

# CashBack Move Forward

Year 2: External Evaluation Report

June 2022



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## 1. Introduction

### Cashback for Communities and shmu

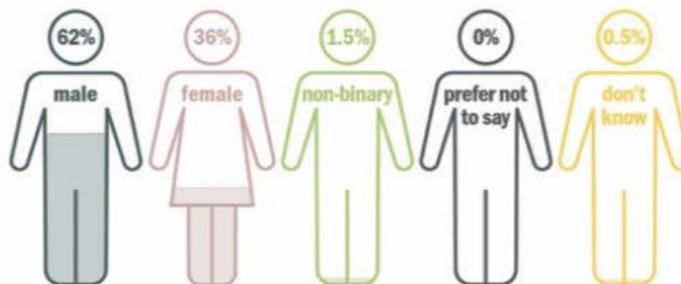
- 1.1. CashBack for Communities is a £19m national programme which funds a range of positive activities for young people between the ages of 10-24. The Scottish Government funding uses money seized from criminals to invest in projects for young people who face disadvantages. CashBack for Communities began in 2008 and is now in Phase 5 (from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023).
- 1.2. In phase 5, shmu (Station House Media Unit) was awarded £292,500 for *CashBack – Move Forward* to work with over 500 young people in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire over three years. *CashBack - Move Forward* offers young people opportunities to learn about and develop radio, film and music skills. The project supports different aspects of personal development and also aims to support young people to avoid becoming involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- 1.3. *CashBack - Move Forward* is structured around three projects:
  - **Youth Media Project** - person-centred creative opportunities for young people (aged 10-18 years) from the regeneration areas of Aberdeen to participate in a range of media activities, supporting them to access transformational pathways in personal development and progression.
  - **Training Academy** - support for young people leaving secondary school identified as being unlikely to achieve a positive destination. Young people can engage in media-related activities to build skills and experience at a transition point in their lives.
  - **Media Access Project** - working with young prisoners in the Creative Media Unit within HMP & YOI Grampian, and with those recently liberated, on media and employability activities. Young people have opportunities to gain experience, develop creativity and confidence, and build a positive and stable life post-release.
- 1.4. This report sets out *CashBack - Move Forward* achievements by the end of Year 2, presenting progress against targets and feedback from stakeholders.

### Engagement by young people and participant profile

- 1.5. Across Year 1 and Year 2, 318 young people participated in *CashBack - Move Forward*. The project is well on track for meeting its target of 500 by the end of Year 3. An upward trend in project reach is evident; in Year 2, 230 young people participated in *CashBack – Move Forward* for the first time, representing a significant increase from the Year 1 figure of 88.
- 1.6. *CashBack - Move Forward* effectively reached the intended target groups that CashBack for Communities seeks to support; almost all (93%) of participants live in the top 20% areas of multiple deprivation. Engagement with the programme spanned all target age ranges, with two-thirds (69%) in the 10-15 age bracket. Males (62%) had a slightly higher level of engagement than females (36%).

## Participant Profile

### Gender:



### Age:



### SIMD Decile:



**1.8.** This impressive level of participation was achieved despite pandemic-related restrictions which affected delivery and caused personal difficulties for some young people. The pandemic's impact is explained below; an important reference point for all the project activity described in this report:

- *CashBack - Move Forward* Phase 5 started during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly impacting shmu. In-person and group activity was impossible for considerable periods and staffing levels were reduced through furlough. However, the organisation found ways to maintain contact with young people and to continue delivering support and opportunities.
- A shift to digital delivery was key to continued provision, and shmu invested in equipment and training to enable the switch and offer opportunities for young people to engage and learn online. Initial support to ensure young people had digital access was also critical to the programme's success.
- Another important shift was adjusting the pace of delivery and types of content used. These adaptations were introduced to ensure that young people were

comfortable with peer work; once in-person work was possible, it was clear that some young people's confidence was affected by the social isolation brought about by lockdowns.

- The pandemic affected each project in different ways. Engagement with schools was a significant challenge because of lockdown and pupils working from home. Once schools re-opened some restrictions remained. School staff absences and the need for schools to prioritise their core timetable meant the Training Academy faced many barriers.
- Lockdown restrictions in HMP & YOI Grampian were even more marked, severely limiting the face-to-face delivery in the Media Access Project. Instead, email and phone calls became standard practice. Alternative digital contact methods were used when restrictions meant that in-person work in the community was impossible.
- Youth Media Project's face-to-face activities were also disrupted. However, online links enabled individual support and group work to continue to some extent, ensuring that young people could still participate in developing creative content.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

- 2.1. As a condition of funding, shmu were required to commission an external evaluator to gather evidence about the programme and report on progress towards the targets and outcomes set for *CashBack - Move Forward*.
- 2.2. The Lines Between, an independent social research agency, was appointed to evaluate *CashBack - Move Forward*. The methodology includes primary research with young people and stakeholders connected to the programme, reviewing and analysing secondary data, and producing annual reports and case studies. The Lines Between worked with shmu to develop evaluation and reporting approaches, and undertook fieldwork including telephone and in-person interviews, and a focus group session with young people.
- 2.3. Scheduled opportunities for in-person fieldwork were limited. The lockdown affected aspects of shmu's delivery model, and there were also difficulties in engaging some young people in the evaluation.
- 2.4. This report is based on:
  - Analysis of secondary data sources including shmu's quarterly reports to Inspiring Scotland.
  - A focus group with 7 young people and interviews with 2 young people
  - Interviews with 4 shmu staff
  - Interviews with 3 parents
  - Interviews with 4 other stakeholders (referrers and partner organisations)
- 2.5. The scorecard data presented in chapter 3 demonstrates shmu's successes in achieving the CashBack for Communities outcome targets, and is based on self-evaluation work undertaken by shmu with young people.
- 2.6. Stakeholders' experiences with *CashBack - Move Forward* were explored in interviews and focus groups. The discussion guide covered each project outcome, and in these conversations consistent themes emerged about impacts and the challenges faced in delivering *CashBack - Move Forward*.
- 2.7. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
  - Chapter 3 describes the impact of *CashBack - Move Forward* on young people and progress toward programme outcomes.
  - Chapter 4 presents emerging conclusions, based on the learning from years 1 and 2.

