust and reliable evidence for each of the intended outcomes**
- **Efficient, proportionate and not overly burdensome for staff, stakeholders and young people**
- **Enabling the collation of evidence that allows for effective and efficient analysis**

The evaluation team have had an opportunity to review the data gathered by shmu in Year 1. Their conclusions are set out below, and reflect the data presented on pages 2 and 3.

The impact of Year 1 of CashBack MoveForward is evident across the CashBack Outcomes. It is particularly evident in relation to outcomes 1, 2 and 3, with young people reporting increased confidence, skills and health and wellbeing. Young people feel supported, which is helping their resilience at an especially challenging time and encouraging positive changes in behaviour. There

is also evidence of MoveForward helping young people remain in and attend education and increasing their capacity for volunteering.

Performance was most positive against Outcome 1 – building young people’s capacity and confidence. Almost all young people (86) reported they felt able to do new things, nine in ten (81) reporting increased confidence and over three quarters (68) feel more resilient. Almost half (45%) of stakeholders also felt that young people’s confidence had improved. Over four fifths reported positive support networks (75) or positive changes in their behaviour (73), with two thirds (66%) of stakeholder also perceiving positive changes in young people’s behaviour.

There is also clear impact of CashBack MoveForward on Outcome 2 – developing young people’s physical and personal skills. Almost nine in ten (77) young people reported an increase in their skills with four fifths (70) increasing skills or achieving accredited learning. Recognised SCQF qualifications were gained by 13 young people: 2 at SCQF Level 3 Media and 11 at SCQF Level 6 in Creative & Digital Media, with a further 5 non-SCQF Dynamic Youth Awards. Two thirds (66%) of stakeholders also reported young people’s skills increasing.

On Outcome 3, over four fifths (73) recorded improved health and wellbeing against the SHANARRI indicators. Stakeholder feedback on this outcome was, however,

lower than for other indicators, with three in ten (30%) perceiving an improvement in young people. It is unclear, however, whether this reflects an impression that young people's health and wellbeing was already satisfactory and did not need to improve.

The most positive progress on Outcome 4 – positive destinations – was that three fifths (53) young people have improved school attendance. Almost two fifths (33) have achieved a positive destination; the vast majority (29) will continue education in some form (including remaining or returning to school), with 3 volunteering and 1 entering training. Several young people (12) also secured interviews for work, training or further education.

Just over half of young people (47) have taken on a volunteering role, contributing over 11,000 hours of volunteering. Three fifths (52) feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving and two fifths (38) have produced and disseminated media tackling issues in their communities. As such there is evidence that young people are contributing to their communities under Outcome 5.

Outcome 6 focuses on diverting young people from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system. Performance on this outcome is lower than many of the other outcomes, but progress has still been made, particularly given the challenging context of Year 1. Two fifths of participants feel less inclined to participate in anti-social behaviour (35) or report improved relationships with their family and social circles (36). An Individual Learning Plan was completed by 14 young people, and 5 prisoners reported feeling more positive about their future post release.

Ongoing Evaluation

Over the next two years, The Lines Between will conduct rolling research with the young people engaged with our programmes, through individual conversations and group sessions, to provide valuable data for our annual reports and case studies.

They will also conduct a rolling programme of in-depth interviews with project staff during the three-year contract to discuss their experiences and views on the project, the organisational context in which it is being delivered, perceptions of barriers and enablers and expectations of impact. These will align with discussions with and about the young people. Other relevant stakeholders will be included as and when they are identified by project staff or the young people themselves, including guidance teachers, social workers, parents or prison staff.

As part of our overall evaluation, we are interested in how the impact of our long-term engagement with young people can be captured, so will make The Lines Between aware of the young people who have worked with us since the start of Phase 5 (or earlier) to ensure there is a qualitative record of their experiences with the project.

“Working with the shmu staff makes you see things differently. The young people grow in confidence and speak up in the group. You see some of them participating more than they used to and they get such a buzz from making recordings and interviewing each other and staff.”

Youth Worker





“I am so proud of my daughter; she has her own radio show and is learning so much. I definitely think this is something she will continue to grow into and develop as an adult. Creativity is so good for her; it’s really given her confidence and helped her make friends.”

