



Lancashire
Youth
Challenge

IMPACT REPORT 22-23

Registered Charity: 1163469



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Page 2

THEORY OF CHANGE

Page 3

DELIVERY OUTPUTS

Pages 4, 7, 8, 11 & 12

CASE STUDIES

Pages 5, 6, 9, 10, 13 & 14

OUTCOMES

Pages 15 & 16

FURTHER INFORMATION

Page 17



INTRODUCTION

I am really pleased to present our Impact Report 2022-2023 for Lancashire Youth Challenge (LYC), having made the decision this year to present a more visual mix of facts, figures and real-life case-studies about what we do, how much of it we do and most importantly the “so what?”.

The report is a celebration of the incredible and hard-earned achievements of our young people as well as the dedication, skills, and motivation of our board, staff and volunteers. Read alongside the more detailed narrative written in our Annual Report 2022, this document looks at the progress we have made based upon a ‘Theory of Change’ model and together they provide a comprehensive picture of the truly life enhancing experiences we offer and how much they can have a lasting impact on the lives of local young people referred to our service.

This year we have experienced a significant increase in our turnover, and as a direct result, our output. This rise is due to securing new commissions from the Ministry of Justice, Active Lancashire, and the Westminster Foundation. The expansion of our output has on the one hand been exciting and developmental, but on the other, has been challenging and difficult, especially in terms of staffing.

To support our growth, we appointed new team members including two part time Youth Support Workers, one part time Creative Producer and, also established a new post of full time Project Coordinator. Our new appointments have made a significantly positive impact on the charity as a whole and in the lives of the young people we support. The team’s time and expertise has enabled the charity to deliver far more exciting, innovative, and ambitious projects.

WHAT DID WE DO?

LYC continue to focus on our aim to nurture, support and challenge young people living in North Lancashire in overcoming barriers and obstacles so that they can achieve personal success. The young people we work with are dealing with significant personal challenges, which include; managing their mental health, coping with trauma, family breakdown, youth offending, housing poverty and/or family pressures.

At the heart of our ethos is the belief that everybody can achieve personal success and learn new skills when given equality of opportunity, meaningful encouragement, and access to high quality provision.

The LYC ‘Theory of Change’ model underpins our aspiration that young people should be equipped to manage both their own physical and mental well-being, feel safe and supported by both adults and peers and have the confidence to try new skills. In addition, they should feel able to express themselves, feel listened to and respected as active citizens in their local community.

We continue to improve our systems for gathering impact data, so that we can capture not only the diversity of engagement opportunities for young people, but also the very real changes that take place for participants on their own personal journey to success, as demonstrated in the 3 case-studies.

I hope you find it an interesting and engaging read.

Guy Christiansen
CEO



THEORY OF CHANGE

OUTPUTS

Fitness & Well-being Challenges

Life Skills Challenges

OPITW Cultural & Creative Education Challenges

Outdoor Challenges & Annual Expedition

Work Preparation Programme

1 to 1 Mentoring

Peer Mentoring

MECHANISMS OF CHANGE

Young people are equipped with the skills to manage their physical and mental well-being

Young people feel safe and supported

Young people feel listened to and respected

Young people feel they are positively contributing to their community

Young people feel confident to express themselves

Young people develop confidence to try new things

Young people feel a sense of purpose and achievement, and contribute to society

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Increased respect for themselves and others

Increased empathy and compassion

A greater commitment to equality and diversity

Increased motivation

Increased aspirations and a clear plan to achieve personal ambitions

Improved social interaction and communication skills

Increased independence

A greater sense of personal responsibility and maturity

LONG TERM OUTCOMES

Young people will have a greater understanding of their place in the world and how they can enable and facilitate positive, meaningful change in their lives and the wider community.

Long term improvements to physical and mental health and well-being

Positive long-term relationships with peers and others

A developed sense of self efficacy

Educational attainment

Enhanced life skills

DELIVERY OUTPUTS

OVERALL

91

Young people recruited to our core weekly programme.

88

12-18 year olds

3

19-25 year olds

51

Male

35

Female

5

Non-Binary

1453



Opportunities for participation. 470 young people engaged in the Our Place in the World Creative and Cultural Education programme.

381

Educational participatory workshops, residentials, and events.

