



A FORCE FOR GOOD:

Amplifying the third sector youth work workforce's contribution to economic growth and social change in the Scottish Borders.

ANNEX A:

Third sector youth work in the Scottish Borders:
The policy landscape



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1. Introduction to Annex A: Third Sector Youth Work in the Scottish Borders: The Policy Landscape

- 1.1. Annex A to this piece of work is a desktop review which explores the Third Sector Youth Work (TSYW) policy landscape within the context of the Scottish Borders. This landscape review was used to inform the focus of the primary research (Annex B) and provide further context to the research findings.
- 1.2. In this review, we first provide a brief description of youth work, the relevant policy context and working conditions in the sector. This is followed by an overview of the impact of TSYW activity on different aspects of young people's lives, such as health and wellbeing, self-esteem and education.
- 1.3. The main focus of the review is TSYW contribution to economic and social development and where youth work adds value within this area. We explore TSYW in the context of employment, skills development, and entrepreneurship. The final section assesses opportunities for economic growth in the Scottish Borders.
- 1.4. Given the breadth of the topic and information available, this review is not exhaustive. We have focussed on identifying relevant information from organisations with key positions in influencing the TSYW sector, including the Scottish Government and YouthLink Scotland. Where appropriate, we have drawn on other literature and research available.
- 1.5. Documents were reviewed using relevant search terms, including:
 - 'Youth work', 'youth worker', 'young people'
 - 'Youth employment'
 - 'Apprenticeship', 'modern apprenticeship', 'foundation apprenticeship'
 - 'Work placements', 'work experience', 'traineeships'
 - 'Higher education' 'Further education', 'college', 'university'
 - 'Skills', 'learning', 'CLD', 'community learning and development'
 - 'Careers', 'pathways', 'opportunities'
 - 'NEET', 'youth unemployment' 'positive destinations'
 - 'Fair work', 'living wage', 'minimum wage'
 - 'Economy', 'economic growth', 'economic development'
 - 'Youth innovation', 'youth leadership', 'youth entrepreneurship'
 - 'Youth achievement awards'
 - 'Non-formal learning'



2. Defining Third Sector Youth Work

- 2.1. Youth work is defined by the National Youth Agency as “a complex series of professional principles, practices and methods which we often describe as the science of enabling young people to believe in themselves and build positive futures.”¹
- 2.2. In the Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work², YouthLink Scotland explain that there are three definitive features of youth work:
 1. Young people choose to participate
 2. The work must build from where young people are
 3. Youth work recognises the young person and the Youth Worker as partners in a learning process
- 2.3. Youth work can be both targeted and universal. Being open to all and is a characteristic of community-based youth work – and many of the young people accessing youth work may experience disadvantage. Some youth work services are targeted to specific demographics of young people such as young carers, or to work on specific priorities such as alcohol or mental health. All youth work is focused on identifying and realising the potential of young people.
- 2.4. Third Sector Youth Work is youth work delivered not-for-profit by community or voluntary-based groups and organisations, many of whom are registered charities (SCIOs), Community Interest Companies (CICs), or constituted groups.
- 2.5. Youth Workers are informal educators, working with young people across a variety of issues including, but not limited to:



¹ <https://nya.org.uk/careers-youth-work/what-is-youth-work/>

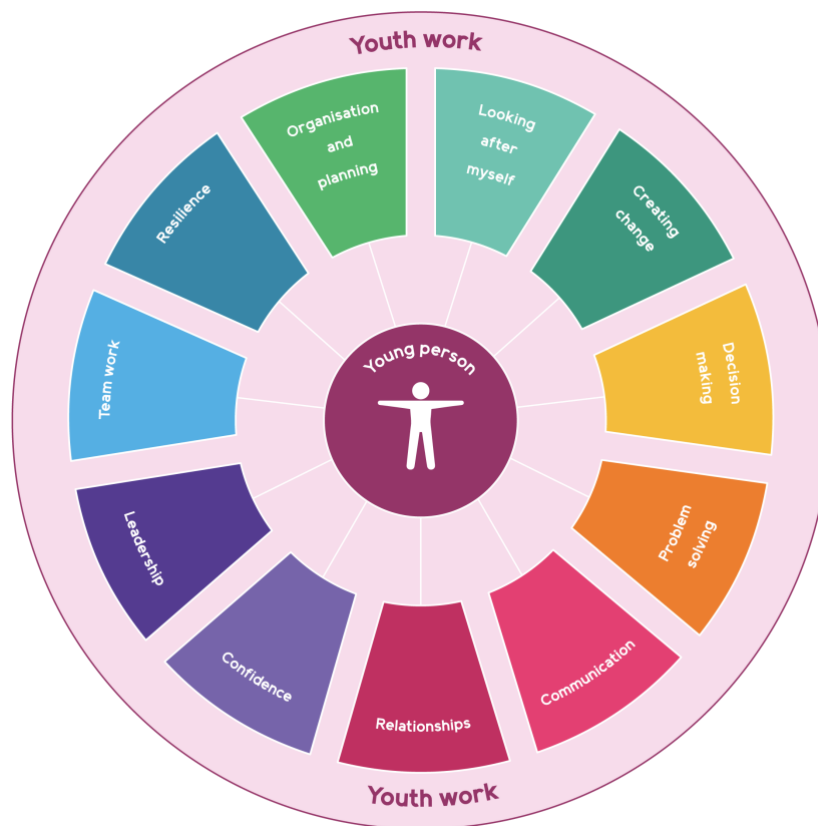
² <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1255/statementonthenatureandpurposeofyouthwork.pdf>



