



INEQUALITIES IN MORAY

2022 - 2023

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INTRODUCTION

In this, the 3rd year of the Inequalities in Moray report, the legacy from Covid and the cost-of-living crisis is still evident in our communities. A great deal has been done to accumulate local and national data to build a picture of what poverty actually looks like in Moray. This data tells us that poverty in Moray is rising and doing so at a faster rate than Scotland as a whole. In Moray, the number of children in poverty increased between 2014 and 2022 by 3.2% to 24.1%. Over the same period, Scotland saw a rise of 2.9% to 24.5%. Only seven Scottish Local Authority areas have increased at a greater rate than Moray during this time. The lower paid economy in Moray is also a contributing factor; this averages £15.94 per hour (gross full-time hourly pay) compared to the Scottish average of £18.10 and ranks Moray 28/32 of Scottish Local Authorities (where 1/32 is highest). The average working week in Moray is 40.6 hrs, compared with the Scottish average of 38.8 hrs per week. Even by working more hours a week, the average full-time weekly pay in Moray (£647.2) is significantly less than the National average (£702.80). Due to this low wage economy Moray is likely to be less resilient to increases in the cost of living in comparison with many other Scottish Local Authorities, which in turn is a likely contributory factor in the rising levels of child poverty in Moray.

Support services recognise that in-work poverty is a particular challenge for many households in Moray; with low incomes, limited flexible and affordable child-care, costly and limited transport, additional caring responsibilities, family members with illness or disability, all of which puts additional pressures on households and restricts progression opportunities such as upskilling through training/qualifications or making positive employment changes. Many in-work families experiencing hardship also find that access to some of the low-income financial supports through benefits and grants is limited, compounding the struggle to make ends meet and increasing the reliance on charity support such as food banks and local community pantries.

Of course, for many, work is not an option due to, for example, caring responsibilities or through ill health or disability, and they are often just as vulnerable to financial hardship.

This last year the Fairer Moray Forum Action Group continued to support organisations, services and community groups to have a voice, to share information and experiences and provide partnership working opportunities. We have focused on mapping services to expose gaps in provisions, have also provided awareness via training and our Money Worries toolkit. We continue to provide the link between grass-roots activity and work ongoing at a strategic level.

This report is vital to truly understand and respect the voices of the people of Moray experiencing hardship, inequality and isolation. Also to capture feedback from the services, community groups and volunteers that provide support, whether it is of a specialist nature, or food, warmth, company and kindness, of which there is much in Moray.

Norma Matheson

Benefits and Money Advice Manager

GUIDANCE NOTE

This document is a series of contributions from the Third Sector and Local Authority partners within the Fairer Moray Forum Action group. It seeks to ensure that they have a voice to contribute to decision-making at a critical time in the funding and prioritisation of services. The content should also assist groups apply for funding with the Moray facts.

Some contributions are longer than others, as we seek to inform the reader about provision.

The evidence is stark about the rise in Moray residents experiencing poverty. It is also clear that local organisations and initiatives who have stepped up to support people are experiencing burn out trying to meet needs. This is a priceless and time-limited resource.

Many groups would like to know more about the role, decisions and visibility of the Community Planning Partnership and to inform them of the difference their work is delivering to Moray residents.

Comments would be welcome and should be forwarded to:

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Moray Council

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MORAY FACTS

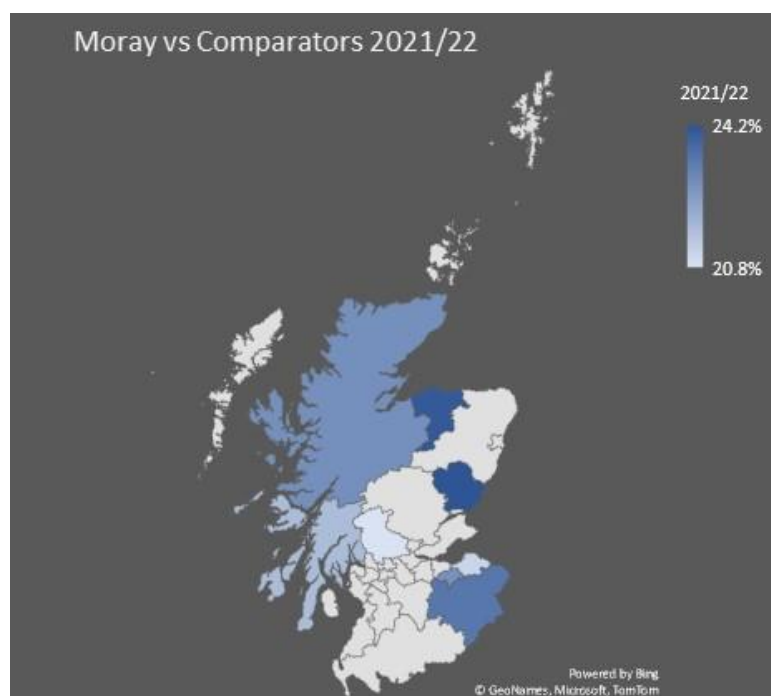
Iain Sneddon, Research and Information Officer with Moray Council has analysed data related to localised poverty in Moray. A full report of Localised Poverty in Moray can be located via this link:

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file158142.docx>

“Other societal groups in Scotland do not experience poverty to the same levels as children. Scottish Government statistics show that 21% of working-age people and 15% of pensioners were living in poverty (2019-22). In work poverty is however increasing. Between 2009 and 2012, 52% of working-age people in poverty were within working households, during 2019 and 2022 this had risen to 57%. Similarly, over the same period the proportion of children in poverty from working households, increased from 51% to 69%. This may be indicative of wages and in-work benefits not keeping pace with inflation. With a low wage economy and poverty levels in Moray rising at a faster rate than Scotland it is likely that Moray will be disproportionately affected.”

¹ The definition of poverty in this report relates to Relative Poverty / Child Poverty – described as: People / Children living in households whose equivalised income is below 60% of UK median income in the same year after housing costs (AHC).

This map shows where Moray ranks in relation to its Comparator Authorities. In 2021/22 Moray ranks as the second highest within our comparator group. This differs significantly from ranking sixth highest in 2014/15. None of our comparator authorities have declined in nationwide ranking to the same extent as Moray over the period.”



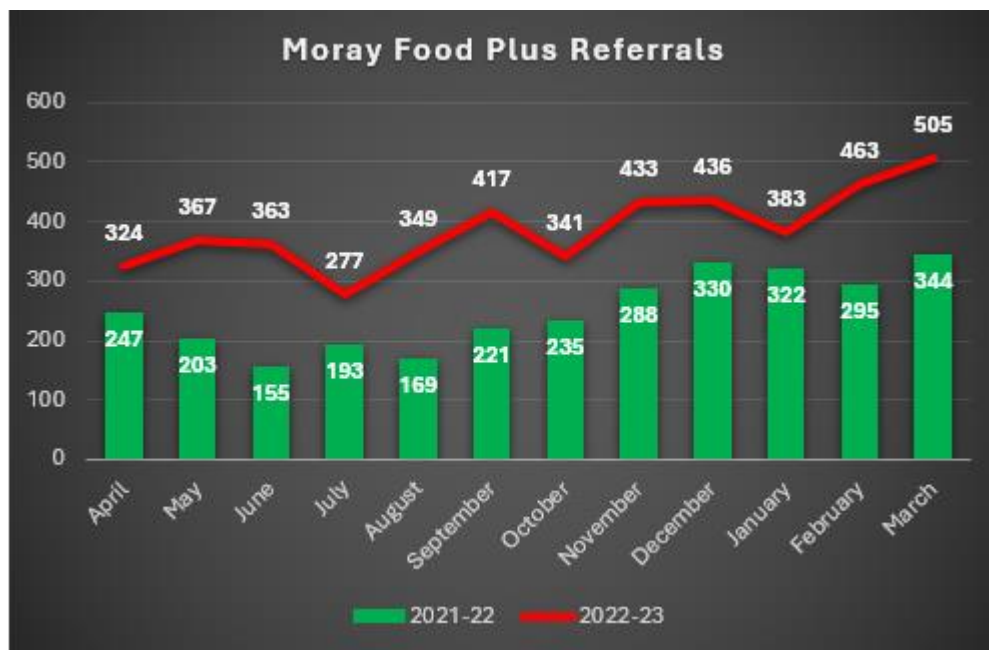
Ranking	Scotland	24.5%
1	Angus	24.2%
2	Moray	24.1%
3	Scottish Borders	23.4%
4	Highland	22.8%
5	Midlothian	22.7%
6	Argyll & Bute	21.7%
7	East Lothian	21.1%
8	Stirling	20.8%

Moray vs Comparator Authorities (% Poverty)

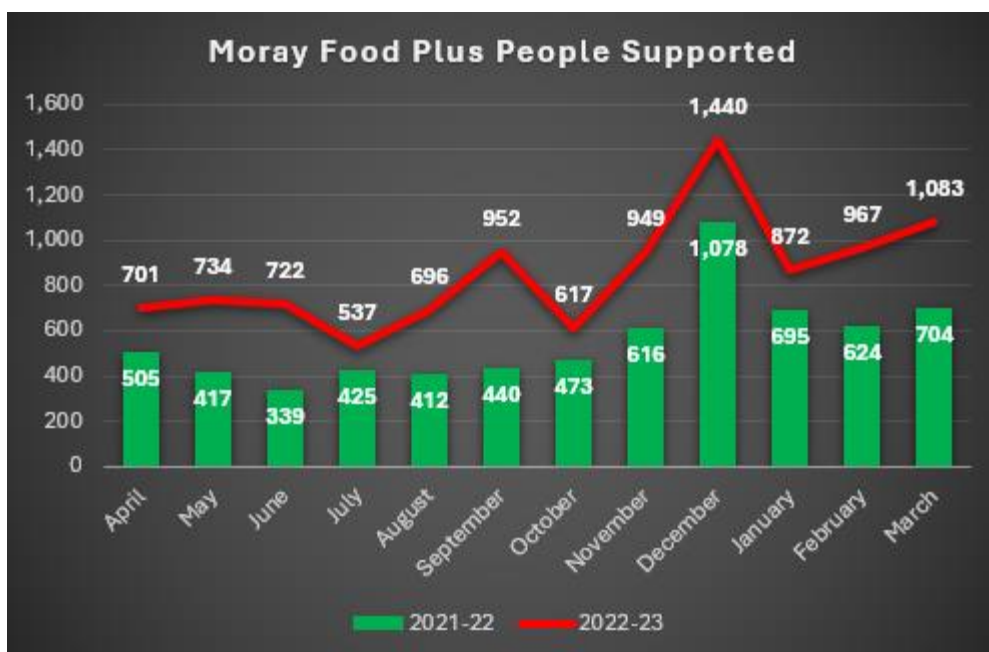
Between 2012 and 2022 child poverty in Moray has risen at a greater rate (3.2%) in comparison with the average rise within our comparators (1.3%).

Moray Foodbank Data:

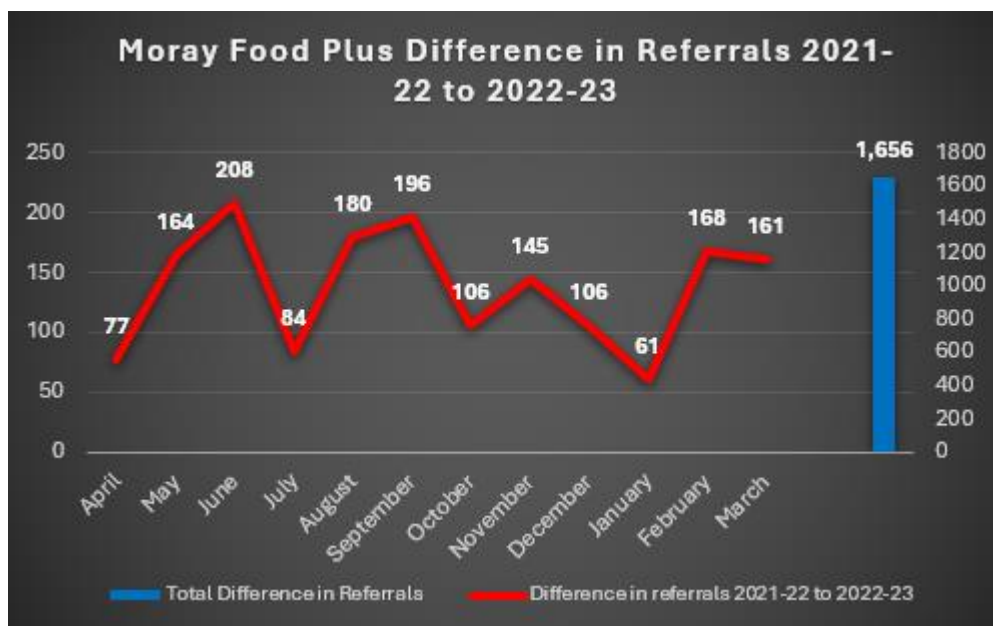
Referrals by Month 2021/22 and 2022/23



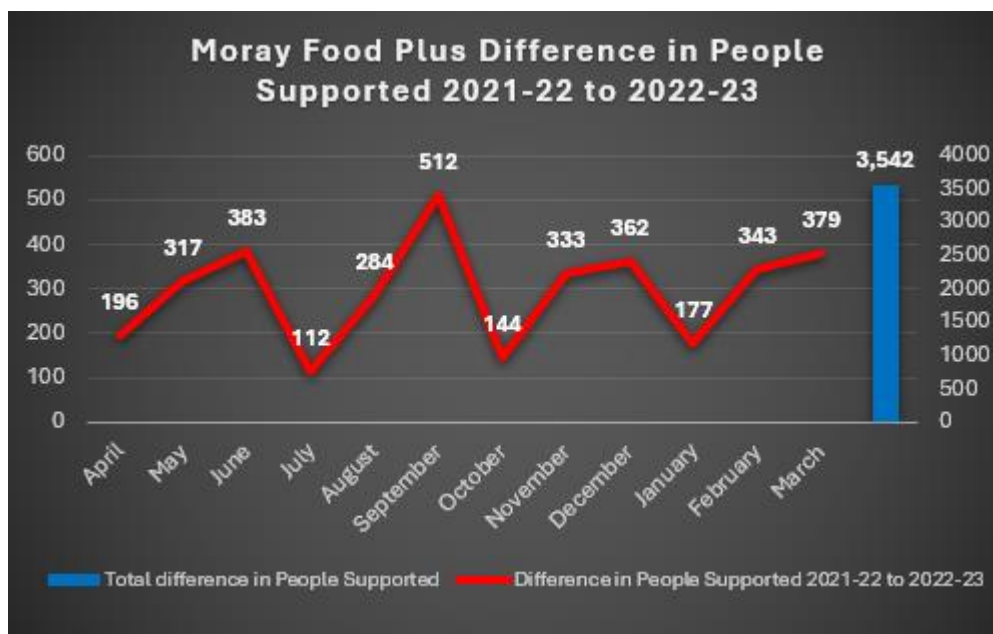
People Supported by Month 2021/22 and 2022/23



Difference in Referrals by Month 2021/22 – 2022/23



Difference in People Supported by Month 2021/22 – 2022/23



Moray Citizens Advice Bureau

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The aims of the CAB service is to provide free, independent, impartial and confidential advice and information to ensure that people are not disadvantaged by lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, or through difficulty in expressing their needs effectively.

Equally we campaign and influence to tackle the root cause of the problems people face, and to work to strengthen their rights.

The CAB network has been part of local communities for over 80 years, year on year the demand on our service increases and this identifies the need for our service. Enquiries are more complex and often require clients to engage in multiple visits. It is free, independent, impartial and confidential, it is open to everyone. We offer information and advice on a wide range of topics including Benefits, Housing, Debt and money, Employment, Health, Immigration, Family, Utilities, Law and Courts. No other organisation in Moray provides this type of service.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- 2033
- 5,461 contacts
- 9930 issues addressed
- Client Financial Gain: £1.3 million

Are there any trends emerging?

In comparison to the previous year:

- 7% rise in Adult Disability Payment (Daily Living and Mobility) enquiries
- Small rise in Discretionary Housing Benefit enquiries
- 3% rise in Arrears relating to private rents
- 5% rise in Fuel debts regulated (gas, electricity)
- Fuel regulated (gas, electricity) enquiries have doubled in the past year
- 5% rise in Employment enquiries relating to Grievances / Problems at work
- 3% rise in Employment enquiries relating to Pay and entitlements
- 19% rise in enquiries relating to the Cost-of-Living payments
- 8% rise in enquiries relating to Homelessness – local authority service
- 8% rise in enquiries relating to Immigration (family, dependents and partners)
- 15% rise in First Tier Tribunal (Benefits) assistance
- 10% rise in First Tier Tribunal (Housing and Property) assistance
- 5% rise in Divorce, separation, dissolution enquiries
- Council Tax enquiries remain high (usually arrears)

The current figures show that people are experiencing difficulties with rent arrears, fuel debt, problems at work, cost of living payments, homelessness, immigration issues, challenging benefit awards or non-awards and housing / property. There appears to be a rise in enquiries relating to divorce, separation and dissolution. And council tax enquiries (usually arrears) remain high.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

1. 'I was upset at the time and the receptionist chatting helped take my mind off my problems whilst waiting for my appointment. The gentleman I spoke to listened patiently throughout and his manner put me at ease even although he had to listen to me cry almost constantly. He had sympathy for my situation as well as finding out the advice needed and, at a time needed, I felt he gave my moral a boost'.
2. 'Excellent service – could not have been more helpful'.
3. 'I was made to feel very welcome in the office and got a good hour's discussion and advice from your colleague. Really helpful'.
4. 'The lady, girl and gentleman were all very nice and did their best to explain and help me'.
5. 'I couldn't recommend this service in Elgin enough, lovely, lovely staff and so helpful and compassionate'.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Transport
- Digital exclusion
- Language
- Capacity
- Poor service when contacting other services, eg, Utility companies, HMRC etc.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We lost a high number of experienced volunteer adviser's post Covid and have spent the past 2 years trying to build back numbers. Training a volunteer adviser takes time (6 to 9 months). Our aim is to continue to increase our volunteer numbers to ensure we have the capacity to support the work we do at Moray Citizens Advice Bureau.

We provide ongoing training to our volunteers to ensure that their skills are maintained in advice giving and we meet quality of advice standards as set by Citizens Advice Scotland and National Standards.

We seek external funding to employ specialist advisers who play a huge role in enhancing the generalist service which is delivered by our volunteer advisers.

We have recently secured funding to employ a Empower Project Adviser full time to assist with the cost-of-living crisis.

We are hopeful to provide statutory solutions (e.g. Sequestration etc) to complex debt issues sometime in the future.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Promote volunteering.
- Support and value the work Moray Citizens Advice Bureau contributes to helping the people of Moray.
- Recognise and promote the array of topic areas we provide advice and information on.

Communities & Volunteering Team HSCM

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

To prevent, reduce and significantly delay the need for long-term services, enabling everyone to maintain their independence in the community and at home to lead healthier, active lives for as long as possible.

We focus on early intervention, prevention and self-management. We will continue to work in tackling social isolation, improving health and well-being and building personal resilience by reconnecting people back into their community.

We actively engage with the community through partnerships and collaborative networking to recognise and address practical service needs. Our goal is to promptly assess and process referrals from partners while prioritising quick responses. Recognising a growing issue of loneliness and social isolation, we have expanded our existing services to respond to this specific need. Rising referrals for our befriending service also gives us an insight into needs within the community.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- Improved volunteer engagement through regular events, and information gathered through Survey Monkey resulted in 98% of volunteers felt valued; 90% deemed impact crucial; 91% believed their contributions had made a positive difference in the community; 84% of volunteers felt it was important to have access to training. Reference - Survey Monkey.
- 10% increase in volunteer recruitment
- 76 individuals supported by our Community Responders
- 76 individuals supported by our Social Volunteers
- 57 of our volunteers to date who have left moved into further employment (to date)
- 49 of our volunteers to date moved into further employment in HSC (to date)
- 66 of our volunteers to date came from HSC background (to date)
- 9 ESOL volunteers completed essential training Adult Support and Protection.

Are there any trends emerging?

Volunteering: Our volunteer recruitment has risen by 10%, driven by our flexible roles approach and recruitment plan, including a new social media campaign. However, the growth stands in contrast to the national downturn in volunteer recruitment, we have had to adapt and streamline our offerings to navigate this shift.

Service Provision: service demand is not meeting demand in volunteer recruitment, we are mitigating this by working on our infrastructure, streamlining processes and increased volunteer engagement to ensure our volunteers feel valued and recognised for the contribution they make.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- It's good to know that I can help people when they need it
- It's really good being an alarm responder, it fits into my lifestyle really well. The lady I help makes occasional call outs and each time I've been able to give her the support she needs so she can stay safe at home
- We know the impact we make, we see it every time we volunteer
- Volunteering has given me a social life, I've met new people, joined new groups and get out the house more
- I am the only person she sees, and I know how much my visits mean to her
- I've been really humbled by my volunteering
- I know I am making a difference
- Through my volunteering I got the confidence to go to other groups
- It is absolutely brilliant I can access all these groups in my wheelchair and be part of it
- I am a Social Volunteer to someone who has autism. We meet up once a week and spend time together doing things with the aim of gradually developing their independence. We bake and cook, go for walks, visit the local cafe and go to town on the bus. I so enjoy my time with them - it really feels mutually beneficial. There is always plenty of laughter and we have developed a lovely relationship. My volunteering role enables me to use some of my vocational skills (I was an OT) and gives me a real sense of achievement – adapted for confidentiality, permission to share from volunteer.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- cost of living
- time
- mental health and wellbeing

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

At present, our volunteer recruitment does not align with the current demand. To tackle this, we are offering a social interaction call through our Moray Calls service to manage these delays.

Additionally, our team plans to implement new strategies in early 2024 to meet increasing demand and ensure a prompt, reliable service to better suit the needs of the day.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

By raising the profile of all departments and enhancing communications for a clear understanding of what each department delivers.

These key, collaborative steps will benefit all our overall outcomes.

Moray Community Support (Facebook Support Group)

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The initial aim in Dec 22 was to help families/individuals that did not qualify for the various local Christmas gifting schemes, to enable them to source gifts for their children, friends and other family members.

The need was identified by an abundance of Facebook posts of people asking for nearly new/2nd hand gifts to re-gift as potential 'presents from Santa'.

The group was created and quickly grew, and the heightened need was more evident than what could ever have been anticipated.

The group now has over 2.3k members all living locally in Moray and is a gifting only page, with members agreeing that no monies are to be exchanged.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

During the Christmas 2022 period, we anonymously and directly helped 40+ families including over 90 children, maintaining a spreadsheet with donations and gifting details for each family. The Facebook page itself was inundated with heartbreaking requests and the generosity of the community was outstanding.

Are there any trends emerging?

It was extremely evident that families living with an income above the cut-off for any additional income through benefits and other various schemes were struggling and they were embarrassed and often felt uncomfortable to initially ask.

The Facebook group is not a freecycle page, it's a community page and the more people asked, the more others seemed to feel more comfortable and often members helped each other. The generosity of "gifters" was amazing and they often bought specific items to directly support another family.

Christmas 2023 was very different to Christmas 2022, and we weren't asked as often for direct support from the group admins, but the group remained very active, and members received and donated by being able to post anonymously (or not) themselves. The level of requests and generosity remained high.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

We assisted one extended family both in 2022 and 2023 under extremely different circumstances.

In 2022, we supported a young mum to provide gifts for her children. She then persuaded her stepdad (an older dad) to contact us for support as he had recently been made redundant and was struggling to find gifts for his 6yo son, who had autism. We were able to provide him with an array of sensory gifts and he cried on my doorstep when he came to collect them. Little did we know the tragedy that was to follow in Jan 23 when the Mum (Spouse of stepdad) was diagnosed with cancer. She fought a brave battle throughout 2023 until November time, when things changed rapidly for the worse. The family contacted us again when they were informed mid-Dec that their mum was unlikely to survive until Christmas. We reached out to our members with specific Christmas gift requests for the Stepdad/Mum, 2 x adult Daughters, 1 x son and 4 grandchildren. The response was wonderful, and we provided them with gifts and vouchers so that they could have an early Christmas Day on 15 Dec. The Mum passed peacefully the next week, and the family thanked us for everything we did to give them a last Christmas of memories as none of them had the capacity to do any Christmas shopping as they waited agonisingly by their Mums side. This is just one story – we have many others.

We also have a very generous gifter, who buys items throughout the year, to provide to requests as they come in. She also runs an amazing free raffle for people to win some wonderful prizes. We have been thanked on many occasions by our members.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Some people are in great need but often think that their need is not as great as others, so are reluctant to ask.

Some people feel a shame in asking because they never expected to find themselves in a position of need.

Our group has 2.3k members but is still a very small number in relation to the area that we cover.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We are 4 mums, administering a Facebook page, helping and supporting others where we can.

We often refer to other more established agencies and organisations and we promote some free events happening around the area.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

The provision of further support to established organisations that can identify those working families/individuals that are living month-to-month because they supposedly earn enough to not be in need of additional benefits.