3 Senior Peer Mentors, Josh, Paige and Amber were awarded prestigious regional awards by the **Lancashire Association of Boys and Girls Clubs** for their contributions supporting LYC.



CASE STUDY 1 ISSAC



Following a suggestion from his CAMHS support worker, Isaac started coming to Lancashire Youth Challenge (LYC) when he was 12 years old. Back then Isaac was finding school life “shocking”. He was getting bullied by his peers, felt like he couldn’t talk to people and was struggling in lessons. His mum knew something wasn’t right as Isaac was coming home anxious, even crying, and not wanting to eat. He had convinced himself that the teachers were targeting him, and that when the whole class was being disciplined it was personal, as if the shouting and criticism were being directed at just him. Isaac had a great relationship with his mum, but he rarely socialized with any friends, preferring to spend his time alone, on Youtube. Looking back, he recalls that “there really was no happiness at all”.

Luckily for Isaac, his mum insisted on getting support, which resulted in more understanding from the school, a referral to CAMHS and a psychologist called Polly, which started him on the right path to dealing with his extreme anxiety. The decision to take up Polly’s suggestion to go along to LYC, was a huge turning point for Isaac.

“I didn’t really know what it was all going to be about, I’d thought it was just about doing a bit of bush craft skills, which sounded ok, but then I met Sam and what really grabbed my attention and caught my eye was hearing about them cycling from here to Paris! That’s what got me and I thought, ‘right... sure,’ and I joined my first session the same day but I didn’t think it was going to be all this!”

Over the next two years, Isaac has become an active member of the group, regularly attending Monday evening life skills sessions as well as “sometimes going and sometimes not” to the Tuesday night gym class. He’s completed a summer and winter challenge, attended other residential well-being weekends as well as getting to do those bush craft survival sessions! Most importantly for Isaac, he has overcome a whole raft of personal challenges as a direct result of the support from the LYC team. Mum explained how Isaac believed that the safest place for him was always with her and that previously when he was asked to go somewhere by himself, he would refuse.

“I have a phobia of sickness and I panic that someone is going to be sick around me and then I’m going to be. For the summer challenge to Wales, the biggest part of the challenge for me was just getting there. It was a two-and-a-half-hour journey, and someone was actually sick! But because we had a stop and they (Sam, Emma, Ian from the LYC Team) were talking to me, I thought, ‘well I’m halfway there, I might as well keep going’ and then I felt good it also meant I got to achieve all the other things with everyone else; the kayaking, canoeing, and climbing Mount Snowden.”

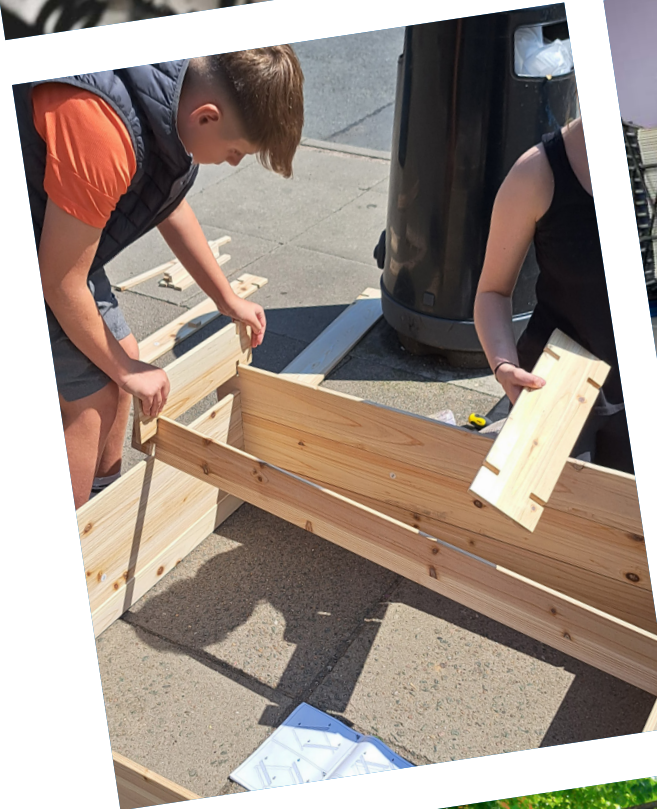
CASE STUDY 1 ISSAC

It's not all plain sailing (or canoeing!) Isaac recently suffered a set back since coming off the medication that helped him cope with his anxiety levels, and in December 2022 he received a formal diagnosis for Autism Spectrum Disorder so he now has additional support from school as well as CAHMS. Isaac also feels that he has learnt lots of strategies since coming to LYC to help him to manage his anxiety better.