2.6. YouthLink Scotland, the national youth work agency, lists seven youth work outcomes³:

- Outcome 1: Young people are confident, resilient and optimistic for the future
- Outcome 2: Young people manage personal, social and formal relationships
- Outcome 3: Young people create, describe and apply their learning and skills
- Outcome 4: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups
- Outcome 5: Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control
- Outcome 6: Young people express their voice and demonstrate social commitment
- Outcome 7: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

2.7. In addition, YouthLink Scotland has worked with stakeholders across the youth work sector in Scotland to develop the Youth Work Skills Framework⁴. The Framework – shown below - is an interactive resource that outlines the key skills that young people can develop through participation in youth work in Scotland, including confidence, resilience and communication.



³ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/policy-research/outcomes-and-skills/youth-work-outcomes/>

⁴ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/programmes/youth-work-and-the-attainment-challenge/skills-framework/youth-work-skills-framework/>



Youth Work in the Scottish Borders

- 2.8. Youth work in the Scottish Borders is delivered by a range of providers in a variety of contexts and settings. This includes the local authority CLD Youth Learning Team, school-based Youth Workers, uniformed youth groups such as Girlguiding and Scouts, national third sector youth organisations and a diverse network of small independent regional and community-based youth groups and clubs.
- 2.9. In the Scottish Borders many of the national organisations with regional service provision (e.g. Quarriers, Children 1st, Action for Children) and the independent regional and local groups and clubs (e.g. Beyond Earlston, Stable Life, Works+, Interest Link) are members of YouthBorders, the regional network of more than 40 voluntary and community-based youth organisations. Further examples of youth work organisations with provision in the Scottish Borders can be found in the [YouthBorders members directory](#).
- 2.10. In 2019, YouthBorders published a Strategic Plan⁵ which has three main ambitions:
- Increasing collaboration and partnership;
 - Ensuring that their network is connected, empowered and represented; and
 - Supporting their members to grow and develop as a workforce.
- 2.11. A progress report from 2020⁶ details the progress that YouthBorders has made, including building partnerships with other services, launching new projects and offering external training opportunities to members of their network.

Policy context of youth work

- 2.12. Youth work is part of a group of practices, alongside adult learning and community development known as Community Learning and Development. Several policies, strategies and legislation, some of which are discussed below, underpin the work delivered by TSYW in Scotland and contribute to the overall aim of a Scotland where young people are safe, valued and listened to.

National Youth Work Strategy

- 2.13. 'Our ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-2019' was developed by The Scottish Government, Education Scotland and YouthLink Scotland⁷. The National Youth Work Strategy includes key goals and priorities for the youth work sector in Scotland.
- 2.14. YouthLink Scotland has been working on a refreshed 2021-26 strategy and has consulted over 1,000 young people, Youth Workers and stakeholders so far. They have identified emerging themes for the strategy, including funding and investment in youth work, health and wellbeing, accessibility, workforce development and communicating the value of youth work.

⁵ <https://youthborders.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/YouthBorders-Strategic-Plan-2019-22.pdf>

⁶ <https://youthborders.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/YouthBorders-Strategic-Plan-Year-1-Update-Sept20.pdf>

⁷ It followed the 2009 Youth Work Strategy which covered the previous five-year period.



- 2.15. The new strategy is still in development, with YouthLink Scotland currently undertaking further stakeholder engagement and working on strategy refinement.⁸ The CLD Plans Guidance Note (2021-24)⁹ notes that the Scottish Government will continue to develop the strategy throughout 2021 alongside the Lifelong Learning Framework 2022-2027 and the Adult Learning Strategy 2021-2026.

Getting it Right for Every Child

- 2.16. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people. GIRFEC is child-focused, relies on identifying and tackling needs early, and requires collaboration and coordination between children, young people, parents, and family services.¹⁰

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill

- 2.17. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a 54-article international agreement that sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.¹¹

- 2.18. In March 2021, a Bill to incorporate the UNCRC into Scottish Law was unanimously passed by the Scottish Parliament. A Policy Memorandum prepared by the Scottish Government¹² describes the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill as a significant step towards a future built on tolerance, equality and dignity:

“The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the global “gold standard” for children’s rights. By incorporating the UNCRC, the Bill will deliver a fundamental shift in the way children’s rights are respected, protected and fulfilled in Scotland, ensuring that children’s rights are built into the fabric of decision-making in Scotland and that these rights can be enforced in the courts.”