We refer several of our members towards Happy Little Preloved Project (based in Forres), The Coat Hangar (various locations throughout Moray) and some 'donation only' cafés to help them source what they need with the minimal, if any, costs.

Moray Supports Migrants & Refugees

(Third Sector & Charity)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Our purposes specifically relate to migrants and refugees living or passing through Moray and are:

- The advancement of education
- The advancement of health, including mental health and wellbeing.
- The advancement of citizenship and community development.
- The promotion of equality and diversity.

The major identification of need is direct contact with migrants into the area, typically through their engagement with ESOL classes and from the resettlement team of Moray Council.

A lot of our resourcing this year has been supporting the Council ESOL volunteers working with the asylum seekers in the Eight Acres Hotel, as well as funding and supporting the delivery of wellbeing activities for this cohort, e.g. funding Fit Life cards for gym membership, providing SIM cards and co-ordinating the collection of donated mobile phones as well as funding of minibus journeys for wellbeing activities.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

As a relatively new organisation, established 30th March 2023, we haven't formally collected any data.

I have personally helped 5 people in Moray to become teachers so knew the need for the charity.

Are there any trends emerging?

The level of English seems to be a major barrier to the groups we currently work/aim to work with in their gaining employment which is commensurate with the skills and qualifications gained in their native country as well as their ability to engage with public sector services.

Adult ESOL Students are referred to Moray Pathways who support them to enrol in courses or secure employment. 4 students secured employment last year.

Our group also supported the Asylum seekers by purchasing 10 memberships with Moray Leisure Centre and organising wellbeing trips.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

1. Through getting to know a student at an ESOL class it became apparent that she was a dentist, and she didn't have the IELTS to get into dentistry and the College did not offer the qualification. Through the charity a volunteer has mentored the lady to learn English to an IELTS level using IELTS material and to deal with the registration process for the British Medical Association. The volunteer follows up on any difficulties thus empowering the student to deal with the system whilst being in the background. A voluntary placement was also arranged in a Moray dental practice to enable the lady to learn the medical vocabulary. She is now a dentist and just waiting for her registration to come through.

2. Step by step support was given to 4 bi-lingual people from Italy and Poland in Primary Support Assistant posts to enable them to gain teaching qualifications. They were wary of leaving permanent posts in case there was no work when they qualified. They were also nervous of teaching when English was not their first language and finally a barrier was how they were going to finance the courses. The students took different routes from part-time training over 2 years to full-time Diploma's in Aberdeen. They were also accommodated to do teaching practice in schools to gain their qualifications. The teachers now are part of the permanent teaching workforce. In supporting migrants, the authority benefits from their skills educationally and linguistically, as they can support with interpretation of the growing number of children in schools where English is not their first language.
3. 2 ladies from Ukraine and Afghanistan were supported to go to Skills Development Scotland to get help with their CV's and access to jobs. As a result, one is now working in Finance with Gordon McPhail and the other works in Moray for the Global Translation Service as an interpreter. This highlighted the cultural difference with the Afghani lady as she said to the ESOL tutor: "This is the first paid job in my life. Would you like my first pay?"
4. Sometimes businesses do not recognise the skills that the migrants offer and hide behind qualification requirements when they are not always essential. For example, one chef is going to college to gain qualifications because at the moment he is paid the same as a porter rate.

The Charity helps make the migrants aware of the opportunities out there and is a conduit to make things happen.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Not understanding the system in another country prohibits people sometimes from taking the first step, and often they need a friendly, helping hand to take the step.

Sometimes they experience racism and negative comments that they are draining the system...when they are keen to work and contribute to it. They may need help initially to access social work, health and housing information.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

At present we are developing plans to organise a mentoring group to support migrants and refugees in the area on a 1:1 basis which will help them overcome the barriers identified above.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

It may be helpful for us to be involved, with other 3rd sector organisations in a strategy meeting, to see what each organisation in Moray is involved with and allow us to signpost our clients more effectively; as well as facilitate mapping across the authority to prevent overlap and duplication.

The Coat Hangar

(Third Sector)



Statistics we collected in 2023:

We set up this project in October 2022 as, with us both working closely with families, charities and educational contacts, it had become obvious that individuals and families were suffering because of the Cost-of-Living Crisis. First, we asked family and friends for Good-as New/Warm4Winter garments for adults and children. So, we provide free coats and jackets for adults and children from 1st October to 31st March and gradually we reached out to the local community and donations were overwhelming. In 2022/23 we gave over 500 to those in need and from October to end January 2024 our number of free coats has already passed that number.

We now have permanent rails in Elgin Town Hall, Lhanbryde Community Centre, Big Blue Pantry Bus, St Giles Centre Elgin in partnership with Moray School Bank and Lossiemouth Hub. Over and above this we go to Lossiemouth 2-3 Soup & Sweet every Thursday, monthly Soup & Sweets in Buckie, Swap Shop/Recycling in Fochabers and Keith Primary School on a regular basis. We also provide garments for Sacro residents in Elgin, Asylum Seekers and specific families involved with Support Workers.

Are there any trends emerging?

Demand has increased significantly since October 2022 and more working families need help with providing warm clothing for themselves and children. Elderly recipients are so grateful and there has been a huge increase in demand for garments for males.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

We do not have direct contact with recipients but the individuals and charities who are involved often tell us about the difference having free warm jackets and coats has made to them as individuals and families.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Earnings too high for benefits but still struggling financially. Cost of living crisis in relation to gas and electricity.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We just hope to maintain the current project on a 6 monthly basis.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Heightening awareness of our Project and continued signposting those in need would be great.

UHI Employability Team

(Public Sector & Charity)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

UHI Moray Employability Team deliver support to vulnerable adults aged 16 plus to progress into employment or training. The need was identified primarily via the LEP Delivery Plan and Moray Pathways partners and the recognition of the number of people in Moray who are economically inactive.

The work will also link to the LOIP aims through targeting the high deprivation areas.

Also included in this work was a shorter project – Supporting New Scots [SNS] - aimed at supporting Ukrainian refugees to find training and employment. This project linked with the resettlement group in Moray and referrals were identified through this group.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

Supporting New Scots - During 2023 we supported 20 individuals on a one-to-one basis and via group work. 16 were Female and 4 Male. The age group was 25 plus. 17 were Ukrainian and 3 Afghan who were all MALE.

Employability

April 2022 – September 2023 – main statistics

164 Referrals in total

110 Male / 54 female

Main age range -18 – 24, then 41 – 60

Referral sources – Department of Work and Pensions DWP main then Moray Council keyworker.

Main location of referrals hometown: Elgin, Buckie and Forres

Achievement of qualifications – 59%

Progression into education – 12%

Progression into Employment – 30%

Are there any trends emerging?

SNS – requirements for the translation of qualifications followed by mental health issues. Strong motivation and resilience.

Employability

Higher percentage of male referrals. Little or no referrals from agencies who would typically work with economically inactive individuals – i.e. social work/OT/Mental health teams etc. Need for more awareness raising.

Range of barriers – lack of education, poor mental health, substance misuse, criminal background.

Employers generally very motivated to be involved in the sector-based work academies and provision of work placements.

Increase in effective partnership working.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Employability Quotes:

If you're thinking about referring yourself to the Employability (ESF) Programme, I can say It will be good experience. You will gain a lot to add to your resume and meet likeminded people.

I've gained confidence, motivation, got help with job applications and cover letters and travel costs. It's been excellent and really improved on what I had!

I feel motivated towards my new career.

I have enjoyed this course from start to finish. Met some great people along the way. I've engaged first aid training, COSHH, IOSH and others. It was paced well, and we had great support throughout the course.

I really did enjoy the course it is 100% worth doing it if anyone has the chance. It is very intensive and worth it because even if not successful in getting a job role the qualifications got get from it is a massive help in getting work in any type of job not just in whiskey."

SNS Quotes:

Yes, I would recommend this programme to others in need of support. It has allowed me to be brave and follow my dreams. Thank you for everything.

I am very grateful to the support staff for absolute tolerance, professionalism, efficiency and responsiveness.

I would like to note that the employees of the support service have a high level of time management, commitment, flexibility, loyalty. I would especially like to thank you for the moral and psychological support provided, related to the complexity of my choice of a course of study, which determines the direction of my further association in Scottish society.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

The main barriers are confidence issues and lack of motivation in most cases.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

At the moment we have capacity to support the programme. We do have plans to develop other activities assuming we are successful in getting more funding.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Ensure that funding for employability provision is allocated to meet the needs of the local Moray Community.

Look at a more efficient and effective way of making decisions in relation to grant allocations. Improvement in overall communication across the partnership although it has improved in recent years.

Lobby the government for longer term funding.

North Scotland Cash for Kids (MFR)

(Third sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

We are a grant giving charity for families across the Highlands, Moray and Aberdeenshire. Supporting children from birth to 18 years of age in poverty, with additional needs or illness. Families can self-refer for our general grant rounds but must have a supporting letter from a registered service provider. All applications for our cost-of-living fund and Mission Christmas must come from a registered service provider.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- Through our cost-of-living grant in 2023 we supported 747 children across the Moray area
- Through Mission Christmas appeal in 2023 we supported 1250 children across the Moray area.

Are there any trends emerging?

We are seeing a real need for help in Moray area. Lossiemouth being high.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Single working parent

I was lucky enough to receive an Aldi voucher this week from Lossie Hub.

This had come at a time where with rising food costs...even shopping in Aldi....has put my usual weekly shop for myself and my 6-year-old son from £40 to £50 pounds per week to now £60 to £70 per week. I work 16 hours a week and get universal credit. And I am grateful for that. But I pay a mortgage on my house plus all the bills. Some months we are left with nothing.

My car recently broke down and I couldn't get help from anywhere to pay for it. Universal Credit couldn't help because I don't qualify as I work. I even went to the credit union but as I have a trust deed, they couldn't help either. I had to borrow money from a friend. This is all because I struggle to save any money with my outgoings going up. The vouchers I get from Louise enable me to stock up my freezer with meat and veg etc so the weeks I don't have much money we still eat well. It also allows me to be able to afford toiletries and cleaning products. Times are tough for everyone just now and it's embarrassing as a mother and an adult that I need extra help but I, like many others, do.

Working family: 2 children

I recently received some vouchers after being referred from the Lossie 2-3 group and it was a saving grace for us as a family of 4 to get them when we did with me starting a new job and having to do a lieu fortnight before I received any wages the vouchers managed to get us food and pack lunch shopping to tide us over until the pay comes in. I'm so grateful for them and can't stress enough how it has helped us receiving them, don't know what we might have done haven't we received them.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Asking for help is a massive issue for some of our families. Getting sign posted to us can take some time.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Trying to work closer with councils and schools.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Make sure the Sign posting to our charity and what we have to offer is there.

Make sure all of social work are aware of our work.

Fochabers Food Stop

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The Fochabers Food Stop was established in October 2023. Our mission, a one-stop food shop for everyone and anyone who needs a little help. It is uniquely different from the food bank where there is no registration or forms to complete and it's a community run service, without judgement, for those who find themselves in need of support in the Fochabers Community and immediate surrounding areas.

The food stop provides all non-perishable food items, toiletries, pet food, baby food, and sanitary products free of charge. The food stop is an outdoor facility which is intentional, ensuring maximum privacy for users.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

In a short period of time this has become an essential community service and is used by many individuals and families in the immediate area, many of whom are referred by the community care teams. The feedback so far has been very positive as many people have difficulty getting to the food bank in Elgin.

Over the Christmas period we worked in partnership with the wider community and the Bearded Chef to bring Christmas meals to those most vulnerable in our community. Financial donations were made by community members and referrals made by the community and from the community care teams. 23 Christmas meals were provided in total. Family hampers were made with ready to heat meals for adults and children, selection boxes, a small gift, and a selection of Christmas products. They were all delivered by our volunteers.

Are there any trends emerging?

Demand is outstripping supply. The local Co-op, Mosstodloch Nursery and Fochabers Scouts have kept the Food Stop going. We need to source collection points.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

There are several families who regularly use the food stop in the village and immediate area surrounding the village. The feedback is good, this is a service that is sadly needed in the community.

There are some families who use this to get to the end of the month and top up their supplies.

As a provision we have tried to ensure that there is additional stock for school holiday periods as those who may be eligible for school meals may find themselves struggling.

By virtue of the fact that the food is available 24/7 we try not to meet the people using the facility, so they are not embarrassed and have privacy.

Some of my observations from our Xmas meals were:

- None of the homes visited had any decorations
- None of them had heating on ... it was colder inside most homes than outside
- The pensioners needed company and wanted a chat
- Most of the pensioners did not have much food for Boxing Day
- One individual did not have heating, electric, any cooking facilities at all
- All were extremely grateful

I think there are opportunities to do more in the community.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

No barriers really, we need people to be aware this is available to all and that this is a service without judgement this is a firm ethos of the group. We now have additional funding from the village association, and this will support whatever we do for our most vulnerable in the community.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

In December our application for a small grant was successful and Fochabers Men's Shed are building suitable housing for our Food Stop. We also applied and were successful to Fochabers Village Association to support this Christmas's community plan.

We will also support the Village Recycled event as the two initiatives have a natural affinity and support the same families.

Our vulnerable parents need food and gifts to support their families, and our vulnerable pensioners need company as well as food. This is forefront of our mind as we look at the year ahead.

More information of how we can support others in the community is required. Perhaps an idea of help for anyone who is in need and can't get to the food stop.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Ideally, I would like to find out more about their role and then would be able to advise on this. I know nothing about them and what they do.

My initial thoughts are ensuring there is awareness of the service.

Step by Step in Moray

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Step by Step in Moray (SbyS) is a charity which supports families with young children who feel isolated or vulnerable for many different reasons. We help them to develop friendships, confidence and skills which will improve their wellbeing and resilience, enabling them to give their children the best start in life. We build quality relationships with families to help them overcome issues they may have experienced themselves as children, i.e. Adverse Childhood Experiences. We support them through life's challenges such as post-natal depression, abuse, loneliness and anxiety or coping with poverty or addiction.

We were established in 2008 to address the negative experiences of parents and their babies/toddlers attending 'standard' parent & toddler groups. Words and phrases used to describe these groups back in 2008 continue to be used by our parents today - 'overwhelming', 'intimidating', 'clique', 'no-one spoke to me at all', 'no structure', 'shambolic', 'too noisy', 'kids running riot', 'felt like I was being judged' etc.

Our target group are parents/carers with children aged 0 – 3 years old who are socially isolated or socially insecure, emotionally fragile and have a fear of being judged as a person and as a parent.

Anyone can access Step by Step, but we prioritise referrals from professionals and other organisations over self-referrals.

What sets us apart from a standard parent & toddler group is the provision of a safe, welcoming, nurturing, non-judgemental place where parents, many low in confidence and self-esteem, build quality relationships.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- 185 families attended Step by Step
- £10k worth of Tesco/Asda vouchers distributed to 43 different families
- MFR Mission Christmas Presents – 35 children, 2022 / 49 children, 2023.

Are there any trends emerging?

The correlation between poverty and poor mental health may be more evident, particularly parents finding it difficult articulating their circumstances. This is leading to more assistance from staff e.g. referring to Wendy at Combat Poverty, assisting with e-consults.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Parent 1: X is pregnant and has one child from a previous relationship. Her ex-partner was emotionally abusive. She is currently going through the legal process to have sole custody of her child. She lives in a private rental with her new partner. Her landlord (current partner's brother) regularly talks about eviction. Moray CAB has helped with a housing referral, and they are working on a financial assessment. Through MFR Cash for Kids Mission Christmas Appeal, Step by Step secured a sack of presents worth £50 for her child.

"It was amazing to get Christmas presents for my son. The presents were very good for his age, and he loves them."

Parent 2: "I started going to Step by Step with my first son at the beginning of 2019 and continued to attend sessions until my second son graduated in Summer 2023.

During the years I attended with my sons, I received a lot of support, both emotional and financial, from Step by Step. I suffered with post-natal depression and anxiety following the births of both sons and found the group a huge comfort, a non-judgemental space to talk with staff and other mums in a similar position, and I made many friends at groups over the years. The group encouraged me to get out of the house and attend each week and both of my sons loved going too.

Throughout lockdown, G, my family worker at the time, was a huge support to me and, as restrictions started to ease, we would meet up for walks and have a good chat together, which I really appreciated during a time which was quite isolating. I was in an unhappy relationship with the father of my children. My ex was a gambling addict and life at home had been very stressful for a long period of time. G put me in contact with Moray Women's Aid to get advice from them and she also told me about Crossreach with whom I received video counselling sessions throughout 2021, the year in which I finally separated from my ex.

Over the years, I have also received financial support from Step by Step in the form of supermarket vouchers and referrals for food parcels, which I was very grateful for.

In December 2022, the frame of my pushchair broke, and my family worker found a second-hand pushchair for me, funded by Step by Step. I do not have a car and do a lot of walking, so I rely on the pushchair for getting around, and not being in a financial position to buy a replacement myself, I was really so thankful for this huge help. My family worker has been incredibly supportive in regard to my children having very sporadic contact with their dad and the impact this had on them.

Having thoroughly enjoyed attending Step by Step with my boys over the years, I was keen to become a volunteer, and, with H's guidance, I began doing this in April 2023. H also provided me with links for doing free courses in relation to working with children and has been a wealth of knowledge to me. Through Step by Step, I have also had the opportunity to gain a Food Safety and Hygiene certificate and take part in a Listen Well course.

I credit my time with Step by Step as one of the reasons I have recently been successful in gaining employment at a local nursery. Step by Step has literally helped to change my life, and I really appreciate everything they have done for me over the years. The work they do is truly amazing, and I really cannot thank the staff and volunteers enough."

Money Advice Support Worker with Moray Food Plus' Combat Poverty Project:

"The supportive relationship that I have been able to build up with the users of Step by Step through attending the groups, and from the ongoing, amazing referrals from the family support workers has enabled me to work closer with some people when they are in extremely vulnerable positions of

need. We have been able to do this discreetly, and in a way that has (hopefully) made them feel supported at every step of the way.

Some of these people have required some quite in-depth financial support to be put in place, and some of this work has been carried out via telephone call, sometimes in an evening - once the children are in bed and the parent is in a calmer environment, and able to interact a wee bit more. Some of the work may be quite "hands-on" when it needs to be. Not one of the referrals that I have had have been similar - they are all different in nature, and the need of that individual family is unique to them.

I like to think that, working alongside Step by Step in the way that I do, has allowed us to put in place that unique support, in a discreet and timely manner, and also in a targeted way that benefits the families. It is a pleasure to be working alongside you all."

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Nil

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We are implementing additional sessions for parents and, also, expectant mums in 2024. 1 year part-funding has been secured for this work which will be delivered by increasing hours for existing staff members.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

A shift of momentum towards good news stories may help address the perceived poverty of hope. As Bing Crosby and The Andrews Sisters sang back in 1944 ...

You've got to ac-cent-tchu-ate the positive

Eliminate the negative

And latch on to the affirmative

Don't mess with Mister In-between

You've got to spread joy up to the maximum

Bring gloom down to the minimum

Have faith or pandemonium's

Liable to walk upon the scene.

The media continues to report that things are bleak/likely to get worse – lo and behold, things are worsening!

Education

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Moray Education's core aim is to raise attainment across our schools in order to improve outcomes for all Moray's children and young people, ensuring progression to positive and sustained school leaver destinations.

The priorities within the National Improvement Framework are:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Moray receives monies through the Scottish Attainment Challenge programme through Pupil Equity Funding, Strategic Equity Funding as well as The Care Experienced Children and Young People fund. PEF is provided to almost all schools based on data around the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and all are to be used to support children and young people impacted by poverty with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

There are 45 primary schools and 8 secondary schools (with 22 having pre-school provision.) Children with additional support needs receive the support they require within mainstream schools as well as enhanced provisions in all of our secondary schools, 10 primary schools and some moray wide provision which is part of a review of the service at this time

Performance and Curriculum: Information on how all of our Moray schools are performing is available on each [primary school](#) and [secondary school](#) page. This includes latest school rolls and inspection reports.

Statistics we collected in 2022-2023:

We awarded 967 primary and 552 secondary (total 1,519) clothing grants in 2022/23 which (at £120 per primary child and £150 per secondary child) equates to **£198,720**.

There were 823 primary and 559 secondary (total 1,382) children and young people financially eligible for Free School Meals in 2022/23. A further 4,198 received free meals through the universally entitled P1-P5 scheme. Meal uptake varies throughout the year.

In 2022/23 the Free School Meal amount was £2.30 per primary meal and £2.40 per secondary meal. We also make direct payments for school holiday periods.

Note: FSM eligibility fluctuates through the year, but the average is consistent with the figures above.

Note: you would think that the Clothing Grant and Free School Meal figures would be the same, but Clothing Grants will include some children who subsequently leave the area.

Education Maintenance Allowance is a weekly payment of £30 provided the young person meets the terms & conditions of the award. We awarded 182 EMAs in 2022/23, totalling £155,121.

The number of children being excluded from Moray Secondary Schools is currently two and a half times the national average, with 42 exclusions per 1000 pupils. (In Northern Scot 23 Feb).

Are there any trends emerging?

There is an increase in our early years' establishments of children with developmental delay including socialization, not potty trained and non-verbal. Access to Speech and Language therapy is limited with a national shortage. This is being discussed at Girfec Leadership Group with a focus on a partnership approach.

Anti-social behaviour in schools can be violent and lead to exclusion for the safety of young people and others.

Increased need for multiagency/partnership support to plan for and put in interventions around:

- Wellbeing including anxiety, school refusal etc
- Attendance
- Anti-social behaviours
- Need to increase achievement and attainment in key areas outlined in SAC reporting

There is a reduced capacity of support services to support e.g. Police Scotland or NHS to provide support and interventions and locally although TSi play a key role in supporting the wider children's services agenda, there is less access to a range of services as opposed to other local authorities.

Increased number of Violence and Aggression forms completed within schools which is being addressed through a behaviour action plan being developed working closely with trade unions as well as a range of training developed to further support and increase the knowledge of practitioners.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Schools report challenges in terms of agency attendance at child's planning meetings and in providing interventions.

Schools report incidents of antisocial behaviour which can involve violence, weapons or substance misuse.

Schools reporting attendance issues and challenges in secondary around young people not attending class and "wandering" the corridors.

Attendance post Covid has been a concern however a focus on this has resulted in improvements and the service, working closely with other agencies will be pulling together a short life working group to look at our guidance around this.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Antisocial behavior
- Rise in wellbeing concerns
- Absence from school
- Some pupils attending school as a “safe space” but not engaging with learning and “wandering”.
- Lack of capacity in support services to plan for interventions for children and young people including through the Childs Planning process.
- Lack of available interventions to support children and young people in school when they are experiencing difficulties including through the Childs Planning process.
- Some parents/carers can require support in order to support C&YP with identified strategies.

What we need to build capacity in schools to meet the needs of C&YP

- Further interventions supported through partnership work to meet the needs of individual Children and Young People
- Schools are currently working at their capacity to meet a variety of needs including health and wellbeing needs in a context where some partners are experiencing reduced capacity to support this e.g. NHS, Police.

A defined offer from partners which we can share with schools to maximize impact.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

What we are doing:

- Working with the attainment advisor to provide support to schools regarding use of PEF funding and how to measure impact of interventions
- QIM oversees with the Attainment advisor – use of SEF and CEC&YP Fund where case studies are included in our service.
- and Education Scotland to set stretch aims to progress towards in key areas as outlined in the attached reporting template.
- Curricular review is ongoing to attempt to provide a breadth of curricular opportunities to “pull” pupils into school. This is happening at authority and school/ELC level. We need support from partners to add further breadth to the curriculum offer.
- A pilot programme is ongoing in 3 primary schools which has introduced counselling for under 10’s in a bid to support pupil wellbeing.
- See Me See Change training has been offered across Moray secondaries to support staff professional learning around supporting mental health.
- A Virtual Head Teacher has been established to support Looked After and Care Experienced C&YP through CEF.
- Supporting All Learners strategy aims to build and further enhance nurturing learning communities which are trauma informed.

- Solutions focused meeting training is being rolled out to support collaboration and positive outcomes from meetings for C&YP.
- A variety of posts including Home School Link Workers and Pupil Support Workers have been established, often through PEF, to build capacity in schools to support children, young people and their families.
- ASN review is ongoing and encompasses work aimed to develop a program of training for all staff to support professional learning and meeting all needs.
- Schools using a variety of Parental Involvement and Engagement activities and events in a way that is contextually relevant to involve parents in school and engage with learning.
- New contract for counselling services from young people aged 11+ provides support to parents/carers in order to provide holistic support for young people when this is relevant. The capacity within this contract for parental support is limited given that the focus must be on young people.
- Schools use a variety of methods of supporting poverty including community larder and uniform recycling as contextually relevant.
- Period products available in schools.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Schools are very much in need of partnership support to meet a range of societal needs that are presenting in schools and in order to put in place plan and interventions to support.