### 3. Impact on young people

- 3.1. This chapter explores *CashBack - Move Forward's* impact on participants, drawing on the project's self-evaluation data and qualitative research undertaken with stakeholders.
- 3.2. The evidence is structured around the six programme outcomes agreed between CashBack for Communities and shmu:



#### Outcome 1: Building confidence and resilience

**275**

YP report increased confidence  
(Target: 154)

**280**

YP report they are able to do new things  
(Target: 159)

**131**

YP feel more resilient  
(Target: 113)

**167**

YP report positive changes in their behaviour  
(Target: 114)



#### Outcome 2: Developing physical and personal skills

**276**

YP demonstrate increased skills  
(Target: 145)

**94**

YP gain accreditation for learning and skills development  
(Target: 80)



#### Outcome 3: Improving health and wellbeing

**259**

YP report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI indicators  
(Target: 141)



#### Outcome 4: Positive destinations

**54**

YP achieved a positive destination training  
(Target: 48)

**84**

YP improved school attendance  
(Target: 67)

Progressed to:

- 3: Employment** (Target: 2)
- 33: Education** (Target: 33)
- 5: Training** (Target: 2)
- 13: Volunteering** (Target: 11)
- 16: Secure interviews** (Target: 13)



#### Outcome 5: Positive contribution to communities

**131**

Contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving  
(Target: 65)

**64**

YP have taken on a volunteering role  
(Target: 55)

**30,395**

Hours of volunteering  
(Target: 18,143)

**135**

YP produce media tackling issues relating to their communities  
(Target: 53)



#### Outcome 6: Diverted from criminal behaviour

**60**

Feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour  
(Target: 54)

**17**

YP complete an individual future Learning Plan  
(Target: 16)

**56**

YP have improved relationships within family and social circles  
(Target: 55)

**11**

YP feel more positive about the future post-release  
(Target: 10)

## Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour



### Outcome 1: Building confidence and resilience

**275**

YP report increased confidence  
(Target: 154)

**280**

YP report they are able to do new things  
(Target: 159)

**131**

YP feel more resilient  
(Target: 113)

**167**

YP report positive changes in their behaviour  
(Target: 114)

- 3.3. Evaluation and monitoring data collected by the project from young people shows *CashBack - Move Forward's* impact on young people's confidence and resilience. After two years, the project has surpassed its targets for all the self-evaluation indicator data collected from young people. By the end of Year 2:
- The vast majority of young people (275) had reported increased confidence (target: 154); and 280 felt able to do new things (target: 159)
  - Almost one third of all participants (131) felt more resilient (target: 113) and
  - Over half (167) reported an increase in positive changes in behaviour (target: 114)
- 3.4. Interviews with young people and other stakeholders illustrate the changes in confidence and resilience attributed to *CashBack - Move Forward*. Young people were supported to build the foundations of confidence and resilience, including developing social skills and self-belief, enjoying shared experiences, feeling safe, and having opportunities to practice resilience. The skilled delivery of this powerful work with young people was also praised.

### Greater confidence with social interactions

- 3.5. Some young people reflected on the value of support in helping them regain social skills and in-person contact after lockdown.



*"I'm a lot more confident speaking to people now. About a year ago, I was scared to talk to anybody. I'd actually try my best not to talk to anyone that I didn't know that well because I'd get really scared. I think that I'd make a bad impression, or I'd look like an idiot or something. But then when I came here...it's fun talking to people now." [Youth Media participant]*

*"When [Youth Media] came back after lockdown I hadn't been speaking to anybody in so long that I didn't want to come back any more...I was really struggling socially. I was scared to speak to anybody. But then I came back and 'boom' - so much better!" [Youth Media participant]*

### Developing self-belief

- 3.6. The *CashBack - Move Forward* model provides young people with clear opportunities to identify their own growth in skills and confidence. It offers a friendly, interactive forum for working with staff and peers, and progressive opportunities for skills development. In this model, young people gain confidence as they perceive their growth in knowledge

and experience and are encouraged to try new things. Week by week they learn new skills, as shown in these examples from the Training Academy and Youth Media projects.



*“They’ll walk in and go, “Oh, we’ll never know how to use that!” [referring to media equipment]. A few weeks later they can, and the skills and the confidence and the self-belief of “I can do this” is one of those softer skills. It’s harder to measure but they do start to believe in themselves more beyond the activity we’re doing with them.” [shmu staff member]*

*“What if people don’t like my voice? What if... there was a lot of ‘what ifs’. But then they were gone.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

*“A young lad was point blank that he was not going on air. Once he got here, that extra being here must have just given him the extra push that he needed. I don’t think he said much - a few words, but he had been adamant he was not going to be doing that.” [shmu staff member]*

*“They were getting an opportunity to try something new and the fact that they see themselves improve, built their confidence – it was something they didn’t know they could do. It also helped with S1 pupils for building confidence to allow them to get used to using the equipment and the opportunity to be outside of the school building as well.” [external stakeholder, St Machar Academy]*

- 3.7. Greater confidence was described for participants in the Media Access Project. Staff highlighted the low levels of self-confidence and self-belief among some young people in the criminal justice system, who may struggle to believe that things can be different.



*“The first few weeks are always challenging - we do a lot of team building trying to get the guys working together. They’re all pretty low on confidence about their ability and especially about their employability – it’s very much ‘Why should I bother? I’m never going to get a job’.” [shmu staff member]*

*“They’ve got very little self-esteem. They don’t think they’re good at anything. And you see, nobody thinks they’ve got any skills or especially when we’re going over the employability, any transferable skills.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]*

- 3.8. Both Media Access Project staff and Scottish Prison Service staff suggested that the increase in confidence stems from the time alongside young people and the trust and opportunities given to them.



*“More confidence compared to when they first came in. A lot were within themselves. They’re talking to me more than they did at the start of the courses.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]*

*“It's been great to see them progress through the weeks. When we first come down they're like “I'm no' going in front of a camera”. And then six, seven weeks and they're the first one up and ready to stand in front of it. I think it really is just offering that safe space, offering them the chance to be creative and to be themselves... giving them that bit of belief that there is more out there, there is opportunities and they may not have had that chance before.”*  
[shmu staff member]

### Enjoyment and confidence

- 3.9. Parents described their child's enjoyment in being involved in the Youth Media Project and the confidence and range of skills gained.

