



# 2025

## ANNUAL REPORT

PHASE SIX - CASHBACK ACHIEVING GOALS

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1NO  
POVERTY

2ZERO  
HUNGER

3GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING

4QUALITY  
EDUCATION

5GENDER  
EQUALITY

8DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH

10REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES

11SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

16PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



# Introduction

## Welcome from Andy Gould, Chief Football Officer, Scottish FA

It is with great pride that I introduce the 2025 Annual Report for the Scottish FA's CashBack for Communities programme. Now in the second year of Phase 6, "Achieving Goals," this report once again highlights the incredible impact football can have on the lives of young people across Scotland.

Through our continued partnership with the Scottish Government and a wide network of clubs, schools, colleges, and community organisations, we have delivered a programme that not only engages young people in sport but also supports them to grow in confidence, develop new skills, and find positive pathways in life. The stories and statistics in this report are a powerful reminder of the difference we can make when we work together with purpose and passion.

This year, over 4,700 young people took part in our programmes, with a strong focus on those from the most disadvantaged communities. Whether through the Football Champions programme in primary schools, the leadership opportunities in our Volunteer Inspire Programme, or the safe spaces created by Go-Fitba and Kick Aboot, we have seen young people thrive – often in the face of significant personal challenges.

I want to thank every young person who took part this year for their energy, commitment,



and courage. I also want to acknowledge the outstanding work of our staff, coaches, and delivery partners, whose dedication ensures that every session is delivered with care, quality, and a focus on inclusion.

As we look ahead to the next phase of the programme, we remain committed to using football as a force for good – helping young people to achieve their goals, build stronger communities, and shape a brighter future for themselves and those around them.

Many thanks,  
**Andy Gould**  
Chief Football Officer, Scottish FA

# Programme Overview

The Scottish FA's CashBack for Communities Phase 6 "Achieving Goals" programme is based around 2 strands, Alternative Education and Alternative Football.

## Alternative Education

This area consists of 3 strands:

### Football Champions

A P5-7 school programme over 12 weeks within targeted communities consisting of educational subject areas such as Health & Wellbeing and Equality. The programme also has a practical element to it with participants developing and delivering a Football Olympics festival to other younger school pupils.

### Football Leaders

A S4-6 school programme over 6 to 8 weeks within the same targeted communities focusing on coaching skills and working towards a Scottish FA Certificate. The young Leaders are mentored throughout the programme and given advice on organisation and adaptation within sessions with the target that they progress into further voluntary opportunities in their communities.

### Volunteer and Inspire Programme

The VIP provides a tailored pathway of development for young people aged between 16 and 24 with an interest in pursuing a career in the game. Over the course of 6 to 8 months, it provides a series of educational workshops and supports them to gain valuable training and work experience opportunities.



## Alternative Football

This area also consists of 3 strands:

### Go-Fitba

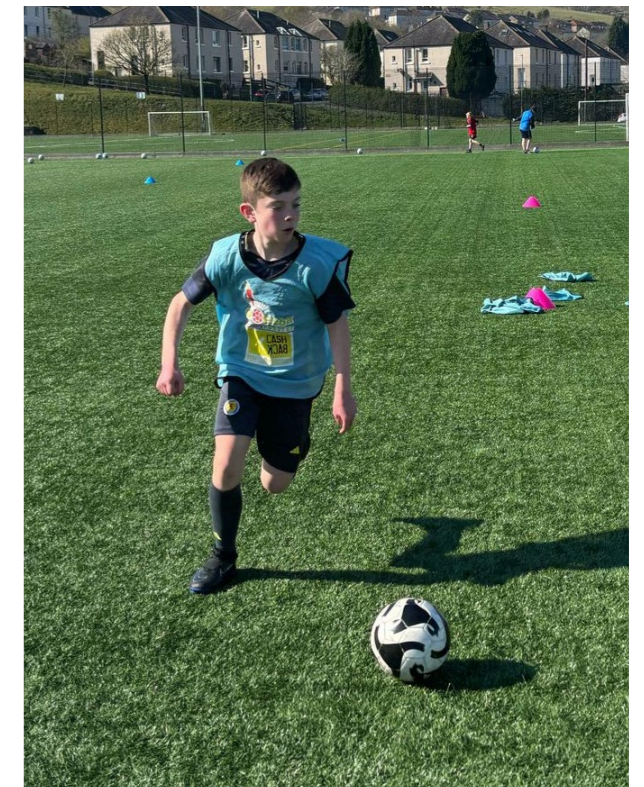
Free holiday hunger camps for children aged approx. 10 to 12 years of age, participating in football activity during school holiday periods whilst receiving a healthy lunch each day.

### Kick About

A targeted 'outreach' project over 10-week blocks that will seek to engage with young people aged between 10–16 years whilst helping to tackle anti-social behaviours in communities.

