

# SCOTTISH BORDERS STRATEGIC YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP IMPACT REPORT

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**NORTHERN STAR**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Northern Star would like to thank everyone who participated in the focus groups or supplied written submissions - staff and trustees past and present, stakeholders and funders. Participants were generous with their time and feedback without which this evaluation would not have been possible.

### A NOTE ON LANGUAGE USED IN THIS REPORT

- ❖ The Scottish Borders Strategic Youth Work Partnership is also referred to throughout the report as the Partnership or the Youth Work Partnership
- ❖ Partner organisations, member organisations or members refers to those involved in the Partnership (seven lead locality organisations plus YouthBorders). These organisations are all independent with their own boards of trustees.
- ❖ Managers or Youth Work Managers refers to the lead member of staff in each of those partner organisations. The lead member of staff at YouthBorders is known as the Chief Officer
- ❖ The Youth Work Managers Group also known as the Managers Group refers to the seven Youth Work Managers plus the Chief Officer of YouthBorders. The Managers Group meets frequently and is the key decision making body in the Partnership
- ❖ Board of trustees also known as trustees are appointed to one of the partner organisations in a governance role. Each board of trustees is responsible for the management and oversight of their own independent organisation.

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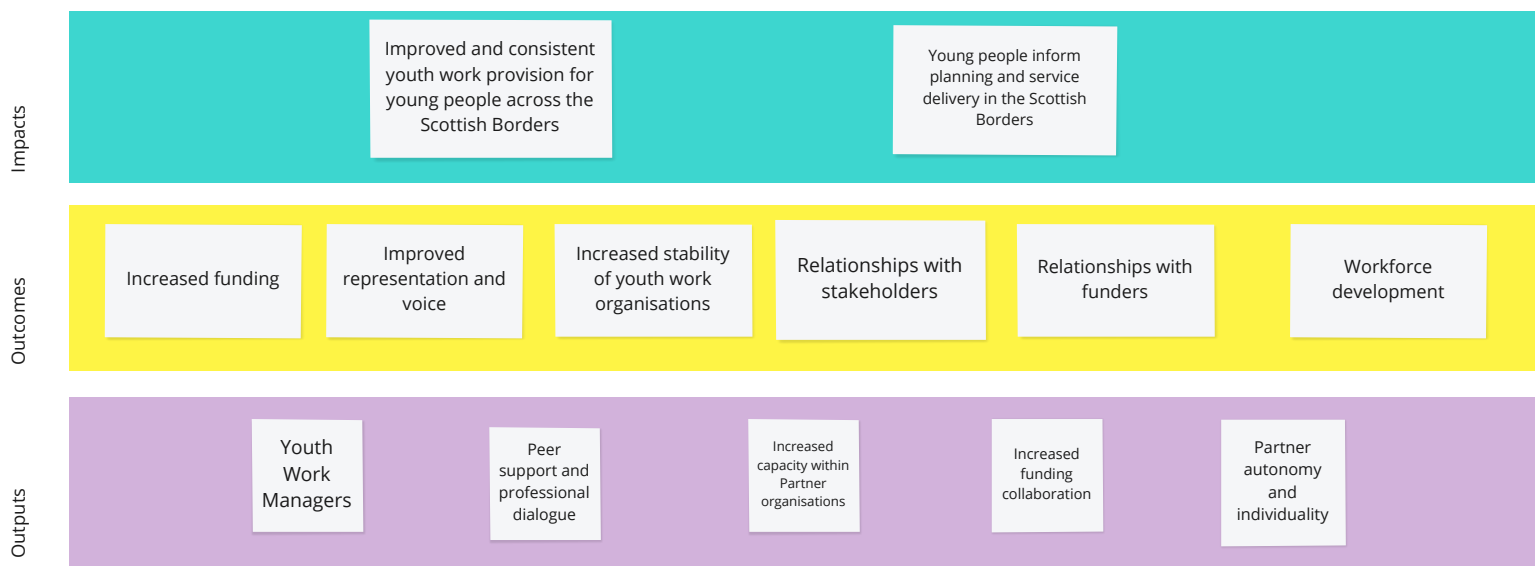
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the findings of an evaluation of the Scottish Borders Strategic Youth Work Partnership. The Partnership is a model of collaboration by voluntary sector youth work organisations and is made up of seven lead locality-based youth work organisations - Beyond Earlston, Cheviot Youth, Connect Berwickshire Youth Project, Escape Youth Services, Rowland's (Selkirk), TD1 Youth Hub and Tweeddale Youth Action - and YouthBorders, the network of voluntary and community based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders.

