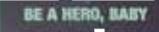


BEYOND VOLUNTEERING

The Life-Long Impact of our Work

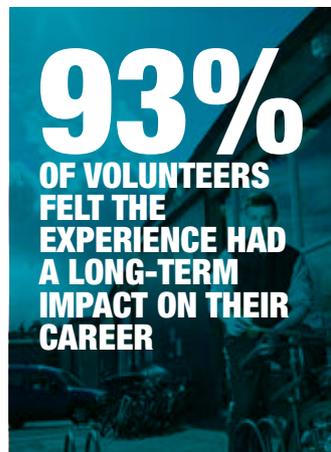


PROJECTSCOTLAND

We are ProjectScotland

For 10 years we have offered 16-30 year-olds the chance to change their life and make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering. 10 years that have seen them gain experience, new skills, and confidence. A dynamic decade that has led to charities throughout the country benefiting from fresh talent and boundless energy, as well as communities being strengthened as new connections are made across the generations. These 10 years have made Scotland a better place. As models go it's a win, win, win.

We believe in young people. Their skills, talent, and energy are the key to Scotland's prosperous future, and it's our job to give them the support and opportunity to shine. This year marks a decade of hard work. It's also a celebration of the brighter futures we give our young people and the life-long impact of our work.



Why We Compiled This Report

Dear ProjectScotland Supporter,

When I took on the role of CEO for ProjectScotland in September 2013 I researched what people thought of us in order to understand the third sector's view of what we actually do. Many people had a very objective view of our organisation. They talked about short-term volunteering placements in the third sector that helped young unemployed people develop new skills and experiences. In some senses, they were right. But to us, ProjectScotland is about much more than that. We recognise that every young person that comes to us is at a different point in their life journey and we give them an opportunity to move forward from that point. The task for ProjectScotland is much bigger than a placement; it's to play a positive part in a volunteers life journey, to leave every young person in a much better position than they were in when they came to us. That position may be a small change for them. It might be that they are more confident to take the next step in life. It might be that they've tried something, and decided it's not for them - that in itself is positive as it helps form future choices. Or it might have been a transformation - the one experience that had a massive influence on their journey from here.

We recognise that these changes don't just occur at the point a volunteer finishes their placement, it is an ongoing journey. It's for this reason that we researched and put together this report with the

help of volunteers who completed placements with ProjectScotland between 2005 and 2013. 175 of these volunteers took the time to complete the survey and tell us about the impact their placement has had on their career and choices to date and what they are up to now. And we spoke to a good number of these directly to get further details about their stories.

We have been very fortunate in receiving financial and voluntary support from many organisations and individuals in the last nine years, without which we wouldn't be where we are today. We have always reported back on the short-term results of our hard work, and thanks to this research, we can now provide insight into the long-term impact that your support continues to make on the life journey of the young people involved. Thank you.



Paul Reddish, CEO ProjectScotland

Life-Long Impact

In 2014 we took the opportunity to contact 1946 volunteers who completed placements with ProjectScotland between 2005 and 2013. 175 of these volunteers took the time to complete the survey and tell us about the impact their placement has had on their career and choices to date and what they are up to now. The volunteers who replied were responsible for nearly 70,000 volunteering hours. 100 per cent of the 175 respondents are now either employed, in education, or volunteering. Almost half were inspired by their volunteering to follow a career in the same field as their placement.

70,000

volunteering hours were completed by the survey's 175 respondents. A third have continued to support their local community through volunteering.

93%

of volunteers felt their voluntary placement had an impact on their career and life choices to date.

74

of the 175 respondents stated that whilst volunteering, they gained experience and skills that were vital when taking their next steps following their placement.

61

of the 175 respondents told us they wouldn't be where they are now without ProjectScotland.

395

charity partners were able to continue their vital work between 2005-2013 thanks to our past volunteers.

600

mentors have volunteered with ProjectScotland since 2005 to help young people get the most from their voluntary placement.

100%

of the 175 respondents are now either employed, in education or volunteering. Almost half were inspired by their volunteering to follow a career in the same field as their placement.

HELEN ARMSTRONG

During the last year of her five-year chemistry degree, Helen began to question her career path. “The lab work wasn’t quite what I wanted. I didn’t think I’d be happy doing that for the rest of my life.”

