

# Quality & Standards Report

## 1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022



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# Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present Dumfries and Galloway Council, Youth Work Service's 2021/22 Quality and Standards Report. The report will provide readers with a comprehensive insight into some of the key pieces of work that the Service has undertaken during this reporting period and will explore the significant impacts that Youth Work has made on the lives of young people and communities across our region over the last year.

Our Council's Youth Work Service main focus is on supporting our most vulnerable young people and ensuring that those young people who need support can receive it locally, and at the time they need it most. The vast majority of the services work goes unnoticed as it is working at nights and weekends in our communities either in small groups or one to one support. This work is not high profile but is hugely important to supporting our young people with their mental health, to gain access to opportunities including jobs and volunteering and helping them become resilient young people that can deal with the challenges that they face today. It is important that this type of low key, high impact work is acknowledged and recognised as a critical early intervention approach for young people.

It has been a challenging, yet busy and exciting year for Youth Work Services, as our provision continues to adapt to the needs of young people across all Ward areas of Dumfries and Galloway. We have continued to build on our partnerships and develop opportunities alongside our local partners whilst listening and responding to the needs of local communities across the region.

We are very thankful to all of our partners who work in collaboration with our Service in order to enhance the experiences and opportunities we are able to deliver for young people in Dumfries and Galloway.

I hope as you read through this report you will see the fundamental role that Youth Work plays in our communities, and that you continue to show your ongoing support as we move into another year.



**Councillor Archie Dryburgh**  
**Chairperson of Communities Committee**

# Youth Work Services in

UNIVERSAL PROVISION WITH TARGETED WORK AIMS  
OUR REGION IN RESPONSE TO LOCAL

## The Nature and Purpose of Youth Work (National Youth Work Strategy)

### 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 and 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

Key

1

2

3

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# n Dumfries and Galloway

FOCUS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS  
 ALL IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

## Key Work Areas

### Community Based Youth Work Opportunities:

Delivery of local youth work groups, projects, and opportunities in evenings and weekends with our most vulnerable and marginalised young people and support to young people's health and wellbeing.

### Youth Work in Schools:

Delivery of accredited Qualifications and Youth Awards in schools and low-level mental health support through Youth Information Workers.

### Youth Participation and Volunteering:

Opportunities for young people to become involved in decision making through projects inc. Regional Youth Council, Champions Board and Young Volunteers.

### Wider Achievement:

Creating opportunities for young people to achieve accredited Youth Awards inc. Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Youth Achievement, John Muir Awards.

### Collaboration With Third Sector Youth Work:

Training, advice and support to Third Sector partners and practitioner forums.

# Key Performance Indicators

Number of children, young people and adults supported to improve life changes through participation in youth work and lifelong learning activities

2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
13,498	10,626	14,900

Percentage of young people and adults who report an improvement in their confidence, skills, individual, family, community or working life following participation in youth work and lifelong learning activities

2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
87.55%	81.18%	89.49%

Number of young people attending youth work services

2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
8,789	2,077	9,107

Number of young people attending youth work events

2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
5,890	10	39,639

### Strategic Priority 1

# Community Based Youth Work Opportunities

Delivery of local youth work groups, projects and opportunities in evenings and weekends with our most vulnerable and marginalised young people and support to young people's health and wellbeing



# CASE STUDY

## **\*Julia**

Julia participated in the You Decide group. This is an issue-based programme designed so that activities can be tailored to suit the needs and interests of young people and their local communities. It is suitable to be delivered across a range of settings and communities to explore issues that may affect young people and their peers. The group ran for 12 weeks with each session running for approximately one to two hours.

Julia began attending 'You Decide' as a place to go to with her friends and do fun things instead of just sitting at home. Although she was not looking for support with a particular issue, it became apparent as the weeks progressed that she struggled with relationships and did not have a good understanding on how to treat people she cared about. This was causing some tension in her friendships and raised concerns over her attitudes regarding safety.

She expressed how she rarely got time alone with her mum or dad and became frustrated at her younger siblings always being there. Julia also felt that she got blamed for a lot of things that went wrong at home. This created a strain with her relationships with friends and boyfriend.

During her participation each week, it became apparent that Julia was struggling on how to manage healthy relationships with her close friends. She would overly favour her boyfriend and ignore her friends, being quite unpleasant and nasty to them at times. This was causing strain in her relationships. Due to Julia also not getting much attention at home, youth workers were keen to support with managing their relationships in a healthy way, so they did not lose the support group.

Through sensitive discussion, staff encouraged Julia to recognise how important her friends were and the significance of having a support group, especially when she consistently expressed frustration at her family situation. Staff also supported her friends, by listening to their perspectives and supporting them to explore why Julia might be acting in this way.

Julia accepted that her actions were causing distress to her friends and helped her realise how important they were to her. The youth information worker and other staff could visibly see the improvement in the friendship dynamics within the group, and by checking in with them each week the young people voiced that they were in a much better place and no longer falling out.

