



## Youth Work Outcomes – Case Study

### Youth Highland: Developing a shared improvement plan for youth work in Highland

#### About Youth Highland

**Youth Highland** is Youth Scotland's Area Association partner in Scotland's Highlands. Youth Scotland is the national charity for supporting and delivering youth work in the community. Youth Scotland has a diverse membership network – from small rural youth groups to large urban projects.

#### What did you use the youth work outcomes for?

- ❖ Planning
- ❖ Partnership working
- ❖ Communicating youth work
- ❖ The work we have done has enabled us to negotiate the value of the work being delivered by the third sector. This in turn has helped us to engage funders and other important stakeholders to support the development of new practices in Highland. These 'influencers' are supporting us to bring about change in how services are delivered.

#### Background

As voluntary and third sector organisations in Highland became increasingly stretched and financially threatened, Youth Highland launched a Voluntary Youth Network to encourage better partnership and collaboration. The Network used the youth work outcomes as a starting point for discussion on how different organisations work to deliver the outcomes with young people in Highland. Network partners then prioritised action to enable us to jointly meet the outcomes and developed an improvement plan.

The improvement plan is still in draft form, but organisations are beginning to use it as a planning tool to focus their organisation's work. Working with shared youth work outcomes helps us to deliver youth work in a challenging and financial and rural landscape.



## Describe your experience of using the Youth Work Outcomes

We are using the Youth Work Outcomes to develop stronger and more trusting relationships between organisations who have previously worked independently.

The outcomes have enabled us to communicate 'youth work' as a profession, and increase partners' understanding of the value of youth work. This meant we were able to create a network of a wide variety of professions and specialisms. The network includes Youth Highland's member clubs (approx. 60 organisations) and a further 75 organisations with a responsibility for working with young people.

The Voluntary Youth Network has mapped its services to the Youth Work Outcomes and agreed priorities for shared future work. We collaboratively developed a regional youth work improvement plan and we are now working together (with organisations, clubs and young people) to develop local delivery plans for youth work and issue based plans (for targeted work).

The development of a shared strategy, with shared ownership will enable third sector organisations in Highland to evidence the impact of our work, reduce duplication of services and deliver best value services.

## What difference has using the youth work outcomes made?

So far, we can evidence that the work has successfully enabled us to develop trusting relationships between organisations, raise the profile and value of youth work and provided a shared focus in the development of strategy.

We hope now we will be able to develop trust and a more equal relationship between the voluntary sector and our statutory youth service in order to bring about best outcomes for young people in Highland. This will require us to communicate and negotiate with officers, decision makers and local stakeholders in the coming months.

❖ **Young People:** We carried out consultations with young people based on 7 outcomes based questions to help us better understand



the experiences and needs of young people and include them in the youth work plans for the region, their local community and for targeted or issue based work. Young leaders are able to better understand the values and principles of youth work, know their rights and hold youth workers to account.

- ❖ **Staff:** Youth Highland staff use Youth Work Outcomes to focus our work. The outcomes enable us to plan and measure what we are doing and the impact it has.
- ❖ **Communities:** We anticipate that as we develop locality plans for youth work communities will be able to better understand the work and the impact it has on young people and the wider community. We hope this will mean members of communities recognise young people as valued contributors and youth work as encouraging active citizenship rather than 'containing' young people.
- ❖ **Partners / Stakeholders:** Feedback suggests that partner organisations value an increased understanding of youth work. Some partners are beginning to use the outcomes to plan and measure their own work and have benefitted from positive communication with Youth Highland to improve their work with young people. Partner organisations definitely recognise the difference between working with young people and youth work.

### Related Links and Resources

- ❖ [www.youthhighland.org.uk](http://www.youthhighland.org.uk)
- ❖ Facebook: Youth Highland
- ❖ Twitter: @youth-highland1
- ❖ Draft Voluntary Youth Network Improvement Plan

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