Helen found herself leaning towards the idea of teaching. She approached ProjectScotland in order to experience working with young people before she took the step of applying for a postgraduate degree.

“ProjectScotland appealed to me because I could do something locally, but it would also be of value to me due to the full-time nature of the placement and the support the role offered.”

Helen volunteered at Cannongate Youth Project, her involvement with the ‘Get Ready for Work’ and ‘Options Plus’ schemes convinced her she

was heading in the right direction. She distinctly remembers being very nervous to begin with, but finding her stride and feeling in control and confident by the end of her placement. “I felt like I got the opportunity to add a lot of new skills to my CV, but also work on myself. I definitely left that placement feeling more confident and assertive.”

After discovering that she did enjoy working with young people, Helen continued to volunteer and even went to teach in Ghana for a few months. After completing her postgraduate teaching degree, Helen worked in several different schools. Now, as a Principal Teacher of Chemistry, she looks back upon her volunteering fondly.



“Volunteering gave me the opportunity to really figure out what I wanted to do.”

- Helen Armstrong

70,000

volunteering hours were completed by the survey's 175 respondents. A third have continued to support their local community through volunteering.

CHRIS MACKRELL

When Chris left high school after 5th year, he had a place lined up at college to study Technical Theatre. He decided to use the summer to gain as much experience as he could.

He approached ProjectScotland to see if we could help him find anything that would match his interests. We gave him the unique chance to join the team at the Midlothian Community Media Association (MCMA) at the very beginning of their project.

“During my placement, I helped move a lot of the stuff over into the new offices, and got involved with coordinating all the work that had been done beforehand. I handled a lot of the IT and troubleshooting issues due to my skills and knowledge in that area, and I also set up the broadcast computer (which is still used today).”

It surprised Chris to realise that the IT and troubleshooting tasks were what he found most enjoyable and due to his experience he decided to apply to BT's apprenticeship programme. Getting accepted for the apprenticeship seemed like a long shot, but due to his placement references he was successful.

“The amount of hours I volunteered for meant that I was considered a proper member of the team, and the work I did made a real difference. My placement gave me all the basic skills I needed to be successful and taught me what it means to be working.”

Chris still volunteers at MCMA and is very much involved in the radio station's activities. He's sat on the board for several years, and continues to present a show on Sundays.



“The experience totally changed my career path. It also reinforced a passion for volunteering, and I make sure to continue giving my time and energy to projects like this.”

- Chris Mackrell

Looking Back

“If I hadn’t done my placement I might not have started a career in outdoor pursuits. And I could be doing something nowhere near as fun.”

CHRISTOPHER, FORMER VOLUNTEER

“I learned a lot of valuable on-the-job skills with my placement, without it I doubt I would have a career in journalism.”

DARREN, FORMER VOLUNTEER

“I give extra voluntary time just because I love to be involved.”

SHELLEY, FORMER VOLUNTEER

“It was the first step in my marketing career, I wouldn’t be where I am now without that placement.”

ALANA, FORMER VOLUNTEER

93%

of volunteers felt their voluntary placement had an impact on their career and life choices to date.

LEWIS LAING

After leaving school at the end of his 4th year, Lewis found himself lost, he didn't have any plans or ideas as to what was next. During high school he had helped out at Youth Services in Perth and Kinross, and they recommended he get involved in a more structured, full-time role with ProjectScotland.

His placement involved numerous tasks and he enjoyed the fact that he got to speak to all manner of people, from all over the world. Through these interactions he began to notice his interest in languages. As his confidence grew, he began to look into going back into education.

After his placement Lewis successfully completed Highers in German, Spanish, and English, before returning to receive Highers in Italian, Politics and History. "I'd enjoyed my placement with ProjectScotland so much that when I found myself with free time again I decided to use it to volunteer. I looked into volunteering abroad and applied for a

competitive programme run by Raleigh International." Lewis' volunteering abroad ended abruptly due to injury, but it had confirmed his budding interest in languages. Upon his return he began learning Gaelic, moving to the West Hebrides to immerse himself in the culture and the language. Whilst there he began a degree in Gaelic Development through distant learning at the University of Highlands & Islands.