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***



# Priority 1 - Community Based Youth Work Opportunities

## Example of Project

### **YOUNG HANDS, YOUNG PARENTS GROUP, KELLOHOLM**

Young Hands is a targeted group for all young parents and expectant parents aged 25 and under within Kirkconnel, Kelloholm and Sanquhar and the group runs every Friday. The group offers the opportunity to meet other parents and their children, to socialise, interact, play, learn and gain support from youth work staff. The group offers parents a safe space where they can come along and not feel judged and each week we offer lunch, and activity for the parents to do with their kids and the space just to have conversations about their weeks. For this group this is the only time the parent's get to socialise within their week with their peers consistently, and this is something the group have reflected on. Within the local area this group is one of a kind as there are no other groups specifically targeted at young parents and while there are a couple of baby groups most of the parents expressed, they feel uncomfortable and judged when going.

Over the past year the group has had some significant stand out moments one of them being they were involved in a focus group to get their experiences of mental health and support during the perinatal period, this allowed for the young parents to have up front and honest conversation about their perinatal experience some of which were positive and other negative. The parents felt it was good they got the opportunity to talk about their experiences with the NHS with hope there can be meaningful change put into practice. For the parents the group is most definitely their support network and this year more than ever we have really seen that support come through with bereavements within the group providing challenging times for the parents, but they still showed up every week to be among peers and keep a bit of normality for them and their children.

One of the stand out moments was this group were part of the first ever young parents residential we have run, this offered for many the opportunity to go away with their children and peers for a few days when most of the group had never been able to take their children away. Within the residential there was real developmental milestones the parents seen their children have and a real opportunity for socialisation and interaction. It also provided the opportunity for young parents across the region to meet, build relationships and learn from each other.

# Priority 1 - Community Based Youth Work Opportunities

## ECCLEFECHAN DROP IN

Ecclefechan Drop In is for young people aged 11 - 17 years, and the group runs every Wednesday evening. The young people have been involved in a variety of activities each week such as cooking, arts and crafts, environment and sports.

The group have also taken part in a Dynamic Youth Award Accredited Certificate as part of their weekly programmes which evidences the many new skills they have learned by taking part in the weekly drop in group. The young people also took part in a John Muir Award which involved learning about their community and the environment they live in.

The group completed environment booklets to receive their award. By running in Ecclefechan, the group provides young people living in the local community with something to do.



### Strategic Priority 2

# Youth Work in Schools

Delivery of accredited qualifications and youth awards in schools and low-level mental health support through Youth Information Workers



# CASE STUDY

## *Lois*

Lois experienced homophobic bullying as a result they were transferred to another school. This was a difficult transition for them and began to experience difficulties in regulating their emotions. They experienced self-harm urges and as a long-term goal their aim was to identify coping strategies and techniques to manage these feelings.

Sessions covered various topics that challenged their feelings and help them feel able to manage their emotions in a healthier way. Various methods of engagement were utilised from scenario-based work, toolkit worksheets & games to keep them stimulated and engaged. Sometimes they could appear distracted and withdrawn, so variation of methods and some fidget toys supported them to keep focused and present.

Lois attended 12 sessions and engaged and interacted well, with good attendance, continuing to build good relationship with staff, openly talked about difficulties they were facing, and is hoping to implement safer coping strategies into their daily life.

Staff used a range of various approaches within sessions which included person centred approach to help manage emotions, build resilience, connect with values and build healthy relationships.

Lois was referred to CAMHS for more specialist support after their sessions were over. They felt that attending the support with staff at school, helped them to feel more relaxed and more confident in vocalising their feelings to others and felt less nervous. Lois felt they had a better understanding of their own emotions and a better vocabulary, and they now actively access youth work services and enjoy participating in a variety of projects and drop ins.

*"I was able to open up more about how I was feeling, as that's not my strongest quality. I wasn't judged for anything said or any of the action I took towards dealing with certain issues. I was spoken to like an adult and given the right advice of how to deal with similar situations in the future. Overall, I was given the proper support and listening ears that I've needed and I feel my targets that I gave at the start of the course have been met".*

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***

## Priority 2 - Youth Work in Schools

### Example of Project

#### **FINDING YOUR FEET, STRANRAER**

Moving from primary to secondary school is a significant change for young people and can be a particularly stressful time in their lives. Our project 'Finding Your Feet' is designed to support young people's transition through a series of interactive workshops that are delivered in the school day by our youth work team. Finding Your Feet is a group work programme, creating a safe space for young people to share concerns associated with secondary school, understand that they're not alone if they are feeling worried, have opportunities to talk to a youth worker or friend about their feelings and learn new strategies for self-care and navigating high school. The sessions include lots of fun, practical activities and aims to build confidence, motivation and resilience.

The programme runs during the first school term (August – October) and is aimed at new S1 pupils. However, this year, the programme was extended to run to December to accommodate the needs of young people who had been particularly impacted by the challenges experienced during the pandemic, that had a knock-on effect on their readiness for secondary school and their transition.

Feedback from young people who took part in the project was generally positive, and they felt that the support they had received had enabled them to settle better into school.

*One young person said "I was terrified of coming to the school and it was good to know there was someone to go to and that I wasn't the only one feeling that way. Youth work has helped me a lot, like to feel confident to ask for help and to get to know the school better"*

Alongside the transition workshops, pupils work towards a Dynamic Youth Award, an SQA qualification that recognises wider achievement in learning and are credit rated on the SCQF at level 3.

