



**Tweeddale Youth Action Report To The Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 March 2022**



Introduction from the Chair

Dave and the staff team have, once again, delivered an exciting and engaging programme of events and opportunities for young people. Throughout the year they have continued to offer regular, engaging and fun drop-in sessions across both youth clubs, continued to offer one to one and small group support sessions, and provided a meaningful alternative to those struggling with the daily routine and commitment required in attending school. Tweeddale Youth Action, continues to provide high quality youth work, protecting those in need while encouraging all those that attend to realise and unlock their potential.

The staff team bring a rounded depth of knowledge and skills to TYA which make possible the range of projects and activities offered across the year.

The purchase of Innerleithen Youth Club was a long and torturous process but the joy it has brought to the young people in Innerleithen has made it all worthwhile. Innerleithen Youth Club is a large space, with the potential to serve many diverse community groups. However, we must walk before we can run, we will get there but, for the moment it is more than earning it's keep as a fun and safe youth space, as well as functioning as the main kitchen from which Food Punks works.

TYA remains in a good financial position. We are very grateful to our funders for continuing to support the project. We are never complacent however, and continue to look for and apply to project specific and operational funding streams. TYA has earned a good name and reputation through continued hard work and positive project outcomes.

Young people in Peebles are, currently not receiving favourable press. Maybe it's the continuing effects of covid, maybe it's a reflection of the current global tensions, or the pressures imposed with the cost of living crisis or, maybe it's issues more close to home. There is no magic wand that any one of us can wave to make their lives, their struggles or their fears magically better. We continue to learn to live with covid, we watch from afar as war changes the lives of many and we all struggle with rising energy costs. What we can do however, is be their advocate and work to change the local rhetoric surrounding young people. By working with other third-sector partners in Peebles and Innerleithen, as well as Peebles High School, TYA endeavours to, and succeeds in making a tangible difference to the everyday struggles facing young people in our area.

TYA Staff Team

Our team comprises of:

Full time Manager: David Hodson
Business Development Officer Stuart Clink
Youth Worker, Aaron Thomson
Sessional Youth Worker Chloe Lacey
Sessional Youth worker Lauren Crawford
Sessional Youth Worker Bruno Giegerich
Youth Club Assistant Amber Lauder
Youth Worker Elisa Smith
Youth Club Assistant: Rhian Laird (supported employment)
Administrator Leena Crichton
Book keeper: Anna Hope
Food Punks Trainee Jocelyn Ferguson (supported employment)
Food Punks Trainee Sergei Rattray (supported employment)
Maintenance Manager Derek Hunter
Youth Club Assistant Alex Church (supported employment)

There have been a few changes within the staff team but most notably we have welcomed Business Development Officer Stuart Clink, Youth worker, Elisa Smith, Sessional Youth worker, Bruno Giegerich and Maintenance Manager, Derek Hunter to our team.

Sessional Youth Worker Lauren Crawford has left, following a move away. Lauren has been a TYA stalwart, coming through the organisation as service user, then volunteer, then supported employment and most recently in a youth work role- we wish her all the best for the future.

Other changes within the team have included Community Jobs Scotland and Kickstart supported employment placements Amber, Jocelyn, Sergei, Rhian and Alex joining our team. These placements are time limited but give young people an opportunity to learn, develop and grow whilst earning money. These placements give young people a springboard to move forward but they also bring considerable benefit to TYA - bringing new ideas and new thinking as well as allowing us to do more.

Volunteers and supporters also bring valuable support for which we are very grateful. Our Board of Trustees give of their time and expertise freely and oversee and guide our project. We're hugely grateful for all their support and acknowledge the considerable amount of time and effort each of them contribute towards the safe governance and running of our youth club.

There have been a couple of changes within our Board of Trustees. TYA Chair Samuel Marriott Dowding stepped down following a move away and long standing TYA Trustee, Graham Lumb has stepped down after over 20 years of support. We are hugely grateful for Sam and Graham's support and wish them both the best of luck.

Lorna Morrow has taken over as Chair with Jamie McCubbin supporting as Vice Chair.