- 2.19. However, the Bill has been delayed after the UK Government announced it would challenge the Scottish legislation in the Supreme Court, contending that the Bill lies outwith the remit of the Scottish Parliament.

- 2.20. Youth work’s connection to the UNCRC is discussed in YouthLink Scotland’s Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work¹³:

“Youth work plays a key role in delivering the principles outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 12, the right of the young person to voice their opinion, have their views listened to and be taken seriously. By engaging young people in social activism, youth work builds citizenship, respect for human rights and a sense of mutual responsibility.”

⁸ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/4465/200402-updating-national-youth-work-strategy-for-website.docx>

⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/cld-plans-guidance-note/pages/1/>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/principles-and-values/>

¹¹ <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/childrens-rights/united-nations-convention-of-the-rights-of-the-child>

¹² <https://beta.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/current-bills/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-incorporation-scotland-bill/introduced/policy-memorandum-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-scotland-bill.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1255/statementonthenatureandpurposeofyouthwork.pdf>



- 2.21. Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People has described youth work as human rights work¹⁴. In the specific context of recovery from Covid-19 his office stated:

*"Youth workers play a significant role in ensuring children and young people can access their rights to good mental and physical health as well as educational, social and recreational rights."*¹⁵

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

- 2.22. Introduced in 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act¹⁶ protects the rights of children in Scotland. The Act sets out duties for Scottish Ministers and public authorities in relation to the rights of children, children's services planning and early learning and childcare, among other issues.
- 2.23. In December 2020, the Scottish Government published a Statutory Guidance document on the Children's Services Planning section of the Act.¹⁷ This states that whilst children's services planning is ultimately the responsibility of local authorities and health boards, it is expected that they work collaboratively with other sectors and organisations (including youth work services) to deliver the most positive impact for communities.
- 2.24. Scottish Borders Council's Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2021 notes that the Council will continue to develop partnerships *"to ensure that the best use of resources, knowledge and expertise is utilised in meeting the needs of our children and young people"*. This includes consistent access to quality youth work services.¹⁸

Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy

- 2.25. Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy¹⁹ was published in 2014. It set a target to reduce youth unemployment in Scotland by 40%. The Strategy sets out key themes, milestones and year-by-year targets for schools, colleges, apprenticeships and employers. According to a 2019 progress update²⁰, the Strategy:

"aims to increase choices for young people in schools and colleges, and to increase opportunities for employment. It does this by bringing together schools, colleges, training providers and employers to promote the pathways young people need to participate in current and future work opportunities. This includes creating new work-based learning options; enabling young people to learn in a range of settings in their Senior Phase of school; embedding employer engagement in education; offering careers advice at an earlier point in school; and introducing new standards for career education and work placements."

¹⁴ Youth work is human rights work - Children's and Young People's Centre for Justice (cycj.org.uk)

¹⁵ Statement: Impact of Covid-19 on Youth Work - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (cypcs.org.uk)

¹⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/children-young-people-scotland-act-2014-statutory-guidance-part-3-childrens-services-planning-second-edition-2020/>

¹⁸ https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/5268/integrated_children_and_young_peoples_plan_2018-21

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-workforce-scotlands-youth-employment-strategy/>

²⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-workforce-fifth-annual-progress-report-2018-19/>



Youth Guarantee: No One Left Behind

- 2.26. In September 2020, the Fair Work, Employability and Skills Directorate within the Scottish Government published an initial report on the Youth Guarantee: No-one Left Behind. The ambition of the Youth Guarantee²¹ is to:

“Guarantee to every young person aged between 16 and 24 in Scotland the opportunity, based on their own personal circumstances and ambitions, of going to university or college, an apprenticeship programme, training, fair employment including work experience, or participating in a formal volunteering programme.”

- 2.27. The Scottish Government is investing £60 million in the Youth Guarantee to fund:

- Local authorities to work with local partnerships to increase their provision of employability support for young people;
- Colleges to generate new opportunities for young people;
- More pathways into apprenticeships; and
- Further work on implementing Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy.

Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework

- 2.28. The Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework²² was published by the Scottish Government Mental Health Directorate in February 2021. The Framework has the following objectives:

“Every child and young person in Scotland will be able to access local community services which support and improve their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Every child and young person and their families or carers will get the help they need, when they need it, from people with the right knowledge, skills and experience to support them. This will be available in the form of easily accessible support close to their home, education, employment or community.”

- 2.29. It sets out the Scottish Government’s whole-system approach to supporting young people to receive adequate mental health care in their community.

“In line with GIRFEC approach, it is vital that community mental health and wellbeing supports and services are integrated with and contribute to a whole-system approach. This should include use of the wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) and the national practice model to identify, describe and evaluate needs, as a coordinated approach to children’s planning that brings professionals across different disciplines together to deliver the right support at the right time.”

²¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/youth-guarantee-no-one-left-behind-initial-report/pages/3/>

²² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-mental-health-wellbeing-supports-services-framework/>



- 2.30. The Framework also suggests the range of support which could be delivered through community mental health and wellbeing services, including:
- Universal youth work provision for early intervention, prevention, positive relationships and facilitating peer to peer support.
 - Targeted interventions for specific groups, e.g. LGBT+ young people, children and young people with disabilities and young parents and carers.