Dance North Scotland

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Dance North works with children and young people through its participation programme, including youth classes, schools' workshops, holiday projects and Movement Play workshops with families. We also build performance skills through Dance North Youth Company.

The aim of our work is to develop creative expression and technical skills in dance, while building confidence, health and wellbeing and social skills in individuals. We aim to inspire joy, to nurture a love of dance and to broaden horizons through working with professional artists. We respond to local demand for classes. In Forres, parents contacted us asking for a class for younger dancers and we now deliver a weekly class for 7 - 10-year-olds.

Parents of neuro-diverse young people seek out our classes, which have a more creative explorative learning style that suits their young people.

We developed Movement Play in response to a parent request for an activity parents and children could do together and have delivered sessions at Rise and Speyside Children's Festival.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

Across our programme, we worked with 291 young people in 2023 over 115 activity sessions.

Are there any trends emerging?

We noticed that young people's participation was at a low level throughout 2022 and 2023. It was difficult to engage young people in out of school youth classes and holiday projects. Parents mentioned cost of living crisis to us, and we were able to distribute Moray Council activity grant information to parents.

We noticed that schools were experiencing levels of pressure that displayed as more children finding it difficult to focus, more children being unable to follow instructions, more children were needing more support. At the same time, we noticed that children really enjoyed the opportunities to move creatively in a workshop and expressed a wish to do more dance activity.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Dance North works with young people from age 7 to 18 years and through dance deliver access to creativity, health and wellbeing and skills development. We support young people to develop their skills, confidence and social skills through dance classes, workshops and performance opportunities, working with professional dance artists.

Many of the young people we work with are neuro diverse and express themselves with great ability through dance.

We encourage pathways from schools' workshops and weekly youth classes into our youth company and/or into volunteering with youth classes. One of our young volunteers has previously attended a

weekly dance class, moved into the youth company and now assists with youth classes and is joining the Board of Dance North.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Geographical barriers, lack of public transport to dance classes, confidence issues, social anxiety. The cost-of-living crisis affects parents being able to afford travel and attendance in dance classes and holiday projects.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We deliver youth classes in 3 locations across Moray and school's workshops are based in different areas, where we develop a relationship with the school. Our pricing policy is deliberately kept low and can be in cash or online. We make weekly booking available for all our classes with no upfront commitment. The first class is always offered free of charge – try before you buy. Where a family is facing financial hardship, we can provide a bursary place or seek alternative sources of help (Moray Council out of school activity fund).

We plan to continue working in partnership to deliver Movement Play workshops for young children and families.

We plan to continue working with young people in different ways through our participation programme. We are seeking to learn more through youth consultation, for example with partners such as The Warehouse @Elgin Youth Café.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Supporting young people's travel and transport options
- Supporting families to access events
- Supporting the cost of arts and cultural activities for families impacted by cost of living
- Advocating the benefits of creative activity for good mental health, especially for young people.

Elgin Youth Development Group

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The need for our work was identified in 1998 when local families came together and said that there wasn't a safe space for their youngsters to hang out and meet new people, this then led to the organisation starting up in 2001.

The work we provide is a community space for young people aged 11-18 that is safe and inclusive for them to come to and meet with their peers. In addition to having the space available for young people we also aim to support young people in developing both personal and social skills, this can be done through our drop-in sessions and 1:1 sessions from our skilled youth work team. In addition, we offer holiday programmes at no cost to our members.

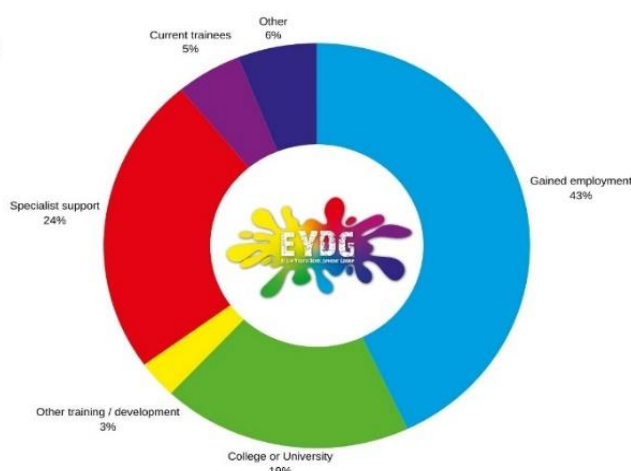
Everything is open to young people regardless of social, cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds with the hope that they can become active members of both our organisation and the wider community. We aim to keep everything either free to our members or as cheap as possible with all food, drinks and snacks available at an extremely discounted rate. We hope that young people can be involved without the stigma that only those who struggle financially access our service when in fact it is available to everyone.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

In 2023 we have seen an increase in young men attending (over 60% of our members). Our Eat, Chat and Chill drop-in sessions show our highest attendance consistently throughout the year with 1333 free meals being given out to 169 different young people in 2023. Our cooking sessions have also become extremely popular in 2023 with sessions being fully booked and also with a waiting list most weeks. We have cooked and served up 352 meals to 98 different young people at these cooking sessions.

EYDGC Trainee Outcomes

- 43% gained employment
- 19% went on to College or University
- 3% went into further training or development
- 24% moved to specialist support
- 5% are still on placements with us
- 6% Other



Last year alone we had our highest number of placements with a total of 19 young people working with us. Seven of those were offered extended placement opportunities, leading to a better all-round work experience and employment prospects.

Are there any trends emerging?

The main trend that has emerged with the statistics we have collected is that the sessions where a free meal has been offered to the young people are our busiest sessions. Over the last year there has been a large increase in young men attending our services specifically between 14-18 years old.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

“Both my kids are members of EYDG and have been well supported for years. Through bereavement, divorce, bullying and the years of Covid, EYDG was there for my boys. My eldest son has had opportunities and experiences that he would not otherwise have had. The team at EYDG have brought out the best of him. My youngest son spent years asking when he could become a member and is now thriving. Knowing that my boys are being given the chance to develop, learn, grow, and have a safe space to do this is all I could want. I don't think staff know the impact they make. I can't thank them enough and know that it will be part of all our lives for a very long time to come”.

“As a single working mum, money has always been a worry. EYDG has helped me so much by providing my children with opportunities and experiences during the holidays that I could have never been able to afford by myself. I am so grateful. In 2020, we went through a life changing event with the loss of my son's best friend. The Youth Cafe team were a beacon of light to my family in what was a very dark time. I was not only trying to find my own feet after the events but was terrified that my children may not be coping and may follow the same path. With little support around me, I found solace in the EYC team who focused on E and M recovery. They spent time with my kids and helped them process the events that had unfolded. Without the team's genuine love, care, and commitment, I'm not sure where we would be today. I cannot find the words to thank the team for everything they have done, as they have literally given me back my children. The Elgin Youth Cafe feels like a second home to my children and the team are like part of our family. They are an incredible asset to not only our community but to my family.”

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Due to the rurality of the area that we are based there are many barriers that our young people face day to day that we are actively trying to combat. The recent increase to the cost of living has had a massive impact on families that we work with, as a large number of our members come from low-income families, this has been backed up as we have noticed that sessions where we offer a free meal is where we see the highest attendance throughout our week. As we are based in a rural area the transport links are extremely poor meaning that there is an extreme lack of opportunities for young people to attend activities without our support as some families might have struggled to get their young person to the activity either by car or public transport.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Being a small third sector charity we are heavily reliant on funding to provide our youth work sessions and are currently stretched in regard to youth work hours and funding. If more funding was made available for us to employ more youth workers, we could provide more youth work in in our building and further afield.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Support us with any available funding for youth work hours both in the building and in the wider community i.e. street work/detached youth work. This is something that we believe is extremely important however is something that we are currently unable to do as we do not have the staff hours.

Portgordon Community Hub

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The need for the provision was identified through a series of community consultations where they voiced their aspirations. This work was progressed when COVID provided opportunity to start realising these ambitions. Our first activity was provision for vulnerable people during COVID. Since then, we have carried a number of projects that are intrinsically linked to areas of CLD.

The biggest challenge is that our demographic is an aging population, with economic and service decline, with a need to provide a draw for families to move in and stay to reduce outward migration. PCT, through a number of consultations, feasibility and subsequent business plan, focused on providing infrastructure, activities to recover from COVID and training to support the sustainability of these projects, such as our volunteer café, community hub, village hall, community garden and potential ownership of the harbour.

Because it is an aging population, there was not the ability to progress these when first identified in 2017. Since then, we have focused our efforts, through the hiring of a Community Development Officer to address these challenges and draw down external funds.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

No. of **adults** and **young people** reached and engaged with through one-off promotional events/drop-ins/community events/engagements etc.

40	50	7	12	4	14	40
AGM	AOC	BATN	DO net	Xmas	Stitchers	History chat

No. of **community groups** receiving capacity building support through CLD activity = 4

No. of adults and young people taking part in influence and engagement activity through CLD (including community planning, participatory budgeting, local and national consultations, co-production and influencing service design).

30	19	22	17	180	24	59
REHIS	Shape Event	TTF Event	Café Vol	Café	GG	PODs

- No. of **children** engaged in CLD activity (**aged 5-9**) = 16
- No. of **young people** engaged in CLD activity (**aged 10-18**) = 7
- No. of **young people** receiving completed nationally recognised awards through CLD activity = 1

Are there any trends emerging?

There has been a past history of over consultation with lack of progress, and this has caused apathy towards attending, trusting and support to any community initiative, potential views on authority towards organisations who are delivering, exacerbated also by COVID.

Negatives:

- The same volunteers across multiple projects which flags major concerns for burn out
- Lack of support due to historical issues and miss-communication
- Communications issues – there is an assumption that everyone is online, so we have to communicate using multiple approaches that have a cost attached, that isn't fundable and challenging if you are not generating an income
- Funding – is often available for short term, but need a sustainable approach to test, grow and develop
- Consultations- these are attended by the same folks, usually supporters. There are the "missing" residents that we don't see despite efforts to reach all, eg to produce a quarterly newsletter takes the following: building and generating content, editing and layout, printing at £181, delivery to 420 households, taking 6 volunteers over 6 areas, approx. 3-4 hrs each.

Positives:

Through our PODS initiative, we have seen socially isolated individuals become friends, grow in confidence and reduction in isolation.

From a PODS user:

"Rather than being cooped up in the house, I can come and take part in the events. I have made friends here who I now meet a couple of times a week in the hall and now I can go to his house. If the warm hub were not here, I would still be experiencing isolation. It has made a huge difference to my life in Portgordon.

A Café Volunteer

Has stated that had the initiatives such as the PODS and opportunity for volunteering in the café has been her lifeline out of anxiety and isolation. She has made friends, grown in confidence and finds purpose and value here. The space is welcoming, being greeted by locals provides consistency for folks 3 times a week.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- Volunteers are exhausted. This is the biggest challenge
- Some need the provision themselves, as there is no-where else locally to go except the village shop.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Concern about rural transport cuts which people can rely on
- There is an absolute reliance on any community led initiative, to be run, maintained and organised by the good will of exhausted and over-stretched volunteers
- The impact of COVID has still not passed with residents wary of integration, comfortable in their new normal, cost of participation and weary of being asked to be involved to keep projects going.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

At the moment we have 4months funding confirmed for the CDO post. This does not provide security and confidence or assist with future planning.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Recognition that the rural communities of Moray need an infrastructure. We would welcome partners to regularly visit and contribute to the development of provision and support to residents.

Also, financial support through core funding to maintain existing posts in order to achieve these community led projects. Seeing that often these projects are not quick turn arounds with immediate impact. There is a need for continuity to build resilience, sustainability and even delivery. This is a huge threat to communities, especially now funding has been cut across all major funders.

Could meetings be available online so we can get an understanding of what the community planning board does and what it means to communities?

Moray Community Foundation (MCF)

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Considered to be a fund of last resort, MCF aims to support members of the Moray community when they come up against financial emergencies and have no-where else to turn. The learnings from a similar charity which was established and operated during Covid– the Moray Emergency Relief Fund (MERF) – highlighted the poverty and hardships that existed. That fund is now closed to applications, and the two Lord Lieutenants across Moray agreed that a new fund should be established within the community i.e. a fund with the community for the community to continue to help those individuals and families in their time of need, when they may be unable to access any benefits, or who may not have received sufficient benefits, and have no-where else to go for support for a financial emergency. MCF could be considered the “son or daughter” of MERF.

Generous donations were received from individuals and businesses and the charity was launched on 1st April 2023.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

From launch date until the end of 2023, we handled 77 applications. Not all were approved as some were found to be out with criteria, but we did make payments totaling £8,300. Average award is around £200/250.

Are there any trends emerging?

Many requests are for food and fuel especially since the Council Flexible Food and Fuel fund has dried up. However, in many cases, it is poor budgeting and for many they would manage better if their benefits were paid weekly.

Universal Credit also causes problems when someone goes from being employed to unemployed or when there is a complete change in circumstances. The time lag to when the new payment kicks in can bring real hardship to families.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

In cases where the application meets the criteria, particularly for white goods, and is fully supported by a referee there is a real feeling of gratefulness. In other cases, there can be gratefulness, but I’d say beneficiaries don’t necessarily understand where the funds have come from and why we have to be strict with criteria, since for many it appears to be another fund/benefit from wherever which could help them. Many financial difficulties, particularly for food and fuel when there is no money left in the meter, stem from poor budgeting.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Nothing apparent other than the fact that we have limited funds for the main aims and objectives of the charity and have to work to those guidelines, i.e. to provide help in an emergency situation.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

At this stage we have sufficient funding to continue operating at current levels of applications. However, it is anticipated that there will be less funds coming to the Council from Scottish Government, and therefore likely to be more pressure on our fund. All cases are handled by an assessor who put forward a recommendation to the Treasurer. All are volunteers and it could be that we will need to recruit more volunteer assessors if application numbers increase.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Please promote Moray Community Foundation for donations or referrals!
- Enlisting more volunteer assessors would be helpful.

Lossie 2-3 Group & Community Hub

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The 2-3 group was made homeless with the closure of Lossie Community Centre. Eventually accommodation was secured at the old theatre in Lossiemouth.

Since the Covid lockdown the community has continued to make requests of the volunteer staff team to access funding, supports and materials. We knew people were very isolated and as things opened up could not afford to go out but needed to build confidence in getting back out and meeting people. So the community hub was developed and Soup and Sweet started, based on surplus food.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

Currently 300 families use the childcare provision - many of whom are working families. The majority of MFR vouchers have gone to RAF working families. 40 families use the childcare centre, which also offers support to a further 200+ families and individuals within the community.

The Lossie 2-3 group also support some RAF families.

- Families are supported through Soup and Sweet.
- People have benefited through donated goods.
- Many families supporting through MRF cash for kids Christmas appeal, (25% More than the previous year.

Are there any trends emerging?

- Funded 2's is great however some children are not ready for 30 hours. Some parents could benefit from parenting skills e.g. parents with headphones on or on their phone are not interacting with their child.
- People who work need all year long childcare not just term-time.
- Some children spend too much time on screens and are overwhelmed when encouraged to play in a big space.
- If you can coax someone to come over the threshold with someone, they stay.
- When people are signed off from work with statutory sick pay, they are not entitled to other benefits (It takes 6 weeks for them to kick in) and they become anxious about payments.
- Increased bitterness from the "in-betweeners" who have always worked and may not have families locally to fall back on and are not entitled to addition benefit.
- People don't know where to get help and are embarrassed to ask. The world is getting smaller through the cost-of-living crisis.
- Families given help through the community care grant for white goods are struggling. The Fridge and freezers given are too small and don't accommodate bulk cooking.
- The price of social housing rent is significant and doesn't make working viable for big families with a benefit cap.
- People in debt have hard choices. If they can't cover internet costs, then their children won't come to stay because they can't access their social media.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- Lady just split up from partner - finding herself homeless. With the Community care grant she was just given a fridge with single shelf freezer.
- I received 2 x £50 vouchers for my children from the Lossie 2-3 group. This came in so handy as we are really struggling to get to the end of the month. We are both working parents, with the rise of food, mortgage and utilities we are struggling to get to the end of month. Our childcare bill had also gone up and there is no surplus funds left. As we work there is no additional support for us. We have never been in this situation before.
- The vouchers came in so handy to help with my son's uniform. I am a full-time working dad and had to buy my son 2 new uniforms this year due to growing. With the rise in utilities there is no spare money left at the end of the month. As I am salaried there is no other means of getting any additional income.
- As a RAF family we have moved from England to Scotland. I was on maternity leave when we moved and now do not have a job to return to. This has had a huge impact on our income these vouchers came in so handy as I was able to top up my fridge and freezer.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- If people see that child benefit is needed, the reality is that other bills will also need support. If families are entitled to child benefit, why are they not entitled to the Scottish child payment? Should the threshold be made higher for families.
- People who rely on free school meals on the government scheme are not entitled to the free dinner money through PEF, so they are crippled over the holidays.
- Grandparents who are providing additional childcare cannot afford to do this, as the hidden costs mount up. This can put a real strain on relationships.
- The "in-betweeners" are not entitled to universal support. Mortgages/rent have rapidly increased, but their pay has not followed suit.
- People don't know about pension credits which is too complicated and are too embarrassed to ask. If on PIP or disability benefit this is not included. People also don't know that they have to apply for the state pension and may not have the IT knowledge or tech to apply.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

- It is hard making decisions on distributing Supermarket tokens sometimes as there is a "sense of entitlement" by some people who are on full benefits. For example, they have a weekly top up allowance compared with someone who has a monthly pay and often has practically nothing to live on for the last week of the month. We have had awkward conversations.
- Banks are charging for every transaction that grants don't include.
- Predicting utilities is very difficult to help people with budgeting.
- Services need to come out regularly to have sessions in communities to break down the challenges people have in making contact.
- It would be good for youth workers to run provision from the Hub. Young people need a safe space.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

It would be good to hear the discussions and decisions by the CPP. How do you plan to deal with the Inequalities report? What are the outcomes of meetings? Is the CPP making change to shape the future?

Big organisations need to come down to the grass roots to find out what the reality is for families and listen. Check out Joseph Rowntree Working Families.

Money Advice Moray

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Money Advice Moray is part of the Benefits and Money Advice Section of Moray Council. It comprises of three teams: Money Advice, Welfare Benefits and Income Maximisation. Our Advisers provide free, confidential and non-judgemental advice. Money Advice Moray aims to play a key part in Moray Council's anti-poverty strategy.

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- **Money Advice** can assist those who are struggling with debt whether it is for a single debt or multiple debts and go through all income and expenditure and advise appropriate of all options available to alleviate debt matters.
- **Welfare Benefits** assist claimants who wish to challenge a DWP or Social Security Scotland benefit decision and advise them appropriately on the course of action and support that can be provided which includes providing an advance submission for an appeal Tribunal hearing and also gathering medical and supporting evidence in support of an appeal.
- **Income Maximisation** provide general advice in relation to all UK and Scottish devolved benefits, ensure income is maximised, assist with completion of benefit form, help with budgeting and create a personal budget plan and refer to other services for further help, support and advice.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- Welfare Benefits clients gain £859,513. This includes awards following mandatory reconsideration/redeterminations, supersessions (changes of circumstances) and appeals.
- 70 clients were represented at appeal level which resulted in a 87.5 % success rate.
- Income Maximisation clients received £1,610,515 in benefit gains which covered 163 new cases and 79 benefit checks.
- Money Advice gained for its 241 new cases in the same period: £867,942 for clients and helped to increase the Council's collection of Rent and Council Tax Money from its clients to the amount of £28,674.

Are there any trends emerging?

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and in particular the rising costs of energy bills made a heavy demand for access to the Flexible Food Fund which for the period of 2022-2023 resulted in 1,736 payments were issued from the Fund amounting to £344,620.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Questionnaire feedback from customers for 2022-2023

Welfare Benefits - https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-SNJHRTk_2B91rTzeDNzfZR5q_3D_3D/

Money Advice - https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-dDejdwu_2BxHKnmsQYildGKw_3D_3D/

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Our service was restricted to the public due to non-access to Council buildings until 20.09.22 when HQ Annexe was re-opened to the public following Covid lockdown, but our service was still mainly operating a telephone appointment service with limited face to face appointments provided.
- In addition, access to DWP offices in Moray (Elgin, Forres and Buckie) and hampered for clients who do not qualify for bus passes and therefore expensive single bus fares can amount to 10% of a single person's weekly basic Jobseekers Allowance payment.
- As more and more people are required to claim for Universal Credit and the need to create a digital UC journal as part of the claimant commitment, claimants in rural areas of Moray are experiencing poor broadband connection and lack of access to rural Library facilities for IT purposes.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

The employment of 1 FTE Flexible Food Fund Clerical Support Worker during this period help to ease and ensure payments were made within appropriate timescales to those in need.

The period of 2022-2023 saw the end of EU funding for Income Maximisation and 2.5 FTE Money Advisers which restricted them dealing with only people of working. Due to the successful application for funding for these posts from April 2023 from UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund, this opened for all ages of people of Moray to get help from Money Advice Moray.

A new Line Manager was employed from December 2022 following the retirement of the previous Line Manager and he was planning to explore community outreach work to cover all areas of Moray.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Need to support and highlight improvement for easy access to digital requirement to make claims in Moray area. To promote and highlight that, although Money Advice, Welfare Benefits and Income Maximisation are deemed as non-statutory, its aims and objectives support one of the Council's main principles in tackling poverty in Moray in line with the following Acts and Regulations:

- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 Chapter 49, Part II Promotion of Social Welfare by Local Authorities
- Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018, Part 1, Tenets and Oversight- Promotion of Take up. Section 6 Recognition of importance of independent information, advice and advocacy.
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, Chapter 9: Advice and Assistance: to provide advice and assistance and access to services which may assist a person experiencing homelessness or assist in the prevention of homelessness.
- Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017: setting out four ambitious headline targets for 2030 that establish Scotland as the only part of the UK with statutory income targets on child poverty.
- Moray Council Corporate Plan 2024- as part of Council's FAIR values- to tackle inequalities, improve life for the most vulnerable.

Adult & Family Learning, Communities CLD Team

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The aim of the service is to provide free learning for adults and families up to and including Nation 4. We support adult learners who have struggle with everyday tasks including reading, writing using numbers. Many learners present with evidence of difficulties but have with no formal diagnosis. They have learned to adapt and mask which impacts on their ability to find work and employment, creating a continuous cycle of financial issues and mental health problems, leading to homelessness, or living without basic necessities. Learners are expected to find work, report their progress, and contact agencies and employers.

Learning difficulties or literacy problems create the main barriers to achieving this, resulting in sanctions or loss of any benefits, or never progressing from a job application. This further impacts on mental health, leading to additional difficulties and potential life-threatening situations. Supporting adult learners with literacy and numeracy can develop confidence, help lift any barriers and create a focus and sense of hope, in that there may be solutions to their problems. Whether the literacies support is to develop skills and achieve qualifications for employment; improving confidence to apply for long term financial support or gaining recognition or diagnosis of disabilities and difficulties, all have a positive impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing. This in turn supports learners to contribute to society either through paid work, voluntary work or achieving awards and certificates, which contribute to self-worth, allowing learners to support other learners within a group setting.

There are a number of pieces of research and documents which backs up what we see everyday:

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/mental-wellbeing-reading-and-writing/#:~:text=Children%20and%20young%20people%20who,%2F10%20vs%206.6%2F10>)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/adult-literacies-scotland-2020-strategic-guidance/>

Statistics we collected in 2023:

During 2022-23, we introduced support for learners when engaging with other agencies. This was in respond to learners saying how difficult they found it to have their voice heard at meetings. We provide support to prepare for meetings, review minutes and agendas and consider what are the main points they want to make so they can go into meetings with confidence knowing they have support. From September 2022 to March 2023 learners were supported at 26 meetings. This provision continues to be provided in response to need.

8 learners achieved 9 SQA units – 2 of these learners required SQA numbers as they had never been registered as working towards accreditation before.

Are there any trends emerging?

We are seeing several trends emerging:

- an increase in learners looking for support with representation at meetings.
- more learners tell us that they struggle with everyday tasks because of their levels of literacies, confidence mental health issues. Sometimes these barriers can prevent any form of learning and development
- 37% of learners work on literacies in comparison to 27% working on numeracy
- There was a decrease in learners aged 16-25 engaging in learning
- There was an increase in demand for support for driving theory which can increase independence, opportunities for work and increase social networks out and about.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:**Learner 1:**

"Learning has helped me speak to other people and come out of my shell."

Learner 2:

"I am so negative just now, jaded now. Are you going to do something or just not hear us again? I am expressing that I am so negative that I just don't think I will be listened to. We need you the able-bodied person to understand, it is not about understanding individual points, but what our day-to-day life is and the bigger picture more than homing in on little issues. You might change the word, but it's the connotation behind the word that is the problem. If you want our opinion then you have to believe it e.g. when the age of the building was highlighted and so didn't have up to date standards to meet modern access, e.g. wide enough doors for wheel chair, and not providing care for people who are disabled yet vulnerable, instead of making me feel my views and points were valid, I was told "we just need to accept it" which is a phrase that I keep hearing recently to justify too much inequality and neglect."

