

CASHBACK: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS ANNUAL REPORT 23/24

MAY 2024

THE LARDER

SKILLS FOR LIFE AND WORK





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Section 1

Executive Summary

The following is a summary of the key outcomes and achievements of the **Cashback: Community Connections** program delivered by **The Larder** and supported by our partners **Youth Action Project, Project Scotland** and **West Lothian College**.

The program aimed to empower young people, enhance their skills, improve their health and well-being, and promote positive community engagement; overall preventing and reducing offending and risk behaviours for young people from 10 to 24.

The report provides an overview of the actual engagement and progress made in each outcome area, as well as the accomplishments against specific indicators.

Our initial target aimed to involve 150 young people in the program with 38 of these in Year 1 of the 3 year project.

However, we exceeded expectations by successfully engaging a total of 51 individuals in 23/24, highlighting the need for this project.

The data and examples provided in this report highlight the positive impact of our life skills interventions on the confidence, skills, well-being, attainment, and behaviour of the young participants. The program has effectively contributed to their personal development and enhanced their prospects for positive futures.

We are proud of the achievements made and remain committed to continuing this impactful work in the future.



Section 2 - Introduction and Background

CashBack: Community Connections

The project was developed with the Larder, West Lothian Youth Action Project, West Lothian College and Project Scotland. It addresses three identified gaps in local justice provision for young people aged between 10 and 25 and their families from April 2023 to March 2026:

1

Preventing offending behaviour including very Early Intervention prior to charge

2

Service for high-tariff Young People already receiving support from Youth Justice

3

A Peer Navigator to support Young People due for release from custody, facilitating access to the project

CashBack takes a **Youth Justice** approach to tackling inequality, supporting young people to address and break down barriers, create equal choice and opportunity for both the young person and their families; working with an ACE aware and trauma informed **CashBack Youth Worker**, trained in restorative justice.

All Young People activity are restricted to West Lothian.



The Larder -

Lead organisation for planning, monitoring and financial management. All referrals go through The Larder who have the initial meeting with those being referred, gather information, and share with other partners before agreeing who is best to support the young person and/or family. The Larder focuses on preventing, early intervention and operate place based activities as well as providing pathways to their own training and employability programmes.



Project Scotland -

focus on creating fantastic volunteering opportunities for our young people whilst working with volunteer mentors who give up their time to mentor those in need on a 1:1 basis within the CashBack programme.



West Lothian College -

the Peer Navigator within the college works collaboratively as the main contact between the college and The Larder. They work with any young person that fits the identified gaps: early intervention, high tariff and pre-release from custody.. They also focus on leading pre-release work, building relationships with those in custody and supporting them, through 1-2-1 sessions, back into the community. In addition, the peer navigator builds relationships with external partners to promote referral into the program.



Youth Action Project -

focus on the high tariff young people who require more comprehensive, longer-term support. Youth Action Project have a well-established partnership with Youth Justice and the funding of an additional part-time Youth Worker provides additional expertise and support to this much-needed area of the Youth Justice system in West Lothian.



We said that we would focus on the following areas over 3 years:

📍 Fauldhouse 📍 Whitburn 📍 Armadale 📍 Blackburn 📍 Bathgate 📍 Ladywell

The localities we are covering in West Lothian are based on those in the bottom 20% SIMD with crime ranks of 2 or below.