“Every Tuesday when she comes home [from the group], you have to peel her off the ceiling, she's so enthusiastic and excited. “This is our topic for this week, I have to go and plan my script!” [parent of Youth Media participant]

*“I pick her up on a Tuesday night or a Saturday - when she comes out I say 'did you have fun?'.... 'I LOVED it' and she's just buzzing.”* [parent of Youth Media participant]

*“[name] is actually quite a shy girl but this has really brought her out. And she's mixing with people that she she's never met before. Normally in that situation, she would be maybe taking a step back and just wanting to see what's going on. And to go live on radio has just brought her out of her shell. I really think it's done so much for her confidence - what a difference it's made.”* [parent of Youth Media participant]

### Resilience

- 3.10. Confidence helps young people to deal with difficult situations. Live radio experiences were highlighted as an opportunity to develop confidence and practise coping skills in a pressurised environment.

“Thinking about what they sounded like and how they projected in the first shows compared to where they are now, there's a massive amount of confidence and resilience. To hit a button and it doesn't work and they hit another button and make it work...that's something that adults would find really challenging. It's tangible. You hear it when something goes wrong, and they apologise, and they move on and change the subject or whatever, so they find ways of dealing with it.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

### Strengthened support networks

- 3.11. Parents also highlighted the importance of the social aspect of projects, which help young people to make friends and develop support networks, where otherwise they might have been isolated.

“I feel that he has found a wee tribe.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

*“She's found with this group of young people that they'll listen, and a lot of them have the same interests as her. She thought she was niche. She thought ‘nobody would like the same things as me’ - I was like, ‘I bet if you spoke to folk you would find out they do’, but she didn't have that confidence to approach a group. Just hearing her speak that ‘such and such likes this the same as me’ - it's nice. Finally she's got friends.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

*“If there's discussion on the radio and one of them dries up and someone else will step in, covering for each other. Sometimes you pick up on it and you think 'good on you for coming in to help them'.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

- 3.12. One parent described the positive impact of involvement in the Youth Media Project for her daughter, who was becoming isolated at school.

“It was really becoming a problem and during lockdown she lost that practice time [for social skills] in school in a safe environment - she became like a shut-in - she stopped contacting her friends on social media. She said, 'I don't know what to do.' I couldn't help her ... so I thought it would be good for her to have an environment she felt safe in that was away from school...And it was almost like a switch had been flicked. It was like dancing on ice. She found her place. She said a few months back 'I've found my people'. She found her spark again, and that's what she'd been lacking.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

- 3.13. The Training Academy's contribution to strengthened social skills was also highlighted.

“The main thing was the confidence and working with others, because a couple of them were pupils who didn't have a large friendship group. So, I think working with a group of people that they didn't know helped build their confidence and I hope will see them in good stead when they leave school to go to college.” [external stakeholder, St. Machar Academy]

### Expertise in supporting young people

- 3.14. Parents praised the hard work by shmu staff to create the right environment for young people and support them through challenging lockdown restrictions.

“The respect and support and the non-judgmental attitude of the staff really suits him.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

*“They're such a diverse little group. You know, there's not one of them the same as the other, home set up, school set up or whatever - they're very accepting of each other. Maybe some of them wouldn't fit into a more mainstream environment where it might be survival of the fittest. There's just none of that here - everybody is given the same value.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

*“What really impressed me through COVID was the absolute priority shmu staff gave to young people - it was about making sure they were safe and seen and supported. [young person] had her mini recording kit delivered to the door. [staff member name] waded through snow to get to the house to deliver it to make sure that she was ok, and she could still broadcast from home.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

- 3.15. Individualised support and working at the right pace for a young person can help them connect with a group, even when their confidence levels are particularly low.



*“There’s one who only joined with us in the past year and wouldn’t initially come on the Zoom calls, because they were really really anxious. So, we spent a bit of time just a couple of staff members on Zoom with her at first, and then eventually it was ‘let’s try and join on for half an hour’ and just building that relationship up...and now she’s just part of everything, in person. And her confidence is absolutely through the roof.” [shmu staff member]*



## Well worth listening to: the Youth Media Project

**shmu's Youth Media Project offers person-centred creative opportunities for young people (aged 10-18 years) from the regeneration areas of Aberdeen to participate in a range of media activities, supporting them with personal development and progression.**

**Eight young people took time out from their weekly planning meeting to talk with an evaluator about their experiences with the Youth Media project. They described how they plan a radio show, and the benefits and learning linked to participating in the Youth Media Project. Many of the impacts link directly to the CashBack for Communities outcomes of building confidence and resilience, improving skills and routes to employability, strengthening support networks and enhancing wellbeing.**





### The creative process

**The planning for a weekly radio show starts with selecting a theme, before exploring the subject and considering how it could be presented. In describing the production of their radio shows, young people revealed the creative thinking and planning involved.**

"Movies, music, we do a lot of books, so like for World Book Day we'll have it about books."

**“ Science we do quite a lot, but it's always different because everyone incorporates their own take on it. For example, if they're particularly interested in languages, they'll incorporate that into science and how the brain works.”**

"If you're doing your own show, it's a topic of interest to you but you've also got to think of the listeners... You've got to find ones that are of interest to you but that won't bore the listeners – so doing solo shows is a bit harder, but then you also get enjoyment out of it because you can say 'I did my own radio show'."

"The topics that come up, I look at them and go, 'Oh, dear, do I really want to talk about this?' But usually, we do end up finding something that's actually interesting and I find something that I can write a script about, and then you go, 'Oh, yeah, I've done this!'"

"Sometimes it takes a while to get this part going. But once one person starts talking it goes by really fast – everybody gets ideas."

"Then we prepare a script, and on Saturday we'll be paired with other people and we do a radio show about our different topics."

### New skills

**When asked about any learning they had gained from participating, the young people described personal impacts including improved confidence and social skills.**

**“ It's insane how much more confident I've got – there's no way I'd even be able to speak to this amount of people because I just, I didn't have those skills at all. But now I can speak to loads of people. I'm really comfortable with that, which is pretty cool.”**

"I originally came here last year in the middle of lockdown. I was self-isolating a bit so I wasn't socialising a lot. So I started coming here...it's been quite cool."

**Young people identified the skills they had learned about the technical side of radio production, in addition to the communication skills needed to prepare for and present a show.**

"Well we know how to do radio now. We know how to work the 'doodahs'! I may not know the technology but I know mostly how to work it!"

"We work the technology and we organise ourselves because we basically run it ourselves – they [the shmu staff] are just outside making sure things run smoothly."

"It's a mixture. You can work on radio and think 'I can do all this stuff now'. Then you learn the simple stuff, like actually holding conversations with people and understanding how to talk to people, and maybe trying to get people involved in conversations. That's an essential skill you might need in life. So I feel like shmu was really good at helping me do that."