Our current Board of Trustees:

Chair of Trustees: Lorna Stoddart
Vice Chair: Jamie McCubbin
Treasurer: Catherine Maxwell Stuart
Trustee: Moira Stark
Trustee Grace Mitchell
Trustee Christine Clarke
Trustee Miriam Adcock

Our Project

TYA remains the lead youth work organisation within the Tweeddale area working with young people between the ages of 10 and 25. We offer open access opportunities for all young people with particular success in engaging those who are typically hard to reach. Our focus is on building supportive, trusting relationships, removing barriers to participation, increasing social skills, confidence and resilience while promoting smarter, better informed choices. Through drop-ins, structured group work, 1:1s and via our enterprise programmes TYA provides a safe environment for young people to access opportunities and support, gain skills, build relationships, feel a sense of belonging and - most importantly, have some fun.

2021/22 has been an exciting and busy year. Following a year of covid restrictions our young people needed opportunities to come together, connect with each other and have fun more than they have ever needed before. We have responded by delivering the busiest Easter, Summer and October programme we have ever delivered- what a difference this has made.

None of the following would be possible without our committed team of staff and volunteers, partners, supporters and funders. Heartfelt thanks go to everybody involved and connected with TYA.

Overview of Activities

Face to face youth work:

Monday - Friday daytimes:

Food Punks preparation and cooking

Monday

Drop-in (Innerleithen 6-8pm)

Tuesday

Art session with Transform Arts (Peebles 5-7pm)

Wednesday

Drop-in (Peebles 6-8pm)

Thursday

Drop-in (Innerleithen 6-8pm)

Friday

Youth management team (Peebles 5-5.30pm)

Drop-in (Peebles 7-9pm)

Weekends:

Ad-hoc Food Punk events and trips away.

Online and digital delivery has been limited, mainly because we were able to deliver face to face youth work which allows for far better engagement.

Over Christmas we delivered festive baking via Zoom and, once again this proved to be the most effective way of cooking with our young people. Supplying bags of weighed ingredients and loaning baking equipment when needed allowed a much larger cohort to join in that could ever be accommodated in person at either of our youth club kitchens.

Food Punks also delivered online cookery sessions for young people from youth groups in South Uist and Barra.

Drop-ins

Drop-ins continue to be fundamental to our work with young people and casual, commitment free access encourages attendance and participation by those young people who would not typically access uniformed, sports or music groups or other extra-curricular activity.

We have a wide range of service users and attendees, many with different needs and accessing for different reasons but there is an agreed need and demand for this environment where young people can make friends, socialise, take part in activities and learning and feel a sense of belonging that is often not available to them in other areas of their life.

Drop-ins offer a gateway to more structured work and support and are crucial to begin to build those essential, trusting relationships. For some of our young people these may be some of the only positive adult relationships that they experience and TYA youth work staff and volunteers are well placed to sign post services, support and opportunities in a non-judgemental way.

Activities on offer include the usual table tennis, pool and table football as well as access to a wide array of games, electronic and old school.

In the current climate of constant connectivity and increasingly online nature of relationships, TYA gives young people a physical space to build positive, healthy relationships with peers. Living in the moment, removed from constant pressure of how to look, how to behave and feel allows young people to enjoy themselves in the real world, and build relationships that start with where they really are. In their words, TYA is a place where they can be themselves.

At times, Corona Virus restrictions limited the number of young people we could safely accommodate in our youth clubs. Once again we are grateful for our Peebles Youth Club garden space, although our smaller partitioned space at Innerleithen Youth Club proved challenging to manage at times. Repairs to our floor in February allowed us to use our whole youth club again - what a difference that has made.