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?**Learner 2**

"Are there any members of the Partnership or Community Planning Board with a disability? A significant barrier is the lack of mentality within society, in that it is ... let 's help, steer and guide but not respect, listen to and employ, our voice does not have weight. The feeling of power struggle is still present. It feels a bit like how pregnant women can feel that their body is no longer their own. To express areas, I need support in my life and for another person to feel that they have the authority to deny what we are and not able to do, "you need to work on... you need to fit in with..." these types of comments are a regular experience.

There is a lack of respect that is the biggest problem and that nurtures all the little problems. Creating a ramp does not change views or mindsets. Disabilities are here because people with abilities set the pace.

There is not anyone among us who choose to be a burden. Independence doesn't necessarily mean the ability to take care of oneself, but really more about being able to take care of a full life. The focus is mainly on routine, structure and living alone, whereas I think most of us, like everyone else want a fulfilling career, children, family, partners, all those things that we all want as a natural human being and this focus is placed in an infantilising view of disabled people."

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Our everyday practice as a CLD team is all about removing barriers and reducing inequalities but we can't do it all alone. We refer learners to appropriate services when it is beyond our remit, knowledge and skills.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Learner 2:

"As above, there needs to be a massive mentality shift. There is a lack of respect and manners within society. Everything is linked. All experiences are linked.

Transitions from one situation to the another is curtailed by a script. And if that person's needs deviate from the script, you don't know what to do. So as an alternative you try to come up with solutions based on what you think is the correct one and you people are the deciders of our fate.

And that is terrifying to us as we are quite aware of the lack of true knowledge and ignorance within the system."

It would be helpful if the Partnership and Community Planning Board could raise awareness of what they do and how they can help the people of Moray.

Buckie Area Forum

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

We are a constituted groups providing a platform for local people and community organisations to come together to influence the planning and delivery of services locally. We are meant to be the grass roots organisation of the Community Planning Board.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

We have a large number of statistics from The Hub in Buckie, that we run, and this is in regard to our work to reduce the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis.

Are there any trends emerging?

The trend we have clearly experienced is the numbers doubling of people in need over the last year. Things appear to be getting worse and out-with our control.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

We have dozens of hardship cases and many anecdotes recorded. We have handed out around £3,000 in food vouchers alone, as well as large supplies of non-perishable food, warm clothes, wraps, torches, hot water bottles etc.

We have seven or eight agencies working, with no charge for the space, in The Hub over the week, All connected with cost-of-living support.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Mental health is quite a large problem with many recipients, and they receive varying quality of support.

Loneliness is also linked to this, and we provide a warm space and free teas, coffee, and biscuits with a chat if that is what they are seeking.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We rely entirely on donations and have been successful in some grant funding.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Restore the funding they used to give to the Forums, to help run their own organisation
- Communicate far better than they currently do to us
- Recognise that we actually exist.

Dandelion Project

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

To ensure that all Armed Forces children have the right conditions and environment in their school settings to thrive whatever challenges their serving parents' military commitments would perhaps generate.

Objectives:

- Ensuring consistent educational advice and guidance is accessible to Armed Forces families.
- Having a single point of contact specifically for enquiries about Armed Forces children in education.
- Advocating and being a champion for Armed Forces children in education in Moray.
- Raising the awareness and understanding about Armed Forces children in education and how to support if needed.
- Supporting schools by delivering professional training, providing resources and signposting.
- Keeping the project sustainable to ensure a long-lasting legacy of support for Moray's Armed Forces children.

The Dandelion Project is in partnership with Moray Council, RAF Lossiemouth and 39 Engineer Regiment. The needs for the project were identified through schools and families wanting more information prior to moving to the area and about transition and deployment support from the three partners.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

From the census data captured in September 2023:

- There are 1,771 pupils from Armed Forces families (regular, reservists and veteran) across Moray's local authority primary and secondary schools
- Numbers of Armed Forces pupils in each Moray Council school has been populated, alongside how many pupils are from regular, reservist or veteran families. This has been used to gain an awareness of how spread-out Armed Forces families are in Moray
- There is an Armed Forces footprint in all but one Moray local authority school.

Are there any trends emerging?

Due to the transient nature of the Armed Forces, data fluctuates throughout the year, so the census data will be inaccurate from the moment it has been captured.

The position for the Education Support Officer leading the Dandelion Project started in October 2023, so no trends have been identified yet. Although with the E7 Wedgetail arriving to RAF Lossiemouth, there will be an influx of personnel and families over the coming years.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

A parent survey was conducted after the project launched in February 2024. There were 228 responses; a survey report is being finalised and key themes and actions will be shared with key stakeholders this term.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?**Awareness**

The Dandelion Project is raising awareness with schools and staffing teams about the number of Armed Forces pupils they have on roll and how to support these pupils. We recognise these pupils face barriers to learning due to their serving parent's work commitments. Schools are not aware of the extent of the resources available to further support their pupils and wider community.

Transition

Families can move multiples times a year or every few years. This can generate challenges, as their child faces interrupted learning, having to move schools mid-year. This gap in their learning may lead to emotional, social and behavioural challenges.

Families are having to navigate through different education structures, curriculum, schooling and in secondary education different subject choices and qualifications. Additionally, they may need to understand how their new local government, authority and health system operate.

Schools need to be aware of the extent of the challenges a family may face and how to support them in this.

Deployment

When a serving parent deploys, this can generate a multitude of wider impacts on the family and children may need support at school in the lead up to, during and after the deployment. There can be a sense of loss with the serving parent away and anxiety can rise, particularly if they have deployed near or to an area of conflict. Young carers can often find this period challenging, as they are being relied on more and their parent is having to 'solo parent' which may be adding additional stress to the family.

Some schools are not aware of what the deployment/separation cycle looks like, how this can impact pupils and what they can do to further support these children or the provision they can have in place should the child need it.

Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Families moving from outside of Scotland to Moray, are finding it challenging to navigate the ASN pathways. In England, schools have Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENDCos) and there are Education Health Care Plans for children with a diagnosis or with specific identified educational needs. In Scotland, schools do not operate in the same way and families and schools are finding it challenging to support transition.

Funding

In England, each Armed Forces pupil receives Service Pupil Premium (SPP), £335 (for 23/24). This includes children from veteran families for up to 6 years (supported by the Ever 6 initiative). SPP is only applicable to schools in England. Families travelling to Scotland from England, are finding it challenging to understand that as a devolved nation we do not receive SPP, so support in schools looks different. The Dandelion Project is seeking opportunities for funding to schools and supporting them to apply. There is a funding programme currently open and some ASGs are interested in applying as cluster groups.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

The Dandelion Project has been funded for three years by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund; October 2023 – October 2026. There is a Moray Principal Teacher currently on a secondment to deliver the project as an Education Support Officer for 23 months. The aims and objectives mentioned above will be delivered alongside key themes from the parent survey and other covenant matters as they arise, if they create a barrier to education.

- CPD packages will be available for schools from next academic session 2024-2025.
- A new section on the Moray Council website will be full of information specifically for Armed Forces families and about education. There will be new supporting documents as well as signposting to other websites and agencies. Schools will be able to signpost families to the council website.
- The project will continue to engage with the Armed Forces community and with schools through regularly drop-ins, meetings and events.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

It would be helpful for the board to promote the Dandelion Project and its objectives. Also to signpost any families, professionals, agencies/organisations to the project should it be needed.

TSI (third sector interface)

Moray

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Part of the Scottish Government's Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan, the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund was created in response to the significant adult mental health needs arising from the pandemic. The Fund is now helping local communities across Scotland, take further steps to improve mental health and wellbeing, with a focus on improving awareness and prevention.

The Fund is being delivered through a locally focused and co-ordinated approach via local partnership groups with TSI's (Third Sector Interfaces) as lead partner. The Fund provides significant investment into community support for adults. In Moray the lead partner is tsiMORAY.

In Year 2, during 2022-23, following engagement with partners and groups delivering Year 1 projects, key local priorities were identified to form criteria for the Fund. As a result, £259,460 was distributed to local communities in Moray to deliver a wide range of projects in line with those priorities to meet the needs identified. These can be viewed [here](#).

Statistics we collected in 2023:

We are still in the process of gathering in reporting from Year 2 projects. We can at this stage provide some indicators that investment from this fund has helped groups and organisations working in, with and as part of communities in Moray, both increase and improve the services, and sometimes facilities, they provide in order to reach more people, and/or connect with people who may be less heard or harder to reach in and across communities of place, interest and/or identity, including some key target groups.

Projects have all aimed to/served to tackle inequalities, increase access and in some cases directly tackle and/or prevent money worries, financial inclusion and/or poverty.

Here are some examples from projects funded through 2022-23 that you may wish to include in this year's Moray Poverty and Inequalities Report:

1st Elgin Scout Group completed their project to make their facilities and therefore the activities provided by the many community groups (17 community groups) through these more accessible to people with disabilities, particularly to people with mobility issues including people who use electric wheelchairs.

Buckie Area Forum supported people through the cost-of-living crisis by providing a hub that helped people ensure essential needs were met directly, and through working with a wide range of partner agencies, through sign posting and inviting in partners to deliver services through the hub. They continue to tackle stigma by ensuring the hub is an informal and welcoming place for all at the heart of the community, and by working with partners, including artists, to offer a whole range of nourishing and enriching experiences, their focus is firmly positive and inclusive. They have seen a steady increase in people accessing the Hub since its inception to the extent that they are fast outgrowing their current premises. They have supported a wide range of people including those experiencing bereavement, difficulties due to cost-of-living crisis (individuals, couples and families)

and involved many people as volunteers, proving so popular that they have at times paused recruitment due to being oversubscribed.

Through Year 2 **Cruse Scotland** deliver 110 support sessions supporting 21 people helping them to cope with the struggle of bereavement. The project particularly targeted people left traumatised by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions on visiting dying loved ones in hospital/care homes; feeling lonely and isolated; and those experiencing money worries as a result of not being able to work due to their grief or where it has been the main family breadwinner who has died. Support delivered by local volunteers included listening support, advice and information, as well as signposting to other opportunities such as our peer-to-peer group support. 82% of people supported reported an improvement in their wellbeing as a result of support sessions. Cruse also took learning from the project in relation to the support that people need in relation to very early stages of bereavement and have developed a new project as a result that will be taken forward in Year 3 to align with meeting the specific needs of this group.

Elgin Cooper Park Community Sports Hub reported on their project that was part of the work they are doing through Active Recovery Moray, which is a partnership between Police Scotland, Arrows, and Elgin Cooper Park CSH that aims to provide regular, free-to-access sporting opportunities for individuals affected by mental health or addiction problems in Moray. CSH teamed up with Moray Wellbeing Hub to develop a Mental Health Accreditation Scheme. This including delivering a range of training to sports clubs (including to volunteers) such as: Being a Good Supporter (to 17 people from 11 clubs); Scottish Mental Health First Aid to train first aiders (12 people from 7 clubs); Trauma informed, Suicide Intervention and Prevention Planning, and skills practice, alongside delivering 8 peer support catch-up sessions attended by up to 9 people per session. They reported that 'Overall, following the training in the project there has been a considerable improvement in participants skills, knowledge, confidence and optimism on the topic of mental health.'

Grampian Regional Equalities Council delivered 'The Grampian Health & Diversity Network' (GH&DN) project aiming to empower ethnic minority community members to become health champions which contributes to tackling health inequalities experienced by ethnic minority communities. The project focused on increasing awareness of mental health, wellbeing, physical activity, and screening programs, as well as enhancing participation in the design and improvement of health services. As a result, GREC now have 33 health champions connected through the network from over 11 diverse communities, who have been continuously sharing the reliable and adapted health information received from the project with their wider communities and contacts, with community connectors in Moray consolidating in their roles. One health champion shared "Being active is important. I am isolated myself sometimes so I think I can give good advice".

LATNEM peer support for mums and birthing people delivered a project that provided both activities including a crafternoon (12 people), a summer social and sound baths, journalling, one to one support (19 people) and 124.5 hours registered childcare support to 3 people attending appointments in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

LATNEM shared a range of evidence, including some stats and feedback, here is a sample:

- 100% of the 20 Service Users who used the childcare/claimed travel expenses said that they were able to attend a face-to-face appointment that would not have been possible without the funding.
- 2463 miles over 101 journeys have been travelled to date as a result of this funding.
- 100% of the 3 Service Users who used the childcare said that they were better able to engage in their mental health appointment and felt the benefit of being able to concentrate on the therapy because they could attend alone, without their children.
- 124.5 hours of registered childcare allowed 33 mental health appointments to be attended without children.

Lossiemouth Community Development Trust – Lossiemouth Men’s Shed

From their report, ‘A Men’s Shed was set up with a committee of 7, premises were found and the use of catering facilities at the football club were offered for those that just wanted to drink tea and cake. Equipment, games and materials were bought to do up the portacabin and be used by the men. Some visited other Men’s Sheds to gain knowledge, and some visited us. We applied for charitable status and are now a SCIO. We met up to 3 times a week with about 10 attending a session. We have 30 active members. We have run social events, and buddying.’

Members have experienced a range of challenges and issues including bereavement, or with mental physical health. Some are carers. Allow enjoy connection through the company they find at the shed, and a shared sense of purpose, including one group who make and sell items at the shed. Through the shed men learn new skills, including sharing skills with one another, and have also welcomed visits on health and wellbeing from professionals.

Moray Field Club

Many social groups and clubs in Moray provide vital opportunities for people, to connect, and help maintain and improve wellbeing by taking part together in activities that meet their shared interests as well as needs. On the surface, it might not be clear how vital these are in relation to prevention in relation to poverty and inequalities. Moray Field Club provides a good example of a club that helps to prevent loneliness and social isolation through activities with a focus on shared interests, keeping people active and engaged, encouraging younger members to join and ensuring older members continue to be included through sharing news and regular meetings, and getting involved in providing or augmenting activities with their own specialist skills or knowledge.

As a result of their Year 2 project ‘We have grown from a membership base of about 75 individuals to about 100. We are pleased to be in a position to offer some of our more senior members who can no longer actively participate in outings, a complimentary pass to Town Hall meetings and a free copy of our bulletin. This keeps our members included and part of the community with the extra benefit of being able to seek their opinions and experience about places and subjects.’

Moray Firth Credit Union

During Year 1, MFCU extended their outreach activities, establishing a satellite office in Buckie, and during Year 2 another in Keith, making links with partner agencies such as The Hub in Buckie, and REAP in Keith. These projects made a real difference through this partnership approach. ‘The Communities in both areas benefitted as well as our partners, because we advertised our visits, we would often find people waiting for us on our arrival, this allowed our host partners to throw additional support behind resolving complicated issues, because they knew their own local area.’

‘Repeat business and new members are an indication that our presence is having a positive effect on the community in the areas we attend, having people waiting for us as we arrive at our satellites is another indication that our project is so important to local people within these townships, **we are pleased and happy to be a small cog within a vital, co-ordinated network of people, departments and charities, whose outlook is positive and forward thinking**, to achieve and make even a small to difference to a much larger problem.’

MFCU have also shared vital information regarding some of the challenges, including the need to recruit more volunteers locally in order to allow times that support can be made available to be more flexible. They have also found that ‘budgetary restraints of the departments or charities that we signpost people to, sometimes running out of funds at the most inopportune moments, usually towards the end of the financial year, some of the charities we apply to have their own criteria, that they strictly adhere to, which preclude some of our referrals from vital funds, even if we believe they are in need of them, we do try to signpost our clients to departments that can genuinely help them, but as with a lot of things these may clash with times that the necessary funding is in short supply.

Moray Food Plus – The Bosie

Moray Food Plus aimed to increase number of activities available at the Bosie, which they did from two to three sessions per day, as well as starting monthly Saturday sessions. They increased the network of groups and organisations they worked with and were able to expand the range of support being offered through developing additional supper clubs, parenting groups, and holiday activities.

From their report 'In the financial year of 2022 – 23 we worked with 428 children and 619 at The Bosie; in 2023 – 24 this number has increased to 730 children and 1,118 adults due to the support offered by this funding. Please note, these are not individual statistics but do include repeat visits.'

Moray ICON

Moray ICON came from a partnership group made up of members from lived experiences, family carers, third sector, health, education and social care, and during their Year 2 project, their aims included: Putting neurodivergent people in contact with each other and relevant agencies in Moray; Creating a way for neurodivergent people to connect with each other to enable the creation of, for example, autistic space, shared interest groups, friendships and support; and Reduction of isolation, loneliness and stress to increase positive mental health.' These aims go hand in hand with their initial aim to 'work collaboratively and ensure the voice of experience was welcomed and at the centre of decision making.'

The project succeeded in meeting aims in a number of ways including events, and developing the [NEURODIVERSITY PATHWAYS | Discover Pathways Moray](#) tool, which can help people with neurodiversities and/or professionals working with people to navigate pathways of support. Challenges have included retaining professional members of group when priorities have shifted however there has been a lot of significant learning gained through the project, including how to plan for the resources required to ensure equitable participation of all members including parents.

For example (from report): 'When forming a group plan in resources for debrief sessions and 1-2-1s for members especially if working in neurodiversity: When our meetings required these debrief sessions in autumn 2023, we did not see this as a negative, but rather as evidence of further need for development. When past the forming stage we could see an expanded approach could suit a more diverse group of parents and professionals in contributing equally. Simply having offline options and clear expectations people can feel supported, others will prefer meetings, and these can be there as well – rather than an all or nothing approach.'

Moray Monday Club

Moray Monday Club aimed to provide outings with the members of the Moray Monday Club, to be a mixture of lunch and afternoon tea outings for the people living with dementia and their carers who attend the club. Their aims through these outings were to:

- Enable people with dementia & their carers to meet regularly & engage in their local community, to make friends and have fun and to help combat loneliness.
- Increase people's confidence in socialising in different settings whilst reducing social isolation
- Help improve the quality of life for people living with dementia & their carers and improve their mental well-being.

They delivered 11 outings over 2023 and as numbers in the group grew exponentially throughout the year, supporting over 60 people to attend each outing, which they attribute to the success of these outings through people having fun, spreading the word and inspiring others to take part.

Moray Sequence Dancers are a community group with 100 members, who hold regularly weekly sessions on Tuesday mornings 10am to 12noon currently at the Supper Room in Elgin Town Hall, with a regular attendance of 30 to 40 members. They have been going for around 40years (since

early 1980s although no-one remembers the exact date) and for much of that time have been self-sustaining as an informal un-constituted community group.

Keen to re-start and reengage with members after covid, they were successful in Year 2 of the Moray Communities mental Health Fund. Despite the set-back and negative impacts of covid this has helped them to successfully re-group and to ensure they resources to sustain activities. Members benefit from the social connection and physical activity through dancing, with their oldest member at 97 still taking a turn around the floor.

They are concerned that they will struggle to find suitable premises when Elgin Town Hall temporarily closes for improvement works, but are working towards securing alternative premises, albeit this is a challenge given their numbers and the space required for their activities.

Whilst sequence dancing is their core activity, members are open to new things, and have been connected with a regional dance agency, Dance North, in case this may yield new opportunities for this dedicated, active and resilient community group, who have long provided enjoyment and improved health and wellbeing for their members.

Moray Women's Aid

Building on a successful artist residency Jen Cantwell, Moray Women's Aid sought to use Art as a catalyst to increase self-belief and confidence for women who had experienced gender-based violence: 'We aimed to provide weekly art-based sessions enabling women to come together to form positive connections and supportive relationship.'

Their project achieved this through delivering weekly art and craft sessions that provided women with a safe space to express themselves through art and learn new skills.

From their report: 'From the first session, the project was and continues to be a huge success. Women have been able to develop new skills, enjoy existing hobbies and interact with other women who understand what they have been through. Sessions have reflected the seasons and women have been able to verbalise what they want to do with participants sharing their skills with others. This validates their abilities and increase confidence and self-worth. Women were able to socialise with other women with shared experiences which improved their mental wellbeing as they felt included and accepted.'

MWA also found that offering one to one support for women experiencing anxiety helped build confidence enabling them to go on to participate in group activities and intend to build on this learning through Year 3.

Nature 4 Health delivered two branching Out programmes, one in Elgin and one in Forres, including:

- bi-weekly nature walks for wellbeing in Aberlour (26)
- weekly nature walks for wellbeing in Forres/Elgin (52)

They have reported:

'Participants have gained in confidence, engaged more with peers, the outside world and in some cases managed to leave the house for the first time since the pandemic. Our BO survey and semantic differential scale surveys for nature walks, pre and post activities, have shown benefits in wellbeing across the board, as well as direct observations from activity leaders and support workers from outside N4H.

Particular areas of note are within social aspects where people are relating that they feel more 'friendly' and 'relaxed' in company but also generally stronger, calmer, more energetic and happier than before the activities. Mental wellbeing seems to be positively affected following both BO and Nature Walks.'

Pride in Moray, from their report focused on Year 2 and a shift to Grant Park in Forres, following on from and building on the success of Year 1, which took place in Cooper Park in Elgin:

‘Pride in Moray 2023 drew in over 1500 attendees who came together to celebrate our diversity and community spirit. The event had a fantastic array of entertainment that appealed to everyone’s tastes. There was something for everyone to enjoy and get involved in.

One of the standout aspects of Pride in Moray 2023 was its strong emphasis on mental health support and safety. With dedicated charities and safe spaces on-site, attendees could relax knowing that their well-being was a top priority. This focus on inclusivity ensured that everyone felt welcome and looked after throughout the event.’

REAP’s Therapeutic Garden Project

Through Year 2 REAP aimed to ‘develop the garden project at our New Elgin site to provide a therapeutic effect to improve wellbeing of our participants with the aim of building mental health resilience through therapeutic gardening.’

REAP reported that they ‘carried out bi-weekly gardening sessions in accordance with our original plan with the wellbeing gardener working 14 hours a week with the participants to support those finishing from their initial placement at our Oaks Therapeutic Garden with further support to ensure that the participants don’t fall off the cliff edge to sustain the progress made in their recovery journey.’

‘Beneficiaries of the project included people with mental health conditions, those bereaved, people suffering anxiety and depression, those in social isolation etc.

The Action for Wellbeing Project supported 78 participants through:

1. 53 gardening sessions
2. 14 Workshops on propagation, composting, growing vegetables, nature sketching, stone painting, mud pies, etc.
3. 3 Open days

REAP shared that ‘The project made a lot of positive impact in the lives of participants. We saw significant improvement in the mental and physical health of participants and have witnessed a remarkable transformation of participants both during the session and over time. We saw increased levels of mood, confidence, socialization, communication, enthusiasm, humour and friendship.

In broad terms, participants benefited through physical exercise, nature connection, having ‘hands in the soil’ and being outside; spending time with others; learning new skills; and a sense of achievement as they complete tasks and see the positive change in the garden.’

Wild Things received funding in Year 2 to deliver their Silver Saplings programme for young people, adults and older people. They described the following beneficial outcomes as what they aim to achieve through delivery of their nature-based activities:

For younger people:

Improved physical health and an understanding of how to manage mental health.

Gain knowledge and understanding of self-help tools that work towards long-term transformation in mental health.

Development of soft skills: leadership, team working, communication

Development of Bushcraft and outdoor skills.

Opportunities to attain qualifications and awards: Saltire Award; John Muir Award

For older people, we anticipate many beneficial outcomes including:

- Friendship-making, feeling less isolated and lonely
- Greater awareness of access to outdoors and taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Greater awareness of physical and mental wellbeing
- Understanding of mindfulness in everyday life.
- Improved self-confidence and self-esteem

They reported:

'Wild Things had a hugely impactful year in 2023, breaking all previous records of community outreach. Where before we ordinarily worked with between 800-1,200 people per year, in 2023 Wild Things worked with a grand total of 1,735 people across Moray and the Highlands through our health and wellbeing in nature programmes.

Silver Saplings contributed massively to this number and by securing additional funding, we were able to expand our impact significantly with numbers as follows:

Children: 1007 of which 223 gained a John Muir Award

Teenagers: 97 of which 37 gained a level 2 Introduction to bushcraft accredited qualification

Adults: 631

Are there any trends emerging?

An increase in need and demand for the vast majority of projects and services provided by community and third sector organisations, as the broader landscape shifts, and people themselves strive, with support, to overcome individual and structural challenges and barriers to learning, participation, mental health and wellbeing, financial inclusion, whatever stage they find themselves in their journey towards becoming active members of their own communities.

It might be easy to misinterpret that one service is vital, in that it provides direct financial support, whereas another service seems like a luxury, because it provides opportunities to build confidence or skills, or improve mental health and wellbeing, but the reality is that both are needed, all are needed, and help nourish and develop individuals and thriving communities.

The increase in demand reflects that all these projects and services are needed and required to create longer lasting beneficial impact as we strive towards a fairer Moray, and the reporting on their benefits and outcomes achieved, whilst only a snapshot from the overall reporting they have shared with us, we hope should help to amply demonstrate that people can be connected, supported, involved and included to create change.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

1st Elgin Scout Group

'The facilities created from the mental health and wellbeing fund have enabled us to create facilities to be utilised by all. It cannot be underestimated how much the fund has helped users mentally (both disabled and able bodied), the outdoor space and facilities have been outstanding and allowed previously marginalised people full use of the facilities and to interact with other members in a safe environment.'