### Play Fitba

A new programme of diversionary football over 10-week blocks for young people aged between 16 and 25 years in targeted communities providing free casual football in a less formal environment than the commitment of playing within an 11 a-side community team.



whilst helping to tackle anti-social behaviours in communities.



# Participation In Numbers

Year 2 of the programme, in partnership with CashBack for Communities and other stakeholders, has helped support thousands of young people over this last year. This is the impact of just some of those projects highlighted in numbers:



Equality, Diversion  
and Inclusion

MALE 3735 FEMALE 998 NB 59

DISABILITY			
VISION	13	HEARING	8
DEXTERITY	3	LEARNING/UNDERSTANDING	225
STAMINA/BREATHING/FATIGUE	65	SOCIAL BEHAVIOURAL	108
NONE OF THE ABOVE	3664	PREFER NOT TO SAY	595
MOBILITY	16	MEMORY	1
OTHER	94		
ETHNICITY			
WHITE SCOTTISH	3092	WHITE BRITISH	70
WHITE POLISH	76	WHITE GYPSY/TRAVELLER	0
MIXED OR MULTIPLE ETHNICITY	80	PAKISTANI	65
BANGLADESHI	5	CHINESE	21
SCOTTISH AFRICAN	56	OTHER AFRICAN ETHNICITY	64
OTHER BLACK ETHNICITY	93	ARAB/SCOTTISH ARAB	45
PREFER NOT TO SAY		OTHER ETHNICITY	61
			850

4792

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

MALE

3735

FEMALE

998

NB

59

75%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

200

PUPILS INVOLVED IN FOOTBALL LEADERS PROGRAMME

MALE

181

FEMALE

19

NB

0

81%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

117

PARTICIPANTS COMPLETING VIP PROGRAMME

MALE

98

FEMALE

19

NB

0

67%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

100

SCHOOL SENIOR PUPILS ON COACH EDUCATION COURSES

MALE

93

FEMALE

7

NB

0

62%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

756

PUPILS INVOLVED IN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

MALE

505

FEMALE

205

NB

46

83%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

1949

PARTICIPANTS ON DIVERSIONARY FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES

MALE

1619

FEMALE

317

NB

13

78%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

1670

PARTICIPANTS ON GO-FITBA HOLIDAY HUNGER PROGRAMMES

8350

HEALTHY MEALS

MALE

1239

FEMALE

431

NB

0

79%

SIMD 1,2 & 3

# Outcomes

A range of methods of programme evaluation was utilised for the Scottish FA “CashBack for Communities” project to monitor the impact against the five outcomes listed below. This included evaluating key stakeholders and participants through QR codes at the point of activity, integrating questionnaires into the education programmes, and other means to capture feedback to measure against each outcomes set targets.

- OUTCOME 1**  
Young people are diverted from antisocial, criminal behaviour and involvement with the criminal justice system

**OUTCOME 2**  
Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)

**OUTCOME 3**  
Young people’s health, mental health and wellbeing improves
- OUTCOME 4**  
Young people contribute positively to their communities

**OUTCOME 5**  
Young people build their personal skills, resilience, and benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk-taking behaviour



OUTCOMES	YEAR 2024/25			PHASE 6 TO DATE		
Total number of participants	Actual	Target	Variance	Actual	Target	Variance
Number of new people on the programme	4792	3528	1264	8556	5733	2823
Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	1151	556	595	1232	903	329
Young people report that they feel less inclined to participate in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour	2152	1764	388	3335	2867	468
Young people gain an accreditation for a new skill	1173	632	541	2334	1027	1307
Young people report an improved relationship with their school	892	632	260	1177	1027	150
Young people's attendance at school improves	725	632	93	992	1027	-35
Young people gain employment or a Modern Apprenticeship	5	4	1	21	7	14
Young people undertake work experience, where it is part of a recognised course or programme or start a training placement	2	76	-74	148	123	25
The number of participants gaining/taking up: College/ University placement	91	8	83	168	13	155
Young people volunteer	217	108	109	468	176	292
Young people report an increase in feelings against SHANARRI indicators: Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion.	2831	2444	387	4490	3972	518
Young people report their mental health has improved and they have a more positive outlook on life.	810	228	582	924	370	554
Young people report they are more aware of the risks and impacts of harmful substance use	1611	1436	175	1661	2334	-673
Young people report they are less inclined to engage in harmful drugs and/or alcohol use.	1587	1436	151	1638	2334	-696
Young people report their confidence has increased	1300	556	774	1793	903	890
Young people report evidence of participation in physical and sporting activities	3460	1816	1644	6066	2951	3115
Young people report their perception of their neighbourhood improves	2363	1816	547	3458	2951	507
Young people report a heightened sense of belonging to a community	1847	1816	31	2937	2951	-14
Young people report feeling their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	2340	1816	524	3437	2951	486
Young people report increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community	2151	1816	335	3245	2951	294
Young people go on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations	207	76	131	502	123	379
Volunteering contributed by participants	3300	800	2500	5576	1300	4276
Young people report feeling more resilient (e.g. believing in yourself, taking things in your stride, being determined, being self-disciplined, being optimistic, adapting to different situations)	1340	556	784	1647	903	744
Young people report positive, supportive networks – including improved relationships with family, friends and peer mentors	1424	556	868	1688	903	785
Young people report positive changes in their behaviour (e.g. reduced risk taking/ increased understanding of risk/ better ability to make positive choices/ improved understanding of rights and responsibilities)	1336	556	780	1658	903	755

# Alternative Education

## Football Champions



The programme is aimed at P5 to P7 pupils within targeted primary schools across the 6 regions.

