

Report to CYPLG – Covid-19 Wellbeing (October 2022)

Background

Scottish Government provided funding to local areas for an “improved response to children and young people’s mental health and emotional wellbeing issues arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic”.

The CYPLG commissioned YouthBorders in October 2021 for two purpose. Firstly to administer “The Wee Wellbeing Fund” on their behalf, for capacity building and project costs which will further the Government’s priority. YouthBorders were allocated £12,000 to distribute between eligible member groups (those not in receipt of CYPLG funding/commission). The findings of which are contained in Part 1 of this report. The second element, was to enable the participation and representation of third sector youth services in the strategic developments related to emotional health and wellbeing: details of activity delivered is outlined in Part 2 of this report.

Fund Priorities:

- To support Children and Young People’s mental health and emotional wellbeing issues arising because of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Services should be for those aged 5 to 24 (26 if care experienced), their families and carers.

Local Priorities (Children and Young People’s Services Plan):

- To reduce inequalities in the health and wellbeing of young people.
- To support prevention activities which promote wellbeing, including play, youth work, physical activity, arts and creativity.
- To provide coordinated early intervention services for children, young people and families.

Part 1: The Wee Wellbeing Fund

The Wee Wellbeing Fund Outcomes:

1. Increased opportunities for young people to build on their confidence, resilience, and skills
2. Increased opportunities for young people to participate in new experiences and learning opportunities
3. Increased opportunities for the workforce to gain accredited CPD / qualifications / training.

What could applicants use the money for?

Organisations were awarded between £500 and £2000 for:

- CPD, training and upskilling of third sector workforce in a way which furthers the outcome of the grants programme.
- Resources, licences, and toolkits which can be purchased and invested into staff, volunteers and/or young people.



- Training and accredited learning / youth awards for young people.
- Costs associated with transport, removal of barriers to participation, adapting services in line with Covid-19 risk assessment.
- Facilitation and specialist inputs from freelance or associate practitioners.
- Provision of capacity building / training activity delivered to other partners and organisations in the Scottish Borders.
- Marketing and communication which will result in increased participation in existing service provision.
- One-off staffing costs for short term boosts to organisational capacity.

Key Monitoring Information

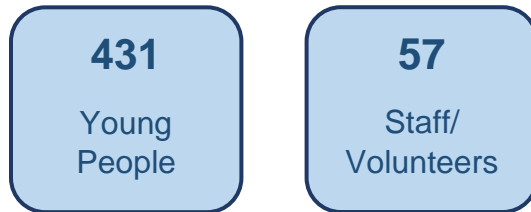
Eleven YouthBorders member organisations were awarded grant funding. Below is the list of YouthBorders member organisations who received funding, including a short description of activity and the amount of funding they were awarded:

| | Member Organisation | Locality | Project Description | Amount |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---|----------------|
| 1 | At Birkhill House | Borders Wide | To provide creative activities with young people accessing support for emotional health and wellbeing. | £250.00 |
| 2 | Branching Upwards CIC | Tweeddale | COSCA Counselling Skills - Workforce Development. | £1,440.00 |
| 3 | Café Recharge | Eildon | Marketing, publicity, and pre-paid meal tokens for young people to be distributed by partner organisations. | £800.00 |
| 4 | Eat, Sleep, Ride | Berwickshire | The Healthy Work Company - Workforce Development. | £420.00 |
| 5 | Interest Link | Borders Wide | Project costs to enable overnight visit and travel for young people with learning disabilities. | £1,100.00 |
| 6 | Nature Unlimited CIC | Borders Wide | Project delivery, recruitment, and training of new volunteers to grow organisational capacity. | £1,710.00 |
| 7 | Schools Out Peebles | Tweeddale | 12 weeks of youth work activities - expressive arts and sport for new youth club in Peebles. | £1,560.00 |
| 8 | The Learning Space | Berwickshire | Project costs for young learner drivers. | £520.00 |
| 9 | Transform Arts CIC | Eildon | Project costs for creative arts activity in Selkirk/Philliphaugh PS catchment. | £2,000.00 |
| 10 | Youth Wellbeing Coaching | Borders Wide | Recovery training for young volunteers. | £1,500.00 |
| 11 | One Step Borders CIC | Borders Wide | Art therapy training and art therapy materials. | £700.00 |
| Total Amount Funded | | | | £12,000 |



Who benefited from this funding?