Buckie Area Forum – The Hub

'There have been many cases receiving support. Below is a small example of such.

1. Young girl, who was struggling, working two jobs trying to buy everything she needed for her new baby. She reached out and we were able to provide a pram, a cot, nappies & many other essentials.

2. Another young family, looking to ease the financial pressure of having a 2nd baby on the way. The girl's partner had just been paid off and they were very stressed. We provided them with lots of baby essential - milk, nappies, clothing, wipes, and toiletries.
3. Homeless widow lost home due to financial difficulties. Staying in local homeless accommodation. Visited Hub and received help with washing clothes and was provided with warm clothing and blankets. Upon being given permanent housing she started helping others from the homeless accommodation with washing clothes.
4. A young couple were referred by one of our primary schools as due to their circumstances they had no heating and no money left for food. The couple and one of their three children came to The Hub and were given warm wraps and hot water bottles. The young boy was given a thick heavy Jacket as he had only on a thin jacket. They received food vouchers to help them through the immediate crisis. Contact details of other agencies were provided to ensure ongoing support'.

Cruse Scotland

- "The support given was invaluable, it calmed me down and helped me deal with my life."
- "I found the sessions to be of great benefit, particularly as I had no family living close by. There were no simple ways of "removing" the grief, but the Cruse volunteer helped me move forward."
- "Emotionally I was struggling with grief badly and needed help and once I got in contact with you the sessions were brilliant. I'd still be in a very dark place if I hadn't had the help from you. Thank you again."

Elgin Cooper Park Community Sports Hub

"Over the years as a community sports coach, I have found one of the most difficult situations experienced is when you see as young club member despondent, disengaged and clearly demonstrating poor mental health wellbeing. The mental health charter programme is very much welcomed and has provided me the insights to provide appropriate support and to sign post young people to other support services."

Grampian Regional Equalities Council

'Implementing this project enabled an expansion of the engagement in a specific area of interest to some of our health champions, which was on cancer screening programmes. In the second semester of 2023 NHSG approached the project to work in partnership with the objective of delivering specific engagement to better understand how to improve uptake of ethnic minority communities on bowel, breast and cervical cancer screening programmes. This shows the potential of the project's engagement model and its capacity to attract additional funding for the benefit of ethnic minority communities in Moray and across Grampian. Furthermore, this represents a clear output to support addressing pervasive health inequalities.'

LATNEM Peer Support for Mums and Birthing People

- "Helped me to socialise in a supportive environment when my mental health was unstable, and I couldn't face going to baby groups".
- "You know that other ladies are there for you and sometimes that is massive as if your mental health is not great you can feel so isolated and alone. Meet ups - social/creative these are invaluable, but I only attend events minus kids and to be honest do not want to be with babies/toddlers as reminds me just how bloody hard that period was for me."
- "I didn't have to worry about what I was wearing or if I got upset or anything so I
- could relax more and just enjoy it."
- "It was so relaxing and nice to get the self-care I needed away from family life".
- "I feel without the support us ladies would struggle. I have met so many lovely people and glad to call them my friends."

LCDT - Lossiemouth Men's Shed

The Men's Shed have shared some of their challenges in relation to the range and scale of physical and mental health needs, and also unexpected outcomes, including:

- 'Having such a positive impact on the men as well as the community. Seeing the differences in the people.'
- 'Learning new skills, even a bit of cooking, first aid.'
- 'Helping out the school children at Lossie high in woodwork as their teacher left.'
- They also kindly shared how they look to the future:
- 'You always are learning and adapting to the Men's and the community needs.'

Moray Field Club

Moray Field Club In their own words, 'While still trying to rekindle activity post COVID, we were concerned that we did not have the confidence to book events or make big plans for our future. The safety net and springboard this sum [£2000] gave us was palpable.'

Moray Firth Credit Union

MFCU have provided a feedback form from one of their partner agencies REAP which illustrates a difficulty an individual was experiencing and how this was resolved through working with the individual and with partners, see appendix to this submission 'An Army of People'.

Moray Food Plus received the following feedback from NESS (Northeast Sensory Services in response to the supper clubs established through their project:

Feedback from NESS:

- "We can't thank Sarah and the staff at The Bosie enough for all their enthusiasm and support with two groups they have running at The Bosie. The NESS supper club has been a huge success. The children who attend gain so much from the opportunity to meet socially with other children who face the same challenges that they do having either a hearing or visual loss".
- "The group has been brilliant for our daughter; it is good to hear her discussing her sight difficulties in a positive way and the other young people in the group are so friendly and supportive".
- "K has always felt isolated, mixing with young people who understand has helped her become more accepting of herself".

Moray ICON

Excerpts from event feedback on what went well, and what could work better:

What worked well:

- Getting everyone together
- I liked connecting with like-minded individuals to develop pathways to correct support in moray I'm excited to be moving toward partnership working
- Venue, information, networking, crisps
- I enjoyed finding out information on existing and new support groups
- I am going to join icon families to find support for me and my son I can also signpost to icon in a work capacity in house and within our service I enjoyed seeing so many familiar faces
- I liked being in a room full of people passionate about neurodiversity like sharing war stories yes please to the meeting list set up neurodivergent group
- I liked the (fidget) toys and connecting with people
- Would love to see regular meetings and get togethers
- Pleased to get icon explained to me and look forward to seeing how it can progress and grow
- Mixing with other parents connecting with others in a non-judgmental space
- Great networking and connection gained an understanding of how icon fits in discover pathways

- Chatting networking with lovely open people
- Delighted to come into such an inviting and welcoming environment with both carers and professionals
- Lovely space welcoming great mix of people who could offer different skills, good mix of people
- Chance to see others who understand and get feedback very accommodating and comfortable setting.

What could work better:

- An initial group intro with a short presentation before chatting (rather than stations)
- More similar events would be good
- Brief run through of pathway resource may be useful (to all rather than at stations)
- Not sure if I've heard enough maybe a wee presentation or a summary at the end
- Would have liked a small presentation maybe to explain about icon agenda so people know what they're coming to, next steps.

Moray Monday Club

A few quotes Moray Monday Club members:

- "We love getting out on the bus and having lunch, we have so much fun"
- "As a carer for my husband, I find life very lonely now as he can't converse with me, so I love being with other people in the same situation as it makes my life a little bit easier and lighter."
- "My wife & I love going to the Moray Monday Club, since I had to give up driving we can't get out and about anymore but the trips with the club let us enjoy getting out and enjoy being with our new friends."

Moray Women's Aid

Excerpt from report, accompanied by appendices to this report – three images of an artwork created through one-to-one sessions with a woman who is partially sighted. The artwork was made using bright colours to provide a bold contrast:

The artwork expresses 'How social isolation affected her and how important the sessions were to her. Although she talks generically about Moray Women's Aid, the conversations and the completion of the art all took place within the art sessions.'

'Women have created art that now hangs proudly in their homes, something that they would have been ridiculed for previously during abusive relationships which would have stopped them attending sessions and impacted on their self-belief.'

Nature 4 Health have shared that 'Testimonials suggest that the positive influence can last for a few days surrounding activity and not just directly after it. Anticipation of attending through to a more relaxed evening and better sleep through to the following day. A few participants have not only kept going along to Nature Walks following a BO programme but arranged peer support meets where chat, tea and walks take place. These activities seem to make a genuine difference to people's outlook and lives.'

Pride in Moray, from their report: 'Pride in Moray 2023 achieved its desired outcome by prioritizing the creation of a safe and inclusive space for the LGBTQ+ community while also fostering support and solidarity from the wider Moray area.'

The success of the event was evident in the impressive turnout of 1500 attendees, which was measured through a comprehensive ticketing system. This significant turnout not only demonstrated the community's enthusiasm and support but also served as a tangible indicator of the event's impact.

Moreover, the event's ticketing system also facilitated donations, resulting in an additional £950 raised to support Pride in Moray so that we could further support the LGBTQ+ community in Moray.

The 1500 people who attended the event were able to be themselves and feel safe and comfortable to be who they want to be without fear.

REAP – Therapeutic Gardening Project shared that, 'We observed a huge shift with one participant, who came with chronic pain and high anxiety. The person shared how through the sessions, they felt heard, seen and appreciated, which they had not been feeling before. '

Other feedback from participants included:

- "The garden is so stimulating in many ways. I enjoy meeting new people I would definitely recommend the garden to others".
- "It's good to be here, even at my worst".
- "The garden has been marvellous. The people, the flowers, just being outside and feeding the birds. I always thoroughly enjoy it and feel better for coming".

Wild Things provided the following feedback from participants:

- 97% of participants said our activity leaders were either great or amazing
- 93% of participants said our activities were either great or amazing
- 94% of participants said their overall experience with Wild Things was either great or amazing
- 96% of participants agreed that they had learned new things about nature
- 86% agreed that the sessions had improved their health and wellbeing
- 90% said they felt closer to community as a result of our sessions

During 2023 Wild Things worked with Robert Gordon's University in 2023 to independently assess impact. This evaluation is in the closing stages of being produced and will be shared once this is complete. They did also kindly share some insights in learning for the future:

'As a well-established series of programmes, we did not encounter any significant problems in our delivery, however, we did utilise feedback throughout the year to further refine our programme of activities, focusing on session plans that worked well and cutting out activities that were either complicated to deliver to certain groups or which made squeezing all our activities into a single session feel rushed. Where this was the case, we created more space within session plans to allow participants to explore their interests more fully. We also created slower, more mindful sessions that focused on the concept of nature connection and found this approach to be extremely beneficial for certain groups.'

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

The vast majority of projects have been successful in recruiting participants, and also, in some cases, in recruiting volunteers, although some services (through forum service updates) out with the scope of this fund have also reported challenges in recruiting volunteers, so that doesn't necessarily reflect the wider picture.

Some projects have reflected on the level of need and/or demand in relation to mental or physical health and wellbeing and/or in relation to money worries has been even higher than they anticipated, although they did develop projects in response to needs identified through their own previous work and/or through information shared by partners that was used to identify the criteria and priorities for the fund.

Moray Firth Credit Union, alongside REAP, provided an excellent case study showing how a range of partners can work together well to help an individual overcome challenges, and help support them to access services delivered by partner agencies.

The projects funded through the Moray Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund include group activities and and/or elements of one to one support, but in all cases, people are individuals, and in some settings activities have been adapted or tailored to better meet individual needs e.g. Wild Things describes how they created more space within sessions, and developed more mindful sessions to avoid sessions feeling 'rushed', making these more accessible and inclusive.

Moray Women's Aid provide testimonial illustrating how one to one work supported one woman with a visual impairment to create artworks through choice of materials, colours and techniques that work well for that individual, providing a vital means of expression.

The Hub, Buckie share their approach to removing stigma through creating an informal and welcoming space, to ensure people are not put off accessing vital services they require to meet essential needs, whilst nurturing an inclusive community environment.

Groups and organisations who rely on project funding, can experience times of feast and famine, which can restrict their ability to respond to emerging needs, or focus on activity delivery whilst securing funding to ensure they can sustain activities.

Some organisations used the Year 2 fund project to gather data helping them to access funds for the future. However, even successful projects, and well governed organisations, whilst being better equipped to apply for funding, are still at times experiencing disappointments when applying for funds.

Some organisations who had developed more enterprising approaches to raising funds, and/or developed plans to diversify funding strands, found their longer term plans and strategies just did not work in the context of pandemic and pandemic recovery, so this forward looking planning needs to continue, with flexibility and adaptability being built in as key to resilience, meeting needs and ensuring people and communities in Moray can both survive in terms of essentials and thrive.

Informal feedback through a range of forums and networks indicates that longer term funding is needed to ensure that communities and the groups and organisations that create and sustain community, as well as serve community, through their projects, is vital.

Reliance on knitting together funds through short term project funding can leave groups at risk of developing much needed services and support that they struggle to sustain when basic running costs are harder to find or subject to external pressures that can lead to sudden spikes in costs, even if these do tend to partially fall or even out over time.

Planning for the future, alongside good governance, and successful projects becomes even more important, and for busy community projects, time for planning can feel like a luxury when they are stretched to meet the demands they face on the ground on a daily basis.

Overall, the level of need and of demand for services that respond to those needs has increased over the course of the fund, and many projects have risen to the challenge delivering as they intended, and in some instances through match funding or adapting plans, have reached more people than they anticipated they would. This reflects the way that short term funding can help groups and organisations continue to develop and adapt, and even if longer term models are developed, within that short term funds can and should continue to play a part in this flexible approach to meeting needs that may continue to change over time.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

tsiMORAY alongside the other TSIs across Scotland have now distributed grants for Year 3 of the Moray Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and have been informed that there will be funds for Year 4.

There has been year on year increase in applications to this fund, an overall improvement in quality of applications, and in a small number of cases where projects have found themselves unable to overcome challenges, we have appreciated the learning that is shared back, particularly with regard to reaching harder to reach or seldom heard groups.

The Minister responsible for this fund has indicated, at a recent national event bringing together TSIs and some partners from across Scotland, that the Scottish Government are very pleased with the success of this fund, and it's reach into communities across Scotland, including Moray, and that as soon as they can, they would invest longer term funding in this approach. However, that day is not here yet. In the meantime, we have started a conversation at a local and national level to explore what that longer term funding model might look like, at a local level through Join the Dots, and at a national level through the TSI Scotland National Network.

We will continue to invite projects to feedback and help shape future rounds of this fund, and to work with partners to try to ensure the priorities and criteria reflect local needs, whilst retaining strong community and lived experience representation in decision making, valuing both expertise and local or community knowledge in key decision-making spaces.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Recognise the vital role that community organisations/the third sector play, the difference their projects and services make, and their key role in working with partner agencies, including those delivering statutory services, to meet the most essential needs of people experiencing inequalities of all kinds including health and socio-economic.

Help us advocate for longer term funding by supporting this approach and contribute where you can to the development of fairer models of funding that can sustain communities that thrive.

Recognise the vital role the third sector plays as part of the big picture and wider ecosystem that aims to tackle structural or root causes of inequalities, alongside and including initiatives that do provide the quick fix or sticky plaster solutions, because the level of need and demand requires, we pay heed to both as we strive towards a wellbeing economy and better, fairer, future for all.

Recognise that whilst a seat at the table may be welcome, it is not always enough, and as community and third sector groups and organisations stretch to meet the levels of need and demand they experience, with empathy for public sector colleagues and peers who they are all too aware are also stretched, understand that it can be harder to make that commitment and investment of time to participate in meetings, whether strategic, operational, locality or frontline.

Recognise that participation can be encouraged through positive means, and that people will do what they can to contribute and take part in spaces, including decision making spaces, where voices are heard, participation is valued, and is equitable.

Moray Rape Crisis

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Established in 2018, Moray Rape Crisis (MRC) provides trauma-informed emotional support, advocacy and information for adults and young people in Moray of all genders, aged 11 and over, who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives, including childhood sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault.

We also work towards preventing sexual violence through delivering awareness-raising workshops about consent in secondary schools and youth services across Moray, and through working strategically with multi-agency partners including the Police, NHS, and local authority.

Our frontline services include:

- Individual therapeutic support- a safe, person-centred weekly space, either in-person or by phone or video, to support survivors to build positive ways of coping with the impacts of the trauma/s they have experienced, and to work towards healing and recovery.
- Advocacy support- support for survivors who choose to report to the police throughout the justice process.
- Group work- rolling 6-week programmes, including well-being, and arts and crafts groups.
- Support for young people aged 11 to 18 - the 'Rise Up' project.
- Support for survivors with learning needs and disabilities - the 'Side-By-Side' project.
- Support in Polish
- Sexual violence prevention workshops with young people aged 11 to 25 in Moray's secondary schools and youth services.

The need for the service was identified pre-2018 by Rape Crisis Scotland (the national body representing rape crisis services in Scotland). Before this time, the nearest rape crisis services to Moray were in Aberdeen or Inverness, both requiring considerable travel time and expense for survivors in Moray. Since the establishment of the service in Moray, over 450 adults and young people in the area who are affected by sexual violence have been supported. The service, originally set up by Rape Crisis Scotland, became an independent charity (in accordance with the RCS process for establishing new rape crisis services in Scotland) in 2020, and since then has grown from 1 FTE staff member to a team of 16 staff members (3 FT and 13 PT). Referrals have increased considerably over this time, increasing by 46% in 2022-2023. Recorded sexual crime in Moray has also increased in this time- by 23% in 2021-2022 and by 22% in 2022-2023.

Unfortunately, MRC requires to operate a waiting list for our services. The exception to this is where a survivor has experienced rape or sexual assault within the past 7 days, when their referral is prioritised.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

In April 2022 to March 2023 we:

- Supported 236 services users (a 42% increase on 2021-2022, in which period 166 survivors were supported by the service).
- Received 142 new referrals (a 46% increase on 2021-2022, in which period 97 referrals were received).
- Provided 7,548 support contacts (by phone, email and text) and appointments (in-person, by phone or by video) (a 189% increase on 2021-2022, in which period 2609 support contacts and appointments were provided).
- Delivered 159 sexual violence prevention workshops to 1,545 young people at 7 local authority secondary schools in the area (Elgin Academy, Elgin High School, Forres Academy, Keith Grammar, Lossiemouth High, Milne's High School, and Speyside High), and additionally Gordonstoun School, Moray SEBN Pinefield Campus, Moray College (University of Highland and Islands) and local young people's services.
- Delivered 3 training inputs to 36 students and staff at Moray College (University of Highland and Islands), and two further inputs to multi-agency workshops on behalf of Moray Violence Against Women Partnership.

Are there any trends emerging?

Increase in referrals:

As noted, referrals have increased considerably over the past 2 years, increasing by 46% in 2022-2023. Unfortunately, throughout this time MRC has required to operate a waiting list for our services. At the time of writing, 117 survivors are waiting between 8 months to a year to access our services.

Impacts of cost-of-living increase, financial hardship and poverty:

An estimated minimum of 20% of survivors using our services are impacted by financial hardship and routinely tell us about their concerns related to food poverty, welfare benefits, and meeting basic living costs such as heating their homes or affording rent.

The stress and anxiety being caused by the cost-of-living crisis compounds post-traumatic stress associated with sexual violence, frequently worsening mental health and well-being. In addition, economic abuse, including restricting a woman's access to her own or household finances, can often be a form of coercive control, alongside sexual violence, within domestic abuse.

Poverty and financial hardship limit survivors' options, and can lead to hopelessness and despair, which in turn make recovery from the debilitating impacts of trauma, and being able to build safety and security, much more challenging.

Since 2022 Moray Rape Crisis have been partnering with Moray Food Plus to offer a free onsite food larder for survivors experiencing food insecurity and financial hardship, along with free toiletries. This resource is regularly utilised by survivors using our services. Weekly deliveries by Moray Food Plus are received.

Issues raised by young people in sexual violence prevention workshops:

A key issue raised by young people in the prevention workshops we deliver in Moray's schools is the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. Young people feel that this is the most common form of sexual violence in their generation. Young people tell us it can be difficult for them to talk about what they are experiencing in online spaces, as they feel anxious about getting into trouble from their teachers or other authorities.

Young people have also raised the following issues affecting them:

- Prevalence of unwanted nudes being sent to them.
- Online influencers that are misogynistic.
- The use of the word "rape" to threaten others.

In our work in schools, we have also observed that in some schools there is still a deeply entrenched view of rigid gender norms amongst young people. We have adapted our sexual violence prevention programme to include additional space to explore and unpack these gendered assumptions/stereotyped beliefs held by some young people.

Feedback from school students in Moray who have participated in our sexual violence prevention workshops speaks to their recognition of the importance of sexual violence prevention work in schools:

When asked *"One thing I learned from the workshops is..."*

- "What sexual violence is and how it can impact someone." S5 Buckie High School
- "That different power dynamics between people can affect a relationship" S1 Forres Academy
- "Consent is everything." S2 Lossiemouth High School
- "No one should be pressured to send nude pics." S3 Elgin Academy
- "Consent has to be online and in person." S3 Forres Academy
- "Nobody can touch you without your consent." S3 Speyside High School

Additional comments from school students:

- "It is necessary to have these workshops." Year 11 Gordonstoun School
- "It can be awkward to talk about this stuff but it is important to be taught about it." S4 Buckie High School
- "I know who Moray Rape Crisis helps." S1 Forres Academy

Evidence of the impacts of Moray Rape Crisis' support and how our work contributes to local community safety, health and well-being and equality outcomes:

In the past year we have implemented a new bespoke scaled evaluation tool to help us measure the difference made by our support. This tool is mapped to our service outcomes, and particularly intends to better evidence the following impacts of our support:

- Increased understanding of the impacts of trauma and sexual violence
- Increased healthy coping with these impacts
- Increased awareness of their options and choices following rape or sexual abuse
- Reduced self-blame
- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Improved levels of social/relational connection.

Survivors are invited to complete the scaled evaluation forms at the start and end of their support.

In the past six months, survivors reported the following differences made through their engagement with MRC's individual therapeutic support and groupwork programmes.

Groupwork:

- Survivors who engaged in MRC's groupwork programme in this period reported that:
- 89% felt more able to cope
- 78% felt more in control
- 78% reported increases in self-esteem
- 67% felt safer
- 67% reported being more hopeful.

Individual therapeutic support- 6 sessions:

- Survivors also fed back the following outcomes in relation to their engagement with shorter-term blocks of individual therapeutic support:
- 86% felt less isolated and more able to interact with people.
- 71% felt safer.
- 71% felt calmer and more able to cope.
- 71% felt supported.
- 57% reported increases in self-esteem.

Individual therapeutic support- 20 sessions:

- Survivors reported the following outcomes after engaging with 20 sessions of support:
- 75% felt safer.
- 75% felt calmer and more able to cope.
- 50% reported increases in self-esteem and being more hopeful.

Qualitative feedback from survivors includes:

- 'I felt very safe, and my feeling and thoughts were listened to and understood, which is very relieving...I am extremely thankful and grateful for all the support and help my worker has provided me over the last 6 weeks or so. She has been extremely comforting and supportive and has helped me massively with the last few issues I was dealing with in amongst my massive journey I've been on for the last few years... It has helped me massively to gain further knowledge in terms of my past abuse, trauma and gaining new coping strategies before beginning this next stage in my life.' (Survivor who has accessed 6 sessions of support)
- 'The support sessions helped me to understand my trauma and I learned a lot about myself. I can control stress and anxiety by using grounding techniques. The six sessions gave me knowledge of how to control my emotions, how important is a self-care and the power of positive thinking. I have a lot of plans for my future and better believe in myself.' (Survivor who has accessed 6 sessions of support)
- 'The support sessions helped me to understand trauma and the grounding techniques have been very helpful. I am more aware of how to cope and manage to control my stress.' (Survivor who has accessed 6 sessions of support)

- 'The support provided by MRC as I navigate the complexities of my trauma has been invaluable. I feel better equipped to face triggers and daily life when things do come up, have explored depths emotionally I have never previously felt safe to do so and leave this experience having gained a greater sense of empathy for myself...Proud of what I have achieved and deeply appreciative of the time, patience and compassion shown by my counsellor, who was very accommodating and adaptable to my thinking, processes and general needs.' (Survivor who has accessed 20 sessions of support)
- 'The support I have received has been imperative to my mental health and in my healing I have been supported to, listened to and given tools to use when I feel I'm not coping.' (Survivor who has accessed 20 sessions of support)
- 'This group has helped me be me...MRC are the unsung heroes of Moray. Thank you for all the support over the years.' (Survivor who has accessed group support and individual support)

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Over the past year, we have worked with a survivor to write and publish her story. 'Amy's Story' (<https://www.morayrapecrisis.scot/amys-story/>) (see Appendix 1) is a powerful and moving personal story of courage, empowerment, healing and hope. 'Amy', who has accessed our service for support, is passionate about telling her story in the sincere hope that it helps other women affected by sexual violence and domestic abuse. To support Amy in her aim of increasing awareness, we have distributed her story to local rape crisis services, women's Aid groups and VAWPs across North-East Scotland. Her story has been shared with the Chief Officers Group in Moray, and in addition sent to all local councillors, MSPs and MP. Amy's Story continues to receive positive and moving feedback on our social media, having previously been launched on our social media in March to mark International Women's Day on 8 March 2023.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Financial barriers and poverty:

As noted above, an estimated 20% of survivors using our services are impacted by financial hardship and routinely tell us about their concerns related to food poverty, welfare benefits, and meeting basic living costs such as heating their homes or affording rent. The stress and anxiety being caused the cost-of-living crisis compounds post-traumatic stress associated with sexual violence, frequently worsening mental health and well-being. Poverty and financial hardship limit survivors' options, and can lead to hopelessness and despair, which in turn make recovery from the debilitating impacts of trauma, and being able to build safety and security, much more challenging.