## IMPACT OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The impact of Partnership has been significant and transformational and has changed the landscape of community-based youth work in the Borders. The image below summarises the key findings of the evaluation:



# INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Borders Strategic Youth Work Partnership is a model of collaboration by voluntary sector youth work organisations.

The Partnership is made up of seven lead locality-based youth work organisations -

Beyond Earlston, Cheviot Youth, Connect Berwickshire Youth Project, Escape Youth Services, Rowland's (Selkirk), TD1 Youth Hub and Tweeddale Youth Action - and YouthBorders, the network of voluntary and community based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders.



The Partnership first originated in 2009 and over the last 12 years has delivered youth work across the Scottish Borders. The Partnership is now at a point in its development where it needs to reflect on its impact and plan for the future. With this in mind the Partnership commissioned Northern Star to assess the impact of the Partnership on member organisations.

# THE STRATEGIC YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP BACKGROUND

## THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

The Scottish Borders is a mainly rural local authority covering 4732 square kilometres in the south east of Scotland. “The region is the fourth most sparsely populated mainland Local Authority area in Scotland after Highland, Argyll and Bute and Dumfries and Galloway. Just under 30% of the population live in settlements of under 500 people or in isolated hamlets, and no towns have a population over 14,000”<sup>1</sup>. The Scottish Borders has a population of approximately 115,510 with children and young people aged 0-15 totalling 19,023 and young people aged 16-24 totalling 10,111.<sup>2</sup> Scottish Borders Council uses 5 locality areas for planning and delivery of services and there are 9 secondary school catchment areas. The Youth Work Partnership is formed of seven locality youth work partners to cover the following areas:

Locality	Secondary School Catchments	Locality Youth Work Provider	% of Secondary School Aged Population
Berwickshire	Berwickshire High School	Connect Berwickshire Youth Project	14%
	Eyemouth High School		
Cheviot	Kelso High School	Cheviot Youth	15%
	Jedburgh Grammar Campus		
Eildon	Galashiels Academy	TD1 Youth Hub	13%
	Earlston High School	Beyond Earlston	17%
	Selkirk High School	Rowland’s Selkirk	6%
Teviot & Liddesdale	Hawick High School	Escape Youth Services	13%
Tweeddale	Peebles High School	Tweeddale Youth Action	21%

<sup>1</sup> Data from the Scottish Borders Council Corporate Plan 2018-2023 [https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/3511/corporate\\_plan\\_2018\\_to\\_2023\\_-\\_additional\\_information](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/3511/corporate_plan_2018_to_2023_-_additional_information) accessed March 2021

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/scottish-borders-council-profile.html#table\\_pop\\_est\\_sex\\_age](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/scottish-borders-council-profile.html#table_pop_est_sex_age) accessed March 2021

## A NOTE ON YOUTH WORK

The Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work defines youth work as “an educational practice contributing to young people’s learning and development. Youth work engages with young people within their communities digitally and physically; it acknowledges the wider networks of peers, community and culture; it supports the young person to realise their potential and to address life’s challenges critically and creatively; it takes account of all strands of diversity.”<sup>3</sup>

All youth work is underpinned by three key principles:

- ❖ Young people choose to participate
- ❖ The work must build from where young people are
- ❖ Youth work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in a learning process

Youth work can be targeted or universal. Targeted youth work involves focussed and tailored interventions aimed at specific groups of young people to bring about often pre-agreed outcomes. Universal youth work can be defined as open access with an open purpose and curriculum. Youth work in Scotland has faced some significant challenges in recent years driven by increasing demand and decreasing budgets.