### Keeping going through lockdown

**Although lockdown resulted in shmu closing its doors to in-person work, the young people described how radio show production carried on at a distance.**

“During lockdown we had weekly zoom calls on Tuesdays – an hour to catch up with everyone on topics and stuff. And then we’d go off and record our scripts and send them in – they’d stitch it all together and put in music and it would go out on Saturday.”

“We did interviews on themes as well and then that got recorded and then onto the radio. We spoke to someone about how they help people during lockdown and then we had a few scientists.”

### Wider impacts

**Involvement with the Youth Media Project also had positive impacts for some young people at school and home.**

“There’s a huge difference. Like I didn’t really speak to anyone in S1 particularly for the first couple of terms. I was really struggling with it, making new friends and stuff. But as I kept coming to shmu I made more friends here, I found it easier to make friends at school, if that makes sense – I don’t know how that worked, but it did. I think, yeah, there’s a big difference.”

**“Because parents or grandparents can listen to you doing the radio on a Saturday as well. Like they go ‘Well done!’ And all week they go ‘We didn’t know that fact. That’s a cool fact.’”**

### Building support networks

**Young people described learning to work as a team through activities at the Youth Media Project.**

“We’re all supportive of each other - so especially like my first time, I had a complete panic attack cos I’d never done it before. But then the second time I did it, everyone was supportive so we all say ‘Yeah you’ve got it, come on!’ And if we’re stuck, we all help each other out. We know if someone’s struggling we’ll do a look and go ‘and on to the next bit’ or we’ll carry on.”

### A great way to spend time

**New opportunities, creative recognition, seeing ideas take shape and having fun together were memories young people shared about their involvement with the Youth Media Project. When the young people spoke about their time with the Youth Media Project, the fun they have together came through strongly.**



**“Everyone’s cool and we can all have a laugh with each other.”**

“It’s enjoyable when people like your stuff, like the first time I wrote a story for my script.”

“When you have a discussion point, and it lasts really long. I remember a couple of times, I’ve had a discussion point and it’s lasted half an hour – even though that isn’t exactly what you should probably do on the radio. That’s very interesting, because there is no dead air and everybody’s always talking. You can really tell that people are invested and interested and that feels good.”

**“Every few months, we get a bunch of board games in and we get pizza. It’s so fun each and every time – everybody’s happy they’re getting pizza and we’re all having a laugh playing board games – it’s awesome.”**

## Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills



### Outcome 2: Developing physical and personal skills

**276**

YP demonstrate increased skills

(Target: 145)

**94**

YP gain accreditation for learning and skills development

(Target: 80)

- 3.16. That the vast majority (276 of 313 young people) reported an increase in skills is a hugely positive result; almost double the target. In addition, 94 young people achieved accredited learning, exceeding the target of 80: this target was exceeded because young people accessed more qualifications per person than expected.
- 3.17. Key features of *CashBack - Move Forward's* effective approach to supporting young people to develop skills include identifying existing strengths and providing opportunities to gain transferable skills including literacy and numeracy, and soft skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, and adapting to new environments.

### Celebrating strengths and successes

- 3.18. At the Media Access Project some of the initial work supports young people to reach a better understanding of themselves and recognise their existing skills, before they start to gain new ones.

“With the employability session that we do, we talk about skills, you know, qualities and transferable skills. They all sit and say, “I don't have any skills, or I don't have anything.” And we sit and we speak to them about it and by the end of it, they're like “I do have that. I do have this.” [shmu staff member]

“With them dropping out of school they don't think they're smart enough. You just have to show them you have these transferable skills. Everybody's got something that they're good at, they can work towards other stuff and put that same mentality towards other things.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]

### A range of skills gained

- 3.19. Stakeholders across the three projects described a variety of skills gained through involvement with *CashBack - Move Forward*. Often these are skills which young people do not realise at first that they are gaining, including teamwork, adapting to new environments, critical thinking skills, literacy and numeracy skills, and self-reflection.

### Teamwork

“They're gaining skills around team building, around how to engage with different groups of people because we'll get guys that haven't met before. They don't know each other and it's about engaging and respecting each other and learning if you don't agree with each other's opinions – how you

*manage that instead of you reacting – seeing them build their confidence in learning to walk away or not get up and react and shout and start a fight that they might have previously done.” (Media Access Project)*

- 3.20. At the Training Academy an important soft skill is to learn how to adapt to new environments and work with others. This is likely to have lasting benefits for young people.

“It’s about giving them the experiences and opportunities to test the waters a wee bit... a few of their behaviours in school – here they’ll be a bit different. I’d rather they tried that sort of stuff here – push boundaries – so that if they’re going off to work, they’ll know how to behave in a workplace or working together.” [shmu staff member]

*“The timekeeping skills of having to make their way to there on time and the organisational skills of doing that. The maturity to keep up with their work that they’re missing in the two periods they’re taking a class, working with outside agencies, getting out of their comfort zone and different social groups...it’s a nice soft start to college.” [external stakeholder, St Machar Academy]*

*“I think it’s the communication and the confidence and the working together – the radio and the film is just the medium to put that together. And it’s those skills that then work in whatever industry or wherever they go off to do later on – it doesn’t necessarily have to be media. It’s important life skills.” [shmu staff member]*

### **Research and critical thinking skills**

- 3.21. Young people learn to research varied topics, which could include issues of specific interest to them and wider issues, too.

“I think it is inspiring to see how the young people take on the topics and how they learn about it - all the questions they ask are really inspiring as well for the researchers. They are always amazed after their interaction with the young people.” [shmu stakeholder, Aberdeen University]

*“They challenge themselves even if the content wasn’t a topic they’d particularly liked that week - you’re not going to like the topic every week - but each and every one of them they’re like ‘Right, okay’. ...they came up with amazing content for the shows.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

*“Critical thinking - that’s a skill - we’ve done a few sessions on distinguishing fake news from real news, the conspiracy theories and all that - delving into statistics - they’ve done an amazing podcast on clinical trials - how randomization works, and how you can then evaluate the outcomes of a clinical trial, how does that inform whether a treatment should be adopted or not.” [shmu stakeholder, Aberdeen University]*

### **Literacy and numeracy skills**

- 3.22. There are opportunities for young people to improve literacy skills through the script writing process; a transferable skill they can use in other settings. Some aspects of the radio work also enable people to practise and gain numeracy skills.