Geographic barriers

Our offices are located centrally in Elgin, close to public transport routes and are fully accessible. However, for survivors located in other parts of Moray, particularly more rural areas and communities, travelling to Elgin can be a barrier to accessing support due to lack of regular public transport. In addition, the cost-of-living crisis is also impacting on survivors' ability to afford travel costs to Elgin. Survivors with disabilities have also fed back to us that they can experience barriers having to travel into Elgin. The day-to-day impacts of living with trauma, particularly PTSD, can also make travel by public transport feel unsafe for survivors.

Equalities groups

Our data highlights that survivors of colour, older survivors aged 65 and over, male survivors and LGBTQ+ survivors are particularly under-represented in our service user group. We are committed to being an inclusive and diverse organisation, and to taking proactive action to address barriers to inclusion. In 2023 we achieved the LGBT Gold Charter Award and part of our work towards this included an Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment of our frontline services, and an Equalities Action Plan to better reach survivors under-represented in our service user group. MRC's Equalities Champions staff group leads on the implementation of the action plan. Over the next year key actions include to improve our reach to older survivors, survivors of colour, Gypsy Traveller survivors and LGBTQ+ survivors.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

As noted, demand for our service continues to increase, which is in turn leading to an increase in waiting times for support. Over 100 survivors are currently waiting between 8-12 months to access support from Moray Rape Crisis at the time of writing. Survivors repeatedly tell us that having to wait months and months for support they need at the time they reach out to us negatively impacts their mental health and well-being, with potential impacts including worsening self-harm, suicide attempts, increased substance misuse, revictimization, development of additional mental health problems and disengagement from education/employment.

We anticipate demand for our service will only continue to grow, given the following factors:

- Ongoing increase in reporting of sexual crime to the police. 322 sexual crimes were recorded in Moray in 2022-2023, inclusive of crime categories of. Overall, this represents a 22% increase on sexual crime in Moray recorded in 2021-2022. Over the past 10 years, recorded sexual crime in the area has increased by 94%.
- Increasing profile and visibility of Moray Rape Crisis in the community as we grow and develop as a service.
- The work of Moray's Violence Against Women Partnership which includes raising awareness of sexual gender-based violence and support for survivors in Moray.

Additional capacity is needed to meet the local level of need within Moray, closer to the time survivors take the courageous decision to reach out for support.

Moray Rape Crisis has a fundraising strategy and regularly applies for grant funding. However, we would wish it to be noted that we receive no funding from Moray Council and are one of the very few rape crisis services in Scotland not to receive funding from their local authority or IJB.

New developments planned over the next year**Extension of sexual violence prevention work to Moray College**

We have secured new funding from the National Lottery Awards for All scheme for the year ahead to extend our sexual violence prevention programme into Moray College (UHI)- to include workshops and awareness-raising with students about sexual consent.

Extension of outreach support provision in Forres

We have secured new funding for the year ahead from the Berry Burn Windfarm Community Fund to extend our current outreach provision in Forres from half a day per week to a full day per week to better meet the needs of survivors in and around the Forres area.

Groupwork programme

We have secured new funding through the Moray Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and NHS Grampian Charity to continue delivery of our groupwork programme for a day each week in six-weekly blocks across the year.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?**Lack of local forensic medical examination facilities in Moray**

A key concern for Moray Rape Crisis is the lack of access to forensic medical examinations locally in Moray. This means that if an adult in Moray experiences rape or sexual assault, and reports this to the police, they are required to travel hours to Inverness or Aberdeen to have forensic evidence taken, unable to wash or change their clothes until this process is concluded. A child or young person is required to travel to Aberdeen.

The implementation of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2021 in April 2022 has increased options for some people in Moray, who can now self-refer for forensic medical examinations alongside sexual health and onward referral at new Sexual Assault Referral Services in Aberdeen or Inverness.

However, survivors accessing support at Moray Rape Crisis have fed back that they have experienced barriers to attending the Sexual Assault Referral Services in Aberdeen or Inverness, due to lack of access to their own transport, lack of public transport (particularly out of working hours), financial barriers such as the affordability of travel, lack of childcare, and the impacts of trauma on their mental health and ability to travel. Issues pertaining to the affordability of travel are only being heightened by the current and enduring cost of living crisis which is causing financial insecurity and poverty, and compounding health and social inequalities, for many survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

The lack of locally situated forensic medical examination provision would clearly seem to be at odds with the priorities of [Equally Safe](#), the delivery framework for which has included the outcome that 'Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people'. We are also concerned that the lack of this provision does not align with the trauma-informed approach to policy and service design outlined in NHS Scotland's and the Scottish Government's [Trauma-Informed Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland](#). In particular, trauma-informed practice, as outlined in the Toolkit, aims to ensure that services are delivered in ways that reduce barriers and prevent further harm or retraumatisation for those who have experienced psychological trauma or adversity. However, having to travel for hours to access forensic medical examination risks further traumatising survivors in Moray already having to cope with the physical and psychological impacts of recent sexual assault.

Lack of update in Moray of the Equally Safe at School gender-based violence prevention programme

Moray Rape Crisis works in partnership with Rape Crisis Scotland to deliver [Equally Safe at School](#), a whole-school approach to addressing and preventing sexual and gender-based violence in secondary schools. Rape Crisis is very keen to offer this programme to schools in Moray and have written to all local schools and also the Education Department to introduce the programme and offer to meet to discuss, but to date only one local school (Elgin Academy) has signed up to this prevention programme.

Equally Safe at School is designed to meet key health and wellbeing outcomes of the Curriculum for Excellence and other key frameworks such as Getting It Right For Every Child, and is consistent with the [Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy](#) to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. The Equally Safe at School programme takes a whole school approach, working with staff and students to prevent gender-based violence and increase confidence and skills in responding to incidents and disclosures of such violence. It aims to positively influence the school culture by fostering a shared, consistent approach to gender-based violence, and is underpinned by principles of equality, safety and accessibility, with student voices at the forefront.

Funded by the Scottish Government and developed by Rape Crisis Scotland in partnership with the University of Glasgow, the approach was piloted with a number of schools across Scotland between 2017-21. It has now been developed into an [interactive website](#) with tools, policy and other templates, information briefings and resources to support schools and teachers to plan and implement a whole school approach to preventing sexual violence, including an e-training module for teaching staff. A range of voluntary and statutory partners and stakeholders have been involved in the design, development and steering of Equally Safe at School, including Zero Tolerance, Improvement Service and Education Scotland.

Schools can register to create an account on Equally Safe at School's interactive website: <https://www.equallysafeatschool.org.uk/taking-part/> As noted, when a school registers, it gets access to a wealth of tools, templates and resources.

The interactive website has been designed to make the planning and implementation of Equally Safe at School as straightforward and achievable as possible, and also to enable senior management to lead, delegate, monitor and report on progress easily.

Some schools are already undertaking some existing work to address gender-based violence, such as the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme. Equally Safe at School is designed to complement these, and schools can use their progress with these programmes towards their work on Equally Safe at School.

Lack of specialist support for children aged 10 and under in Moray who are affected by sexual abuse and rape.

A key local gap is the lack of specialist support in the area for children aged 10 and under. We have received a number of referrals over the past year or so for children in this age group whom we are unable to support as we are funded to work with children and young people aged 11 and above. There are few other specialist service options for children of this age group who have experienced sexual abuse and rape, and NHS psychological services for children and young people have long waiting lists.

Rural Environmental Action Project

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

MORAY ENERGY ADVICE SUPPORT SERVICE (MEASS)

The MEASS project is aimed at vulnerable households in extreme fuel poverty. This includes households who are struggling to pay their bills, facing hardship and unable to afford to keep warm, including those choosing between eating and heating. Households receive support by way of energy saving advice, over the phone, workshops, home visits, access to energy debt grants and energy efficiency measures such as free boiler replacement, insulation, solar panel grants, and other green energy measures which helps to bring down the cost of energy and by consequence help to tackle fuel poverty.

The project came to being because of the feedback we received from our clients and members of the wider Moray public. The community expressed their desire to have a targeted support service that caters for the energy needs of the most vulnerable households in the community.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

1. Many more households have fallen into fuel poverty.
2. Those on border line fuel poverty prior to the cost-of-living crisis are now knee deep in fuel poverty.
3. Energy debt has increased drastically leaving many more households to move into extreme fuel poverty.

Are there any trends emerging?

1. Solar panel uptake is on the increase.
2. Households now resorting to energy behavioural attitude to help bring down their energy bills.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Much great feedback has been received including the following quotes from our clients:

1. "You can't understand what you have done for me, thank you to all at REAP".
2. "I contacted REAP when I received a demand to pay a high bill, they helped me to apply for grants, I didn't think this could happen but within 3 weeks, my energy debt of £2500 was paid for through REAP's application to the Home Heating Support Fund.
3. "What an amazing team at REAP, they helped me apply for new boiler and radiators.
4. "I have been having issues with OVO for several months now, a friend told me to get in touch with REAP, once I did, the adviser listened to me and was very compassionate, to my amazement, the issues I have been having with OVO for several months was resolved in a phone call by REAP, wonderful service".
5. "I contacted REAP when I ran out of credit on my meter as I couldn't afford topping up, but thanks to REAP, I received a top up voucher".
6. "The workshop was very informative, thank you REAP".

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

1. Mental health issues (anxiety and depression) resulting from fuel poverty.
2. Digital exclusion - Instances of households unable to attend energy saving advice workshop due to inability to either access digital info or unable to use digital devices.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Existing capacity supports the work. Future plans include funding application to pay wages of energy advisors to sustain the legacy of the project and develop it further.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

REAP always work in collaboration with other local organisations to take referrals and maximise access to the project. Anything the Community Planning Board can do in promoting the project and also facilitate access would be greatly beneficial for the community.

Libraries, Learning Centres & Heritage

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The Libraries, Learning Centre and Heritage Service delivers work that aligns with a range of local and national priorities:

- Provide opportunities to develop skills for life, work, inclusion and employability for people to reach their full potential
- Engage and empower communities to help deliver, develop and lead on health and wellbeing opportunities for all
- Provide opportunities to develop skills for life, work, inclusion and employability for people to reach their full potential
- Deliver targeted work across Moray to help reduce child poverty and inequalities in health & education

There are 11 libraries across Moray, providing a range of facilities in rural and urban areas either through standalone venues or co-located within schools or community centres. In addition, a range of outreach services provide opportunities for more rurally isolated communities to access a core offer on a regular basis.

Our statutory duty is to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service for all persons who want to make use of it, to promote the service, and to lend books and other printed material free of charge for those that live, work and study in Moray.

Reading: Libraries support more people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy reading for pleasure. This plays a vital contribution in supporting literacy amongst the young and contributes to efforts to improve educational outcomes across Moray. Providing access to inspirational content can lead to improved health and wellbeing, and providing opportunities for people to come together through reading related activities can bring people together from different generations and combat social isolation.

What we deliver:

Moray Libraries provides a range of resources to meet the needs of the entire community, books, eBooks, eAudio, online information, newspapers, eMagazines, physical audio books, a wide range of reading related activity for all ages and abilities, author talks, children's story times, book groups across a range of areas of interest, and specially curated collections including dementia collection, Gaelic collection, Health Matters.

Digital: Libraries play a lead role across Moray in the delivery of Digital Activity and support Digital Inclusion through addressing access, skills, motivation and trust. Libraries provide opportunities for people of every age and all backgrounds to engage with new technology and make the most of digital services. Libraries play a fundamental role in supporting people to benefit from the potential of the digital world providing benefits to individuals and organisations to access digital information and resources.

What we deliver:

Libraries all offer free internet access through People's Network internet machines, and public wifi.

Through the Learning Centre team, a wide range of opportunities to access support with digital skills, to engage with new technology and take part in formal and informal learning sessions are available service wide.

We offer a range of STEM learning opportunities for children of all ages, using resources that incorporate coding, robotics, 3D printing, microbits, AR, VR and drone technologies.

We run weekly Help Hubs that support users to make the most of their own digital devices.

Health & Wellbeing: Libraries support people to make informed choices about their own health and wellbeing, providing support for those most in need, including the vulnerable and socially isolated. Libraries are seen as key places to access trusted and good quality information as part of the Councils information offer. Libraries provide safe spaces in the heart of their communities for information, digital access, promotion, signposting and activities. There is increased demand from people for quality mental and physical health information and libraries are well placed to support early intervention and prevention agendas.

What we deliver:

Libraries provide access to a range of specially curated health collections of stock: Mood boosting books, Reading Well, Dementia awareness. Alongside these libraries offer specific resources for lending, EG themed reminiscence boxes.

These lending collections are supported through activities and services including Memories Scotland, a national project engaging communities in creating a rich social history collection connecting heritage resources with reminiscence activity.

Libraries also offer safe, trusted spaces where people can engage with health professionals, Near Me is a confidential secure service allowing people to attend appointments via video call reducing the need to travel unnecessarily.

The Information hubs service is available across all 11 libraries in Moray and provides opportunities for residents to access information on council services in person in their own communities.

Employability and Support for Business:

Libraries have a key role to play in helping people develop skills and access the labour market. Being in employment is a crucial element of people's health and wellbeing and supports social mobility. The library service can play a key role in supporting business start-ups and entrepreneurs with access to business information and facilities in safe trusted spaces. This then helps people into employment or self-employment and provides valuable space for business networking, learning and collaboration.

What we deliver:

Free access to digital resources including PCs, WiFi, scanners and printers in all of our libraries.

Weekly Job Clubs in 3 of our larger libraries, supporting CV building, online job search and applications, emailing, company research and interview skills.

Digital skills training opportunities, including both informal and accredited IT courses.

Summer 2024 will see the launch of our Business Matters Hub within Elgin Library. This will allow us to deliver:

- Bespoke IT training sessions for the business community, including Excel spreadsheet training.
- Free access to a range of business support resources including company data, community profiles and demographics, and sector specific trends and contacts.
- Bookable, private workspaces that will support the small business community.
- Networking and coproduction opportunities, facilitated by our partner organisations.

Children & Young People:

A varied offering of resources and activities for children and young people. Libraries will support skills development and equality of opportunity for children and young people empowering them to be active in their communities and have a voice in the ongoing development of the library service. Libraries provide a range of activity enabling children and young people to form communities of interest without barriers regardless of background, needs or ability.

What we deliver:

A supportive and safe environment for children, young people and families to come together and participate in a range of programming designed to engage families in use of the library, raise awareness of local and national events and activities and provide opportunities for social interaction and support alongside fun-based learning.

Every Child a Library Member:

Early Years Bookbug sessions, Junior storytimes and crafts, a range of Lego related activity and participation in the annual national reading initiative the summer reading challenge, offering rewards and prizes for children who continue reading for pleasure during the school summer holidays.

Culture and Heritage:

Libraries in Moray are welcoming inclusive spaces where communities can come together and create their own art, watch performances, engage with exhibitions, and learn about arts and culture through books and reading. Libraries often provide the first opportunity children and young people have to experience art and culture through books and events and activities. The Heritage service offers opportunities for people to engage with their own and their communities past through provision of a rich range of unique materials.

What we deliver:

Free exhibition space for local artists to display work, a range of activity aimed at engaging local communities in skills sharing and development, EG knitting groups.

Heritage and archive resources and dedicated local history service supporting local, national and international enquiries relating to Moray and it's people.

We also work with target groups identified through partnership working, including the New Elgin Better Off subgroup, Adult and Family Learning, Moray Pathways, DWP, Moray Food Plus, Moray Resource Centre and Social Work.

Statistics we collected in 2023:**Library Stats 2023/24**

- Number of borrowers as a percentage of the population 11.39%
- Participation with digital learning opportunities: 5,868 (activity attendees and enquiries)
- Numbers of public attending a 'wellbeing' event in libraries: 2,946
- Participation with Cultural Heritage: 1,879
- Number of individuals accessing libraries services 261,397
- Number of physical items borrowed from Moray Library Services 251,483
- Number of digital items borrowed from Moray Library Services 32,603
- Number of children and young people participating in library 21,668

Digital Sessions - 251 Sessions, 2557 Children, 1156 Adults

Job Clubs - 107 Sessions, 474 Adults

Help Hubs - 98 Sessions, 602 Adults

Accredited IT Learning - 183 Sessions, 344 Adults

Are there any trends emerging?

Post pandemic engagement with services is still below pre covid levels. Engagement with events and activities is increasing at a faster rate than more traditional indicators for library usage, footfall and loans. This indicates a change of use with a richer more meaningful level of engagement occurring with levels of participation in a diverse programme of events and activities increasing significantly.

We increasingly rely on external funding to be able to procure new resources that embrace new and emerging technologies, and to be able to deliver learning opportunities service wide.

We have seen an ever-increasing demand for outreach visits to schools, nurseries and community groups.

Our Business Gateway partners have identified a digital skills gap amongst the self-employed/small business community regarding the requirement to submit all VAT returns electronically.

Research that informed the Moray Growth Deal STEM project highlighted a lack of local provision for early years STEM education.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Reading:

World Down's Day story time: 'Parents chatting with staff regarding the range of diverse books available. Parents delighted and commented on the importance of seeing people with Down's represented and the obviously positive effect this had on their son.'

Digital Explorers Club

- *Child has had a fantastic time and learned new skills. I have learned about 3D printing*

Adult feedback statistics - 100% of adults who completed the feedback felt that:

- child benefited *a lot* socially from attending the Digital Explorers Club
- children are more confident using digital technologies as a result of attending the club
- they felt their own digital knowledge had increased by participating in the club activities

Digi Bytes and Takeaways

Adult feedback comments:

- *Making this equipment available through the library is a brilliant idea.*
- *It was great for me to meet new people. The group was lovely and the ladies organising the project were informative and offered lots of support throughout.*
- *I wouldn't have even looked at coding at her age (5) but I will be looking for more kits to help her with STEM as she grows.*
- *I got to spend time with my daughter playing and learning.*
- *It was great to be able to take kits home that my child wouldn't have had the opportunity to use otherwise.*

Summer Digi Sessions 2022

- *My wee boy has ASD. This was great for him. He loved every week and he was gutted that it had to finish.*

Digital Creators

Adult feedback comments:

- *The club being in Cullen was a great opportunity as we both work and may not have been able to take him elsewhere but he could walk after school.*

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Community groups and organisations are struggling with the cost of transport, so we are increasingly being asked to go to them to deliver sessions.

The withdrawal of ITA funding from April 2024 will significantly impact our low incomes learners who have previously relied on this funding stream to enrol on accredited IT qualifications.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Plan to develop a stronger core offer of activity aligned to the outcomes identified above, having a clearly relatable offer leading to a better understanding of library services by communities.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Better opportunities for networking and information sharing. Look at the positive impact individual partners/organisations are having and invest in these successful delivery models and facilities.

Identifying where delivery aims and objectives across services and partners can align with the library service, EG digital skills, Health and Wellbeing, literacy etc. to achieve better value and better outcomes for communities.

Libraries are key places to connect in communities, to access trusted information, to deliver targeted interventions to support prevention, health and wellbeing, and family needs.

Aberlour Youthpoint

Moray

(Third Sector)



im of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Our mission is to ensure that all young people and families in Moray have access to wellbeing support when needed, working towards achieving the Children's Service Partnership priorities: *'Children have the right to live in communities where their voice is heard, and they are built up to be all they can be'* and the agreed priorities of:

- The wellbeing of children, young people and families are improved
- The impact of poverty on children, young people and their families are mitigated
- Children and young people feel safe and free from harm
- Life chances of looked after and care experienced children and young people are improved

We provide a Tier 3 service, the Intensive Community Support Service funded by The Moray Council and a Tier 1-2 service, the Early Help (mentoring and groupwork service) funded by, Hope, the Pilot Trust, the William Grant Foundation and the Moray Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant. The Service Outcomes Based upon an analysis of referrals and the past years work the Early Help Service have identified eight service outcomes:

1. Reduction in risk and levels of harm (Safe)
2. Improved mental health and wellbeing (Healthy)
3. Improved attendance at school, college, training or work (Active)
4. Improved healthy relationships with family/carers friends and community (Nurtured)
5. Actively involved in plans and decisions (Achieving/Respected)
6. Preparation for good transition (Responsible/Included)
7. Successful volunteer/befriending match (Respected/Included)
8. Increased confidence in parenting ability (Safe/Responsible)

Statistics we collected in 2023:

At the beginning of the reporting period YouthPoint Moray had 191 active young people within the service across Early Help and Mentoring, Intensive Community support and UP Zone. 75 closed to the service throughout the year, 5 were signposted to other services, 6 were awaiting allocation and 9 were declined a service.

We were allocated funding from the Local Authority to deliver a summer holiday programme to young people and families that access our services. 72 young people and their families engaged in various group activities – bowling, go-karting, BBQ's, trampolining and family day's out. In addition to the group activities we delivered, we also provided activity packs for young people and their families to engage in within their family homes.

We provided 46 families with food vouchers over the Christmas period, these were families that staff at Youthpoint identified or ones that reached out to us for support. On average a family received between £30-£70 depending on the size of the family and what was required. In addition to this, we supported a further 18 families who needed help with top ups on their gas and electric. Families appreciated receiving vouchers instead of hampers as it enabled them to choose their own foods, and a lot of families put the vouchers towards purchasing food for their Christmas dinner.

We delivered 57 bags of toys which we received from cash for kids, to families across Moray. These were greatly received with many families expressing their sincere gratitude. This ensured children and young people had presents to open which many wouldn't have had!

Are there any trends emerging?

Many of our families continue to struggle financially during these unprecedented times. We continued to support families with food packs, support with gas and electricity and warm clothing this year equating to over £4000+. We have also supported families who are entitled, to access the new Scottish Child payment. Over recent months families across Moray have received money from Aberlour Urgent Assistance Fund, I have included information on what support families have required from this fund:

- Beds/Mattress
- Food
- Washing Machine
- Bedding
- Clothing
- Fridge/Freezer
- Repairs to House
- Utilities

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

Quotes from Young people participating in school holiday activities:

"I Had an opportunity to try something new"

"I made new friends"

"I Feel more confident in groups"

"It means so much to have someone to listen and help me"

Young person case study (YP Zone) highlights the need for young people to have opportunities to take part in positive activities:

'When the young people's worker went to an initial meeting with a young person, the young person lacked confidence which was shown as he wouldn't look at Young People's Worker and would fidget a lot. This young person had a 100% attendance at school, the young person smoked a lot including weed and vaping, this young person would also experiment with other drugs including cocaine and ecstasy. Young people's worker and the young person talked about positive decisions and gave information about certain drugs which the young person didn't know about. Youth worker also spoke about the importance of school, careers and how substances can affect certain areas of life. Young people's worker and young person would bake, cook and go to the gym. The young person enjoys these activities, and they are based on what they said they would like to do they have continued to do these activities out with our contact.'

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Young people who have the opportunity to engage in various activities during school holidays are often not able to participate in these activities out with the support of Youthpoint due to financial barriers or parents/careers not being able to support them to the activity.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We provide holiday programme, service and support through Easter, Summer and October school holidays. As always, we evaluate with the young people how we can enhance and develop our service provision and any external partners and providers we can work with to ensure young people are getting as much support, opportunities and experiences as possible.

Due to current economic climate and uncertainties, external funding is required to support future development of projects and support for young people which can be challenging to source.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

More opportunities for young people who are hard to reach to access free activities that would provide them with something they can engage in with their peers.

Young people spoke about having a place to spend time with their friends with little to no adult supervision where they would be warm, could charge their phones and use a toilet.

More opportunities for young people to learn about running a household – applying for a house, dealing with bills, applying for benefits and support, budgeting. – Potentially one to one sessions as group ones might be too overwhelming for some young people.

Arrows Drug & Alcohol Services

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

In line with the national drug mission plan our service works towards reducing drug deaths and improve the lives of those impacted by drugs. Our focus is on:

- preventing people from developing problem drug/alcohol use
- reducing harms from the consumption of drugs/alcohol
- getting more people into high quality treatment and recovery services
- addressing the needs of people with multiple and complex needs
- supporting families and communities affected by problem drug use.

In line with the nature of this document a core element to our service is imbedded in identifying and working to overcome the challenges associated with poverty and deprivation as its widely understood that a key underlying factor for drug deaths is poverty. In 2021, people in the most deprived areas were 15 times as likely to have a drug-related death as those in the least deprived areas.

Combined with one of the missions cross-cutting priorities and MAT standard 8 which is centred around advocating for access to equality and human rights based approach to anyone seeking our support; as People with problem drug and alcohol use and the people who support them (including family members, friends and support workers) have the same human rights as everyone else however, they can face cultural, social and economic barriers to fulfilling these rights.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- There were 719 active cases in service with 55% of clients receiving support for drug use, 36% receiving support for alcohol use and 8% receiving support for co-dependant use. Of the 719 active cases 43% of clients are receiving support from more than one service and result in a joint care caseload – this is the same percentage as Q2 & Q3 2023/24.
- the number of new people seeking support during each quarter broken down by the substance used. 46% of people sought support for alcohol use, 38% for drug use and 14% for co-dependant use. There has been an increase in the number of new people seeking support for co-dependant use. Out of the 203 new referrals 36% were referred to more than one service resulting in a joint care caseload – this is an increase from the 25% joint care caseload reported during Q2.
- Referrals into the direct access service increased a further 66% this quarter, highlighting the growing need for services and inferring the growing number of individuals struggling with substance use issues as well as family/support members effected.
- When looking at the patterns around reasons for referral into service the currents quarter trends are: 41% presenting looking for help regarding alcohol consumptions; 33% for drug consumption and 26% presenting for polysubstance use.
- A 150% increase in distribution of Naloxone was recorded and a further 45% in safer injectable provisions and other IEP equipment was recorded.