Young people face a number of issues including poverty and inequality, isolation, exclusion and poor mental and physical health. These issues have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

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<sup>3</sup> YouthLink Scotland (2005) *Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work*. Available at <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/1255/statementonthenatureandpurposeofyouthwork.pdf> (Accessed March 2021)

## THE STRATEGIC YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP

Youth work in the Scottish Borders is delivered by Scottish Borders Council and the voluntary sector. A significant amount of community based youth work provision delivered by the voluntary sector is coordinated through the Strategic Youth Work Partnership. Each of the seven lead partners are independent registered charities with a long standing presence within their locality. Each partner has their own staff team and volunteers, youth work manager, board of trustees, and some have their own premises or other community assets.

YouthBorders is the network of voluntary and community-based youth organisations in the Scottish Borders and has a current membership of 42, of which the seven partners mentioned above are included. YouthBorders has played a significant role in supporting and facilitating the work of the Partnership since its inception and is now also now the lead partner on strategic project funding opportunities.

In 2020 the Partnership had 64 staff and 90 volunteers across the seven delivery partners and engaged with 858 young people. YouthBorders currently has 4 staff (3.5 FTE).

The Youth Work Partnership is not a constituted body and therefore is not technically funded by any organisation. The work of the partnership is funded through grants with YouthBorders the funding applicant, distributing the funds to individual partners.

The National Lottery Community Fund provides project funding using this model for Stepping Stones - a region wide programme of emotional health and wellbeing support for young people through universal and community-based youth work. Direct work with young people in the project is provided by the seven lead organisations whilst YouthBorders is the grant holder and has a coordinating role. The Partnership has also been awarded funding in this way from the Scottish Government Youth Work Education Recovery Fund for a youth work holiday programme during 2021 to support young people impacted by COVID-19.



# IMPACT OF THE PARTNERSHIP

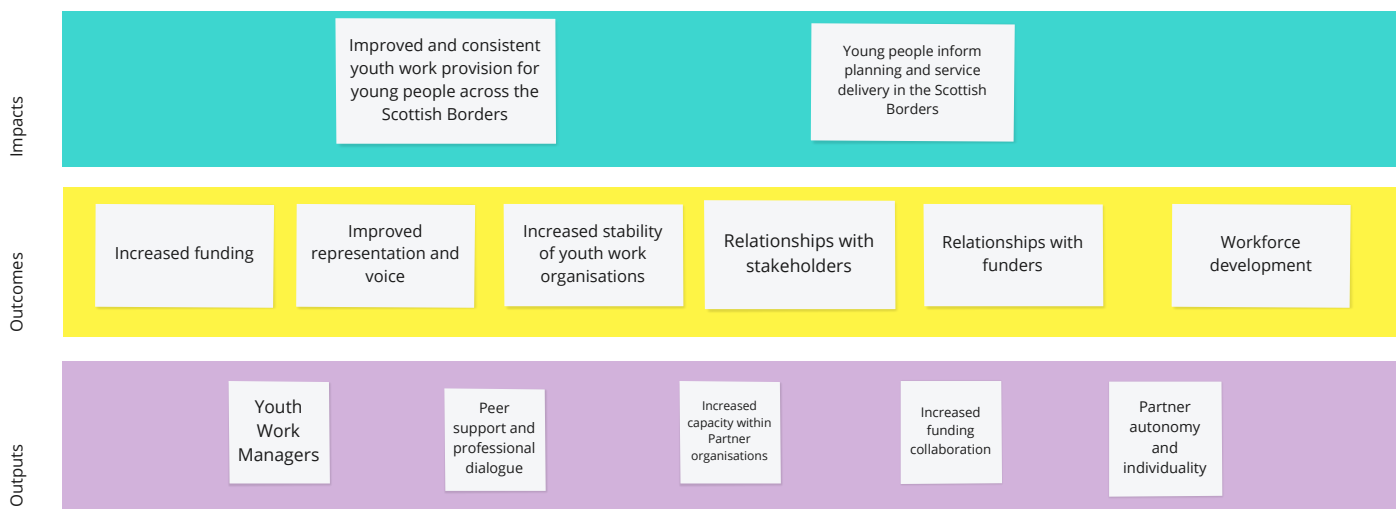
*“While still allowing for the partners to work autonomously the Partnership allows for good collaborations, it strengthens the voice and position of youth work and allows for a more coordinated/strategic approach to delivering youth work across the Scottish Borders” [Stakeholder]*

The impact of the Scottish Borders Strategic Youth Work Partnership is significant and transformational. It has changed the landscape of youth work in the Borders. The Partnership has created stability and improved quality within the voluntary youth work sector.