How many people have **directly benefitted** from this funding?



How many people have **indirectly benefitted** from this funding?

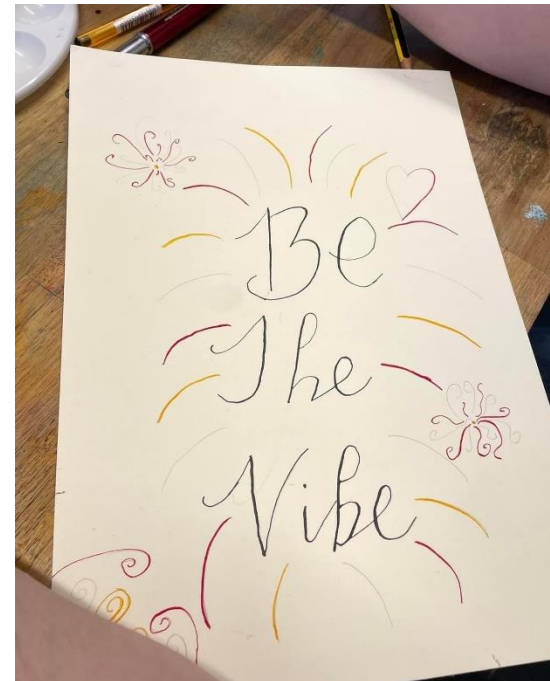


Image: Calligraphy At Birkhill House

What impact did we make?

Below are some feedback quotes from young people, youth workers and parents which highlight the impact this funding has made.

Outcome 1: Increased opportunities for young people to build on their confidence, resilience, and skills.

- **Youth Worker:** “We used the Wee Wellbeing fund to support young people to get their driving license and become confident safe drivers. The young people who passed their theory tests had a **huge sense of achievement**. This had numerous benefits including improved mental health, **raising self-esteem** and **decreased social isolation** as well as helping them move towards a positive destination as they enter young adulthood.”
- **Youth Worker:** “The young people and schools have all reported **improved wellbeing** as a result of attending our sessions”.
- **Parent:** “He has anxiety problems and could be linked with autism. I feel the art class is a vital class for him as he enjoys this class and it **makes him more creative and confident** within his work and **helps him keep calm** and gives him a sense of pride”.

Outcome 2: Increased opportunities for young people to participate in new experiences and learning opportunities.

- **Young person:** “I am so happy I was offered a calligraphy space. I didn't know what to expect and felt extremely anxious but love it! I came home last week and **for the first time in a long time felt at peace and relaxed**. I managed to get some chores done and felt more motivated than I felt in a long time. It's amazing to learn something new and make meaningful art with it.”
- **Young Person:** “Dancing is our life! We still danced in our bedroom during lockdown but **it's much better doing it with us all together** in the same room.”
- **Young Person:** “It was **great to be with my pals again** and actually playing football, learning new tricks and having fun.”

Outcome 3: Increased opportunities for the workforce to gain accredited CPD / qualifications / training.

- **Youth Worker:** “Attending the counselling course has been **life changing for me** as a practitioner. I always felt I was a good listener and that young people felt that I was approachable but through this course **I have learned what it really means to ‘actively listen** and hold the space’ for our young people.”
- **Youth Worker:** “As for the additional training, this was shared with the team, and we are now **all more equipped to manage conversations** around sexual violence and where to appropriately signpost on.”
- **Youth Worker:** “I enjoyed learning why uncertainty caused stress and why uncertainty about the future makes us less capable of coping with negative events when they happen. It **really helped me in my work and personal life** take positive steps and learn things pass and its okay to have these thoughts and feelings.”



