

Annual Report 2023-24



**“It makes me feel
recognised, like I’ve
got a special place.”**

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Welcome

We are delighted to introduce SSF's annual review, which captures an incredible past year for our charity and the young people we are privileged to work with. During 23/24 we committed to redoubling our efforts to leading change across Scotland to ensure more young people were better understood, supported and more physically active.

Increased emphasis was placed on engaging those who would benefit most, embedding trauma informed approaches throughout our team and beyond. We shared practice and learning across partners and sectors creating a ripple effect across the country.

We expanded our work to provide education and training to more young people and those who support them across Scotland's Local Authorities. We offered high quality opportunities to gain skills and expertise to help address the widespread challenges faced by society. More impassioned young people have gone back into communities as a force for good supporting others to lead healthier and happier lives.

We commenced new work in primary schools, engaging children through Active Play. Ensuring that opportunities for all are offered even earlier to ensure equality and support for those communities that need it most.

It has been an exceptionally challenging year for many as deepening poverty continues to rise. The response of our team has been truly exceptional, and this report outlines those achievements.

Dougie Millen, Chief Executive & Maureen McGonigle, Chair

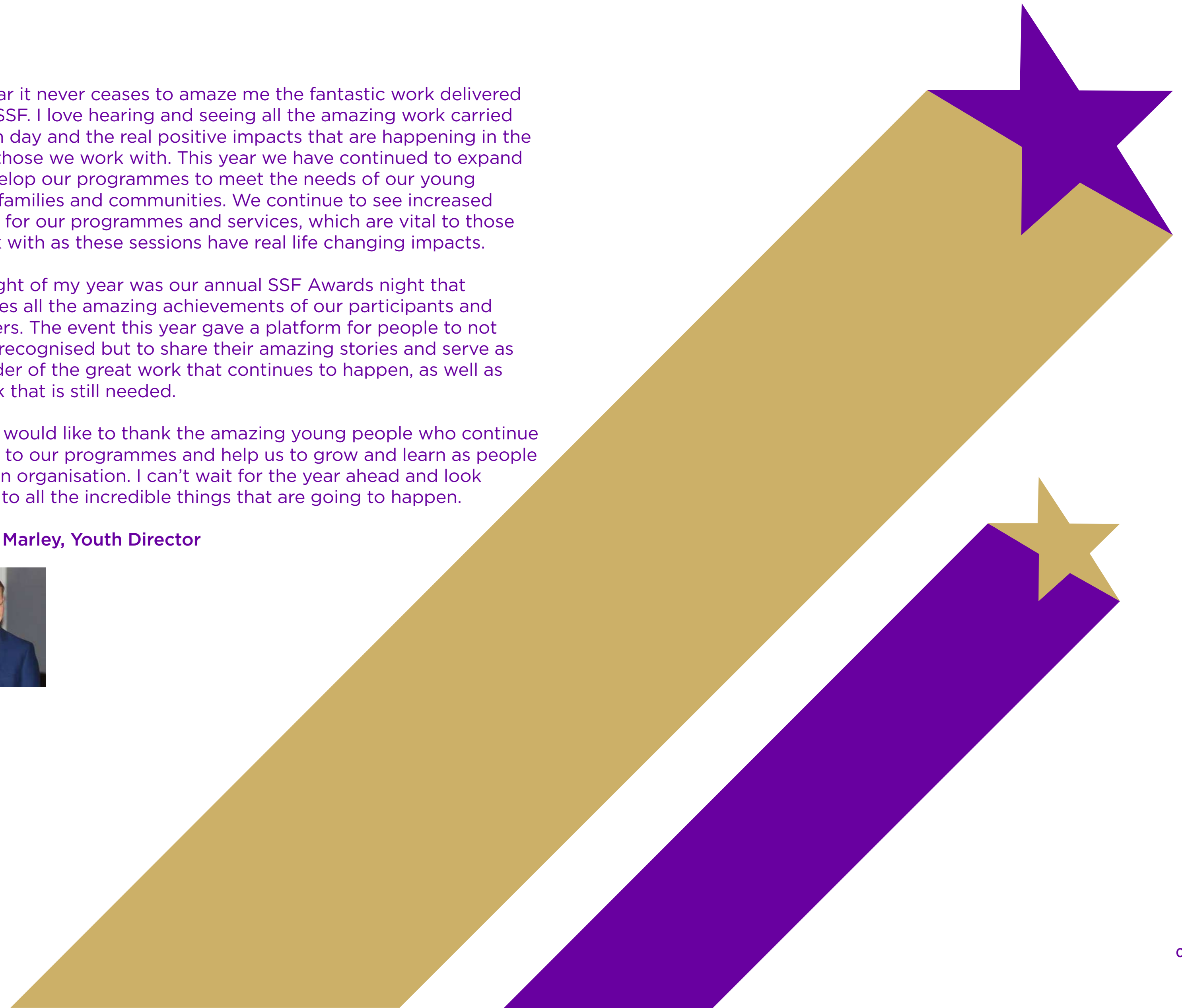


Each year it never ceases to amaze me the fantastic work delivered here at SSF. I love hearing and seeing all the amazing work carried out each day and the real positive impacts that are happening in the lives of those we work with. This year we have continued to expand and develop our programmes to meet the needs of our young people, families and communities. We continue to see increased demand for our programmes and services, which are vital to those we work with as these sessions have real life changing impacts.

A highlight of my year was our annual SSF Awards night that celebrates all the amazing achievements of our participants and volunteers. The event this year gave a platform for people to not only be recognised but to share their amazing stories and serve as a reminder of the great work that continues to happen, as well as the work that is still needed.

Finally, I would like to thank the amazing young people who continue to come to our programmes and help us to grow and learn as people and as an organisation. I can't wait for the year ahead and look forward to all the incredible things that are going to happen.

Andrew Marley, Youth Director



Our charity

Our vision & purpose

A world in which every young person fulfils their potential.

Our mission

We use sport as a catalyst to enable young people to be healthier, more confident and more resilient, so they are better prepared to combat the effects of poverty, trauma and adversity.

What we do

We enable young people, living in challenging environments, to become champions for good in society.

We are

Connecting, listening, and acting.
Educating and enabling others to expand our impact.
Creating spaces for young people to feel safe and welcome.
Harnessing the power of sport.

Our values

Empathy: We are compassionate, understanding, always listening.
Leadership: We are decisive, ground-breaking, experts in what we do.
Inclusivity: We are diverse, equitable and inclusive by design.
Passion: We approach our work with dedication, love and care.

Transforming young lives through sport

Our team

Staffing Changes

CEO Kirsty McNab went on maternity leave in December 2023. Strengthening our partnership with **sportscotland**, Lead Manager, Dougie Millen was appointed as CEO until January 2025.

Board Recruitment

The diversity and expertise of the board was strengthened with the appointments of new trustees, Nicole Flynn, Sally McCutcheon and Hollie Fullerton. Bringing additional experience to support our EDI priorities and corporate partnerships links.

Our new team structures were fully embedded in 23/24 and we moved all our sessional staff working in regions to contracts of employment providing additional employee benefits.

“They (SSF) have like this trusting thing about them. Like I really trust them, I trust them with my life. They’re the best, they’re actually amazing.”

SSF Young Person



Our approach

Relationships and connection

Central and key to our work is relationships and human connection to ensure people feel seen, heard, and valued. Without connection, positive relationships cannot be formed.

Person centred

Our approach is person centred, we work alongside people, we co-produce solutions with young people, giving them choice and autonomy. Things are done that way because it works for them.

Trauma informed

We recognise the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledge the role trauma may play in an individual’s life.