“For some of them we’ll see an increase in literacy skills...we’ll know how much they were willing to write to start off and then much more later on. If it’s a script that they’re writing, it needs to be read...we will actually sometimes encourage them to write things phonetically so that they can see it properly. That builds into their confidence to have a go, which then builds into their confidence to get it right.” [shmu staff member]

“She’s been able to use what she has learned here and apply it to different settings. She had to give a talk at school and because she’d been making the scripts here for the radio, and then delivering them on the radio that gave her confidence to deliver things to the class. She wouldn’t have managed that before - she would have just squeaked and said ‘I need to leave the room’.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

“I think coming here has rekindled the love of writing - she wants to go to University and do that now.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

“They’re working on their literacy skills when they’re writing a script for radio or for film, or numeracy was working out how many songs can be played in an hour. They don’t really realise that and then when you tell them that at the end it gives them a little bit of a sense of achievement of ‘wow you’re right I have done this and I can do this’.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]

### **Reflection and correction**

- 3.23. The groups are encouraged to instigate their own topics or ideas for a radio show, or film or podcast, but they also have to work together, compromise and consider how to develop and improve their work.

“They have to work together - they will write their own bits of script, but those all have to be coherent. I’ve got a group just now listening back to one of their previous shows to see how good, bad or indifferent it was or what they could do better next time. One of the things we do is that constructive feedback...trying to encourage self-reflection without criticising.” [shmu staff member]

### Outcome 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves



#### Outcome 3: Improving health and wellbeing

## 259

YP report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI indicators

(Target: 141)

- 3.24. The Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and able to realise their full potential. This is evidenced through SHANARRI indicators – a scale of measurement which aims to capture if young people are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.
- 3.25. For *CashBack - Move Forward*, 259 young people recorded improved wellbeing against the SHANARRI indicators. Again, targets were surpassed by the end of Year 2.
- 3.26. Wellbeing is a broad issue and the feedback gathered to date is descriptive; examples of project's successes centre on finding effective ways to connect with young people, identifying needs and providing support where possible.
- 3.27. The three projects delivered through *CashBack - Move Forward* enable staff to work alongside young people, get to know them and their circumstances, and check if other support is needed. This represents a realistic holistic approach which can help young people to get a more stable foundation for life, as these quotes from the Media Access Project show.

“A lot of them are coming out [released from prison] and they're homeless or they've got mental health issues or drug and alcohol issues but they put getting a job right at the top all that stuff and they don't realise it's not sustainable.” [shmu staff member]

“Even though they might be coming in to do a radio session or something, it's all the additional bits that come with it. We always say that the media is the hook to get them there, but when they come to us I can check, how's your housing, is your rent still being paid? What about your gas and electric - have you got that set up? There's always somebody there to check in with them - although they're coming for the film or radio, I do the one-to-one support as well.” [shmu staff member]

- 3.28. Opportunities to bring people together through project-based activity in *CashBack - Move Forward* have an important positive impact on wellbeing. For some young people this has been particularly important because of the isolation they experienced through the pandemic, but more generally, some young people require high levels of support to engage in a new experience.



*“Issues had existed before COVID, with staff noting the rise in working with young people who were isolated...but there’s more now...it’s those who are shy, anxious, struggled in school because they were more on the fringes and voluntarily excluded themselves. We’ve got to help them to get over those barriers.” [shmu staff member]*

*“People are different because of COVID. There are a lot more anxieties we’re finding with young people. There’s also a little bit more support needed to get to us - there’s anxieties around using a bus. People who haven’t used the bus for a good couple of years, or haven’t ever used a bus.” [shmu staff member]*

*“It’s really nice to see them chatting together. I think everyone was online fatigued and getting them back in the building was really important just to have that supportive time together...health and wellbeing is more than just PE and being outside. It’s mental wellbeing, self-awareness and things like that.” [shmu staff member]*

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



### Outcome 4: Positive destinations

**54**

YP achieved a positive destination training

(Target: 48)

**84**

YP improved school attendance

(Target: 67)

Progressed to:

**3: Employment** (Target: 2)

**33: Education** (Target: 33)

**5: Training** (Target: 2)

**13: Volunteering** (Target: 11)

**16: Secure interviews** (Target: 13)

- 3.29. All the indicator targets for Outcome 4 have been reached or surpassed after two years, with 54 young people progressing to employment (3) and training (5), but most notably to further education (33) and volunteering (13), as well as 16 young people securing interviews for these options. Furthermore, with 84 young people improving school attendance, the project is 25% over target on this indicator.
- 3.30. This is a significant success given the challenge of meeting targets when many positive destination options were adversely affected by lockdown. Examples of barriers include college courses going online, fewer job opportunities as companies furloughed staff, and the reduction of volunteering opportunities as organisations paused their operations.
- 3.31. Overall *CashBack - Move Forward* provides specific opportunities for accredited learning and qualifications, and also support for other aspects of workforce and life readiness. These may support successful transitions, including taking responsibilities, meeting deadlines, developing transferrable skills and identifying a plan for the future.
- 3.32. Staff also highlighted that the positive results already achieved may not tell the full picture. Positive destinations may not be immediately evident, but in some cases, stories of success linked to engagement with shmu emerge later.

“We have the eight-week and 12-week programmes and then they’re moving on, so they don’t always see their own impact straightaway. And sometimes once they reflect back and realise that something changed while they were here, and that was a good effect of what we did, or that we’re a small part of a bigger cog in a wheel.” [shmu staff member]

### Accredited learning and qualifications

- 3.33. *CashBack - Move Forward* provides many opportunities for young people to gain accreditation as they participate in activities and learn skills. These provide potential future employers with valuable evidence of learning, ability and commitment.

“The organisation is really good at valuing and supporting volunteers and that applies to young people as well – [young person] got a media qualification. [2<sup>nd</sup> young person] is working on Saltire Awards – it’s just built in so naturally - they don’t actually feel like they’re struggling towards something, it’s just something that they do. [2<sup>nd</sup> young person] came home with his 50 hours volunteering slip and that then prompts discussions about why that’s important, and why you can use that in later life.” [Parent of Youth Media participant]

*“She's delighted she got a Nat3 in Media Studies through here. She got a Saltire Award for 100 hours volunteering. Now she's using that to do a Duke of Edinburgh Award. And I just think ‘She's 13 - I'm so proud of you’. [parent of Youth Media participant]*

- 3.34. The Media Access Project supports young people who are being liberated from prison to gain accreditation for their involvement, focus on gaining skills and look to the future.