"The challenges you do with LYC are so different from going on a school trip, they talk to you differently and it makes you want to do it. When I don't think I can achieve something, Emma-Jay will say 'How many times did you die? What's the worst that can happen? Just give it a go, just try it once'. They've helped me overcome so many fears, including staying away from home and being with other people. Previously I didn't have the right mind-set, they helped me change that!"

Isaac has made lots of friends since coming to LYC and is positive about his future, which includes going on to study A levels, get some flying experience and eventually become a pilot. He's optimistic he can achieve these things since learning that when he panics, he can do something about it.

"LYC doesn't just help young people, they also help the families. They are brilliant, I don't know who taught them, who gave them the tools to do it. They have changed Isaac's life for the better" - Isaac's mum



DELIVERY OUTPUTS

PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING



Young people took part in the triathlon, building stamina, fitness, and strength.

5

Mile cross-bay walk from Flookburgh to Chapel Island and back fund raising for Cancer Care.

67

Miles of road cycling from Walney Island to Morecambe Promenade.

51

Miles completed in the gym on static exercise bikes.

A "virtual" swim of Morecambe Bay, swimming miles in relay – a total of

520

lengths

The project also included - Bike Ability training, cycle maintenance, and road safety awareness.

12

Weeks defence based programme of Krav Maga with 25 young people.

9

Attended indoor climbing at Lancaster University for 3 months followed by an outdoor rock-climbing trip.

12

Attended weekly gym sessions equating to 864 hours working on core strength, cardio workouts and sports activities.

MINDFULNESS AND MENTAL WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

34

Young people attended emotional health and wellbeing Reflections workshops.

25

Young people engaged via our new **RESTORE** project at schools in Leyland. Providing over 60 hours of engagement.

48

Weeks of our Time to Breathe/ Reflections programme including Life-skills sessions, emotional wellbeing sessions and residential challenges.



8



DELIVERY OUTPUTS

ANNUAL EXPEDITION PROGRAMME

3

Residential challenge experiences - Spring Challenge, Island Summer Challenge, and Winter Challenge.

SPRING CHALLENGE



10

Travelled to Langton Adventure Centre in Patterdale, which saw the team take on rock climbing, orienteering, bush crafting, canoeing, and ghyll scrambling.

ISLAND SUMMER CHALLENGE

13

Completed a week long outdoor adventure expedition on the island of Anglesey with Big Adventure. Activities included coastering, rock climbing, sea cliff abseiling and, jumbo paddle boarding.



WINTER CHALLENGE

8

This year's Winter Challenge took place at Ormside Mill. A team of 8 scrambled up a dry river, crawled under a waterfall, waded into a massive cave and took time out for creativity through poetry, spoken word, and mindfulness.



CASE STUDY 2

MANOT



Manot was born in Egypt and came over to England with his mum and two brothers when he was 10 years old. It was a difficult and lonely time for him and his family facing a new life and culture and without any English language skills. When they first arrived, the family were allocated a Family Support Worker. Aside from day trips out with her, Manot didn't go outside of his house unless it was to go to school. "I didn't really feel like it", he said, "I didn't know how to communicate with anyone" so it became easier to just stay at home.

The language barrier also meant that Manot struggled in school. Although he was given a translator at primary school, she didn't speak the same Sudanese Arabic as him, which meant although he understood a little of what she was saying to

him, there was a lot he could not understand.

"Not knowing the language meant that a lot of the time I didn't know what was going on. Even though the school were supportive, and everyone was friendly, it was frustrating as I just couldn't communicate with them. Moving to high school, it seemed that communicating got even harder and more confusing. It felt lonely because I was just sitting in the corner, and I would just look around people tried to talk to me but I didn't really know how to speak back."