Outcome focused

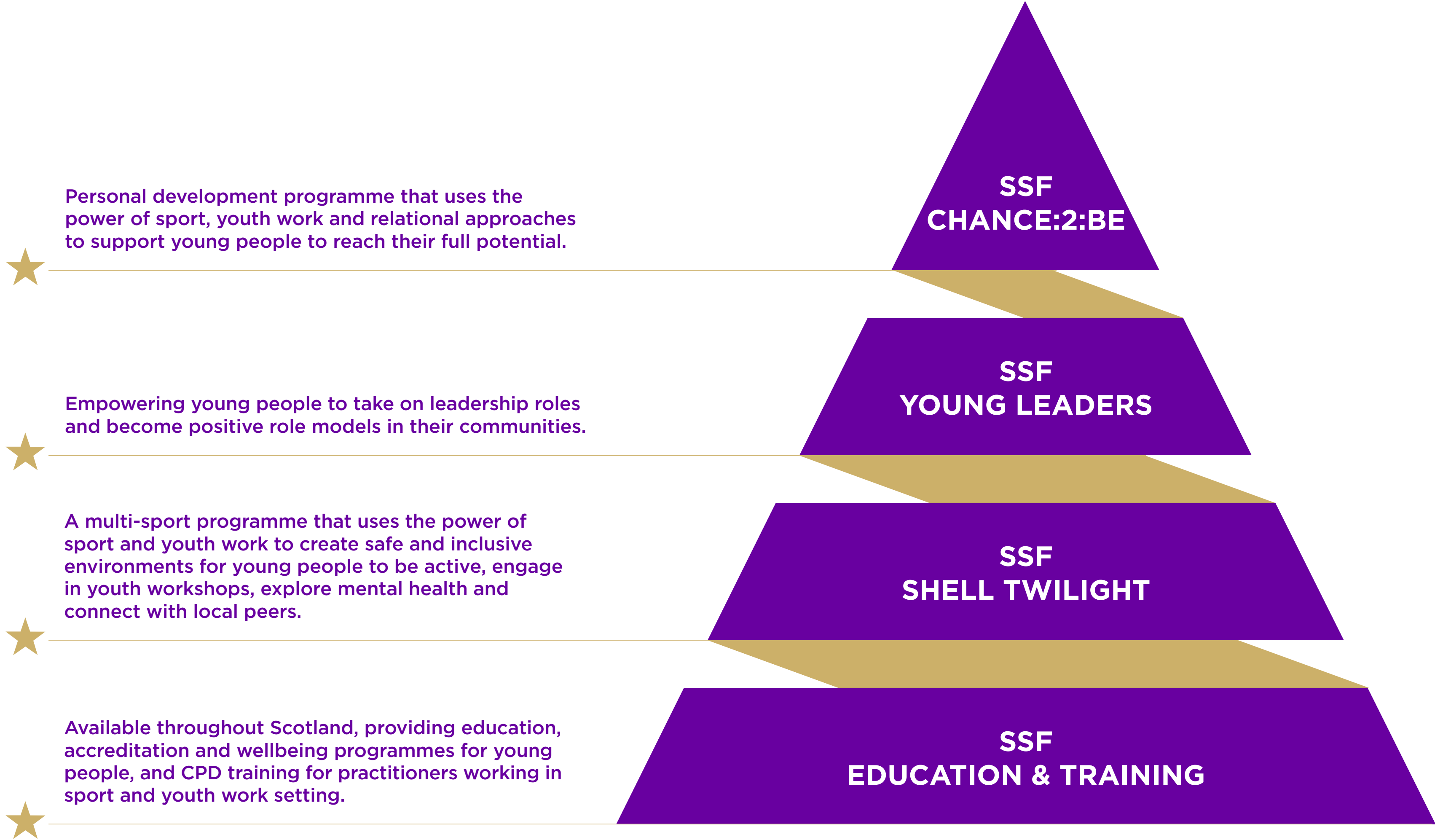
We focus on the changes and differences we hope to make.

Needs based

We connect with young people and communities to understand their needs, what is missing and what needs are not being met.



Our programmes



Active Play

Children in Scotland are still not as active as we would like to them to be, resulting in them being less healthy and less happy.

The Active Play programme was conceived to address problems related to low levels of physical activity during childhood that led to a range of preventable mental, physical and social problems. Active Play was established in 2011, through a unique third sector partnership that has brought together a range of expertise in play, physical activity, policy, funding, training, research and evaluation.

Through existing relationships and strong partnerships with Inspiring Scotland and Actify, in August 2023, SSF were invited to become an Active Play charity partner to deliver programmes in primary schools across North Ayrshire.

Active Play is a programme which supports and enables children to play actively outdoors through structured games and free play, developing physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively through the process. Each session contains fun, active and inclusive games designed to improve children's physical literacy and increase their physical activity levels. The Active Play model is very much aligned to SSF's vision and as an organisation, getting more young people active, through creative, fun and innovative initiatives is a key priority for us.

We are delighted to have successfully delivered the Active Play programme across primary schools in North Ayrshire and are looking forward to delivering more in the coming months.



Our year

1758
SSF participants

29
local authorities receiving
SSF Education & Training

2681
qualifications achieved

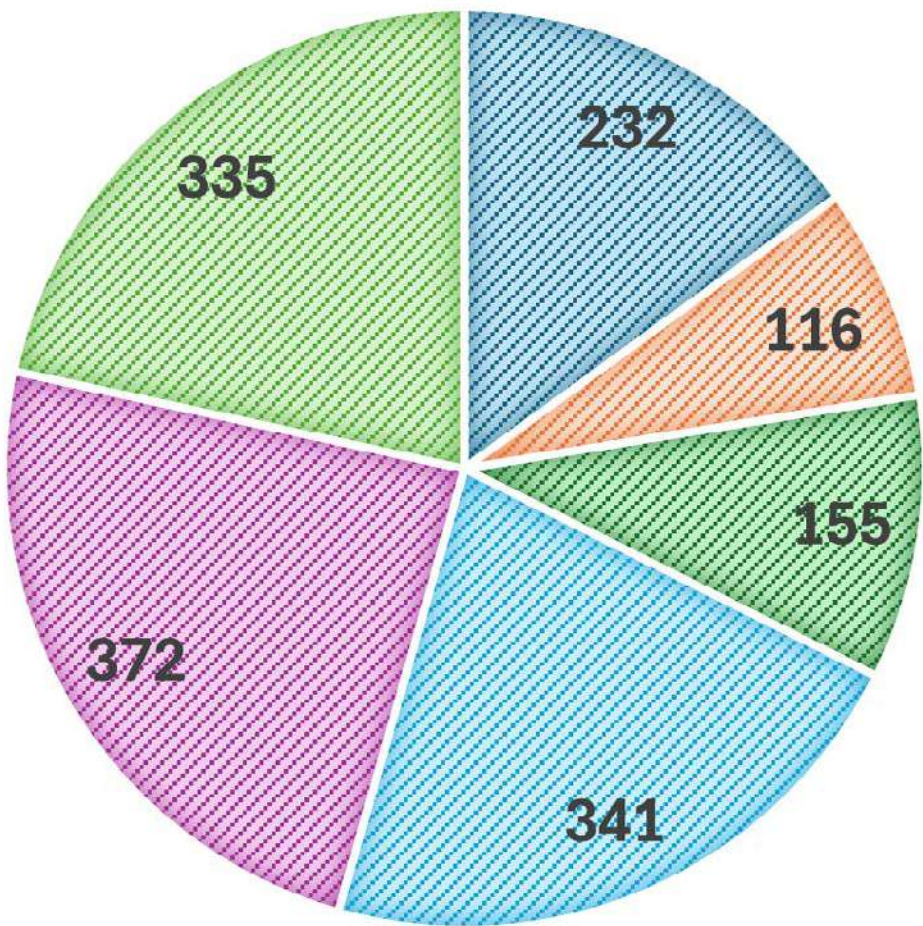
56
SSF Young Leaders volunteering
within their communities