In this report, the difference the Partnership made has been classified into three levels:

- ❖ Outputs – these are the changes that that occur as a direct response of Partnership activity. These are changes at individual or organisational levels
- ❖ Outcomes – these are the changes that occur as a result of the outputs. They are changes at Partnership level
- ❖ Impacts – these are the ultimate end goals; they are the reason the Partnership exists

The diagram below summaries the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Partnership.



## OUTPUTS

### **Youth Work Managers**

Establishing and securing the Youth Work Manager posts and providing consistency and clarity of role has been the key output of the Partnership and enabled the delivery of other outputs and outcomes. The Partnership's focus on establishing and developing Youth Work Managers in each of the partner organisations has delivered significant benefit to those organisations and young people. The Managers provide experience, leadership and capacity for each organisation, increasing funding, improving quality and building partnerships in their locality with CLD, schools and community groups.

### **Peer Support and Professional Dialogue**

The seven Youth Work Managers plus the Chief Officer of YouthBorders have formed a close and effective Managers Group. They meet regularly and also communicate outwith meetings. This provides essential professional and personal support for the Managers. The Managers Group works well with high levels of trust and commitment. What comes through very clearly from this evaluation is the freedom and openness with which Managers feel they can speak to each other about the challenges they face. Through this Group the Managers are able to access peer support and professional dialogue that supports their development and improves their practice.

Each organisation in the Partnership is independent and has its own board of trustees. Trustees bring a wealth of experience and skills to each organisation but most trustees are not youth workers and lack current 'on the ground' youth work experience. It is therefore essential that the Managers are able to access professional development and emotional support through the Youth Work Partnership. Whilst the Managers Group meets this need, it does not replace the professional supervision and management by their Chairperson/board of trustees.

The regular Managers meetings (previously every six weeks then weekly/fortnightly during COVID-19) have provided a safe space for the Managers to come together, share information, reflect on practice and seek advice on challenges and problems. The involvement of YouthBorders and its Chief Officer means Managers have access to a wealth of knowledge, expertise and advice. This space is a really important

professional development space where Managers are able to access expertise, support and guidance that is not available elsewhere. This has been the case in times of stability and in times of crisis or challenge. Support has taken the form of practical advice, sharing resources/staff and emotional support giving Managers an outlet to share concerns and problems.

Peer support has been a strong between the Youth Work Managers but sharing practice and peer support has not been common at board level or between youth workers.

### **Increased capacity within partner organisations**

Membership of the Youth Work Partnership has freed up the capacity of Managers to focus on their own organisations and the role of YouthBorders has been significant. Close working relationships and sharing both good practice and challenges generates insight, understanding and evidence that YouthBorders is then able to respond effectively to. The knowledge and expertise YouthBorders has amassed means that the Managers don't need to develop this expertise in house (this also benefits the other member organisations of YouthBorders). This ranges from finance, IT, governance and staff management to policy, research, legislation, safeguarding and child protection. The Managers trust YouthBorders to be a source of information and support on these issues.

### **Increased funding collaboration**

The Partnership has delivered significantly increased collaboration around funding. Managers regularly share funding information and opportunities. There has been a reduction in competition for funding and a more collaborative approach. Managers consider funding opportunities for the Partnership as well as their own individual organisation and have chosen to apply as a Partnership rather than individually. The Outcomes section of the report details the increased funding secured as a result of this increased collaboration.

## Organisation autonomy and individuality

The Partnership has fostered and supported close working between organisations whilst at the same time upholding the autonomy and individuality of each partner organisation. The lead youth work organisations are rooted in their own locality area and this is important for credibility and legitimacy within their local communities as well as understanding the needs of young people. This has enabled local innovation and nationally recognised practice by individual members of the Partnership.