The pupils are selected to be part of the group by their school, with a focus on individuals who may be disengaged in learning, have poor attendance or may be involved in anti-social behaviour within their school or community.

The aim is to use football as the vehicle to provide a positive learning experience and develop pupils' knowledge in key areas such as healthy eating, equality and inclusion as well as participating in football coaching sessions to gain the physical benefits. As part of the

programme each pupil has the opportunity to become a young coach later in the programme.

The pupils gain experience in leading a "Football Olympics event" to younger pupils within their school to develop some key skills such as organisation, communication and leadership.

All pupils that are part of the 12-week programme receive the Football Champions Booklet, t-shirt and certificate. Partners/Clubs who deliver the programme encourage pupils to join their community programmes to continue their football journey and to stay involved in football for many years ahead.

### Participating Schools

**Central:** St. Serfs, Banchory, Clackmannan, Redwell, Airth, Ladeside, Carron, Carronshore, Bowhouse & Raploch

**East:** Coupar Angus, Newhill, Rattray, St Stephens, Ladyloan, Hayshead, St. Thomas, Wardykes, Rowantree, Glebelands, St. Puis, St. Kenneths, Cardenden, Lunfinan, Denbeath, Buckhaven, Balcurvie & Lochgelly West

**North:** Merkinch, Central, Dalneigh, Raigmore & Smithton

**South East:** Blackburn, Murrayfield, Our Ladys or Lords, Granton, Pirniehall, Harrysmuir & Wardie

**South West:** St. Winnings, St. Lukes, Tarbolton, Coylton & Blacklands

**West:** Newark, St. Michaels, St. Francis, Klings Oak, Antonine, Camstradden, Blairdardie & St. Clares

Understanding more about consequences with behaviour. Interacting more with boys from the other class. There's more to football than just playing it. You can learn from football.

**Pupil X, Lochgelly PS**

I liked being able to learn more about how my body being healthy helps me get better at football. It was fun being able to be in charge of football sessions rather than being told what to do.

**Pupil X, Central PS**



Making new friends to play football, gaining confidence in school, playing new games and having fun in school.

**Pupil X, St. Clares PS**

Pupils who had previously had difficulties getting along with each other were able to work together in teams.

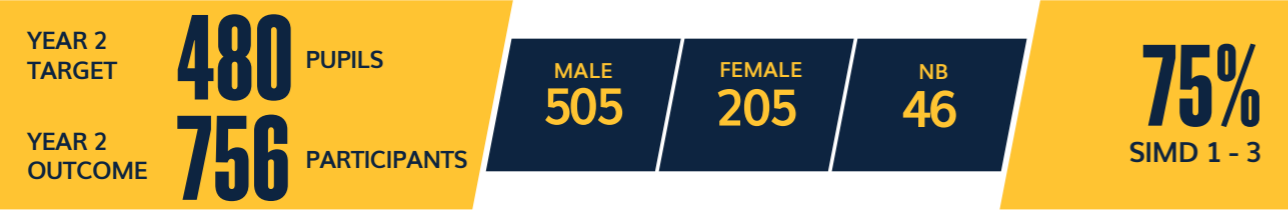
Confidence improved as these children felt part of something special - it helped that we were able to visit the local football club grounds instead of participating in this programme at our own school. Pupils were keen to share their ideas and lead activities.

**Teacher, Ladeside PS**



There were lots of signs of positive changes within the kids who have attended the programme - especially confidence, it was noticeable to see it grow throughout and each day this progressed and was noticeable both on and off the pitch.

**Coach, Drumchapel United**



# Football Leaders



Secondary Schools involved:

**North:** St Machar Academy & Inverness High School

**East:** Craigie High School & Lochgelly High

**Central:** Alloa Academy & Larbert High School

**West:** Drumchapel High School, Port Glasgow & Stephens High School

**South East:** Craigroyston Community High School

**South West:** Ayr Academy, Kilwinning Academy & Auchenhavrie Academy

This project is aimed at S4-6 pupils within the key targeted community secondary schools to deliver a tailored learning programme to approx. 15-20 young people that have been identified via different stakeholders as suitable to engage.

The young people selected, who might be disengaged with education, would undertake a 6 to 8 week 'Football Leaders' programme within schools where they would lead and participate in coaching sessions working towards a Scottish FA certificate.