6470
hours of youth volunteering

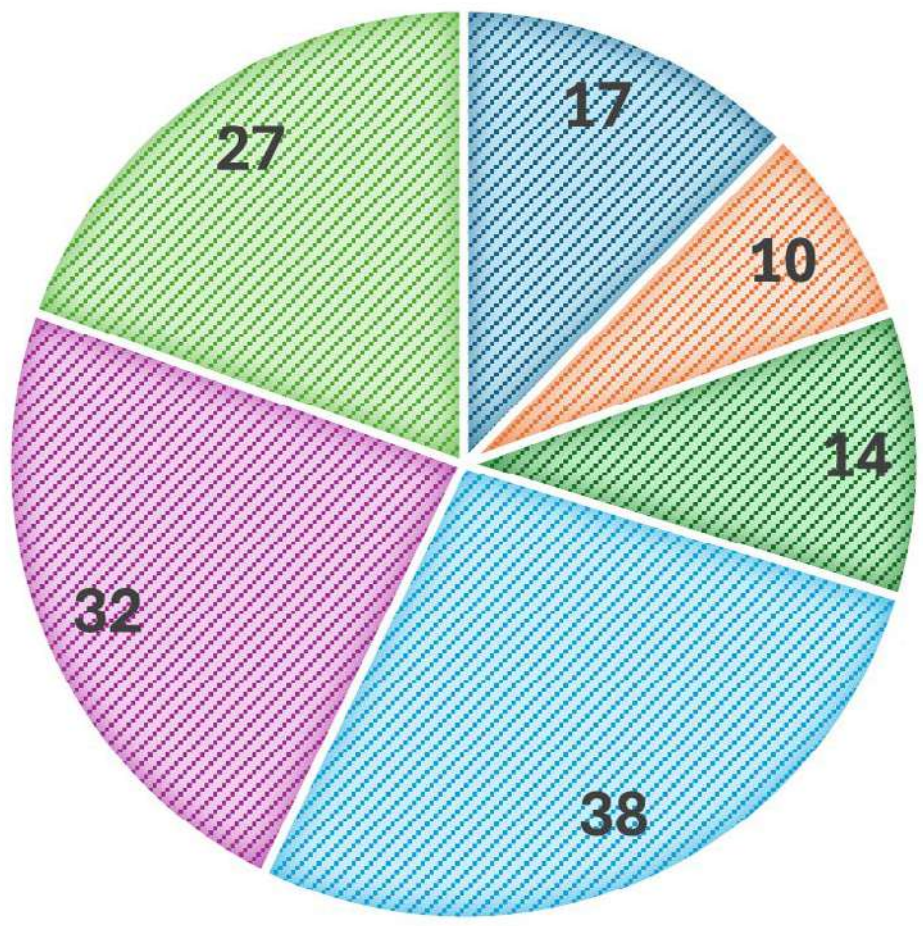
1155
hours of SSF employee training

SSF Education & Training

SCQF ACCREDITATIONS ACHIEVED



SCQF MODULES DELIVERED



- Working with Young People in Sport

Human Connection

Planning Effective Physical Activity Programmes
- Communication

Goal Setting

Conflict Resolution

Our strategic priorities



Developing people

We provide young people with opportunities to enhance their learning and future employment opportunities.

We educate and train practitioners to provide inclusive, accessible and outcome focused sport and physical activity.



Strengthening communities

We empower young people led community development that recognises the strengths of the people, knowledge and resources within that place.

We deliver environmentally sustainable practices across all our work, supporting our young people to lead change.

We work with organisations to understand and address needs to achieve the greatest impact for the community.



Improving health and wellbeing

We purposefully use sport and physical activity as a tool to improve wellbeing, resilience, and self-care.

We work to reduce the stigma attached to mental health and buffer effects of trauma and adversity.

Developing people case studies

Scottish Football Association

As a result of multi-year funding through CashBack, we were able to agree a 3-year programme of SSF Education & Training with the Scottish Football Association (SFA).

Having previously included our modules as part of their workforce education, the SFA recognise the value of our training, particularly our focus on relationship building and taking a person-centred approach. They were keen to continue to embed our modules within their training programmes to add value and additional knowledge and skill development.'

"100% recommend SSF modules to other governing bodies or schools just because the variety of modules they offer is brilliant. Working with SSF, they like to adapt things so much to the group as well – they put the person first which is really important."

SFA Education Officer



This year we have delivered 11 modules to 131 participants on the Volunteer and Inspire Programme, which is for emerging football coaches. They have collectively achieved 189 SCQF accreditations and developed skills in areas such as communication, resolving conflict, teamwork and leadership. Improvements in confidence and engagement with local communities was also noted, with participants applying what they have learned into their own coaching and community work.

"The experience I've had with SSF has been great. I would really encourage other coaches to do it because you're learning about real world scenarios that are tough to deal with that you might not be able to learn about in other environments. So, coming here and doing their modules is really beneficial because you're learning new things that you will take into your coaching practice on a day to day basis."

SSF Education & Training Participant



Lourdes Secondary School

We collaborated with Lourdes Secondary School to deliver a bespoke SSF Education and Training programme aimed at addressing the needs of 12 young people in S3, aged 14-15. During the 20-week programme they would have the opportunity to achieve 6 SCQF qualifications, accredited to level 4 and 5 on the SCQF framework, participate in 5 SSF Wellbeing Workshops, and gain an SCQF Level 2 Youth Scotland Hi-5 award.

The school nominated students who faced challenges such as low confidence, low school attendance and a likelihood of not attaining qualifications through the traditional school curriculum.

Although the programme began with 12 students, attendance stabilised at 9 per session. The group had a great interest for playing football and other active games, which were incorporated into the module activities during their weekly sessions. However, despite their enthusiasm for the activity-based learning, we had to implement diverse teaching strategies to support the young people with the written components of the module.

It took time to build a relationship and trust between our tutor and the students. In the early stages, engagement and challenges with managing behaviour were evident for one tutor. To address this we brought in a second tutor, allowing for better support and a more conducive learning environment. After building trust, the group found support within the programme, embracing it as a safe space to express themselves and explore their capabilities.

“I feel like I can be myself. We get time to talk about stuff that we need to get out.”

SSF Education & Training participant

For many, the supportive atmosphere acted as a catalyst for improved school attendance, encouraging a renewed sense of purpose and motivation, while enhancing the young people’s engagement and performance in other areas of school.

“It helped me keep up my attendance by giving me a reason to go to school.”

SSF Education & Training participant

“The young people are engaging better in their classes following the session with SSF.”

**Jonny Carroll, Deputy Head Teacher,
Lourdes Secondary School**

Achieving qualifications provided tangible pathways to future opportunities. The young people valued the practical benefits, seeing the qualifications as more than just academic achievements but as crucial steps towards further education and employment. These qualifications opened doors to brighter futures, instilling confidence and ambition in the participants.

“I enjoy coming here because we do fun activities, and we will get qualifications for our future.”

SSF Education & Training participant

Beyond academic pursuits, the programme provided a platform for personal growth and improved wellbeing as it sparked enthusiasm and engagement, contrasting with experiences in traditional classroom settings.

“I don’t have much energy in class, but coming here brings out my energy.”

SSF Education & Training participant

A further benefit of the programme was that students, initially from different friendship groups, formed strong bonds and built new relationships. They found common interests, shared experiences, and built trust, evolving from classmates to a cohesive group.

“I got to make new friends and meet new people in my year group.”

SSF Education & Training participant

We are proud of our impactful partnership with Lourdes Secondary School, delivering a successfully tailored educational experience. In total participants achieved 59 SCQF qualifications and completed 43 SSF Wellbeing Workshops, a testament to the young people’s dedication and the programme’s effectiveness in fulfilling their potential.

“SSF have been a welcomed partner, with them delivering within our school an engaging, dynamic and innovative course to extend the reach of our curriculum to further meet the needs and improve outcomes for a targeted group of young people.”

**Jonny Carroll, Deputy Head Teacher,
Lourdes Secondary School**



Spencer

Spencer (15), North Ayrshire, became involved with SSF programmes in 2023 as he found school hard to engage and attend as he did not enjoy it. This led to Spencer displaying behaviour that the school found hard to manage. In the wider community, Spencer was getting involved in trouble with other peers and found it difficult to walk away from arguments, which often resulted in being wrapped up in conflict. He reported feeling no sense of connection or belonging to his community; as well as finding it difficult expressing himself and creating connections with adults, thus living with a lot of anger and confusion.

Spencer was nominated for the **SSF Chance:2:Be programme** through his pastoral teacher. They felt his involvement in a non-traditional learning environment would suit him well and support him to achieve accreditations, improve his mental health and relationship with school.