## OUTCOMES

The outputs of the Youth Work Partnership described above have led to delivery of a number of important outcomes. Overall, there is a more strategic approach to youth work planning and delivery, improved geographical coverage, a stronger voice for the youth work sector, increased profile of youth work in the Borders, increased funding, improved stability of organisations and effective working relationships with stakeholders. Some of these outcomes many have happened over the last 13 years for some organisations, but the Partnership has enabled all of these outcomes across the Partners and has acted an amplifier and accelerator.

The Partnership is recognised and valued by stakeholders and funders. A Joint Services Inspection led by the Care Commission in 2016 highlighted the Partnership as a model of good practice<sup>4</sup> and the Partnership won a national YouthLink Scotland Award in 2014.

### Increased Funding

The Partnership has generated significant external investment in youth work in the Scottish Borders. This was initially in the form of strategic investment from The Robertson Trust and The Rank Foundation. The Manager posts have been and continue to be part-funded by the Children and Young People's Leadership Group (CYPLG) administered through their commissioning sub-group. This investment of public sector funds through the CYPLG acts as an indicator of quality and enables partners to leverage other funding.

In 2017/18 the Partnership was successful in securing funding from National Lottery Community Fund for the three-year Stepping Stones project supporting transitions and this funding has been extended for a further 3 years to 2024. The Partnership has also secured project funding from the Scottish Government Youth Work Education Recovery Fund for holiday provision in 2021.

These are important successes for the Partnership but it is important to understand the Partnership is more than funded specific projects. The major impacts of the Partnership came from strategic investment to build the core capacity of

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/32seven4/Scottish%20Borders%20services%20for%20children%20and%20young%20people%20inspection%20report%20June%202016.pdf> accessed March 2021.

organisations through the Manager posts. Whilst the part funding of the Manager Posts by CYPLG has been sustained, it has not progressed or increased and does not include funding for the YouthBorders Chief Officer whose role has been critical to the success of the Partnership. The support that YouthBorders provides to the Partnership is much greater than the funding available. Discussions about the future of the Partnership, whether amongst Partners or with funders and stakeholders, need to address this disparity in funding.

### **Representation and voice**

A key outcome of the Partnership has been representation on strategically important groups such as the CYPLG, CLD Strategic Partnership and on groups associated with Public Protection. Partners felt they had much a stronger collective voice than they would have as individual organisations and this in turn raises the profile of youth work and the needs of young people in the Borders. YouthBorders role within the Partnership enables it to develop deep insight and evidence about youth work ensuring effective representation on strategic groups.

YouthBorders represents the Partnership and all their other affiliated members on these groups and external stakeholders value the insight, professionalism and appropriate challenge that YouthBorders brings to the table. YouthBorders acts as a bridge between the Partnership and these external groups. The benefits flow in both directions with partners having a having a stronger voice in policy and decision making and stakeholders really valuing the information, insight and expertise that the Partnership provides helping to ensure decision-making, funding and policy is grounded in the reality of young people's lives and community need.

The role of YouthBorders to represent and act as the voice of the Partnership also frees up Manager capacity. Every meeting that YouthBorders attends on behalf of the Partnership results in a minimum of 6 hours that Managers are able to spend on their own organisations. This is of significant value to partner organisations and also ensures greater value for CYPLG's investment in the Partnership.

### **Increased stability of youth work organisations**

The Partnership and the Youth Work Managers have delivered increased financial stability within youth work organisations. A major driver of the Partnership in its

early days was financial instability and frequent funding crises amongst youth work organisations that were common. Stakeholders now report that funding crises are rare. The presence of a Manager within each organisation provides fundraising capacity and expertise that has grown and developed over time.

The Partnership has enabled partners to support each other well. When partners have experienced staff absences, other partners have seconded staff or provided skills and expertise to enable the continuity and quality of youth work. An example of this is two organisations temporarily sharing a Child Protection Officer.

There was some evidence in the focus groups that this increased stability also enabled partner organisations to develop and support partnership working in their locality and support other smaller often volunteer-led clubs and projects. Partner organisations provided support to projects and clubs, cascading the support they get from the Partnership.