Food Punks

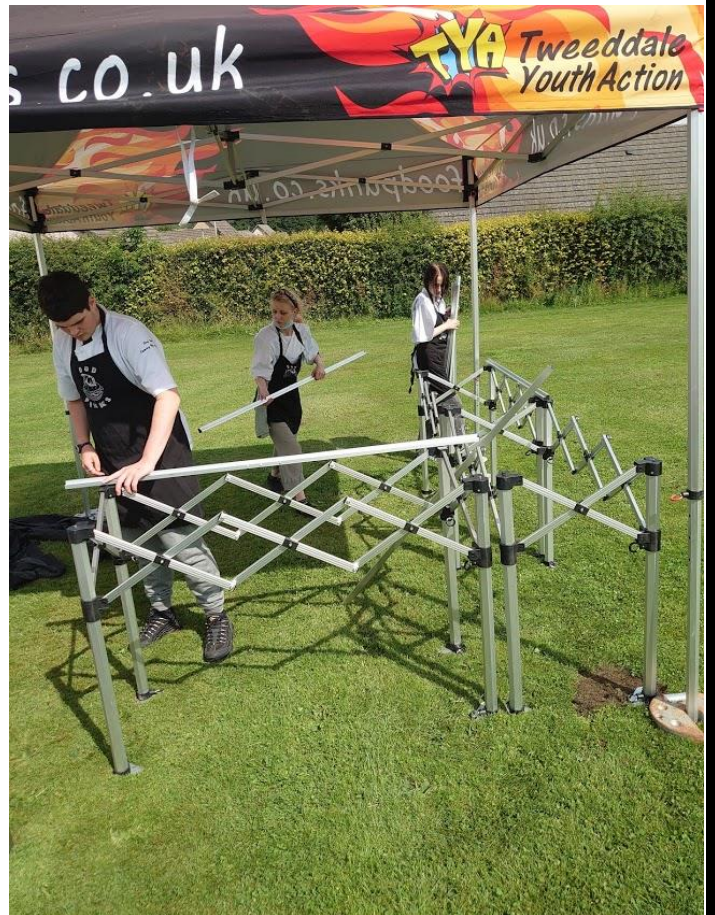
This has been an incredible year for Food Punks, not least including the appointment of local chef Stuart Clink as TYA's Business Development Officer in October.

Before Stuart's appointment we were busy with several events, including the mud-fest at Enduro World Series mountain bike event in Innerleithen but we lacked capacity to deliver much of the inquiries we were regularly receiving.

With Stuart at the helm we have increased our capacity to both deliver income generating events and train cohorts of young people to support these events.

Through Food Punks our young people learn valuable cookery skills as well as the equally important communication and team working skills required to deliver outside and event catering.







It wasn't all work though and there were also plenty of opportunities for fun, including some new food experiences.



Through Food Punks we have been able to support 12 Food Punk volunteers as well as 4 supported employment placements.

Outcomes have been stellar and include increased confidence, aspirations and sense of self. Food Punks remains a project within a project and fosters the sense of belonging, challenge, learning and fun that is key to all TYA activity.



Bike Punks

We have had limited opportunity to use our Bike Punks workshop to anywhere near it's full potential but we have made progress on building our CNC machine which is now ready to use.

Renovations to our Innerleithen floor have led to the workshop being used for storage and largely lying dormant but as this financial year ends we now have our fully functioning workshop back and we are working towards engineering, bike repair and metal work projects with our young people in the year ahead.



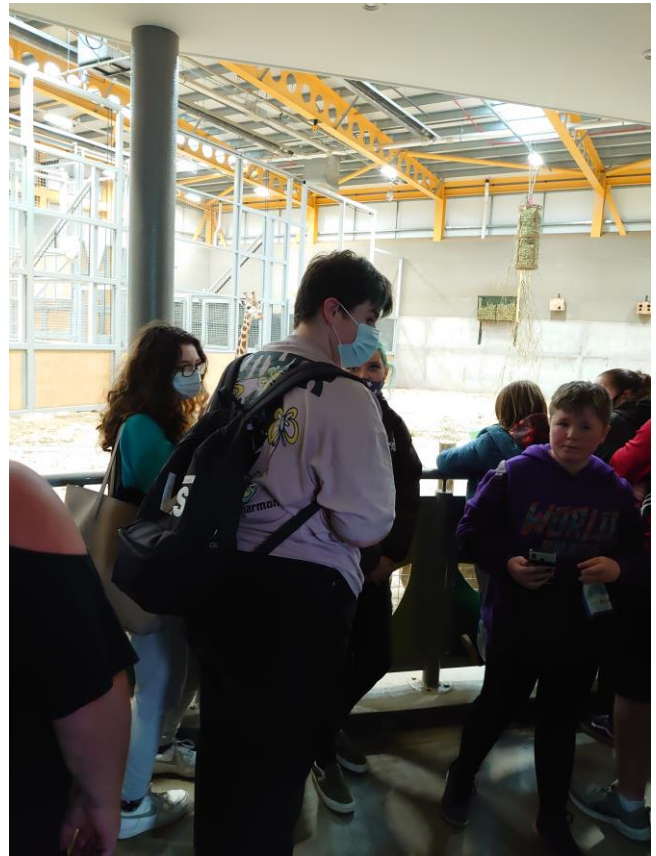
Cycling and cycle tourism continues to offer increasing employment opportunities within the Tweed Valley. Our Innerleithen workshop is well placed to train and equip our young people with the knowledge and tools they will need to access paid work within this sector. For young people who don't fit the academic mould this is a huge opportunity we want to capitalise on.