Part 2: Strategic Representation of Third Sector Youth Services

The CYPLG sought YouthBorders support strategic representation in the following areas: YouthBorders provided this service through the provision of time, knowledge, and expertise of our Chief Officer. Our Chief Officer has fully participated in the following:

Commissioning Review

- Routine attendance at Commissioning Review Group meetings, making active and meaningful contribution and challenge
- 1:1 meetings with the Commissioning Review Group Chair
- Contribution to draft and final papers produced by the Commissioning Review Group for presentation to CYPLG
- Presentation of third sector youth work at CYPLG Development Day
- Communication to YouthBorders members regarding ambitions and intentions of Commissioning Review
- 1:1 meetings with commissioned and non-commissioned services to listen, engage and then advocate
- Contribution of third sector data and evidence in to Commissioning Review SharePoint Site
- Provision of verbal and written update to YouthBorders members on Commissioning Review via the convening of the Third Sector Youth and Families Specialist Network
- Sectoral advocacy to those with decision making power regarding the experience, concerns, and desires of third sector youth organisations
- Challenge regarding equalities impact assessment in commissioning process
- Co-Lead for emerging commissioning priority re. Independent Advocacy

Children and Young People's Mental Health Project Board

- Routine attendance at the Mental Health Project Board, making active and meaningful contribution
- Involvement in recruitment of Project Manager
- Proposed and project managed independent participatory social research focused on community supports / primary prevention
- Providing appropriate challenge and scrutiny to data, project documents and proposal associated with this area of work
- Feeding back on funding proposal
- 1:1 member support for service funded by the Project Board – and ongoing involvement in project initiation and monitoring
- Provision of regular updates to YouthBorders members – including convening of the Third Sector Youth and Families Specialist Network
- Dissemination and promotion of Family Supports Audit to third sector youth organisations
- Linkage between Early Intervention and Prevention Emotional Health and Wellbeing Group - specifically in relation to Trusted Adults
- Review and comment on Mental Health Training menu



- Feedback and contribution to Service Asset Maps – including linkages to previous work in Dumfries and Galloway and with national youth information service, Young Scot.

Facilitating membership engagement to inform CYPLG priorities/plan and covid-recovery related to mental health and emotional wellbeing; and Linkages between the sector and workforce development opportunities associated to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

YouthBorders plays a facilitating role in convening the quarterly meetings of the Youth and Families Specialist Network. This is a sub-section of our full members, characterised by those providing targeted or specialist support to young people and their families (either by method or by demographic). The Youth and Families Specialist Network meetings convened in 2021/22:

- September 2021 (Covid Recovery / Digital Mental Health Services / Child Protection)
- December 2021 (Reflections on 2021 / Vulnerable Young People's Protocol)
- February 2022 (Strategic Representation Updates / Funding Opportunities)
- May 2022 (Get into Summer / Mental Health and Wellbeing / Commissioning Update / Public Protection)
- September 2022 (CYPLG Commissioning Update / Whole Family Wellbeing / The Promise)

This forum plays an important role in how we listen to and understand the priorities of our membership and gives us a regular avenue to communicate and share strategic developments impacting on our sector from the range of strategic groups where we represent community-based youth organisations. This is a space for building of relationships and insight with and from our membership which can inform representation to CYPLG and other forums related to emotional health and wellbeing. This includes: creation of a 16-25 Network to explore improved pathway and transition between youth and adult services; provision of training such as responding to challenging behaviour as youth worker increasingly experience dysregulated behaviour; creating opportunity for trauma informed practice training and awareness raising of The Promise.

"[YouthBorders] are engaged with their membership. They go above and beyond what you would normally expect."

In 2021/22 we published 47 E-bulletins sending this to 244 individuals; including to managers who cascade relevant extracts from the bulletin to their staff and volunteers. In commissioned research, we found that 93% of our members rated our outgoing information and communication direct to members as being rated 7/10 or higher; the average scoring being 8.6/10. This includes information related to funding, opportunities for young people, and provision of training and workforce development opportunities.

Report by Susan Hunter, Chief Officer

susan@youthborders.org.uk

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YouthBorders is a Company Ltd by Guarantee with Charitable Status: SC313338. Scottish Charity Number: SC037680

Address: YouthBorders, Room 2, Tweed Horizons Business Centre, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SG

Phone: 01896 808968 Email: info@youthborders.org.uk Web: www.youthborders.org.uk