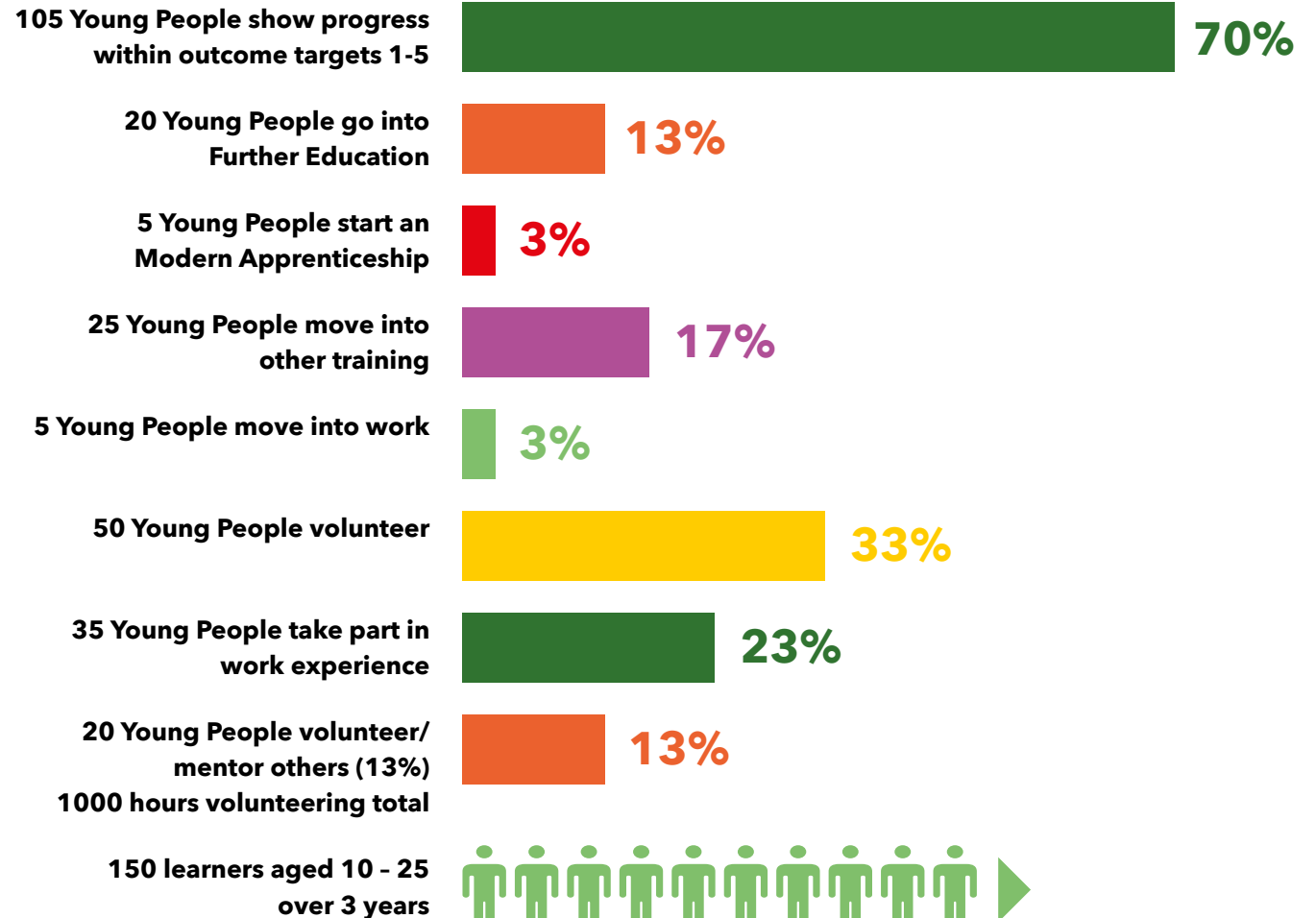
In Year 1 we focused on Fauldhouse as a pilot with Armadale and other areas in Year 2-3.



Section 3

Impact and Performance on Indicators

Overall targets over 3 years





Outcomes - Year 1 Results

Outcome 1

26 Young People met key target

Our Year 1 target of 27 Young People reporting their own participation in antisocial/criminal behaviour and their inclination to participate in this was narrowly missed but we have made great progress within certain low SIMD areas which had been experience high levels of antisocial behaviour, with many community centres, shops and local services allowing the young people back into their facilities and the young people themselves feeling less inclined to participant in anti-social behaviour.

Outcome 2

30 Young People met key target

Our Year 1 target of 27 Young People gaining an accreditation was met with most young people who have been with us over 6 months. They each achieved at least one SQA qualification at SCQF levels 3,4 and 5. We also saw significant amount of Young People return to school, increase attendance and have a general better relationship with teachers due to our support which was not part of our initial outcome target.

Outcome 3

25 Young People met target

Our Year 1 target of 27 towards SHANARI indicators is slightly less than anticipated but a great start with other targets within this outcome around minimising risk behaviour, understanding drug and alcohol use and participation in sporting activity added value planned out with our key target around SHANNARI targets.



