

growing up

The Impact of Scottish Borders Community Youth Work Services

YouthBorders 

**2010
2011**



Enabling Resilience

Our motivation for doing the Impact Report in 2011, and the first one in 2010, was to demonstrate the difference youth projects and clubs makes in young peoples lives. So read the case studies before you read anything.

I think we all have a responsibility to think about the impact of our activities and whether they are effective. Creating a real impact also takes time because, as you will read, getting alongside young people, building trust and enabling them to build confidence, takes time.

YouthBorders has demonstrated that locally, for every £1 of local authority funding, voluntary youth work projects raise £3 from independent funders and income generation. They develop and support volunteers and that provides another £3 of value for every £1.

This is not a measure of the 'social return' on investment - the saving to the public purse of money that would have gone on intensive support when young people do not get jobs, when lives become more chaotic, they get involved in crime or even end up in prison. We aim to get a measure of that in the future, although it is inherently difficult to do so.

What was our motivation to do the innovative Youth Work Futures Project? It was to enable Borders projects and clubs to do great work with young people, to be more able to make a qualitative difference in young people's lives. That is our core vision and is fully shared with our member projects. YouthBorders offers support to our member projects, volunteers and staff. So what's been our impact?

- Enabling young people to benefit from increased competence and confidence of volunteers and youth work staff: **enabling resilience**

- Results focused, ensuring that the results from Youth Work Futures project are not an 'emperors new clothes'; our aim is that the managers and Trustees of projects have the skills and confidence to develop successful projects: **creating resilience**
- Training 55 different people in nine months, some of them attending up to 6 courses, courses such Fundraising, ArtsSmart or How to Evaluate your Work.
- Creating and sustaining jobs: Youth Work Futures has stimulated the creation of 7 new jobs, sustained 5 youth work jobs, and helped to sustain a further 15 seasonal or part time roles.
- Furthering partnership to being truly complimentary and collaborative, maximising joint impact
- Building an understanding that 'Curriculum for Excellence' is a shared approach; youth work is not about diversionary activities, it is life enhancing

YouthBorders Strategic Plan 2012 will set out priorities for the year ahead, to have the maximum beneficial impact on the sector, building on the outcomes demonstrated in this report.

Everyone who is putting time into their local youth project is showing leadership in their communities: the young people who contribute, the volunteers, the staff and the Trustees. We are all indebted to their contribution. I hope this report gives their often unseen work a voice.

Bridie Ashrowan, YouthBorders Manager

YouthBorders' training and development >What difference are we making?

"I have an increased understanding of outcomes and evaluation and the ability it gives to improve projects."

Evaluation Workshop

"I have learned a lot about the different ways that people learn and its effect on group learning and dynamics and the skills to cope with this."

Train the Trainer Workshop

"Thanks for putting together the Essentials training day on Saturday - I really enjoyed learning about Dynamic Youth Awards and am quite inspired to see how I can put it to work."

Dynamic Youth Awards Workshop

"It helped me to realise that our situation is not unusual, that people are often reluctant to make change for personal reasons."

Legalities of Change Workshop

"This training has been imperative for me as I will be starting a new post that will require me to have a hands-on approach to the PVG Scheme."

The PVG Scheme: A Youth Work Perspective

"Thanks to the training, we have a clear understanding of the expectations and our responsibilities. Through shared discussion, we are developing a holistic vision for the project."

Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees of Voluntary Youth Work Projects

"Increased awareness, ideas to take back to Board / project / staff and potential funders we can apply to."

Fundraising Training for Youth Work Project Managers

"This was inspiring about what is possible. The realisation that a strong Board with good governance is the key to sustainability."

Workshop on Developing Sustainable Youth Work Services

"Useful role of YouthBorders bringing funders and youth work organisations together - I believe it increases the chance of successful applications."

Workshop: How to write a successful funding application

"Really worthwhile training as many of the skills can be transferrable to other areas of your work. Would love to see it rolled out to young people as well."

Introduction to Mediation Skills



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Who has made an input to the evidence in this report?