Luckily for Manot, one of his older brothers had been referred to Lancashire Youth Challenge to help with his English communication skills and to build his confidence to socialise. Having seen the difference it had made, Mum spoke to Youth Worker, Sam, and then Manot joined LYC in 2020 when he was 12 years old. Within a month he had signed up with a cohort of young people to take on the Summer Challenge that included ghyll scrambling, rock climbing, caving, wild swimming, canoeing, paddle boarding and hiking.

"My brother was also on the challenge so at first it was easy for me to spend most of the first day sitting with him but by day two I was feeling far more comfortable. I think just spending all the time with everyone under the same roof, sleeping in the same room and with no internet connection so you couldn't sit using your phones, meant I got pretty good at talking to people."

Manot hadn't previously seen himself as an outdoor person or that he would want to do anything outside. Now he is hooked. The gym sessions helped to build up his stamina and just from taking part in that very first challenge, he came away feeling part of a team and with a greater understanding of how mentally and physically strong he could be with the help of others.

"LYC taught me to be more resilient and that I am not alone. They taught me how

CASE STUDY 2 MANOT

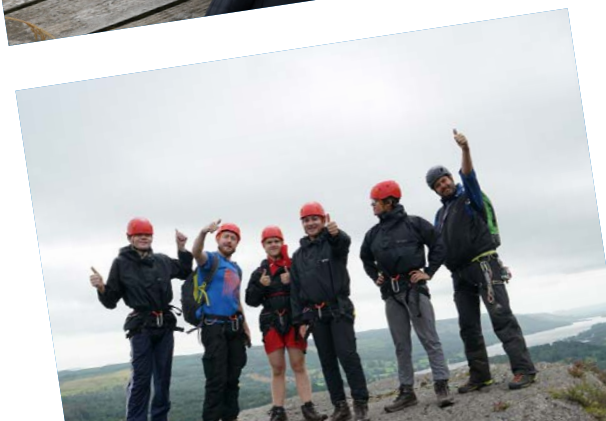
to socialise and how to speak the language. If they didn't do this kind of stuff, I would probably be at home right now. Yes, if it wasn't for the team and their support, I probably would have given up and gone home."

A particular LYC session opened his eyes to the negative effects of social media. This awareness of its addictive nature had significantly reduced the time he spends on his phone. Instead, he's focused on more physical challenges and is particularly proud of reaching the top of both Scafell Pike and Mount Snowden:

"My legs were aching, it really hurt. I reckon if I hadn't have gone to the gym sessions, I wouldn't have been able to do that. In my mind, I was like, I should just go back down, it's just too hard, especially on Snowden because it was all stairs. The team were all just singing to each other, talking to each other. One girl was like a powerbank. She said we're like a phone that needs charging and she would charge us by supporting us and encouraging us to get higher. When we made it to the top, it was cloudy, but it was still really good, I was really proud of myself."

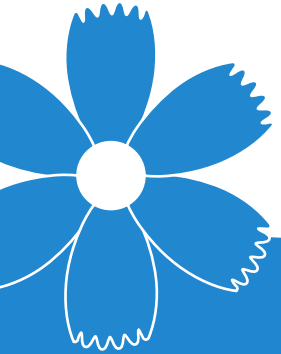
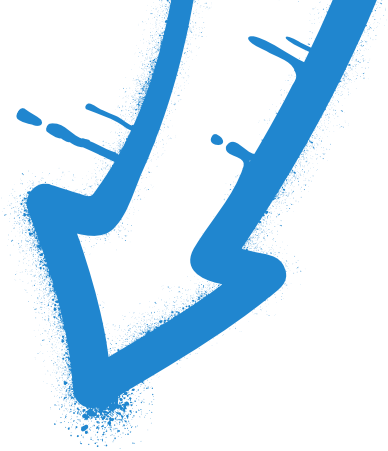
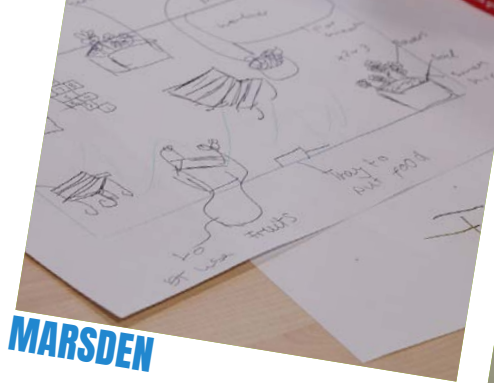
It's looking like some of that resilience will be a real benefit in the future as Manot wants to be a successful business entrepreneur so that he can invest in projects like LYC that help people just like him.