Outcomes - Year 1 Results

Outcome 4

24 Young People met target

Our Year 1 target of 27 against Young People reporting that their relationships with their neighbourhood and communities was just below the key target, mainly due to length of time some Young People had been with us. The main shortfall within this outcome was volunteering hours with only 175 hours completed against a 250-hour target. We have put plans in place with our partner Project Scotland to focus more on this in Year 2 with already great results in Q4 of Year 1 and an increase in partner organisations for more opportunities.

Outcome 5

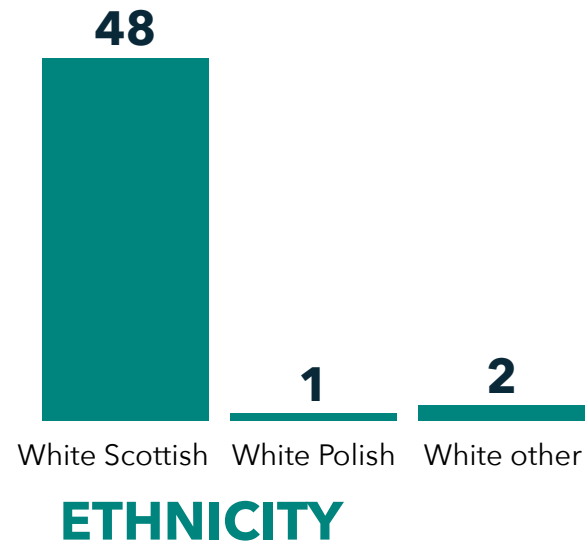
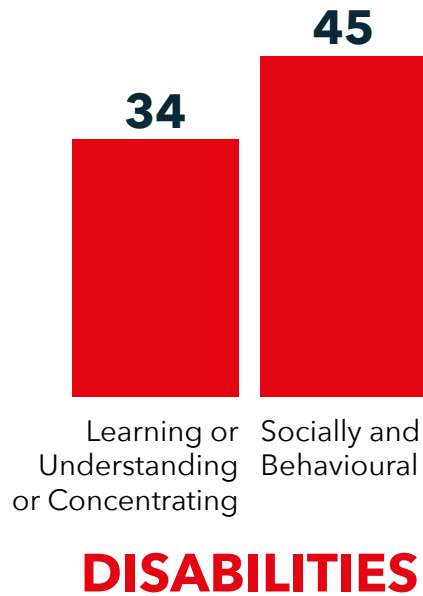
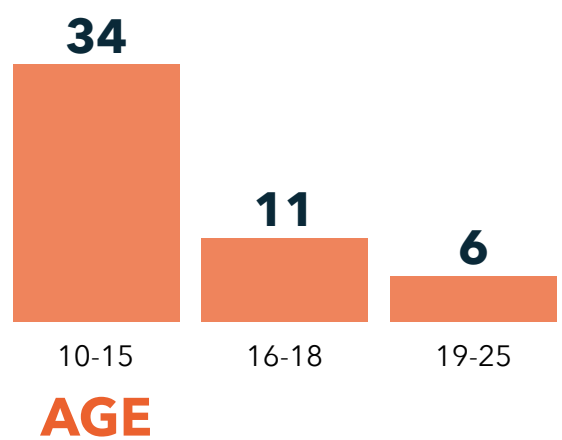
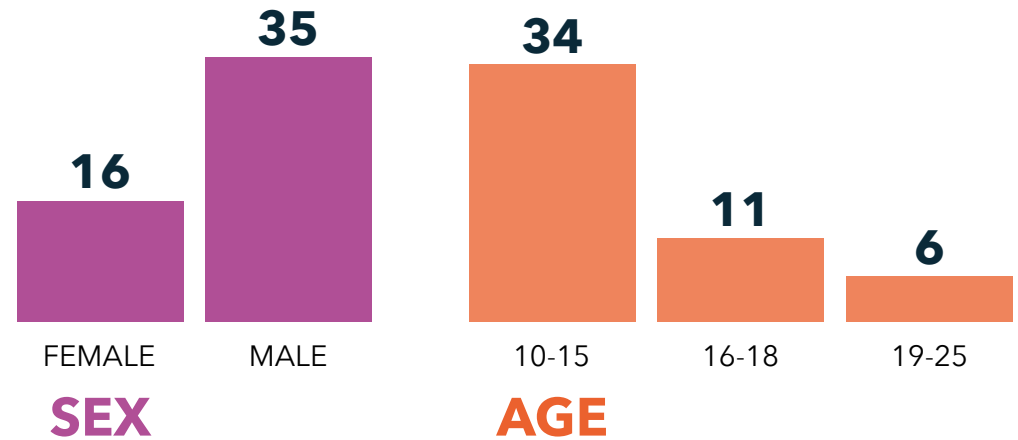
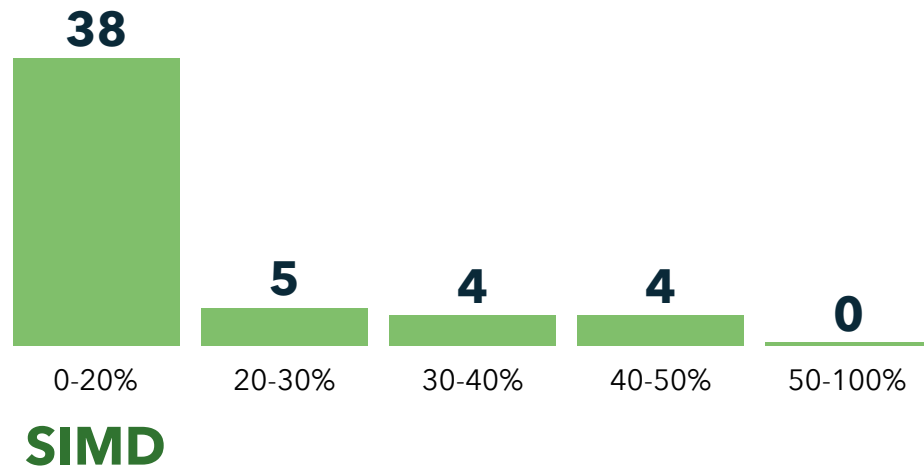
25 Young People met target