The contributions to this report compared to last year's demonstrates the change that the sector has been through. Whereas previously we were contacting scattered groups all over the Borders, we now have new partnership services in the 6 learning communities with a dedicated youth work manager as the lead contact. This year contributions have been made from the following services and partners:

- Connect Youth Work Services (Berwickshire)
- Cheviot Youth Work Services
- E-scape Youth Cafe (Teviotdale)
- Tweeddale Youth Action
- Rowlands Youth Cafe (Selkirk catchment area)
- Earlston Youth Project (Earlston catchment area)
- Scottish Borders Council's Community Learning & Development
- The Rank Foundation
- The Robertson Trust

Comment from 'Young Roots' Residential

"It was a fun weekend: good people, good vibes and nice places to sit that are warm."

age 12

Introduction: What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to relate the impact of the work of YouthBorders member community youth work projects to key local and national strategies, specifically, Curriculum for Excellence, 'Getting it Right for Every Child', 'Valuing Young People', the National Youth Framework and YouthBorders Strategy:

- Scottish Borders Children and Young People's Services Plan, Scottish Borders Youth Work Strategy and Single Outcome Agreement objectives are: for young people to go into education, employment or training having more choices and more chances, and for them to make a positive contribution to their community.
- Curriculum for Excellence, which is integrated into YouthBorders Strategy, which is to support young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors in their youth groups, communities and individual lives.
- 'Valuing Young People', the national youth framework, to have services that reflect the reality of young people's lives - supporting them through key life transitions, boosting aspirations and promoting young people's positive contribution to their communities, and as national and global citizens
- Skills Strategy for Scotland sets out as one of its priorities a Scotland: 'Where people can work in teams, are creative and enterprising and hungry to continually learn new skills.' The strategy states that Youth Work can make its own distinctive contribution: 'Youth Work and volunteering offer young people the chance to develop confidence, motivation and skills which stay with them for life'.

Method of Evaluation

YouthBorders worked with Evaluation Support Scotland in 2010 to develop a method of mapping the evidence provided by youth groups to outcomes and impact. The outcomes and indicators used were those provided by key national strategies such as 'Getting it Right for Every Child' and simultaneously, Curriculum for Excellence.

There are four themes regarding impact within Curriculum for Excellence: Successful learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens. There are eight indicators of well-being in 'Getting It Right For Every Child': Healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included and safe. A short-hand of 'SHANARRI' is used for working with these indicators. YouthBorders proceeded to identify a set of youth work indicators, mapped to SHANARRI indicators and Curriculum for Excellence.

Youth projects and groups provided case studies and feedback from young people. The next step in our analysis was to map the evidence, feedback from evaluation forms and case studies, to the indicators and themes. The results of this analysis, we believe, provide clear evidence of a positive impact on young people's lives.

YouthBorders, as a support and capacity building organisation, has also included evidence of its own impact on the community youth work sector. This includes feedback on the difference that the Youth Work Futures Project (2010/2011) has made and the impact of the Quality Youth Work Training Programme (launched 2011).

the cafe has helped me develop my confidence and work with others I wouldn't normally speak to. It's also helped me develop more skills, learn respect and how to talk to others.
aged 19

outcome 1

curriculum for excellence>**CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS**
getting it right for every child>**ACTIVE, RESPECT**

Taking part in activities; Speaking up in groups; Making friends; Trying new things outside of comfort zone; Increased attendance by disengaged young person; Improved mental well-being; Increased assertiveness when in challenging situations.

“the cafe has really helped me to make new friends and take part in things I hadn’t done before”

Aged 12

“I feel more capable of contributing to my youth project.”

Young volunteer after Evaluation training

outcome 2

curriculum for excellence>**SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS**
getting it right for every child>**ACHIEVING, NURTURED**

Awards for informal learning; Demonstrated use of skills such as communication; Life skills; Participation in new activities; Leading a group / running an activity; Volunteering; Involved in decision making processes; Employability skills.

“I thought it was really fun, I enjoyed recording the radio play and the drama workshop and want to be involved with as much as possible.”

Participant on the Young Roots Residential age 13

“The cafe has really helped me to take part in things I hadn’t done before”

aged 12



outcome 3

curriculum for excellence>**EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS**
getting it right for every child>**INCLUDED, RESPONSIBLE**

Taking part in group work; Developing a 'world view'; Empathy for others; Volunteering; Getting on with others in group/club; Speaking and listening skills in groups; Involved in community outside of group; Decreased conflict with peers.

“The Primary 7 group helped me when I moved up to High School and I wanted to do the same for my P7s this year.”

6th Year volunteer at Duns Youth centre

“The club is really good. There’s nothing like this where I stay and don’t have half the stuff you have here”

Aged 13 (attended in school holidays while staying with relatives)

outcome 4

curriculum for excellence>**RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS**
getting it right for every child>**HEALTHY, SAFE**

Knowing how/where to ask for help; Looking after your health, e.g. responsible eating/drinking, sexual health; Reduced criminal activity and anti-social behaviour; Community engagement; An increased capacity to consider risk; Make reasoned decisions; Working with others on positive life choices.