Thereafter the aim would be to provide the young people with other opportunities at clubs or other stakeholders and we have seen many support the delivery of festivals that the clubs have provided for their community Football Champions. Hopefully further opportunities to get involved with the club in either coaching or football participation can then happen more frequently.

Make drills fun but also challenging.  
**Pupil X, Larbert High School**

I feel more resilient because I made fun sessions which people enjoyed.  
**Pupil X (Larbert High School)**

School Attendance – Was 22% and now 47%.  
**Pupil X (Craigie High)**



Improved skills of being a leader which made me more confident.  
**Pupil X (Craigie High)**

I overcame my challenges by being confident on and off the ball.  
**Pupil X (Port Glasgow High School)**

I personally thought the Scottish FA were great because I learnt a lot and I got a certificate. Now I see the game so much differently for example, it's harder to be a coach than I thought and lastly I really enjoyed it.  
**Pupil X (St Machar)**

The pupils I spoke to were very positive about their time with you both! Great that you can see the potential in the pupils just as we do.  
**Jenny Urquhart, Depute Head - Inverness High School**

Scottish FA has made a huge impact on a targeted group of boys who were disruptive in some classes. They learnt to take responsibility and what it meant to lead in a positive way. The engagement has been superb and the boys have thrived in this particular environment, thank you so much!  
**Mrs Tinto, School Guidance Teacher - St Machar**



I feel more resilient as the drills were working well so we could advance them.  
**Pupil X (Alloa Academy)**

Practice helped improve confidence and resilience.  
**Pupil X (Craigie High)**

I feel more resilient and overcoming these challenges made me feel better about doing the sessions. I forced myself to do it because I know it's going to benefit me.  
**Pupil X (Alloa Academy)**

I think it was good because it taught me to be a better leader and it improved my confidence and talking skills.  
**Pupil X (St Machar)**

# Volunteer Inspire Programme (VIP)



The 'Volunteer & Inspire Programme' is an initiative that has brought together 6 groups of young people across the country from the ages of 16 to 24 years old.

This year 5 of the 6 Scottish FA regions partnered up with Further Education institutions to deliver the programme: West – Glasgow Kelvin College; South-West – Ayrshire College; Central – New College Lanarkshire; South-East – Edinburgh College; North – North-East College. Our East region partnered with 7 different community clubs who nominated young people volunteering within their club.

The main objective of this programme is to bring young people together to help develop a range of practical and personal skills that will be useful in their future life and career. Each group of VIPs have completed this educational programme with a variety of workshops such as Planning, Communication and Goal Setting delivered in partnership with Scottish Sports Futures.

The VIP programme has been enhanced this year with support from Chase Bank for participants to be able to complete the full Scottish FA Level 1 coach education qualifications, which leads to them gaining the UEFA Grassroots Leader Award. Thereafter a key aim is to support the participants with future positive destinations and opportunities to volunteer at local, national events and within local community clubs. This contributes to making the young people more employable when moving forward. In addition to the main regional VIP programmes we also worked in conjunction with Princes Trust to deliver a bespoke 'Get Started in Football Programme' for some of their young participants.

Aside from educational courses, participants have had the opportunity to gain volunteering opportunities to support various programmes, events and community clubs. All has contributed to 100% of young people into positive destinations such as college progression, university, local community clubs, modern apprenticeships or employment.



We've been working with the Scottish FA for some time now, and it's great to see how they prioritise the education and training of their coaches and workforce. SSF's involvement has been primarily via delivering qualification within the VIP programme, but in addition to this, we have also delivered to wider groups such as the Princes Trust as part of the 'Get Started in Football Coaching' project.

Additionally, we began working closer with Scottish FA club leaders to take the first step toward becoming trauma informed through our Trauma Informed Sport and Physical Activity module. We're looking forward to continuing to work together to upskill staff and volunteers who positively impact the communities and individuals who need it the most.

**Shabaz Khan, Education & Training Manager, Scottish Sports Futures**



The Scottish FA VIP Award Programme has had a hugely positive impact on students at North-East Scotland College. It has supported dozens of our sports students in achieving their Scottish FA coaching qualifications, enhancing their employability and confidence.

The programme has also encouraged long-term commitment to volunteering and provided practical, engaging workshops that link directly to academic learning. Over the past two years, this has stood out as a valuable and successful partnership for NESCoI, helping us better prepare students for real-world roles in the sport industry.

**Zack Ellis, External Engagement Coordinator, North-East Scotland College**

# VIP Feedback

The SFA VIP Programme and New College Lanarkshire Partnership has been pivotal in helping the students of NCL develop their coaching practices.

The programme provides industry required qualifications and learning alongside the students Academic Studies to allow further learning and development towards a career within the Sporting Industry.

**Ally Breton, Sport & Physical Activity Lecturer, New College Lanarkshire**



Participating in the SFA VIP project has been an incredibly enjoyable and transformative experience for me. Learning from the SFA and SSF Tutors has not only enhanced my coaching skills but also made me more employable.