Are there any trends emerging?

Holistic Approaches:

- Limited funding and resources for comprehensive treatment programs that address multiple aspects of an individual's life.
- Lack of coordination and integration between different service providers, leading to fragmented care.
- Resistance from traditional medical models that may prioritize pharmacological interventions over holistic approaches.

Peer Support and Community Integration:

- Stigma associated with attending peer support groups, which may deter individuals from seeking help.
- Accessibility issues, particularly for individuals in rural or isolated areas where peer support resources may be limited.
- Challenges in maintaining confidentiality and anonymity within small communities, leading to concerns about privacy.

Trauma-Informed Care:

- Shortcomings in training and education for healthcare professionals on trauma-informed approaches.
- Limited availability of trauma-specific interventions and therapies within mainstream treatment settings.
- Resistance to acknowledging and addressing trauma histories among both patients and providers.

Dual Diagnosis Treatment:

- Fragmentation between mental health and substance abuse treatment systems, leading to challenges in accessing integrated care.
- Shortage of providers with expertise in treating co-occurring disorders.
- Stigma and discrimination faced by individuals with mental health diagnoses within substance abuse treatment settings, and vice versa.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

The Case of Colin: Navigating Post-Prison Challenges Without Support

Introduction:

This case study follows C, who faced significant hurdles upon his release from prison due to lack of aftercare and support from social services. C's story sheds light on the challenges individuals face when re-entering society after incarceration.

Background:

C was released from prison with no aftercare plan or support from social services. His benefits had been stopped during his incarceration, and without any form of identification, he struggled to start a new claim. With no place to go, he relied on a friend's sofa for a week before seeking assistance from the council.

Challenges Faced:

- Benefits Suspension - C's benefits were halted while he was in prison, leaving him without financial support upon release.
- Lack of Identification - C's inability to provide proper identification complicated his efforts to access support services.
- Homelessness - C's temporary accommodation on a friend's sofa was unsustainable, leading him to seek help from the council.
- Emotional Distress - C's emotional state, compounded by his recent incarceration, met with resistance from council officials, hindering his access to support.

Resolution:

C spent an entire day applying for homelessness support, facing bureaucratic hurdles and emotional strain. Despite the lengthy process, he was left waiting for a resolution after the council office closed.

Lessons Learned:

- The importance of comprehensive re-entry support for individuals leaving prison cannot be overstated. Without proper aftercare, individuals like C face numerous challenges that hinder their successful reintegration into society.
- Bureaucratic barriers, such as benefit suspensions and lack of identification, exacerbate the difficulties faced by those re-entering society post-incarceration.
- Empathy and practical assistance from community members, can make a significant difference in the lives of individuals navigating post-prison challenges.

Conclusion:

C's journey highlights the urgent need for improved aftercare and support services for individuals leaving prison. By addressing bureaucratic barriers and providing compassionate assistance, communities can help facilitate the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into society.

D's Struggle for Housing: Overcoming Past Mistakes and Family Challenges**Introduction:**

This case study follows D who has been facing difficulties accessing council housing due to past behaviour linked to his addiction. D's story sheds light on the challenges individuals encounter when seeking housing support while grappling with addiction and family complexities.

Background:

D has been attempting to secure council housing for several months. However, he has been repeatedly denied due to past behaviour related to his addiction struggles. Despite his efforts, D has encountered a lack of understanding and support from housing services.

Challenges Faced:

- Housing Denial: D has been informed by the council that he will not be housed again due to previous behaviour linked to his addiction, leaving him without a stable place to live.
- Lack of Support: Housing services have not offered D the support he needs to address his addiction and improve his housing situation.
- Custody Limitations: D is unable to have overnight visits with his four children due to overcrowding at his mother's residence, where he currently stays.
- Family Dynamics: D's living situation with his mother is further complicated by the presence of his brothers, who also struggle with substance use, causing stress and tension within the household.

Resolution:

Despite facing numerous challenges, D continues to seek support and stability for himself and his family. With the help of community resources and support networks, D hopes to overcome his addiction and secure stable housing for himself and his children.

Lessons Learned:

- Individuals struggling with addiction face unique barriers when seeking housing support, including stigma and lack of understanding from housing services.
- Addressing family dynamics and providing support for substance use disorders are essential components of addressing housing instability among vulnerable populations.
- Collaborative efforts between housing services, addiction support programs, and community organizations are necessary to effectively address the complex needs of individuals like D.

Conclusion:

D's journey highlights the need for a more holistic approach to addressing housing instability among individuals struggling with addiction and family complexities. By offering understanding, support,

and collaborative solutions, communities can help individuals like David overcome barriers and achieve stable housing and a brighter future for themselves and their families.

Josh's Journey: Overcoming Homelessness and Reconnecting with Family

Introduction:

This case study follows J who has been experiencing homelessness since separating from his ex-partner two years ago. J's story highlights the impact of homelessness on family relationships and mental health, as well as the challenges individuals face when accessing housing support while dealing with substance use issues.

Background:

After leaving the family home following a breakup, J has been couch-surfing and struggling to maintain consistent contact with his four children. His unstable living situation has taken a toll on his mental wellbeing. Despite his efforts, J has been unsuccessful in accessing council housing due to his substance use and lack of identification.

Challenges Faced:

- Homelessness: J has been without stable housing for two years, impacting his ability to maintain regular contact with his children and exacerbating his mental health struggles.
- Substance Use: J's substance use has hindered his ability to attend appointments and engage with housing services effectively, further complicating his efforts to secure accommodation.
- Family Separation: The distance between J's temporary accommodation and his children has made it difficult for him to maintain consistent contact, causing emotional distress for both him and his children.
- Lack of Identification: J's lack of identification has presented a barrier to accessing housing support and other essential services.

Resolution:

Recognizing the importance of stable housing for J's wellbeing and family relationships, support workers intervened by advocating for him with the council. A letter was written to the council outlining J's situation and emphasizing the positive impact that housing stability in Elgin would have on his mental health and recovery. As a result, J was provided with suitable temporary accommodation and has recently been offered permanent housing.

Lessons Learned:

- Homelessness can have far-reaching consequences on family relationships and mental health, underscoring the importance of addressing housing instability as a priority.
- Substance use issues can compound the challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness, highlighting the need for integrated support services that address both housing and addiction.
- Advocacy and support from social workers and community members play a crucial role in helping individuals like Josh navigate bureaucratic barriers and access the housing support they need.

Conclusion:

J's journey illustrates the transformative power of stable housing in rebuilding family connections and supporting mental health and recovery. By addressing the root causes of homelessness and providing tailored support, communities can help individuals like J regain stability and rebuild their lives.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Stigma Reduction Efforts:

- Deep-rooted societal attitudes and misconceptions about addiction that may be resistant to change.
- Lack of funding and support for comprehensive stigma reduction campaigns and education initiatives.
- Structural stigma within healthcare systems and institutions that perpetuates discrimination against individuals seeking treatment.

Family-Centered Interventions:

- Family dynamics and relationships may be complex, and engaging all family members in treatment can be challenging.
- Lack of awareness or understanding among healthcare providers about the importance of involving families in treatment.
- Privacy concerns and reluctance among individuals to involve family members due to fear of judgment or conflict.

Culturally Sensitive Services:

- Limited cultural competence among healthcare providers, resulting in insensitive or inappropriate care for individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Language barriers and lack of interpretation services for non-English speakers.
- Limited representation of diverse communities in decision-making and policy development processes.

Harm Reduction Strategies:

- Legal and political barriers to implementing harm reduction programs, such as opposition from law enforcement or conservative policymakers.
- Public misconceptions about harm reduction approaches, including beliefs that they enable or condone substance use.
- Funding constraints and competing priorities within healthcare budgets that may limit investment in harm reduction initiatives.
- **Continuum of Care:**
- Fragmentation and gaps in service provision between different stages of the treatment continuum.
- Limited availability of aftercare and support services, particularly in rural or underserved areas.
- Challenges in sustaining long-term funding for ongoing support and relapse prevention programs.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

Capacity is an ongoing challenge, essentially having a greater demand that's growing faster than the resource capacity to provide. Below is a brief summary of some of the dimensions we are focusing our efforts into to address the aforementioned.

Expand Treatment Options: Aim to Increase the variety of treatment modalities available to accommodate different needs and preferences, including holistic approaches, evidence-based therapies, and culturally sensitive interventions.

Improve Access to Care: Address barriers to accessing treatment, such as long wait times, geographical barriers, and financial constraints, by expanding service locations, offering telehealth options, and providing sliding-scale fees or financial assistance programs.

Enhance Staff Training and Education: Invest in ongoing training and professional development for staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality, evidence-based care, including training in trauma-informed care, dual diagnosis treatment, and cultural competence.

Integrate Peer Support Programs: Incorporate peer support programs into treatment offerings to provide individuals with a sense of community, understanding, and encouragement from others who have lived experience with addiction and recovery.

Promote Family Involvement: We recognize the importance of family involvement in the treatment process and provide support services, such as family therapy, education programs, and support groups, to help families understand addiction, cope with its impact, and support their loved one's recovery.

Strengthen Collaborations: Continue to build partnerships with other healthcare providers, community organizations, government agencies, and advocacy groups to create a coordinated network of support services and resources for individuals and families affected by addiction.

Combat Stigma: Continue to Develop, expand on and implement stigma reduction campaigns to challenge negative attitudes and perceptions surrounding addiction, promote empathy and understanding, and encourage individuals to seek help without fear of judgment or discrimination.

Prioritize Continuum of Care: Ensure continuity of care by offering comprehensive support services throughout the recovery journey, including detoxification, residential treatment, outpatient programs, aftercare support, relapse prevention, and ongoing monitoring and follow-up.

Utilize Technology: Use technology to enhance service delivery and accessibility, including telemedicine for remote consultations, digital platforms for therapy and support groups, mobile apps for self-management and relapse prevention, and online resources for education and information.

Engage in Research and Innovation: Stay informed about the latest research findings, best practices, and emerging trends in addiction treatment and recovery support, and actively participate in research initiatives and quality improvement efforts to continuously improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

Facilitating Collaboration: Bring together key stakeholders, including service providers, community organizations, government agencies, and individuals with lived experience, to collaborate on identifying needs, setting priorities, and developing coordinated strategies to address substance abuse issues effectively.

Advocating for Resources: Advocate for increased funding, resources, and support from government agencies and other funding sources to expand and enhance drug and alcohol services, including treatment, prevention, harm reduction, and recovery support programs.

Promoting Policy Change: Advocate for policy changes at the local, regional, and national levels to support evidence-based approaches to substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery, including policies that prioritize harm reduction, expand access to treatment, and reduce stigma.

Supporting Prevention Efforts: Invest in prevention efforts aimed at reducing substance abuse and related harms in the community, including education campaigns, early intervention programs, and initiatives to address social determinants of health that contribute to substance abuse.

Increasing Accessibility: Work to improve access to drug and alcohol services by addressing barriers such as transportation, affordability, language barriers, and cultural differences, and by expanding service locations and hours to better meet the needs of diverse populations.

Promoting Equity: Ensure that drug and alcohol services are equitable and accessible to all members of the community, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other factors, by addressing disparities in access to care and advocating for culturally responsive and trauma-informed services.

Supporting Data Collection and Evaluation: Promote data collection and evaluation efforts to monitor the effectiveness of drug and alcohol services, track outcomes, and identify areas for improvement, and use data to inform decision-making and resource allocation.

Fostering Community Engagement: Engage with the community to raise awareness about substance abuse issues, involve community members in planning and decision-making processes, and mobilize grassroots support for initiatives to address substance abuse and promote recovery.

Addressing Social Determinants of Health: Recognize and address the underlying social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to substance abuse and related health disparities, such as poverty, unemployment, housing instability, and lack of access to education and healthcare.

Building Resilient Communities: Foster resilience and protective factors within the community to prevent substance abuse and support recovery, including promoting social connections, building supportive networks, enhancing coping skills, and creating opportunities for meaningful participation and engagement.

Brilliantly Brave & Green Ribbons

Business (social enterprise element)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Having worked for over 30 years with third sector and statutory services, I became increasingly aware of the need to build community resilience and help people talk about their feelings, thoughts and behaviours and the impact this had on themselves and the wider community.

Empowering individuals to recognise mental health challenges, provide support, and foster a culture of empathy and understanding through 1-1 support, small and large group activities, and training. People were thinking suicide but not feeling able to talk to anyone openly about it. The waiting lists for statutory services are horrendous and there are other options for people to tap into ... if they know, or how to engage in a group...if they can get on a bus /transport to attend.

Statistics we collected in 2022-2023:

- 7 Scotland's Mental Health First Aid Courses have been delivered to statutory and third sector groups
- 2 Suicide Awareness with community groups
- GP awareness session (self-care/burn out)
- Listening skills & communication sessions (including suicide) to youth workers, Elgin Rotary
- Mid-life mingles in Lossiemouth & Forres running monthly (5-22 participants)
- Weekly Mental Health Peer Support Group (4-10 participants)
- LGBTQ+ Drop in Lossiemouth (8 participants)
- 1-1 coaching sessions. 22 people.

Are there any trends emerging?

There needs to be more places in the community for people to go, for free, where they will be welcomed and regardless of their challenges or issues can be seen and treated as a human being.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- "A" has been diagnosed with ME which causes severe pain in her legs. She struggles to stand for any length of time and walking any distance becomes painful. She has been prescribed pregabalin to ease symptoms. She has been told she is now required to look for work which concerns her due to her physical disabilities. She also worries that as soon as she mentions ME and the challenge, she experiences with movement she will not be offered a position. This is having an impact on her mental health to the point she states, 'what's the point of carrying on, I might as well not be here.'
- Peri menopausal lady in her early 50's, one symptom, hot flushes. She works in a local care home where the overall temperature of the building is higher than normal working conditions due to resident's needs. She has had several conversations with her line manager (male) who she says is sympathetic to her request to change the uniforms to a material that is lighter which would support better working conditions. He states that it is the 'bosses' who are not prepared to change the uniforms, but no reasons given. She has discussed with colleagues, and they support her as they struggle with the uniforms too, again menopause symptoms, but they are unwilling to rock the boat for fear of losing their jobs. She really feels very isolated and under-valued.

- Experience at local gym: “I have given it a good shot but after yesterday’s class I came home bitterly disappointed. If people aren’t confident or anxious then the area set aside would put people off. Being put in the middle of the weightlifting area, where men were waiting patiently for us to finish our class. It was uncomfortable and I felt really self-conscious. It’s like staff are trying but little effort has been applied, ticking boxes to say they have a class for menopausal women. It’s worth giving feedback to gym staff and management beyond the leisure centre that the class is a token effort offering. See if we can change this. “
- Midlife Mingle: “I really enjoyed the laughter and it’s good that we can share our intimate experiences. It is such a relief to share as some of the things we’ve tried might just help others” and “a lovely friendly group and so refreshing to be able to talk about menopause symptoms & worries so openly with people who understand what you are talking about.”
- “Individuals need time and space to process their thoughts/feelings and help to handle suicide, even if they don’t recognise it at the time. We need places just to be, without anyone trying to sort us or say trite platitudes. Our lives have changed forever, it touches everything we do. It is the shadow that never leaves. More people need to be trained to listen, notice and ask **are you thinking of suicide?**”

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Support to get to venues and services
- Childcare
- Ticking boxes to meet criteria
- Stigma & people’s attitudes
- Free accessible buildings
- Funding
- Sustainability and security.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

- With funding we could do much more
- Yes we want to get more peer support groups running and Mid-life mingles
- Provision for parents who have autistic children
- Awareness raising.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- There needs to be a simple pathway for people to know where to go to get help and support with timescales
- People’s attitudes to mental health and suicide needs to change. People get dismissed because they don’t meet the criteria. Where does that leave people? More isolated and lonely.
- Venues for provision are expensive
- Provision in rural areas is an issue
- We should not be focused on the number of participants attending. Everyone matters.

[Home - Green Ribbons](#)

Moray Child Protection Team

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

We as practitioners in Moray are committed to ensuring that protecting children and young people remains a priority and we understand the importance of addressing all areas whereby children may be exposed to harm.

The Moray – Let's Chat Online Safety Campaign sought to reduce bullying and improve online safety for children and young people in Moray, regardless of whether online harm was an emerging or growing trend.

The reduction in bullying sat within Priority 2 – Safe of the Children's Services Plan 2020-2023 in that we would keep children safe within the community. At the time the plan reported an average of 50% of children from nursery to school leaving age reported they had been bullied in the past month.

Our improvement aim was to reduce the incidence and impact of bullying and it was believed that the campaign would raise awareness of online bullying and equip children and young people, as well as responsible adults with the tools needed to identify the signs of online bullying and to address and prevent it.

Throughout the campaign we wanted to encourage good relationships between parents, carers and the children and young people in their lives.

The campaign offered practical advice and tips on keeping children and young people safe online and empowering open and honest conversations between children, care givers and professionals to ensure risks are reduced, and in the event of a child being exposed to harm, tackled at the earliest opportunity.

We wanted to achieve a situation where children, young people, parents and carers could better understand the issues and seek meaningful solutions so that Moray's children and young people can feel safe and supported.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

No stats for 2023 – Online Safety and internet-enabled sexual offending categories are new additions to the concerns resulting in child protection registration. At present there have been no instances reported for 2023/24 data. At present we don't collect data on concerns that don't lead to registration.

Are there any trends emerging?

Children and young people's use of the internet is increasing and there are new concerns emerging with the influence of AI technology and COVID saw an increase in children and young people utilising online services and increasing their risk to online harm along with the adults in their lives.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:**Feedback from parent/carers:**

- Well presented with lots of relevant and current information.
- I really liked the range of topics covered
- I liked that it was held online.
- It didn't overload me with technical terms.
- Useful strategies for keeping young folks safe.
- Interesting, informative and fun.
- It was good to be included as sometimes our age group is overlooked.
- Good focus on solutions and what we can start doing to help kids today.

Feedback from professionals:

Positive feedback was received across all the professional events held, with comments about the events increasing knowledge of the issues and leaving them feeling confident to deal with the issues discussed. Individual feedback is available for each event.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

It is hard finding locations to hold in person parent/carer workshops and successfully advertising these events to maximise attendance. Online sessions can be hard for those who struggle with technology.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

The parent/carer workshops are to be a twice-yearly addition and delivered by the Child Protection Improvement Officer on behalf of the Moray Child Protection Committee along with additional sessions for professionals, top tips flyers that will respond to current trends in online safety or emerging issues. Police Scotland are also carrying out in school sessions for P5-S4 alongside the Child Protection Improvement Officer. At present demands for other work can sometimes cause delays in these sessions being facilitated.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Assist in advertising event and sessions and helping to spread the word that the sessions are available and can be tailored to individual concerns so that the sessions can be prioritised.
- Assist in emailing MCPC mailbox with any developing news stories and concerns regarding online safety if spotted so that guidance for parents/carers and practitioners can be developed at the earliest opportunity to tackle the issue and help prevent it becoming a 'worry' for Moray.
- Support parents and carers accessing the sessions.

The Loft Youth Project

Keith

(Third Sector)

WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG
PEOPLE THERE ARE TIMES WHEN
YOU WILL SEE RESULTS
IN 10 SECONDS
AND THERE ARE TIMES YOU
WON'T SEE IT FOR 10 YEARS.
EITHER WAY,
KEEP PLANTING THOSE
SEEDS OF CHARACTER,
EVENTUALLY THEY BLOOM.

Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

The Loft Youth Project is for all young people between the ages of 10 and 18, residing in the areas of Keith and Strathisla, or who are connected to it through social networks or employment. The Loft Youth Project aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which young people are encouraged to learn, grow and meet challenges when appropriate. This is done by providing:

- Social and recreational opportunities through a drop-in facility and a range of organised activities.
- Learning opportunities, both formal and informal, offered within the project including additional opportunities developed by linking with other learning providers.
- Support to individuals and groups provided by our team of volunteers and youth workers and through additional support activities run by other agencies.

The main aims of the organisation are to:

1. Provide a safe and secure drop-in opportunity alongside a programme encompassing a range of activities to match needs and age. This work is developed and agreed by and for the young people.
2. Provide a range of wider educational and learning opportunities to increase the skills, confidence, employability, and self-esteem of young people.
3. Improve the quality of life of young people in Keith and surrounding areas by providing support and guidance for young people that are having specific issues or difficulties.
4. 4 Support young people to identify needs and opportunities regardless of financial or social circumstances including the rural dimension.
5. Establish training activities which will help support the loft organisation.
6. Remain intrinsic to the social and economic regeneration of the area.

Provision:

- 2 single gender clubs; "Tenz 2 Teenz"; ASN teenagers' group; LGBTQI group; Activity Agreement club; Young people and stitches; Cookery project; Rural primary transition; Drop in and outreach work. 1:1 support and holiday programmes including outreach programmes
- Opportunities for employment e.g. MERI placements supported
- In September 2022 "The Living Loft" opened for those 16 plus which offers a 6-week programme to assist transition to independent living
- The weekly Pantry provides good quality surplus food to promote a zero-waste culture and supports 20-25 families.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- 275 young people: 195 (10-15), 76 (16-19) 4 (19 plus)
- Key partners: NHS, Social Work, Guidance Department, Primary Head Teachers, Funders, Businesses, Moray Pathways, tsiMoray.

Are there any trends emerging?

- The significance of providing a warm, free and safe space.
- Increased anti-social behaviour, with a no consequences attitude by some.
- Inappropriate use of social media.
- Excessive alcohol & drug use.
- Risk taking sexual behaviour.
- Disinterest and disengagement in school.
- Attention spans have reduced with poor literacy ability.
- More families are struggling financially...some with only a few pounds over the threshold for benefit support.
- Young people are disclosing suicidal ideation.
- Poor boundaries set by parents.
- Providing activities with the addition of food has been well received and improves social skills.
- Challenges of free bus passes enabling small gangs to travel and cause havoc.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- Young female (15): T was referred through Guidance and I attended her Child Planning Meeting she has mental health issues with extreme anxiety. She stopped attending school after COVID and became isolated from everyone. I arranged a meeting with Mum who had come through The Loft, then the three of us met and set some goals. I supported her in the decision to become home schooled, as school was the main trigger for anxiety. After gaining her trust she was introduced to the senior youth worker and weekly 1:1 sessions started. We assisted with referrals to the Rowan Centre for assessment and diagnosis. We are making small progress, and she still isn't ready for groupwork however, she attends every week and stays behind to help clear up after activities and set up for the girls group. In time we hope she will attend this. Stress of upcoming exams have knocked her back with the fear of going to school to sit them, so arrangements were put in place to hold the exams at The Loft. Her words: "I like my sessions at The Loft as I feel safe, and it helps me overcome my fears. They don't judge me; I can express my feelings."
- Young male (14): J first attended The Loft through P7 rural transition and was a large character. When he started secondary school two years ago, he struggled to adapt to a larger setting and was being bullied. He was referred from Guidance alongside 9 other S1 boys. We covered topics on bullying; what I want in a friend; coping mechanisms; along with a variety of activities. As he wasn't a stranger to The Loft he participated well within the group and opened up about his bullying which we relayed back to Guidance. He has flourished this year in particular with leadership skills. As we moved these boys on to other groups within the project, I approached him about volunteering with the next P7 transition programme. He was delighted to be asked and now helps weekly with transition. As well as volunteering he attends other activities which is important for his development. His words: "I gained a lot from attending boys' group, it helped me with being bullied and being able to ask for help. I was happy with being asked to help the P7's as I know how it feels coming from a small school, I really like it."
- Parents:
"My son was so anxious about going to secondary school, The Loft has been a lifeline for their mental health."

"We don't realise how lucky we are to have The Loft on our doorstep, and staff who care."

"We don't qualify for free school meals as I work and having the free meals over the holidays has greatly helped."

"Seeing my daughter become a confident individual through the programmes on offer. I'm very grateful."

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

Working class families are seeing their parents struggling financially and emotionally which they haven't seen before...it's worrying for them. Seasonal work which is low paid limits opportunities and experiences.

New S2-S4's lost out in the transitions and the friendship groups that naturally formed. Many are now lacking resilience.

Transport support to enable young people to go out with their community on activities is really beneficial and simple days out give new experiences and build confidence.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We rely on external funding to support youth work activities and pay for youth workers. Some of the key funders for programmes have stopped which is really worrying e.g. Cashback for Communities. We can only deliver if funding is successful. The tap of funding linked to Covid has dried up and it has become very competitive.