Out and About

This year has been the polar opposite of last year's limited opportunities to get out and about. The easing of covid restrictions and the increased availability of funding support has allowed us to undertake the busiest school holiday programmes we have ever delivered:











Making friends, consolidating friendships, breaking down barriers and being open to new ideas and new experiences can be life changing. We have seen increased confidence, self esteem and aspirations as well as reduced anxiety, loneliness and isolation on the back of these trips.

It's not rocket science, it's about belonging, having an identity and seeing there is reason to be optimistic and hopeful for the future. If young people don't get this through positive experiences, they will find it through other means.

What else?

Ipads/laptops

Through support from Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber we were able to donate 5 Ipads/chrome-books and data to young people living independently.

Applying for jobs and college courses isn't easy when you are only able to use a phone- these devices have made a huge difference to these young people's lives.



Financial support for parents/families:

Scottish Government funding to support families living in poverty enabled us to distribute almost £4,000 in supermarket vouchers to local families on their behalf.

It is heartening to see the recognition of youth work's community based knowledge and expertise in supporting and targeting those most in need of support.

This is new territory for TYA but it has helped us build relationships with parents and it has also helped us forge a growing relationship with our local food bank.

Buildings and improvements

We entered this financial year with our Peebles Youth Club looking tired and in need of decorating and our Innerleithen Youth Club out of commission with wall to wall dry rot. We have been trying to purchase this building for the past 2 years and owning it was key to the repairs and renovations needed to make it a fit for purpose youth work space.

Fast forward a year and our tired Peebles Youth Club has been transformed with new carpets, paint and equipment.

Just as exciting is finally concluding on the purchase of our Innerleithen Youth Club in December 2021 and the subsequent dry rot treatment and floor repairs which now allow us to use the space in it's entirety. Huge thanks go to all funders, supporters, advisers and trades involved with the purchase of our Innerleithen Youth Club and the renovation of both spaces. Having fit for purpose, dedicated youth work spaces helps young people feel valued and gives them a powerful sense of ownership.

Structured sessions:

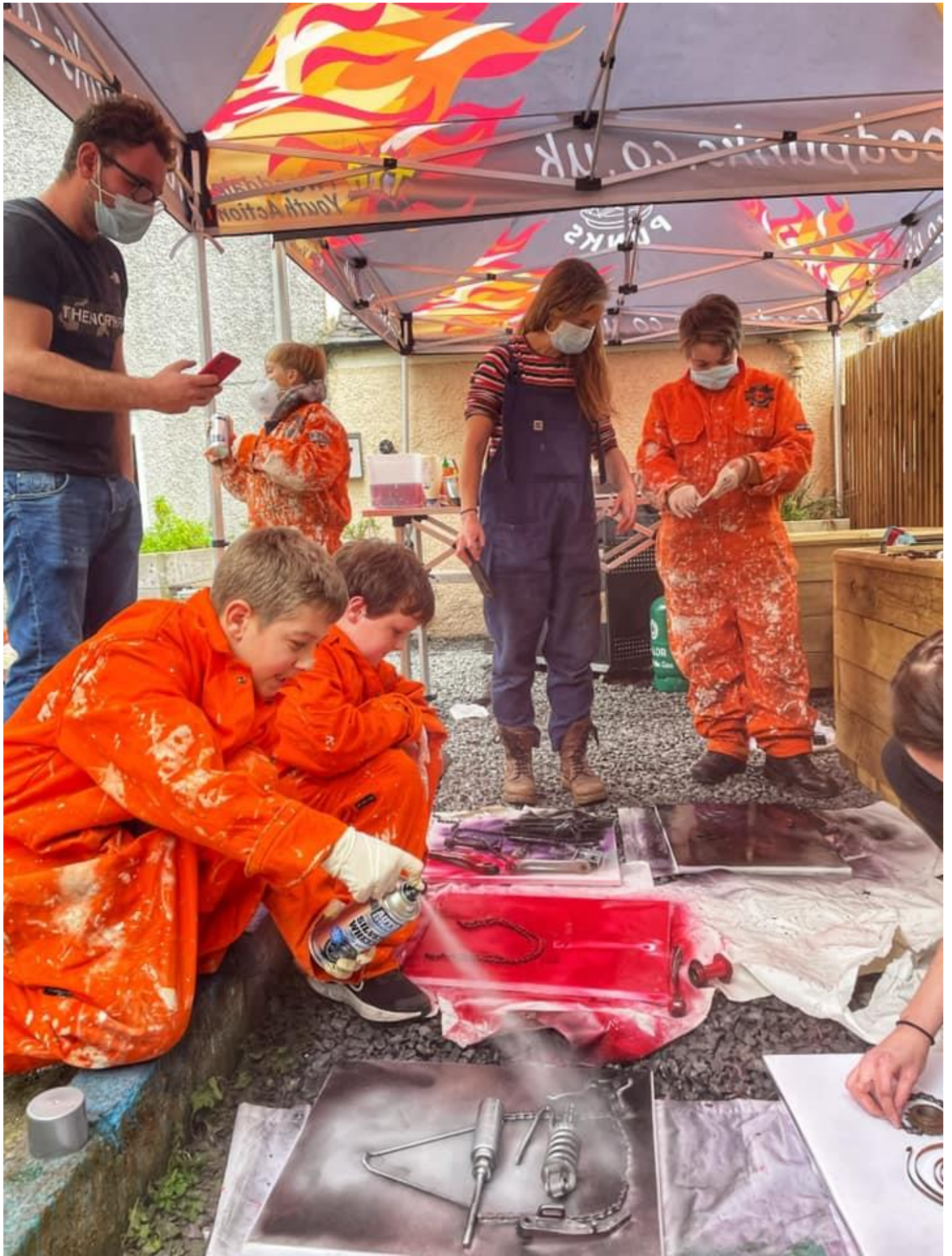
Throughout this year we have continued to deliver inputs and structured sessions on a wide variety of topics, including sexual health, drugs and alcohol, relationships, bullying, online safety and much more. A collaboration with Lara from Transform Arts also saw us offering a Tuesday evening arts session, focused on moving sculpture and painting.