#### **THE BRIDGE ISSUE BASED GROUP, DUMFRIES**

This group ran in conjunction with young people attending alternative education at The Bridge. Despite the group being delivered through education, the young people still attended on a voluntary basis in line with a Youth Work approach.

The group is made up of young people aged 12-16 and takes place on a Thursday afternoon during term time. The group offers a range of activities and opportunities and covers a diverse range of topics decided on by the young people taking part. The purpose of the group was to provide an alternative to mainstream education and provide additional support to young people with the challenges they face in life and to provide understanding and skills to manage risks they may face. Topics covered by the group include drugs, alcohol, peer pressure, healthy relationships and risk-taking behaviours.

Through taking part in activities, the young people have built relationships with youth work staff and their peers with young people becoming open and honest about things that impact their lives. The engagement from members of the group grew as time went on with young people being shy and nervous to begin with but showing a growth in confidence through their participation in sessions, as well as being better informed on the issues that may affect them in their day to day lives.

### Strategic Priority 3

# Youth Participation and Volunteering

Opportunities for young people to become involved in decision making through projects inc. Regional Youth Council, Champions Board and Young Volunteers



# CASE STUDY

## ***\*Bella***

Bella is 13 years old, and first started coming along to Youth Work provision when she was in Primary 7, attending Secondary School Transition groups in her local area. After this, Bella began attending Junior Youth Groups, and started becoming more involved in the planning of groups and the Youth Work offer in her community. Bella suffers from Juvenile Arthritis and has often struggled to feel “the same” as her peers, often feeling isolated due to the impacts that her condition can have on her life at times, from missing school due to attending doctor’s appointments, the effects that her medication can have on her, and not being able to fully participate in some school subjects such as P.E.

Bella began to experience mild anxiety at school and this had a knock on impact on her school work and social life at school and outside of it. She was referred into the Community Youth Information Worker to receive tailored one-to-one support.

Bella recently undertook her Level 1 Young Leaders Training and has become an active and inspirational Young Leader. She can often be seen at events in and around her local area, helping to run activities for other young people, fundraising and ensuring that young people are well represented and seen in a positive light. One of her biggest achievements to date was helping to run the Primary 7 Social Transition programme in her local high school, where her own journey in Youth Work started two years ago.

She has massively gained in confidence and has developed a sense of responsibility and maturity for her role as a Young Leader, and for her personal life away from volunteering living with a condition that at times can be limiting. Staff frequently comment on the difference in Bella compared to when she started her volunteer journey.

Bella has said that volunteering has allowed her to take on a new role within Youth Work and taught her a bit more about being responsible as a Young Leader and becoming a good role model to other young people.

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***

## Priority 3 - Youth Participation & Volunteering

### Example of Project

#### DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY YOUTH COUNCIL, REGIONWIDE

Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council (DGYC) is an organisation of young volunteers, aged 12-25, who live, work and study in the region. There are 35 positions on DGYC:

- 24 Ward Youth Councillors (2 per Ward area) who are responsible for representing the voices of young people who live, work and study within their physical communities.
- 7 Nominated Youth Councillors (1 per minority group) who 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.
- 4 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (2 for each constituency) who are responsible for representing the voices of young people through the Scottish Youth Parliament and to national representatives and decision makers.

One of the highlights of the year for the Youth Council was organising two hustings events for the Scottish Parliament Elections in May 2021. The hustings involved all candidates standing for the constituency elections with questions put forward to candidates by young people throughout Dumfries and Galloway. Questions were put to candidates about their priorities and what they planned to do for young people if elected. The hustings were watched by over 200 young people were an opportunity for first time voters to hear directly from candidates about the issues affecting them in their local communities.

Another highlight for the outgoing Youth Council (who stepped down in November 2021), was the project they undertook looking into young people's perceptions of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The peer-led research started after a Member of the Youth Council put forward a motion to discuss others' perceptions of the service. The discussion that took place during that meeting prompted the Youth Council to go out-with their group to speak to more young people throughout the region. In total, 222 young people aged 12-24 shared their views with 50% having direct experience of the service, 28% had indirect experience through friends or family and 22% had no connection to CAMHS. The findings were shared with CAMHS directly by Members of the Youth Council Mental Health Group and have been incorporated into CAMHS service review processes.

In November 2021, the region-wide Youth Council Elections took place to elect the second cohort of Youth Council Members for the 2021 – 2023 term. These elections seen over 130 young people express their interest in standing up for their communities and representing the voices of young people to decision makers and leaders on a local and national level. Over 3,500 votes were cast during the elections fortnight before the results were counted and announced on Monday 22nd November.



## Priority 3 - Youth Participation & Volunteering

### **YOUTH ACTION YOUNG LEADERS, KIRKCUDBRIGHT, CASTLE DOUGLAS & DALBEATTIE**

The group is made up of young people in the Stewartry who have an interest in volunteering with youth work services between the ages of 12-25.

The Young Leaders of Stewartry have over the last year taken part in a number of training courses and workshop days within the main 3 towns of Stewartry (Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie) with the aim to improve their leadership skills, gain knowledge and improve opportunities for other young people. This group has no specific weekly meeting time slot but come together during holidays and training events at least every quarter with isolated catch ups in their locality with youth workers.

