

A photograph of two people, a man and a woman, wearing safety gear and pulling on thick red ropes on a boat. The man is on the left, wearing a red jacket, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark jacket. They are both looking towards the ropes with concentration. The background shows a body of water and a cloudy sky.

Impact Evaluation Phase 5 (2020 to 2023) CashBack For Communities

Final report November 2023

The logo for CashBack For Communities, featuring a yellow square with a white left-pointing chevron, the text 'CASH BACK' in black, and 'FOR COMMUNITIES' in yellow below it.

**CASH
BACK**
FOR COMMUNITIES

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Ministerial Foreword

CashBack Phase 5 Evaluation

The CashBack for Communities programme invests money recovered from criminal activity in projects to benefit local communities. The programme supports Scotland's National Performance Framework and Programme for Government commitments, which focus on three key missions of equality, opportunity and community. The CashBack programme's long-term aim is to support children and young people most at risk of being affected by antisocial behaviour and crime.

Funding of up to £19 million was committed to the CashBack programme between April 2020 and March 2023. Over 72,000 children and young people benefitted from CashBack funded projects. This exceeded expectations and was a remarkable achievement, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I believe in the potential of all our children and young people. This report shows the value of the CashBack programme in providing early interventions and support to help improve the lives of thousands of children and young people in Scotland.

CashBack Phase 5 has been an outstanding success. I would like to offer my congratulations to the 24 CashBack organisations and the supporting partnerships that helped to make it happen. Most importantly, I congratulate all the young CashBack participants who were at the heart of the programme.

Siobhian Brown
Minister for Victims and Safer Communities
December 2023

Acknowledgements

This report draws strongly on the evaluation and annual reports produced by CashBack partners - including case studies, quotes, photos and statistics. CashBack partners used imaginative and innovative ways of presenting evidence about the difference they have made for young people. We thank all the CashBack partners and evaluators for providing this evidence to inform the national report.



Introduction

About this report

This report explores the impact of and lessons learned from Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities, which ran from April 2020 to March 2023. It explores:

- the profile of participants
- the impact of the programme
- the key success factors and barriers in bringing about impact
- lessons learned around programme management, planning and support.

Detail on the method used to conduct this evaluation is outlined in Appendix One. It is important to note that Phase 5 of the programme was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. It affected the numbers participating in the programme, the outcomes achieved and ability to reflect on outcomes with participants.

Throughout this report we refer to CashBack partners. These are the funded partners delivering CashBack activity.

The CashBack for Communities programme

CashBack for Communities is a unique Scottish Government initiative which takes funds recovered through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and invests them back into communities. CashBack for Communities has been running since 2008. Phase 5 of the programme focused on investing in community programmes and activities largely – but not exclusively – for young people at risk of turning to crime and antisocial behaviour. It focused on providing a range of activities for young people between the ages of 10 and 24 which:

- supported people, families and communities most affected by crime
- supported those most at risk of being involved in antisocial behaviour, offending or reoffending into positive destinations
- supported young people most at risk of entering the justice system.

It also supported activities, not limited by age, which meet the criteria above and provided intergenerational support for parents, families and children impacted by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)¹.

¹ [CashBack for Communities 2020 to 2023 Application Guidance](#)

Programme development

There have been six broad phases of CashBack activity.

1

Phase 1 (from 2008 to 2011) was an early stage where approaches to using proceeds of crime to have positive impacts for young people and communities were developed and established.

At the end of Phase 1 the Scottish Government's Safer Communities Division carried out a review of the CashBack programme and changes were made to strengthen programme management and delivery. These changes included the appointment of an external delivery partner to develop consistent processes, support projects in delivering and measuring their outcomes, and support monitoring, evaluation and reporting at project and programme level. Since July 2012, this role has been undertaken by Inspiring Scotland².

The logo for Inspiring Scotland, featuring the word "INSPIRING" in white capital letters on a dark teal rectangular background, with the word "SCOTLAND" in dark teal capital letters below it.

2

Phase 2 ran from April 2011 to March 2014 and involved 14 CashBack partners, reducing to 13 by the end of Phase 2. This phase was evaluated in May 2014. There was a strong focus on mass participation activity. The evaluation made a series of recommendations relating to the processes within the programme. It also highlighted positive initial steps towards understanding the outcomes and impact of the programme.

3

Phase 3 ran from April 2014 to March 2017 and involved 14 CashBack partners. Ten were also involved in Phase 2, and four were new. Phase 3 was strongly focused on outcomes and impact on young people, across the themes of employability, sport, youth work, culture and facilities. An evaluation is available [here](#).

4

Phase 4 ran from April 2017 to March 2020. It involved 17 CashBack partners, six of whom were new to the programme. Phase 4 involved a strong focus on socio-economic deprivation, and targeted activity to support the most disadvantaged young people. An evaluation is available [here](#).

² The Scottish Government has tendered this role on a regular basis and applied a thorough selection process.

5

Phase 5 ran from April 2020 to March 2023. It involved 24 CashBack partners, 11 of whom were new to the programme. Phase 5 focused on people most affected by crime and most at risk of entering the justice system, as well as a new focus on intergenerational support for parents, families and children affected by adverse childhood experiences. This report sets out findings from an evaluation of Phase 5.

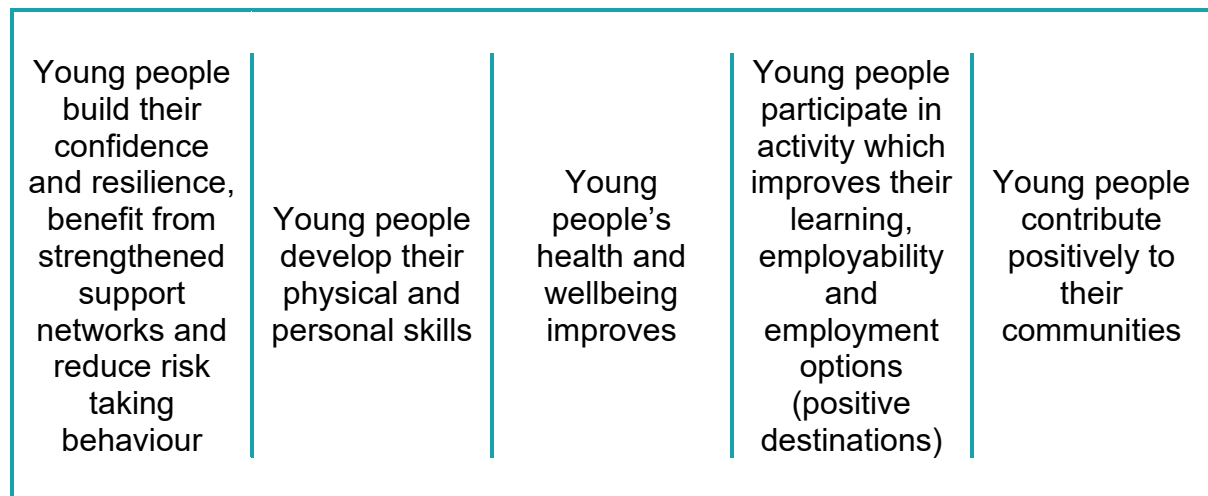
6

Phase 6 CashBack runs from 2023 to 2026 and is ongoing at the time of this report. It supports 29 CashBack partners, including ten new partners, and is strongly focused on supporting the Scottish Government’s Justice Vision Aims.

A list of CashBack partners for Phase 5 is included as Appendix Two. Most delivered CashBack projects directly. Three - Prince’s Trust, Youth Scotland and YouthLink Scotland - delivered through small grants to organisations, individuals or groups.

Priorities in Phase 5

The long term intended outcome of CashBack for Communities is to divert young people from crime and involvement with the justice system. Over Phase 5, investment aimed to bring about five short term outcomes for young people.



All five short term outcomes and the long term outcome of diversion were mandatory. It was expected that all funded projects would contribute towards these.

Phase 5 also involved new work across the programme to support children’s rights. With support from Inspiring Scotland, CashBack partners worked to formally embed children’s rights across their projects. The goals of the CashBack programme were also mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the ‘Decade of Action’ to accelerate progress on these goals between 2020 and 2030.

The full logic model used during Phase 5 is attached as Appendix Three.

The rationale for CashBack

Scottish context

Scotland has an aim of avoiding the involvement of children and young people in the justice system. Scottish Government policy has a strong focus on prevention, early intervention and improving life chances for young people. This approach has significantly reduced the number of children referred to the Children's Reporter for offences, prosecuted in Scotland's courts and being sentenced to custody³.

When children and young people get involved in the justice system, this is almost always due to underlying causes related to adversity, deprivation and trauma⁴. This is clearly exhibited through recent research undertaken by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration for the Scottish Government.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration research

This research explored the profile of children aged 12 to 15 years who were involved in offending and referred to the Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal⁵. Through an in-depth look at 400 cases this research showed clear links between involvement in the justice system, and disadvantage and trauma.

- **Deprivation** - 63% had home addresses in areas within SIMD 1 and 2 areas.
- **School** - 59% had concerns about attendance and 41% had been excluded.
- **Substance abuse** - 49% had used drugs and 48% had used alcohol.
- **Trauma** - 48% were victims of parental neglect, 39% had witnessed significant traumatic events and 25% were victims of parental violence or aggression.
- **Sexual abuse** - 39% of girls were victims of sexually harmful behaviour or sexual abuse. 30% of girls were reported victims of child sexual exploitation.
- **Mental health** - 32% had mental health concerns. Girls were twice as likely as boys to fall into this category (39% for girls, 18% for boys).
- **Residential care** - 26% of children were in residential care.

Across all children and young people referred to the Children's Reporter over the past five years, three quarters were boys and a quarter were girls. The issues experienced by girls differed from boys, with a particularly high prevalence of sexual abuse and mental health concerns, and a high proportion of girls involved in the justice system living in residential care.

Wider research also shows a clear link between children and young people's involvement in the justice system and deprivation. For example, the highest proportion of prison arrivals are from the most deprived parts of Scotland (33% in SIMD 1, 1% in SIMD 10⁶). The Scottish Community Safety Network found that 12 year olds living in the 20% most deprived areas were more likely than those in the 20% least deprived areas to have engaged in antisocial behaviour (36% compared

³<https://www.gov.scot/publications/rights-respecting-approach-justice-children-young-people-scotlands-vision-priorities/pages/2/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/vision-justice-scotland/pages/7/>

⁵<https://www.scra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Children-aged-12-to-15-years-offending.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/vision-justice-scotland/pages/7/> - from SPPS 2019/20

with 25%). Those living in more deprived areas are also more likely to think that antisocial behaviour is an issue in their area⁷.

Research also shows clear links between ACEs and crime. Scottish Government⁸ research made a case for preventing crime by targeting those most at risk of experiencing adverse childhoods. It highlights that there is a strong association between ACEs and crime, with people who experience multiple ACEs more likely to engage in risk taking behaviours which are sometimes associated with criminal behaviour. It concludes that preventing adverse childhood experiences could have a significant impact on crime in Scotland.

The CashBack approach

The approaches taken by funded CashBack partners strongly link with the Scottish Government's ethos around supporting children and young people, and learning about successful approaches. The CashBack portfolio works across young people's journey through the justice system, including targeted prevention work, early intervention and rehabilitation activity.

- **Targeted prevention:** A significant portion of activity is targeted at preventing children and young people from becoming involved in the justice system, identifying groups of young people most at risk of potential future involvement in the justice system, and providing positive opportunities.
- **Early intervention:** Some of the CashBack programme involves work with young people who are exhibiting signs of potential early involvement in the justice system. This includes people exhibiting risk taking behaviour, antisocial behaviour or low level offending.
- **Rehabilitation:** Some CashBack projects work with young people who have been involved in the justice system. This includes working with people within young offender's institutes, on release from young offender's institutes or who have offending backgrounds.

The CashBack approach also follows wider evidence⁹ which shows that approaches which help children and young people who may be involved in the justice system are successful if they are based on:

- relationship-based, rights-based, individualised and person centred approach
- a trauma informed and youth work focused approach
- actively listening to children and young people
- creating learning experiences for young people
- providing opportunities for children to succeed in positive ways
- providing support into volunteering, jobs and qualifications
- working with the whole family where appropriate.