Since beginning the **SSF Chance:2:Be programme**, Spencer demonstrated a desire to improve himself and take up opportunities available to him. He had consistent attendance and thrived within a different learning environment. He threw himself into new experiences and continued to push himself out of his comfort zone, all whilst building impactful relationships with SSF staff, something which he had struggled with previously due to his lack of trust in others. These new-found relationships also supported Spencer to become much more aware of his emotions, and he now noticeably talks through his emotions much more openly with staff.

“It turns out I love stuff like this. Being outside, just getting stuck in. Who knew!”

Since participating in the **SSF Chance:2: Be programme** Spencer has gained 5 accreditations SCQF level 2-5, completed a first aid workshop, participated in outdoor education activities, team building, and a careers visit to a local building company. He has also re-engaged in school, reduced his risk-taking behaviour and is now focused on achieving his goal of joining the Armed Forces. He has worked closely with our staff and has committed himself to re-engaging in education and gaining additional qualifications this year to support this ambition.

“I’m not getting into fights anymore and I’ve stopped vaping. I know I need to screw the nut if I am going to get into the army.”

Spencer was recognised at our SSF Awards 2024 for his outstanding commitment to his personal development and was a finalist in the “Inspiring Journey of the Year” category.

“Aye man its good I canny believe it, if you had told me I would be up for an award back in August I would have laughed at you. This programme has defo helped me to keep more calm about things – less reaction towards things I would usually flip out at. I know where I want to go after school and feel the staff at SSF have got my back to support me.”

Spencer was adamant he was leaving school however, throughout the after-care programme and our collaborative work with the school, he decided he would like to stay to achieve his goal of getting more qualifications for his future.

“Spencer has decided he would prefer to stay on to 5th year at school and gain more qualifications! He also spoke to me about becoming a Mentor/Volunteer for SSF’s new young people that come onto the programmes?”

Spencer Parent

Spencer’s outcomes:

- **Diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the justice system.**
- **Improved learning, employability & employment options.**
- **Improved health, mental health and wellbeing.**
- **Built personal skills, resilience, and benefited from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour.**



**Watch
video
here.**



Improving health & wellbeing case studies

Girls on the Pitch programme

Over the past 6 months, in partnership with Stirling Active Schools and with support from the Sweaty Betty Foundation, we have delivered a girls only physical activity and wellbeing programme with young girls aged 11+.

The aim of the programme was to:

- ★ Increase levels of physical activity
- ★ Improve young girls' knowledge of wellbeing
- ★ Improve young girls wellbeing
- ★ Use sport and youth work as a method of connection during the transitional period from primary to secondary school
- ★ Bring young people together in a positive manner

A significant element of the programme was peer to peer delivery, with local female teenagers co-designing and co-delivering the programme. The SSF Young Leaders have been instrumental in the planning and delivery of the programme and have led on consultation, programme creation, delivery of activities, promoting health and wellbeing and monitoring and evaluation. This is a huge achievement for the SSF Young Leaders, putting all their leadership skills into practice, committing their time every week to the programme and being excellent role models for their younger peers.

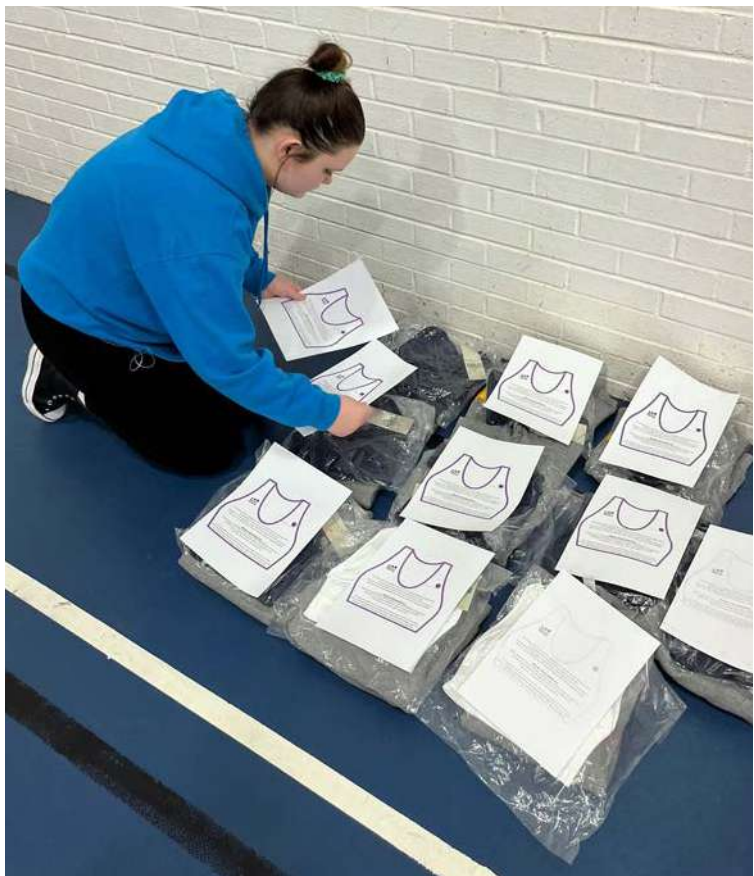
“The best thing about being involved in the Sweaty Betty programme is it’s helped build my confidence to become a coach and pushed me out my comfort zone to take a lead on games. I’ve seen so many more faces and smiles on the girls since the start of the programme. This programme has made me feel like I have a positive future in coaching.”

SSF Young Leader

As part of the programme the young girls were given hoodies and sports bras so they always had kit to come along to the session. The girls participated in 60 minute sessions involving activities such as football, basketball, cricket, dodgeball and tennis. We also discussed topics that may impact mental health and wellbeing, particularly in relation to transitioning from P7 to S1. Examples of this include relationships, importance of consent, making healthy choices, anxiety and stress and the link between physical and mental health.

“Look, we got cool jumpers and can’t wait to come back next week and take part in more of these activities.”

P7 participant



Caldervale High School

We delivered an SSF Wellbeing Workshop on the topic of Anxiety to a group of 15 S3 girls from Caldervale High School. They had been nominated by the school to participate as they had been identified as being low in confidence and were disengaging from classes.

When the session started, it was evident that the group were nervous about the workshop and unsure of our tutors. This resulted in a lack of engagement and difficulty connecting to begin with.

We prioritised building trust and encouraging contributions by creating a safe and welcoming environment. We delivered a range of introductory activities, and outlined the purpose of the workshop which is to learn about how sport and physical activity can be used to manage anxiety and how to incorporate the SAMH 5 ways to wellbeing into daily routines.

As the workshop progressed the group increased in confidence, engaging with the tutors and were comfortable contributing to group discussions and activities.

The young people left the session feeling more confident in understanding what anxiety is, how to identify signs and symptoms and how to create a self-care routine to manage anxiety levels throughout their daily lives. They also created new relationships with each other and the SSF tutors.

“Before the session I was nervous, at the end I was happy, but now I’m sad that it’s over.”

SSF Wellbeing Workshop participant

By the end of the session the young people were enthusiastic and motivated and keen to continue with more wellbeing workshops.

Since completing the workshop, the group have developed in confidence and have been assisting with sports sessions in their local community.

“They have since used their skills to help with coaching delivery to younger pupils at a local primary school.”

Active Schools Coordinator



Strengthening communities case studies

Govan Youth Information Project

When looking at how SSF can support and strengthen communities, we take a sustainable approach to community driven development that recognises the assets such as, people, places and partners. Our aim is always to address need through creating new provision in partnership or enhancing existing provision, ensuring we avoid duplication. Genuine, open and meaningful partnership working is key and we have been very lucky to have been working alongside Govan Youth Information Project (GYIP), who are the main youth work provider for children and young people in Govan, to strengthen the offer of youth provision and opportunities for young people.

Together with GYIP, we joined forces to:

- ★ Co-deliver a multi-sport and youth work programme on Friday nights, focusing on mental health and wellbeing. The programme provided the young people with a safe space within their local community to connect with their peers, local staff and explore the topic of mental health and wellbeing through physical activity. Each session consisted of physical activity, youth work and wellbeing activities and all young people received food whilst at the session.