Specific examples of training courses young leaders of Stewartry have taken part in over the last year include completing their level 1 young leaders training course at Dumfries, taking part in the CREW2000 drugs and alcohol awareness training and peer mentoring training with Youth Link Scotland. Young Leaders also had the opportunity to come together during the Easter Holiday to take what they had learnt at CREW2000 training and create a workshop for young people to raise awareness around the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Individual members of the group also dedicate their time to help youth workers at events, such as the community day in Castle Douglas, Youth Beatz Event Days and Roadshows during the summer as well as helping out at regular groups such as Peer Project (ASN group), Drop In's and Champions Board Groups (Care Experienced Young People)

Strategic Priority 4

# Wider Achievement

Creating opportunities for young people to achieve accredited Youth Awards inc.  
Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Youth Achievement, John Muir Awards



# CASE STUDY

## ***\*Chloe***

Chloe was involved in the Stewartry Young Leaders group for the 21-22 period taking part in training courses, events and regular groups. She had previously been involved with weekly groups as a participant and had struggled with some anti-social behaviour in the past but Youth Workers had noted that she took on an unofficial leader role within their peer group and offered the young leader training with the potential outcome of personal development through volunteering and wider achievement as an incentive.

Chloe's own aims from interacting with the Leaders group was to improve the quality of her CV and gain more experience working with others as she had left school early as a Christmas leaver and was looking for more opportunities to gain a wider achievement through awards like the Saltire Award. She began her journey with the Young Leaders group by taking part in the Level 1 Young Leader Training Course which then enabled her to start attending other groups regularly as a Young Leader. She attended the Peer Project on a Wednesday and excelled at helping young people to come out of their shells by encouraging them into playing football and other sports. Later in the year Chloe also took part in events such as the community day in Castle Douglas where she helped with daytime stalls and at the 'I'm a Raver' evening event.

Chloe also helped Stewartry Youth Workers to test out ideas for groups and holiday events for the wider community and gave constructive feedback to workers to develop. Further training happened after Christmas with Chloe and other young leaders taking part in CREW2000 training with the aim for these young people to then develop a workshop on Drug and Alcohol awareness to be presented to other young people in Stewartry.

Chloe has previously commented to youth workers that she enjoys her time spent with youth work. It has helped her to develop on certain skills and she feels as though she has a better understanding of youth issues in an objective manner. Youth Workers have also observed that Chloe is more confident to come to Youth Workers with any personal issues as well as observations from groups and ideas.

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***

## Priority 4 - Wider Achievement

### Example of Project

#### **DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD, REGIONWIDE**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a key part of our Councils Youth Work Service and within the services Priorities and Commitments there is a clear focus on support and development of the DofE within our region. June 2021 saw the approval of a new Duke of Edinburgh's Award Strategy 2021/2026, continuing our commitment to help any young person in our region to build their skills, challenge themselves to achieve their goals and believe in their own abilities. The new strategy committed to

- Increase the number and diversity of young people accessing a DofE programme, making sure it is available in a setting where young people want to do it, and address issues that prevent young people undertaking their DofE programme.
- Promote the value, relevance, and positive impacts the DofE has for young people, leaders, volunteers and the wider communities in Dumfries and Galloway.
- Support delivery of high quality, challenging and personalised development opportunities and DofE programmes for all our young people and leaders.
- Support meaningful reflection and evaluation for young people through their participation and achievement. We will celebrate our young people and our network.

#### **SKILLS FOR LIFE**

##### **MOFFAT, LOCKERBIE, ANNAN, LANGHOLM**

Skills for Life sessions have been delivered in the four local academies across Annadale and Eskdale in partnership with schools. Young people are identified by Pupil Support Staff, who typically require extra support, with sessions being delivered over Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays over two-hour periods.

Pupils develop a variety of different skills through interactive activities, games and group discussions. Life skills give young people social and interpersonal skills that enable them to cope with the demands of everyday life.

The sessions are accredited with a Dynamic Youth Award (DYA) which is a nationally recognised award which provides a means of recording and evidencing wider achievement. Over the last year 44 pupils have received a DYA accredited certificate.

Strategic Priority 5

# Collaboration with Third Sector Youth Work

Training, advice and support to Third Sector partners and practitioner forums



# CASE STUDY

## **\*James**

James was part of the group of young people who were hanging around in their local town at evenings and weekends and were being accused of so-called anti-social behaviour.

Neighbours next to the public toilets and the public using the toilets were complaining to police, the local community Police Officers met with the Youth Work Services Team to see what we could do in partnership to ease the perceived issues. Staff started to pop along to the local area when the young people were there and started to engage in conversations, at first the young person totally ignored staff, wouldn't speak to them due to suspicions about who they were, and were making faces behind their backs.

Staff kept the engagement going over a number of weeks and eventually encouraged the young people to come into a group on a Tuesday afternoon, where they could take part in activities, have a chat, and have food in a safe and warm environment.

Staff found out through chats that most of the young people were on restricted timetables and were hanging about in the public toilets during lessons.

Over the months, James has continued to come to the sessions and has now started to come to other groups including our Friday drop in and a sports session and is making new friends and socialising with other young people and joining in more activities such as cooking and baking.