Every Child, Every Chance: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-2022

- 2.31. Published by the Scottish Government in March 2018, the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan²³ sets out actions to progress towards child poverty targets set for 2030. The plan includes commitments to new support for childcare after school and in the holidays and £1 million to be spent on practical support for children experiencing food insecurity during school holidays.
- 2.32. Scottish Borders' Child Poverty Action Plan highlights the role of the third sector and youth work in tackling child poverty.²⁴ This includes partnering with the sector on actions such as:
- Providing targeted programmes to support disadvantaged young people to succeed and achieve.
 - Providing free or low-cost access to activities, experiences and trips during evenings, weekends and school holiday periods.
 - Addressing food insecurity through the provision of food to individuals and families via Fareshare and other schemes including food growing and community cafes.

²³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

²⁴ https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7696/child_poverty_annual_report_2020-21



3. The impact of youth work; “Youth Work Changes Lives”

- 3.1. A 2016 YouthLink Scotland study about the economic and social impact of youth work²⁵ estimated youth work has changed the lives of more than 1 in 10 of the Scottish population. In this section, we look at examples of TSYW’s impact on different aspects of young people’s lives, including health and wellbeing, confidence and education. We have focused on TSYW organisations providing services in the Scottish Borders.
- 3.2. This section is not exhaustive and is intended as an indication of the impact of TSYW across different policy areas.

Health and wellbeing

- 3.3. Outdoor youth work involving walking, mountain biking, sailing, horse riding and games is evident in the Scottish Borders TSYW with organisations including Beyond Earlston, Rowland’s (Selkirk), Connect Berwickshire Youth Project, Eat Sleep Ride CIC, Stable Life and Escape Youth Services routinely have physical activity opportunities as part of their youth work programme.
- 3.4. TSYW organisations also help young people to reduce behaviours that pose threats to their safety and wellbeing. Stepping Stones²⁶, a three-year project delivered by the Scottish Borders Youth Work Partnership, has been working to improve the health and wellbeing of young people across the Scottish Borders. Their Year 2 Impact Report²⁷ describes the support they offer to young people to develop knowledge and understanding of health and risk-taking behaviours such as online safety, alcohol and drug use, sexual health, relationships and consent.
- 3.5. The services that TSYW organisations provide are also vital in supporting the overwhelmed state mental health support services in Scotland. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across Scotland are struggling to deal with demand which means young people can face long waiting times to access support. The latest figures published by Public Health Scotland state that only 73% of referrals across Scotland between Oct-Dec 2020 were seen within an 18-week period against a target of 90%.²⁸
- 3.6. TSYW organisations play an essential role in providing specialist early intervention mental health support to children and young people. For example, Quarriers run a Resilience for Wellbeing Service²⁹ in 9 secondary schools in the Scottish Borders and One Step Borders³⁰ providing befriending to young people 16-25 with mild to moderate mental health issues. This service provides one-to-one, group and drop-in sessions to help young people gain the skills and confidence to take care of their own mental health and wellbeing. The service also works with parents to equip them with strategies to support their children with their mental health.

²⁵ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1254/full-report-social-and-economic-value-of-youth-work-in-scotland.pdf>

²⁶ <https://youthborders.org.uk/stepping-stones/>

²⁷ <https://youthborders.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Stepping-Stones-Year-2-Impact-Report-Nov20.pdf>

²⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/nhsscotland-performance-against-ldp-standards/pages/camhs-waiting-times/#page-top>

²⁹ <https://www.quarriers.org.uk/services/borders-resilience-for-wellbeing/#>

³⁰ <https://www.onestepborders.info/>



- 3.7. The Stepping Stones project also plays a key role in supporting young people across the Scottish Borders with their emotional wellbeing. Their Year 2 Impact Report described a Youth Worker providing life-changing intervention support to an extremely vulnerable young person who was in crisis during lockdown and at risk of self-harm.

Confidence and self-esteem

- 3.8. In 2018, the Scottish Youth Work Research Steering Group published 'The Impact of Community-based Universal Youth Work in Scotland'.³¹ The report is based on analysis of over 120 Significant Change Stories generated by Youth Workers and young people. Findings from the study show the positive impact youth work can have on young people's confidence and self-worth. In the excerpt below, the secondary benefits of improving a young person's confidence are discussed:

"The data collected from the stories emphasised the impact of youth work on a young person's psychological wellbeing, specifically confidence. This had direct benefits in the form of tangible improvements to the young person's life, both in the short term (e.g. performance at school) and the long term (e.g. career impacts). Young people reported more confidence, particularly in relation to communication with peers and adult figures, to develop friendships, to develop existing skills/abilities and the confidence to try new experiences. This was also reflected in the youth worker commentary. This sense of confidence was tied up with increases in self-worth. Youth work provided young people with opportunities to maximise their potential, through involvement in activities whereby they regained or further developed a sense of value in themselves. Together, these positive influences contributed to the development of a positive identity."