“*They're showing that commitment to learn about film, radio, music - they're getting two SQAs at the end of it in media, and their employability award. They may come out and might not ever use the actual certificates but it's something really positive that they spent their time on. They've learned other skills - the team building, the confidence, the positive outlook.” [shmu staff member]*

*“The employability award is setting them up for coming out. They'll have a CV, they'll know how to do interviews, they'll know how to fill out applications. It's giving them a bit more hope, as opposed leaving Grampian without that. It could be very easy for them to turn around and return back because they don't have that kind of same focus.” [shmu staff member]*

#### **Taking responsibility, meeting deadlines**

- 3.35. Parents of young people who took part in the Youth Media Project told us that the planning, researching and broadcasting has provided useful experience for their children. These skills are relevant to many other situations where responsibility is given, and expectations need to be met.

“*I think also the discipline ... they commit to what they're going to research and broadcast, and they have to do that... they have to prepare it and bring it in and perform if you like. There's a lot of real-world experience that they're getting - you can't just say you're going to do a show. You actually have to work for it and turn up.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

*“He's getting very good experience of planning a commitment and negotiating if things need to change.” [parent of Youth Media participant]*

- 3.36. Some learning opportunities continued despite lockdown restrictions, with adapted approaches used to ensure that young people could participate in activities.

“*We posted out material to look at infection to look at the bugs that live in different household items. We posted out petri dishes [to young people] where they could grow the bugs that were on their phone or on other things. They did the activity in their own time and then discussed online - that was really good actually.” [external stakeholder, University of Aberdeen]*

### Transferable skills

- 3.37. One aspect of employability support is to help young people recognise and understand the value of their transferable skills and highlight that their activities are giving them relevant experience.

“We can pull in the employability angle because we’ll have a young person say, ‘I couldn’t possibly work in a shop. I don’t know how a till works.’ And we’ll go ‘Well, you didn’t know how radio studio worked a few weeks ago, and now you do, so you could learn’...” [shmu staff member]

### Future pathways

- 3.38. For some young people, involvement with *CashBack - Move Forward* has inspired them to consider study or career pathways and be clearer about what they want to do in life.

“She wanted to be an author ... and I said, ‘well they do journalism maybe that will spark an interest for you’. And she was like, ‘yeah we’ll give it a go’. Then she did the radio side of it and said, ‘This is fun!’” [parent of Youth Media participant]

“It’s making them more aware of the world of work... it is a good way to smooth that transition for young people.” [external stakeholder, SDS]

“Throughout COVID she researched and broadcast her own science show. That sparked a real interest in science as a career path which she’s been investigating. I don’t know if she’ll go down that route but whether it’s science or not, she’s definitely awakened an interest in the media and research and how you can broadcast your views.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

“She came along and tried it and just loves it, to the point now that this is what she wants to do. She was thinking of journalism and has just picked her subjects for Nat5s. Now she’s been looking up courses on media.” [parent of Youth Media participant]



## Life through a new lens

### Ryan – a Case Study from the Training Academy

shmu's Training Academy supports young people who have been identified as being unlikely to achieve a positive destination when they leave secondary school. The Training Academy provides media-related activities to help young people build skills and experience at a transition point in their lives.

In addition to working with school leavers, the Training Academy programme was expanded to include the Stage1 Discover programme. This enabled shmu to support young people (aged 16-24) who are not in education, training or employment and who face significant barriers to involvement.

In this case study, shmu staff describe this work and reflect on the recent involvement of 22-year-old Ryan\*. The CashBack outcomes relating to increasing confidence, skills and employability can be seen in action here.

\* Pseudonyms have been used. Some quotes have been lightly edited for readability, but all meaning has been retained.

### Starting points for young people

**shmu staff outlined the ethos of the programme, and some of the challenges that face the young people who take part.**

“Our Stage 1 Discover programme is for those who have already left school, and those guys are usually right at the start of the employability journey – they are really quite far from the labour market.” (shmu staff member)

“What we found now over the past four or five years, and compounded by COVID, is the young people we’re now working with have got rock-bottom confidence, or self-esteem, and issues around anxieties. We’ve got quite a lot of young people for whom the idea of going and talking with other people, or of walking into job interviews is just a million miles away. So our Stage 1 Discover programme is working more or less one-to-one with young people.” (shmu staff member)

“It’s often more about identifying skills, developing skills and team building, using media as a tool to help...we find a lot of our young people don’t want to necessarily learn stuff, but the minute you’re saying, you’re researching this, because you need to present this so other people understand, it’s okay. They learn by osmosis rather than by any kind of sort of formal learning process.” (shmu staff member)

### Embracing new opportunities

**Ryan has been involved in the Stage 1 programme for five months, having been put in contact via a social work project. Because of an interest in film and some previous experience of making stop-motion films, Ryan received one-to-one support from an employability support worker, and one of shmu’s film tutors.**

“Initially it’s around what their barriers are, what it is that’s holding them back, what they want to work on... and what we often do as well is help them realise that your perceived barrier is actually just something you’re not very good at and don’t necessarily need to be good at!” (shmu staff member)

**Ryan found the activities interesting, and was able to learn new technical skills and practise social skills too.**

“I learned how to use their cameras...how to do shots, like zoom in, zoom out - all that kind of stuff. And I managed to make two films, one called The Shoelace and a role play of a scene from ‘Joker’.” (Ryan, young person)

### Personal development - rising to the challenge

**Ryan described his confidence as something he was “still focusing on” and noted that he faced some personal challenges “getting to know people - because I’m very shy and all that.” Despite this, he has taken**



**the role of director “Basically telling them where I want them to be and what I want them to do...I hope I can get better at it!”**

“He’s been building up his confidence in terms of working with the support workers, but having to interact with people maybe he didn’t know so well, but from the comfort of being behind the camera.” (shmu staff member)

“He’s opening up more. Ryan has a very polite way about him. But he’s finding it in himself recently, to be more honest with us. And also his confidence has definitely grown as well...it’s come on leaps and bounds.” (shmu staff member)

**shmu take a sensitive and staged approach to building up young people’s skills and confidence. After one-to-one support there will be opportunities to work in groups.**

“One of the next steps we’re doing with Ryan is about small group work. Once people have been with us for a little while, we start to build confidence a little bit - for some of them to jump into our next programme of full-on group three or four times a week, is too much of a leap. So when we’ve got quite a few in our groups we’ll link them and do one or two sessions together - a wee mini project working with one other person where they can test the waters a little bit.” (shmu staff member)

**Ryan believes shmu has given him something positive to be involved in, where he is learning and growing, and looks forward to opportunities still to come.**

“I’d like to learn more.”

### Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities.