Staff have seen a big difference in this James's attitude and behaviour in the last few weeks and the young person has commented on how she is building relationships with youth work staff and the community policewoman and now has much more respect for the police, she is trying her best to attend school more and is starting to have chats with staff about her future and asking for support with this.

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***

## Priority 5 - Collaboration with Third Sector Youth Work

### Example of Project

#### **RESILIENT YOUTH, GATEHOUSE, STRANTAER, DUMFRIES, ECCLEFECHAN**

Funding was secured in April 2021 from Youth Link Scotland's Education Recovery Fund in order to run projects that would meet a number of aims and provide young people with outdoor learning opportunities in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proposal Resilient Youth was developed by the Council's Youth Work Service, YMCA Gatehouse, YMCA Dumfries, and YMCA Stranraer, bringing together the skills and expertise from Youth Work practitioners in both the public and voluntary sector. The project focused on improving Youth Work support for young people's mental health and wellbeing and increasing access to Youth Work activities that utilise outdoor learning. Resilient Youth offered free and fully accessible outdoor Youth Work activities for young people aged 12-17 years and enhanced the already existing Youth Work offer from across our region. The project focused on some of our region's areas of high deprivation and most rural communities who were severely impacted by COVID-19. Resilient Youth enabled young people to take part in a programme of fun and challenging outdoor activities helping young people to discover their own natural high, channelling the need for thrill seeking and risk taking into safe and structured activities. The project was a huge success at a time when young people were struggling to cope with the changes brought around by the pandemic, and needed alternative opportunities to channel their energy at a time that was challenging and where the world around them was still uncertain and frightening. The project worked with 80 young people across the region in Stranraer, Gatehouse, North West Dumfries and Ecclefechan.

The Resilient Youth programme was based around outdoor learning opportunities as we recognised the benefits of being outdoors included enhanced personal and social communication skills, increased physical health, enhanced mental and spiritual health, and the ability to assert personal control and an increased sensitivity to your own wellbeing. The young people took part in issue-based groups in their community with Youth Work partners, volunteering sessions, then activity days. There was a wide variety of activity days that young people could take part in: geocaching at Mabie Forest, water sports at Galloway Activity Centre, Urban Arts Festival, Climbing at Bouldover in Annan and much more. These activities are usually inaccessible for young people due to barriers arising from transport, cost and lack of confidence. During Resilient Youth, there was also the additional challenge of re-engaging young people in activities, and this was a concern for all across the Youth Work sector, and partners felt that our project was current, relevant and would appeal to young people who have anxieties about returning to indoor provision. The young people have had fantastic experiences and have been able to try new things as well as making friends and meeting like-minded young people from across the region, building relationships with them and staff from other Youth Work providers.

Staff from Dumfries and Galloway Council Youth Work Team worked in partnership with colleagues from YMCA to develop, plan and deliver the project effectively. This included youth workers from both organisations jointly delivering sessions and co-ordinating trips as well as young people mixing from different areas and types of youth groups. There were some challenges at different points of the project but these were overcome and showed the impact and benefits that can come when collaboration is an integral part of a project from the onset.

## Priority 5 - Collaboration with Third Sector Youth Work

### CHAMELEONS, REGIONWIDE

The Chameleons are a group of young people from across Dumfries and Galloway who have established themselves as a steering group to develop projects, events and support for LGBT Young People and their allies. The group is open to anyone who is 12 – 25 years, and identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, non-binary, and those who simply don't fit into the gender identity or sexual orientation norms of our society. It is also aimed towards allies who are friends or champions of the LGBT Community.

The group meet bi-monthly to work on developing projects, campaigns and events that promote equality and fair treatment in society of people who identify as LGBT, as well as delivering the annual LGBT Gathering.

The Gathering is in its 4th year and offers a calming and safe space for young people to come together to explore, share and connect with the community and learn strategies for maintaining well-being and inner peace. As part of the gathering, they capture the current challenges and issues experienced by young people, to provide the steering group with new priorities and actions that are addressed over the year ahead.

To date, the group has delivered on a range of actions, including, campaigns and events that take place during the national LGBT History Month (every February), offer a calendar of social events for young people, have developed a workshop focussed on hate crime and hate speech (Gonnae No Say That), and have contributed to scene development in the region's highly respected immersive drama production 'Toon'.

The Young People's Steering Group has played an instrumental role in helping our Youth Work Service to achieve our Silver Charter Mark Status, that has enabled us to continue providing an inclusive, high-quality service for our young people, staff and volunteers and ensuring equality and diversity remain at the heart of our service.





# Other Regional Projects



# DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

## Example of Project

### CREATORS FOR CHANGE

Creators for Change was aimed at young people aged 12-25 and ran weekly, with the group focusing on creating digital content that was designed to be informative and educational for other young people. One of the main pieces of work the group carried out with done in partnership with the Fire & Rescue Service around water safety.

The group took part in workshops delivered by the Fire & Rescue Service as well as doing their own research on water safety before developing a content to be able to share this information with others.

The group created a number of TikTok videos that could be shared on the platform as well as other forms of social media that depicted different elements of water safety, how to stay safe and what to do in an emergency including using life-saving equipment. During the filming of their videos, the weather was awful however the group stuck with it and endured to make sure they got all the content they needed for the final edits of the videos.