- 3.9. In addition, the findings "point to the central role and value of youth work in supporting and nurturing personal and social development for those young people engaged in the provision."
- 3.10. LGBT Youth Scotland has had a significant impact on the confidence and self-esteem of many LGBT young people in the Scottish Borders. A case study published on their website³² describes how a young person's Youth Worker made a profound impact on their life and opened up opportunities for the future.

"[Youth Worker] would always be there to boost my confidence, knowing I was extremely afraid to take a step into a high school. I would suffer panic attacks at the thought of walking down those daunting hallways. However, because of the support I received from LGBT Youth Scotland, I was able to become one of the first peer educators to visit schools in Scotland to discuss LGBT awareness."

³¹ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/3183/impact-of-community-based-universal-youth-work-in-scotland-november-2018.pdf>

³² <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/news/2020/making-a-change-in-the-scottish-borders/>



Education and attainment

- 3.11. Youth work interventions can play a key role in improving young people's attainment and engagement at school. For example, TD1 Youth Hub are working in partnership with Galashiels Academy to provide one-to-one support as well as small group work sessions to improve the school experience of young people who are finding it most challenging. Nature Unlimited³³ incorporate John Muir Award in to their partnership activity with both primary and secondary schools to increase communication skills develop confident learners.
- 3.12. Supporting transition between primary and secondary school through enhanced support is also an evident youth work intervention in the Scottish Borders. This includes sustained transition support such as Peeblesshire Youth Trust mentoring³⁴.
- 3.13. TSYW can also help to support young people who are disengaged from mainstream education to achieve qualifications. In 2020, Stable Life, a TSYW organisation that supports disadvantaged young people in the Scottish Borders through equine assisted learning and therapy, delivered the 'Out of the Woods' project in partnership with Borders College. The project gave young people the opportunity to complete an SQA accreditation and helped them to develop a more positive attitude toward learning and further education. Twenty-two young people achieved an SQA NPA Level 4 in Horse Care as a result of their participation in the project.³⁵
- 3.14. Some TSYW organisations support young people to achieve accredited achievement awards such as Hi-5 and Dynamic Youth. These credit-rated youth awards give value to young people's achievements through informal learning such as youth work. Young people who were successful in achieving youth awards³⁶ had positive outcomes in relation to self-worth, problem solving, team work, and communication skills.

Child poverty

- 3.15. The National Strategy for Youth Work recognises the important role of youth work in addressing the challenges and inequality faced by young people experiencing poverty.
- "We know that in Scotland there are 220,000 children living in poverty. Poverty affects future life chances, with children in low income households more likely to have poorer health, lower educational attainment and reduced life expectancy. Working together we can create a virtuous cycle of improvement to break the cycle of inequality and improve life chances for young people. We are committed to break this cycle and ensure that all young people have opportunities which will improve their life chances."*
- 3.16. YouthLink Scotland recently published the findings of an evaluation of a pilot project involving six youth work programmes (including TD1 Youth Hub in the Scottish Borders) aiming to tackle food insecurity during the school summer holidays.³⁷ The findings

³³ <http://www.natureunlimited.scot/what-we-do/schools>

³⁴ <https://peeblesshireyouthtrust.org/about-pyt/>

³⁵ <https://stablelife.org.uk/download/stable-life-annual-report-2020/>

³⁶ Youth Scotland Youth Awards Scottish Borders data provided to TLB for 2020-21.

³⁷ https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5659/food-insecurity-report_proofed.pdf



indicate that youth work has an important role to play in tackling the learning loss associated with food insecurity.

“This innovative pilot has generated evidence about the important role of youth work in a partnership approach to tackle food insecurity. Across the different models of food-related activity, we identified consistent positive messages about impact, engagement and effectiveness.

The pilot demonstrates youth work’s contribution to preventing learning loss by maintaining young people’s skills, motivation and engagement with education in holiday periods. The approach is an effective model for delivering opportunities for young people to gain accreditation, develop confidence, engage with new experiences and build relationships with positive role models in their communities.”

- 3.17. As noted in section 2 of Annex A, Scottish Borders’ Child Poverty Action Plan highlights youth work’s contribution to tackling child poverty via offering free or low-cost activities and holiday programmes, and food provision.



4. Relationship between youth work and economic development

- 4.1. Using Social Return on Investment (SROI), a 2016 YouthLink Scotland study of the economic and social impact of youth work³⁸ estimated that the total value of youth work in Scotland is at least £656 million – a return of £7 for every £1 of public cash.
- 4.2. In this section, we look at the economic value of youth work and how it contributes to economic development in three main ways:
- Helping to tackle youth unemployment;
 - Improving skills that are valuable to the local economy; and
 - Promoting youth innovation and entrepreneurship.