The valuable coaching experience I've gained has been instrumental in shaping my journey and preparing me for future opportunities in the sports coaching industry.

**Greg Kirton, VIP Participant**

Being part of the SFA VIP project has been a fantastic experience. The hands-on coaching experience I've gained is invaluable and has greatly contributed to my growth and confidence as a coach.

I have been able to incorporate my learnings into my coaching practice at the Rose Reilly Football Centre on a weekly basis.

**Abi Thomson, VIP Participant**

Through the coaching course, I've gained ideas and skills that make a real difference at the Girls Only sessions. Using fun games to keep girls aged 5+ involved and smiling every week has been really rewarding.

**Female, Young Person, Volunteer Coach, VIP Participant**



# Go-Fitba Holiday Programmes



The 'Power of Football' to impact lives is well documented, however some young people due to the nature of the sport, or associated cost, will drop out or become disengaged. This can result in them becoming involved in antisocial type behaviours. Building on the success of the Go-Fitba project from phase 5, we have continued to provide more avenues to free 'Alternative Football' to help encourage more young people to participate and become less likely to take part in antisocial behaviours.

Go-Fitba provides free bespoke camps that young people aged approx. 10 to 12 can access in the holiday periods. This programme will provide tailored education to help young people understand the importance of not engaging in antisocial behaviours.

Many of these camps have seen services such as the police and fire brigade visit and engage with the young people. Another key aim of the programme is to combat holiday hunger by providing free healthy lunches/breakfasts to all participants in the absence of school meals.

Over 8350 healthy lunches were delivered to participants this year through our grassroots community club partners.



## Go-Fitba Stats



## Go-Fitba Delivery Partners

•Pollok United	•Sauchie Junior Academy
•Thorn Athletic	•Vale of Leven FC
•Drumchapel United	•Wasp Community Club
•Morton FC Community	•Bo'ness United Community Club
•Whitacre Wolves	•The Galaxy Foundation
•Hibernian Community Foundation	•West Park United FC
•Spartans Community Foundation	•Drumchapel Amateurs FCI
•West Lothian Community Foundation	•South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture
•Cowden in the Community	•Ayr United FA
•Dundee United Sports Club	•KA Leisure
•Stirling Albion Foundation	•Vics in the Community
•Motherwell FC Community Trust	•Kilwinning Sports Clubs
•Cumbernauld Colts Community FC	•Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust
•Stenhousemuir FC Community Foundation	•ICT in the Community Trust
•Falkirk Foundation	

# Go-Fitba Participant Feedback

I sometimes find it hard to take part in activities and mix with others but I have really enjoyed this week.

I have enjoyed socialising with people I didn't know.

I liked being able to play football with my friend from school who I wouldn't normally see outside school.

I have enjoyed having a proper kick about during the holidays instead of just taking shots with my pals.

I have enjoyed playing with the older people, I liked the challenge and that they helped me.

I made lots of new friends. I am going to stay friends with them and meet them at the youth club after the football camp is finished.



I love football, but it's usually too expensive. But at this camp, I can play football all week if I want to. I can't wait to come back next time!

Camp food is the best! It's super yummy and keeps me full when I'm playing. Every meal is like a hot picnic!

The police visit was great but hopefully that's the only time I see inside of their van.

It has been great getting to see friends out of school. Lunches, daily challenges and being CashBack camper of the day have been the best.

I have most enjoyed getting to know other girls who also play football.

## Go-Fitba Staff Feedback



It was good to have the young people attending and giving them a safe place to play during the holidays. It gave them the opportunity to build and develop friendships. The young people gained confidence by taking part in activities and sports. They were also included in the cooking of meals and experienced different trips over the week.

One of our participants was autistic and has been attending our sessions for a number of years, so is well known to the coaches, however on the first day he was quite unsure and anxious as he didn't know many of the children who were attending the camp. As the day went on, Liam's confidence grew and he became more involved in the drills and activities each day.

All of the other children were really good with Liam and probably helped him to settle into the group, they encouraged him and helped him throughout the week. Liam tried a number of new activities, including competitions and skills challenges which he was supported in doing so by our coaches and the other participants.

Liam's dad commented on how much he enjoyed being a part of the week and the great opportunity it was for him to be able to attend the sessions each day.

Over the course of the Go-Fitba camp, numerous children have exhibited significant growth in confidence and self-esteem. Initially, many participants showed a lack of confidence in group settings and game-like situations.

However, as the weeks progressed, these children became increasingly willing to engage in group activities and games. They demonstrated enhanced confidence in their skills and improved their ability to communicate and interact with their peers.



We had one participant who felt very uneasy and scared to join in with the football due to a lack of self esteem. However, with the encouragement of coaches and other participants she joined in and loved it.

Her mum made a comment the next session thanking the staff as her daughter was delighted when she got home that afternoon.