“Since coming to the session, my mental health has changed as I have been able to go out and play football every week.”

SSF Young Person

- ★ Co-deliver an alternative education programme for young people in Govan and surrounding areas. Young people, who were finding it difficult to attend school and services within the community were nominated to attend SSF and GYIP’s 24 week Chance:2:Be personal development programme. The programme was delivered 2 days per week and supported 10 young people to complete 4 accreditations and achieve a positive destination which included returning to school, gaining a place on personal development or employability programme and successfully applying to apprenticeships.

“I can’t believe the change in him, before this programme he spent most of the time in his room and wasn’t engaged in anything. He is now back in school, thinking about his future and happy. Thank you so much.”

SSF Young Persons Parent

- ★ Support young people to contribute towards their community positively and into leadership roles within the Govan Community.
- ★ Recruit 6 young people from Govan to participate in the SSF Young Leaders programme, attending a 3-day training residential to Inverclyde to complete their SSF leadership induction. They are now supporting their local community, volunteering with GYIP to deliver youth work, sport and physical activity.

“I’ve been helping all summer at holiday programme, I love working with the young people.”

SSF Young Person

“I have been able to help with GYIP this summer and really enjoyed it.”

SSF Young Person

Through our partnership, young people have become members of GYIP’s Positive Role Models Volunteer Programme, which has allowed them to put their learning into practice through volunteering at GYIP’s holiday programmes supporting others with their wellbeing.

“We see a big change in the confidence of the young people. They are involved more with our (GYIP Positive Role Models Programme) sessions and want to help in the community.”

Ethan McNally, Sessional Worker, GYIP



Our people

★ SEX IDENTITY

Male	47%
Female	41%
Non-binary	1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	1%
No Data	9%

★ SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Heterosexual/Straight	69%
Gay/Lesbian	1%
Bisexual	1%
Other	<1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	6%
No Data	23%

★ AGE PROFILE

Under 10	1%
10 – 15 years	52%
16 – 18 years	37%
19 – 24 years	6%
25+ years	5%

★ SIMD PROFILE

0-20%	75%
20-30%	6%
30-40%	4%
40-50%	7%
50-100%	9%

★ DISABILITY/IMPAIRMENT/MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION*

Vision	1%
Hearing	1%
Mobility	<1%
Dexterity	<1%
Learning, understanding or concentrating	6%
Memory	<1%
Stamina, breathing or fatigue	2%
Socially or behavioural	4%
Mental Health	2%
None of the above	44%
Other	3%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	7%
No data	25%

★ ETHNICITY

Total young people from a minority ethnic group (including white minority ethnic groups)**	9%
White – Scottish	67%
White – Other British	3%
White – Irish	<1%
White -Traveller	<1%
White – Polish	1%
White – Roma	1%
White – Showman/Showwoman	0%
White – Other	1%
Mixed or multiple ethnicity	1%
Pakistani, Scottish Pakistani or British Pakistani	<1%
Indian, Scottish Indian or British Indian	<1%
Bangladeshi, Scottish Bangladeshi or British Bangladeshi	<1%
Chinese, Scottish Chinese or British Chinese	<1%
Other Asian ethnicity	2%
African, Scottish African or British African	1%
African – other African ethnicity	<1%
Black – Caribbean	<1%
Black – Other Black ethnicity	0%
Arab, Scottish Arab, British Arab	1%
Other ethnicity not listed above	0%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	2%
No Data	20%

★ RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

None	53%
Church of Scotland	4%
Roman Catholic	8%
Other Christian	3%
Muslim	3%
Buddhist	0%
Sikh	0%
Jewish	<1%
Hindu	<1%
Pagan	<1%
Other religion	<1%
Prefer not to say/Don't know	6%
No Data	23%

* Note that young people may report more than one condition listed and so percentages against each disability will not combine to give the overall total. This figure is the total young people reporting any one or more disability, impairment, and/or mental health condition overall. This statistic excludes 'prefer not to say' and 'don't know' responses, and those who did not consent to their data being gathered for this purpose.

** For analysis purposes, we have grouped all categories other than 'White (Scottish)', 'White (Irish)' and 'White (Other British)' as ethnic minority. This statistic excludes 'prefer not to say' and 'don't know' responses, and those who did not consent to their data being gathered for this purpose.

Our recognition highlights

Our recognition highlights

Social Media

Over the last year we have been purposeful in using social media to raise awareness and profile of equality, diversity, and inclusion topics. As a result, we have:

- ★ Regular meetings with our EDI working group, working on our strategic action plan to ensure we are meeting the needs of our people.
- ★ Used social media to help gain our LGBT charter status (Silver level accreditation) through LGBT Youth Scotland.
- ★ Refined our social media themed campaigns calendar to reflect the needs and advocate for our people on socials. Campaigns such as; Pride, National Coming Out Day, #NoWrongPath, Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week, Challenge Poverty Week, Mental Health Awareness Week.

SSF Awards 2024 Press Coverage

- ★ Five North Ayrshire young folk up for major sports awards.
<https://www.largsandmillportnews.com/sport/24132155.five-north-ayrshire-young-folk-major-sports-awards/>
- ★ Unsung Hero of the Year award for Lochgelly's Erynn McGrath.
<https://www.centrafifetimes.com/news/24140033.unsung-hero-year-award-lochgellys-erynn-mcgrath/>

- ★ Irvine's Zara named youth worker of the year at SSF awards.
<https://www.ayrshire-today.co.uk/news/24139409.irvines-zara-named-youth-worker-year-ssf-awards/>

- ★ Young Fifer crowned unsung hero at awards for her commitment and dedication.
<https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/young-fifer-crowned-unsung-hero-at-awards-for-her-commitment-and-dedication-4531087>

External Events

Scottish Government

- ★ Presenting and facilitating at the ACEs and Trauma Network meeting about our work and approach to trauma informed practice.
- ★ Ministerial acknowledgment at Parliament from Maree Todd, the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, who explained how the support of our SSF programmes and partnerships is helping to reduce barriers to participation and encourage the important conversations.

- ★ Presented at the CashBack Portfolio Partners Event.

Corra Foundation

- ★ Presented at the Corra Conference 2024, sharing SSFs story and experience of understanding impact and gathering learning to transform young lives through sport.

Stirling University

- ★ Presented to 3rd year Sport Management students about Sustainability in Sport and Policy in Action.
- ★ Presented to Msc Sport Management Students about Sport Management Challenges and Sustainability.

sportscotland

- ★ Presented at the Coaching Symposium about the culture of SSF, person-centred coaching and trauma informed practice.
- ★ Presented and facilitated a workshop for disabled people undertaking modern apprenticeships in sport.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

- ★ Presented at the DYW Partner Event for Glasgow.

Awards

- We are proud to have been recognised nationally for transforming young lives through sport. We were finalists in the following awards:
- ★ The Glasgow Business Award for 'Fair and Healthy Workplace'
 - ★ The Glasgow Business Award for 'Green Champion'
 - ★ The Herald & GenAnalytics Diversity Awards for 'Diversity in Sport'
 - ★ National Good Lottery Awards for 'Project of the Year'
 - ★ The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) Organisation of the Month Award

Our events

Our events

Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Event

To celebrate Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week 2023, we hosted a girls-only, multi-sport event at Meadowbank Sports Centre, Edinburgh. After consultation with young women from across our programmes, it highlighted the need for events like this to help understand the barriers that young women continue to face in sport.

Sports Minister, Maree Todd MSP joined us on the day as well as partners from across Scotland including, **sportscotland**, Badminton Scotland, Basketball Scotland, Scottish Athletics and Scottish Disability Sport. The Minister joined participants as they took part in variety of different sports including wheelchair basketball and new age curling.

The young women have attended a number of sessions throughout the year supported by the Sweaty Betty Foundation and met with the Sports Minister at last year's event. They were presented with sports apparel which included a sports bra from Sweaty Betty and Netball Scotland kit.

Comedy Night Fundraiser!