Again, just below Year 1 target of 27 for Young People feeling more resilient, confident and having a greater positive relationships with family and friends. A slower start in Year 1 but we anticipate this to be shown in our results with the first 2 quarters of Year 2. Great to see almost 50% of Young People on programme in Year 1 highlighting their confidence increasing and improved relationships with friends and family.

See Appendix on page 23 for full table of data

Section 4

Equalities and Risk Profile (51 learners)





Section 5

Case Studies

Fauldhouse - Case Study 1 - Group

How it began

The summer of 2022 saw 38 deliberate fires set, in the village of Fauldhouse, at a cost of £165,000, attacks on the Fire and Rescue Service and local buses and general high level anti-social behaviour. Several incidents were reported in local and national news, older people reported that they were terrified of going to the shops as there was always a large group of young people outside them. A council employee was injured when a missile was thrown at him.

A group of young people were banned from all of the shops and community facilities due to their abusive attitude to staff and damage to property. Local people took to social media threatening the safety of the young people and they were seen as a threat to the community. The whole situation was a tinderbox that was about to explode.

As a response local people came together and an anti-social behaviour group was formed in September 2022, consisting of:

- CLD
- WLC Regeneration officer
- Community Services & housing
- West Lothian Youth Action Project
- Fire & Rescue Scotland
- Police Scotland
- Therapy Football
- Fauldhouse and Breich Valley Community Development Trust
- Forestry & Land Scotland
- Local Councillors



Between September 2022 and April 2023 services worked together to engage with the young people through outreach and street work culminating in a group of local parents forming a youth work groups and activities.

A group of 13 young people between the ages of 13 and 16 were identified as the key instigators and they themselves were racking up charges every week. Many of them were not engaged in education and if over 16 were unemployed.

Once the funding was approved and the **CashBack: Community Connections** was established the team from **The Larder** and **Youth Action Project** started engaging with the group, liaising with the Parents support group **FCYT**. They built relationships with the young people, who were resistant to engage with any new adults and signed up 11 of the group for a 6-week summer programme hosted in the **Fauldhouse Community Development Trust Hub** and delivered and sessions being deliver in the local forest. The programme included a forest clean up, pond dipping and den building sessions with officers from **Police Scotland** and **Fire and Rescue Scotland** and the **Forestry Commission**, working with the **CashBack** team to deliver the sessions.

The young people attended all of the sessions, with nearly 100% attendance. They started building positive relationships with a whole range of agencies and agreed to continue working with the **CashBack** team in **The Larder training hub** in Livingston, in August 2023. Since then they have worked with a number of partners listed in our partnership section:

In September 2023, one Young Person secured a roofing apprenticeship and another moved internally to another employability service called **Power to Grow**.