Lewis is currently employed as an Early Years Support Worker. His job involves him working closely with local communities in the Highlands ensuring that Gaelic is protected, encouraging its use, and securing the language for future generations.

"I absolutely believe that without my ProjectScotland placement providing me with the opportunity to figure out what interests me, I wouldn't be where I currently am."



"It's only now that I can look back to 2005 and see how much influence volunteering has had on my life and the decisions I've made when it comes to my education and career."

- Lewis Laing

74

of the 175 respondents stated that whilst volunteering, they gained experience and skills that were vital when taking their next steps following their placement.

ANDY SLOSS

When Andy left school he found himself moving from one full-time job to the next. He was restless and unhappy. He hated being indoors all day and had lost faith in the value of his work so took to the internet and began searching for a way into the outdoor industry.

When Andy found ProjectScotland he thought it sounded perfect. "I was tired of being turned down for jobs because I didn't have any relevant experience. I thought the opportunities that ProjectScotland could offer me would be the foot in the door that I needed."

Andy's placement was with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) in Glasgow. His role covered all different aspects of environmental conservation, a million miles away from the office work he was used to.

"I was so much happier doing this kind of work - it felt like I was doing something useful and valuable again."

Andy finished his placement and it was through his contacts at TCV that he found out about the Forestry Commission Apprentice Programme. He applied, and with the support of his line manager at TCV he was accepted on to the course.

Six years on, Andy is employed full-time with the Forestry commission and feels as if his current job brings him 'full circle'. "I'm directly responsible for training the new apprentices. We get up to 30 a year. Without the support of ProjectScotland and TCV I certainly wouldn't be where I am now."

Andy continues to support the work of ProjectScotland as a volunteer mentor and he uses his experience to help support other young Scots get on in life.



"My placement offered me the chance to find something I love doing and has opened up avenues I struggled to find before."

- Andy Sloss

61

of the 175 respondents told us they wouldn't be where they are now without ProjectScotland.

DULCIE PHIPPS

What started as occasional drug use with friends turned into non-stop parties for Dulcie Phipps. Within several months of starting college and living away from home her life was a mess. She told us “the aftermath of what I thought was a few months of fun was pretty rough.”

She started having nightmares, sleep paralysis, and fell into a deep depression. Her hair began to fall out, she had terrible mood swings and in her words “was just a wreck of a human being.” She moved back into her family home hardly communicating with anyone.

She knows her family encouraged and supported her but otherwise says “I don't really remember how I ended up at SCYD as a ProjectScotland volunteer.”

“Whilst I don't remember every day of the placement, I am sure that my time at SCYD helped me. Just having a purpose in life, a reason to get up, gave

me a little motivation bit by bit. Being surrounded by amazing, non-judgemental people who all had their own stories, and understood me, meant I started to feel better.”

Dulcie worked on a couple of community projects during her time volunteering and at the end of the six months had made such an impression that her line manager at SCYD nominated her for a ProjectScotland Personal Development Award. “I couldn't believe it,” she told us. “Although I didn't win, I was in the top three in all of Scotland. If someone had told me six months earlier that this was where I would be, I wouldn't have believed them.”

Dulcie went back to college to study a HNC and has now gone on to study Chemistry at the University of Glasgow.



“The difference in me now from those many years ago is incredible. I couldn't see it at the time, but I know now that I have all the wonderful people at SCYD to thank.”

- Dulcie Phipps

600

mentors have volunteered with ProjectScotland since 2005 to help young people get the most from their voluntary placement.

JULIE-ANNE JAMIESON

One of the benefits ProjectScotland offers to each volunteer is the option of a mentor. Our mentors are matched with volunteers based on location, skills, and the volunteer's interests beyond volunteering. Since 2005 we have had over 600 mentors give their time voluntarily to help young people get the most out of their placement with ProjectScotland. Mentors meet with volunteers at the beginning of a placement, and continue to offer additional support, advice, and direction throughout the volunteering journey.

One of our current mentors is Julie-Anne Jamieson. She has volunteered with ProjectScotland since 2006. During her time with us, Julie-Anne has mentored 18 young people in a variety of roles, from a Youth Marketing volunteer to a Horticultural volunteer. When asked about her role as a mentor she said "what I hope to do is help young people try and gain from

their experience with ProjectScotland. I encourage them to think about what they've learnt, and how they're going to use these skills in the future."