The group were passionate about the work they were carrying out and eager to see it shared with others in the hopes that it may prevent or save someone from difficulties in the water.



# YOUTH EVENTS

## DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY YOUTH AWARDS - REGIONAL

The annual Dumfries and Galloway Youth Awards form part of our region's legacy from the 2018 Year of Young People. The Awards aim to celebrate the talents, achievements and personalities of young people from across our region. Everyday, hundreds of young people are making a huge difference in their local communities through a variety of means, Young Volunteer initiatives, peer education programmes, mentoring, fundraising and campaigning for issues that they are passionate about to name a few.

The DG Youth Awards showcases our region's young people in a positive light, through a number of different awards. The winners in each category were:

- Health & Wellbeing Award - Bar Evolution, Dumfries
- Participation Award - Mia Beattie, Lockerbie
- Equality Award - Listen 2 Us Children's Panel Volunteers, Regional
- Culture & The Arts Award - Catherine Townsend Sawley, Dalbeattie
- Sports Award - Erin Quinn, Annan
- Environment Award - Path Project, Newton Stewart
- Youth Work Excellence - 10,000 Voices in Action, Regaional
- Unsung Hero - Steven Allan, Castle Douglas
- Inspiring Voices - Hannah Birse, Creetown
- Youth Worker of the Year - Laura Kiltie, Wigtownshire

Each year at the event, the winner of each category (excluding Youth Worker of the Year) is out forward for a live vote to compete for the title of "D&G Young Person of the Year". In 2021, this as won by the Path Project in Newton Stewart, a group of boys aged 14-16 who worked alongside local partners to design and install a path in a park for use by the local community.

Dumfries and Galloway Youth Awards also showcases local talent through dance and musical performers that kick off the event and provide entertainment during the interval. Keynote speakers are also featured to deliver important messages about the power of young people, and how important it is to keep acknowledging these achievements.



# YOUTH EVENTS

## OCTOBER BIG DAYS OUT - REGIONAL

The Big Days Out were organised as a partnership activity for local communities in order to showcase what is on offer for young people and families with a family fun day style event, with a targeted event for young people in the evening featuring I Am a Raver. The day was jointly delivered by Youth Work Services, Active Schools, LGBT Youth Scotland and local Third Sector partners relevant to the area. Over the course of 4 days, the pop-up events ran during the school October break, with activities for all ages. Youth Work inputs focussed on targeted sessions with alcohol awareness, issue-based activities, and universal activities.

Galloway Activity Centre and Brilliant Fun brought outdoor and active activities for the community to participate in for free. Young people were able to sign up to perform on stage with young people from local music groups singing, young leaders performing dance routines in the Youth Work Services mascot and entertaining the crows. With the stage, the community were invited to perform through an application process, and there was a variety of acts from yoga, dancing, young performers, and a national band. In the evening, young people were invited to I Am A Raver, where they enjoyed a 3 hour rave in their local area ages 12 – 17.

The Big Days Out provided young people and their families with a day out featuring high quality entertainment, with no barriers to attendance, and were successful across the region.

# YOUTH INFORMATION IN SCHOOLS

## LOW LEVEL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS PROJECT - REGIONAL

The low-level mental health in schools project, is making a direct contribution to the health and wellbeing of young people in both primary and secondary schools.

This year saw COVID-19 restrictions lifted, which enabled our service to continue to provide evidence-based group work programmes alongside 1-2-1 support. We have also been able to re-introduce lunch time drop ins. This has been useful for young people who may be considering support but want to meet the youth information worker and learn more about the project. This provides an opportunity for young people to meet up with likeminded people and encourage a sense of community. Some schools have extremely high numbers of young people who access this service each week. In total there has been 783 young people who have attended lunch time drop-ins. This has led to a number of referrals for intervention.

The 1-2-1 programme continues to offer weekly support for young people. Many of these young people have also received support from other agencies or waiting for specialist treatment from mental health teams such as CAMHS. In such circumstances we provide parallel support, ensuring that all agencies are working together to meet the needs of the young person, ensuring good communication (with the consent of the young person) and if needed, informing the relevant sources of any new and significant developments and concerns.

Since August 2021, we have received 399 new referrals which supplemented the number of young people we had carried over who were still in support when the previous school year ended. This meant we had 378 young people who had received and completed intervention across the school year. The youth information workers have developed good working relationships with the teaching staff and work collaboratively to ensure that relevant information and concerns are shared (if needed).

From August 2021 to June 2022, we delivered evidence-based mental health programmes 'Living Life to the Full' and 'Mindful Warrior' (DNA-V) in Primary Schools across Dumfries and Galloway with 23 schools participating in the programme.

Our Youth Workers delivered this cognitive behavioural therapy programme over a period of 8 weeks, that lasted for 45-60 mins each session. The young people engaged in an interactive programme that included: Understanding how to make positive choices; to respond differently to difficult situations; building inner confidence; how to fix almost everything – by breaking things up into manageable steps; learning new techniques/strategies to cope with difficult feelings such as irritability and anger.

In total, there were 815 young people that participated in these evidence-based programmes, and 3,734 sessions completed.