Go-Fitba Staff Feedback Cont\*

The project has allowed children to get off the street where they may be hanging about and influenced by others to do bad things.

They have been brought into a positive, structured environment with rules while also getting the chance to take part in a number of football activities throughout the week.

They have been given competition and been challenged which has taught them how to deal with some adversity in a positive way. The participants have been encouraged and have learned from their coaches, and seen the opportunities available to them in football from our coaches, our volunteer helpers and the other players.



Yes, it has given the young people somewhere to go and be active playing sport and also getting fed during the school holidays.

As they are mixing from different schools in a positive environment it is allowing the young people to build relationships and friendships with young people from different areas and backgrounds across the community.

Many participants have a history of antisocial behaviour.

They reported that having a structured routine and engaging activities on Thursdays helped reduce stress, which might otherwise have been managed in unhealthy ways.

During the camp the local community police officers attended with their police van. Kids got the chance to sit in the back of the van and speak with the officers. We felt this gave a positive link and connection between the kids and the officers.

A familiar face should they pass on the street, and potentially less likely to cause bother and be more honest that they know our community police officers.

Alternative Football  
Kick About and Play Fitba



Kick About aims to provide a targeted 'outreach' project that will seek to engage with young people aged between 10 – 16 years.

The concept is to take football out into an area that young people might congregate to provide tailored activity that will not only engage young people but help to deter them from becoming involved in anti social behaviour.

The project will be embedded within the club that will enable them to provide alternative routes to other volunteering, career or educational opportunities; with the club linking with the local schools this will also help increase opportunities to engage with the young people.

Play Fitba will target those young people aged between 16 and 25 years old providing free football in a less formal environment. The research has indicated that young people start to drop out of the game as they get older due to a number of factors (e.g. too formal) and this section of the project is aimed to provide a less formal approach to being involved in club football.

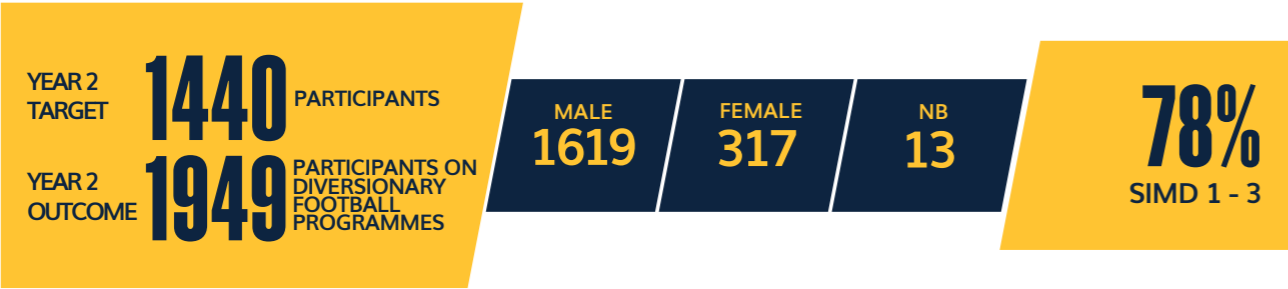
The concept is to provide a more 'drop-in' games project with some tailored educational/ volunteering opportunities to help support young people. This element of the project would enable the clubs to work with key stakeholders to provide referral routes into the project for young people that might be on the verge of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

Kick About & Play Fitba Stats

**96%** feel that they have reduced their involvement in antisocial/criminal behaviour, or trouble (or that it was not an issue before)

**97%** feel an increase in feelings against the SHANARRI indicators (Safety, Health, Achievement, Nurture, Activity, Respect, Responsibility, Inclusion)

**97%** feel they are more aware of the risks and impacts of harmful substance use



Alternative Football Feedback

The group of boys who have attended our 'Kickabout Football' programme have shown an increase in confidence and social-interaction since taking part. They have shown interest in making friendships with each other as a result of the programme, and give regular acknowledgment to each other with high praise, which seems to be boosting their self-belief.

**Morton in the Community**



The participation levels have increased as weeks have went on with participants becoming more and more active at the sessions. Resulting in healthier lifestyle, developing their skills in a safe environment.

**Arbroath FC Community Trust**



The participants all agreed that taking part in this session on a weekly basis meant that they all had something to look forward to. They also agreed that if they weren't at this session they'd likely just be kicking about the streets or sitting inside playing PlayStation etc.

**Blairgowrie & Rattray Community football Trust**



# Case Studies

To highlight the impact of our programmes a number of case studies were gathered covering all areas of the Phase 6 structure. These stories show the success of the CashBack programmes in achieving the desired outcomes, and reflect the positive effect that the programmes have had on young people around the country.

01

AC

Programme    **Play Fitba**

Outcome        **2, 3 and 5**

AC suffered a mental breakdown 2 years ago and was resident at Stobhill's recovery ward. One of our longest participants was also in the ward at the same time and told AC about the session we run at the club. AC suffers from DiGeorge syndrome which has affected his development physically and also has learning difficulties. AC has 2 children and a partner and home life has been very difficult for him. AC requires care and his partner was his primary care-giver. Before joining us AC had also found himself in trouble with the police for breach of the peace and drug possession.