Julie-Anne has a background in working with young people, and she uses this skillset to empower her volunteers, helping them take responsibility in their roles and think about their personal development. A particular example of this, which sticks out in Julie-Anne's mind, is one of her mentees taking full responsibility for designing materials to promote the summer events programme at City Art Centre in Edinburgh, as part of the exhibition *Coming into Fashion: A Century of Photography at Conde Nast*.



"I love it because I meet such interesting and talented young people who are so enthusiastic; it really inspires me during my day-to-day work"

- Julie-Anne Jamieson

395

charity partners were able to continue their vital work thanks to our past volunteers.

THE ECOLOGY CENTRE

One of these partners is The Ecology Centre based in Kinghorn, Fife. They enable the local community to learn more about the environment whilst also providing quality volunteer experiences to a wide range of people. Since partnering with ProjectScotland in 2007 the Ecology Centre has hosted more than 18 ProjectScotland volunteers, two of whom are currently volunteering.

Alison Greggans, Operations Coordinator at the Centre, says the centre is “as much about people, as it is the environment. We could not manage this site without our volunteers, but it’s not just the centre that benefits. I’ve learnt a lot about myself having worked with the young people that come here. We introduce our volunteers to a growing number of responsibilities over the course of their time with us, and even though it’s a lot of work, no one wants to leave by the end of it!”

Two of the more recent ProjectScotland volunteers at the Ecology Centre have taken specific career steps

as a result of their experience. Rachel is currently embarking on a social care degree at university after meeting with the carers that visit the site regularly. Duncan, another ProjectScotland volunteer, has secured a four year apprenticeship in St Andrews working on conservation sites.

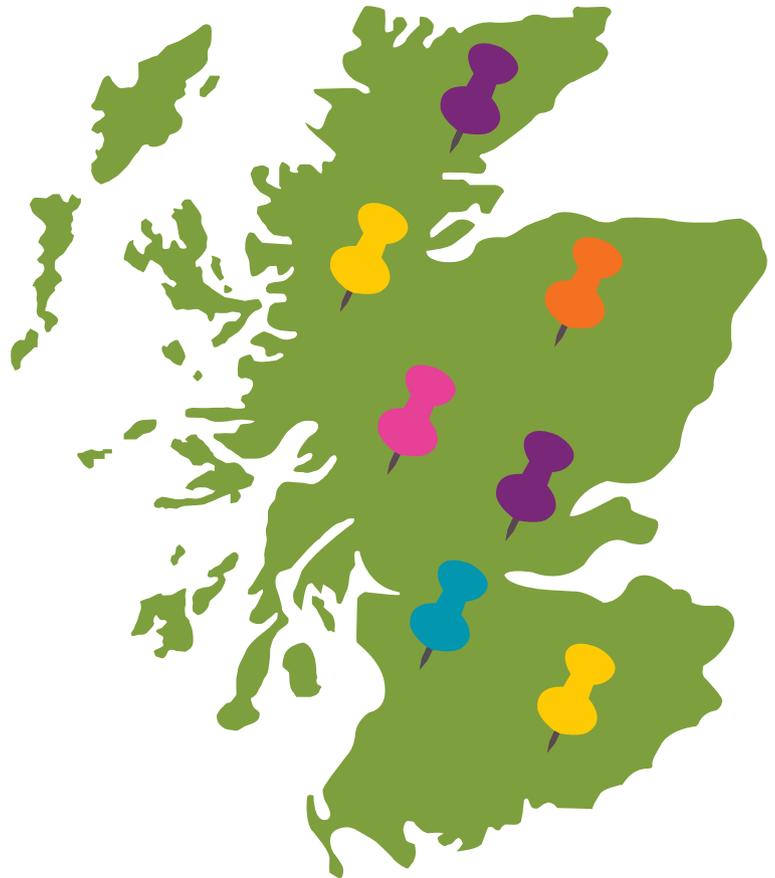


“We want our volunteers to do well, we give them the knowledge and the time to learn, and then support them in their choices beyond their volunteering. They leave here more confident, with a stronger sense of community and responsibility, they learn about themselves and keep us going too!”

- Alison Greggans

Helping Hundreds of Scottish Charities Do More...