Some of the issues that the young people presented with -

62% (8YP)

have dyslexia
- 1 cannot
read at all
and has had
no learning
support since
P6

23% (3YP)

diagnosed
with ADHD &
ASD

8% (1YP)

diagnosed
with global
delay

77% (10YP)

live in
households
where
substances are
misused

85% (11YP)

have 4 or more
ACES

8% (1YP)

have a
diagnosed
mental ill
health

8% (1YP)

have pre-
frontal lobe
brain damage

77% (10YP)

are school
non-engagers

23% (3YP)

attend school
part-time

23% (3YP)

are care
experienced

54% (7YP)

are known to
have lived with
DA

85% (11YP)

have multiple
charges



What Qualifications Have They Achieved?

92% (12YP) have gained SQA Wellbeing SCQF 4 (2 units)

54% (7YP) have gained SQA Employability SCQF 4 (2 units)

15% (2YP) have gained their first ever qualifications - Level 1 & 2 Numeracy and Literacy (3 units in each qualification)

46% (6YP) have gained 1st Aid in the workplace certificate

15% (2YP) have gained SQA Bakery SCQF 4 (2 units)

8% (1YP) gained his 1st ever qualification Numeracy Level 3 (17yrs old)



What Happens Next?

15% (2YP)

left the programme due to non-engagement - we may however work with them again in the future

8% (1YP)

returned to school full-time and is currently sustaining it

8% (1YP)

moved to another training programme Power to Grow

8% (1YP)

have an apprenticeship secured for Oct 2024 when he turns 16

31% (4YP)

have secured a place in Power to Grow

23% (3YP)

have secured a place in The Trust project at West Lothian

8% (1YP)

already moved over to Power to Grow

85% (11YP)

have secured a positive destination

From the cohort of 13 none of them have had any further charges since engaging with our programme in July 2023.

'It is heartening to see a reduction in the numbers ASB in the ward, especially amongst youth. It's obvious that partnership working in the area is working and it's nice to see Fauldhouse and Breich Valley ward topping the charts for good reasons rather than negative.'