# YOUTH INFORMATION IN THE COMMUNITY

## LOW LEVEL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN COMMUNITIES PROJECT - REGIONAL

All Youth Information Workers delivering the Low Level Mental Health in Communities Project are qualified to work with young people and have successfully completed an accredited counselling skills certificate through COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland).

Young People are able to be referred through other projects within the Youth Work Service or through other statutory or voluntary services across Dumfries and Galloway such as social work, youth Justice or third sector organisations. They can also refer themselves for one-to-one support or group evidence-based programmes. The project is voluntary for young people to participate in, and referrals should be completed with the young person's consent. A referral may be accepted or signposted elsewhere if it does not meet the criteria.

Young People are offered one to one support to focus on learning strategies to cope with difficult emotions and situations. They are weekly for up to 45 minute per session and delivered over 6-12 weeks. The group work programmes are designed to focus on young people's overall health and wellbeing. These programmes are designed to focus on young people's overall health and wellbeing programmes are run weekly for 12 weeks and usually delivered with between 6-10 young people (depending on the venue) and the content of the sessions are flexible to meet the needs of each group.

The group work and issue-based programmes are usually delivered with between 6-10 young people (depending on the venue) and the content of the sessions will be flexible to the needs of each group.

The Community Mental Health groups and 1-2-1 support sessions have been going well with lots of young people accessing the groups for the first time. The group's overall in recent months have given young people the chance to improve their confidence and self-esteem and focus on some issue-based topics and help create some awareness covering Anxiety, confidence, Self Esteem, Gambling, drugs & alcohol awareness, and smoking & vaping. Groups in Wigtown also had visits from the police with an Anti-Social behaviour workshop and local paramedics from the Scottish Ambulance Service ran a first aid night giving young people the opportunity to gain lifesaving skills and knowledge.

# CASE STUDY

## ***\*David***

David was initially referred to the Youth Work Service to access 1:1 support through the Community Mental Health Project. The project offers low level mental health support to young people and aims to help them learn strategies to cope with their difficult feelings and navigate through challenging periods of their life.

David's mental health and wellbeing had been negatively impacted during long periods of isolation during the pandemic, a breakdown in friendship circles and further heightened by the bereavement of a close family member. They were struggling to attend school due to anxiety and felt demotivated.

The first few sessions with the project focussed on building a trusting relationship with the local Youth Information Worker, who facilitated sessions that enabled them to explore some of the issues they were experiencing, linking to how that made them feel and considering the strategies and techniques that could help them to manage some of their emotions.

After 7 sessions, the Youth Information Worker supported them to attend a local youth group, while continuing to meet for weekly 1:1 sessions.

David was initially naturally anxious about meeting new people and participating in group activities, however, before long, and with the support of the Youth Information Worker and the Young Leaders at the group, David began to feel more confident and enjoyed going along to the groups.

The turning point came in the summer of 2021, when David signed up to participate in the Amazing Summer camps. This was a huge step forward for them and they viewed it as a challenge and a personal milestone that they wanted to reach. They enjoyed their first residential experience, away from home for the first time without a parent, and engaged in all the activities on offer, even meeting new friends from across the region who they continue to keep in touch with.

David has built up a new support network over the last year, getting to know youth workers and volunteers from a range of different projects, developing new friendships, and having their own toolkit in place to deal with challenging times and periods. They are far more confident to ask for help and know that the Youth Work Service is there to provide support when they need it. They said *"I sometimes don't believe the change in myself and didn't think I could ever get back to being me again"* They continue to regularly access youth projects, and are back at school on a reduced timetable.

***\*names have been changed to protect anonymity***



# 10,000 VOICES IN ACTION

10,000 Voices in Action Project has been the first project of its kind in the region, enabling youth led organisations to design and develop funding proposals for projects that will address the issues and priorities identified across each of the 12 Ward areas. Projects that meet the criteria are then put forward to a public vote in which young people decide on the projects they think should be awarded funding.

The project has been fully youth led by a group of young people from across Dumfries and Galloway, the Youth Action Group has successfully managed to give out £120,000 worth of money to 65 projects for young people in the region over the past 2 years. This has been hard work and meant a lot of dedication for the group of young people that have been the driving force behind the project. The young volunteers who are part of the Youth Action Group meet weekly and have full responsibility for managing the project in its entirety. This includes the project's marketing and promotion, designing criteria and shortlisting project proposals, promoting the vote, and distributing cash to the successful projects. The young people are also responsible for the ongoing monitoring of projects, carrying out site visits to see the projects in action and catching up with organisations and young people to find out how their project is going and the impact it is having on all those involved.

The projects have made a significant difference to the lives of young people across Dumfries and Galloway in each of the 12 Wards. As we closed round 1 young people got the opportunity to complete the monitoring and reporting to see just what a difference the project has made. Out of the 32 projects that were successful the projects were aimed at supporting young people experiencing poverty, poor mental health, LGBT support, sexual health and bullying and projects designed to help existing groups recover from the effects of COVID and restarting vital services for young people.

The evaluation of year 1 has received positive feedback demonstrating that value of 10,000 Voices in Action and we have been inspired by the power and potential of grass roots and community led action in responding creatively to the huge challenges that the pandemic poses. Many of our funded projects have been able to develop practical solutions to these challenges and have repurposed projects to support the specific needs of the local area, while continuing to meet the priorities identified by the young people.