Towards the end of the year, Elisa delivered some powerful targeted work with girls around harnessing the power of nature.

Aaron continued to deliver one to one and small group work with identified young people. Outcomes from young people accessing this support have included making friends, making smarter choices and increased confidence and self-worth.

Stepping Stones serves as a bridge between y/p and TYA (and external) activities and opportunities.





Across all activities Tweeddale Youth Action has created 3,100 youth work opportunities from 162 active members throughout the year.

Our Funders

We are extremely grateful to the continued financial support and investment from: Scottish Borders Council; Bank of Scotland Foundation, National Lottery, Saints and Sinners Club, Children In Need, Community Jobs Scotland, Kickstart and Garfield Weston

We are also extremely grateful for new financial support from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), SCVO Adapt and Thrive, Tesco Groundworks, Arnold Clark Foundation, Youth Link Scotland, Peebles Common Good Fund and Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber

Their collective support has meant that, despite the challenges of Covid 19 we have been able to continue supporting young people and making a positive difference in their lives

Outside of these funding awards we are also incredibly grateful for the donations and financial support from local businesses and the wider community.

Currently we are in a relatively stable financial position, but we are ever mindful of the funding environment and the need to secure essential funding to continue providing a relevant and meaningful youth service in the years ahead.

Outlook

We still remain vulnerable to the short termist nature and lack of sustainability of third sector funding but we continue to deliver high quality, innovative and relevant youth work and our funders and supporters recognise the value and impact of our work with young people.

We consistently meet our funded outcomes and remain hopeful that the value of this work will continue to be recognised and continue to attract further financial support.

We have excellent community links and support from statutory and community partners, stakeholders and parents who understand the benefits that TYA bring to our community and the positive difference we make to young people's lives in the Tweeddale area.

Food and Bike Punk's income generation capacity continue to grow and we will continue to work towards sustainability and reducing our reliance on grant funding.

We see this as vital in ensuring continuity of service provision and retention and development of our staff team.

Our future plans include closer collaboration with our local High School to support alternatives for young people who refuse to attend school.

Young people view our youth clubs as safe spaces. We want to support learning through youth work principles of voluntary engagement, giving young people an opportunity to engage with teaching resources and project based/vocational learning on their terms in a space they feel safe in. This could be very powerful.

We also want to increase our out of school - evening, weekend and holiday time provision to reach more young people and encourage greater access to advice, information and opportunities.