Pauline Clark, local councillor



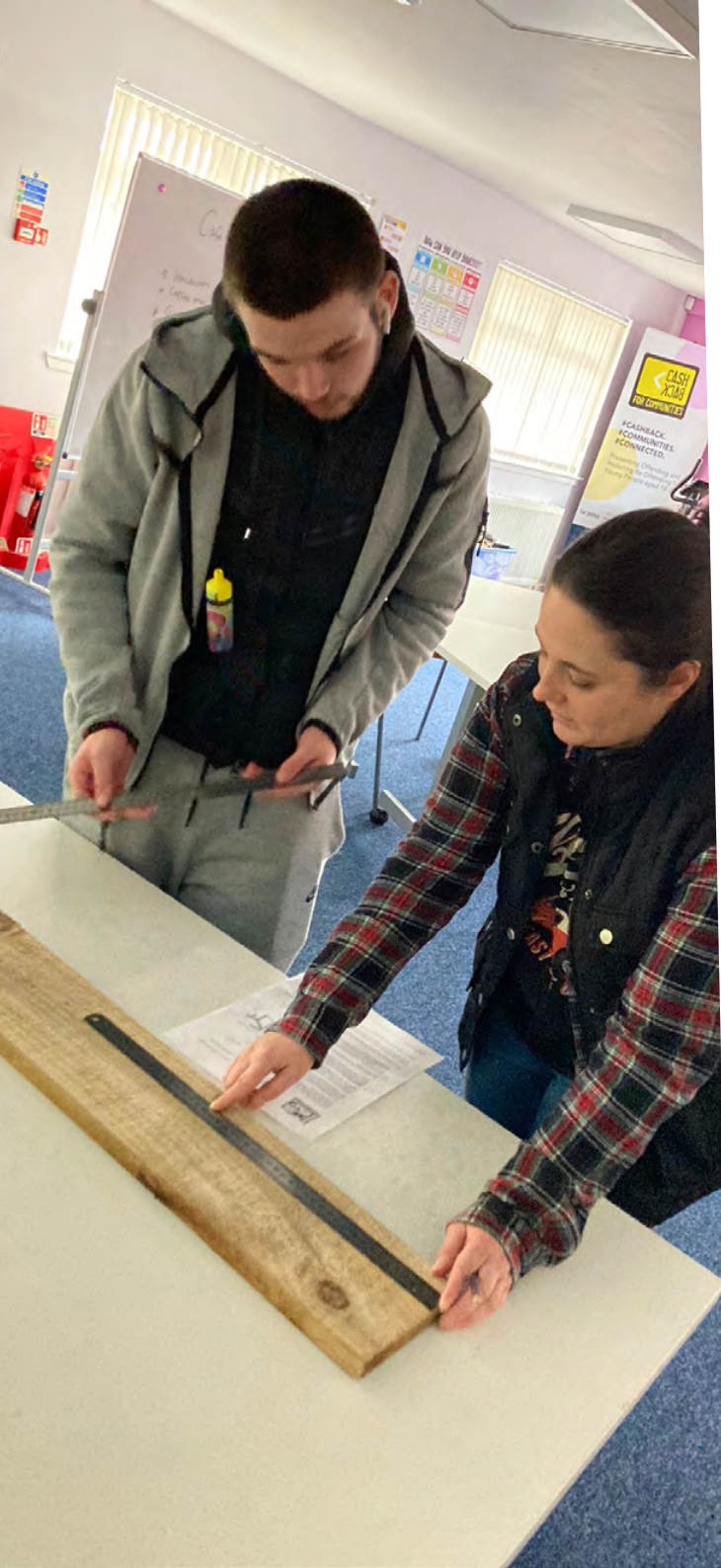
Individual - Case Study 2

James is 14 and had not attended school for six months when he started to engage with the **CashBack** team. He had been involved in negative peer group behaviours such as fire setting, anti-social behaviours, and community violence. He lives at home with mum, dad and sister. His mum is disabled and he helps to care for her.

James participated in the **CashBack: Community Connections** summer programme based in his home village of Fauldhouse and took part in Forest clean ups, pond dips and other team building and personal development workshops. He really enjoyed the outdoor classroom and interacted with the **Police, Forestry Commission and Fire Service** staff really well and was a great team player. Staff noticed that he was always on the fringe of negative behaviours rather than actively participating. During 1:1's he disclosed to staff that he felt like he was outgrowing the behaviours of the group, he didn't have other friends and would like the opportunity to form new friendships, however he could not cope with a school environment to allow this to happen.

As part of the **CashBack** partnership **The Larder** offered an alternative programme to James that took him away from that peer group and allowed him to focus on his future and make more positive life choices. He took up his sport again and has been signed by a local junior football team. He would like to be a sports coach and has started thinking about College. He is working on qualifications with Larder Youth workers and is taking part in learning support from an external literacy worker.

James made friends with 2 other boys on the **Power To Grow Programme** and told staff that he "Really appreciates everything that they do to help him" His parents have both said that the **CashBack** programme "is the best thing that happened to him" and they now feel like he will have a positive destination when he is 16.



Family Support - Case Study 3

The young person prior to coming on to CashBack programme was in a residential care unit. She and her 3 siblings (2 of which also attend the programme) had all been removed firstly from mums care, then from dads care and placed in foster care or units. She had not been in education for any more than a day in 2 years.

Attendance at start was poor but then improved, she had returned home with a sibling and staff found out that this was because she was using course as a means to escape home, mum kept leaving her to care for her baby brother even during nights.

During this time she was allocated a space at **Bathgate Academy** with agreed PT timetable fitted around **CashBack**. However the day before she was due to start at Bathgate her mum made the decision to return her to care. She did not let this derail her journey and still turned up at Bathgate for her hosting the next morning and has been attending all her allocated times since.

She has settled back into the unit and describes a feeling of "relief" at being back. **CashBack** allowed her to integrate back into education in her own time. We designed her education around her needs - she thrived with this freedom.

Her old high school teacher states that the programme has been "a life saver" for her and that we have "worked miracles" with her and her siblings.

The turning point for her was when she got into a serious argument with one of her siblings over mum and rather than staff getting angry or discipline her we simply defused the situation, made her a cup of tea and chatted through the restorative questions. She states no-one had ever done that before and she felt heard. She changed after that day and became much calmer and open with staff.