"I want to meet good people and I want to help other people just like me that grew up lonely so that they know they are not alone."



DELIVERY OUTPUTS

COMMUNITY IMPACT CHALLENGES



1

STRIVE2THRIVE

Working with Strive2Thrive in Ribbleson, we helped to re-wild and refurbish a community allotment.



We worked alongside young people at Stanleys Community Centre to help build their Indoor Fitness Wall and develop an outdoor growing space.

STANLEYS 3

With investment from **Active Lancashire**, we supported four youth and community charities to realise their own community impact projects



2

CNOS

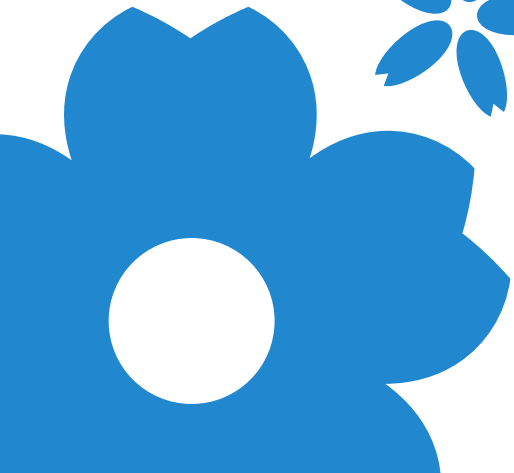
We supported Community Network and Outreach Service in Leyland to build a community garden in Moss Side.



4

MARSDEN HEIGHTS

The team helped build a Community Sensory Garden, at Marsden Heights Community College in Nelson.



DELIVERY OUTPUTS

CULTURAL & CREATIVE EDUCATION PROJECTS



1.5K

Young people received a Change in a Box creative pack from Joseph Rynhart.

Funded by Arts Council England, the project used art as a means of engaging with their local communities.