AC has developed massively since joining the programme. From a purely footballing perspective he has improved as a goalkeeper learning how to play with his feet and being coached to judge the flight of the ball. More importantly AC has found a place where he himself says he feels at home. AC has gone from strength to strength and is one of the most popular participants in the group. He has overcome many challenges since joining the programme, one being how AC handles criticism.

At a league day initially, AC found it very difficult to be on the receiving end of constructive criticism from his teammates and would often become stressed and walk off however in recent times AC has stayed the course in every session and has learned to take pointers on board and become a more well-rounded person.

The Trust has been a big part of my life. When we say a big part of my life we are talking about our mental health and that's one of the things they do up here they really help our mental health.  
**Quote from participant**

AC made us aware that he may not be getting the care he requires at home as his partner is his primary caregiver. We then (with his consent) contacted Health & Social Care with concerns and have now managed to get a case worker who is looking into getting AC a better standard of care. With regards to his criminal charges, we have also been in contact with a voluntary member of a social care diversion team who is to make sure that AC is supported throughout the process as AC should, in their opinion and ours, be viewed as a vulnerable person who requires additional support to answer questions.  
**According to Club Staff**

02

DF

Programme    **Football Champions**

Outcome        **1, 2, 3 and 5**

DF's household is busy: he lives with an older brother, two older sisters and three younger sisters. He has an older brother and half sister who live elsewhere. He has been involved in negative incidents in the community where he has physically fought with other children and engaged in verbal arguments with adults. His school attendance is less than 40%. DF was excluded from school several times last year and lacks resilience when he is faced with a task or a situation he finds challenging.

He will opt out of tasks which he views as difficult and will not accept support from school staff to overcome these challenges. He disengages from reading and writing tasks. DF displays poor concentration and does not remain on task without adult intervention. DF lacks self-esteem and chooses to disengage rather than be unsuccessful. He struggles with positive relationships and often says that no-one cares about him. School staff have provided DF with his own space (our Pod) where is he 1:1 with the Principal Teacher.

DF has developed positive relationships with the staff at Stenhousemuir FC who delivered the Football Champions programme at the club. He has benefited from being included in this group as a lot of his time is spent 1:1 with an adult or with very close adult supervision. He has had the opportunity to be trusted and show that he can work with other children. DF has not taken part in any literacy based learning since June 2023. He has not been in a classroom environment since August 2023. Although there were some workbook tasks within the champions programme that he opted out of writing, he completed the majority of pages and always participated in the discussions.

Although there have been moments where he has struggled with the adult decision making during a football activity, on the most part he has responded well to the staff leading the programme. They have treated him with respect and he has never missed a session. We have concerns about his life in the community but DF has went on to attend football matches at Ochilview Stadium. We see this as a positive sign for his future - that Ochilview is now a safe place for him.

DF has recently been accepted into Larbert High School of Football Academy. He wrote on his application form that he has been involved in the Football Champions programme. He will not be attending LHS on a full timetable in August however he currently has enhanced transition visits to the Diner - a non academic support room for individual pupils. I am glad that he will continue to have his interest in football supported at LHS.  
**According to Club Staff**

03

Bailey

Programme    **Go Fitba**

Outcome      **1, 3 and 5**

Bailey is a young boy who lives locally. Bailey can find himself getting in trouble at school as he struggles to concentrate, which leads to him playing up. Bailey can struggle to regulate his emotions, and finds himself getting angry at little things and lashing out at others. However, he really enjoys his football, the activity keeps him active and happy. We have found Bailey is much happier and content when playing his football.

At the beginning of the week, Bailey wouldn't interact with anyone other than a few of his friends, and would get annoyed if he wasn't in their team when playing matches. However, as the week progresses through sitting with different people at various times, Bailey was able to make new friends which meant he was getting less frustrated when getting put in teams and he had a much wider friends network'.

Thanks to the help of the coaches, I feel so much more comfortable with people I don't know very well. I've made lots of new friends which is cool.

**According to Bailey, Participant**

As the week progressed, we were really impressed with how Bailey adapted to being in groups with people he didn't know, and how he overcame those challenges. As Bailey grew in confidence with the environment, he displayed great leaderships attributes by actively helping some of the younger participants to engage and enjoy the programme.

**According to Abbie Trotter, Football Development Officer**



04

Lennon

Programme    **Go-Fitba**

Outcome      **2, 3 and 4**

Lennon was referred to us from Action for Children, he has spent most of his life moving place and has no stable living arrangements. Lennon's father has recently came out of jail and is unemployed.

Lennon is staying with his dad alongside 7 other children. He is a lovely boy who has had a hard start to life.

I have loved the football camp, It's been so much fun and I want to be a footballer now.