She has made plans for her future and is hopeful about them - she used to refuse to participate in workshops about the future or planning. She continues to achieve and grow. She has achieved multiple level 4 SQA units which puts her ahead of most of her year at school



Section 6

Priorities for Year 2

Due to Year 1 underspend being allocated to Year 2 and 3 we have increased our target of total learners from 150 to 170 over the 3 year period.

With the additional fund this has enabled us to bring in extra hours and use local partners to deliver not only a bigger and better service but increase the Young People 1:1 support which has been highlighted by staff in Year 1, plus work closely with employers to give the Young People more volunteer/work experience and job opportunities.

Our priorities will be ensuring Young People reach a positive destination and we continue to offer our support after they leave to ensure stable positive destination long term, alongside ensuring that our volunteer targets are met alongside the other targets which are slightly down on overall for Year 1.

Section 7

Comms

In Year 1 we promoted the programme through 2 key stakeholder events within the Year, inviting along local schools, sds, council and support agencies to hear more about the support we could offer.

Alongside this we created marketing materials which were promoted over social media channels and email. In Year 2 we will do similar but also look to create video marketing materials, utilising West Lothian colleges students to showcase the great work carried out in Year 1.



Section 8

Finances

| | Grant Spend | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | 2023/24 | Original Budget | Variances |
| CashBack Youth Workers | £ 50,327 | £ 44,502 | -£ 5,825 |
| Mentoring | £ 13,279 | £ 15,733 | £ 2,454 |
| Peer Navigator | £ 13,450 | £ 16,900 | £ 3,450 |
| Training, wellbeing support and development | £ 6,738 | £ 13,500 | £ 6,672 |
| Travel and project consumables | £ 5,922 | £ 11,121 | £ 5,199 |
| Trainee allowances | £ 11,807 | £ 40,000 | £ 28,193 |
| IT and Communication technology | £ 3,992 | £ 4,000 | £ 8 |
| Admin, management and marketing | £ 14,500 | £ 14,500 | £ 0 |
| Total Expenditure | £ 120,015 | £ 162,257 | £ 42,243 |

Actual Vs Budget

Year 1 saw an underspend of £42,243 with the majority of this due to learners not eligible for the training allowance (16-17 year olds).

The **Scottish Government** has agreed that the underspend will be carried forward to years 2 and 3 and will be allocated to additional life skills and key sector training for young people, alongside additional resource internally across the partners with a Progressions coordinator.

The **Progressions Coordinator** will manage the learners journey from start to finish and carry out more intense 1:1 support and young people reaching positive destinations.



Section 9

Partners and Collaborators

Existing partnerships who support and will work with the CashBack project.

- Smile Counselling
- Justice Team
- Police Scotland
- Fire and rescue Scotland
- Forestry Commission
- The Safer Communities Project
- Iain Smith
- West Lothian Schools
- Voluntary Sector Gateway
- Scottish Prison Network
- St Philips Residential School
- Addiewell
- Inclusion and Wellbeing Service
- The Wise Group
- Sacro (New Routes)
- HYPE
- West Lothian Criminal Justice Partnership
- Advice Shop
- Skills Development Scotland
- Change Grow Live
- Aid and Abet
- Fast forward
- Police Scotland
- Fire and Rescue Scotland
- West Lothian College
- West Lothian Adult Education (literacy and numeracy)



Section 10

Highlighting Scottish Government policy areas

Contributing to Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan

- **Use of Public transport for staff and Learners** - We supported all our eligible learners to apply for free bus passes as well as supporting those in the more rural areas by delivering sessions firstly within their local communities and then implementing supportive bus travel where our Youth Workers would go on journeys with the group so that they felt more comfortable using bus and train travel. We also did activities around reading travel timetables to not only help them self-travel but with their numeracy and literacy skills
- **Working with Forestry Commission to do litter picking around local forests** - The Larder and Youth Action Project teamed up with the local commission within the Fauldhouse and Breich Valley team to carry out guided tours of the local forestry and it's surroundings. As well as learning more about the local environment the forestry team explained about climate change and the effects it had on their work and how the litter picking was a great help towards not only helping climate change but the local animals who lived in the forest areas.
- **Building bird boxes to put up in the local forestry** - Off the back of the partnership we built with the forestry team we utilised another funding opportunity via Project Scotland to use Youth Action Projects workshops to build bird boxes for the local area which the local rangers were delighted about.
- **Support local community garden with young people helping build planters and work throughout the gardening project** - A group of young people worked with Youth Action Project to support their staff to carry out extensive works within their community gardens. This involved moving over 2 tonnes of soil, building planters and then planting various produce throughout the garden. We will continue to do this over the next year and exited to see progress!