As well as the community the projects have also had a significant impact on the young people from the Youth Action group over the last 12 months, the young people have undergone a range of bespoke training and development opportunities to help them in their role including public speaking training, participatory budgeting, active citizenship, community resilience, and exploring how poverty affects young people in Dumfries and Galloway.



# CASE STUDY

## **\*Ryan**

Ryan has been involved with the youth work service accessing provision in his local community since he was in S1, more recently over the past year Ryan has started volunteering with different projects including 10,000 Voices in Action and becoming an active young leader for the Junior Youth Group in his town. Ryan has overcome in the past year a lot of personal hurdles which have been challenging for him but also given him a sense of achievement. Through accessing different universal services and targeted work and more recently volunteering, as staff we have seen a real progression in his confidence, self-belief, determination, and personal growth.

Ryan has shown an outstanding commitment to his participation in youth work and is always willing to help staff set up, tidy up, at different groups as well as supporting with activities. Ryan is a very kind nature, high energy, loveable rogue within youth work and the community. Within his home life and groups, he always goes the extra mile, and anything asked of him he will go out his way to do. The junior youth group in particular really enjoy Ryan volunteering as he has a good rapport with the young people and always gets involved and leads different activities for them.

In the last year Ryan has been a real key player within the 10,000 Voices in Action project, with this project alone he's has overcome some personal challenges including public speaking where he got up and spoke to a room full of 60 people at the 10,000 Voices in Action celebration event, something that he would never have done.

Before Ryan really struggled to concentrate and motivate himself when it came to focused activities but there has been a huge change in his maturity where he can now not only sit and focus on a task but also support staff to lead sessions with other young people. Through 10,000 Voices in Action Ryan successfully completed his Participative Democracy Certificate which was big achievement for him personally and gave him the motivation to want to do more as he recognised his ability.

A comment he shared from his involvement in volunteering was:

*"I am proud of myself because when we were on our celebration trip to Blackpool I had some time out from the rest of the group and there was a homeless man out on the promenade I said to the Youth Worker I hate seeing that people alone with nothing and I spent half an hour just chatting away as he told me his life story... when I look back on that I think back to 2 and a half years ago and I would never of had the confidence or the courage to do that. I am proud I did as the guy was over the moon someone just gave him the time of day and listened. My journey for 10,000 voices has been a great one and one I can't wait to continue moving forward."*

**\*names have been changed to protect anonymity**

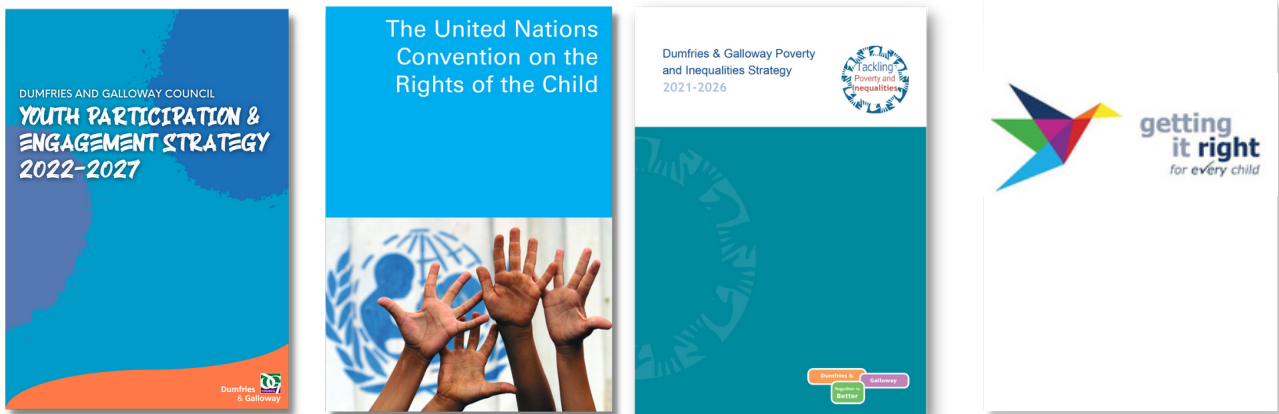
# STRATEGIES

As a service, we play a key role within a number of both National and our Council's strategies, as well as some external, these include;

- Children's Services Plan
- Poverty & Inequalities Strategy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy (through the Youth Justice Partnership)
- Community Participation and Engagement Strategy

The Youth Work Service also sits on and contributes to the following groups;

- Youth Work Strategic Group
- Youth Justice Partnership
- CLD Strategic Partnership
- Corporate Parenting Group



# EXTERNAL FUNDING

From the financial period the 1st of April 2021-31st March 2022, the Youth Work Service received over £910,000 in external funding from a variety of sources, including:

- National Lottery
- Scottish Government
- Cashback for Communities
- Youth Scotland
- Cash for Kids
- Youth Link Scotland
- The Holywood Trust
- Foundation Scotland
- Robertson Trust

In order to deliver such ambitious programmes of opportunities for young people across our region, our service relies on the support of external funders to match fund our Council core revenue budget of £1,000,000



# Quality & Standards Report

## 2021-2022

**For more information, please contact:**

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