FIND YOUR PURPOSE

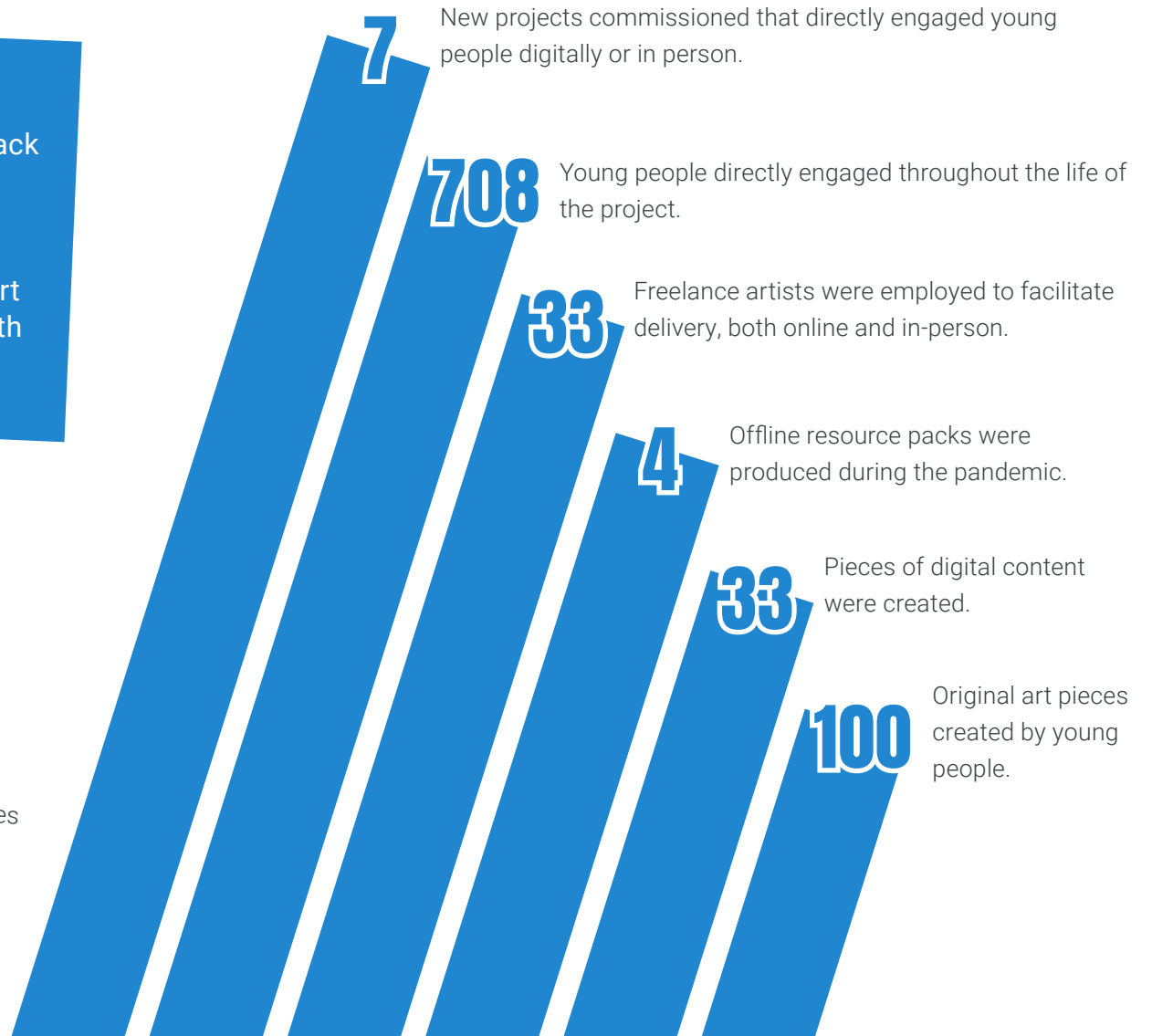
A work preparation and life skills project, delivered in partnership with Adullam. Areas covered included:

- CV writing
- Team building
- Problem Solving via challenges
- Harrison assessment
- Interview Preparation
- Skills Building
- Meet the professionals



OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD CULTURAL & CREATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME 20-22

Young people engaged in high quality creative arts-based activities, designed to empower and encourage comment on their place in the world.



CASE STUDY 3 PAIGE



Paige was a quiet and shy girl when she first came to LYC at 13 years old. Her parents suggested she get involved in the hope that being a part of the project would help build up her wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem.

"I had a few friends, in school, but I wasn't very confident, and I did get bullied. I've always enjoyed learning; it was just the bullying that ruined school for me. I'm not sure why it happened, I suppose I was a little different. Most girls had their hair up, had the right handbag or wore lots of make-up but I didn't. I didn't really socialise outside of school either. My family would take me on days out, but I didn't hang out with friends I felt too awkward. So instead, I was stuck in a rabbit hole, just scrolling through social media."

In Summer 2021, Paige took part in her first LYC challenge – The 'Highest, Longest, Deepest, Darkest and Wildest' Challenge. There are not many people who can say they have climbed Scafell Pike, canoed the length of Windermere, abseiled to the depths of Cathedral Quarry, explored Yordas Cave and camped out in wild weather on the top of a fell. Paige can, and she reflects:

"I was really nervous because I've never done anything that big before – I was really proud of myself when I did the abseiling bit because I'm not a fan of heights, but I still went down with a bit of encouragement from everyone else. But what also helped me was encouraging other people who were scared too. I found that it helped them because they knew I was also scared but was prepared to give it a go."

Being a part of LYC has helped Paige face her fears and embrace new experiences. She found herself jumping off rocks into the sea, climbing down a cliff face and, perhaps most significantly, meeting and interacting with new people, something she previously found extremely difficult to do. In fact, not only can she hold a conversation but considers herself to be a real chatterbox, *"you can't shut me up now"*.

LYC have provided Paige with so many stand out moments in the three years she has been involved. From the arduous struggle of climbing Mount Snowdon to standing on the top of what she describes as 'a tall wooden beam like a telegraph pole with blocks in it to climb up'. For both challenges the temptation was to give up "my legs were aching so much", or to give in "I was really scared", but with the support of Sam, Guy and the other volunteers she came out on top:

"It's so good to be able to say yes, I did it .. aha ... just that feeling of pride and confidence that you did something you're scared of."