“I used to bully him. Aye, a totally get that it wasnae right. I feel bad, it was horrible. Oor awright now.”

Young person after a Social Skills workshop at their local youth cafe

“Could have slept better but want to participate in as much as possible”

Aged 13 after a residential



case study

01

EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS
INCLUDED RESPONSIBLE

INCLUDING YOUNG PEOPLE

In the beginning...

We have a music studio and work with a variety of young people providing activities and learning opportunities. We were asked if we would be willing to provide activities for a couple of hours once a week for a young man who is interested in music and computers and, through being wheelchair bound, doesn't normally get out and about much.

Along the way...

This young man likes to relax and listen to/play music in a setting which would normally be difficult to provide for due to his circumstances. We don't exclude anyone from any opportunities to learn skills or use equipment and as a result he is engaging in opportunities to develop his computer literacy and musical skills.

In the end...

Self confidence was built upon by encouraging and acknowledging achievement through guided self-doing. If there is a difficulty presented in operating a particular piece of technology or instrument, solutions are sought based on his needs. Examples of this may be as simple as zooming in the computer screen to open tuning a guitar.

and the moral of the story is...

Since attending the one to one sessions, this young man has really come out of his shell. So much so that he is now attending our regular youth club drop in sessions with the other young people, is making new friends and generally widening his social circle. Skills wise he has had the opportunity to operate specialised audio equipment and computer software which has helped his confidence, literacy and IT skills.



case study

02

SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS
ACHIEVING NURTURED

GROWING OUR OWN

In the beginning...

A sixth year pupil in Berwickshire has been coming to the youth centre since his P7 days. During this time he has faced many challenges at home and has sought support and advice from our staff on numerous occasions.

Along the way...

He volunteers at the P7 sessions and has become an effective peer educator and role model. He has a natural empathy with young people and the issues they are facing and is able to be part of the journey that the P7s are on. He has over 150 hours of volunteering with us, receiving credit for this through MV awards and volunteered during our summer programme helping run trips to Wet n' Wild and M&D's theme park. After a Tall Ship Voyage from Lerwick to Aberdeen in summer 2011 with the Jubilee Sailing Trust he talked of working with young people in an outdoor environment as a career. This experience has stayed with him and continues to motivate him

In the end...

He is now a confident individual enjoying his 6th year at school with plans for the future. As a successful learner, he has achieved his Youth Leadership at Sea certificate and also passed his driving test.

and the moral of the story is...

We have supported and encouraged him on his journey from P7 through school, always being honest with him and vice versa. We've been able to reflect on some of the situations he has found himself in which has developed him and our relationship. He has repaid our support through his volunteering and is now well equipped to begin adult life with a positive outlook and great prospects for a successful career in youth work.



casestudy 03

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS
HEALTHY SAFE

SUPPORTING DIFFICULT CHANGE

In the beginning...

This young person had gone from a stable happy home life to a split family. Although mum shielded her from the harsh reality, inevitably she was traumatised by it all. This was very evident at club where her emotions were very raw. She had several evenings venting her anger, frustrations, fears, insecurities and lots of tantrums and tears.. She was unable to deal with these, blaming herself and feeling confused. She couldn't understand why she had so many emotions and why her personality had changed so much.

Along the way...

Weeks turned to months and there was no improvement. She was reluctant to recognise that, even with months having passed, her dramatic change at home was still affecting her.

In the end...

She realised she wasn't to blame and has all but worked through the grieving process. She now knows that, even when the emotions return, there is no way she could have controlled the situation. As a result she has grown with more understanding and tolerance of others. The volunteers at the club supported her, always ready to listen, not to judge and to help her see more positives, to look to the future and not dwell on negative thoughts.

and the moral of the story is...

She has worked through a very tough time coming out the other side realising that with the support of friends you can get through anything and there will always be situations out of her control. As volunteers it's very hard watching a young person through a personal crisis and not being able to heal their pain. There is no quick fix and the support may need to be there for a long time, going over the same ground and reassuring them it was out of their control.



casestudy 04

CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS
ACTIVE RESPECTED

GROWING CONFIDENCE

In the beginning...

A young man aged 12 began attending the project 18 months ago once a week for the P6/7 session set up to support transition into high school. He was a quiet individual who had a lack of confidence in participating in certain activities as he didn't want to stand out due to his disability. He often opted out or needed extra encouragement to engage.

Along the way...