Tackling youth unemployment

- 4.3. One way that youth work contributes to economic development is by helping tackle youth unemployment. Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy³⁹ describes the consequences of youth unemployment:

“The cost of youth unemployment is significant. Being unemployed while young can affect future earnings as average wages remain lower throughout the person's working life, even if the person is not unemployed again. It can also increase the chances of being unemployed again. Other consequences of being unemployed when young can emerge later in life, and include lower life satisfaction and happiness, poorer health, a higher risk of depression and lower job satisfaction. The longer the initial spell of unemployment, the greater the negative effect.”

- 4.4. In a 2020 report⁴⁰, YouthLink Scotland drew attention to youth work's role in addressing unemployment among young people.

“YouthLink Scotland believes youth work's role within the employability system deserves greater recognition. There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating the integral relationship between youth work and employability, through the role youth work plays in supporting young people in schools, community and post-school contexts. This relationship should be developed further as we continue to adjust to the consequences of COVID-19 and its impact on the labour market.”

- 4.5. The Scottish Government is committed to reducing youth unemployment. It has published several strategic documents and invested in many programmes related to youth employment over the past ten years. As noted earlier, in 2014, the Scottish Government set a target to reduce youth unemployment in Scotland by 40%; this was achieved by 2017⁴¹. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, youth unemployment could increase to a level similar to the period after the 2008 economic crisis⁴².

³⁸ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1254/full-report-social-and-economic-value-of-youth-work-in-scotland.pdf>

³⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-workforce-scotlands-youth-employment-strategy/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5048/200831-youth-work-and-employability-final.pdf>

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.scot/news/youth-employment-target-met-four-years-ahead-of-schedule/>

⁴² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/youth-guarantee-no-one-left-behind-initial-report/pages/3/>



- 4.6. There are several Government-funded initiatives that act as a platform for TSYW organisations to support young people into employment, education or volunteering. In 2018, the Scottish Government published research on the experiences of the users and providers of these employability services.⁴³ The report contains several case studies with young people who successfully found and sustained employment as a result of working with youth work organisations.
- 4.7. In the Scottish Borders, several TSYW organisations are working with young people to help them gain employability skills and find employment. For example, Works+ state that over 90% of the young people they work with find a positive destination within ten weeks. They have published a series of film case studies showing the positive impact they have had in the Scottish Borders.⁴⁴
- 4.8. In addition, several TSYW organisations are Community Jobs Scotland (CJS) employers. CJS is an employability programme delivered by SCVO which creates work opportunities for young unemployed people within voluntary sector organisations throughout Scotland. The scheme is targeted at young people who are more disadvantaged in the labour market. Rowland's Selkirk, Tweeddale Youth Action and Cheviot Youth have all employed staff through the CJS scheme.
- 4.9. Volunteering can play a role in supporting young people into employment or training. Volunteer Centre Borders Youth Volunteering Ambassadors⁴⁵ promote the value and benefits of youth volunteering and the Saltire Volunteering awards scheme. The national framework "Volunteering for All"⁴⁶ sets out the value and benefits of volunteering. The volunteering rate for young people aged 11-18 was 52% in 2016, nearly double the adult volunteering rate of 28% in 2017. Sport or exercise was by far the most popular volunteering activity for young people at 49%, followed by children and youth groups. Improving skills
- 4.10. TSYW contributes to economic growth by supporting young people to develop and improve skills that are valuable to the local economy. YouthLink Scotland recognise this in their report on Youth Work and Employability⁴⁷:
- "Youth work plays a key role, developing young people's skills, (which has been recognised as important by employers), as well as providing support and early intervention strategies to those at risk of disengaging from education and contributes significantly to the employment agenda."*
- 4.11. 'The Impact of Community-based Universal Youth Work in Scotland'⁴⁸ published by the Scottish Youth Work Research Steering Group provides evidence of the link between youth work and young people developing important skills.

⁴³ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2018/12/one-left-behind-review-employability-services/documents/research-user-provider-journeys/research-user-provider-journeys/govscot%3Adocument/research-user-provider-journeys.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://www.worksplus.works/case-studies>

⁴⁵ <http://www.vcborders.org.uk/for-young-people/school-volunteering-ambassadors>

⁴⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/volunteering-national-framework/pages/3/>

⁴⁷ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/5048/200831-youth-work-and-employability-final.pdf>

⁴⁸ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/3183/impact-of-community-based-universal-youth-work-in-scotland-november-2018.pdf>



“The overall evidence from the study confirmed that participation in youth work is important for acquiring and developing skills for life. Skills for life are defined here as practical, life-enhancing skills, such as those acquired through formal qualifications (both educational and otherwise, e.g. driving licence), work experience, life experience and accredited/achievement awards. Skills for life were closely linked to the tailored nature of youth work, in particular the identification of strengths and interests suited to each young person, enabling appropriate matched opportunities. Many accounts directly linked the skills developed through youth work with vocational destinations and career aspirations. The opportunities engaged with through youth work (e.g. The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award or participation in new experiences) allowed the young people to build confidence to pursue their interests, shaping their future destinations.”