⁷ [The Picture of Anti-Social Behaviour in Scotland, Scottish Community Safety Network, 2020](#)

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-childhood-adversity-resilience-crime/>

⁹ [Improving the Life Chances of Children Who Offend: A Summary of Common Factors, Youth Justice Improvement Board, 2019](#)

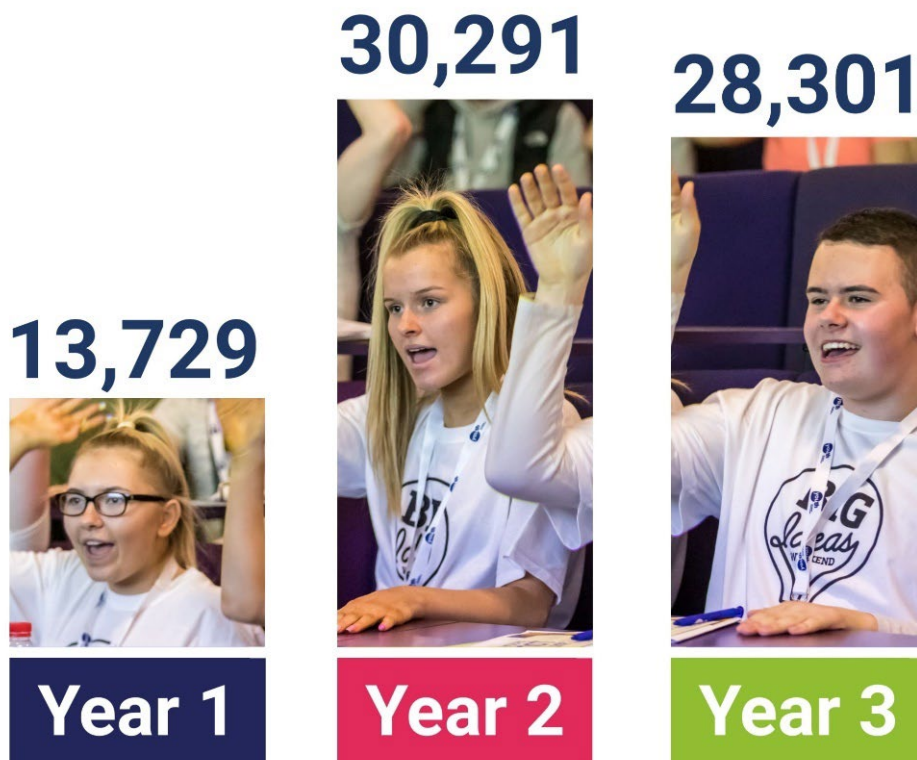
Participant Profile

Total participants

More than 72,000 young people took part in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities. This is almost a fifth more than the target set for Phase 5. Due to the robust reporting processes in place, this is a reasonable estimate of the number of participants in Phase 5.



The global pandemic significantly affected the numbers participating in the programme during the first year of Phase 5. However, CashBack partners were able to increase delivery during years two and three, as they came to terms with how to adapt their activity to meet emerging needs within the relevant restrictions.



2020/21 - full pandemic/
lockdown

In Phase 4, more than 106,000 young people took part in the programme. The decrease in numbers for Phase 5 reflects the focus on person centred and longer term work with young people. There was a deliberate and concentrated approach by the CashBack programme and partners to invest in tailored work with participants, to bring about maximum change in young people’s lives. A few CashBack partners indicated that they had changed their approach during Phase 5 to focus more on in-depth activity with a smaller number of young people. This was based on learning over time, and during the pandemic.

Example: A focused approach - basketballscotland

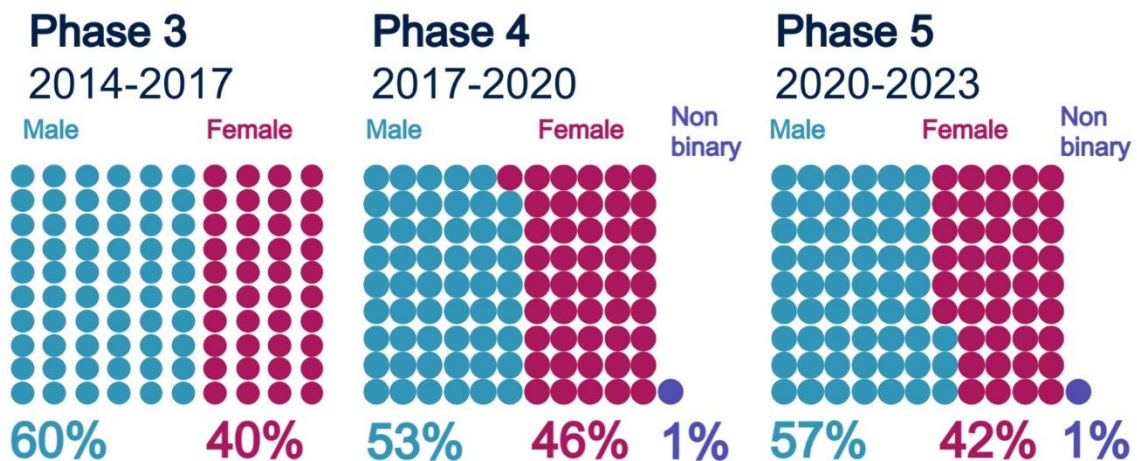
During Phase 5, basketballscotland changed the design of its Schools of Basketball project. It originally aimed to run a lighter touch programme with a larger number of schools in Scotland. It shifted to an embedded approach working in-depth with three schools in areas of deprivation. This shift was felt to have transformed the quality of the project outcomes. The work undertaken had a significant effect on the young participants involved. basketballscotland believed the greatest impact has been achieved with those participants who have been with the programme the longest and built up trusted relationships with the youth workers.

While most CashBack partners reached the expected number of young people, a few indicated that they found it difficult to reach the number of young people originally intended due to the challenges of the pandemic. This was a particular challenge for CashBack partners working with young people in the justice system, with challenges around access to secure units and prisons, referrals from partners in the justice system, and a need to adapt to lower prison population numbers over 2020 to 2023.

Profile of participants

Gender

More males took part in Phase 5 of CashBack than females. A small proportion of participants identified as non binary.



Within each phase, the CashBack programme has reached more males than females. Although Phase 4 saw a more equal gender balance in participation, Phase 5 saw an increase in the proportion of males taking part. In particular, during the first two years of the programme – during the height of the pandemic – participation of males increased to 58%.

Evidence is clear that women account for a much smaller proportion of those involved across Scotland’s justice system than men – for example in prosecutions, convictions and people in prison¹⁰. However, evidence also shows that women are less likely to feel safe in their own communities, are more likely to feel concerned about crime in their area, and are less confident in the justice system than men.

Example: Reaching women - Ocean Youth Trust Scotland

Ocean Youth Trust Scotland’s Changing Tack with CashBack project achieved a broadly even split of male and female participants during Phase 5. Although sailing is a male dominated world, Ocean Youth Trust Scotland is proud to have female youth workers and an Operations and Training Manager who is also a qualified skipper, to provide role models for girls and young women.

Age

65% | Most participants in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities were aged 10 to 15.

Around a third (31%) were aged 16 to 18 and 5% were aged 19 to 24.

CashBack partners highlighted that the pandemic meant that at times there was more work than they had planned with under 12’s, as there were fewer restrictions for these age groups.

Scottish Government policy teams and Inspiring Scotland felt that it was appropriate that the number of upper primary and lower secondary age participants was relatively high. Most of these participants are involved in lighter touch, early intervention activities such as weekly youth group settings.

“We are getting in at the early stages where early intervention is more useful.”

Scottish Government policy team

For older participants, who may already be involved in the justice system, activity tended to be higher intensity. Scottish Government policy teams were also pleased that the support didn’t stop aged 18, and ran up to age 25, meaning that young people in their early 20s don’t slip through the system.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-justice-system/>

Wider protected characteristics

Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities engaged young people with a wide range of protected characteristics.

48%

Information on religious beliefs was available for almost 12,000 participants. Based on this information, just over half of participants (52%) reported no religion and just under half (48%) reported religious beliefs. Participants reported at least ten different religions, with the most commonly reported beliefs being Church of Scotland, other Christian or Roman Catholic.

13%

Information on ethnic origin was available for just over 40,000 participants. Based on this information, 13% of participants were minority ethnic and 87% were white Scottish or white other British.

12%

Information on sexual orientation was available for almost 18,000 participants. Based on this information, 12% of participants were gay, lesbian, bisexual or other and 88% were heterosexual or straight.

In terms of disability:

- more than 5,100 young people experienced social or behavioural issues
- more than 4,400 experienced issues learning, understanding or concentrating
- approximately 700 experienced issues with mobility or dexterity
- approximately 500 experienced issues with vision or hearing.

Information on marital or civil partnership status was available for just over 4,600 participants. Based on this information, 88% of participants were single, 2% were married or in a civil partnership, less than 1% were divorced, separated or widowed and 10% selected 'other' marital or civil partnership status.

Some CashBack partners gathered information about parental status, and used this information to offer specific support or onward referral routes for young parents.

The programme involved at least 435 young people whose gender differs from that assigned at birth. At least 54 participants were pregnant or had been pregnant within the last 12 months.

Partners worked hard to ensure that they reached people with a wide range of characteristics, reflecting on this regularly and taking new approaches to engage a diverse range of young people. Many CashBack partners ran targeted activity for specific groups, or undertook specific work with other organisations to promote and ensure access for minority ethnic, disabled and LGBTQIA+ young people.

Example: Positive supportive networks - Eden Court

Through CashBack for Communities, Eden Court piloted a Queer Youth Arts Collective. This project gave young people identifying across the LGBTQIA+ spectrum the opportunity to discuss current issues relating to art and culture. It provided a space where young people could feel comfortable being themselves and build a trusted network. This project was seed funded by CashBack for the first ten sessions, and became self-sustaining.

Deprivation

60% | Over half of the young people involved in Phase 5 were from the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland¹¹.

This compares with 69% of participants being from the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Phase 4, and around 30 to 40% being from the 15 to 20% most deprived areas for Phase 3.

94% | Almost all of the young people involved in Phase 5 were from the 50% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland.

In Phase 4 there was a strong focus on involving young people from areas of multiple deprivation within the CashBack programme. During Phase 5 there was more of a focus on individual need and experiences of communities affected by crime and antisocial behaviour, involving participants from across all areas of Scotland.

Geography

CashBack delivered projects in every local authority in Scotland. Spend per head of population was highest in the local authorities with the highest levels of deprivation – Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire and Dundee. Spend across the other local authorities was broadly in line with population and deprivation levels. The three island authorities – Eilean Siar, Shetland and Orkney – received slightly higher levels of spend per head than would be anticipated based on their levels of deprivation, which helps account for their remote, rural locations¹².

CashBack partners felt that the focus on justice and communities affected by antisocial behaviour resulted in a strong focus on activity in higher density population areas and areas of deprivation.

Five CashBack partners undertook work in island areas. A few mentioned that they reached more rural and island participants through online activity, in 2020 and 2021 – but this hadn't been possible to sustain through in person delivery. Even CashBack

¹¹ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, Deciles 1 and 2 – includes an estimate from one CashBack partner based on the areas in which the organisations it funded operate.

¹² Analysis based on Inspiring Scotland figures on spend and activity per local authority area, 2020 to 2023.

partners who worked across the whole of Scotland indicated that they had struggled to get island participants involved. A few mentioned that they would like to do more in island communities in the future.

For Phase 6, the CashBack programme application process asked whether CashBack partners would deliver in island areas, and there was a focus on ensuring a good geographic spread including some island and rural areas. Inspiring Scotland is working with CashBack partners with national reach to explore how they can reach rural and island areas. This is to ensure that young people on islands are not disadvantaged by their geography and receive the same quality of experience.

Example: Rural activity – Station House Media Unit (SHMU)

SHMU's CashBack Move Forward project worked to engage rural participants across Aberdeenshire, primarily through its employability framework Stage One Training Academy programme. It has learnt that a one to one approach, although resource intensive, achieved the best results. SHMU extended the length of some sessions to better suit the needs of participants that travelled from further afield.

Example: Island activity – YouthLink Scotland

YouthLink Scotland's CashBack Youth Work Fund involved activity in every local authority in Scotland – including Orkney, Shetland and Eilean Siar. For example, in Shetland young people took part in training to equip them with the skills, abilities and knowledge to become effective youth workers. Several participants then went on to gain employment with Shetland Youth Services.