Fair Work Framework

The Larder and its partners are fully committed and comply to the fair work framework

UNCRC

The programme details our commitment to UNCRC by reviewing our CRWIA with all partners and staff as part of our ongoing training strategy alongside highlighting this information and report within our websites www.thelarder.org/training/cashback-community-connections. All staff have undertaken the training module.

Best Start Bright Futures

This project supports the Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan, GIRFEC and No One Left Behind, and is committed to creating services that offer equal, person-centred employability support for both young people and their families as well as strengthening the communities and transforming the economies that we work in.

A key aim is to enhance employability and help lift beneficiaries and their families out of poverty. By offering support for the Young People and their families, we are providing holistic and whole family support contributing to a transformational approach to people and place.

| Total Learners | Actual 51 | Planned 38 | Vs Target 13 |
|---|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| OUTCOME 1 : YOUNG PEOPLE ARE DIVERTED FROM ANTISOCIAL, CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR AND INVOLVEMENT WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM | | | |
| Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced | 26 | 27 | -1 |
| Young people report that they feel less inclined to participate in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour | 26 | 27 | -1 |
| OUTCOME 2 : YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITY WHICH IMPROVES THEIR LEARNING, EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS (POSITIVE DESTINATIONS) | | | |
| Young people gain an accreditation for a new skill | 30 | 27 | 3 |
| Young people report an improved relationship with their school | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| Young people's attendance at school improves | 19 | 0 | 19 |
| Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; : Modern Apprenticeship/Employment the number of participants gaining/taking up | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up : Training/Work Experience | 16 | 15 | 1 |
| Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up : College/University placement | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| Progression outcomes after completion of the programme; the number of participants gaining/taking up : Volunteering | 7 | 13 | -6 |
| Provide the number of young people achieving SQA qualifications | 30 | 0 | 30 |
| OUTCOME 3 : YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPROVES | | | |
| Young people report an increase in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion | 25 | 27 | -2 |
| Young people report their mental health has improved and they have a more positive outlook on life | 25 | 27 | -2 |

| Total Learners | Actual 51 | Planned 38 | Vs Target 13 |
|--|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Young people report they are more aware of the risks and impacts of harmful substance use | 18 | 0 | 18 |
| Young people report they are less inclined to engage in harmful drugs and/or alcohol use | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| Young people report their confidence has increased | 28 | 27 | 1 |
| Young people report evidence of participation in physical and sporting activities | 23 | 0 | 23 |
| OUTCOME 4 : YOUNG PEOPLE CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO THEIR COMMUNITIES | | | |
| Young people report their perception of their neighbourhood improves | 23 | 27 | -4 |
| Young people report a heightened sense of belonging to a community | 24 | 27 | -3 |
| Young people report feeling their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving | 24 | 27 | -3 |
| Young people report increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community | 24 | 27 | -3 |
| Young people go on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations | 17 | 27 | -10 |
| Hours of volunteering contributed by participants | 175 | 250 | -75 |
| OUTCOME 5 : YOUNG PEOPLE BUILD THEIR PERSONAL SKILLS, RESILIENCE, AND BENEFIT FROM STRENGTHENED SUPPORT NETWORKS AND REDUCE RISK TAKING BEHAVIOUR | | | |
| Young people report feeling more resilient (e.g. believing in yourself, taking things in your stride, being determined, being self-disciplined, being optimistic, adapting to different situations) | 24 | 27 | -3 |
| Young people report positive, supportive networks - including improved relationships with family, friends and peer mentors | 28 | 27 | 1 |
| Young people report increased access to appropriate services | 25 | 27 | -2 |
| Young people report positive changes in their behaviour (e.g. reduced risk taking/increased understanding of risk/ better ability to make positive choices/ improved understanding of rights and responsibilities) | 25 | 27 | -2 |

Appendix - Outcomes Year 1 Results

THE LARDER

west lothian
college

PROJECT
SCOTLAND

YOUTH ACTION
PROJECT



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