- 4.12. Several TSYW organisations in the Scottish Borders are committed to increasing the employability skills of young people. Eat Sleep Ride CIC offer employability programmes to support young people to develop the confidence, skills and work experience to support them into employment. Food Punks at Tweeddale Youth Action provide supported work experience for young people through catering and hospitality; whilst Branching Out Youth Club are seeking to improve pathways in to training, employment and volunteering for neuro-diverse young people. Many other organisations providing these services have already been referenced throughout this report. For example, Works+ support young people in the Scottish Borders to gain skills to find employment, training or further education.

Promoting youth leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship

- 4.13. Leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship are qualities that make businesses and the economy thrive. There are several youth work-driven initiatives in the Scottish Borders targeted at promoting these qualities, which are described below.
- 4.14. In 2020, YouthBorders worked with Corra Foundation and Comic Relief to deliver a new community-led grants programme in the Scottish Borders. #ShiftThePower offered grants from £1,000 to £8,0000 to charities and community groups to develop and run projects to benefit young people in the Scottish Borders. The project promoted youth leadership by having a project team made up of young people who designed the application process and decided which projects would receive awards.
- 4.15. Some youth work organisations in the Scottish Borders run peer mentoring and leadership services, including We Are With Youth Borders, Interest Link Borders and Youth Wellbeing Coaching CIC, which offer young people opportunities to develop as peer educators, mentors and leaders. Other organisations teach young people valuable business skills through their services. For example, Food Punks is an event-catering social enterprise run by Tweeddale Youth Action. It offers young people in the Scottish Borders an opportunity to learn cooking and entrepreneurial skills.
- 4.16. A few TSYW organisations in the Scottish Borders run Youth Committees or Youth Assemblies, which hand responsibility to young people and give them opportunities to develop their leadership and entrepreneurship qualities such as Volunteer Centre Borders Youth Volunteering Ambassadors and the TD1 Youth Hub Ambassadors.



5. Economic development in the Scottish Borders

- 5.1. South of Scotland Enterprise's 2020/21 Operating Plan⁴⁹ addresses some of the challenges facing the South of Scotland (including the Scottish Borders) related to economic growth:
- An ageing population and many young people leaving the area;
 - Low productivity, sectors with traditionally low wages and few higher-skilled jobs;
 - There are transport and digital connectivity issues;
 - The area is very rural and sparsely populated;
 - Some fragile communities in need of regeneration;
 - A perception that there are little further and higher education opportunities; and
 - A lower number of business start-ups and less investment in innovation/research & development (compared to the rest of Scotland).
- 5.2. In addition, the Operating Plan discusses the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy.
- "The South of Scotland has already been, and is projected to continue to be, significantly and disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This reflects the rurality of our region and the composition of our economy. Many of our existing challenges will be worsened, including for example the digital divide which has hampered the ability for some businesses to adapt to new ways of working."*
- 5.3. However, the Scottish Borders is involved in various deals, plans and partnerships with the shared ambition of promoting economic growth within the area.

Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal

- 5.4. The Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal⁵⁰ is a mechanism for accelerating economic and inclusive growth in the region. It involves significant government investment in innovation, skills and infrastructure, which will drive productivity and growth while reducing inequalities and deprivation.
- 5.5. The City Region Deal partners include: City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders Council and West Lothian Councils; the city region's universities and colleges; and the city region's business and third sectors. Between the partners, £1.3 billion will be invested over the next 15 years.

⁴⁹ https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/media/1134/sose_operatingplan20_interactive.pdf

⁵⁰ <http://esescityregiondeal.org.uk/>



5.6. The benefits of the Deal are summarised in 'City Region Deal: Accelerating Growth'⁵¹:

"A key driver of this City Region Deal is the opportunity to address inclusion across the region. Prosperity and success is not universal across the region: 21% of children are living in poverty; there is a lack of mid-market and affordable housing; and too many people are unable to move on from low wage/low skill jobs. The City Region Deal will address these issues, create new economic opportunities, and is expected to provide up to 21,000 new jobs. Partners' approach to ensuring that growth is inclusive is summarised in this section.

The region's new Integrated Regional Employability and Skills programme, alongside improved transport and housing provision, will ensure that businesses and communities across the region will benefit and will be given the chance to take advantage of these exciting new opportunities."

Community Wealth Building in the Scottish Borders

5.7. Community wealth building is a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.

5.8. The Scottish Government's Cities and Regions policy⁵² describes the five core principles to Community Wealth Building:

- *"Progressive Procurement – developing local supply chains of businesses likely to support local employment and keep wealth within communities.*
- *Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets – Using anchor institutions to improve prospects of local people.*
- *Shared Ownership of the Local Economy – supporting and growing business models that are more financially generative for the local economy.*
- *Socially Just Use of Land and Property – developing the function and ownership of local assets held by anchor organisations, so local communities benefit from financial and social gain.*
- *Making Financial Power work for Local Places – increase flows of investment within local economies by harnessing and recirculating the wealth that exists."*

5.9. The Scottish Government has committed £3m to a Community Wealth Building Fund for Ayrshire to develop Scotland's first regional approach to CWB. Future plans to expand investment in Community Wealth Building have been announced. Five more areas will receive funding, including the South of Scotland, Clackmannanshire, the Western Isles, Glasgow City Region and Tay Cities Deal (Councils of Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perth & Kinross).