On the 6th December 2023 Barclays hosted a comedy fundraiser at The Stand Comedy Club, Glasgow, on behalf of SSF. The evening was hosted by SSF Ambassador, Chris Forbes, and joined by comedians Gita Blaze, Rosco McClelland, Stuart Mcpherson and Susan Riddell.

Having the support from the team at Barclays during the lead up to the event as well as on the night support with the raffle from four volunteers was an incredible help. The evening was a great success raising £2000.

We remain grateful to Barclays for their continued support with our fundraising efforts, both financially and through participation on our Business Sustainability Working Group.

Tenner to Tons

Tenner to Tons is an SSF entrepreneurial challenge encouraging teams to create a business with a focus on sustainability. Teams are provided with a starting capital of £10 and have an aim to transform their £10 into as much money as possible through any means of entrepreneurship.

This year, The University of the West of Scotland (UWS), 3rd year Sports Development students took on the challenge as part of their Enterprise module. The challenge saw teams raise £2000 for SSF with ideas ranging from bake sales to sponsored/guided walks. The support and enthusiasm from UWS has been incredible over the semester with plans to roll out the Tenner to Tons challenge again next year.

SSF Awards 2024

We welcomed young people, friends and partners to the voco Grand Central Hotel on Thursday 22 February 2024, for the annual SSF Awards 2024 sponsored by **sportscotland**.

The evening was undoubtedly the highlight of the year and was an emotional and inspirational reminder of what can be achieved through partnership working and putting young people at the heart of everything. It provided the ideal opportunity to recognise the successes and learnings of our young people, coaches, youth workers and partners.



Watch
video
here.

Our finances

Our finances and funders

	2023/24 £	Increase from last year
Income	£1,289,734	-9%
Expenditure	£1,291,965	-18%
Training Modules	£36,458	53%

Funders

BBC Children in Need
Clyde Gateway
Comic Relief
Cycling Scotland
European Capital of Sport – Glasgow
Garfield Weston Foundation
Glasgow Chamber of Commerce
Glasgow Climate Action Hub
Glasgow Life
Hugh Fraser Foundation
Inspiring Scotland
National Lottery Improving Lives
National Lottery Young Start
North Ayrshire Council
Scottish Government – Active Scotland
Scottish Government – CashBack for Communities
Shell UK
sportscotland
Sweaty Betty Foundation
The Robertson Trust
West of Scotland Housing Association



Our equality, diversity and inclusion progress

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Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group continues to be the driving force to developing policies and practices organisationally. Throughout 23/24 we have endeavoured to make our programmes more inclusive and reach a more diverse range of young people. During the last year we prioritised having a more diverse workforce across all parts of our organisation and establishing new partnerships to look at innovative ways of achieving this. We also took steps to better support employees and participants from the LGBTQ+ community.

Modern apprenticeship programme

This year we were selected alongside 7 other partners working in the sporting system to take part in an employability initiative led by Enable and **sportscotland**. The Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme supports people with a disability into work providing them with skills, knowledge, confidence, college experience and a work placement.

Enable is a charity that supports people, employers, and communities across the country. They believe in an equal society where everyone has the right to live, work and participate as active and respected citizens in the communities of their choice.

Charlotte Holder, Enable Work's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant said:

“Every modern apprentice has the opportunity for support from their employer or Glasgow City college to ensure that they are progressing in their course. We provide extra targeted support for individuals who have experienced barriers throughout education or employment creating opportunities for them to develop transferable skills”.

Throughout this programme we have provided staff with training to build an understanding of how best to support colleagues. We have also utilised newly established networks to strengthen how we advertise and recruit in a more inclusive way and better support staff by making reasonable adjustments.

As part of our newly formed partnership with Enable, they sponsored one of the award categories at our SSF Awards 2024 and invited us to the Europe in Action conference. It has been hugely positive working together and we intend to build from this great start.

LGBT Youth Scotland's Silver Charter Award

We are proud to say we have been awarded the LGBT Youth Scotland's Silver Charter Award! We have been taking proactive steps to ensure LGBTQ+ staff, volunteers, and service users feel safe, supported, and included at SSF. We have reviewed and developed our policies, practices and resources for people connected to SSF.

Being awarded the LGBT Silver Charter Award makes a clear statement that equality and diversity are at the heart of our organisation.



Scottish Government policy areas

UNCRC

(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Young people’s views, rights and voices are integral to our work. Increasing awareness of the UNCRC and the impact that the UNCRC Incorporation (Scotland) Act 2024 will bring is essential, both internally but also with our partner organisations.

We have enhanced our policies and prioritised educating, training and developing our people:

- ★ Children in Scotland, Childrens Rights Training is completed at the point of recruitment.
- ★ Attended the recent Children 1st conference, “A Conversation about Children’s Human Rights in Sport”.
- ★ Our Child Protection Policy has been written in language that is accessible to our young people and includes trauma informed language.
- ★ Our previous referral process has been reviewed and now renamed to “our nomination process” This was based on young people’s feedback, that “referral” had negative connotations and associations and was not trauma informed.
- ★ Our SSF Young Leaders have participated in **sportscotland’s** “Safeguarding for Young Leaders” course. This includes a detailed examination of what rights they have as children themselves but also what rights they have in their role as a young leader.

To the right are examples of how we are ensuring our delivery is aligned to the UNCRC.

Article 12 Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13 Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

- ★ Consultation is built into each of our sessions and is also done more formally quarterly and yearly to ensure young people are having a say on matters affecting them.
- ★ We have commenced the process of recruiting an SSF Youth Advisory board to ensure that young people are involved in the decision making of the charity and their opinions are heard, valued and taken seriously.
- ★ Young People influence the location our services are delivered from to ensure this is a place where they feel safe both in the session and traveling to and from the venue. Our Govan sessions have recently been relocated following feedback from our participants.

Article 31 Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Article 15 Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

- ★ We deliver services for young people which allow them to connect with people and their community safely, access physical activity and youth work and take part in a variety of activities which allow them to learn creatively.
- ★ Our commitment to ensuring young people have access to free, safe activity which supports their physical, social and emotional development is continuing to grow and recently we have started delivering Active Play across North Ayrshire in three school settings. Active Play is a proven programme which supports primary aged children to become more physically active and is designed to develop physical literacy and improve children’s fundamental movement skills (FMS). We are embedding learning from the Active Play programme within our current programmes.

Fair Work Framework

We are a member of the Living Wage Foundation and committed to paying at least the real Living Wage.

Appropriate channels for effective worker's voice

- ★ All employees undertake a variety of “conversations” recorded in Clear Review – our People and Learning system. These will take the form of check-ins, quarterly objective settings, wellbeing and annual performance review.
- ★ We undertake pulse surveys throughout the year on a variety of issues, most recently on employee wellbeing.
- ★ We hold quarterly all employee meetings after Board meetings to update on relevant decisions and gather feedback.

Investment in workforce development

- ★ All employees undertake at least 16 hours of training every year. This objective was surpassed in the last financial year.
- ★ We offer learning loans to employees who wish to pay for more expensive training such as university/college courses relevant to their jobs and provide paid time off to attend these courses.

No inappropriate use of zero hours contracts

- ★ We do not use inappropriate zero hours contracts. We made the decision to restructure the use of sessional staff to ensure that there are guaranteed number of minimum hours where possible and these staff will be moved to contracts of employment.

Action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace

- ★ We have an EDI working group to help create a more diverse workplace which has representation at all levels of the organisation including Board.
- ★ We aim to ensure that one gender identity won't represent more than 60% of the Board and workforce. This is currently being met.
- ★ Our staff are paid on a scale agreed with the Board on an annual basis and all employees join at the bottom of the scale unless there are exceptional circumstances. This ensures that all employees are paid equally.

Offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of their employment

- ★ We offer flexible working from an employees first day and in addition do not limit the number of times this can be applied for.

Oppose the use of fire and rehire practice

- ★ We do not use fire and rehire practices and will not consider it.



Best Start, Bright Futures:

Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026

A: Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain, and progress in work.