*“The support we’ve had, the help we’ve had with that includes the resource to keep things going. We’ve always had someone there to help as well, who has had sufficient training. I’ve been able to get extra training.” [Local Volunteer]*

## **Relationship with Stakeholders**

Through the Partnership, member organisations have good working relationships with key stakeholders such as Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. The community-based, open access youth work the Partnership delivers is an important part of what the Council wants to achieve in the Borders. Partners and stakeholders would like to see a deepening of this relationship going forward though a focus on strategic level engagement, investment and work on shared outcomes.

Partners expressed the need to develop stronger relationships with schools and Borders College to enable holistic support for young people. Whilst there is some high-quality youth work<sup>5</sup> delivered by the Partnership in and through schools, this is

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<sup>5</sup> YouthLink Scotland's Link Magazine highlighted the partnership work between Peebles Hight School and Tweedale Youth Action and Galashiels Academy and TD1 in a special issue focused on attainment - <https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/3893/the-link-autumn-2019-aw-lr.pdf>

not always a strategic partnership. Partners are not always included as strategic decision makers within schools and there is a need to improve this going forward.

### **Relationships with funders**

The Partnership has helped to build the confidence of partners and improved their relationship with funders.

*“I think they grew in confidence having had a better relationship with funders and having really open conversations and being able to just lift the phone and say, we’ve got an issue here. And it wasn’t always about money. It was about who can we partner with? What do you think of this idea? Have you seen anything similar here before? So, the relationship that was built, not only between the organisations, but between the organisation and funders was really important. And I think that’s been a key success.” [Stakeholder]*

The strategic investment from funders in the Partnership moved the funding relationship from a transactional one to one based on relationships and support. Funders have also benefitted from this, learning about what works and is effective in partnership working.

*“And part of that learning for us has come from the YouthBorders model where we know that by investing time in relationships we’re able to gain more information from our grant holders and they are able to gain more insight from us. It’s a two-way street. So, that still remains a key component and benefit of that partnership for me.” [Stakeholder]*

### **Workforce development**

Workforce development in the youth work sector in the Borders is essential for the stability, health and quality of the sector now and in the future. The focus group discussions highlighted that it can be challenging to recruit and retain staff within the Borders. There is no clear developmental path for youth workers and there are differing terms, conditions and pay depending on where youth workers work. The Partnership has made some initial moves to drive improvements in this area. Standardising the Youth Work Managers role was significant step forward and since then the Partnership has worked to standardise pay scales for youth workers



(although this is voluntary and variation still exists including within Manager's salaries).

Further work on workforce development is needed in the future to ensure that the youth work sector in the Borders is fit for purpose, invests in the development of its staff and continues to improve the quality of youth work for the benefit of young people. This work has started in 2021 with YouthBorders, supported by South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), commissioning research to better understand the workforce development needs of third sector youth work organisations in the Scottish Borders.



## IMPACT

### **Improved and consistent youth work provision for young people across the Scottish Borders**

The Partnership has delivered a consistent approach to youth work across the Scottish Borders through organisational stability, collaboration and support for Managers. The Partnership has used Scotland's Youth Work Outcomes to help shape consistent, joint project work. The Youth Work Managers have had the capacity to focus on the quality of the services they deliver for young people.

The lead partner organisations have a strong presence in each locality and the evaluation showed that in some cases they have supported the continuation and development of small volunteer-led youth groups for the ultimate benefit of young people. The geography and population of the Scottish Borders is such that delivering youth work through a few urban centres will not reach or meet the needs of most young people. Instead, youth work has to be dispersed throughout the area mirroring the population of young people, enabling them to engage on their terms in their local communities. Whilst Partnership does not reach every young person in every corner of the Scottish Borders, it does cover the main population centres and endeavours to reach those in more rural locations.