Changing needs of participants

CashBack partners talked in detail, and with significant concern, about the changing needs of the young people and families they worked with during Phase 5. CashBack partners were very clear that the impact of Covid continued to make itself known and had not gone away. Many felt that young people's needs were even greater in 2022 and 2023.

While emphasising the strengths and skills that young people have, CashBack partners highlighted that due to the pandemic and the cost of living crisis young people had significant needs around:

- **confidence and self-esteem** – which some described as “shockingly low”
- **isolation** – many young people continued to leave the house rarely and had limited social skills including communication with peers
- **learning** – young people continued to display signs of lost learning due to Covid
- **engagement** – young people had shortened attention spans and difficulty with routine due to spending long periods on their own at home
- **behaviour** - increased disruptive behaviour, difficulty adjusting to being back at school, increased risk taking

- **mental health** – including anxiety, sense of an uncertain future, frustration and disillusionment
- **physical health** – lower levels of physical fitness and activity
- **employability** – with many being less employment ready than before the pandemic, further back the employability pipeline
- **vulnerability** – the pandemic exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and amplified and multiplied pressures
- **deprivation** – with poverty and disadvantage exacerbated, and an ongoing need for support with life at home – food, household, energy, fuel, mobile top ups, furniture
- **trauma** – a lack of security and increased trauma, which impacts on family relationships and absorbing anxiety from parents who are struggling to cope.

“The level of anxiety was really screaming out at us.”
CashBack partner

While recognising the strengths and resilience of young people, CashBack partners described the situation as “shocking” and “frighteningly acute”.

“It can be difficult to achieve the expected outcomes for young people if their basic needs are not being met.”
CashBack partner

A few noted that staff have also felt the effects of the pandemic, as well as participants. CashBack partners talked of high levels of turnover and exhausted staff.

CashBack partners adapted Phase 5 activity to respond to changing needs. This included:

- one to one support before group work
- working with a smaller number of people on a more intensive basis
- moving young people onto more training rather than a job
- introducing counselling services
- financial support
- providing space for parents to come in to keep warm
- providing more food during programme delivery
- introducing more detached youth work in an attempt to get young people to re-engage with activities and society.

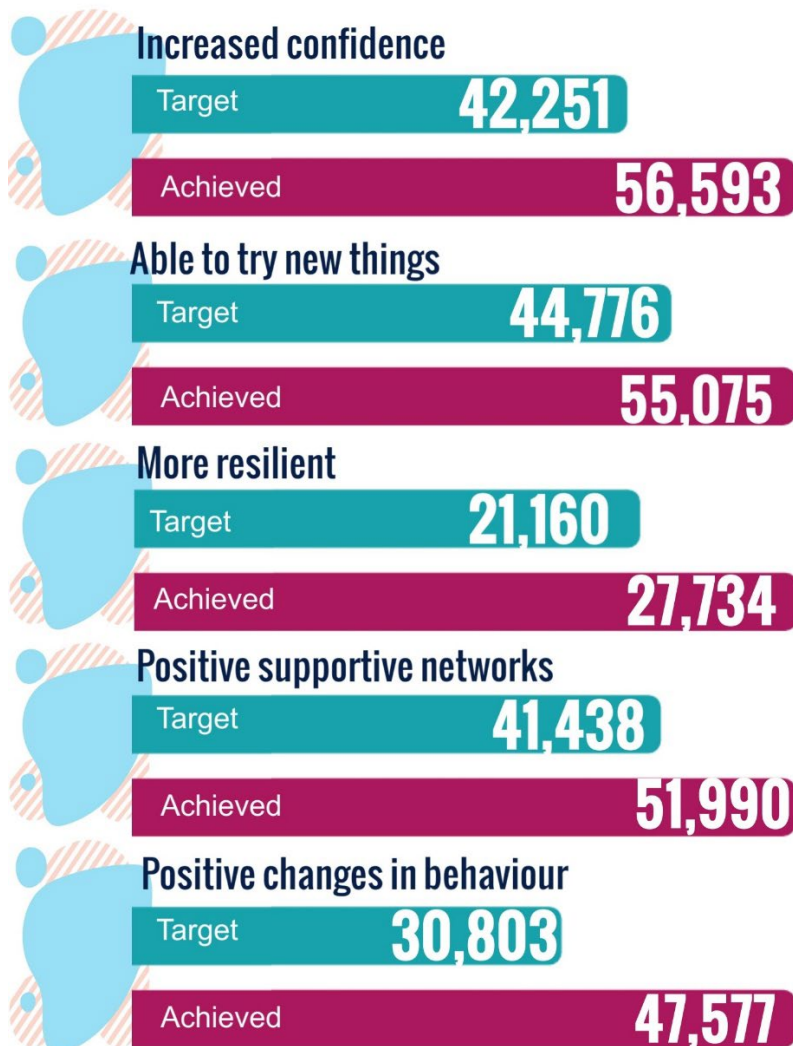
Impact

Introduction

This chapter explores the impact of CashBack for Communities activity for individuals and communities. It is based on reviews of annual and evaluation reports for CashBack partners, and discussions with all CashBack partners.

Outcome 1: Confidence

More than **56,500** young people built their confidence through participating in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities.



Reflection

CashBack partners found that building confidence and resilience was a key area of success and progress during Phase 5. Many highlighted that increases in confidence and resilience underpinned the other outcomes experienced by young people. Participants became more confident in terms of:

- communicating with people
- making friends
- speaking out in public
- expressing ideas and opinions
- experiencing reduced anxiety
- managing and expressing emotions.

Dealing with anxiety was a key theme for many, with participants feeling CashBack activities helped them to cope with problems and challenges, build a positive attitude and talk to others about their aspirations and challenges. Some saw it as a positive step toward rebuilding some of the confidence and resilience they lost over lockdown. More generally, young people also pointed to increased resilience in terms of solving problems and feeling positive about the future.

This confidence helped young people to try new things, supporting longer term change. This included steps to building a routine, such as getting out of the house more, using public transport or travelling independently. Some young people talked about gaining confidence to return to school, to try other activities (such as learning, sporting or creative activities) or to get outdoors more in the community.

“Before I came, I was too scared to like try things out...but because of the environment and everyone supporting me, it just makes me feel more confident in myself.”

Young person, Achieve More Scotland

Confidence also helped young people to engage more effectively in other environments. For example, some young people talked about feeling able to speak up and contribute in class, and feeling more positive about transitioning from primary to secondary school. Some mentioned that they felt more comfortable trying things which were outwith their comfort zone, and putting themselves in situations they may not normally be in.

Participants in sport based activities highlighted that this helped them to keep going and try again, even if they made mistakes or were struggling. Many mentioned that this helped their resilience and enabled them to deal with challenges and problems outwith the sporting environment.

As well as trying new things, participants talked about wider positive changes in their behaviour including:

- being able to work well with other people
- making positive decisions about the future

- accessing wider support
- having more open and honest conversations
- speaking up about particular issues and needs
- understanding others better and being more tolerant
- resisting peer pressure.

A few participants talked of feeling more able to say no to friends, and being strong enough to avoid following the crowd. Participants also highlighted that through meeting a range of people they learned to respect and understand people's differences, and became more tolerant. These changes in confidence, resilience and behaviours combined in many to build a feeling of possibility and positivity about the future.

“Doing this has showed me I have some abilities I didn't know I had, so I believe I have a brighter future.”

Young person, Station House Media Unit

Example: Confidence, wellbeing and employability - SPFL Trust

Scottish Professional Football League Trust's CashBack off the Bench project supported young people aged 16-24 who had been involved, or who were at risk of involvement in the justice system. It provided opportunities to education, physical and mental health support to build better futures. Through this support, participants felt more able to do new things and reported positive, supportive networks. This improved sense of self-confidence and direction enabled young people to progress the opportunities available, for example by achieving an award or qualification. In this sense, the SPFL Trust has learnt that low self-esteem and poor mental health are crucial first barriers to address. Through the programme more than 180 young people increased their confidence and resilience, and developed positive supportive networks and positive changes in their behaviour.

Example: Expressing opinions - YDance

The CashBack for Change programme led by YDance used dance and drama to positively influence 10 to 21 year olds that were most at risk of antisocial behaviour or entering the justice system. It involved weekly sessions delivered in HMYOI Polmont, alternative schools, secure accommodation and wider community settings. Many young participants were not used to being offered choices or expressing an opinion.

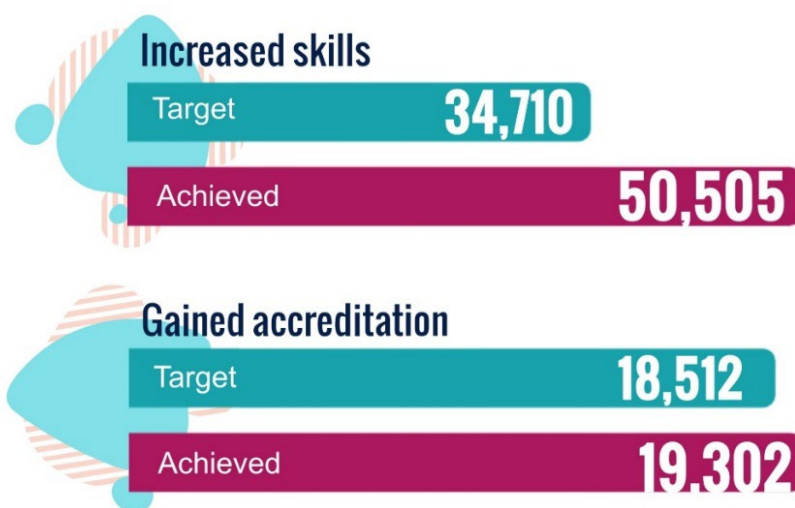
Through the programme, participants designed and planned their own dance sessions and delivered them to their peers. End of programme performances generated pride and a sense of achievement. Participants also developed skills in curiosity, open-mindedness, problem solving and imagination.

“Making and performing in a show has made me feel better about myself and what I can achieve. Also I am more confident.”

Young person, YDance

Outcome 2: Skills

More than **50,500** young people increased their skills through participating in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities. More than **19,300** gained accreditation.



Young people achieved accreditation at different levels. Almost 12,000 recognised SCQF qualifications or accreditations were achieved. In addition, almost 15,000 non-SCQF accreditations were achieved. Some young people achieved more than one accreditation. Participants gained a wide range of qualifications including:

- SQA Personal Development Awards, Employability Skills, Core Skills, Wellbeing Award, Leadership
- ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Awards
- John Muir Awards
- Dynamic Youth Awards
- Hi5 Awards
- Saltire Awards for Volunteering
- Explorer Young Leader
- Queens Badge
- Food, hygiene, hospitality, hosting and first aid awards
- Community Achievement Awards
- Construction certification – including Site Certification, CSCS, PASMA accreditation and Working at Heights
- REHIS (Royal Environment Health Institute of Scotland) awards
- MyBnk financial awareness certificates
- Duke of Edinburgh awards
- Outdoor Learning awards
- Youth Achievement awards
- Coaching qualifications – for dance, football, rugby or other sports.

Reflection

Through taking part in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities, young people developed:

- social skills – including talking to people, voicing opinions, speaking in front of others
- life skills – including problem solving, conflict resolution, critical thinking, working as a team, decision making, time keeping, acting responsibly, money management, planning, organising, risk assessment
- wellbeing skills – including managing emotions, patience, looking after yourself, first aid, understanding risk, how to be safe online, how to make choices, exploring mental health, nutrition, fitness, gambling awareness
- work skills – including job search, interview skills, CV preparation, and sector specific skills
- IT skills – including using a computer, digital skills and creative media skills
- sporting skills – football, dance, cricket, basketball, rugby and others
- creative skills – exploring ideas, producing new outputs, musical skills, editing, creative writing, film-making, sculpture, print making, writing music, acting/performing
- equality and diversity skills – including learning about sectarianism, homophobia, organised violence and racism
- leadership and coaching skills – how to engage and communicate with younger children, how to tailor coaching to meet the needs of different people
- literacy and numeracy skills.

“We’ve done sessions on confidence, eating disorders, alcohol, and drugs... I like how eye-opening they are, I thought I knew some of this, but then you don’t know that much until you can really talk about it.”

Young person, Youth Scotland

For many young people, taking part in skills development opportunities helped to develop new areas of interest in terms of employment or further learning.

Participants also highlighted that they learned things about themselves through taking part in CashBack and gained a better understanding of their own strengths and skills. A few also said that they learned that there were other ways of gaining skills and qualifications beyond going to school. Some said that they had gone on to develop their skills further themselves, as a result of CashBack activity.

Example: Increasing skills - Includem

Includem’s ADAPT for CashBack project supported young people and their families who were at risk of involvement in the justice system and affected by poverty, unemployment, domestic abuse or crime. Many of the young people involved in the project were neurodiverse. Children and young people were empowered to explore their interests within their communities, and were supported to complete Dynamic Youth Awards which gave them a focus to achieve.

Example: Increasing skills - Prince's Trust Scotland

Prince's Trust Scotland offered CashBack Development Awards to support young people to progress or make a fresh start in education, employment and further training. These were available for individuals, and also to support small groups of young people within schools who may be struggling within mainstream education to secure qualifications, increase attainment and develop their wellbeing.

“Using the award to pay for my course meant I have learned some new general joinery skills and have got an apprenticeship starting in August.”

Young person, Prince's Trust Scotland

Prince's Trust Scotland also ran the CashBack Achieve programme to support young people at risk of underachieving in education, offering support to achieve in education and youth work settings. Through this, young people gained recognition of their skills, including SQA accredited Personal Development and Employability Skills.

Through the project, Prince's Trust Scotland supported more than 1,200 young people to increase their skills, and more than 1,100 to gain accreditation.

Example: Increasing skills - YouthLink Scotland

YouthLink Scotland administered the CashBack Youth Work Fund. Through the Fund, more than 20,600 young people were supported to increase their skills and more than 8,600 gained accreditation. A range of projects across Scotland participated in the Youth Work Fund, developing skills in a wide range of different ways. Young people achieved accreditation in the form of Dynamic Youth Awards, Youth Achievement Awards, Saltire Awards, Food and Hygiene, First Aid, Duke of Edinburgh and a wide range of other awards.



Outcome 3: Health and wellbeing

More than **56,000** young people improved their health and wellbeing through participating in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities.



Reflection

The CashBack funded projects made a significant difference to participant health and wellbeing. In many cases, supporting health and wellbeing was a core outcome which underpinned achievement of subsequent outcomes. CashBack partners highlighted that wellbeing needs were exacerbated by the pandemic, with many participants reaching projects with much higher wellbeing needs than before.

CashBack projects made a difference in terms of physical health, mental health, access to services and supporting healthy choices. Evaluation of CashBack projects highlighted that these positive changes were often brought about through the creation of a safe environment in which young people felt nurtured, respected and included. Many young people highlighted that through CashBack projects they had access to an environment that was safe and welcoming, providing respite and an alternative space from their daily lives and stresses. Young people felt listened to and able to express themselves, learn and make connections in these spaces.

Mental health

CashBack partners noted that young people displayed greater anxiety and mental health issues during Phase 5 than in previous CashBack phases. Some were very concerned about the scale and range of mental health issues experienced by young people. Young people highlighted that participating in CashBack activity helped with their mental health in a range of ways.

- **Mood and emotions** – CashBack activity helped young people to feel happier, calmer, more energised, more motivated, positive and optimistic. It also helped young people to manage their emotions, cope with negative feelings, deal with panic and anxiety, and become less stressed, anxious and worried.
- **Sense of purpose** – Through CashBack, young people highlighted that they felt a sense of usefulness, purpose and routine.
- **Connections** – Through CashBack activity, young people learned to have more positive relationships with others, and increase the respect and co-operation they have with others.

“This project has really helped me with my mental health. It gives me a sense of routine.”

Young person, Impact Arts

A few young people described shifting from being suicidal to being more confident and hopeful about the future, addressing anger they carried with them, and strengthening relationships. Some CashBack projects were able to offer in-house counselling, mentoring or referrals to counselling services to support young people with their mental health.

Physical health

Some projects, particularly those involving sport and physical activity, made a positive impact to young people’s physical health. Young people highlighted that taking part in activity sessions helped them to feel fitter, stronger and healthier. Many indicated that if not involved in CashBack activity they would have been more sedentary and spent more time at home and indoors.

Supporting healthy choices

Through taking part in CashBack activity, young people also gained the skills to improve their health and wellbeing through making healthy choices. Young people talked about making more positive wellbeing choices in relation to:

- building understanding of the effects of alcohol and drugs
- cutting down on alcohol, drugs, vaping or cigarettes
- learning how to build a healthy daily routine
- eating healthy food
- establishing positive sleeping patterns
- understanding and assessing risks.

“I feel better, and I can remember things...I used to drink every day, but now I only drink on the weekends, and not even every week... I used to have lots of cuts and bruises from drinking and falling over and self-harming and I don’t have that anymore.”

Young person, Action for Children

In some cases, projects provided practical support with meeting basic needs around medical care – for example helping people connect with doctors and other medical support. Some young people highlighted that through enhancing their wellbeing they became better able to take up the wider opportunities offered by CashBack as a result.

Example: Wellbeing - basketballscotland

The CashBack Schools of Basketball project supported S1 and S2 pupils through one to one support, basketball coaching and small group classroom sessions. Health and wellbeing were at the core of the programme. Young people received mental health and wellbeing training from SAMH and explored topics such as anxiety, stress, negative thought patterns and depression. Young people developed a language to start understanding and exploring their mental health and to help others to do the same.

Example: Enhancing wellbeing - Scottish Rugby Union

Scottish Rugby Union ran CashBack Schools of Rugby and a wider community rugby programme through CashBack. Young people found that rugby sessions helped them lift their mood, cope with negative feelings such as stress and anger and gave them something positive to look forward to and enjoy. For some young people the rugby itself gave them a positive outlet for stress and tension that built up through the day or week, and the challenges they faced in rugby helped them to cope with other challenges.

“After a training session or a match is when I'm happiest. It definitely helps with your mental health.”

Young person, Scottish Rugby Union

Example: Wellbeing support - Police Scotland

Police Scotland's VOW project supported young people who been involved with the justice system, offering a wide range of support. This support included help with emotional wellbeing and recovery. Police Scotland worked in partnership with a wide range of partners to support health and wellbeing, and recognised that this was essential in order for young people to achieve their broader desired outcomes in terms of employment, learning, housing and other areas of their lives. Using dedicated CashBack funding Police Scotland partnered with Bright Light Counselling and provided direct access to counselling services for young people. Many young people were not ready for counselling and received alternative therapeutic services. Young people were supported by peer mentors with life experience of addiction and recovery, and forming these trusting relationships was key to the success of the project.

Example: Trauma counselling support – Celtic FC Foundation

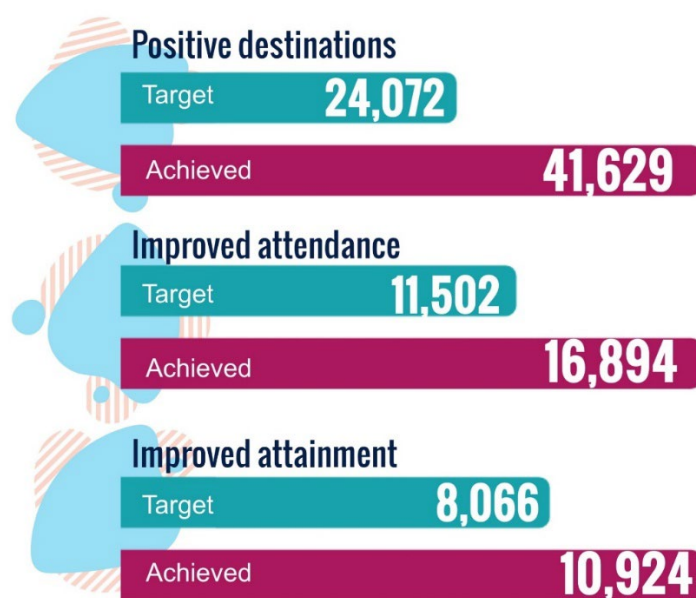
Celtic FC Foundation delivered the CashBack Gateway to Employment project, providing bespoke employability support to young people who have offended or were at risk of offending. One strand of the project involved intensive mental health provision for young people over ten weeks, exploring their needs and areas of focus. Support was also available after completion of the programme.

The counsellor was integral to the staff team, spending time with the participants listening to music, eating and taking part in group activities. This helped to build the confidence of young people to take up the offer of counselling. Participants could get involved in counselling during the 10 week course period, or afterwards – depending on when they felt ready. In many cases, external support was traditionally viewed with caution or suspicion, so accepting it reflected the trust participants placed in their mentors at Celtic FC Foundation.

Evaluation of intensive mental health support through a retreat at Celtic FC Foundation found that mental health benefits around lower levels of stress, coping more effectively with anxiety, improvements in mood and lasting connections with peers lasted for more than 12 weeks after the retreat.

Outcome 4: Learning, employability and employment

More than **41,600** young people achieved positive destinations through participating in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities. Young people also improved engagement and attainment at school, with more than **16,800** improving their attendance and more than **10,900** improving their attainment.



The most common positive destination - for 25,700 young people - was education, including remaining at or returning to school. Almost 6,500 moved into training, while more than 7,900 began volunteering. More than 1,000 young people progressed to employment.

It should be noted that most young people who took part in Phase 5 were in the 10 to 15 age range (65%). Participants also experienced high levels of deprivation – with 69% of participants being from the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland, based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – and were at risk of involvement in the justice system. Young people in the older age groups were largely far from job ready and experiencing high levels of anxiety, trauma and isolation due to the pandemic.

Employability

Within CashBack activity, young people were supported to progress towards new opportunities through:

- gaining accreditation, qualifications and work experience
- developing job search skills, strengthening CVs and interview techniques
- accessing volunteering or work experience opportunities
- developing independent travel skills to enable young people to access new learning or working opportunities
- accessing support to apply for job, to college or for apprenticeships
- accessing funding to support the steps they needed to take to access training, learning or employment.

“It's given us experiences that we can now put on our CVs and our personal statements.”

Young person, Scottish Sport Futures

CashBack also supported young people to become interested in and inspired by learning. Through CashBack activity, many young people became aware of opportunities within specific sectors or themes. For example, young people became inspired through taking part in youth work activity, creative activities or sporting activities, and became interested in developing further learning or career opportunities within this area.

Some CashBack partners were able to offer employment and volunteering opportunities within their own organisation, which helped young people to feel confident taking the step into employment in a safe and nurturing environment.

Young people also raised their aspirations through taking part in CashBack activity. As well as becoming more aware of the opportunities available to them, young people also realised that they were good at things, that they could achieve, and that they had skills that they could transfer to other learning and skills development opportunities.

Many young people described taking part in CashBack activities as setting them on a new path – of learning, volunteering or employment. Young people were supported to think through their goals, explore their options and plan what they wanted to achieve. This helped many young people feel better prepared for future learning or employment, and more aware of the opportunities available to them.

Young people and CashBack partners highlighted that moving into further learning or employment could be a long term plan, and that some of the young people supported through CashBack progressed along the journey towards improved employability, building the foundations for future positive destinations.

Example: Positive destinations - Rangers Charity Foundation

Rangers Charity Foundation's CashBack Towards New Futures programme supported more than 140 young people into positive destinations. All participants reported some progress towards a positive destination as a result of the programme. Rangers Charity Foundation also had a Job Work Coach in place who provided a support mechanism for course referrals, financial support, benefit advice and job opportunities.

Through the programme, young people were supported to re-engage with learning and gain qualifications. Most participants completed the programme with at least four qualifications, and realised that they are well able to learn in an environment that suits them. By providing a nurturing person-centred learning environment, participants could be individually supported. Many participants went on to college, university or employment, citing participation in CashBack as getting them on the right path.

Example: Journey to employment - Barnardo's

Barnardo's Fit for Work project supported young people in the most deprived communities in Scotland on their journey towards work. During Phase 5, participants exhibited high levels of anxiety and isolation. For many, leaving the house was a key achievement. Through the programme, 81% of participants moved on to a positive destination – including further training, full time education, employment and continuing support with Barnardo's. Young people also felt better prepared for work, because of the life skills they had gained through the programme.

Example: Employing young people - Achieve More Scotland

Achieve More Scotland worked with young people to offer volunteering, training and employment opportunities. As part of this, it offered young people a six month full time work placement through the Step Up programme for recent school leavers, with support from Jobs and Business Glasgow. The programme supported young people who were not job ready and may otherwise be involved in the justice system. Most of the young people who completed placements with Achieve More Scotland were kept on full time to deliver A CashBack Difference activity, and wider activities.

Learning at school

Through taking part in CashBack activity, young people were also supported to remain at or return to school and enhance their engagement with school. Some participants had previously not been engaging with any activity and were mainly staying at home, not attending school and not going out in the community. Taking part in CashBack activity helped young people through:

- realising that learning can be fun
- feeling more positive about school
- feeling more able to focus
- having a more positive frame of mind and positive mental health at school.

“I’m not skipping school as much, it’s helped me realise that I’m just losing out on education.”

Young person, Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project

Some young people talked about CashBack activities not feeling like school, and offering an alternative, less stressful learning environment. Some CashBack activity was delivered in school, providing an incentive for participants to go to school as they looked forward to the activity. In school CashBack activities also helped to release stress and energy, helping to improve engagement and behaviour in classes.

Example: Schools of Football at Scottish Football Association

Through CashBack, Scottish Football Association ran Schools of Football – a curricular programme delivered to S1 and S2 pupils in Scotland to support them to develop skills, improve attendance and attainment and support transition to secondary school. The Schools of Football made a difference to how pupils felt about attending school.

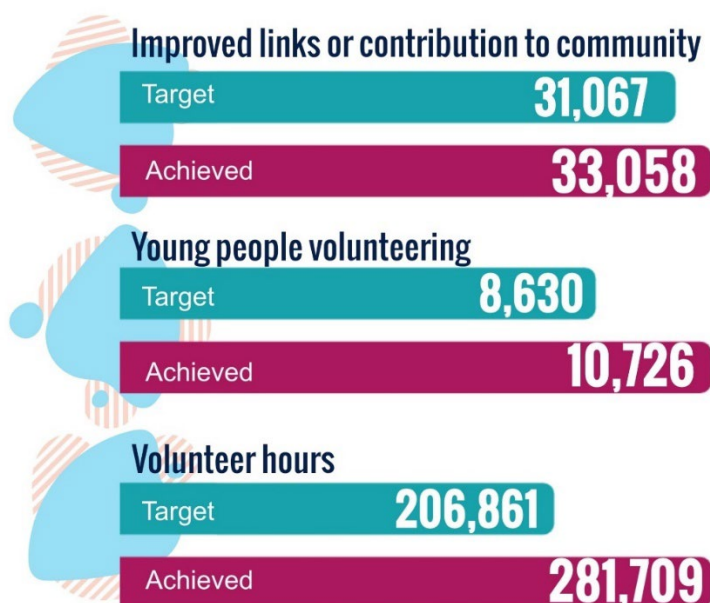
Pupils said they were more excited to go to school on days they had football and for those with low attendance, School of Football was an incentive to attend. Staff frequently mentioned that School of Football improved attendance for those involved while parents also noticed increased enthusiasm for attending school. Some teachers and coaches reflected that the programme gave athletic pupils a sense of purpose and achievement when they lacked motivation or struggled with their academic subjects.

Young people involved in the VIP programme also had the chance to volunteer and gain experience in roles of responsibility. Evaluation of the project shows that a significant number had plans to pursue employment, education or training – with some already having secured a new job thanks to their involvement in the programme.

Outcome 5: Community contribution

More than **33,000** young people improved their links and contribution to the community through Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities.

More than **10,700** took on a volunteering role, dedicating more than **281,700** volunteering hours. This is worth more than **£3 million** in social value, with time volunteered calculated at the Real Living Wage¹³.



Reflection

Through CashBack projects, many young people were involved in volunteering and contributing to their community. It is worth noting that most of this activity took place in the second and third year of Phase 5, due to the pandemic significantly impacting on the opportunities available to young people to be out in the community. CashBack partners adapted quickly however, offering outdoor opportunities where possible such as garden maintenance, environmental projects and litter picking.

Young people developed their links and contribution to their community in a wide range of ways. Overall more than 21,800 young people had a heightened sense of belonging to a community.

- **The CashBack community** – Many young people pointed to a sense of community and family within the CashBack project. Young people emphasised the safe, inclusive communities created by projects. This fostered a sense of belonging and being able to rely on peers and staff. It also created a space where people who may feel marginalised could feel a sense of belonging, build

¹³ £10.90/ hour, Sept 2023

friendships and support one another. Some of the older age groups said that this built a sense of responsibility too, with younger children looking up to them. In some cases this led to positive changes in behaviour, due to young people wanting to act as role models and support others to change their own behaviour. Young people also felt a sense of connection with staff, and didn't want to let them down.

- **The school as a community** – Where CashBack activity was delivered in school, young people felt more connected, involved and invested in their school community. Having opportunities to represent the school, or have achievements recognised and celebrated, helped people feel more of a sense of belonging and contribution to the school. CashBack projects in school also helped to bridge the gap between school year groups, and connect parents and the wider community with the school.
- **Positivity about the community** – Many young people felt more positive about their local community as a result of CashBack. Some felt a sense of pride that CashBack activity was happening in their area. Others enjoyed taking part in positive experiences locally, as some previously had negative feelings about their area.
- **Connecting with the local community** – CashBack supported many young people to get out and about in their own communities more. This included taking part in local activities, and using local services and facilities – such as parks, gyms, shops and outdoor space. This helped people to feel more connected with and part of their local area.

“It's got me feeling that now if I see someone from my neighbourhood, I can say, 'Hello, how you doing?'”

Young person, Scottish Professional Football League Trust

- **Looking after the local community** – For some, taking part in local outdoor activity enhanced their appreciation of the natural environment, and their understanding of the need to look after these places. Some young people felt more invested in looking after local facilities that they used, for example football pitches, and got involved in litter picking or maintenance.
- **Influencing the local community** – As a result of taking part in CashBack, some young people went on to join local community groups, sports clubs, youth groups and other local organisations as leaders and influencers. Young people often felt that they now had more to offer the community, understood how to make a contribution and wanted to have a greater say in community issues. More broadly, CashBack activity also fostered in some a sense of activism around national or global issues – such as tackling climate change. Overall more than 16,100 young people had an increased motivation to influence what happens in their community.

“You have to be tolerant and patient, take time to help others, like the younger kids.”

Young person, Scottish Football Association

Overall, many young people felt a positivity and pride that CashBack activity was happening in their local area. This was something positive that helped young people to feel good about their neighbourhood and proud of their community. More than 10,200 young people said that their perception of their neighbourhood improved as a result of CashBack.

Example: Volunteering - Access to Industry

Access to Industry's CashBack Passport project helped young people to volunteer and positively contribute within the prison community. Young people were supported to develop their skills, and subsequently take on voluntary roles such as painting, joinery, catering or cleaning, linked to the qualifications they have gained through CashBack. This helped young people to consider their future on liberation and prepare themselves for getting out of prison.

Example: Community connections through Generation CashBack

The Generation CashBack Consortium (Youth Scotland, Boys Brigade, Girlguiding Scotland, Scouts Scotland) recognises the role youth groups can play in bringing communities together and creating an inclusive and cohesive environment. Through CashBack, the consortium proactively created opportunities to bring people together in their communities. This included local tidy-ups, coffee mornings, packing bags at supermarkets and assisting with poppy donations.

Young people described how membership of their youth group gave them a sense of what belonging to a community feels like, and were keen to contribute to the running of the group. As a result, almost half of participants were either volunteering or interested in volunteering in the future. Young people delivered more than 85,000 hours of volunteering during Phase 5 of CashBack.



Outcome 6: Diversion

More than **30,000** young people felt less inclined to participate in antisocial behaviour as a result of taking part in Phase 5 of CashBack for Communities. More than **6,200** said that their own participation in antisocial behaviour had reduced.



It is worth noting that in many cases, CashBack projects were undertaking early intervention work with children and young people who may be at future risk of involvement in antisocial behaviour or the justice system. This is particularly true of the projects working with larger numbers of participants, and those working with younger age groups. Many children and young people said that they were not taking part in antisocial behaviour before taking part in CashBack, therefore their participation in this type of behaviour had not reduced. CashBack partners emphasised that during the pandemic many participants were at home with high levels of anxiety and poor mental health, resulting in a different profile of needs among participants during Phase 5. This is explored in more detail in Chapter Two.

Reflection

CashBack Phase 5 supported young people to feel less inclined to take part in antisocial behaviour, diverted young people from involvement in the justice system and supported those involved in the justice system towards positive future journeys.

For many, CashBack activity focused on building foundations for young people to make positive decisions, take part in positive activities, and develop a sense of purpose – which should contribute towards reduced involvement in the justice system. This included:

- providing a safe space for young people to be
- providing activity to combat boredom or frustration
- targeting activity at times when diversion is most needed
- raising awareness of the consequences of antisocial behaviour
- supporting young people to take considered and positive decisions
- developing empathy to consider how actions and choices affect others
- building relationships with trusted adults to provide advice and support.

“It gives me something else to go do on a Thursday, I know I need to stay sober and not have a smoke if I want to go. When my pals are asking me to go drinking or that with them, I now have an excuse not to go and cause I'm not just sitting in the house they don't push it as much.”

Young person, YouthLink Scotland

Some young people reflected that CashBack activity had helped them to move away from risky behaviour or involvement in the justice system.

“I feel my behaviours have got better, I can walk away from people and I'm fighting less than before... I can keep myself safe now and when I'm out.”

Young person, Includem

For some, CashBack activity helped to equip young people with the skills they needed to be less likely to be involved in justice system as a victim. Young people learned about the risks of certain kinds of behaviour, how to keep safe, and how to protect themselves from being exploited or manipulated by others.

Some young people highlighted that because CashBack activity was available, it gave them a reason or excuse not to go out with friends who may have a negative influence, as they were busy doing something else. This helped them to stop associating themselves with people who may be a negative influence, and empowered young people to make their own decisions.

A few said the CashBack activity gave them a space where they felt calm and positive, even if outwith the activity they may still get involved in more challenging behaviours.

Some young people found that CashBack activity supported them through a journey focused on wellbeing, recovery, training and employability, which diverted them from involvement in the justice system through providing a broader purpose, motivation and positivity about the future. Through CashBack, some young people found a structure, stability and encouragement to approach their lives through a fresh perspective.

Some young people found that they had developed more positive relationships with the police, due to CashBack activity. Some CashBack projects directly involved Police Scotland in relationship building activity.

However, while some CashBack partners working with groups of people already involved in the justice system or antisocial behaviour were able to see a direct link, many others indicated that they were working with people who were more at risk of entering the justice system because of their life experiences or situations. These CashBack partners indicated that it was very challenging – and not always appropriate – to draw a direct line between their early intervention with young people who had no involvement in the justice system, to a decline in antisocial behaviour or diversion from the system.

Example: Young people in the justice system - Access to Industry

Access to Industry's CashBack Passport programme supported young people within HMPYOI Polmont, and on their liberation. The projects supported people to feel less inclined to participate in antisocial and/ or criminal behaviour, and be more resilient to avoid being drawn into negative behaviours. Young people described feeling ready and willing to move on from negative behaviours and experiences.

"I want to be a law-abiding citizen. I've got a family to think about. This is it – away from the past."

Young person, Access to Industry

"I want to change my life and get a job, I want to move on... No more trouble; this is me getting my life sorted."

Young person, Access to Industry

Example: Reducing exploitation - National Autistic Society

As part of National Autistic Society's Moving Forward with CashBack project, Police Scotland worked with a group of autistic young people to support people to be less vulnerable to being exploited or manipulated by others. Participants showed a positive shift in knowledge and confidence in future behaviours, particularly around knowing what action to take if someone tries to manipulate or exploit them or get them involved in criminal activity. Participants felt that this support helped them to make more positive life choices, understand their rights and responsibilities, and (where relevant) be less involved in risk taking or criminal behaviour.

Example: Reflecting on choices at Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project

Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 CashBack 180 project involved taking a youth work approach to diverting people from involvement in the justice system. Young people were supported to reflect on their actions, the potential consequences and the need to make a change.

The project was able to positively influence and divert away from antisocial behaviour while building a sense of community and connection.

"I was like always fighting and now all my pals, we just always go out and just like enjoy ourselves and we don't really get in trouble or that."

Young person, Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project

Listening to young people

Introduction

The CashBack programme works to involve young people in planning, delivering and evaluating its work. This chapter explores how young people are listened to and their voices are heard within the programme as a whole, and individual CashBack projects. It focuses on:

- developing Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments
- listening to young people
- person centred and relationship-based approaches.

This chapter draws on discussion with CashBack partners and themes emerging from annual and evaluation reports. It also includes reflection from Scottish Government policy teams and Scottish Government and Inspiring Scotland staff involved in leading and managing the CashBack programme.

Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the base standard for children's rights and sets out the fundamental rights of all children. During Phase 5, Inspiring Scotland worked with CashBack partners to support and ensure that Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments are conducted in relation to all relevant programmes and projects, as part of the planned incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots law. This involved sharing training, guidance and best practice across the portfolio.

CashBack partners reflected on the process of producing a Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment. For many, the approach built on and consolidated the work they were already doing to put the rights of children and young people at the centre of their work. Most said that the Assessment reinforced their existing approaches, and a focus on a person centred approach, a youth work approach and listening to the voices of children and young people.

The process of producing an Assessment added value through:

- acting as a catalyst to reflect on and review provision
- helping to clearly set out a collective vision, approaches and priorities
- highlighting best practice and areas that could be improved
- providing space to examine how to capture and act on the voices of children and young people

- providing a positive way to actively engage young participants
- providing a vocabulary and framework for talking about rights
- providing reassurance that the organisations approach was rights respecting

“It made us think more about children’s rights, and we are now conscious of talking about children’s rights in a more explicit way.”

CashBack partner

Some CashBack partners highlighted that they accessed support or advice from Inspiring Scotland, which they found helpful and clear. A few said it was particularly helpful to have examples of how other organisations had approached the Assessment.

A few said that the timescale for producing the Assessment was quite short, and the process was resource intensive and complex. CashBack partners said that as a result of the Assessment they introduced staff training on the UNCRC, trauma or adverse childhood experiences.

As most CashBack partners found the process of producing a Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment useful, this process has also been included within Phase 6.

Example: Children’s Rights Assessment - Impact Arts

Impact Arts found the process of producing a Children’s Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment very beneficial. It actively involved young participants in the process. The work undertaken on the CashBack Assessment was then carried across to other projects and wider organisational projects. Although Impact Art’s approach to youth work has always been synonymous with children’s rights, the Assessment helped them to analyse the concept in detail and discuss the subject directly with young people.

Example: Children’s Rights Assessment - Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project

Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project got young people involved in the process and worked with them to make a video in which they highlighted rights with meaning for them in their own words. The project has published its Assessment on its website along with the young people’s film and have committed to reviewing it annually.

Example: Children’s Rights Assessment - Action for Children

Action for Children used the Children’s Rights Assessment as a catalyst to review its services. Children and young people were part of the co-production process creating the assessment, championing the interests of children. Action for Children also held a staff UNCRC training session hosted by Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights) which was recorded and made available to all staff.

Listening to young people

Listening to young people was central to CashBack Phase 5 activity, across all partners. CashBack partners heard young people's voices through:

- young people designing Phase 5 activity at the outset
- shaping programme content based on the needs of each participant or group
- spending time exploring participant interests, needs, strengths and goals
- developing individual plans or programmes for each young person
- pivoting within sessions if activity isn't being well received that day – for example if participants are restless or losing interest
- gathering feedback from participants – using surveys, forms and discussion groups – which then informs future delivery, with adjustments made after each session
- having youth panels or forums to contribute views and suggestions.

“Young people informed everything that was delivered.”
CashBack partner

CashBack partners felt that listening to young people worked well, and strengthened delivery while also building confidence, ownership, trust, inclusion and leadership among young people. The main challenge in terms of listening to young people has related to meeting expectations. CashBack partners stressed it was important to communicate well, and not over-promise. A few said it was also important to be clear about boundaries, particularly for people whose lives may be chaotic.

CashBack partners who had been involved over multiple phases emphasised that feedback from young people involved in Phase 4 was key to developing new and refined approaches for Phase 5 (and then on to Phase 6). Inspiring Scotland also pointed to work done at programme level to explore young people's views on the CashBack programme, which informed Phase 5 and Phase 6 development.

“Young people's voices are well heard in the CashBack portfolio.”
Inspiring Scotland

A few CashBack partners highlighted that further consideration should be given to how young people are involved and listened to at national level, in shaping the CashBack programme. For example, a few CashBack partners did not feel the approach of involving young people in assessing applications for Phase 6 worked well as it was not felt to be user friendly and was over a short timescale.

Example: Young people with lived experience – Includem

Includem designed its programme with input from young people who had been involved with the justice system and early intervention services. Staff worked jointly with young people, their families and wider stakeholders to develop individual plans tailored to the needs of the young person.

“The young people decide on their plans and what they want to do.”
CashBack partner

Example: Use of youth panels – range of CashBack partners

Impact Arts had a youth consulting panel, involving a range of project participants. These young people contributed views and suggestions to help ensure that young people's voices informed the wider work and strategy of Impact Arts.

Ocean Youth Trust Scotland also established a youth forum drawn from young people who had completed a residential sea voyage.

Station House Media Unit had a youth forum as well as young development groups for each media discipline. It also spoke with young people as part of CashBack applications, to explore needs and priorities.

Person centred and relationship-based approach

CashBack partners highlighted that through their work they had learned the importance of building connections, networks and relationships, and taking a person centred approach. Many said that relationship based practice was central to their approach, building trust, providing support, taking a youth work approach and developing positive and constant relationships.

CashBack partners felt that relationships were the foundation of their work, and the basis for being able to support positive outcomes and change for young people. CashBack partners emphasised that relationships were even more important in light of the pandemic, with young people experiencing higher levels of isolation, anxiety and depression.

A few said that through their work, it was often the longest anyone had ever listened to some of their participants. A few CashBack partners highlighted that relationship building takes time, to allow trust to develop and ensure young people feel listened to.

“Relationship-based practice is core to our work and why we’ve been successful.”

CashBack partner

Some CashBack partners talked of how CashBack had helped them to shift their approach to embed relationship based practice, person centred approaches and youth work approaches. This required investment in staff training, and work to support staff to understand the importance of building positive relationships. Some highlighted that they had learned that it was most effective to employ staff with a mix of skills – for example including youth workers working alongside experts in employability, creativity or sport.

Finally, a few CashBack partners highlighted that the relationship based approach meant that they worked more in-depth with a smaller number of people, and provided support over a longer time period, with more after-care support. Inspiring Scotland also highlighted that over phases, the profile of project work has become more intensive, with a smaller number of participants. More CashBack partners are now working for a longer period with fewer young people, providing more support which lends itself to a person centred approach adapting to people's needs. This has been an evolution of the CashBack programme over time, towards a more in depth approach.

Example: Relationship based employment support - Barnardo's

Through CashBack, Barnardo's moved from delivering employment training, to adopting a youth work approach to employment for young people. The approach was flexible and allowed young people to get involved in programme design, which helped to develop their confidence.

Example: A person centred approach - Celtic FC Foundation

Celtic FC Foundation has embraced the person centred approach, built positive relationships and developed confidence and coping strategies. This was achieved through a safe and supportive environment, with a programme flexible enough to adapt to individual needs and motivations. The inclusion of a trauma counsellor providing one to one mental health support for young people helped to meet the needs of each individual. Celtic FC Foundation also used a pick n mix approach to programme content. Young people were offered choices and could decide which topics they would like to cover during their time on the programme.

“It is very much done in collaboration with the young people, so we're hitting the subject matter that's relevant and prevalent in their lives.”

CashBack partner

Example: A person centred approach - Police Scotland

As part of the VOW project Police Scotland provided access to counselling support through Bright Lights Counselling. However, they quickly realised that some of the young people were not ready for counselling. The approach was adapted to suit the needs of each individual. This included sometimes starting with activities to help improve mental health and wellbeing, such as yoga and classes, to build up to counselling sessions when the young person is ready.

“We now realise that everyone is on a journey, what doesn't work one week might work the next.”

CashBack partner

Learning

Introduction

This chapter highlights learning about what worked and what was challenging in delivering and managing Phase 5. It is based largely on discussion with CashBack partners, Scottish Government policy teams and Scottish Government and Inspiring Scotland staff involved in leading and managing the CashBack programme. It also draws on themes from annual and evaluation reports from the CashBack partners.

The pandemic

Phase 5 was initially dominated by the global Covid-19 pandemic, which emerged in spring 2020. Work was paused, new approaches were developed and CashBack partners shifted into crisis support mode to meet immediate needs emerging in their communities. Due to the nature of these challenges, a separate, detailed report was produced in 2022 to reflect on learning from the pandemic in terms of CashBack delivery. This report does not cover this learning again in detail, and the full report can be found [online here](#).

Inspiring Scotland and Scottish Government worked alongside CashBack partners to adapt to the challenges of the pandemic and ensure continued support to projects and participants. Inspiring Scotland, Scottish Government leads and CashBack partners indicated that a lot of time was spent during Phase 5 on replanning work, reprofiling budgets and flexing to make the changes CashBack partners needed to deliver during the pandemic. However, this ongoing review and revision meant that CashBack partners were very well placed to bounce back from the initial impact of the pandemic.

“That bounce back wasn’t just by chance. It was a well thought through and planned piece of work.”

Inspiring Scotland

While activity was able to pick up quickly in most instances, work which was planned in certain environment – in particular prisons – was a particular challenge. Some of the CashBack partners worked in prisons, or recruited participants from the prison population as people were liberated. CashBack partners indicated that this work was challenging due to:

- severe restrictions on access during the pandemic
- challenges bringing external training providers into a highly restricted prison setting
- busy and pressured prison environments meaning that their work appeared relatively low priority in the prison
- reduced prison populations – particularly for those aged under 18 – and closure of young people’s units.

CashBack partners indicated that it was positive that fewer young people were in prison, in part due to new Presumption Against Short Sentences legislation. However, some indicated that a backlog of court cases from the pandemic meant that there was a higher proportion of remand prisoners, who were held until their trials began. These prisoners presented a different challenge, due to a large degree of uncertainty about their needs.

As a result of these challenges, some CashBack partners had changed their approach to focus more on preventative work in the community, rather than work in the prison environment.

Many CashBack partners also indicated that achieving outcomes relating to community contribution and volunteering were more challenging during Phase 5. The pandemic limited the range of volunteering opportunities available (particularly in 2020 and 2021) with many finding it hard to get organisations to take on volunteers. The pandemic also impacted on the needs and interests of participants. Some CashBack partners felt that participants were not always ready to volunteer, or that this was not a priority for them.

These challenges meant that some CashBack partners adapted their approach away from a formal volunteering opportunity with an organisation, to more community based activity to support the local area – such as litter picking or promoting and supporting local events.

Programme management and communication

Scottish Government policy teams were happy with the way the CashBack programme was managed and how applications were assessed. Scottish Government policy teams felt that the selection process was well managed by Inspiring Scotland, with applications assessed and critiqued in detail.

Scottish Government policy teams who were involved in the CashBack panel and selection process felt this gave them a good understanding of strategic priorities and CashBack partners. However, with many staff moving on to new roles within Scottish Government on a regular basis, most of the policy leads involved in this evaluation had not been involved in the selection process. This suggests a need for a proactive connection with Scottish Government policy areas, when there is staff changeover, to provide greater insight on the programme. A few said they wouldn’t have time to be involved in the full application assessment process, but they would like the opportunity to comment on applications specifically relating to their policy area.

For future phases, a few Scottish Government policy teams suggested it may be useful to consider whether the application process may put off smaller, grassroots and community organisations from applying. Scottish Government policy teams were conscious that larger organisations may have more resources, capacity and experience to allow them to submit high quality applications, but the programme should not lose its grassroots connection with organisations deeply embedded in their communities.

Scottish Government policy teams felt that the CashBack programme connected with and contributed to a wide range of policy areas, including:

- youth justice, youth work, early intervention and diversion from the justice system – linking to the Youth Justice Vision
- preventing adverse childhood experiences, a trauma informed and relationship based environment
- focusing on deprivation, child poverty and inequality as a contributory factor to negative outcomes – across a wide range of policy areas including community safety and Active Scotland – and with a specific mention in the Tackling Child Poverty Action Plan
- increasing physical activity, developing physical confidence and promoting wellbeing and resilience (Active Scotland priorities)
- culture, community and tackling the climate emergency.

Some Scottish Government policy teams felt that they had good connections to the CashBack programme, sharing learning and requesting information on a regular basis. These teams felt that the information from Inspiring Scotland was high quality, valuable and turned around very quickly and that Inspiring Scotland was good at responding to requests outwith the routine, providing exactly what was needed.

Some Scottish Government policy teams felt that they did not know much about CashBack work and indicated that it would be useful to have regular updates to policy areas. There was recognition that roles had changed within teams, and that Phase 5 had been unusually pressured with the pandemic and related priorities.

Interviewees also indicated that they were very busy, and were not concerned with the day to day activity or detail. Some said they wouldn't have time to read lots of information, but would welcome occasional meetings with Inspiring Scotland or visits to CashBack partners. Scottish Government policy teams also indicated that they would welcome a short thematic summary around key areas such as justice, community safety, employability, adverse childhood experiences and Active Scotland. These would be useful both for policy areas which don't have specific funding streams or budgets for activity (to use for influencing) and those which do (to ensure activity is not being duplicated, and to understand funding going into different policy areas from different sources).

A few interviewees indicated that information on programme numbers (available through the annual Impact Report for the programme) could be more useful if it was available earlier in the year.

Collaboration

CashBack partners indicated that during Phase 5 they worked with a wide range of other organisations as partners. This included:

- schools, colleges, training providers and employers
- local authorities – active schools, education, youth work, transitions, community learning and development, social work, employability, children’s services, community rangers, leisure centres
- public bodies and agencies including Skills Development Scotland, JobCentre Plus, Police Scotland, the Violence Reduction Unit, the Care Inspectorate, the Fire Service
- sportscotland, sports governing bodies and sports teams
- secure care centres and prisons
- voluntary organisations, cultural venues, health groups and youth groups.

Involving others in delivery of CashBack activity helped to:

- increase capacity, enhance breadth and quality of content, offer specialist skills, knowledge and expertise, and provide different teaching styles and adults to engage with
- reach target participants, provide links to local communities, and expand relationships, networks and contacts
- provide work experience, volunteering and employment opportunities.

“There are a number of partners without whom we couldn’t have delivered the programme as it was and who helped make it unique.”

CashBack partner

Some CashBack partners highlighted the value of working with schools, identifying participants for the project and bringing increased impact and credibility through closely connecting project and school activity. Others highlighted the value of working with youth work and community organisations. Partnerships were felt to work best where there was a sense of trust, shared values and vision, shared goals and shared understanding of the approach.

Some highlighted that the context during Phase 5 was turbulent, leading to a high degree of turnover within their own organisation and others, which affected partnership working.

Example: Working with others – Scottish Sport Futures

Scottish Sport Futures worked closely with a range of organisations. Working with the Violence Reduction Unit allowed it to deepen its work with young people, and access expertise on subjects such as drugs and alcohol misuse, sectarianism, relationships and sexual relationships. SAMH delivered workshops on mental health and also wellbeing modules. Scottish Sport Futures also provided Education through CashBack support for other CashBack partners, including the Scottish Football Association.

Within Phase 5, some CashBack partners collaborated with one another. This included referrals between CashBack partners, networking meetings and sharing learning. CashBack partners enjoyed the portfolio days which supported networking. Some suggested it would have been useful to have more regular contact between CashBack partners. Inspiring Scotland indicated that supporting collaboration was challenging during Phase 5 due to the pandemic, restrictions on activities and constant re-planning of activities. Collaboration between CashBack partners will be supported as a core part of Phase 6.

Example: Sharing learning – CashBack partners

Cyrenians provided expertise and support to others on children's rights assessments, and delivered online sessions on children's rights to other CashBack partners. Youth Scotland shared Dynamic Youth Awards and accreditation processes across CashBack partners for Phase 5 and will do the same for Phase 6. Scottish Sport Futures provided Education through CashBack support for other CashBack partners, including the Scottish Football Association.

Tracking outcomes and measuring impact

Overall CashBack partners and Scottish Government policy teams were broadly content with arrangements for tracking outcomes and measuring impact of CashBack activities. However, many of the CashBack partners indicated a significant challenge demonstrating outcomes related to diversion from the justice system.

Projects which were focused on supporting young people who were already involved in the justice system or antisocial behaviour generally found it easier to demonstrate impact in relation to diversion from the justice system. However, many CashBack partners were undertaking activity for groups of young people who may be more at risk of involvement in the justice system and exposure to crime or antisocial behaviour because of their life experiences or circumstances. These CashBack partners highlighted that:

- many of the young people they worked with were not – at the time - involved in the justice system, crime or antisocial behaviour
- many of the young people they worked with were young (10 plus) and less likely to be involved in antisocial behaviour or crime at that stage
- much of the work of projects involved supporting at-risk young people on a path towards positive activity
- some of the young people involved in CashBack were as much – or more - at risk of being a victim of crime as a perpetrator.

CashBack partners indicated that much of their work may be formative for participants, through building relationships, networks, trust, confidence, resilience, skills and opportunities - but that it was difficult to predict what might happen in the future, or track what happened to young people over a longer period. Through their work, CashBack partners could see indicators of positive behaviours among young people clearly – including attendance at school, reduced disruptive behaviour and

increased resilience – which could indicate a progression towards positive decision making. A few highlighted that it could be difficult to talk to young people about potential or future antisocial behaviour and involvement in the justice system, while also building healthy and supportive relationships and taking a rights based approach.

Scottish Government policy teams agreed that this was challenging, as early intervention work is with children and young people who may be at risk of antisocial behaviour due to wider circumstances, but who have often not begun this in a demonstrable way.

“How you illustrate something which hasn’t happened is a common topic for us.”

Scottish Government policy team

A few CashBack partners raised wider concerns about the need to demonstrate achievement of multiple outcomes and indicators for every young person. A few felt that a more focused approach, enabling projects to select the outcomes most relevant to their work would work more effectively. A few CashBack partners felt that it would be useful to spend more time capturing subtler changes and softer skills, about relationships, boundaries, resilience, leadership and decision making.

A few CashBack partners found that gathering equalities information across all protected characteristics, which was required for Phase 5, was challenging. CashBack partners highlighted that many of the participants they were working with were young children, and it may not be appropriate to ask questions about all characteristics for all age groups. CashBack partners also stressed that it was challenging gathering equality information for large scale or drop in activity, as gathering high quality information requires trust and strong relationships.

At the same time, a few CashBack partners felt that through CashBack they had significantly improved their evidence base around the impact of their work, highlighting that they now had evidence to demonstrate that their approach works, and to make a compelling case to funders.

“What CashBack has given us is a brilliant evidence base for how impactful our programme is.”

CashBack partner

For Phase 6, all outcomes remain mandatory, however arrangements have been updated to:

- ask only about diversion from antisocial behaviour or the justice system when this is directly relevant to the project and young people
- ensure each project reports only on the outcome indicators and outcomes that are most relevant to the project and the young people it is working with
- refine the approach to protected characteristic reporting – to gather robust data on key categories agreed with each CashBack partner at the outset

- offer flexibility so that projects can provide more data for certain aspects of their work – for example more in-depth work will fit with more in-depth reporting, while drop in or one off activity would require lighter touch data
- streamline quarterly reporting, with some information only required on an annual basis in quarter four each year.

Intergenerational work and adverse childhood experiences

Phase 5 introduced a new focus for CashBack on intergenerational support for parents, families and children affected by adverse childhood experiences. A very small number of projects specifically targeted this intergenerational work. Many projects didn't formally include intergenerational work in their aims, but did lots of work around families and networks. To reflect this, Phase 6 focuses on families, rather than using the term 'intergenerational'.

CashBack partners highlighted the importance of working with the whole family to support young people with adverse childhood experiences. CashBack partners across the portfolio emphasised that their work was based on trauma informed practice, with staff having been trained. Supporting people with adverse childhood experiences was a core part of the work of most projects, with CashBack partners saying that most of their participants had experienced some form of family trauma – and often generational cycles of trauma.

Approaches that CashBack partners felt worked included:

- supporting creativity, self expression, peace and concentration
- building trusting relationships
- providing safe spaces
- taking time and investing in support
- supporting the whole family
- providing access to trauma counselling
- investing in supervision, support and training for staff.

Example: Trauma counselling - Rangers Charity Foundation

Rangers Charity Foundation has seen a high volume of participants with multiple adverse childhood experiences. As a result, it recruited a full time trauma counsellor. Around 70% of participants took up the offer of support from the counsellor. Through this route, participants explored how trauma had already affected them and may continue to do so. This helped young people to explore what had influenced them and how to break the cycle of trauma.

Example: Whole family support - Cyrenians

Cyrenians provided whole family support for young people leaving secure care, an approach which is well aligned to The Promise. It worked across secure care centres, with young people and families. It also provided support to families to help them prepare for and attend meetings about their child, as well as spending time with siblings to ensure their voices were heard before the young person moved back home.

Cyrenians worked alongside Scotland's five secure units, supporting young people and families to rebuild their relationships with the aim of enabling young people to return to the family home – where possible. It offered mediation between young people and their care givers, siblings or other relevant family members; outreach support breaking down barriers to education, wellbeing, employment and training; and group workshops to build resilience, conflict resolution skills and emotional regulation. Through mediation, families were supported to negotiate rules and guidelines, set boundaries, communicate and move on from specific issues. Family outreach workers supported young people and the wider family, listening, building trusted relationships and helping young people develop their confidence and skills.

Capital funding

For Phase 5, projects were allowed to use up to 10% of their funding for capital expenditure. Most CashBack partners indicated that they had not accessed capital expenditure funds as part of Phase 5. Some felt they didn't need this due to the nature of their programme, or due to having access to other funds to support capital purchases for their CashBack work.

Examples: Capital funding – CashBack partners

Achieve More Scotland accessed a relatively small amount of capital funding to purchase sports kit and equipment. The main goal in providing kit was to introduce a consistent level of opportunity and avoid young people having to overcome lack of appropriate kit as a barrier to participation or facing bullying as a result of clothing.

Station House Media Unit accessed a relatively small amount of capital funding to support replacement of hardware and technical equipment. Being a media production specialist, there was an ongoing need to expand and improve the range of equipment available to facilitate sessions with participants. At the start of the pandemic, some of the funding (plus additional external funds) was used to help remote participants establish home studios and continue to produce media.

Sustainability and organisational learning

CashBack partners felt that CashBack had allowed them to test out lots of ideas and approaches which would inform their wider work as an organisation. This included:

- taking a needs based, participant led approach
- taking an in-depth, targeted and focused approach
- taking a youth work and youth development approach
- targeting and reaching disadvantaged communities
- working closely with others, including CashBack partners.

CashBack partners felt that the way Inspiring Scotland supported them encouraged them to be innovative, flexible and adaptable. This positive support influenced the culture and confidence of organisations to try new approaches and learn.

Some CashBack partners felt that involvement in CashBack had helped them to develop sustainable future approaches to their work. Some felt that they were now in a better position to attract funding from other sources, due to having better evidence about the difference that their work makes. Some had tried new approaches which they were able to evidence were successful and had managed to sustain or expand these with funding from other sources.

Example: New approaches - Police Scotland

At Police Scotland other parts of the organisation have become aware of the type of work taking place through the Vow project. The project has spread the word about the importance of understanding the young person's behaviour rather than just focusing on the crime, and this ethos is now being replicated elsewhere.

Example: CashBack approach - Scottish Football Association

Scottish Football Association is now working to integrate the CashBack approach into its wider work. It has launched a Football for All strategy, which defines the approach to providing affordable football. SFA is very aware that many young people want to be part of a club, but not necessarily part of a competitive team.

Example: Sustaining work - Achieve More Scotland

Achieve More Scotland managed to sustain a little of its work in primary schools, as a result of demand from schools who reported a deterioration in behaviour following Achieve More Scotland winding down its close pupil support. This was done on a school by school basis, depending on available funding.

Conclusions

Overall

Phase 5 of the CashBack for Communities programme started in spring 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic emerged. Through strong foundations and community connections, most CashBack partners were able to pivot quickly to meet emerging needs. Working closely with Inspiring Scotland, and supported by flexibility within Scottish Government, CashBack partners were able to meet immediate needs of their communities, and re-design projects to enable effective delivery.

As a result of this flexibility, strong joint working and community connection, most CashBack partners were able to engage and involve young people at the level expected and support young people to achieve strong outcomes in terms of their confidence, skills, health and wellbeing, learning and employability. During Phase 5, at programme level overall participation and outcome targets were exceeded. The CashBack programme (Phase 5) reached more than 72,000 young people. This is 11,500 more young people than expected. This is a significant achievement within the context of the global pandemic.



Impact

The CashBack for Communities Phase 5 programme helped thousands of young people develop their confidence, resilience, behaviour, skills, health and wellbeing, learning and employability.

The programme exceeded all but one of its target outcomes for young people. The only target not achieved related to young people's own participation in antisocial behaviour reducing. Many children and young people (often of a very young age) said that they were not taking part in antisocial behaviour before taking part in CashBack, therefore their participation in this type of behaviour had not reduced.

There is high quality qualitative evidence which clearly shows the difference that the CashBack programme has made to young people.

Lessons learned



72,321

young people took part



56,593

increased confidence

55,075

felt able to try new things

27,734

felt more resilient

51,990

developed positive supportive networks

56,045

improved health and wellbeing



41,629

achieved positive destinations

19,302

gained accreditation

16,894

improved attendance

50,505

increased skills

10,924

improved attainment



47,577

made positive behaviour changes

10,726

young people volunteered

33,058

improved links to the community

30,475

were less inclined to take part in antisocial behaviour

281,709

volunteer hours

6,286

reduced their own participation in antisocial behaviour



The CashBack approach

CashBack Phase 5 delivery was strongly based on evidence about effective approaches to support young people who are at risk of involvement in the justice system. Delivery embedded the principles of in-depth and relationship based approaches, listening to children and young people, taking a youth work and trauma informed approach, and working with the whole family where appropriate. There is clear evidence that working in this way to provide learning experiences and support into volunteering, jobs and qualifications is a key foundation for supporting young people at risk of involvement in the justice system. The approach also links strongly with the Scottish Government's ethos around supporting children and young people.

Gender

More males took part in Phase 5 of CashBack than females. It would be useful to explore this further, and relate participation levels to intended outcomes and target group. Evidence is clear that women account for a much smaller proportion of those involved across Scotland's justice system than men¹⁴. However, evidence also shows that women are less likely to feel safe in their own communities, are more likely to feel concerned about crime in their area, and are less confident in the justice system than men. This may be an area that is worth exploring in depth, thinking about the particular justice challenges faced, the target groups for CashBack, and how the CashBack programme can support young men and young women effectively.

Geography and deprivation

In Phase 5 there was a strong focus on deprivation, with spend per head of population highest in local authorities with the highest levels of deprivation. Over half of the young people involved in Phase 5 were from the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland. This focus mirrors the strong correlation between involvement in the justice system and areas of multiple deprivation.

Phase 5 also included a focus on wider factors including adverse childhood experiences, school attendance, experience of care and mental health. This also mirrors evidence that a wide range of other factors influence involvement in the justice system – such as trauma, school attendance, mental health and other factors. Phase 5 balanced these factors, opening access to a wide range of young people who may experience or be at risk of involvement in the justice system, beyond those living in deprived areas, while retaining the focus on deprivation as a key factor.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-justice-system/>

Strategic and portfolio connections

CashBack partners and Scottish Government policy teams were happy with the way the CashBack programme was managed and felt it clearly connected with and contributed to a wide range of policy areas. Many policy teams worked closely with the CashBack team and Inspiring Scotland, and felt information provided was high quality, valuable and timely. With staff moving regularly within Scottish Government, there is a need for ongoing proactive connections with key policy areas.

Scottish Government policy teams were positive about the application process and how it was managed, but some highlighted that for future phases, it may be useful to consider whether application processes may make it challenging for smaller, grassroots and community organisations to apply. Some were keen to draw on the strengths that different organisations have, and open up access to strengthen the portfolio through including more grassroots and smaller organisations.

At portfolio level, CashBack partners were very positive about the support they received from Inspiring Scotland and from other partners in the portfolio. CashBack partners understood that the pandemic and focus on meeting immediate needs had affected the ability to connect and network with CashBack partners during Phase 5 and for the future, would value more opportunities to connect.

Young people led and influenced how individual projects were planned and delivered. For any future phases, it is important to give early consideration to how children and young people can best be involved in shaping the overall programme.

Focusing on diversion

Phase 5 helped build understanding about how to measure diversion. Many CashBack partners indicated a significant challenge around demonstrating diversion from the justice system and felt it would be useful to consider how to measure and evidence diversion across the CashBack programme, to recognise the value of early intervention and primary prevention work. For Phase 6, arrangements have been updated to reflect this learning.

Monitoring and evaluation

More widely, lessons have been learned from Phase 5 which have been incorporated into Phase 6. This includes refining approaches to reporting on outcome indicators and protected characteristics, streamlining quarterly reporting and providing flexibility in reporting to allow CashBack partners to provide more evidence for in-depth aspects of their work, and lighter touch data for drop in or one off activity. We believe that these changes should significantly strengthen the monitoring and evaluation arrangements for Phase 6, while reducing reporting requirements for projects and young people themselves.

Appendices



Appendix One: Evaluation Method

This evaluation was undertaken by Research Scotland for Inspiring Scotland and Scottish Government. It involved:

- **Review of documents** – All annual and evaluation reports for each CashBack partner were reviewed, alongside wider work undertaken by Inspiring Scotland in relation to Phase 5 of the programme.
- **CashBack partner interviews (29)** – In-depth interviews were held with all 24 partners delivering projects within Phase 5, exploring progress, outcomes and learning. Interviews took place in early 2023. A total of 29 individuals took part in the conversations.
- **Stakeholder interviews (12)** – Interviews were held with two members of the Inspiring Scotland CashBack team, two members of the Scottish Government CashBack team, and eight policy colleagues from the fields of employability, justice, physical activity, adverse childhood experiences and community safety.

Separate work was undertaken in early 2022 to explore the response to and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This involved conversations with all 24 CashBack partners and a review of relevant documents. A full separate report is [available here](#).

Appendix Two: CashBack Partners

There were 24 partners in Phase 5. Almost half (11) of the partners were new to CashBack for Communities for this phase. The new partners are highlighted in green in the table below.

CashBack Partner	Project	Grant Offer	Target Group	Notes
Access to Industry	Passport CashBack	£500,000	280 aged 16 to 23	Young Offenders Institute Polmont
Achieve More Scotland	A CashBack Difference	£500,000	3,000 aged 10 to 24	Diversions activity - areas of deprivation
Action for Children	CashBack Positive Changes	£595,000	270 aged 14 to 24	At risk of involvement in justice system
Barnardo's	Fit4Work through CashBack	£555,000	300 aged 15 to 24	Furthest from workforce/ justice/ deprivation
basketballscotland	CashBack Schools of Basketball	£460,000	408 aged 11 to 17	Schools with highest levels of deprivation and crime
Celtic FC Foundation	CashBack Gateway to Employment	£455,204	1,296 aged 16 to 24	At risk of offending/ deprivation
Cyrenians	Keeping Families Together with CashBack for Communities	£419,000	380 aged 12 plus	Support for young people and families
Eden Court	CashBack for a Creative Highlands	£490,000	1,420 aged 12 to 24	At risk of encountering crime
Impact Arts	CashBack to The Future	£580,000	448 aged 12 to 19	Disadvantaged communities/ at risk of ASB
Includem	ADAPT for CashBack	£788,423	200 aged 10 to 15	On edges of offending
Mayfield and Easthouses Youth 2000 Project	CashBack 180	£170,000	300 aged 11 to 19	Involved in offending, ASB or risky behaviours
National Autistic Society	Moving Forward + with CashBack for Communities	£624,228	174 aged 12 to 24	Refusing school and furthest from labour market
Ocean Youth Trust Scotland	Changing Tack for CashBack	£441,946	152 aged 12 to 16	At risk of involvement in justice system

CashBack Partner	Project	Grant Offer	Target Group	Notes
Police Service of Scotland	CashBack VOW and Turn Your Life around with CashBack	£182,700	1,200 aged 10 to 24	Breaking cycle of re-offending and risk taking
Prince's Trust Scotland	CashBack Development Awards	£555,263	2,620 aged 11 to 24	Targeting most disadvantaged
Rangers Charity Foundation	CashBack Towards New Future	£250,000	112 aged 16 to 24	Offending backgrounds/Young Offenders institutes
Scottish Football Association	CashBack Football Communities	£2,000,000	3,600 aged 10 to 24	Areas of deprivation and disadvantage
Scottish Rugby Union	CashBack Schools of Rugby/Community Rugby	£1,500,000	1,600 aged 10 to 18	Areas of deprivation and disadvantage
Scottish Sports Futures	CashBack Transforming Lives	£1,332,000	2,324 aged 10 to 24	Areas of deprivation and disadvantage/ risk of justice system
YDance (Scottish Youth Dance)	CashBack for Change	£410,000	1,004 aged 11 to 21	Risk of ASB/ justice system
SPFL Trust	CashBack off the Bench	£500,000	240 aged 18 to 24	Positive behaviour re ASB/ health/ equality
Station House Media Unit (SHMU)	CashBack Move Forward	£292,500	567 aged 10 to 24	Disadvantaged young people/ risk of justice system
Youth Scotland	Generation CashBack	£1,700,000	8,000 aged 10 to 24	Areas of deprivation/ most affected by crime
YouthLink Scotland	CashBack Youth Work Fund	£2,700,000	30,000 aged 10 to 24	At risk of justice system

Police Scotland started its Phase 5 work in 2021/22, due to the emergence of the pandemic and related policing priorities.

Appendix Three: CashBack phase five logic model



CashBack for Communities 2020-2023

Short-term outcomes



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

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence of young people Resilience of young people Strength of support networks Levels of risk-taking behaviour 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people report their confidence increasing Young people feel able to do new things Young people feel more resilient (e.g. believing in yourself, taking things in your stride, being determined, being self-disciplined, being optimistic, adapting to different situations) Other stakeholders (other people involved with the young person e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, etc.) report perceived increases of confidence and resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people report positive, supportive networks – including improved relationships with family and friends/ increased access to appropriate services Young people report positive changes in their behaviour (e.g. reduced risk taking/ increased understanding of risk/ better ability to make positive choices/ improved understanding of rights and responsibilities) Other stakeholders (other people involved with the young person e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, etc.) report perceived positive changes in the behaviour of young participants
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Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal skills, including literacy, numeracy and thinking skills; working with others; leadership; personal learning planning and career management; and skills for enterprise and employability. Physical skills, including physical co-ordination and movement 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people gain accreditation for learning and skills development Young people report their skills are increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other stakeholders (other people involved with the young person e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, etc.) report skills are increasing
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Outcome 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people's feeling of being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included (These skills link to the SHANARRI indicators) 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people report increases in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other stakeholders (other people involved with the young person e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, etc.) report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators among young people
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Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people participating in training which improves their soft, core and/or vocational skills Young people participating in learning Young people progressing to employment Young people participating in volunteering Young people improve attainment levels 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression outcomes after completion of the programme, the number of participants: remaining at or returning to school, taking a course of further or higher education, undertaking a Skills Development Scotland-funded training programme, engaging in an Activity Agreement, participating in learning or training offered by Third Sector providers/ Social Enterprises / Community Learning and Development, volunteering, work experience, where it is part of a recognised course or programme, Community Jobs Scotland, being employed / a Modern Apprenticeship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants' attendance at school improves Participants' attainment at school improves
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Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contribution young people make – such as volunteering, leading, coaching, mentoring Perceptions of the neighbourhood Sense of belonging Motivation to influence decisions making 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants going on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations The number of hours of volunteering contributed by participants The number of community focused awards gained by participants Young people feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other stakeholders (other people involved with the young person e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, etc.) perceive that young people's contribution, links and social interaction are improving Participants' perception of their neighbourhood improves Participants have a heightened sense of belonging to a community Participants have increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community
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Long-term outcome:



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

<p>What we will measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of criminal behaviour Levels of involvement with the criminal justice system Levels of antisocial behaviour 	<p>The indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported antisocial behaviour and/or criminal behaviour may reduce in the area concerned Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour.
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