⁵¹

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55c87967e4b05aa55020f656/t/5c263201898583ec74c01146/1546007049724/ESE+SCR+Deal+Document+6+August+2018+signed.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>



Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

- 5.10. The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal⁵³ brings together the local authorities of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council to promote economic growth.
- 5.11. The Deal, which was formally finalised in March 2021, will result in up to £452 million being invested into projects designed to accelerate the region's economic development, create jobs and encourage future investment in the area.

Fit for 2024

- 5.12. Introduced by Scottish Borders Council in 2019, Fit for 2024⁵⁴ is a five-year programme of transformation with the aim of “delivering a Council that is adaptable, efficient and effective, and one ultimately capable of not only meeting the challenges ahead, but of fully optimising outcomes for the citizens and communities for which it is responsible.”⁵⁵
- 5.13. The five pillars of the programme include:
- Service by service reviews
 - Investing in digital transformation
 - Enhancing community engagement, participation and empowerment
 - Placemaking and best use of assets
 - Process improvement and productivity
- 5.14. Ultimately, the vision for Fit for 2024 is to help the Scottish Borders become the UK's first smart connected rural region, supporting better outcomes for people in the region.

South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership

- 5.15. The South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP)⁵⁶ is a forum of representatives from a wide range of organisations, sectors and groups across the South of Scotland. The REP has a collective ambition to drive transformational change and economic success within the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway.
- 5.16. In June 2021, the REP published a Draft Regional Economic Strategy which sets out priorities, actions and challenges related to stimulating the local economy and establishing the South of Scotland as a great place to live, work and invest in.

⁵³ <https://www.borderlandsgrowth.com/>

⁵⁴ https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/923/fit_for_2024

⁵⁵ <https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s34249/Item%20No.%204%20-%20Fit%20for%202024%20report.pdf>

⁵⁶ <https://sosrep.dumgal.gov.uk/>



- 5.17. Priorities, actions and performance targets are set out across six key themes:
- Skilled and Ambitious People
 - Innovative and enterprising
 - Rewarding and Fair Work
 - Cultural & Creative Excellence
 - Green & Sustainable Economy
 - Thriving & Distinct Communities
- 5.18. The REP will work with individual partners to drive the strategy over a ten-year timeframe. They will monitor progress of the strategy and its accompanying delivery plan and provide annual reports, instigating additional action where needed to keep efforts on track.



6. Conclusions

- 6.1. This review has examined several aspects of TSYW in Scotland and provided a review of opportunities for economic development in the Scottish Borders.
- 6.2. Many strategies and frameworks underpin the important work delivered by TSYW organisations, including the National Youth Work Strategy and Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. These and other strategies provide contemporary drivers for youth work activity and priorities nationally, regionally and locally. They require TSYW organisations to be responsive and agile to a range of policy influences in their work whilst retaining their core principles and youth work values.
- 6.3. Extensive evidence shows the positive impact that TSYW has on young people and their communities. Benefits include improved attainment, self-confidence and health and wellbeing. We have also seen evidence of how TSYW contributes to economic development by helping to tackle youth unemployment, improving skills and promoting youth innovation and entrepreneurship.
- 6.4. Though the Scottish Borders faces challenges in growing the local economy, for example its ageing population and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on rural areas, there are exciting opportunities for future growth. The area will benefit from investment deals and partnerships such as the City Region Deal over the next 10-15 years.
- 6.5. While the landscape review has outlined the impact of youth work, there is a lack of data about working conditions in the TSYW sector. Key insight from the data that is available is detailed in section 2 of Annex B. This suggests that many individual youth work organisations promote Fair Work principles, such as paying the Living Wage and providing flexible working arrangements.
- 6.6. The primary research conducted by The Lines Between was designed to investigate and fill the evidence gap around working conditions. Using surveys, one-to-one discussions and focus groups with Managers and Youth Workers in the Scottish Borders, the research aimed to give YouthBorders a better understanding of the experiences of the workforce, and of opportunities for and barriers to workforce development. The findings from the primary research are found in Annex B.
- 6.7. In addition to main report and Annex B (primary research findings), we would direct readers to the following documents for additional information and context:
 - The Impact of Community-based Universal Youth Work in Scotland⁵⁷, a study commissioned by the Scottish Youth Work Research Steering Group.
 - YouthLink Scotland's Youth Work Skills Framework⁵⁸.
 - The draft Regional Economic Strategy (RES) prepared by the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (REP)⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/3183/impact-of-community-based-universal-youth-work-in-scotland-november-2018.pdf>

⁵⁸ <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/programmes/youth-work-and-the-attainment-challenge/skills-framework/youth-work-skills-framework/>

⁵⁹ <https://sosrep.dumgal.gov.uk/article/21953/What-is-the-RES->