Due to this encouragement he began participating and working well alongside his peers. He wasn't pushed into doing things and took his time deciding when he was comfortable to engage. Friendships were formed from other primary schools and familiarity with the staff and settings helped to increase his level of involvement. He took part in crafts, baking, computer work, group work discussions and community fundraisers. Since moving to high school he has continued to attend the project up to 4 evenings a week and has now joined the youth committee.

In the end...

The young person participated in a range of activities that he wouldn't have done before the support. The increase in confidence was evident and parents highlighted this. To begin with he would not use the PC, not wanting others to notice his difficulties. Now this is not an issue and other members will assist him when necessary. Now he assists at the P6/7 sessions and is able to talk openly with younger members about their experiences, in particular how knowing young people from different schools beforehand helped them to settle in easier and the new activities they have taken part in.

and the moral of the story is...

Staff allowed him to work at his own pace and encouraged other young people to assist him rather than the adults. He realised that he can still fully participate in spite of his disability. It highlights the importance of early intervention during transitions.



casestudy 05

CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS
ACTIVE RESPECTED

OVERCOMING BULLYING

In the beginning...

We had a young man who was struggling with social situations and peer relationships. He was initially afraid to come into the project due to bullying and lack of confidence.

Along the way...

To begin with staff built a relationship with this young person by going to the high school lunch time drop in group, slowly building his trust and encouraging him to attend the homework club held at the youth cafe as a small group with lots of adult support.

In the end...

He joined the homework club and gained confidence and trust to start attending the generic drop in sessions. He then joined the Youth Committee and now has an active part in planning and organising events. He has attended every programme we run - and taken an active role in public events. He is now presenting the film made through the summer programme to his class at school and talking about his experiences.

and the moral of the story is...

That it takes time to build up meaningful relationships and in a supportive environment a young person can do anything!

His change in confidence and peer relationships has grown so much. This has been noticed within our project but also by the school and other agencies he works with.



ANGER MANAGEMENT

In the beginning...

The young person was withdrawn, angry, had problems with social skills and was continually being sent to time out at school. He described his anger as 'seeing red' and not being in control of it. Regular meetings with the school nurse, Penumbra and ourselves allowed the young person to have a good support network.

Along the way...

The young person expressed an interest in film and acting. Our worker asked him to regularly write little excerpts of his life to express his feelings and release some pent up aggression.

In the end...

Over the 8 months it took to make the film, there was a significant change in his behaviour. Home life improved dramatically, respect for teachers increased. Friendships became stronger and his ability to now control his anger was apparent. He was now aware of the 'feeling' he got before his temper spiralled out of control and suggested that this was as a result of the discussion sessions during the film project. He had to learn to control his aggression within the group setting; this allowed him to transfer those skills into every day life.

and the moral of the story is...

This young person achieved great things, travelling to Greece for a film festival and awards ceremony. He travelled over Scotland to various film award ceremonies and the film was nominated for four awards and won one. As a result of all the support and experience he gained confidence, life skills, friends and a way of controlling his anger. His school grades improved and he is now supporting other young people in the project who suffer from the same or similar anger issues.

With a lot of support and hard work, anyone can achieve anything and it reminds us of why we got into youth work in the first place.

casestudy 06

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS
HEALTHY SAFE



youth work futures

Recent reports of youth rioting, rising unemployment for 16 to 24 year olds and a country in economic crisis doesn't fill our hearts with confidence for the future of our next generation. Over the past 2 years at YouthBorders we have tried to be ahead of the game, working with our members – the youth services on the ground, and with support from our third sector and statutory colleagues, to address sustainability challenges. In October 2009 a partnership event, bringing those who deliver services together with those who fund them, took place. *Co-operation rather than competition* was a poignant comment on the night that reflected the mood of the evening and, after rigorous debate, the mandate emerged for YouthBorders to facilitate the youth sector's change in the Borders.

I was seconded from The Bridge CVS to work with the YouthBorders Manager, Bridie Ashrowan, on the **Youth Work Futures Project**. We formed a working group with Scottish Borders Council, representatives of community youth services and Youth Scotland to plan for joined up strategies for funding local youth work.

Working from a strong ethos of **communities need to be masters of their own actions for change**, we set up **Local Action Groups (LAGs)** in each of the 6 learning communities of the Borders. Simultaneously, Bridie and I approached local and national funders and were met with enthusiastic responses encouraging us to pursue the working together element of the project. These optimistic messages from the funders helped shape the LAG's planning around becoming a united service. Further to this, YouthBorders was successful in securing £60k from The Robertson Trust to recruit 6 development workers from within the sector to facilitate the LAGs and coordinate the change towards six locality-wide youth work services.