Parent

Plans and Priorities for Year Two

Across all three programmes

We held visioning sessions for all our projects to consider long-term recovery and ensure we have short, medium, and long-term plans for our operational programmes that are achievable, sustainable, and deliverable. This will include a blended approach both to staff working and to delivery and learning across our strands.

We hope to source funding to employ a Wellbeing Practitioner having agreed the need to bolster support for young people taking part in our CashBack Move Forward programme.

Youth Media

Following a phased return to our building as restrictions allow, we will expand youth media activities to also include Film/TV and music development sessions throughout year two. The plan is to extend the YM hours on a Saturday and create a whole day of interactive and dynamic sessions to really stimulate the interest of our young people and to attract new participants.

We will continue our Speak Out programme in primary schools after summer having been able to reinstate the programme in three local primary schools since April 2021. The transition of P7 pupils to secondary school is the first point for joining youth media as by that stage and in normal circumstances, classes will have some experience of working with shmu staff in school and are keen to develop their interests further.

Building on our recent return to schools, our extensive YM summer programme has been designed to incorporate as much outdoor learning as possible in addition to the studio-based activities. We will also include external partners and tutors to support a diverse and exciting programme. Music sessions will also be included as part of the summer and wider YM activities.

If restrictions allow, our young people will also have local outings to the venues they identified as wanting to go to last year but were unable to attend. We are working collaboratively with the new Science Centre and the Aberdeen Art Gallery who are hosting this year’s National Art exhibition, BAS9 and reflecting the wishes of young people, arranging trips to outdoor activity centres to support their wellbeing through physical activity.

Further, we recognise the valuable experience of our existing YM participants to support and help newcomers to the programme and we are keen to explore a more structured mentoring partnership within youth media to enhance inclusivity and ensure our projects are continuously informed by the needs and aspirations of young people.

Staff are developing delivery of a Nat 3 qualification in Media for participants and using the time allowed for face-to-face activities to conclude SQA radio production qualifications and Saltire Awards.

The shaping of YM’s development is steered by the young people via their Youth Forum where they contribute to our wider strategic plan to keep the programme vibrant, appealing, and relevant.

Training Academy

Towards the end of Year 1 we worked with schools to set up a summer leavers programme for those leaving in May 2021. Online delivery was considered but the pupils identified were not engaging with their school online, so this was not viable. We have plans in place to start a short face-to-face Training Academy course in our own building, with a focus on media to get pupils interested

and motivated to continue to engage. We will also support pupils to look forward beyond their leavers' date to make plans for their next step – the aspiration is that pupils will enjoy their time with us in and choose to engage further with us on our employability programmes beyond their leavers date.

MAP – HMP Grampian

Our aspiration for Year 2 is to be able to deliver continuous courses in the prison as well as engage with our young people in the community face to face and have them take part in activities and volunteering in the shmu building and local area. With the change in restrictions at the end of May 2021, we plan to return to work in the prison to begin a new course in June and which will run until September 2021. This new course will run over 4 half days a week and will include a music element, as well as radio, film and employability.