There has been limited partnership work with the local authority as there has been no youth worker in post locally. More funding for community-based youth work is needed.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

I would like the Board to value the youth work that is done and come out to see what we provide for young people. We are constantly applying for funding and fundraising. Are there any funds that you could direct us to for e.g. holiday programmes, basic activities, food for nourishing young people?

I would like to know what your role is and how decisions are made?

R-evolution for Good

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Our Aim: To end child poverty for good, changing the world one family at a time. Seriously ambitious, we know, but we are passionate and determined to make a difference to the children in our communities.

Our Mission:

- Build a strong and successful business, delivering training and development to empower people.
- Work with families one-to-one in a dignified way to help them reach their potential.
- Create a community-owned and led organisation where the shareholders can help deliver the vision.

R-evolution for good is a charitable community benefit society registered in Scotland no. SCO50392 founded in 2020. We deliver training development to business and use 100% of the profit to support families experiencing poverty in Scotland.

We offer top quality training and development to help businesses empower people to grow and develop. We then use the profit to support families experiencing poverty to make change through one-to-one coaching and counselling support. We offer bespoke training and development to businesses to meet their needs including food safety, customer service, manual handling, and management.

Our first community share offer ran in September-December 2020 and raised over £16,350 of investment in our business. We have 55 Community Shareholders.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

Coaching:

52 Adults

37 Children & Young people

Counselling:

61 Adults

29 Children & Young People

RADAR

11 Men

Are there any trends emerging?

Demand for our support services has understandably been high and continues to grow. We are making impact not only in the number of people and families supported, but our growing number of coaches, counsellors, volunteers and the demand for training. (We have 4 qualified volunteer counsellors; 9 trainee volunteer counsellors, 10 progression Coaches and 4 trained volunteer coaches).

Counselling: As our service is 100% confidential it is inappropriate to comment here, but we are regularly hearing about trauma from our clients.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

1. A parent who has had 14 years Social Work involvement due to domestic abuse her children. Her children are in kinship care. In her first meeting her biggest aim was to get Social Work out of her life. She worked on things that would enable the Protection Order to be lifted and within 5 months this happened. She learnt how to drive and considered work as a child was heading to nursery. Although there are still challenges in life, she is in a better place to deal with them.
2. A parent had separated from her husband, “broken” and very self-depreciating. Children neuro diverse. Through 4 months of coaching her attitude was transformed through breaking down aims into small steps e.g. she wanted to re-decorate her house, but this was overwhelming and had a big cost implication. So, she is now saving and doing one segment at a time to make it affordable. She was last seen buying more paint!

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

People see a focus on processes than delivered actions from services that are supposed to be there to help them.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We are seeing pain daily. Funding is a constant challenge. We know what works and have a skilled staff.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Provide a service offering counselling and coaching for children and young people for free
- Recognise that the backlash of Covid has impacted and there are currently no real services available that children actually need. Some children cannot sit with an adult. They need to be involved in setting practical goals and actions...really practical things to give them the space on their priorities and someone to listen to them.
- We are tired and could become cynical about the strategic talking shops, we need action. Strategic service plans are created in isolation of the Third Sector.
- No-one ever asks how we are doing.

Moray Schoolbank

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Moray Schoolbank is a charity that was set up in 2017 with the aim of providing school uniform and warm winter clothing to children living in poverty, ensuring all children are equal and have opportunities to reach their potential at school.

Our ethos is to involve children across Moray in helping us to achieve our aim so that our local children help their peers.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

In 2023 we trialled a pre-loved school uniform shop at the St Giles Centre, which we made permanent and since then have the need for referrals reduced by 60 in the first year.

We have accrued over 1000 volunteering hours. The St Giles pop in is open Thursday to Saturday 10-3pm and offers extended hours over the summer to assist with uniform.

Are there any trends emerging?

The biggest impact has been changing the way we work from offering “new school uniform packs” to people choosing what they need and having pre-loved items. If you make things accessible and welcoming, people will come and use the provision. It’s far nicer to pop into a shop, than being referred.

It is very hidden that people are drowning, many are working 2 jobs and just miss the cut-offs for support. One small change can tip the balance e.g. interest rates.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- People told us, why didn’t you do the shop before, it’s so easy to access. Having different provision gives consumer choice and better access which in turn has a massive impact. A shop is a far easier prospect for people to come in and wander round.
- People are so grateful when clothes are delivered. “Clothes are important. Young people only wear certain things and it’s a struggle.”
- Often grandparents or carers come into the shop, and when we have a chat we can help them to get other support.
- “Kids grow so fast. It’s a shame it’s not available for all children’s clothes.”

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

If families need support with uniform, they’ll likely need other help, taking the first step to easily access it is the challenge. By removing the need to be referred families can come and talk directly to us and this has made a difference to them.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We work with volunteers and its balancing funding applications to cover our costs, with meeting needs, and we must keep on top of stock.

We have been running pre-loved pop ups to see what the uptake is.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Support ventures when they are working.
- Highlight pockets of funding...external or their own.
- Recognise poverty in Moray.

Progress for Parents

(Public Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Progress for Parents is a service to help parents tackle their barriers to learning, training or employment. We offer a keyworker service to support parents to identify areas in which they want support. This could be to improve skills, gain work experience, address money worries, and have some motivational support. The parents are supported to make a plan, with short term and long term aims to help them increase their family income above the poverty threshold.

The project works collaboratively with lots of other services, from Money Advice to Arts Programmes, Paid work placements to social activities. Whatever is identified that helps the parent makes changes, to improve their circumstances in the long term.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

- 84 Parents in poverty have been supported individually, with other group work and community engagement work also taking place.
- 17% of parents have progressed into employment and have increased their household income above the threshold
- 40% of people who received devices through Hub stated that they had low or no digital skills.
- 80% of all Moray Employer Recruitment Incentive applications from local employers are paying real living wage
- There was also a survey completed in conjunction with Economic Growth, Chamber of Commerce and RAF Lossiemouth to identify the specific issues around childcare. This data is now being used to improve the situation across Moray.

Are there any trends emerging?

School Age Childcare is a significant issue for Parents, both the affordability and availability. The cost of living and inflation are having a long-lasting impact on families. Many are struggling to manage from month to month.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

"I didn't believe I would actually get a job. I feel amazed and relieved on the progress I have made. I was getting really worried about prices going up and I only had £5 a week spare. I feel hopeful now"

"I really enjoy attending the group and all the different activities we do. It is good for me to get out of the house and meet new people. I have noticed that my mental health is better for 3-4 days after being in the group. I feel less isolated, it's good for me to get out of the house"

"You don't know how much difference your help has made to me. When we first met I was in a really low place, it's like you reached out a hand to help me when I needed it most"

"It is really difficult to take that initial step to ask for help, but I am so glad I did. I think it is really difficult to see beyond the barriers, but a keyworker can help you to do this, and everything is done at your own pace with no pressure, but lots of support and encouragement."

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

- Transport costs to get to and from work
- Jobs that work around school hours
- Lack of Childcare availability
- Digital Skills and connectivity
- Lack of confidence in parents in their abilities and skills that they can offer an employer
- The complexities of issues that families are trying to cope with, along with the cost-of-living pressures, keyworkers/support workers are needing a wide range of information and services to help families progress
- Single parents are particularly struggling as one income, whether from work or Universal Credit is not enough. As soon as there is a bump in the road parents are unable to tackle problems.

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We have developed some group work to meet the needs of the parents

The keyworkers within the service try to tailor the plan for each parent according to their needs

Some need is beyond our capacity but there are gaps in service where need cannot be met

We do have capacity to support parents, but we need to do more to show the variety of support the service can offer, other services struggle to see how much support a family can receive through Employability.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

We need a more joined up approach to tackle the impact of Poverty, not just mitigate its effects. Longer term planning to tackle the impact, and more engagement with communities to see what they want to change.

More support to families that are trying to work and change their circumstances, better wages, especially for women, to tackle the gender pay gap.

Real promotion of flexible working and how economically this can improve outputs for companies and save costs for workers.

Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC

(Third Sector)



Aim of the work and how you identified the need for it:

Who we are: A collective of people from the community of Moray who have experienced challenges in our own mental health and wellbeing at some point in our lives and want to make positive change. We believe in the value of CHIME in promoting positive wellbeing for all.

Vision: We believe everyone should have the power to live hopeful and connected lives as valued members of the community.

Mission: We operate for the benefit of Moray community as a social movement of Wellbeing Champions, and as a social enterprise which invests in our community's mental health.

Collective voice: MWH have been collating collective voice around mental health and drug and alcohol stigma and discrimination in reports since February 2023. These reports are then shared with public bodies to create change and move toward lived experiences at the heart of service planning and delivery. The public versions of these are available on our website and the highlights of these is shared here.

Digital inclusion project 2023: This Digital Pioneers funded project provided drop-ins (community and primary care), 1-2-1 support, devices, connectivity and training to moray citizens impacted by digital poverty.

Statistics we collected in 2023:

The collective voice reports heard from over 450 people (number of people Moray Wellbeing Hub (MWH) Champions spoke with in their communities of place and interest).

Are there any trends emerging?

Key themes: trust and connection, to people and resources, stigma particularly in rural communities, availability of services and support especially for young people, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis as well as the lingering impact of the pandemic, Loneliness, lifelines not being available and how scary that can be, suicide, getting a diagnosis, stigma– others and self, community payback, parenting including specifically as a new parent and for parents with mental health and addiction challenges.

Digital poverty – barrier to accessing services and supports in Moray:

- Trusted relationships, built over time, are needed to empower those furthest from digital inclusion: Individuals may present in a drop-in with another barrier or challenge that then leads to digital discussions and support.
- 16 to 17-year-old care leavers in particular have little access to devices and connectivity: national schemes do not cover this age group.
- Self-stigma can be a massive barrier when accessing support to upskill or request devices: a trauma informed, safer, peer-led approach is powerful in creating non-judgemental interactions, but these are challenging to resource over time.

Stories/feedback from our recipients:

- What does Ward 4 mean to you - “I’m safe here, if I was out there, I wouldn’t be safe from myself” During ward 4 visit.
- “We need a flip in mindset to realise it is ok to take pills and not be frightened of addiction if it is going to make us function much better and lead a more fulfilling life.” Citizen around stigma in medications in recovery.
- “At the time you only think it affects you but it isn’t until you become clean and your memories and feelings return that you realise the extent of who has been affected by your actions.” Addiction impacts
- Local crisis support service, “just speaking to someone who knows, and you don’t have to say certain words. Because they know, you know..”
- “They are really good to sound off to – (local services named) and Breathing space. Sometimes when I wake up at night at 2 in the morning and I call someone whose always there. I ken it’s a total stranger, but they’re good.”
- “There’s just nowhere I can go to talk to someone anymore”, Individual looking for connection in a community setting.

Selected quotes from community members and the context of their views from the collective voice reports in 2023.

What additional barriers to participation are your recipients experiencing?

N/A

Do you have the capacity to support this work, and/or do you have any plans to develop new or additional activities?

We are actively seeking funding with a range of partners, local and national, for collaborative approaches around digital inclusion, peer-support and challenging stigma and discrimination.

What could the Partnership or the Community Planning Board do to improve things?

- Ensure you tap into the collective voice approach: a small investment alongside existing partners can widen the voice you hear in you strategic planning, ensuring meaningful engagement with lived and living experiences.
- Recognise the significant barriers stigma and discrimination continue to create for marginalised individuals.
- Understand that digital poverty in Moray is restricting citizens achieving their human rights to access to services.

Mentoring Young Talent

Report 2022 - 2023



Outputs:

During academic year 2022/2023, a total of 28 School pupils across Moray were participating in the Mentoring Young Talent Programme for care experienced young people (CEYP). 16 were successfully matched to a mentor and 12 were at relationship stage with a keyworker and awaiting a volunteer mentor.

- Buckie High School – 2 with KW
- Keith Grammar School – 4 matched 3 with KW
- Lossiemouth High School – 1 matched, 4 with KW, 1 on hold
- Forres Academy – 4 matched, 2 with KW
- Speyside High School – 1 matched 1 on hold
- Elgin High School – 2 matched, 1 ended still in school
- Elgin Academy – 1 matched, 1 with KW 1 on hold
- Milnes High school – 1 matched.

Positive Outcomes:

100 percent of the school leavers involved with the programme have moved into a positive destination. A total of 16 School leavers moved from school onto a positive destination and this includes FE/HE, employment and voluntary work which then progressed to UHI Moray College courses. All of the 16 School Leavers 11 still have an active relationship with their Mentor.

All of the 28 School pupils who have been involved have stated that the programme has improved their Health & Wellbeing, and they have gained employability skills which has supported their progression beyond School. We have evidence of improvement in attendance, behaviour, improvement in attainment in certain areas and overall aspirations for the future and this has been gained from qualitative feedback from the school teaching staff. In 2023-2024 we are focusing on a process of analysing quantitative data to provide further evidence. See below some of the qualitative impact statements:

“My attitude has been more positive towards school & my grades have improved, she has made me feel more motivated to complete my work. My mentor supported me with a study plan and helped me write my personal statement”.

(Young person who is now at University studying Nursing)

“He has made me feel more confident & independent & I realise that I can achieve my goals. He supports me and is helping me put a business plan together, he believes in me”.

(Young person who has left school, studied Sports Business at UHI Moray and is now is looking at setting up his own Football Coaching School)

She means a great deal to me as I would not be where I am today without her.

(Young person who was struggling in school and a future pathway. Is now in her 2 year at college studying a Bricklaying Course)

“She has been great, she listens and gives me the best advice & she also enjoys baking. She has helped me through college during the lows. She helped me job search for a little Saturday job and I now work in a kitchen which has been really great for my confidence and giving me experience in catering”.

(Young persons journey with her mentor from school years leading into college studying hospitality)

Case Studies:

YP has sustained her college course with the support of mentor, YP has been on MYT programme since start and matched with mentor since 2020. Started college summer 2023 still meeting weekly with mentor.

Young person would not leave his local town in Buckie and has been mentored since 2022 and has developed his confidence in leaving Buckie to take part in mountain biking activities with his mentor. YP also attended the summer bowling activity for all matched pairs (8 pairs in total) – this was a large group of 19 people in total. He stated this was something he never thought he could do. Now in process of attending Outfit Moray on a personalised programme supported by KW

Young person (KGS) school attendance and grades have improved significantly since seeing mentor as reported by guidance

Young person (KGS) guidance teacher has noticed an improvement in attitude towards school since seeing mentor

Young person (KGS) attended a MC summer (2023) work placement within the HR department – his mentor fully supported him to achieve this as others had told YP this wouldn’t work out. YP is now looking at finishing school this year (2024) with a goal to work for a charity based in England

Examples of Mentor Support and Activities:

M is grieving the death of her mum – Mentor has started a course - How to deal with young people grieving, this teaches ways to help young people deal with their emotions. Mentor is helping manage her emotions at school and this 1 hour a week is allowing M to look forward to having this session and being able to cope better in school.

L is being supported with confidence and overcoming fears, by outdoor activities such as hill walking with his mentor L stated that his anxiety has stopped him experiencing this, but building towards their goal with the support of the mentor has helped. Their goal is to climb Ben Rinnes this year – the photo I sent you would be good to put alongside this.

Helped build J confidence for college, mentor supported with an introduction to the college, taking her for experiences she has never had before, encouraging J to become independent and learn life skills with meeting and talking to new people in cafes, shops etc.

J to join the police, mentor (ex-policeman) has made him understand and realise that fitness and life experiences are needed before he joins, J has really listened to this and improved on his health and fitness and is looking at changing his college course to sport and fitness which will be more beneficial than brickwork.

My mentor has helped me complete job applications online for a part time job.

Impact Statements - Mentors:

"My favourite thing about being a mentor is seeing the difference in the mentee over the period that we spend together. When they place their trust in you and confide in you about their experiences, it's a clear indication that you have successfully built that relationship and it's very rewarding. Being a mentor has taught me a greater awareness of the adversities that young people in our community encounter, as well as their remarkable resilience. In just one hour I made a difference by being the one person that my mentee could turn to when she needed someone to talk to. Knowing that she trusted me enough to ask to meet one day because she was having a hard time actually made me feel very proud." **(Mentor)**

"Mentoring has been life changing for me. It's given me a confidence I didn't have before and has taught me a lot about myself. I love that I can meet my mentee during the week and we can chat and have a laugh together, and any worries I had are forgotten about. I honestly feel like I get just as much out of the mentoring program as my mentee does." **(Mentor)**

"First walk we did Lewis was a little concerned on the rough surfaces and ice but already he is learning new skills and he also contributes really well in conversations. Most importantly with my support he is really willing to try new things and is happy to tell me when he feels uncomfortable when I will then help him through the concern."

"I feel really proud that I am helping a young person to develop an interest and expand his horizons and I am also really enjoying establishing a new friendship with my mentee."

"My favourite thing about mentoring is watching my mentee growing in confidence and helping him face and conquer challenges that he has previously struggled with." **(Mentor)**

"Mentoring for one hour every week is a great opportunity to spend time with Megan and see the difference, Megan is definitely open with me, she definitely feels safe to emotionally open up with me now."

"Our Thursday afternoon meet ups are going really well. We vary where we go, mostly depending on the weather and where she would like to go. She is chatty and enthusiastic young person, but I feel she is in need of just being able to chat with someone outside of school and her family. She is slowly talking more about her Mum and family life. It is all really going really positive for Megan being given the opportunity to have someone to chat to" **(Mentor)**

"I have loved mentoring, she is night and day since the first time I met her, she made no eye contact when I first met her, now she chats away, orders in cafes and away up to the desk to order our food and drink. Very chatty and starts conversations, engages in conversation, we don't stop talking." **(Mentor)**

"Being a mentor to my YP it has made me more aware of life and struggles in the community outside of our own family bubbles." **(Mentor)**

"We started initially by just going for a walk around the Park to have a chat and get to know each other. Then as time went by started organising events / things to do together. I always ask how things are going with and make a concerted effort to allow him to talk. Over the years I have found it has made me better at listening". **(Mentor)**

"Mentoring is really rewarding and felt a proud moment when she got the job". **(Mentor)**

"Mentoring really makes me feel I am making a difference. I have seen his personal growth and self-esteem improve greatly. I am proud to be on this journey with him." **(Mentor)**

Impact Statements Mentee's:

"Mentoring's been good because it's really nice to have someone who is just there for me and we can chat and hang out for an hour." (Mentee)

"It's really nice to get out once a week and have a chat over lunch with my mentor. It's a great opportunity for us to catch up and discuss how our weeks have been going. It's also really nice to get away from everything for a little while. My mentor has been instrumental in boosting my confidence when it comes to seeking opportunities, whether it's for work or university applications. With her guidance and supportiveness, I've learned to believe in myself and trust in my abilities that i can do it." (Mentee)

"I'm getting on great with my mentor, she's a very nice and understanding person, I'm planning on getting a job when I turn 14 and she is going to help me create my CV which I'm very grateful for!" (Mentee)

"Mentoring has definitely made me happier. I focus on it so much through the week because it's something for me to look forward to. I am more happier and more chilled out, definitely not as much kick offs in school" (Mentee)

"I have more motivation on going to the gym and improving myself to be a better person. Gavin has given me advice about joining the police which is something I want to do" (Mentee)

"Day trips with my mentor have all been new for me, cafes and places we have visited have been new and its been nice to be able to experience these things.

I have really enjoyed mentoring, its someone that you can talk to about issues that you don't want to talk to family or friends about, my mentor has given me good advice and helped me with the move from school to college.

I am definitely more eager to try new things and more willing to talk to new people.

I think it helps people that have a lot of anxiety or don't get to do many activities or get out the house if they are struggling, its so nice to speak to someone" (Mentee)

"I feel like I can talk about anything with my mentor and my favourite activity to do with my mentor is going on walks and exploring. This makes me feel really good after spending time with my mentor. My mentor has helped me with some insecurities of mine and I've noticed I've become a lot more confident in myself. Since getting a mentor." (Mentee)

"Yes, I do enjoy it, it's nice having someone to talk to, I like meeting weekly, it allows me to open myself up to new people rather than sitting in my own company all the time. My favourite thing is having someone to chat to and someone to listen, gives me something to do in my spare time. I like showing my mentor my artwork, they don't know much about art, but they show an interest." (Mentee)

Parent/Carer Feedback:

"L has been going out with Ian on Fridays and seems to be going really well. They've been doing big walks and finding Trigg points. L always comes back happy and really enjoys the mentor's company. That was a great match"

"The Mentor is so good with T; he is upfront and honest with him and T seems to take on his advice. The mentor knows how to deal with T appropriately and in a way that T wants to speak to him about his struggles and how to manage them. T always comes home from mentoring and speaks so highly of their time together; he seems calmer and more collected once he has had some time with his mentor".



WORK PLACE
VISITS



COOKING



Mentoring Young Talent 22-23



1:1 TIME



WALKING



ACTIVITIES

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM OTHER PROVIDERS

RAF Lossiemouth	Public Sector	The main issue I see impacting poverty and equality is the already well understood issues about childcare capacity in the region. It limits employment options for non-serving parents predominantly woman often meaning a reduced salary/hours around school times and/or being unable to continue career whilst partner serves at RAF Lossiemouth.
Communities (CLD) Youth Work Team	Public Sector	<p>Inequalities that Local Authority Youth Workers are encountering are predominantly inequality of choice and opportunity, either from geographic or socio-economic issues. Mental health and social anxiety prevent young people from taking part in activities as well as confidence. This is reflected in requests for community-based youth work provision.</p> <p>There is also something about the perception people have about young people, the actions of a small minority are influencing people's perception of young people as a whole. Young people who work hard and just get on with things feel they don't get the attention or the opportunities that some of the more challenging young people receive. In addition, young people report feeling disengaged and disempowered in being part of decision-making in schools and communities, which is the voice and participation agenda.</p>
Residents (23)	Moray	<p>The cost of VETS bills are crippling since some of the smaller practices have been bought over. Previously a direct debit could be set up so there was not the worry of a pet becoming ill. This is no longer permitted. The expectation is that you pay on the day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I would go without food for my dog but am terrified of him getting old. It's not fair." • "How is emergency care allowed to be offered via Inverness? If you have no transport and your pet gets ill there are no options. If Vets want to practice in Moray then they should offer all services in Moray." • "I'm a pensioner and live alone with my dog. He is my only family. I have to get a lift to the practice as it's not on a bus route. How are pensioners who have worked all their days be expected to pay vet bills on state pension plus taxis fares too?"

Digital Inclusion	Moray Pathways specific	Between 01/4/2022 and 31/3/2023, 304 people attended 276 digital support sessions.
Equalities Officer	Public Sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No British Sign Language Interpreters in Moray and no infrastructure to train BSL interpreters. 2. No lawyers in Moray who are specialised in immigration and who can support refugees in Moray. A major source of concern for Afghan families in Moray is the welfare and wellbeing of family left behind in Afghanistan and the uncertainty about their future. 3. Ethnicity has, for a long time, been an overlooked issue in Moray. Recently, the ethnic makeup of Moray has started to become more diverse. The Council's latest equality outcomes recognise this and include a number of actions to address this. 4. A lot of works needs to be done to get ready for the extension of the public sector equality duty in 2025. The duty will be extended to "inclusive communication". 5. We need to look at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent use of plain English • enabling a two-way communication between council and BSL users • ensuring that online apps are compatible with mobile phones and laptops (the latter would assist visually impaired service users).

CONTRIBUTING ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Moray Citizens Advice Bureau, 6 Moss St, Elgin Tel. 01343 550088

Communities and Volunteering Team – HSCM involvement@moray.gov.uk

Moray Community Support Facebook Group: 

Moray Supports Migrants and Refugees <https://msmr.org.uk/>

The Coat Hangar coathangar@yahoo.com

Moray College UHI Employability Team mcemployability@uhi.ac.uk Tel 01343 576152 or 07385 945725

North Scotland Cash for Kids northscotland@cashforkids.org.uk Tel 01463 227700

Fochabers Food Stop 

Step-By-Step info@stepsmoray.org Tel 01343 544628

Education, Moray Council 01343 543451

Dance North Scotland Tel 01309 691661

Elgin Youth Development Group youthwork@elginyouthcafe.org Tel 01343 548300

Portgordon Community Hub Tel 07399 031253

Moray Community Foundation <https://moraycf.org/>

Lossie 2-3 Group & Community Hub enquiries@thelossie2-3group.org.uk

Money Advice Moray money.advice@moray.gov.uk Tel 01343 563456

Adult & Family Learning, Moray Council

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Dandelion Project pr@moray.gov.uk

Tsi Moray info@tsimoray.org.uk Tel 01343 541713


Moray Rape Crisis contact@morayrapecrisis.scot Helpline 08088 01 03 02

REAP info@reapscotland.org.uk Tel 01542 888070

Libraries, Learning Centres & Heritage http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_1472.html

Aberlour Youthpoint Tel 01343 546214 morayyouth@aberlour.org.uk


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R-evolution for Good contactus@revolutionforgood.org.uk Tel 01340 212 101

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Moray Pathways *****

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English as an Additional Language Team educationandsocialcare@moray.gov.uk Tel 01343 557921

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, text, or other markings on the page.

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