CASE STUDY 3 PAIGE

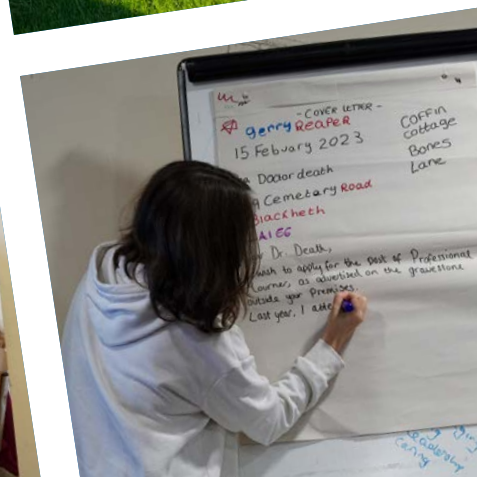
In her latest challenge, she has stepped up into the role of Peer Mentor, a commitment she is clearly excited about as it gives her the opportunity to give something back to the group:

"Sam felt I would be well suited to the role, so I went on some Peer Mentor training to learn all about communication skills, providing support for people and recognizing the importance of clear boundaries between mentor and mentee. I'm no longer just a participant, I've been given a more mature role in the group and act as a role model for the new ones as well as generally helping Sam and the other staff out."

So, what does the future hold? Paige intends to continue at college after successfully completing her level 1 and 2 qualifications in Travel and Tourism. Once she has her Level 3 qualification the intention is to go on to work in the travel industry. It's a career she was very unlikely to pursue if she had remained the quiet, shy girl in her 'rabbit hole'.

"Being a part of the group has generally made me happier, it's just a nice environment full of nice people who care and want to listen to you –we're one big family and we're all in it together. I'm a lot more active now including going out more with friends and to the gym, I've gained confidence, pride and happiness as well as lots of useful skills."

"It has been such an amazing experience. I am so glad my parents referred me, because if they hadn't I would not be the person I am today."



BENEFITS TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

OUTCOMES



* Figures based on a representative sample.

YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US

They felt a sense of **achievement** and **personal success**, and it was good to **try new things** and **meet new people**.

That they felt **better equipped** to manage their **emotions** and **overall wellbeing**.

The **positive impact** of **being outdoors** had on their **well-being**.

“My ability to approach challenges has changed since I started LYC. I didn't do much before and I couldn't be mentally bothered to do stuff, but with this ace team I've been able to push myself in ways I never thought. Having these opportunities has helped me not to be afraid of challenges and that I am able to persevere in difficult situations.”

Participant

BENEFITS TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

OUTCOMES CONTINUED

88%

Commented on how the programme had supported their physical development, increasing their physical strength and fitness by an average of **36%**.

94%

Of young people felt an increased sense of personal and social responsibility and commented on how they felt more mature.

100%

Felt more confident and had a heightened sense of self-esteem after completing a programme at LYC; stating that on average their confidence had increased by **46%**.

100%

Of young people stated that they had learned more about themselves and the wider world.

81%

Agreed the programme had helped them to develop their self-efficacy and enabled them to feel better able to communicate their thoughts and needs.

100%

Of participants increased their understanding of emotional wellbeing and felt better equipped to understand and manage their emotions by an average of **33%**.

FURTHER INFORMATION

LINKS

For further information you can find a series of links to our social media pages, films and reports below (just click).

Website Home Page

Annual Report 2022

Facebook Page

Time to Breathe Film

Morecambe Bay Youth Triathlon Film

Islands Summer Challenge

OPITW Cultural and Creative Education Programme

THANKS

Once again, a huge thanks to the freelancers, creative practitioners, youth workers, volunteers, trustees, and partners who have contributed to make such a positive and meaningful impact in the lives of the young people we support.



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**



Impact Report produced by
Think Forward CIC.



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CHARITABLE TRUST**



**STONESWOOD
HOMES**

FCSCCT

FRANCIS C SCOTT CHARITABLE TRUST

**Walney Extension
Community Fund**



**Curious
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