Since 2005 we have worked across the length and breadth of Scotland supporting our charity partners to do more in their local community. Our charity partners operate across areas such as the arts, sports, youth work, and animal care. And our volunteers work in roles within marketing, human resources, fundraising, and journalism. We aim to give young people lots of choices in order to find the right placement to help them get on in life.



What We've Learnt

We are committed to improving the quality of our work so that every young person has a powerful and transformative experience with us. Our process of evaluation helps us question how we can improve the quality of our placements, for both the volunteer and charity partner. Our findings are used to help reflect on our practice. Here's some important things we've learnt...

Time is a barrier for young people continuing to volunteer after their placements. We will keep talking to our partners about flexible ways to keep young people engaged.

Some respondents felt our placements weren't long enough. We are looking to extend more of our placements to six months.

A lot of young people want as much help as possible to move onto education, employment or training. Volunteering is a tool that aids progression. Going forward we will run more workshops and better equip our mentors to support this journey.

9 of the respondents told us that volunteering made them realise what they didn't want to do. We are working hard to support young people to recognise that discovering what's not right is also a worthwhile result.

We're receiving more website hits and applications than ever before. There's increasing demand for what we offer. We've analysed that demand and as a result opened our opportunities up to 16-18 year olds; who will benefit from our work as much as those over 18.

Our respondents told us they want to stay involved with ProjectScotland - that's why we've now created our 'Champions' programme, encouraging past volunteers to continue supporting our work, and therefore allowing more young Scots to get on in life.

What next? Transforming more lives...

WHAT'S NEXT FOR PROJECTSCOTLAND?

In our 10 year history we have done so much to shape the lives and futures of young people and their communities. More than 5000 young people have given over 3 million hours of volunteering to 540 charities and not-for-profits nationwide. We're proud of our impact so far, and drawing on this report, we're committed to improving the volunteering experience for Scotland's young people for the next 10 years and beyond.

EVERYONE'S PATH IS UNIQUE

We completed a review of our Evaluation Framework and processes. It told us quite emphatically that every young person's path is unique, that there is no 'one size fits all' approach. We now offer more individual support: more contact, a wider variety of workshops, and great matches with mentors.

RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Our evaluation process is not just a form-filling exercise, nor is it only relevant to ProjectScotland. It allows a young person to recognise their achievements over the course of their placement so they can move forward with meaning. It also helps us understand how effective we are at supporting them on their journey.

GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE CHOICE

For a significant change to take place with a young person, we recognise that control and choice should always rest with them. ProjectScotland Volunteers choose to participate in our programme and with support they choose what placement is right for

their development. They choose to be matched to a ProjectScotland mentor, and which employability workshops they want to attend. Empowering young people is paramount to bringing about meaningful change.

THE FUTURE

The findings of this report are compelling; 93% said their volunteering experience impacted their career and life choices, of that 37% said they wouldn't be where they are now without ProjectScotland. Our report strongly demonstrates the life-long impact of volunteering.

Our future success rests on continuing to provide rewarding opportunities for young people and supporting them to take control of the decisions that affect them. We have the knowledge, passion, and ambition, to transform hundreds of young people's lives every year, but we can't do it alone.

To find out how you can support ProjectScotland and the work we do, contact our Fundraising Team at fundraising@projectscotland.co.uk.

“We're proud of our impact so far, and drawing on this report, we're committed to improving the volunteering experience for Scotland's young people for the next 10 years and beyond.” - Paul Reddish



WE ARE 10



“I absolutely believe that without my ProjectScotland placement providing me with the opportunity to figure out what interests me, I wouldn't be where I am.”

-Lewis Lang, ProjectScotland Volunteer.

Find out how you can support young people all over Scotland:

T: 0131 226 0700 E: fundraising@projectscotland.co.uk
W: www.projectscotland.co.uk Follow us @projectscotland

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this report by providing feedback, case studies, and interviews. And, of course, to all those who have helped ProjectScotland make its first decade such a success.

ProjectScotland is a Scottish registered charity (SC035464) and is a company limited by guarantee (SC267476) with its registered office at 20 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh, EH7 4GH.

This impact report covers the period 2005-2013. For the full background data behind our reporting please contact fundraising@projectscotland.co.uk