- ★ We offer SSF training and accreditations to adult learners across Scotland.
- ★ We have flexible work options for all staff including young parents to fit with childcare requirements.

B: Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs.

- ★ In Glasgow, the city’s public, third and housing sector partners have committed to tackling child poverty as the key priority in Glasgow, through person-centred and place-based approaches. To lead the way on this ambition, a multi-agency Child Poverty Pathfinder has been established, working in partnership with the Scottish Government and the city’s Community Planning structures and plans. SSF have signed up to the No Wrong Door network, which is a network of service providers and organisations that contributes to the Pathfinder. It promotes and develops tools for holistic working and case management to provide a person-centred approach. It will reshape how organisations in the city work together, ensuring that citizens can access support seamlessly from multiple organisations.
- ★ We continue to promote and introduce young people and families to local support services and continue to play a key role as “community connector”, ensuring communities are connected and aware of the services available to them.

- ★ We provide food, hygiene products, access to food vouchers and back to school packs after holiday times for young people in a dignified and person-centred way.

C: Supporting the next generation to thrive - Embed the Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

All SSF delivery is based on the GIRFEC principles and values.

- ★ We are supporting young people to grow and thrive by providing afterschool and evening physical activity and youth work provision, alternative curriculum provision, holiday programmes, wellbeing support along with providing clothing.
- ★ We offer intervention and prevention programmes for young people, meaning young people have the opportunities to engage in positive activity to improve their lives, wellbeing and develop skills.
- ★ Many of the young people we are working with are affected by the poverty related attainment gap and as an organisation we are committed to closing this gap. We offer accessible SCQF accreditations level 2-5 so young people receive tangible recognition for their work. Being able to provide recognised accreditations for the young people contributes towards the poverty related attainment gap, building young people’s skills for the future and supporting young people to gain employment.
- ★ We build connections, trust and relationships adopting a trauma informed approach. We will have activity on during the day as well as in the evening, to encourage young people to leave their homes, engage in positive activity and reduce isolation.

- ★ We provide young people with 1-2-1 personal development support, a safe place to talk about trauma and challenges, complete accreditations, and qualifications.
- ★ We use physical activity to regulate stress and buffer effects of poverty and provide young people with opportunities to take part in activities out with communities and comfort zones.
- ★ Young people, through participation in creative workshops learn about budgeting and financial awareness to increase their understanding and knowledge about their entitlements. We support them to access these when required.



Climate change action plan

As part of our commitment to wider sustainability, we have been working to improve our environmental practices and reduce our emissions. Key to the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan is delivering a just transition to ensure that fairness is at the heart of climate action and that individuals and communities are not left behind.

The work that we do aims to combat the effects of poverty and buffer against trauma and adversity and we know that often the effects of climate change can impact more negatively on those living in poverty. For this reason a key focus of the goals and actions we identified through our Environmental Impact Strategy are to engage and enable young people to take climate action and live sustainably. By doing so we aim to reach communities and contribute towards achieving the outcomes outlined in the Climate Change Plan in a just and fair way.

We believe in collaborative working to make the biggest impact and have established some strong partnerships to help us to achieve mutual goals in tackling climate change and enabling young people to take action on this topic.

What we are doing

Climate Education for Young People

In order to engage on this topic in a meaningful way with our young people, we collaborated with Sustainable Pathways to create a fun, interactive and action-oriented workshop which will be embedded across all of our programmes. We recently secured funding to upskill all of our delivery team to enable them to deliver the workshop. This means that all our young people will participate in a workshop on the topic of climate change and they will learn about the problems caused by climate change, and sustainable solutions which they can embed into their daily lives which will have a positive impact on our planet. The workshop covers areas such as transport and travel; what we buy; recycling and re-use; how we eat and energy.

Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

We've been encouraging staff to use a sustainable travel hierarchy when thinking about how they travel. We are working towards reducing the number of miles travelled by car and promoting active and sustainable travel options where possible. To help enable active travel we secured funding for a secure bike pod and clothes drying unit for our Glasgow office. We have been working towards achieving the Cycling Friendly Award and this will help us to achieve that. Access to the bike pod and clothes dryer will be available to our young people meaning that all our young people in Glasgow will have barriers removed to travelling actively and this is another area where we will influence and encourage our young people to take climate action.

In addition to this, we support all of our young people to apply for their concessionary bus travel passes to enable them to travel using public transport.

Waste and the Circular Economy/What We Buy

We collaborated for the second year with ApparelXchange (AXC) on our sportswear donation drive. Through this collaboration we want to reduce the amount of clothing going to landfill and increase access to clothing for those who need it most. We want to raise awareness of the problem of over-consumption and influence consumers towards buying pre-loved clothing. This is a topic that we pick up with young people through our workshop, and we have plans to take participants from our programmes to the AXC warehouse to provide education about the impact of fast fashion and over-consumption on the planet. Compared to 2022, our reach increased, and we had an over 500% increase in donations. The active wear that we receive is processed and re-distributed to young people from SSF and other partners, addressing the barrier of access to suitable clothing for participation in sport and physical activity.

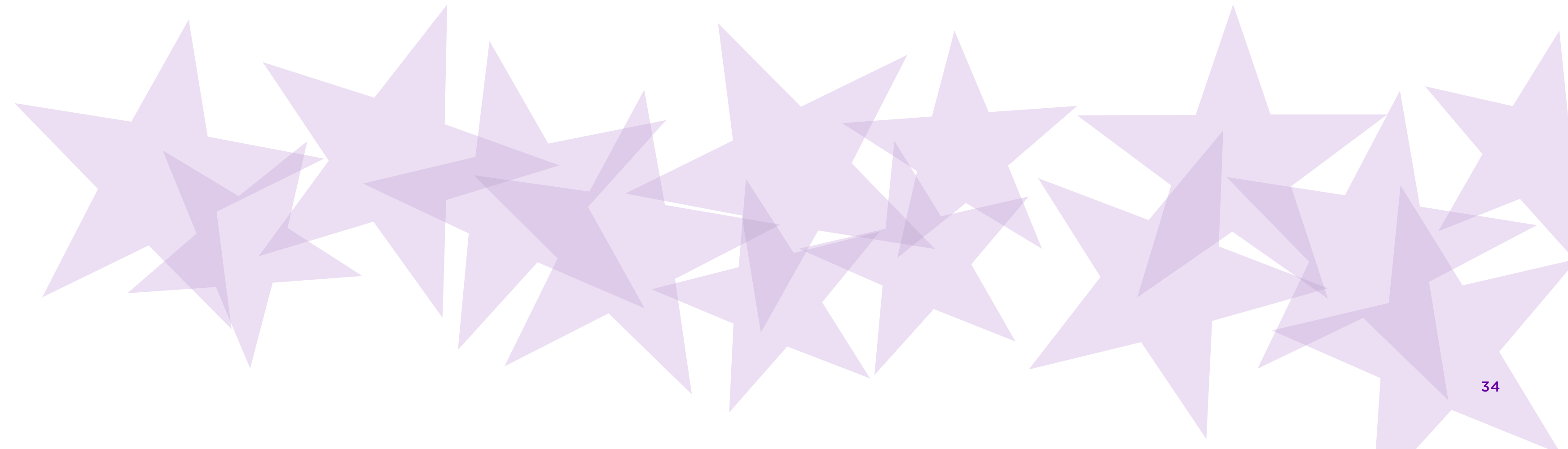
We've started to establish a partnership with Scottish Water. They have pledged to donate 180 re-usable water bottles for distribution to our young people participating in our programmes. Part of our focus is on reducing the use of single use plastics, and the introduction of re-usable water bottles will support this. We also plan to use the opportunity to educate our young people about the negative impacts of single use plastics, the pollution caused by plastics entering our waterways, over-use of water and highlight potential apprenticeship and employment opportunities through Scottish Water.

Active Scotland Outcomes Framework

We have continued to strengthen our work with Scottish Governments Active Scotland Division (ASD) to support more young people be more active, more often and deliver against the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework. Providing access to opportunities to experience the many benefits of physical activity and sport is a right we want every young person to have.