#### Outcome 5: Positive contribution to communities

**131**

Contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving

(Target: 65)

**64**

YP have taken on a volunteering role

(Target: 55)

**30,395**

Hours of volunteering

(Target: 18,143)

**135**

YP produce media tackling issues relating to their communities

(Target: 53)

- 3.39. Targets for Outcome 5 were exceeded. A total of 64 young people gave 30,395 hours of volunteer work through their participation in Move Forward's activities. This represents a significant opportunity for young people and is an important community contribution. In years 1 and 2 more than two fifths (135) of young people who participated in *CashBack - Move Forward* produced and disseminated media relating to their community, and 131 felt that their contribution, links with local communities and social interaction had improved.
- 3.40. The evaluation has identified many different positive impacts from the outward-looking, community-based opportunities delivered by *CashBack - Move Forward*. These include the value of different forms of learning opportunities, changed attitudes and stronger links for support services across communities.

#### The value of different forms of learning opportunities in a community

- 3.41. The community-based delivery format and nature of the learning opportunities offered by *CashBack - Move Forward* suit some young people better than the traditional school environment. They can learn skills and develop in parallel with their school education.

“Because its small numbers and the studios are little, for him that's really manageable - he's got a sensory processing thing - he likes the fact that you have to be quiet.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

“They can be much more engaged here – much more interested – just getting more into it and less self-conscious ...they've got sort of invisible constraints at school.” [shmu staff member]

“When we get grief from school about maybe not doing homework, we can say well, you know, he's broadcasting so many hours a week. So, he's getting a real kind of experience here that he wouldn't get otherwise. He can't commit to homework, but he can fairly commit to writing a script.” [parent of Youth Media participant]

- 3.42. In the Media Access Project, some of the content produced is accessed and provides a service within the prison community.

“They've made shows and programmes on this course for other areas of the jail - content that's shown on our in-cell prison TV. The main kind of shows they want to do are music-based but we have touched on shows about work

*and work life, politics, drugs, health, and sports. It's then advertised throughout the prison. It's definitely helped the community of HMP Grampian." [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]*

- 3.43. *CashBack - Move Forward* staff encourage young people to continue to engage after liberation from prison.

“*When somebody is going back into the community, it's still that difficult stage where you need to catch them when they come out and get them to engage with where they're at and what they're doing." [shmu staff member]*

- 3.44. Much of the media work with young people covers subjects that are of most interest to them. Sometimes a topical community of interest issue prompts important contributions.

“*It tends to be that the guys are wanting to look at topics in terms of mental health or suicide or drugs or things are of meaning to them. They often don't feel connected to their communities because they're young people involved in anti-social behaviour. They are much more wanting to talk about drugs programmes so that they don't become invisible, and issues like stigma." [shmu staff member]*

- 3.45. In the Youth Media Project, young people often lead the discussion on topics to consider for broadcasts. These discussions can bring a group closer together and strengthen the peer support networks which emerge through participation in *CashBack - Move Forward*.

“*We had a really nice conversation last month about relationships, and they brought up toxic friendships, and we just sat back and let them have that conversation. It was really wholesome to see them identifying setting boundaries. They bounced off each other and shared ideas. They looked online for resources of mindfulness, and it was just them having that time to sit together and open up and share ideas again which they might not necessarily get in school. And I think that brought them together a bit because they were like, 'I've had that same experience'." [shmu staff member]*

- 3.46. The Training Academy was also seen by stakeholders as way to offer meaningful activities for young people who are struggling with engagement, notably those still in school because of their age, who may not be motivated to participate.

“*I think it's been very positive both for the senior phase especially when it comes to that area of pupils who have stayed on at school because they don't know what to do and they aren't engaged in school, but we need to find things to help them to remain engaged. I think that's a very positive thing that shmu can be involved in. I wish there was more courses for that small group of pupils who are still 15 after the summer but need engagement and just don't engage in class." [external stakeholder, St. Machar Academy]*

### Changed attitudes

- 3.47. *CashBack - Move Forward* activities and teamworking opportunities create a dynamic new experience for young people. This can lead to changed attitudes within their community of peers or at school, as these examples from the Training Academy show.

“One of the very subtle changes in one lad was that he praised the other girls in the group for their work, and he was a sort of kid who would never give praise out, especially not to girls. To say to some girls, “That was a great job guys”, was a strange transformation for him and himself. So, you're seeing that sort of attitudinal change, which is really important.” [shmu staff member]

“In terms of engagement, there is a marked difference there. It's not ‘they just go the Training Academy and forget about school’, I think there is also that encouragement from shmu to say, ‘right okay whatever subjects you're still doing in school, we would expect you to still go and complete it’. The kids are more motivated to say okay, because they still have these subjects and these qualifications, they need to get...so I've noticed for the last few that there was a sort of head-down mentality, ‘let me finish what I need to finish and move on’.” [external stakeholder, SDS]

### Building stronger links across support services and communities

- 3.48. Stakeholders also highlighted that shmu's strong community links have enabled them to make connections and engage with young people more easily.

“Rather than starting from scratch, if we want to engage a specific community, we try and go through people who are already on the ground. shmu are really good for that.” [external stakeholder, University of Aberdeen]

“If I had a kid sitting at 30% attendance in school, realistically there's no chance I'd be able to catch them. If I know that young person is doing their training sessions or at shmu, I have that flexibility where I can arrange to go and meet them face-to-face... so in terms of reaching the harder to reach ones, it's been a godsend.” [external stakeholder, SDS]

## Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system



### Outcome 6: Diverted from criminal behaviour

**60**

Feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour  
(Target: 54)

**17**

YP complete an individual future Learning Plan  
(Target: 16)

**56**

YP have improved relationships within family and social circles  
(Target: 55)

**11**

YP feel more positive about the future post-release  
(Target: 10)

- 3.49. *CashBack - Move Forward* has achieved all targets for Outcome 6. Most notably, 60 young people report being less inclined to take part in anti-social or criminal behaviour (target: 56). Other targets relating to reducing criminal behaviour have also been met, with young people completing future Learning Plans for behaviour and risk-taking and feeling more positive about the future post-release. Encouragingly, 56 young people report improved relationships within their family and social circles (target: 55).

### Encouragement, structure and a fresh perspective

- 3.50. The Media Access Project provides young people in the criminal justice system with structure and purpose, which helps them to develop a fresh perspective.