Alongside The Robertson Trust, Children In Need and The Rank Foundation took a particular interest in the initiative and pledged their coordinated support in building the new infrastructure for providing youth work services in the Borders. To date, the YWF Project has brought in excess of £450K over 3 years which has since been matched by the locality youth services owing to the confidence funders have shown in the Borders' strategy. Services have also been able to not only preserve but create jobs.

In addition to this, The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) agreed to the YWF Project Group's recommendation to invest £106K in leaders who could drive the sustainability and funding strategy of the hub of youth work services in their area. For the first time, funders and organisations were planning together for a consistent solution.

We are now in a very exciting implementation phase where all six areas have an agreed solution for working together. In most cases, new lead or merged organisations are forming with long term plans for creating core teams of youth workers, complemented by volunteers, and supported by full time managers and skilled trustees.

There is still so much to be achieved and the challenges continue but the work undertaken by all involved, including many individuals who have contributed their time without pay, demonstrates a way of working that we hope to share with other projects and regions.

Emma Liddell, Development Coordinator

“Working creatively with people and communities, taking a bottom up approach to development is the only show in town.”

Martin Sime,
Chief Executive SCVO

'Although it is in its early stages, the results of the Youth Work Futures Project is beginning to show signs that it will fundamentally change the stability of the sector and quality of service delivery in the long term. A terrific piece of work borne out of effective partnership working

Kevin McCall

**Community Learning & Development Officer
Youth Work**

It is largely because of this work that we are where we are today with a positive future and renewed enthusiasm in co-operation.

You have led and motivated a huge number of people.

**Sandy Brydon
YWF Strategic Team**

We recognised the need to invest in work which would strengthen youth provision in the Borders. The work undertaken to date is the beginning of that "vision". To ensure that young people in the Borders reap the rewards of the tremendous amount of hard work and enthusiasm which key stakeholders have invested in this project. It is so important that groups do not work in isolation. Youth Work Futures is an ambitious project but one which The Robertson Trust feels to be worthy of investment and which we shall continue to support as we move forward.

**Lesley MacDonald
Chief Assessor
The Robertson Trust**

'The investment from Rank should be seen as an integral part of the Borders development. The opportunity to bring the Borders youth work provision together is exciting and long overdue.'

**Chris Dunning
Rank Foundation**

Many thanks for all your excellent work - we now have a way of working together that bodes very well for the future.

**Glenn Rodger
Director of Education
& Lifelong Learning**

youth work futures > what did other people think?

YWF helped initially to facilitate local youth sector groups meeting. It was essential that senior staff had development funding to allow ideas to mature and it was great that YWF brought that funding in. It allowed our manager to develop capacity in his strategic thinking. The local management teams went on to form local solutions. It was important to be able to attract big funders down to look at developments in the Borders and YWF helped to facilitate this. The transition has been really tough but I think we're in business now.

**Catherine Hadshar, Trustee
Connect Youth Services
(Berwickshire joined up services)**

The YWF Project has ensured that Rowlands can now plan, develop and deliver sustainable youth work in Selkirk and the surrounding area over a prolonged period for the first time since its formation. The impact has been felt by all at Rowlands who can now plan for the future. The project proved to be a testing time but I believe that we discovered strengths we weren't aware of and we can go forward with confidence.

**Graham Easton
Chair
Rowlands Youth Cafe**

Authors of the Report

Bridie Ashrowan, YouthBorders Manager

Emma Liddell, Development Coordinator

Date

November 2011

What is YouthBorders?

YouthBorders is the network of youth groups and non-uniformed clubs across the Scottish Borders region and offers benefits, including training, insurance, strategic representation and support for youth work organisations.

YouthBorders works in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and as an Area Association of Youth Scotland, the national network of youth groups and clubs. The membership includes youth clubs, youth cafes and information projects, and specialist projects, such as arts projects, mentoring and befriending projects. Our membership in 2011 was 27 groups across the Scottish Borders. YouthBorders over-arching aim is to support the delivery of good quality youth work in the Scottish Borders.

With thanks to:

Evaluation Support Scotland

Youth Scotland

Scottish Borders Council Community Learning & Development

Contributing youth projects (see page 4)

The Robertson Trust

The Rank Foundation

Scottish Borders LEADER 2007-2013 Programme

“I used to bully him. Aye, a totally get that it wasnae right. I feel bad, it was horrible. Oor awright now.”