We have:

- ★ Collaborated and led multi-sectoral partnerships to ensure physical activity can contribute to different policy areas such as health, education, skills development, and communities.
- ★ Shared our robust evidence base with partners regarding working with communities experiencing challenge. Sharing practice on how best to get children living with poverty active and stay active.
- ★ Allocated time, expertise and investment towards young people and communities who are least active and facing the greatest barriers to participation to help reduce inequalities.
- ★ Empowered young people to complete training, education, accreditations and go back into their communities to be a force for positive change in society.
- ★ Developed and delivered education and training around trauma informed approaches in sport. We will work strategically with ASD to strategically embed this with more partners working in sport and communities.



Children's rights and wellbeing impact assessment

Children’s rights and wellbeing impact assessment

We are committed to protecting and promoting children’s human rights and ensuring that our young people are at the heart of and involved in our decision making. From our youth trustees to the involvement of young people in our programme development, we use our [CRWIA](#) to ensure that children’s human rights are embedded in our policy and practice.

You can also view our own impact assessment [here](#).



Our upcoming year

Our upcoming year

We will further develop environmentally sustainable working practices creating a positive impact on people, society, and the environment.

We will continue to work towards Scotland’s vision where children’s human rights are embedded in all aspects of society to recognise, respect and promote children’s rights. These include the right to be treated fairly, to be heard and to be as healthy as possible.

We will strengthen our strategic partnerships with local authorities and partners, aligning our regional resources and teams to place based working.

We will embed mental health and wellbeing practice across all our programmes.

We will continue to enable greater inclusion and diversity across our programmes, workforce and board.

We will raise the profile of our work and target our equality, diversity and inclusion campaigns aligned to our beliefs and the needs of our young people.

We will support young people engagement with Scottish Government and elected members to action their ideas for change.

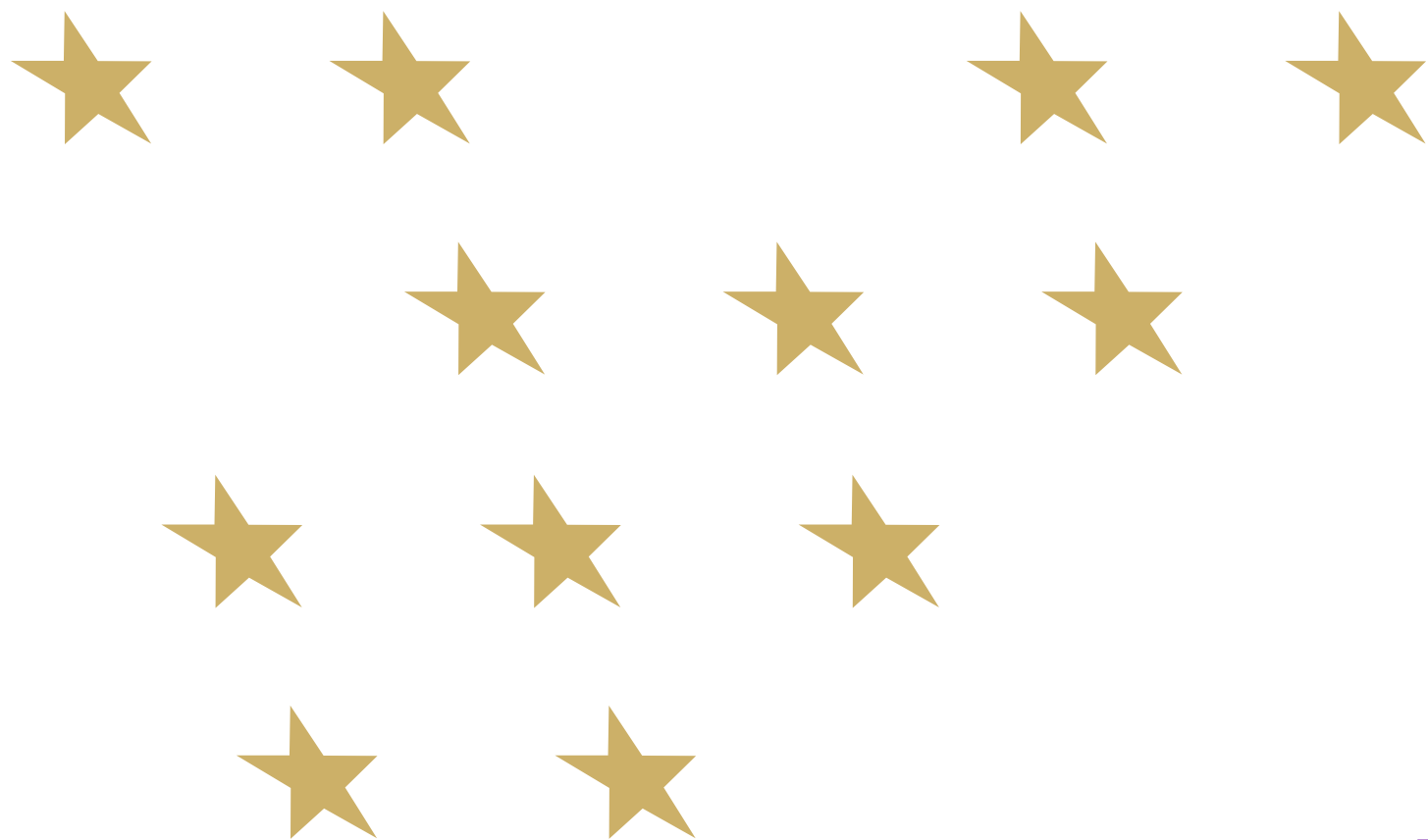
We will provide more young people with opportunities to enhance their learning, prospects, and employment opportunities by working with DYW and schools.

We will work with the sporting workforce to educate and raise awareness of trauma and adversity and the link with sport and physical activity.

We will co-produce conferences and learning events with partners including Actify, Evaluation Support Scotland, Spirit of 2012 and **sportscotland**.

We will share learning with the sporting system and partners around our approach to understanding impact and evidence-based practices.

We will continue to be a Fair Work First employer and ensure it continues to underpin our employment practices.



Our annual outcomes

Our annual outcomes

★ Young people improve their confidence

Young people report increased confidence	95%
Young people report they are able to do new things	93%
Other stakeholders report increasing confidence	100%

★ Young people build resilience and aspirations

Young people think more about their goals for the future	92%
Young people feel more positive about themselves, their lives, or their futures	82%
Young people feel more able to tackle problems and overcome challenges	87%
Other stakeholders report increases in young people's resilience	97%
Other stakeholders report increases in young people's aspirations	98%

★ Young people have strengthened support networks

Young people build positive relationships with others	91%
Young people feel more supported by others in their community	86%
Young people report increased knowledge and access of local services available to them	82%

★ Young people reduce risk taking behaviour

Young people report positive changes in behaviour	86%
Other stakeholders report positive changes in young people's behaviour	94%
Young people are more aware of the risks around harmful substances	74%
Young people report being less involved in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour	85%

★ Young people develop physical and personal skills

Young people report an increase in their skills	98%
Other stakeholders report young people's skills increasing	100%
Young people have got better at budgeting and managing their money	64%
Total number of individuals completing accreditations	1759
Total number of accreditations achieved	2027

★ Young people improve their learning, employability, and employment options

Young people report their attendance and/or attainment at school improving	72%
Total number of young people taking part in learning and training	1677
Total number of young people progressing to employment/internships/modern apprenticeships	41

★ Young people improve their health and wellbeing






Young people report increases in wellbeing against SHANARRI indicators	96%
Other stakeholders report increases in young people's wellbeing against SHANARRI indicators	100%
Young people report the programme has helped with their mental health	78%
Young people report they are more active since joining the programme	88%

★ Young people contribute positively to their communities

SSF Young Leaders volunteering within their community	56
Number of volunteer hours completed by young people	6470
Young people complete community focused awards	154
Total number of community focused awards completed by participants	192
Young people feel their contribution, links with communities, and social interaction are improving	66%
Other stakeholders report improvement in young people's contribution, links with communities, and social interaction	100%

“They invested
in me, involved
me, they cared
about me.”



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SSF 
Transforming young lives
through sport