*"Some significant strengths...are that we have consistent expertise in the managers and in the governance – I'm not suggesting it's perfect; nothing in life is perfect. But it's significantly stronger than it was, say, ten years ago. That experience has definitely borne fruit in terms of the stability of the delivery and doors staying open, in terms of funding strategies and maintaining funding strategies, in terms of professional development for workers and youth workers and also for providing higher quality opportunities for the children and young people that access the services."*  
*[Stakeholder]*

Youth workers and Managers have, where appropriate, worked together to support young people who move between localities within the Borders. This was particularly the case during COVID-19 lockdowns where youth workers from partner organisations collaborated to support young people. It is difficult to know whether this would have happened anyway but it happens more consistently, more quickly and more often as a result of the Partnership.

There have been examples of lead partner organisations working together to deliver joint activities and programs for young people. There were joint residentials and trips in the past and during COVID-19 some partners came together to deliver shared online work. There is the opportunity to do more shared activity going forward pooling expertise and resources and enabling young people to meet others outwith their direct social circle or geographical area.

### **Young people inform planning and service delivery in the Scottish Borders**

Stakeholders highlighted that the Youth Work Partnership enables them to understand what is happening on the ground with young people in communities and develop services that are responsive to need. The Partnership helps services that are not directly people facing to ensure that their planning and development is reflective of the reality of young people's lives. Partner organisations' presence, experience and commitment to the communities in which they exist mean they are trusted by stakeholders to take on this role. There is scope to do more of this in the future.

Through the #ShiftThePower funding from the CORRA Foundation, young people from the seven lead partner organisations were invited to join a grant making panel. The young people's panel identified local priorities, agreed the criteria, designed the application process, promoted the fund, read through the application forms and decided what projects would receive funding. YouthBorders facilitated the grant making process but the relationship through the Partnership with the seven lead organisations made the opportunity viable and possible.

## HOW WAS THE IMPACT ACHIEVED?

The impacts outlined above were achieved through a number of key inputs and conditions.

### **Strategic investment**

The funding and support provided by The Robertson Trust, The Rank Foundation and Scottish Borders Council to establish and develop the Youth Work Partnership was a key driver of the Partnership's impact. The strategic vision and commitment of these of these funders and their willingness to invest in a new way of working over the long term was instrumental in developing the Partnership that exists today and the benefits it delivers for youth work and young people. Strategic investment of resources (both time and money) enabled:

- ❖ The Youth Work Manager posts
- ❖ Access to shared training and development opportunities
- ❖ YouthBorders to support and develop the Partnership
- ❖ Time and space for the Partnership to develop

Whilst the funding from The Robertson Trust and The Rank Foundation ended in 2017/18, the legacy of the funding is still evident in the thriving Partnership.

### **People**

A significant driver of the Partnership's success has been the trust, commitment and willingness to engage by partner organisations and funders. This is most evident in a Managers Group where trust and commitment coupled with openness and honesty has led to effective peer support.

There is evidence of shared values within the Partnership although these have not been explicitly articulated. Partners talked about a belief in, and a commitment to the youth work approach; placing young people at the heart of decision-making; and openness and transparency.

The Partnership has been enhanced by the stable nature of the Managers Group. There have been some changes to people on the group but most of the Managers have been in post for a number of years. This has helped to foster the close-knit group that exists today.

### **The independence and equality of partners**

The principle of autonomy and independence of each organisation underpins the Partnership. Important for the success of the Partnership is that the seven locality partners are 'local organisations' grounded in their communities and able to respond to the needs of those communities.

All seven partners have an equal voice in the Partnership although at present this is an unwritten rule. In previous years funding had been distributed equally amongst partners but in the last year (2019/2020) the Partnership has moved to an equity model of funding distribution based on a number of factors including number of young people, and existing organisational resources. This demonstrates a real maturity within the Partnership.

### **The locality model and geographical factors**

The Partnership model with its seven lead organisations working in five locality areas was designed to work with the geography of the Borders and its dispersed population. The locality-based model the Partnership adopted has helped to minimise competition between organisations. Partners do not need to compete for territory or for young people and this has helped to foster an openness and collaboration that has seen the Partnership develop.

The members of the Partnership reflect the geography of the region without overlap and without gap and as such there is a completeness to the Partnership. No member has left the Partnership since it was established and there has not been any consideration to changing the make up of the Partnership such as by admitting new members.