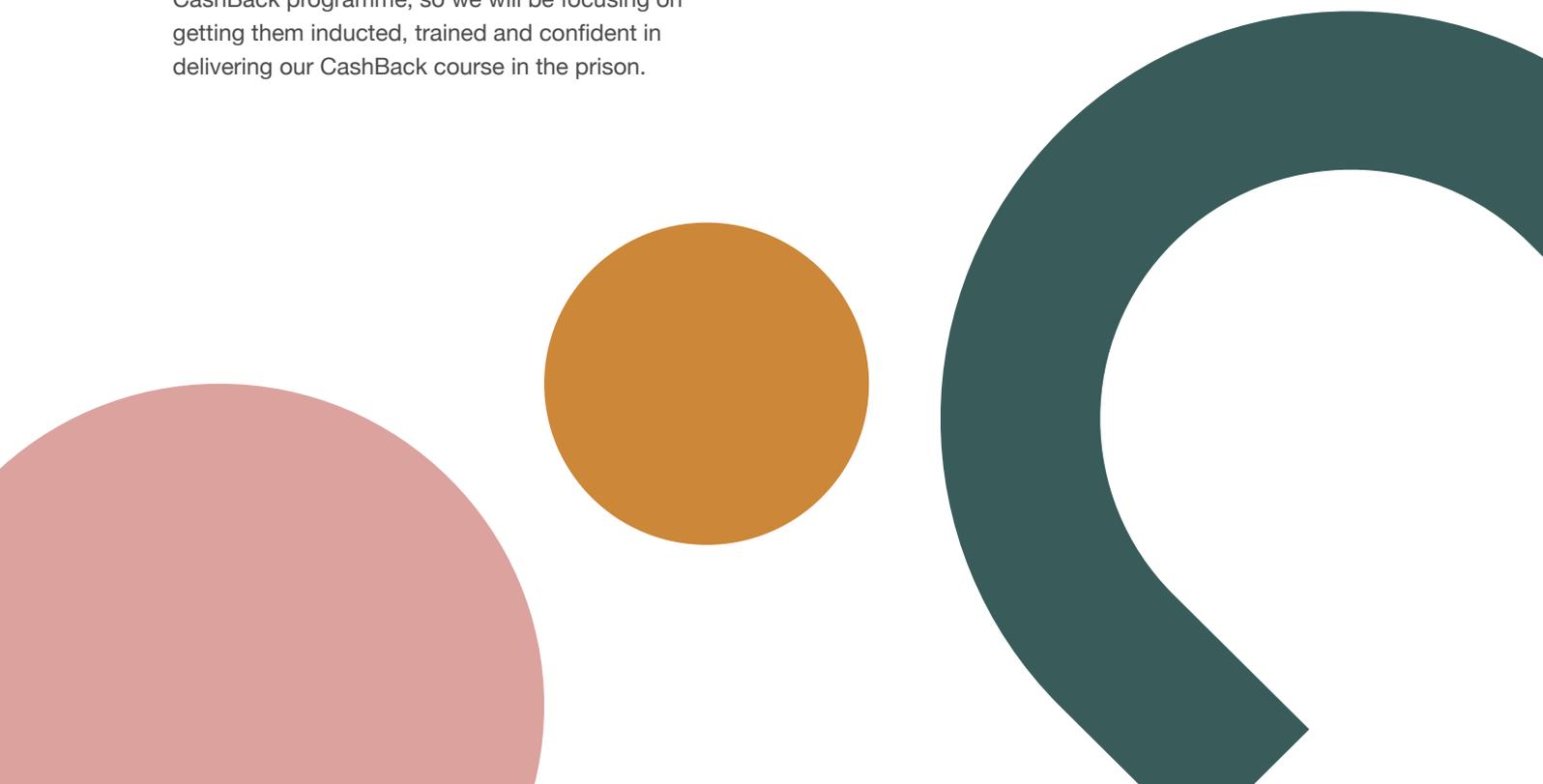
Within HMP Grampian:

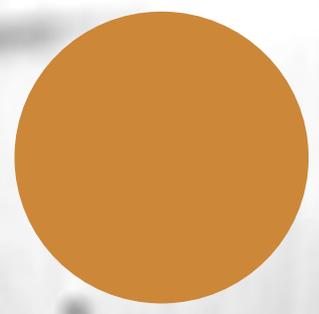
- A priority for the start of Year 2 is our return to HMP Grampian. We will be providing our established pre-release, personal and skills development employability course. This year, delivery will be slightly different; using a combination of tutors and support workers to deliver the sessions alongside our SPS Prison Officer, not a full-time prison-based member of staff. We will therefore have set media sessions and support/employability sessions, covering 4 sessions in total.
- In Year 2 we are introducing new tutors to the CashBack programme, so we will be focusing on getting them inducted, trained and confident in delivering our CashBack course in the prison.

- We hope that restrictions will ease throughout Year 2 of the funding, allowing us to potentially increase the number of prisoners we can work with in later courses – maximising our prisoner engagement throughout this year.

In the community:

- A priority will be to link in our CashBack participants into other courses and opportunities at shmu in the community on their release. We have courses for under 25s specifically in Aberdeenshire focusing on employability and creative group courses in Aberdeen City.
- We will also continue to prioritise our digital inclusion agenda in Year 2 of the funding, ensuring all our participants have access to a device and internet on release. Our offer of emotional and practical support to our young people will be continued alongside opportunities for learning, personal and skills development and employability. As restrictions ease, we will start meeting face-to-face and develop small group work sessions where possible.





Bye
Both presenters:
Next time: