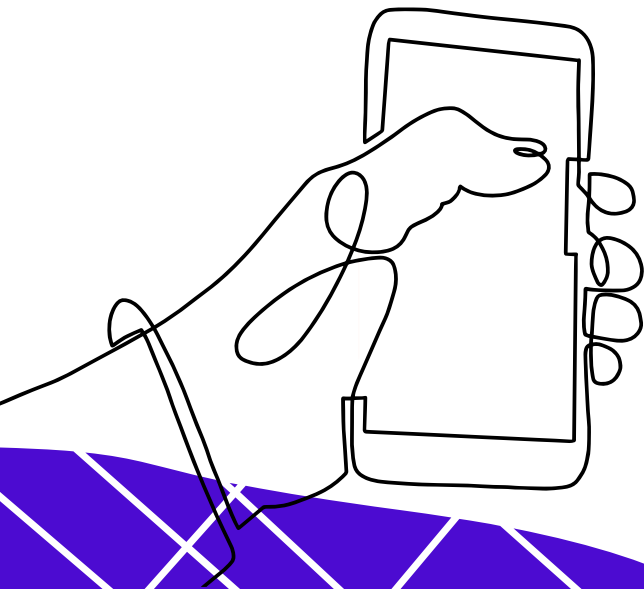


YOUTHWORK

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

QUALITY AND STANDARDS REPORT

1ST APRIL 2020 – 31ST MARCH 2021



@YOUTHWORKDG
YOUTH.WORK@DUMGAL.GOV.UK



CONTENTS

PAGE 3 & 4	Foreward - Councillor Adam Wilson, Dumfries and Galloway Council Young Peoples Champion
PAGE 4	Foreward - Hannah Birse, Chair of Dumfries & Galloway Youth Council
PAGE 5 & 6	Key Youth Work Areas
PAGE 7 & 8	A Year in Statistics
PAGE 9 - 11	COVID-19: Youth Work Service Response
	Examples of Youth Work in Annandale & Eskdale
PAGE 13	John Muir P7 Transition Group Case Study
PAGE 14	Annan Hub Club & Lockerbie Youth Group Case Study
	Examples of Youth Work in Lower Nithsdale
PAGE 15	The Attic - North West Dumfries
PAGE 16	Georgetown Youth Group, Under the Lights and Case Study
PAGE 17	Case Study
	Examples of Youth Work in Stewartry
PAGE 18	Issue Group - Kirkcudbright
PAGE 19	Detached, Friday Football and Case Study
	Examples of Youth Work in Upper Nithsdale
PAGE 20	Young Hands
PAGE 21	Kelloholm Friday Night Football and Case Study
PAGE 22, 23	Case Study
	Examples of Youth Work in Wigtownshire
PAGE 24	Ramp Project - Stranraer and Social Isolation Project - Wigtown
PAGE 25	Garden Group - Douglas Ewart High School and Case Study
PAGE 26	Case Study
PAGE 27	10,000 Voices in Action
PAGE 28 - 30	Oasis Youth Centre
PAGE 31 & 32	Youth Enquiry Service
PAGE 33 - 37	Youth Information Workers in Schools
PAGE 38 - 40	Dumfries & Galloway Youth Council
PAGE 41	Champions Board



FOREWORD



COUNCILLOR ADAM WILSON
DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY COUNCIL –
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the Youth Work Service's 2020/21 Quality & Standards Report. The report will provide you with a comprehensive insight into some of the critical work that the Service has undertaken between 1st April - 31st March 2020 and will look at the significant impacts that Youth Work has made on the lives of young people and communities across our region, in a year that was like no other.

On Monday 23rd March 2020, it was announced that a nationwide lockdown would be implemented in the first steps to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this, the Youth Work Service was running over 50 weekly groups, 1-to-1 support sessions, drop-ins, trips and excursions and much more, that seen the Service engage with thousands of young people aged 12-25 from Stranraer to Langholm and everywhere in between.

The lives of young people everywhere were turned upside down with schools, colleges, universities, and youth groups closing their doors in the interests of protecting our community's most vulnerable people.

Our young people became more isolated and at risk than ever before, with their go-to safe spaces out of reach. The lives of young people everywhere were turned upside down with schools, colleges, universities, and youth groups closing their doors in the interests of protecting our community's most vulnerable people. Our young people became more isolated and at risk than ever before, with their go-to safe spaces out of reach.

Our Youth Work Service changed its delivery method overnight to a fully digital offer, meaning that this critical level of support could continue during the scary and uncertain times in the early stage of the pandemic. Within 24 hours of the lockdown announcement, a new digital programme was launched, and every single young person who the Service works with was contacted to check in and provide reassurance that Youth Work would still be there, but just in a different way through various online provisions.

These early stages set the tone for what would be a challenging and difficult year for our Service, as it went on a journey of continuous adaptation in order to meet the needs of our most vulnerable young people, whilst complying with Scottish Government restrictions.

DG Youth Council continued to meet on a weekly basis and alongside the Youth Work Service, Statutory Partners and Third Sector organisations developed and ran a consultation to explore the Impacts of COVID-19 on young people in D&G; the Meeting Place dedicated youth room opened in McMillan Hall Newton Stewart; £59,000 was awarded to the Service from Youth Link Scotland's Education Recovery Fund to run Resilient Youth, an outdoor programme focused on alternative highs and getting young people outdoors; and Dumfries & Galloway Council has made a £1million investment into low level mental health support allowing the Youth Work Service to provide young people with a 7 day a week fully inclusive Service. (Continued on next page.)

Councillor Adam Wilson (Continued)

From October, the easing of restrictions meant that provisions could move back indoors, and as the year went on, we continued to place focus on the day-to-day frontline Youth Work Services that we deliver in communities across our region both in and outdoors.

This included universal community-based Youth Work, holiday programmes, one-to-one support sessions, issue-based group work, Youth Work in schools, youth democracy, Young Leaders programmes, accreditation and many more.

Overall, it has been a challenging year for Youth Work Services, but one that has allowed us to build some professional resilience and built our ability to overcome obstacles and challenges, and we continue to grow and adapt our Service to meet the needs of the young people who attend our provisions, and we continue to develop these alongside partners whilst listening and responding to the needs of local communities. We are exceptionally thankful to all partners who work collaboratively with our service in order to enhance the opportunities and experiences we are able to provide to young people in Dumfries & Galloway.

I hope as you read through this report you will see the ever important role youth work plays in our communities and continue to show your ongoing support as we move into another year.

FOREWORD



**HANNAH BIRSE, CHAIR OF
DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY
YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Youth Work Service Quality and Standards Report demonstrates the huge variety of work that has been undertaken by the Service throughout April 2020 - March 2021, in what has been a tough and unpredictable year for everyone across our region, as we continue to deal with the affects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within Dumfries & Galloway Youth Council, we continue to work in our local communities across the region, but during the previous year we have developed three sub-groups focusing on: Environment and Climate Change; Mental Health; and Rights and Inequalities. This allows us as a group to work on the issues that are currently affecting us as young people, and how to challenge and respond to these issues effectively.

This report highlights the great number of projects that have had an impact across our communities, from our large towns to our small villages. Youth Work works with young people on their terms and where they are, and that has been no more so evident that this previous year. I hope you enjoy reading through this report and will see the valuable role that Youth Work plays in our region for our young people.



THIS REPORT HIGHLIGHTS THE GREAT NUMBER OF PROJECTS THAT HAVE HAD AN IMPACT ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES, FROM OUR LARGE TOWNS TO OUR SMALL VILLAGES. – HANNAH BIRSE



YOUTHWORK

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

#YOUTHWORKCHANGESLIVES



**WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TO IDENTIFY LOCAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES
TO PROVIDE A UNIVERSAL SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 – 25
IN ADDITION TO TARGETED WORK AIMED AT OUR MOST VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE**

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL'S YOUTH WORK OFFER

1. YOUTH WORK IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES
2. YOUTH WORK IN SCHOOLS
3. YOUTH ACTION INC. DG YOUTH COUNCIL, YOUNG VOLUNTEERS & YOUTH DEMOCRACY
4. RAISING ATTAINMENT THROUGH ACCREDITED YOUTH AWARDS AND THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD
5. COLLABORATION WITH THIRD SECTOR YOUTH WORK PARTNERS
6. DIGITAL YOUTH WORK
7. YOUTH EVENTS



DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

#YOUTHWORKCHANGESLIVES

KEY WORK AREAS 21/23 INCLUDE

- MENTAL HEALTH
- CLIMATE CHANGE
- POVERTY & INEQUALITIES
- YOUNG WOMEN'S NETWORK
- P7 / SENIOR PHASE TRANSITIONS
- WORKFORCE & SECTOR DEVELOPMENT
- COVID-19 RECOVERY & RESILIENCE
- STEM
- POLITICS & DECISION MAKING
- SOCIAL ISOLATION

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK

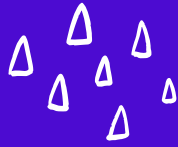
THE PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK IS AS FOLLOWS:

- BUILD SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF CONFIDENCE
- DEVELOP THE ABILITY TO MANAGE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
- CREATE LEARNING & DEVELOP NEW SKILLS
- ENCOURAGE POSITIVE GROUP ATMOSPHERES
- BUILD THE CAPACITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO CONSIDER RISK, MAKE REASONED DECISIONS AND TAKE CONTROL
- DEVELOP A 'WORLD VIEW' WHICH WIDENS HORIZONS AND INVITES SOCIAL COMMITMENT

IT HAS THREE ESSENTIAL AND DEFINITIVE FEATURES:

- YOUNG PEOPLE CHOOSE TO TAKE PART
- THE WORK MUST BUILD FROM WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE
- YOUTH WORK RECOGNISES THE YOUNG PERSON AND YOUTH WORKER AS PARTNERS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

A YEAR IN STATISTICS



4,000

isolation
packs
delivered

£19,660

funding to support
young people
through COVID

57%

of young people who attended online
groups were new to Youth Work

313

Zoom sessions to
speak with a youth
worker

578

activities
delivered
online

1774

sessions/activities
/workshops
delivered to
young people

312

young people in
receipt of weekly
calls

1,119

young people participating in
online Youth Work programmes
that ran for
8 weeks or more

5,313

young people
supported

28

weekly groups
online

74

young people receiving formally
recognised qualifications during
COVID-19

online reach

692,712



A YEAR IN STATISTICS



636

1-to-1's with young people

41

training sessions delivered for staff



217

calls by different young people to the Blether line for mental health support

16

partners worked with

68

John Muir Awards

759

young people engaged during Detached Youth Work

1,298

reach through the virtual Toon experience

64,508

reached virtually via Youth Beatz

537

summer packs delivered

1,231

attended Youth Work Hubs during 1st lockdown

51

virtual youth groups ran

258

referrals to Youth Work hubs

312

number of outdoor sessions ran during Summer 2020

88

volunteers supporting the Youth Work Service digitally and in-person

60

number of Young Leaders trained

COVID-19: YOUTH WORK SERVICE RESPONSE

BACKGROUND

2020 was a year unlike any other for the Youth Work Service. The arrival of COVID-19 meant that we had to change overnight how our service operated, ensuring that despite the pandemic we were continuing to support the young people we work with in communities across Dumfries & Galloway.

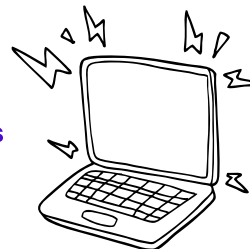
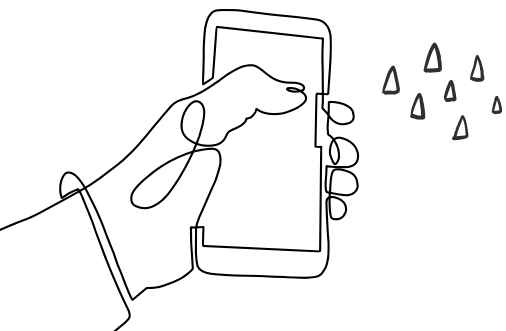
In the months prior to Lockdown, Dumfries and Galloway Council's Youth Work Service were working with thousands of young people aged 12 - 25 across the length and breadth of our region through over 50 weekly groups, events, 1-2-1 support sessions & drop in's. When Lockdown was announced in March, the lives of young people across our region were turned upside down, with schools, colleges, universities and youth groups closing their doors for the benefit of public health. Young people were suddenly more isolated and at risk than ever before, with their safe places and safe people, seemingly out of reach. In response, the Youth Work Team changed and adapted overnight, to a fully online & digital service, enabling it to continue to provide support to some of our most vulnerable young people, through what was going to be an incredibly difficult and turbulent time. Within 24hrs of the announcement, the Online Programme was launched, and all young people who were known to the Service had been contacted to check in and make them aware that the Youth Work Service was very much still there for them.

Youth Workers created a two-phase programme of support for young people.

Phase 1 offered 4 Main Services to young people:

- 1. Online & Digital Programme of Activities & Events including virtual groups & Drop Ins**
- 2. Daily / Weekly Calls & Check Ins**
- 3. 1-2-1 Support Sessions via Teams or Phone Call**
- 4. Delivery of Physical Resources**

Over the coming 12 weeks, the Service engaged with 5,313 young people, ran 313 zoom sessions, delivered 4000 isolation packs and supported over 300 young people through 1-2-1's and daily calls, all whilst working from home and for some, managing new posts through redeployment in various other Council Services.



ISOLATION PACKS

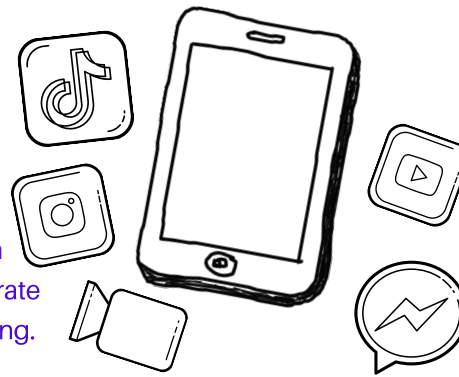
Within the first week of Lockdown, it was clear that COVID-19 was having a disproportionately negative impact on young people across our region who were becoming increasingly lonely, isolated and anxious. In addition, it became clear that many of the most vulnerable young people the service supports, did not have access to a device or to reliable internet, which meant they would not be able to participate in digital & online services. To ensure that they were still able to engage and receive support from Youth Workers, the team developed Isolation Packs - a survival bag of activities that would enable young people to continue to engage from home, with everything they needed dropped on their doorsteps. Each isolation pack contained 13 different activities, booklets of challenges, fidget toys and a Hi-Five award, which would give them the opportunity to gain formal accreditation. After securing funding from the Hollywood Trust, a team of staff and volunteers spent hours putting together 1,000 packs that would go out to young people most at need, with all 1,000 packs going within 2 hours of the sign-up form going live.

The demand for Isolation Packs, continued to rise with parents, carers and partner organisations emailing in to ask for them for young people they supported. Thanks to additional funding from the STV Children's Appeal and a £500 donation from Police Scotland, a further 3,000 were made available and subsequently distributed to young people.

COVID-19: YOUTH WORK SERVICE RESPONSE

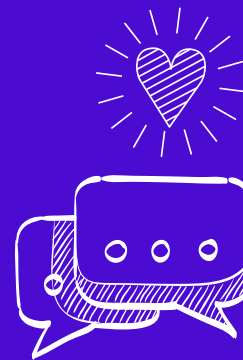
ONLINE AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

Prior to COVID-19, digital technology and social media were already important to our Service and young people, but no one could have anticipated just how integral it would become to our region's Youth Work offer. **The first evening of digital Youth Work saw over 30 individual young people join for a virtual drop-in run through Facebook, Instagram Live and Zoom.** Young people and Youth Workers joined together to celebrate Music Night in a non-traditional fashion, with a virtual dance off and sing along. The reassurance and security this first session gave young people was evident from their participation and continued engagement from that night on. Our ability to adapt our service online and continue to support young people was sector leading with organisations from across Scotland supporting their young people to participate in our Digital Activities. **As Lockdown progressed, we were aware that many young people only used specific social media and websites online and so to ensure that we were not excluding any young people, we adapted all online activities to be delivered across 14 platforms from Zoom to Tik Tok.** The online programme took on many different forms as we continually adapted to young people's changing needs. From week 1 to week 12, the programme changed dramatically, supporting young people with study skills, STEM, self-esteem & confidence, fitness and mental health through a variety of tutorials, competitions and activities. The Online Programme enabled young people to create routines and schedules that saw them through some of their most difficult days in Lockdown, proving yet again the vital role of Youth Work in Young People's lives. Our Youth Work Service now has a fully integrated Digital Team who deliver a 7 day-per-week online Youth Work offer.



1-TO-1 SUPPORT

The Youth Information Team at the Youth Enquiry Service were working with hundreds of young people across Dumfries and Galloway prior to COVID-19 providing vital support and information on a range of topics. When Lockdown was announced, the first thing the team done, was to ensure that the young people continued to be supported. **Through social media, daily/weekly calls and virtual 1-to-1's the team supported over 312 individual young people to cope throughout the pandemic.**



YOUTH WORK HUBS

In response to rising numbers of vulnerable young people across Dumfries and Galloway, Youth Work Services set up **14 Youth Work Hubs** in Secondary schools from Langholm to Stranraer.

The Hubs offered young people with the opportunity to participate in small face to face group work sessions, where they could learn about a range of topics and issues affecting them and their peers. The Youth Work Hubs were referral only, with the level of need determining the number of sessions a young person could attend on a weekly basis. Referrals were accepted from Social Work, Education, Employability & Skills, Youth Workers and Third Sector.

Over the 10 weeks the Hubs ran, they received 258 referrals with 1,298 attendances from young people across the region. Through participating, young people developed their social skills, built confidence, became more resilient and developed skills to cope in difficult circumstances. The Hub's enabled young people to explore their emotions and behaviours, providing them with the tools they needed to keep themselves safe throughout COVID-19.

Young people also had the opportunity to gain formal accreditation through taking part, with 193 individuals achieving and working towards their Hi-5, Dynamic Youth, John Muir and Heritage Hero Awards.

COVID-19: YOUTH WORK SERVICE RESPONSE

VIRTUAL YOUTH BEATZ

Youth Beatz and The Toon have been a prominent feature of Dumfries & Galloway's Event calendar for over 12 years, and COVID-19 presented some obvious problems as to how these would typically run. Despite our inability to meet in person or hold the festival and surrounding Fringe events in the way we normally would, Youth Beatz 2020 went ahead as a one-off virtual festival! Continuing to offer young performers the opportunity to showcase their talents, the festival live streamed young people from across Dumfries and Galloway singing, performing and DJ-ing at home. Held on the 28th June 2020 Virtual Youth Beatz took over social media from 1-9pm running a jam packed programme of performances and vital youth information, including the first ever social media stream of the Toon, culminating in an hour long Zoom Festival. Over 40 young people joined in with our Zoom festival, and over 1,200 individuals viewed the Toon via social media.

The event reached over 60,000 people from across Scotland and engaged with over 10,000 for the duration of the day. Youth Beatz online gave young people the opportunity to reflect on previous events, sharing fond memories and look forward to future festivals where they would be able to come together again.

For a full breakdown of how our Service responded during COVID-19 for the reporting period, please visit www.youthwork.dumgal.gov.uk where you will find our COVID-19 Youth Work Response Report.

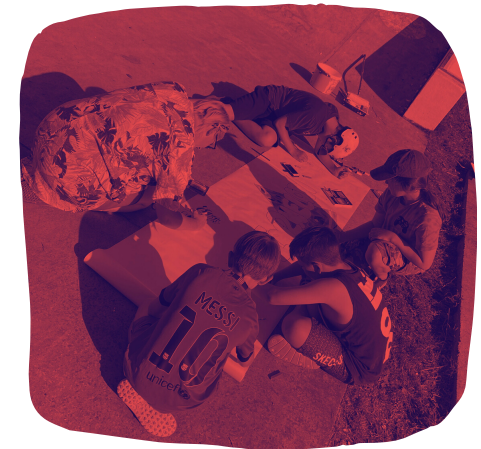


DETACHED YOUTH WORK

Detached sessions were a prominent feature in communities across Dumfries & Galloway, in order to effectively engage with young people who were still out and about despite lockdown, not to act as a telling off, but to ensure that young people were safe and to signpost them to online Youth Work if staff felt that this was appropriate.



**SUMMARY
OF
WORK AREAS**



YOUTH WORK IN ANNANDALE & ESKDALE

OVERVIEW

Youth Annandale & Eskdale sits in the East of Dumfries and Galloway. The main settlements are Annan, Gretna, Langholm, Lockerbie, Lochmaben and Moffat. Annandale and Eskdale has a number of attractions for visitors including scenic lochs, rivers and many outdoor attractions as well as historic sites and is home to a number of fascinating towns and villages. Covering 156,286 hectares, Annandale and Eskdale accounts for around a quarter of the total area of Dumfries and Galloway. 59% of the locality is rural.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE:

- ✘ Distribution of Isolation Packs to vulnerable young people.
- ✘ Weekly support catch-ups with young people.
- ✘ School hubs delivered to vulnerable young people in Annan, Langholm, Lockerbie and Moffat Academies, during Summer.
- ✘ Online Summer Programme – Summer Packs delivered to young people.
- ✘ Outdoor Programme – Girls Group, ASN Groups, Monday, Youth Groups in Annan, Moffat, Lockerbie and Langholm, Young Parents Group, Moffat MUGA and Sports Sessions and Youth Cafés.
- ✘ Online Groups set up – Girls Group, ASN Group, Monday night group, Friday night Group, Young Parents Group, Drama Group, LGBT support Group, Cadets Moffat.
- ✘ Indoor Group re-start – Monday night youth group and Friday night at Annan, Girls Group, ASN Groups, Youth Café 18 – 25 and Young Parents Group in Annan. Youth Groups across the locality, Cadets Moffat, Drama Group, LGBT support group continued online and Outdoor MUGA at Moffat and Outdoor Sports session Lochmaben.
- ✘ Back to online sessions January – March 2021 with groups listed above.
- ✘ From October Champions Board meetings became available for those that are care experienced in Annandale and Eskdale with groups running in Lockerbie and Annan during lifted restrictions and support moving online during lockdown.
- ✘ Youth Council – delivered online throughout each week.
- ✘ Distribution of Easter Eggs to local young people.

CASE STUDY – JOHN MUIR P7 TRANSITION GROUP

A very shy young person from a small village during lockdown became very withdrawn from society. Dumfries and Galloways Youth Work Service offered out the John Muir Award that focusses on discovering the natural world around you, environmental changes, the ecosystem etc. after accessing the group the young person became more knowledgeable about the environment. The young person said that the group helped them build on their confidence, got them outdoors and made them more passionate about their life and what they can do to help the natural world around them.

They are so happy that they have achieved their award and looking forward to sharing their learning. They said it gave them something to look forward to and then enjoyed being able to come along and talk to different people. Their Mum told staff that she had noticed a big difference in their confidence and that it has given them something to look forward to weekly.

YOUTH WORK IN ANNANDALE & ESKDALE

ANNAN HUB CLUB

The Hub Club group is open to any young person from Annandale and Eskdale aged 12–25 who has a disability or autism spectrum disorder or extra support need. Our Youth Work Team offer a safe place where a young person can engage and interact with others through activities as well as having fun. Some young members are supported to attend from Quarrier and Key Living Support services, as well as a few parents. Normally, young people are supported to build relationships, socialise with others, participate in a variety of activities & trips, gain access to youth information and also have the opportunity to get involved in working towards accredited learning opportunities such as Youth Achievement Awards & Saltire Awards. At present we have 15 young people attending regularly, from Moffat, Lockerbie, Annan and Eastriggs, during

March 2020 - March 2021 the group met online on a weekly basis, every Thursday evening from 6.30 - 8.00 p.m. During this time three members of our hub club group worked in partnership with Paragon Music from Glasgow who are an inclusive music company who inspire and empower young people with extra support needs and disabilities to create and perform their own music, whilst other members of the group met with youth service staff. The three young people took part in an inclusive learning and performance environment and came up with lyrics and put them to music that they created with the variety of instruments that they have learned to play and took part in a performance at the end of the session to family, friends and youth service staff, the young people have increased their skills in confidence, assertiveness, communication and concentration.

CASE STUDY - LOCKERBIE YOUTH GROUP

Kelsey* was invited into a support group as they identified as a trans female and she was struggling with everything in her life. She felt she had no voice and that she could not access any other Youth Work Service. The group originated after a high number of requests from young people requiring support during the pandemic were identified to youth work. The sessions started online providing support during Lockdown and then moved to a Saturday in person taking place in Lockerbie.

The main aims of the group were to give young people a safe space that they could be themselves, be accepted, listened to, provided with any information they need and to relax and have fun. We have achieved giving some of the most vulnerable young

people in society a safe place decreasing their anxiety and strengthening their sense of self-esteem.

We have provided them with tools to help them to be positive members of their community. The young person made staff aware that the only time she was living was when she was at the group and when she was not attending, she is only surviving. She does not want to think about a life not being able to access the group. The difference in the young person has been very noticeable for staff as when she first started accessing the group online, she would not turn on the camera or mic. Now she comes along to the group in person wither that be in the local park or café and is a very happy confident young woman. This has brought tears of happiness to staff.

*Not actual name

YOUTH WORK IN LOWER NITHSDALE

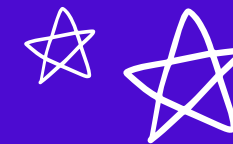
OVERVIEW

Nithsdale is bordered by the Stewartry area in the West, Annandale and Eskdale in the East, East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire local authority areas in the North and the Solway Firth in the South.

Dumfries is the Regional Capital and has a population of 32,914. It serves as the main administrative, shopping and health care centre for the region and provides a range of employment and education opportunities, leisure facilities and housing options. Dumfries also contains the boroughs of Locharbriggs, Lincluden, Lochside, Heathhall, Troqueer and Georgetown.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE:

- * Building based Youth Work provision in Oasis Youth Centre: Bite & blether sessions, Super Mondays, Young Parents, lunch clubs, Hangouts, Parkour, VIPMe, Drama group, Event Production Course, Global Ed.
- * Building based Youth Work provision in Youth Enquiry Service: Youth Info drop ins, Nithsdale Challenge, You Decide, Living Life to the Full, Study Support Sessions, Happy Feet, Mental Health Peer Educators group.
- * Outdoor Youth Work programmes - games tournaments, football, bite & blether sessions, outdoor movies, parkour, environment groups, young parents, ASN groups, STEM activities, trash art project.
- * Digital and Online Youth Work provision during lockdown: Big Quiz Live, Music Night, Young Parents, Fri-Yay, STEM activities, Awareness Arts, Easter & Summer Social Media Programmes, Drop In sessions.
- * Blether Chats (phone calls to young people needing someone to talk to/support).
- * Supported Youth Councillors in Lower Nithsdale Wards.
- * Champions Board.
- * Football and Sports sessions.
- * Support hubs in local Secondary schools.
- * Duke of Edinburgh's Award Oasis Open Centre.
- * Delivered Easter Eggs to local young people.
- * Delivered isolation packs and activity packs to local young people.
- * Detached youth work: Locharbriggs, Lincluden, Lochside, Heathhall, Troqueer and Georgetown.



UNDER THE LIGHTS

Under the Lights started through successful partnership work between North-West Community Campus, Dumfries Police Division, Dumfries Saints and Youth Work in the North-West Dumfries area.

The aim of the group is to promote the welfare of young people with a safe space to get active playing football, rugby, and space to hang out with music, free snacks, food and drinks.

The sessions first ran from October to December 2020 at the schools 3G pitch every Saturday night seeing around 60 young people taking part on a weekly basis.

As a result of the projects early success external funding has been secured to see the project develop further. COVID-19 restrictions temporarily stopped under the lights from taking part and now the aim is to relaunch with all partners to continue this fantastic partnership and opportunity for young people in the North-West area.



YOUTH WORK IN LOWER NITHSDALE

GEORGETOWN YOUTH GROUP

The Georgetown Youth Group runs every Friday at the Georgetown Community Centre with the aim to offer young people a safe and supported space for young people within the Nith area of Dumfries to explore issues such as bullying, mental, physical health & wellbeing. The youth group ran many years ago however ended and was restarted in October 2020 in response to a spike in anti-social behaviour.

Unfortunately, the pandemic meant that the group was stopped shortly after it started, with the second lockdowns restrictions coming into force in January and the group starting late 2020. As the restrictions eased detached work took place in Georgetown instead. As restrictions have continued to lift and activity was able to move back inside there has been an increase in participation which has mainly been focused on football as this is what the young people have mainly wanted to do.

The plan is to re-establish the group then run more issue-based activities. As the group has now stopped for the summer a youth café will take its place. Hopefully the young people will come back this Summer so the group can pick up where it left off.

THE ATTIC – NORTH WEST DUMFRIES

The Attic Youth Group takes place weekly at North-West Community Campus with the aim to make young people feel safe and supported by offering free accessible activities for young people aged 12-18 living within the North-West Dumfries area. The Youth Group was established after requests from local partners for more activities for young people to do in North-West Dumfries. The Attic is now a fully constituted group with its own bank account and as a result has been very successful securing funding from external funders however the restrictions from COVID-19 has led to most of the activities being postponed and we are awaiting further lifts on the restrictions.

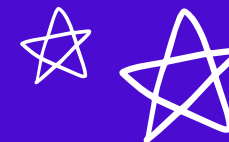
The majority of young people who attend come from North-West Community Campus, but we are also joined by young people who attend Dumfries Academy and St Joseph's College.

During the lockdown many Attic members received isolation packs after successful funding was secured which provided free colouring/puzzle books, a notepad and pencil, a deck of playing cards, dominoes, a mini Rubix cube, 3 fidget toys, a pot of slime/fidget putty, a mini jigsaw, a hi-5 Award booklet (a qualification gained for volunteering accredited at SCQF Level 2) and a Youth Work pack with additional puzzles,

activities, game instructions, details of our online services and how to complete the Hi5.

Covid-19 restriction's saw the Attic temporarily close, however the group continued online via zoom which provided a safe space for young people to interact and check in with youth workers. After many quizzes, scavenger hunts and discussions we managed to get back outside with the ease of restrictions however this impacted numbers as expected which led to a lot of detached work in the area which was very positive. With further ease in restrictions this allowed the Attic to restart with North-West Community Campus. The Attic has been so popular that the hours had to be changed for young people by age to accommodate the high numbers reaching 75 on the third week back.

The youth workers consulted with the Attic members to see what they would like to do over the coming months within the current guidelines at the time. Each week the sessions have been very lively with music playing, board games, karaoke's, sports in the game's hall, nerf wars, milk shake bars, mocktail bars, ice cream floats, weekly Greggs, drinks and snacks.



YOUTH WORK IN LOWER NITHSDALE



CASE STUDY – J

J first began at accessing the Attic as it is local to him, and he heard it was a fun place to hang out with friends. The Attic Youth Group takes place at North-West Community Campus with the aim to make young people feel safe and supported by offering free accessible activities for young people aged 12-18 living within the North-West Dumfries area. J moves between friends groups and has at times been the victim of bullying in school and sometimes this has crossed over to the Attic. This was promptly dealt with and no longer happens during the youth group as J commented: "it's a place I go to feel safe and hangout with pals."

J has at times found it hard to control his anger particularly when other young people were picking on him, J has really improved on this as he saw that

when he shared what was happening and then seeing how it was dealt with it has given him more confidence that he has support at the Attic. J stated: "The youth workers always help me if I am feeling upset, they are a good laugh."

J has been attending weekly football sessions with youth work, Oasis run drop in's and he has also began accessing the Georgetown Youth Group also. He is very keen to help set up and get involved showing improved confidence over the year. When asked about how he feels about his time spent at the project J said: "I like all the different activities that happen, its different every week. I like also if I want to be by myself there is enough space I can just sit and listen to music if I want too."

 **I AM IN CARE AND DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL, SO THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO MAKE FRIENDS. THE ATTIC IS MY FAVOURITE YOUTH GROUP. – L** 

 **THE YOUTH WORKERS ALWAYS HELP ME IF I AM FEELING UPSET, THEY ARE A GOOD LAUGH. – J** 

CASE STUDY – L

L is currently in residential care and previously never engaged with any youth groups or services, the Attic was the first group she has attended. L has made many new friends that she did not previously have as she is home schooled and is now starting to go to other youth groups and perhaps even the champions board in the future.

L added "I wanted to meet new people and managed to meet new friends for the first time. I came to the Attic because my former key worker recommended it to me. I am in care and do not attend school, so this is a good way to make friends. The Attic is my favourite youth group."

The Attic Youth Group takes place at North-West Community Campus with the aim to make young people feel safe and supported by offering free accessible activities for young people aged 12-18 living within the North-West Dumfries area.

All staff agree L has really grown in confidence and is very much a big part of the youth group now, when she first attended, she would only talk to her former keyworker however as week's progressed, she has come out of her shell and really engages with all youth workers and Attic members. L's carers have noted how her confidence has blossomed and that she appears much more settled at home as she now has things to look forward to and has a social life. L finished off by saying: "I really enjoy it here and because of coming here I have started going to other groups."

YOUTH WORK IN STEWARTRY

OVERVIEW

The Stewartry area makes up 26% of Dumfries and Galloway encompassing the three Wards: Abbey, Castle Douglas and Glenkens and Dee with the majority of the population inhabiting either 'Remote Small Towns' or 'Remote Rural' areas. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (39%) is the main employment source for the area with Construction (11%) and Accommodation and Food Services (8%) the next highest. There are 19 Primary Schools and 4 Secondary Schools in Stewartry with pupils entering higher education above national average but further education falling below national average. Youth Work focusses mainly on the more heavily populated towns such as Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright which also happen to be among the most income deprived zones in Stewartry.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE:

- * Boys Issues: Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright.
- * Champions Board: Dalbeattie and Castle Douglas.
- * Community Based Groups: Bloom, Creative Conscious, Happy Feet, Live and Learn, You Decide and Your Resilience: Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbright and Dalbeattie.
- * Detached: Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright.
- * Football Friday: Dalbeattie.
- * Girls Issues: Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright.
- * LGBTQ+ Support: Castle Douglas.
- * Peer Project: Dalbeattie.
- * Youth Council Support: Online.
- * Quizzes, Mental Wellbeing: Online.
- * Support Hubs (Schools): Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright.
- * Alphabet Street w/ Police Scotland, Active Schools and Fire and Rescue: Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright.
- * Easter Programme: Active Sports, Camping 1-0-1, Detached and Youth Cafes: Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright.
- * Summer Programme: Detached, Youth Buzz (Pop up Youth Centres), Youth Hubs: Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright.
- * Community Volunteers Programme (Completed September - October 2020) Kirkcudbright.

ISSUE GROUP – KIRKCUDBRIGHT

The Issues groups for Kirkcudbright have traditionally been two separate groups that are open to those who identify as male and those who are female with those who are fluid able to attend their choice of group. It runs predominantly at the High School after hours focussing on current issues with young people as dictated by young people. This can touch upon anything from sex education to alcohol abuse and bullying.

The sessions were run with a mixture of indoor, outdoor and online provision throughout the year with activities that included crafts, creating games, quizzes and sports. Young People have found the sessions helpful for expressing any pent-up frustrations from the last year and they have been integral for consulting on content for Easter and Summer Programmes.

Highlights from the last year included: a Lip Sync battle online, attempting to cook outdoors during a gale and hot chocolates during the winter.

YOUTH WORK IN STEWARTRY

DETACHED STEWARTRY

Detached youth work ran throughout the majority of the year with the exceptions of the lockdown periods as an alternative to indoor provision as a way to keep in touch with our core group of young people in a way that was safer and took youth work to where they are. They ran in our three main locations Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie and Kirkcudbright and also focussed on introducing youth work to young people who haven't accessed our services before.

Young People feel safer in their own environments and often are able to talk to us about bigger issues than when they are indoors in larger groups. These sessions have been useful for the Youth Information Workers to make contact with young people who might need referring to their programmes for one-to-one counselling.

Most of the Issues that youth workers tackle with young people on detached sessions revolve around drinks/ drugs/ alcohol abuse, bullying, family issues and mental health. Youth workers have also acted as a mediatory service between groups of young people who may have had fallings out that want to make reparations.

Detached sessions played a crucial part for Stewartry in ensuring young people were supported over the last year.

CASE STUDY – MAYA

Last year was a struggle for Maya with the online schooling and online meetings with the youth work due to the stress of family situations and school. Maya enjoys coming to the Kirkcudbright Girls Issues group so she can talk about situations, so Maya has someone to talk to about what is happening in her life. Maya has been brought up with the group and enjoys the group so much that she continues to attend all the ones that she can. Before lockdown she attended the issues group at the high school and continued to attend when the meeting became online based taking part in activities such as quizzes and escape rooms. One of the other groups that Maya attends is called Live N Learn, the group is part of a mental health project which started as a COVID funded project. Maya feels that this is one of her favourite groups to attend as the activities that are

delivered are specific and suited to her age group and develop her worries and queries. The aims of the group Maya attends are life skills and how to manage your budget. This group is from S4 to S6 and aims to prepare young people for leaving school and having experience in everyday tasks e.g. cooking. Maya has been concentrating on cooking skills and budgeting her money as she gets EMA and was wanting to open up a savings account which she applied for within the group. Maya is very passionate about cooking and has loads of ideas for the group to participate in and likes to take charge of the cooking activities as she has a lot of knowledge. There is talk about signing Maya onto the young leader programme due to her commitment to the group and her volunteering role in helping other young people.

FRIDAY FOOTBALL

The Friday Football is delivered within Dalbeattie, mainly at the High School, with the aim of reaching young people in order to deter them away from anti-social behaviour on a Friday evening by providing a space for them to play football and food to tackle poverty issues within the area.

This group was not able to run during lockdowns as an online session was not possible, however as soon as youth workers were able to support groups outdoors we were using public spaces such as parks in order to cater to young people until we were allowed to continue provision at the school. We were able to provide young people with BBQ food and would see a regular group turning up to talk with youth workers.

Being in a public space we also spent time with transition years talking to P7's about their options at youth work and moving up to the High School. Some of these young people then decided to sign up for other groups.



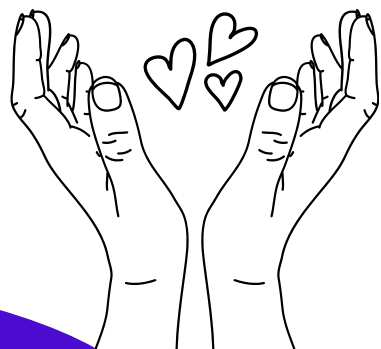
YOUTH WORK IN UPPER NITHSDALE

OVERVIEW

Mid & Upper Nithsdale contains the settlements of Thornhill, Sanquhar, Kelloholm & Kirkconnel that are between 13 and 30 miles north of Dumfries and border with East Ayrshire local authority council. The area all located on the A76 and all the area has primary schools, secondaries and a range of shops and leisure facilities. Sanquhar, Kirkconnel and Kelloholm fall into 3 of the highest areas of deprivation in Dumfries & Galloway. Kelloholm and Kirkconnel once a former Mining Community has suffered population decline and unemployment since the closure of the deep mining industry.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE:

- * 60 isolation packs delivered from Thornhill to Kelloholm.
- * 56 Summer programme activity packs delivered from Thornhill to Kelloholm.
- * Young, Wild & Free Sanquhar & Kelloholm.
- * Evening Detached in Sanquhar.
- * Evening Detached Kelloholm & Kirkconnel.
- * Kelloholm Youth Group Online.
- * Mid & Upper Nithsdale Youth Committee.
- * Young Hands - Young Parents Group.
- * Kelloholm Youth Group (in person).
- * Friday Night Football, Kelloholm .
- * Outdoor Football, Sanquhar.
- * January to March Youth Work Hubs x 3 days a week, Sanquhar Academy.
- * June to September Youth Work Hubs x 3 days a week, Sanquhar Academy.
- * Thornhill After School Group.
- * Champions Board.
- * Nithsdale Challenge, Sanquhar Academy.
- * Bite & Blether Outdoors, Kelloholm.
- * Lunch Club outdoors, Sanquhar Academy.
- * Bite & Blether Outdoors, Thornhill.
- * Graffiti Project, Kelloholm Skate Park.
- * 10,000 Voices in Action Youth Action Group.
- * Sanquhar After School Group.
- * Christmas Movie Night & Pizza.



YOUNG HANDS

Young Hands is a group for young parents under the age 26 in Sanquhar, Kirkconnel & Kelloholm running weekly from The Miners Hall, Kirkconnel. The purpose of the group is to provide a safe, social and learning space for parents and their children and each week to provide a range of activities for them and their children to participate into develop their relationships and confidence. The group was established because it was recognised that quite often young parents do not feel confident in attending "mainstream" parenting groups in their communities due to feeling judged or criticised. Over lockdown the group ran online for an hour a week and the parents reflected that lockdown for them was extremely challenging especially where there were single parents, and it was just them and their kids and the hour chat even though it was virtual provided some sanity to speak to other adults. Once we could the group ran back inside where numbers were building each week as we were the first parent group to open within the community. The parents kept sign posting their friends to come along to the group and we got the parents to work along side us to co design activities for the week leading up to Christmas including what we could do as a group for Christmas. Coming back after January the group didn't run again until we were outdoors at the end of February which again encourage the parents to get out and about with their children instead of being stuck at home.

YOUTH WORK IN UPPER NITHSDALE

KELLOHOLM FRIDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

The Friday Night Football started off as we came out of lockdown in September 2020 and services restarted outdoors and one of the things young people had wanted before lockdown was to have football. This was for any young person in Kelloholm, Kirkconnel or Sanquhar aged 12 - 17 to attend, the attendance was positive and young people were happy to be back out and about within the community. The group ran outside for 5 weeks until the darker nights came in and then we moved inside.

The provision offers young people a safe environment where they can develop both formal and social relationships, learn new skills, take part in activities as well as seek advice and information. Young people are always in control of how much they choose to participate within the session where there is always a wide range of activities available.

The outdoors football really provided a proper community engagement where we had parents and young siblings come down to enquire about what we were doing and who we were but

allowed us to build positive relationships within the community. The young people that attended loved being able to come along to play football with their mates especially after being stuck in the house during lockdown. For some of the lads their local football teams who they played with had not run for 6 months so they enjoyed getting back into it but also for those young people who could not afford to go to a football team it dropped that barrier. We after we moved back inside used to run an hour of football and then an hour of generic youth group.

Generally, the group have bonded really well together and it is well noted that where there are many pockets of young people in small group whilst there is the big group playing football, they have become at ease with each other as a larger group and feel confident to express themselves. There have been clearly new friendships developed and often where there is group discussions on varied topics it provides the opportunity for young people to support each other and share their experiences.

CASE STUDY - MATTHEW

Matthew has been attending youth work provision for several years including being involved in projects such as The Toon and in his second year as a Youth Councillor for Mid & Upper Nithsdale. However more recently Matthew since September 2020 has been a young leader at the Kelloholm Youth Group & Friday Night Football.

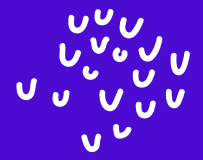
Matthew has a great rapport and relationship with the young people within the community and with youth work staff, every Friday he turns up and leads the football including putting young people into fair teams and encouraging new young people to get involved. Young people respect and listen to Matthew in terms of when it comes to the rules for the games and challenging them when they are not respecting each other.

He has also been an advocate within the community through his young leader role in terms of trying to get the MUGA resurfaced and the lights working in the football field so that they

can play football later at night when the dark nights come in. Staff recognise the great work he does in terms of leading the football for young people in the community and he has a clear passion for working with young people and his community.

Due to Matthew's diverse range of participation within Youth Work, he has developed a keen interest in volunteering and participation. He has said youth work has given him many opportunities to become a lot more involved within his local community and bring back activities and opportunities young people have wanted for years. He shows outstanding leadership and confidence within himself, and his role and he is a credit to himself and the community.

"Being a young leader has given me valuable experience in youth work and has given me a great opportunity to experience what I want to do and what I enjoy doing".



YOUTH WORK IN UPPER NITHSDALE

CASE STUDY – DORA

Dora is now 16 years old and start attending Youth Work provision when she was 12 in S1 when she attended the After School Group in Sanquhar Academy. Over the 4 years she has been involved with youth work she has come on so much in terms of confidence, self-esteem, and self-belief. Dora Leigh in the first instance came along with a few friends and over the years has made many new ones through attending different groups and projects.

Over the past few years where there has been more provision within Upper Nithsdale, she has started to become much more involved within the service over the last year and even within groups at times takes on a young leader role. She has a very caring nature and wants to be involved in helping youth workers and young people within the community. She trusts the work that we deliver so much that she has signposted other young people who she feels could benefit from the service/support. To be able to watch Dora flourish and take more of a leadership role and get involved with projects that are out of her comfort a zone has been an amazing journey to watch and be part of.

As part of some of the projects she has been involved in she was also voted for by her peers to be

Chairperson of the Mid & Upper Nithsdale Youth Forum after our earlier chair moved on. She had worked on developing ideas with the committee for the Christmas 2020 & Easter 2021 programme but also bringing these to life for the young people within the community.

In early June 2020 she also joined the 10,000 Voices in Action Youth Action Group which has been a group of young people volunteering to role out Participatory Budgeting to projects and communities that meet the priorities as set out in the 10,000 Voices Consultation. It's been a massive thing for her to be involved in and the first time she has done anything like that, and she has really excelled within her role and finding confidence within her own thoughts and opinions to share among the group.

As a staff team we really see Dora's full potential and have seen her grow in confidence, demonstrate excellent leadership and increase her own self-belief through everything she has achieved in youth group. She see's youth group as her "second family" and her journey with youth work is only just getting started as she takes on more leadership responsibility. Dora is an inspiring young woman, full of potential that has achieved massive personal milestones.



AS A STAFF TEAM WE REALLY SEE DORA'S FULL POTENTIAL AND HAVE SEEN HER GROW IN CONFIDENCE, DEMONSTRATE EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP AND INCREASE HER OWN SELF-BELIEF... – STAFF

YOUTH WORK IN WIGTOWNSHIRE

OVERVIEW

Wigtownshire sits in the far West of Dumfries and Galloway, with over half of its population living in rural areas and 36% living in urban areas – in this case, Stranraer – which is the area’s only town/settlement which is classified as urban. Per hectare there is 0.24 people living across D&G, the Wigtownshire average for this figure is 0.17 so well below average.

As well as Stranraer, there are several other towns that are main settlements of local residents: Newton Stewart, Wigtown, Whithorn, Glenluce, Creetown and Portpatrick.

A number of areas in Wigtownshire are identified through the Social Index of Multiple Deprivation as being areas of high deprivation, with pockets in Stranraer and Whithorn.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE:

- * Isolation packs delivered across the locality.
- * Evening Detached sessions across Wigtownshire.
- * Peer Projects online.
- * Late Lounge over 18’s group online.
- * Wigtown Youth Forum Committee.
- * Stranraer Youth Café Committee.
- * Friday Night Football in Whithorn and Stranraer.
- * January – March Youth Work Hubs: 3 days a week Douglas Ewart High School.
- * January – March Youth Work Hubs: 3 days a week Stranraer Academy.
- * June – September Youth Work Hubs: 3 days a week Douglas Ewart High School.
- * June – September Youth Work Hubs: 3 days a week Stranraer Academy.
- * Champions Board groups in Newton Stewart and Stranraer.
- * 10,000 Voices in Action, Youth Action Groups in each Ward area.
- * Easter Egg distribution to local young people.
- * Young Leaders attended International Women’s Day Conference by KIP Education.
- * Delivered the Wigtown Social Isolation Project with funding received from Youth Link Scotland.
- * HIIT Classes delivered with young people in Newton Stewart.
- * Whithorn Christmas Eve Boxes with Whithorn Youth Group.
- * P7 John Muir Transition groups online.
- * Virtual Kilimanjaro Walking Challenge.
- * On Yer Bike! Cycling and Climate Change project in Stranraer.
- * LGBT Groups online and in person.
- * Phone call check ins.
- * Skills Cafes.
- * VIP Me.
- * Opening of McMillan Hall Youth Room in Newton Stewart.
- * Beach cleans across Wigtownshire.
- * Pamper nights online.
- * October Holiday Programme.
- * Sports Sessions.
- * Golf for Beginners.
- * Young Leaders Training and Volunteer Projects.
- * Youth Work in Schools: issue-based group work.
- * Online Young Drivers.
- * Support to Wards 1 and 2 Youth Councillors and 10,000 Voices Youth Action Groups.
- * Sound Connections Project.
- * Beyond the Book (book club).
- * Delivered Summer Programme packs.
- * Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Cairnsmore Open Centre.
- * Champions Board Christmas Eve boxes.

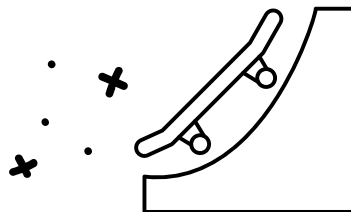
YOUTH WORK IN WIGTOWNSHIRE

RAMP PROJECT – STRANRAER

Stranraer Ramp Park sits within Stair Park and has been a feature of the lives of many young people in the area for a number of years. We have been working in partnership with the Community Assets Team and Ward Worker in Stranraer to engage young people in the process of redesigning and developing a new Ramp Park facility in Stair Park.

The current ramps are well used by children and young people despite being old and dilapidated. Our Youth Councillors for Ward 1, along with a group of young people who regularly use the ramp park, have been collaborating with a specialist contractor to design the layout of the park, along with any special features they would like to see within the budget. They have also been involved in fundraising and contributing to funding applications to raise additional cash to provide enhanced features that they felt was important, such as creating a low-ramp training area for junior and beginner riders. All of the consultations, meeting with designers and project planning sessions have been held at the Ramp Park and facilitated by our detached youth workers.

To optimise young people's engagement and participation in this project it was important that the opportunities to be involved were within their own social environment, and not within typical meeting setting such as community centres and halls. Good relationships have been established with the young people, with the benefit of discovering and learning with and from them and building something new that they can participate in its emergence. Together, we have been able to identify and employ the different skills within the group to advance the project, such as nominating young people who are confident to speak up at meetings, facilitate consultations within the wider skate park community, and utilising young people's experience and technical knowledge to design the best park possible. The next phase of this project, that is due to begin after the summer holidays, is to install the new ramps, then work with the young people to plan a launch event that will take place towards the end of the Autumn.



SOCIAL ISOLATION PROJECT – WIGTOWN

When the Youth Work Service received funding from Youth Link Scotland's Social Isolation Fund, young people from Wigtown Youth Forum knew exactly what they wanted to do with it. The aim of the fund was to alleviate and lessen the severe impacts that social isolation and loneliness was having on young people in the local community during COVID-19, and to reintegrate them into their communities in the recovery phases that lay ahead.

The young people from Wigtown chose to run a four-week intergenerational project, where they would recruit and signpost both younger and older members of the community to the online group that would be held on Zoom. Fun and interactive sessions were organised with doorstep deliveries before the group containing materials and goodies that would be used during various tutorials and activities. Sessions included: Flower arranging with a local

business; Bingo & Supper Tea; Music Night with a local band; quiz night and cupcake decorating. The young people designed all of the sessions and helped to deliver the resources needed for each evening. Each session that took place featured items and services from local business providers from Wigtown and the surrounding area.

In lockdowns one and two when we only had online and outdoor Youth Work provision, the young people said that they have missed taking part in the wider community events that COVID-19 has meant that they have missed out on, such as events they frequently hold for both young and older members of the community in and around Wigtown. The older people who took part said that they really enjoyed the project and looked forward every week to coming online to get to talk and do fun activities with new people, and it was lovely to speak with the "young yins"!

YOUTH WORK IN WIGTOWNSHIRE

GARDEN GROUP – DOUGLAS EWART HIGH SCHOOL

During the Summer of 2020 when we were still in a state of lockdown, the Youth Work Service opened Youth Work Support Hubs in each Secondary School in Dumfries and Galloway. The Hub in Douglas Ewart High School, Newton Stewart, featured several groups who accessed the hub on different days, one of which was a group predominantly made up of 12-14 year old boys who would form the Garden Group.

When looking for things they could do around the

school, the Headteacher pointed out an old disused piece of land that lay at the back of the school on the sports field. It used to be a garden but in recent years had fallen into disrepair after not being looked after and upkeep. In Adam's story, we will see the work that has gone into the group from these young people and the efforts they have gone in order to ensure that the school garden is no longer sitting forgotten about, and that it has been turned into a space that all young people

can enjoy, whether it is for outdoor learning, or for a safe space to relax outside with friends at breaks or on free periods.

The group have transformed the garden and have built links with staff within the school, and with local businesses who have provided them with goods. They have also learnt some skills for life, with some of them wanting to undertake careers and/or further education in the construction sector.

CASE STUDY – ADAM

Adam is 14 years old, and first started accessing Youth Work through the Junior drop-in that was on in Mid-Galloway. Adam enjoyed being at drop-ins and catching up with his friends, but COVID meant that these types of groups would no longer be able to run, and he was not keen to take part in the online Youth Work opportunities that were on offer.

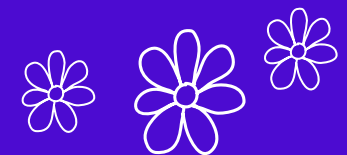
When the Youth Work Hubs started at the local high school in order to provide some support to young people, Adam attended the sessions. The school Headteacher flagged up a potential project for the group to be working on outside in the nice weather. An old disused garden which sat at the back of the school was starting to become an eyesore, needing a lot of TLC and someone to put a bit of time into it, and turn it into something that people could use, and that would be safe.

The group began turning over the garden, digging away weeds, replacing an old polytunnel, making vegetable patches, putting in some plants, repairing fences and gates and much more. Adam and the group started phoning and messaging local companies on Facebook who could provide goods for the garden, most of which were provided free of charge, or just a haulage fee was asked for. They received oak barrel planters from a local Whisky factory, top soil from a local provider, gravel from another and more that is still coming in.

As a result of Adam's hard work and commitment to the project, another similar project has recently started in Newton Stewart's Douglas Park, installing a path into a local park which will provide locals with the opportunity to do their daily mile, and to learn more about climate change, as information boards

would be a key feature of the path. Adam has been digging, putting in drainage systems, and learning to work as part of a team. His experience outlined above has resulted in positive changes in Adam's life both at home and school. His confidence has increased and he has found having this sense of purpose and belonging to something a great impact on his life.

Aaron has said that he has gained a lot of new skills as a result of taking part in the various Youth Work projects, these are things he can take forward as he would one day like to work in Construction or be a Farmer. Through his commitment to the various groups, he has been involved in a number of reward days and trips away.



YOUTH WORK IN WIGTOWNSHIRE

CASE STUDY – CONNOR



Connor is 14 years old, and first started coming along to Youth Work provision when he was in S1 and attended lunchtime drop ins in his school. Connor began to attend some evening drop ins and would frequently come into the school's youth base during the day to speak with Youth Workers, as he would often struggle in school, and this acted as a diversion for him. After a few months began to ask about volunteering opportunities within the Youth Work programmes in his area, as he was exceptionally keen to get some volunteering experience under his belt.

Connor told staff that he had a keen interest in volunteering and developing his leadership skills and from this has since been volunteering in one of our groups for young people with Additional Support Needs. Connor started volunteering with the group just over one year ago and hasn't looked back since. The group members really enjoy having Connor there to help them to plan activities and programmes

and act as a peer mentor.

Connor has massively gained in confidence and has developed a sense of responsibility and maturity for his role within the Peer Project, and for his personal life away from volunteering, with staff frequently commenting on the difference in him compared to when he started his volunteer journey. Connor's Mum has also commented to staff about the difference she is seeing in Connor, both at school and at home.

Connor has said that volunteering has allowed him to take on a new role within Youth Work and taught him a bit more about being responsible as a Young Leader and acting as a role model for other young people. Connor has recently completed his Level 1 Young Leaders Training and is looking forward to progressing onto the next level and further developing his own knowledge and understanding on volunteering.

 **CONNOR HAS MASSIVELY GAINED IN CONFIDENCE AND HAS DEVELOPED A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND MATURITY FOR HIS ROLE WITHIN THE PEER PROJECT... – STAFF** 

10,000 VOICES IN ACTION

YOUTH ACTION GROUP

The 10,000 Voices in Action is a project that started in June 2020 during lockdown and for the most part has been delivered online via Zoom. The project is focused on enabling young people to use their voices, to have autonomy over their own funding using Participatory Budgeting to get young people to vote for projects they want to see happening within their communities that meet the priorities as set out within the 10,000 Voices consultation findings. The Youth Action Group (YAG) is made up of young people from across Dumfries and Galloway with a different wealth of experiences in youth work.

Over the past year the YAG have met every Thursday night on Zoom for 1 to 2 hours and they've had one full day together with everyone as a group. They also met within the communities in smaller groups to catch up and complete their Participative Democracy Certificate. Since June, the young people working on the group have achieved a lot in terms of the project during a lockdown. They successfully created and put out an application form to organisations so that they could bid for the money, they then shortlisted these and put the majority through to the public vote. Young people spent time promoting and encouraging young people in their communities to vote. They have also completed over 100 hours of their Saltire Award and their Participative Democracy Certificate. The groups have also been taking part in site visits both in person and virtually to monitor the projects that were successful in receiving funding, including meeting the young people that have benefited from the projects.

FUNDING PROCESS

From August to October the Youth Action Group launched the first round of £60,000 to give away within the 12 different wards in Dumfries and Galloway each ward had £5,000. We had over 50 projects apply initially to the fund and after the online public vote where 1314 young people used their decision making powers 32 organisations shared the investment of £60,000.

FUNDED PROJECTS

Ward 1 - Stranraer and the Rhins

Wigtownshire Rugby Club - £804
Wigtownshire Stuff Friday group - £1,270
Better Lives Partnership - £1,202
Stranraer Youth Cafe - £1,724

Ward 2 - Mid Galloway and Wigtown West

HIIT For Health - £2,300
Reconnect Whithorn £1,320
The Vault Youth Project - £1,179

Ward 3 - Dee and Glenkens

The Gatehouse Bunker - £2,200
Kirkcudbright Development Trust - £2,500
YMCA Gatehouse of Fleet - £300

Ward 4 Castle Douglas & Crocketford

Better Lives Partnership - £2,752
Stewartry Youth Work Steering Group -
Anti Bullying - £1,660

Ward 5 - Abbey

Opportunities for marginalised young people -
Stewartry Youth Forum - £2,540
The Birchvale Players - £2,460

FUNDED PROJECTS CONT.

Ward 6 - North West Dumfries

Dumfries YMCA - £5,000

Ward 7 - Mid & Upper Nithsdale

Dumfries & Galloway Hard of Hearing Group - £500
Thornhill After School - £1,500
Upper Nithsdale Riding for the Disabled Association -
£1,000
Nithsdale Lifesavers Club - £500

Ward 8 - Lochar

Jericho Fly Fishing Club - £3,121
DG Cheer - £1,486

Ward 9 - Nith

LGBT Youth Scotland - £610
Police Scotland Youth Volunteers - £1,300
Music and Me, Oasis Events Team - £1,550
Dumfries Parkour Group - £1,450

Ward 10 - Annandale South

Annan Athletic - £3,000
Annan Academy Bee Club - £1,000
Solway Spartans Boxing Club - £500
Bright Stars - £350
Annan Youth Group - £141

Ward 11 - Annandale North

Lockerbie Learning Centre - £5,000

Ward 12 - Annandale East & Eskdale

Duke of Edinburgh - £4,845

Regional Projects

The Mental Health Project - £630
The Environmental project - £425



OASIS YOUTH CENTRE

OASIS YOUTH CENTRE

The Oasis Youth Centre, in Dumfries town centre, is the region's flagship youth centre. It provides a safe place where anyone aged 12-25 can discover somewhere to go, something to do, and someone to talk to. Since opening in 1999, the centre has provided support and opportunities to many young people and continually looks to reshape its provision in line with the needs of the young people it serves.

HANGOUT

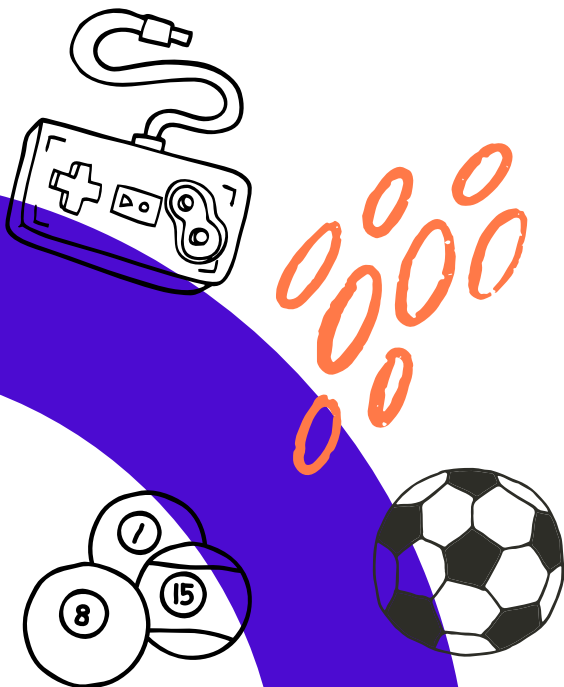
Hangout runs 6 nights a week from Oasis Youth Centre. Hangout sessions are targeted at 11-17 year olds living in Dumfries. During both lockdowns, the group ceased to function however regular drop-in sessions were ran online in its place. Whether in person or online, hangouts provided a space for young people to engage with youth workers in conversations, participate in team activities, informal learning and generally have a safe space to socialise in. After the second lockdown, the group had a major focus on wellbeing and ensuring young people were doing okay or getting the appropriate support as restrictions eased and more of their communities opened up. The group have been eager to hold more sessions outdoors and at Dock Park to make the most of being able to attend groups, rather than continuing to stay indoors.

 **HANGOUTS ARE A SAFE PLACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO COME WHO DON'T FEEL SAFE AT HOME OR ELSEWHERE.** 

 **MOST PEOPLE HERE ARE POSITIVE, STAFF MEMBERS ENCOURAGE YOU AND REMIND YOU THAT YOU ARE WORTH IT WHEN YOU ARE STRUGGLING.** 

 **IT'S A SAFE SPACE TO HANGOUT.** 

 **HANGOUT IS FUN, AND IF WE HAVE ANY ISSUES WE CAN TALK TO STAFF. WE GET A LOT OF DONATIONS WHICH WE APPRECIATE AND ITS REALLY NICE OF COMPANIES TO DO THIS.** 



OASIS YOUTH CENTRE

BOUNCIN BAIRNS

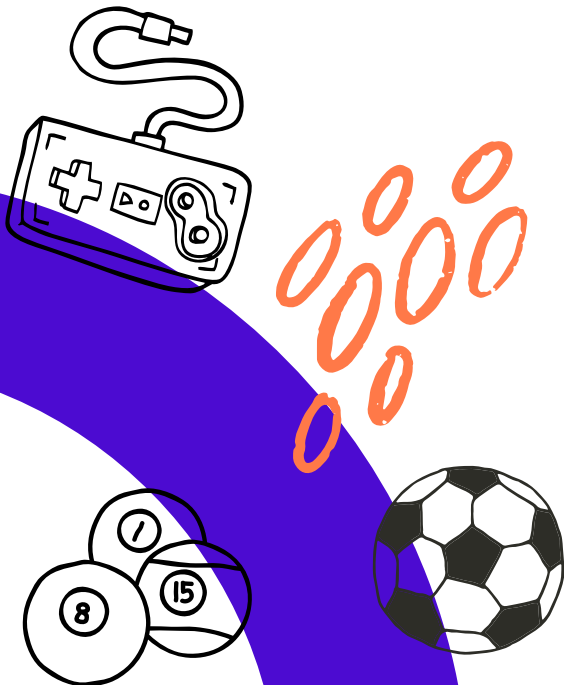
Bouncin Bairns is targeted at young parents (up to 25 years old) and is a space where they can come together discuss issues around parenting and general life while being able to have their children with them. Over the past year, the group has ran online, outdoors and face to face indoors with inputs from early years.

The group have supported one another in a time where many toddlers will not have had the opportunity to socialise and engage with other children, and in times when parents may feel more isolated than expected with new parents.

I ENJOY COMING TO BOUNCIN BAIRNS AS THE GROUP DOES NOT HAVE THE SAME JUDGEMENT AROUND YOUNG PARENTS THAT I FEEL MANY OTHER PARENT AND TODDLER GROUPS HAVE. IT IS A SAFE AND WELCOMING SPACE FOR ME AND MY CHILD.

BOUNCIN BAIRNS HAS GIVEN A SPACE FOR US, ALLOWING OUR KIDS TO COME OUT THEIR SHELL AND THEIR CONFIDENCE GROW SO MUCH.

IT GIVES ME A CHANCE TO ENGAGE WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAY BE EXPERIENCING OR FEELING SIMILAR THINGS TO ME.



OASIS YOUTH CENTRE

CASE STUDY – AM

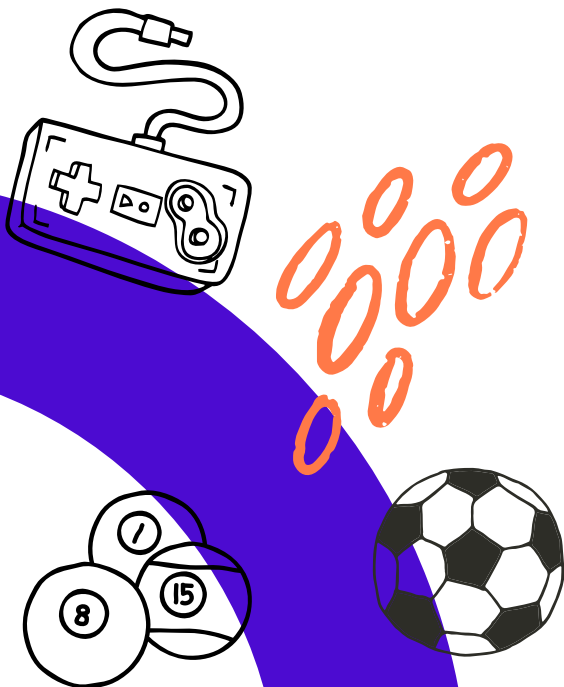
AM started accessing services during the summer of 2017 as a way to combat boredom during the summer holidays. They have engaged with services ever since, attending a variety of groups on offer. AM enjoys participating in arts-based activities during hangouts and drops ins, and also attended our arts and crafts group. AM stated that they felt their mental health had improved significantly as well as provision providing them with an escape from a chaotic home life. They felt staff had played a part in this change as staff always found a way to make them smile or

laugh and eventually bring them out of their down moods sometimes experienced in groups. Staff have commented on the change in AM's confidence since December as they have engaged with more young people out with their social circle, and having more conversations with different staff. AM has went from one of our quietest young people to a bubbly, confident young person over the space of a few months.

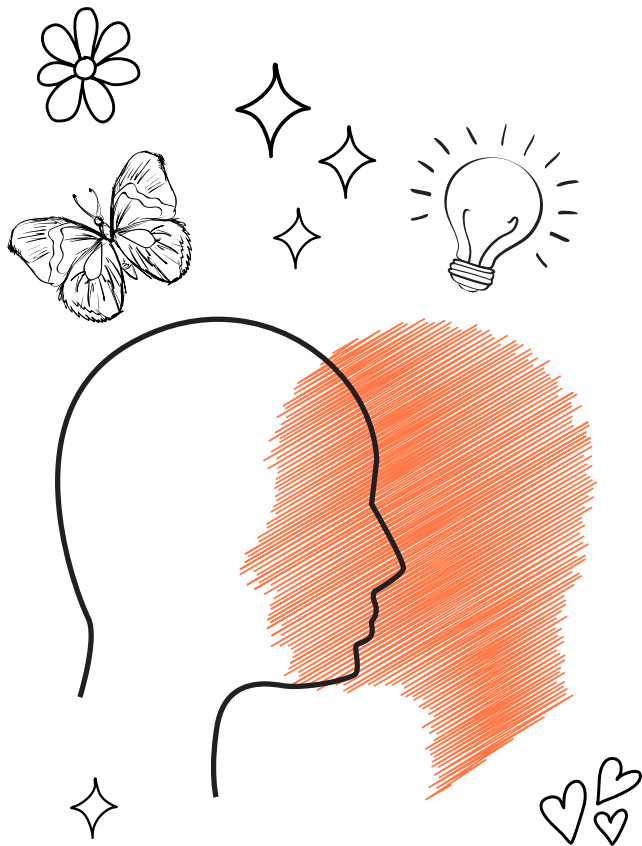
CASE STUDY – LH

LH began accessing services around 2 years ago after their friends suggested they come along to Oasis. They have participated in a range of groups, but for the most part of the 2020-2021 reporting session, LH accessed hangouts between the two national lockdowns and since the restart from the second. Over the course of the year, LH had been in trouble with police and for behaviour in the youth centre. Since returning from the second lockdown, they have recognised the positive effect being involved in groups such as the Hangout has had on their mental health and behaviour has improved drastically within the centre.

Staff have noticed that LH has been able to control their emotions and remain a lot calmer, and be more respectful to others and their surroundings. Previously they would have become angry, try to encourage a fight, or leave provision in the heat of the moment, without thought of the consequences. LH also feels their confidence has increased since being involved in services. Over the coming months, LH is looking to sign up to the young leaders programme to gain new skills and get an idea of whether youth work is a career path for them.



YOUTH ENQUIRY SERVICE



YOUTH ENQUIRY SERVICE

The Youth Enquiry Service (YES) is Dumfries & Galloway Council's Youth Information and Support Hub. The service provides support to help young people overcome any difficulties they are facing – from mental health to CV building, bereavement to drugs, body image to relationships.

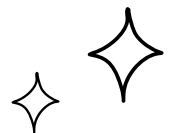
THE PAST YEAR

The Youth Enquiry Service successfully moved to the top floor of DG1 Leisure Centre in the Summer of 2019. The space is considerably bigger than the previous premises which is allowing for a more varied programme of groups and resources for young people to use. The light and airy building has improved the general mood and feeling while people are in the building. The building has been kitted out with new equipment to allow for a varied use of all the rooms. The building features two purpose built 1-2-1 rooms for informal support sessions, a fully equipped multimedia suite, sensory chill out room, full kitchen, project room and main delivery room. The partnership with the NHS Sexual Health team will continue with them delivering the youth clinic from within YES one afternoon a week in a dedicated clinic room.

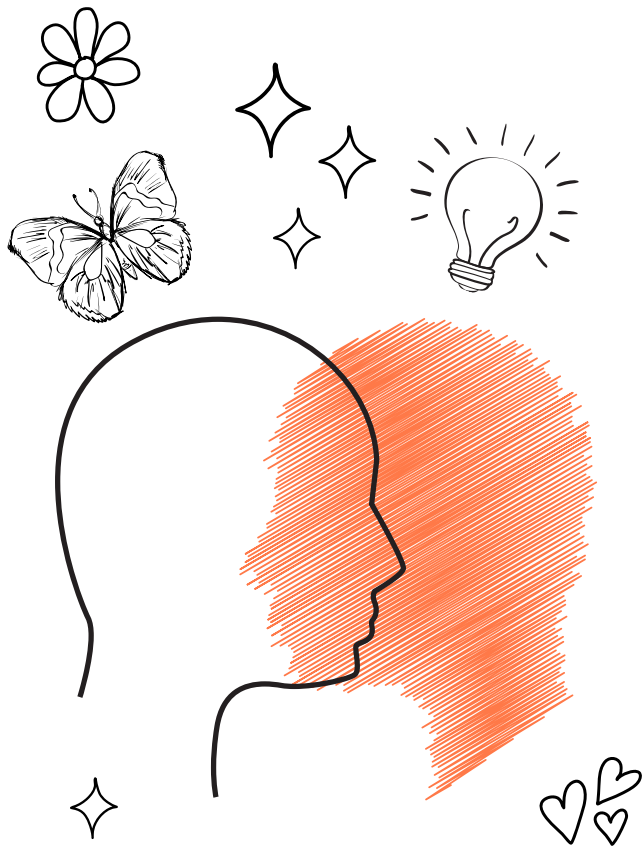
Over the past year, the Youth Enquiry Service has continued to be a safe place for young people aged 12-25 and moved online during periods of lockdown due to Covid19 and at points ran as a hub, offering support and activities for some of our most vulnerable young people.

When full face to face, indoor youth work has been allowed to run in line with Covid19 guidance, the Youth Enquiry Service has provided a range of provision including:

- **One to one, low-level mental health support**
- **Universal drop-in sessions for both 12- 17year olds and 18-25year olds**
- **You Decide - a targeted group where young people pick the topics they want to learn more about**
- **Happy Feet - a 12 week programme that looks at different aspects of health and well-being including food, mental health and physical activity**
- **Creative Media - a group where young people can learn different media & digital skills**
- **Two-Faced - a targeted group looking at self-esteem and body image whilst learning new make-up techniques**
- **Living Life to the Full - an accredited programme which teaches a range of life skills, improves well-being and builds resilience**
- **Seasons for Growth - a programme to support young people who have experienced bereavement, loss or change**



YOUTH ENQUIRY SERVICE



YOU DECIDE

The You Decide group ran at the Youth Enquiry Service from October to December 2020 on a Monday evening. The group was aimed at young people aged 12-17 and is a starting point for young people attending targeted, issue-based groups. The young people decided what topics they want to cover and each week a different topic is then looked at through workshops and activities. The young people who attended the group had previously accessed universal provision in the form of drop ins and through the development of relationships with staff at these sessions, the need for more focused work was identified. The nature of the You Decide group gives young people control over what topics they want to find out more about so that it relevant to them. Topics chosen and covered during the group include LGBT, friendships & relationships, alcohol, mental health and body image. The group helped to build on new friendships and improve on existing ones within the group. The group members all improved in confidence and self-esteem as well as increasing their knowledge on the different topics. Most of the group have since moved on to attending other targeted programmes and all have continued to access universal provision.

 **THE GROUP GAVE ME A SAFE SPACE TO TALK ABOUT THINGS I WOULDN'T NORMALLY TALK ABOUT.** 

CASE STUDY - K

K had accessed universal services starting with an After School group then onto drop-in sessions. K has struggled at times with peer relationships, often experiencing bullying and exclusion from social activities with peers. K signed up for the You Decide group at YES as they wanted to learn about different topics and meet like-minded people. The purpose of the group is for young people to identify topics relevant to them that they would like to learn more about. A different topic is covered with the group each week through workshops and activities and helps to improve young peoples confidence, knowledge on relevant topics and build positive

relationships. Through attending the group, K has gained more knowledge and understanding on different topics including friendships, LGBT and alcohol. K has built positive relationships with staff and formed solid friendships with other members of the group. K has visibly grown in confidence and is open to sharing their feelings and experiences with the group. K has enjoyed being part of the group and feeling included and valued. K is more confident now in being themselves and expressing who they are. K has also moved on to attend a new targeted group that is has a more singular focus which suits their needs and interests.

YOUTH INFORMATION WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

The Mental Health in Schools Project is an expanded model of the 'Pilot' Youth Information Workers in School (2018-2020). The Youth Enquiry Service is part of Dumfries and Galloway's Youth Work Service, which is delivering the project to Secondary and Primary Schools across Dumfries and Galloway.



Since August 2020, this provision has been committed in delivering flexible responsive early intervention and low-level mental health support for young people across the region. The work is targeted at closing the poverty-related attainment gap identified in the Scottish Government Framework to support the Scottish attainment challenge. It offers a confidential and a person-centred approach to support young people's social and emotional wellbeing.

The delivery of this project is supported by specialist Youth Information Workers who have an accredited Certificate in Counselling Skills through COSCA (the professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in Scotland) and three full-time Youth Workers based within the regions Primary Schools.

The projects aim is to provide a programme that strengthens and increases a young person's emotional resilience, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social emotional skills.

Every secondary school is allocated a Youth Information Worker delivering 1-2-1 low level psychological support and a range of evidence-based group work and issue-based programmes.

Our one-to-one support sessions provide a safe space for young people to feel supported in disclosing anything that is troubling them. The Youth Information Worker uses various approaches such as Person-centred and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), to help a young person develop an understanding of their feelings and experiences and explore coping strategies to find helpful solutions. The sessions last 6-8 weeks, meeting once weekly for 45 minutes per session. All potential requests for assistance from other agencies and partners must inform the school before submitting a referral for a young person to our service. Young people may approach the service directly, they may have contact through projects delivered by the Youth Work Service across D&G or through other statutory or voluntary services such as Social Work, Youth Justice or Third Sector Organisations.

 **I LEARNED HOW TO DEAL WITH MY ANXIETY MORE AND CAN DEAL MORE CONFIDENTLY WITH MY PANIC ATTACKS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN. THE SESSIONS HAVE HELPED ME NOT THINKING IN TO THINGS AS MUCH AS THIS IS HELPING MY RELATIONSHIPS AND SCHOOL. – YP AGED 14** 



YOUTH INFORMATION WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

Our evidence-based groups and programmes focus on the overall health and well-being of young people and are delivered both in primary and secondary schools. They consist of 6-10 young people and the contents of the sessions are flexible to the needs of each group, again they last up to 8 weeks with a duration of 45- 60 minutes per session.



These include:

- **Seasons for Growth** - aims to build the resilience of young people who are dealing with significant loss or change and help young people develop the language needed to express their feelings.
- **Living Life to the Full** - aims to improve self-esteem and confidence and improve wellbeing and resilience using a CBT approach.
- **DNA-V** - an evidence-based model that promotes psychological strength, and connection to values to support young people cope with challenges, stress, and change.

Over the last 10 months we have received over 470 requests for assistance. Approximately, 350 young people will have completed intervention by the end of June and the remaining will begin support in the new school term in August 2021.

We have supported young people with various issues such as Anger management, Exam stresses and Relationship Issues, however, the top key themes for referrals have been around Anxiety, Bereavement and Low mood.

We have developed stronger relationships with the school staff as well as other agencies and organisations and work collaboratively to meet the needs of the young people. The programme has had a significant impact on the young people and within the community with many young people experiencing positive change in their behaviour, building resilience and being able to manage their emotions.

 **...THERE HAS BEEN AN IMPROVEMENT IN YP OVERALL CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN NEEDED. YP SEEMS TO BE MORE SOCIALLY CONFIDENT AS WELL. I THINK YP APPEARS TO HAVE BETTER COPING MECHANISMS NOW...**
- PRINCIPAL TEACHER PUPIL SUPPORT 



YOUTH INFORMATION WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

SUPPORT OVER LOCKDOWN

In September 2020 -December 2020, our three Youth Workers delivered the 'Living Life to the Full' (building self-esteem and confidence) and Seasons for Growth (bereavement, loss) programmes in Primary Schools across Dumfries and Galloway.

These groups were delivered by our three Youth Workers who delivered 175 Living Life to the Full sessions and 9 sessions of Seasons for Growth in a total of 10 Primary Schools, these include: - Heathhall, Lockerbie, Lincluden and Park, Dalbeattie, Northwest Community Campus, AE, Amisfield, Caerlaverock and Brownhall Primary. A total of 464 young people participated in these groups, focusing on their overall health and wellbeing.

In January 2021, the lockdown had a significant impact on the young people, however, within the secondary school service we continued to provide one to one support via digital platforms such as teams and phone calls and texts. We also offered young people who had completed intervention, 15-minute check-ins with the Youth Information Worker. This provided the opportunity to check in with the young people to support, advise and recall any coping strategies that they already had in place. The total of check-ins from January to March was over 300, in addition to the regular one to one support sessions. We found that this service was welcomed not only by the young people but also by the Pupil Support Teachers and parents who felt reassured that the young people had regular contact during this difficult time.

Over 300
15-minute check-ins offered
to young people between
January and March

9 Seasons for Growth sessions
& 175 Living Life to the Full sessions
delivered across 10 Primary Schools



YOUTH INFORMATION WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

CASE STUDY

YP was referred to our 1-2-1 programme by their pupil support teacher for support dealing with anxiety and issues with school. YP was struggling to adjust back into school after lockdown. YP was struggling with increased anxiety which was greatly affecting their attendance in school. YP was rarely in school or classes and needed support helping to adjust back into full time education.

YP also struggled to do social things such as shopping, cinema, going out with friends. YP describes this as being an issue since they were little. YP would love to overcome anxiety and live "without fear" but YP is worried they will "always be like this."

YP was initially offered 8 one to one sessions however due to further lockdowns, these sessions were extended for further support.

YP set themselves the short and long term goal of increasing attendance in school, having control over anxiety and being able to cope with change.

YP engaged fantastically with the sessions from day one. YP spoke in depth about their feelings and explained that their moods and anxiety were "out of control".

YP began working on decatastrophizing; their anxiety was being fuelled by unrealistic overthinking and sessions provided opportunities to challenge these and provide alternative ways of dealing with these thoughts/feelings. Living Life to the Full programme was used which YP engaged with and allowed them to break down anxiety into small

manageable chunks. The YP began to learn what their triggers were and how to control these.

YP had began to make great progress when unfortunately we had another lockdown and school was closed for a further 4 months. By the time YP returned, the anxiety had increased.

After a few sessions, YP's attendance began to improve in school and was averaging two days a week in school but managed to come into school every day. Adjustments were put in place to help cope with full time education such as having a safe place in school when they felt overwhelmed but this helped increase confidence in school.

YP had many changes in life that potentially could have wreaked havoc on their mental health but told me they would "just take it day by day". This was an incredibly powerful statement from the YP who previously used to have panic attacks caused by fear of the future.

Towards the end of the sessions, YP was juggling leaving 5th year, moving home, moving to a whole new city, having constant assessments and dealing with personal relationships. YP used the techniques that they learned through the Living Life to the Full programme to help them cope with all these changes and anxiety.

YP stated that , '..anxiety was still present in their life but it was no longer the main part of it and no longer "terrified of the future but taking things "day by day".



YOUTH INFORMATION WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

CASE STUDY

YP was referred to the service as they struggled to control anger and emotions especially when given consequences for their behaviour which they struggled to take accountability for. This resulted in destructive behaviour and being quite physical with others and towards themselves.

YP attended weekly sessions to change this and they also continued to receive support throughout the lock down period. The YP set a personal goal to get help with anger and historical incidents that they were still struggling to understand.

YP used various worksheets and toolkits to explore emotions, gaining a better understanding of feelings, physical warning signs, how their responses affect others as well as themselves and equipping them with alternative coping skills to deal with life circumstances more positively.

YP created a distraction box full of resources, items that can be used when feeling overwhelmed with emotions and help provide a positive focus to calm down, reflect and deal with emotions more effectively. This was something that they really enjoyed creating for themselves.

Staff used person centred approach and CBT allowing YP the opportunity to express concerns and worries whilst helping deal with emotions, looking at the links between how they think, feel, and behave.

In the beginning of YP sessions a target sheet (a scale from 0-10 used on a weekly basis to monitor the changes in meeting their set goal) was used and they scored themselves a 2, in the final session they scored themselves a 10 showing that YP was feeling more in control of emotions and receiving support enabled them to talk through worries and concerns.

YP built positive relationships and created a positive support network with the Youth Information Worker, family support worker and Pupil Support teacher working together to support YP to feel more in control of their life.

YP said that they felt 1-2-1 support had helped them learn new coping strategies to deal with their feelings and emotions. YP reflected that they liked the sessions being in school hours and knowing they had someone in school to talk to and be listened too really helped. YP stated that they don't feel as angry at times and are less annoyed.



DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY YOUTH COUNCIL



Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council were elected in April 2019 and have 35 positions for young people aged 12-25. There are 3 types of role that young people have been elected to:

Ward Youth Councillor (2 per Ward area, 24 in total)

Ward Youth Councillors are responsible for representing the voices of young people who live, work and study within their physical communities to local decision makers including Elected Members.

Nominated Youth Councillors (1 per minority group, 7 in total)

Nominated Youth Councillors are responsible for representing the voices of young people across the region who are often not heard in decision making. This is a Youth Councillor for each of the following; Young Carers, Care Experienced Young People, LGBT Youth, Ethnic Minority Youth, Gypsy Traveller Youth, Young People with Additional Support Needs & Disabilities and Young Parents.

Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (2 per Constituency, 4 in total)

MSYPs are responsible for representing the voices of young people who live, work or study in their constituency at national sittings and to national decision makers including MPs and MSPs.

There is also a co-opted position in the organisation for Dumfries & Galloway Council's Young Peoples Champion.

The Youth Council have continued to meet from April 2020 - March 2021 digitally and on average they have met every 3 weeks over this period and have worked on a number of projects, initiatives, consultations and events.

The highlights for 2020-2021 have included:

- **The Impact on Young People: COVID-19 Research that was a localised version of the national Lockdown Lowdown consultation that the Youth Council led on alongside a number of Third and Public Sector partners.**
- **DGYC put forward questions for the Children and Young People Cross-Party Group which saw Ministers and Members discuss the issues facing children and young people nationally.**
- **DGYC delivered 3 community led beach clean in Annan, Garlieston and Stranraer as part of their commitment to tackling environmental issues.**
- **Members assessed, scored and awarded funding as part of the CashBack for Communities: Youth Work Fund panel for Dumfries and Galloway. CashBack reinvests proceeds of crime back into the community to benefit young people across Scotland.**

• **The Rights, Inequalities and Discrimination group launched a local campaign called #KnowYourRights that aims to get children and young people speaking about rights in their communities. The campaign was launched on World Children's Day and will run through until Human Rights Day on December 10th. The campaign included the delivery of Active Bystander Training which was delivered online on November 23rd by the Active Bystander Training Company.**

• **The Youth Council Enquiry Service (YCES) was established that enables Youth Council Members to communicate with Council departments directly, similar to the Elected Member Enquiry Service (EMES).**

• **Work is underway to progress the Joint Action Plan developed at the 1st Joint Meeting in March 2020. (Continued on next page.)**



DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY YOUTH COUNCIL



The Youth Council are elected in 2-year term cycles and in light of the pandemic, made the decision to postpone the elections from March until November 2021 in order to ensure the elections could be delivered in person and aligned with the Scottish Youth Parliament national cycle.

The group also recognise the challenges they've faced because of the pandemic and restrictions. Speaking on this, Chairperson, MSYP Hannah Birse said "Although we were elected in March, due to exams our induction period did not properly start until June with formal meetings taking place monthly from August 2020 onwards. We were able to meet only 6 times as a regional group before restrictions were introduced and although we've continued to meet and progress action where we can, we have been affected by the issues highlighted within the Impact on Young People: COVID-19 Findings Report too. From job uncertainty to exam grading, concerns for our communities and loved ones to online fatigue, it's been a difficult year. As a group, we are proud of what we have achieved in over a very strange year, and despite the pandemic, where possible we've remained a committed group of volunteers working to make sure young people are included and considered in decision making at a local and national level"

CASE STUDY – EVA

In Autumn 2020, Eva made the last-minute decision to put herself forward for the Youth Council by-elections having not been involved in youth democracy or Youth Services previously. Within her manifesto, if elected, she had wanted to raise awareness surrounding mental health conditions and invisible disabilities and to stand up for the young people who live in her Ward area.

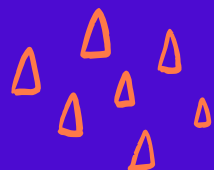
In the 1st online by-election the Youth Council had ever delivered over 100 young people came out to vote in her Ward area, and Eva was elected in September 2020 to take on the role.

Over the first few weeks, Eva was a quiet presence in the group feeling more comfortable speaking in smaller groups or on a 1-2-1 basis. "Being involved in the Youth Council has boosted my confidence a lot, I've grown as a person and now I am able to speak in front of bigger groups with a little more ease". Over time Eva started to speak up more in regional groups, feeling more sure in how the Youth Council runs and

the Members. Eva said, "I've definitely gained more time management skills and feel more able to prioritise meetings, coursework etc.". Youth Workers have also noticed a difference over time, initially reluctant to open up or share their views or ideas, this started to become a more regular occurrence during the Youth Council Meetings.

In January 2021, Eva hesitantly decided to put herself forward as the Wigtownshire representative on the Youth Council's Leadership Group, from this she was elected and with some encouragement subsequently put herself forward to stand in the Vice-Chair Elections.

Eva was elected as Vice-Chair and has taken to the role quickly. She is a reliable and trustworthy member of the Youth Council team, initially quiet and reserved, she has become more vocal on the issues young people are passionate about in her community.





CASE STUDY – DAVID

David has been involved in the Youth Council for 7 months and previously had no involvement in Youth Services. He found out about the Youth Council in class one afternoon where the teacher had read out the bulletin about the chance to be a Youth Councillor in Annandale and Eskdale, and asked for volunteers to stand for election – over time and with encouragement from his teacher, David decided to sign up.

When David was asked the difference being involved had on him, his response was “tons”, starting off very, very quiet and only contributing through the chat function of online meetings, over time David has become an active contributor to meetings and a keen volunteer out-with the Youth Council in his local community too.

David believes that the turning point for him to feel more confident was when he participated in the beach clean in Autumn 2020, pushing himself out of his comfort zone to participate with people he didn't know that well and hadn't met in person before. “It was a big thing for me to take part in it...before I didn't really do anything public and felt embarrassed to stand out”, as a result of this experience, David has

now organised and taken part in a number of community clean up sessions in Langholm, something he is determined would not have happened before.

David said “it's helped me in other ways too, like I am more likely to say yes to things now, like the Industrial Cadets as an example, I heard about it and my instant reaction was to think I couldn't do that, but then I felt like maybe I should try because I've been doing new things through the Youth Council and I know I can meet new people and try different things...the team I'm in are in the final for the industrial cadets and it's been amazing to be involved”

Speaking about the change in David, his Youth Worker said “it's been great to see him develop and grow more confident and sure of himself over the last 7 months. By his own admission, David was really quiet and wouldn't really speak unless he was sure of himself at the start. Now, he's opened up to asking for more information or sharing when he is unsure which is a huge difference. David is a committed Youth Council member and actively does his best for his community and peers”.



IT'S HELPED ME IN OTHER WAYS

TOO, LIKE I AM MORE LIKELY TO SAY YES

TO THINGS NOW... – DAVID



CHAMPIONS BOARD

Dumfries and Galloway's Champions Board Project is open to young people aged 12-25 who are care experienced. The project is voluntary for young people and over the last year, we have had to change how it is delivered significantly. At the start of the year, we were running 8 weekly, community-based groups after school and in the evenings for young people to come together and take part in activities such as cooking, sports and games, with 3 monthly Listen2Us meetings taking place bringing young volunteers together who wanted to change and influence how services for young people are delivered by organisations and departments with a Corporate Parenting responsibility.

Planning was underway for our 2nd annual #WeCare conference and the findings from the Listen2Us consultation from 2018 had been incorporated into the Corporate Parenting Group Plan and was being progressed. Then in March, when everything changed, and services moved online we found that a lot of our young people were not engaging online. Weekly, or in some cases daily phone calls were set up with those in need of support and the priority of the project shifted from ensuring young people's voices were heard in decision making to focussing our attention solely on young people's well-being.

For a number of our care leavers, this included support to ensure they could connect with each other, and their wider community by making applications for devices and connectivity, and linking in with food providers.

When restrictions allowed, we resumed our provisions outdoors, however there are unique challenges in delivering targeted groups in public spaces so although these were successful in many communities, they were challenging to sustain in others.

Towards the end of 2020 and with the restrictions easing to allow for indoor provision, we were able to re-establish and build back many groups and were able to have the annual Champions Board Christmas Dinner on a locality level. A key project 7 Listen2Us Volunteers were involved in from November 2020 - March 2021 was in partnership with Children's Hearings Scotland who were involving young people with experience of care for the first time in their panel recruitment and interview processes. The young people, all aged 15-25 undertook several training sessions and completed online learning modules to prepare them for the role before interviews were carried out in March 2021 virtually. This experience, whilst challenging at points, was something young people found to be worthwhile with 3 young people going on to support the interview process for Glasgow City in addition to Dumfries and Galloway.

A significant aspect of the project, more so during the last year, has been the Champions Board Individual Grants Scheme, which is open to young people 12-25 to apply for items, equipment or experiences that will support and improve their well-being. Over 130 grants were issued between April 2020 - March 2021 with young people receiving funding for a wide range of items from arts materials to sports clothing, books to bikes, care packs to activities, and board games to homeware items. The scheme has been well received by young people, carers, parents and professionals as many funding streams focussed on essential items, the Individual Grants Scheme were able to provide items or equipment that provided young people with a distraction or hobby they could do at home.





QUALITY AND STANDARDS REPORT

1ST APRIL 2020 – 31ST MARCH 2021

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