The Partnership's original drive to reduce competition for funding and increase collaboration is still evident within the Partnership in 2021. It is not without challenges, but the members of the Partnership are aware of and consider the interests and needs of other partners and the overall Partnership when considering funding. Partners regularly share funding opportunities, intentions and successes with each other.

## THE ROLE OF YOUTHBORDERS

To date YouthBorders has played a significant part in the development and delivery of the Partnership. YouthBorders, its Chief Officer and Chair have many roles in relation to the Partnership including:

- ❖ Facilitator
- ❖ Coordinator
- ❖ Mediator
- ❖ Leader
- ❖ Critical friend
- ❖ Coach
- ❖ Supporter
- ❖ Fundraising proposal writer
- ❖ Voice of the Partnership

Partners really value the input and expertise of YouthBorders. There have been three different Chief Officers during the lifetime of the Partnership and the role remains an essential one. Partners value being challenged, the invitation to reflect and the support to improve their services for young people.

The role of YouthBorders in representing the Partnership on external groups such as the Children and Young People's Leadership Group is valued by both members of the Partnership and external stakeholders. Partners trust YouthBorders to act in the best interest of the Partnership and for every meeting YouthBorders attends on its behalf it frees up Managers' time to focus on delivery and quality of their work. Stakeholders value the "professionalism" of YouthBorders and the insight it brings to meetings. The fact that YouthBorders is independent but connected to the seven partner organisations leads stakeholders to trust its input.

YouthBorders acts as a conduit for information, policy and research between partners and stakeholders. YouthBorders is able to share insight with partners and stakeholders, share the outcomes of meetings with the Partnership and connect partners to the policy landscape.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> YouthBorders does this for all 42 of its members and not just the seven locality partners. The close working relationship that YouthBorders has with the seven locality partners through the Partnership enables it to develop a deeper insight and understanding of youth work across the Borders and share this insight with stakeholders.

What the role of YouthBorders could and should be in the future needs further discussion but it is clear that its role to date has been crucial in the Partnership's success. Both YouthBorders and the Partnership need to clarify what level of commitment YouthBorders can give to supporting these crucial elements of the Partnership into the future.

*"A lot of the benefits of good partnership working are evident, but one of the things that is really important about good partnership working is having an organisation like YouthBorders to develop, empower and facilitate the partnership is crucial as well." [Stakeholder]*

# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

This evaluation was conducted primarily using qualitative research methods and desk research. We gathered data using the following methods:

### Focus Groups

- ❖ History of the Partnership
- ❖ Beyond Earlston
- ❖ Cheviot Youth
- ❖ Connect Berwickshire
- ❖ Escape Youth Services
- ❖ Rowland's (Selkirk)
- ❖ TD1
- ❖ Tweeddale Youth Action
- ❖ Statutory funders
- ❖ External funders
- ❖ YouthBorders

There were 11 focus groups with a total of 40 participants. For the focus groups with partner organisations, each Youth Work Manager was asked to recruit previous and current staff and trustees. Participants in the focus group were required to have knowledge of the Partnership and be able to comment on its impact. Focus group data was recorded and transcribed then analysed using Dedoose software.

### Online questionnaires

Questionnaires were sent to local stakeholders or funders who were unable to make the focus groups.

- ❖ 2 questionnaire responses received

### Desk Research

Members of the Partnership provided background information about their organisations whilst YouthBorders provided access to information and minutes of previous meetings related to the Partnership.

All those who participated in the evaluation did so with the guarantee of anonymity, as such any quotes will not be attributed.



## APPENDIX 2: MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP

- ❖ Beyond Earlston - <https://www.beyondearlston.org.uk>
- ❖ Cheviot Youth - <https://www.cheviotyouth.org>
- ❖ Connect Berwickshire Youth Project - <https://bypconnect.com>
- ❖ Escape Youth Services - <https://www.escapeyouthservices.co.uk>
- ❖ Rowland's (Selkirk) - <https://www.rowlands-selkirk.org.uk>
- ❖ TD1 Youth Hub - <http://www.td1.org.uk>
- ❖ Tweeddale Youth Action - <https://www.tweeddaleyouth.co.uk>
- ❖ YouthBorders - <https://youthborders.org.uk>