“Looking at different opportunities to reduce that isolation and boredom that some of them face and to deter them away from going back to negative behaviours. If you've got a music group to come to every Thursday and they know that they can't come under the influence, or they know they can't come with their pal that they always hang about with, it gives them something – that meaningful activity to work towards.” [shmu staff member]

“People stopped taking drugs throughout the course and you can just see them physically change going from smoking Spice almost daily to coming down and taking part in courses here and now just don't even touch the stuff. So yes. I see some big changes.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]

- 3.51. In some cases, shmu staff are a key source of support for young people. Their ongoing contact plays an important role in providing stability and encouragement, assisting positive transitions.

“That through-the-gate support is vital – it makes a big difference to a lot of them having that support or having somebody to phone. Some of them say it's nice to know that somebody cares, because they may be leaving prison and shmu is the only contact that they have depending on what they've been in for, or if they don't have social work or if they don't have connections they can slip through the net.” [shmu staff member]

“I haven't seen as many come back into prison once they've been released after they've been in the course. I only know of two people who have come back after taking part in the course. I'm hoping others have went on to get

*jobs or go into further education. And obviously with shmu helping them outside as well, we have some success stories from that.” [external stakeholder, Scottish Prison Service]*

- 3.52. Through extended work with young people, shmu staff can build trust, understand young people’s experiences, and have constructive realistic conversations with them. This provides a space for reflection and supports them to consider and make different choices.



*“The employability worker is brilliant – she gets on their side – we do a lot of chats about ‘so you were a good drug dealer what are the qualities then?’ ... They always think it’s funny that we’re talking about the qualities of a drug dealer and make it positive, but you have to get on to their level ... We speak to them about longer term, some of them say ‘We’re going to go back to drug dealing’ and they talk about the lives they want, like getting a mortgage... We do a lot of working on life skills and having those conversations that they have just never had with parents or teachers before... understanding that this way of life doesn’t lead to what they think... Sometimes it can be session 8 or 9 out of 12...and you think you’re getting nowhere, and then something just switches in them and they’ll ask, ‘oh actually could we maybe just work on a CV, just in case.’ [shmu staff member]*



## A different beat

### Liam – a Case Study from the Media Access Project

**shmu's Media Access Project works with young prisoners in the Creative Media Unit within HMP & YOI Grampian, and with those recently liberated, on media and employability activities. Young people have opportunities to gain experience, develop creativity and confidence, and build a positive and stable life post-release.**

**This case study focuses on Liam\*, a young person who took part in the Media Access Project.**

**Liam described the positive impact of being involved, including greater confidence, increased skills, improved employability and a more positive outlook. Staff at shmu who worked with him also identified positive changes for Liam.**

**\* Pseudonyms have been used. Some quotes have been lightly edited for readability, but all meaning has been retained.**

### New opportunities with media

**Liam's main focus since he became involved with the Media Access Project has been music and radio-related activities; opportunities that he wouldn't otherwise have had access to.**

"We were doing a DJ workshop... we got taught how to make beats through free online software. I was writing up scripts for the radio show as well, learning how to do research on different topics and learning how to choose topics, and then doing an hour long radio show with that." (Liam)

"shmu's introduced me more to beatmaking which I was interested in before, but I never really got the opportunity to take it on. You can't really get the experience of beatmaking unless you go and buy all the equipment and software..." (Liam)

### Positive changes to confidence and skills

**Taking part has had a positive impact on Liam's confidence which he and others have witnessed.**

“ I think I've become a more confident speaker because I've had the opportunity to speak on a radio show you know... it kind of forces you to speak a bit clearer and take a breather when you're speaking and think before you speak.” (Liam)

"I would definitely say that over the 12 weeks his confidence has risen and he's been open to learning new skills and developing – he's always been willing to go a bit further. Sometimes it was just Liam on his own and he still came and he still took part." (shmu staff member)

**He also learned new skills which he recognises could offer useful experience for future roles. Some of his learning has helped him to achieve qualifications including a Level 3 Personal Development Award.**

"I had to come up with a radio show – if I was to go and apply for the job and try and do that myself, I wouldn't have any knowledge of it. It's the type of experience you would only get in these places you know. I just knew that it was something that I enjoyed, but at the same time you may be further on, you know, a follow-on to getting work in the future." (Liam)

### Gaining a fresh outlook on life

**Liam became involved with the Media Access Project because of his criminal behaviour. He reflected that earlier access to opportunities like those available through shmu could have helped him avoid some of the behaviours which previously got him into difficulty.**



“ I think it's a positive thing - more people should have access to stuff like this. You know, the only way I've gotten help to do what I've wanted to do is because I've been caught committing a crime, you know? But maybe if I had been given support when I'd left school with something like this, maybe I wouldn't have been committing a crime, maybe I'd have been working in a job.” (Liam)

**shmu staff comment that Liam's involvement shows a willingness to use his time as positively as possible.**

"It's really good that he's engaged with us because he's got his Community Payback order to comply with and some outstanding charges. I think, because he's working with an organisation, he's showing the commitment and dedication. I think that's really important to show to the court, that he's actually looking to improve his situation and heading away from the negative lifestyle... this is actually allowing him to develop skills and work on a CV, his team building, confidence and all that, which I think looks pretty good against upcoming trials." (shmu staff member)

## 4. Conclusions

- 4.1. Overall, there is clear evidence that *CashBack - Move Forward* is achieving its intended outcomes, and there is enough information to understand why the positive impacts for young people are being achieved.
- 4.2. Each young person who takes part in *CashBack - Move Forward* is unique, with different needs, experiences and starting points. The opportunities offered across the three projects provide an engaging, supportive platform to build confidence and resilience, gain new skills, improve employability pathways, and improve wellbeing. Young people respond well to opportunities to produce media they can share with their community. This improves their outlook, and in some cases presents a diversion from negative influences and activities.
- 4.3. *CashBack - Move Forward* started during a difficult operational period because of the context of the pandemic. Thoughtful and effective adaptation enabled the team to provide support and work sensitively and individually with those affected by lockdown restrictions.
- 4.4. Most targets were met or surpassed by the end of Year 2, and with COVID-19 restrictions continuing to ease, initially in schools and in the coming months in prisons, Year 3 opportunities should continue to grow. In Year 3, with a more stable delivery timetable and greater opportunities for face-to-face contact, the evaluation team hope to have greater access to young people and stakeholders; this will enable more detailed exploration of impacts and experiences.
- 4.5. With two years of experience of digital delivery, and a full return to in-person work there are positive prospects for the final year of Move Forward. Young people and communities across Aberdeen will clearly reap the benefits of deeper relationships, collaboration and creativity brought about by *CashBack - Move Forward*.