**According to Lennon**

It's good Lennon is interested in something now instead of sitting around the house. I used to be a keeper when I was younger so we will have something in common now.

**According to Lennon's dad**

Lennon was shy boy when he first attended, he would only talk in a couple of words to adults and wouldn't interact with the other children. Lennon realised he had a natural ability as a goalkeeper and has excelled in this during his time at Go-Fitba. Because Lennon realised he was good at this, he was more inclined to join in, and even joined in the fun games as an outfield player. As the week progressed, Lennon has made some friends at camp and showed a real new passion for football. Lennon has asked us "Can I play for Sauchie and if I do, does that mean I get to play games on a Saturday like other people at my school?".

We have spoken to Lennon's dad and Action for Children and we are delighted to provide Lennon and opportunity to play in one of our teams.

**According to a coach from Sauchie**

That's amazing that Lennon has done so well, we are happy he has found a passion for a sport and we will help support his growth and involvement.

**According to Action for Children**



# 05 Rylan

Programme **Football Champions**

Outcome **1, 2 and 5**

Rylan is a primary school pupil who has had behavioural issues at school over the last couple of years. He has struggled with self-esteem and confidence issues and was a perfect candidate for the Football Champions programme.

I've really enjoyed taking part. I've missed my football and I think I might try and get back playing for a team again. I want to get fit again and be a good example for the younger kids in school.

**According to Rylan (Participant)**



We had reports that Rylan has been a member of the 2012s football team in the past but had left over 2 years ago. This was due to big drop in his confidence and self esteem. He choose to leave the team and since that time his behaviour at school has not been the best, he has been quite disruptive in and around the school environment. When Rylan joined the Football Champions programme he carried on the poor behaviour into his first couple of sessions. However, after those initial sessions Rylan has really engaged with the programme and the coach seen huge improvements in his behaviour.

**According Garry Hay, Regional Education Officer**



At first it was challenging with the group and with Rylan in particular being disruptive. However, the reason for this programme is to try and engage with children who may have different learning needs, so I tried to make our sessions as interactive and engaging as possible. When Rylan seen how much fun the programme was, he got right into it, improved his behaviour and grew so much in confidence.

**According to Colin Hunter (Kilwinning Sports Club Manager)**

# 06 Mitchell

Programme **Go Fitba**

Outcome **3 and 5**

Before Mitchell participated in the CashBack activity, his life was marked by various challenges affecting his health, well-being, and family dynamics. Mitchell is a 10 year old boy living in an area characterised by social economic deprivation and high rates of anti-social behaviour. His family situation is complex, with limited financial resources and strained familial relationships.

Mitchell's parents are both unemployed, facing difficulties in providing for their family's basic needs. The financial strain has contributed to heightened stress within the household, impacting Mitchell's emotional and psychological well-being'.

I had so much fun playing football, the coaches were great and gave us lots of fun drills. I made lots of new friends too.

**According to Mitchell**

Mitchell has shown tremendous growth and resilience during his time in the Easter Camp. He's overcome obstacles and demonstrated a strong commitment to personal development. It's been inspiring to witness his journey and see him flourish into a confident and capable young person.

**According to the Coach/Youth worker**



# 07 Mason

Programme **Kick About**

Outcome **1 and 5**

This programme gave Mason 2 additional nights of football activity each week, which meant he had something to do three out of five nights during the week. He attended every single session that was available and was always there promptly.

He was one of the youngest participants, and he did say he found it challenging playing with the older participants, however he worked really hard and made some good friendships with new people.  
**According to the Coach**

Mason is 13 and lives with his family in a socially deprived/ high area of anti-social behaviour in Dundee. Before taking part in the Kick about programme, Mason would regularly be wandering the streets at night looking for something to do.

He plays football for a team, but they only train once per week and the other 4 nights he was at a loose end and getting himself into bother.

Before this programme I would be bored most nights and have nothing to do. This meant all I did was wander the streets with my mates and sometimes end up in bother.

Since I've been coming here, it has given me something to look forward to and I feel like my confidence has improved due to playing with the older guys.  
**According to Mason (Participant)**



# 08 Malaukai

Programme **Football Leaders**

Outcome **2 and 3**

Malaukai was happy for others to take the lead in the early parts of the programme, but, as he grew in confidence, his communication and organisational skills excelled. At the final football session where the leaders organise and deliver a festival to a group of their younger peer, Malaukai took a lead role and help organise his fellow participants practices and co-ordinated the children into their groups.

He led his practice in a very positive and enthusiastic manner which created a fantastic atmosphere the young people taking part in the festival. It was very pleasing to see Malaukai's personality and skills grow throughout the programme.  
**According to Craig Potter ( Educator for Football Leaders programme)**

Malaukai is a young person living in a one parent family in a high area of deprivation. He took part in the Football Leaders programme which is very beneficial to him as he plans to move on to sports coaching in a Further Education establishment.

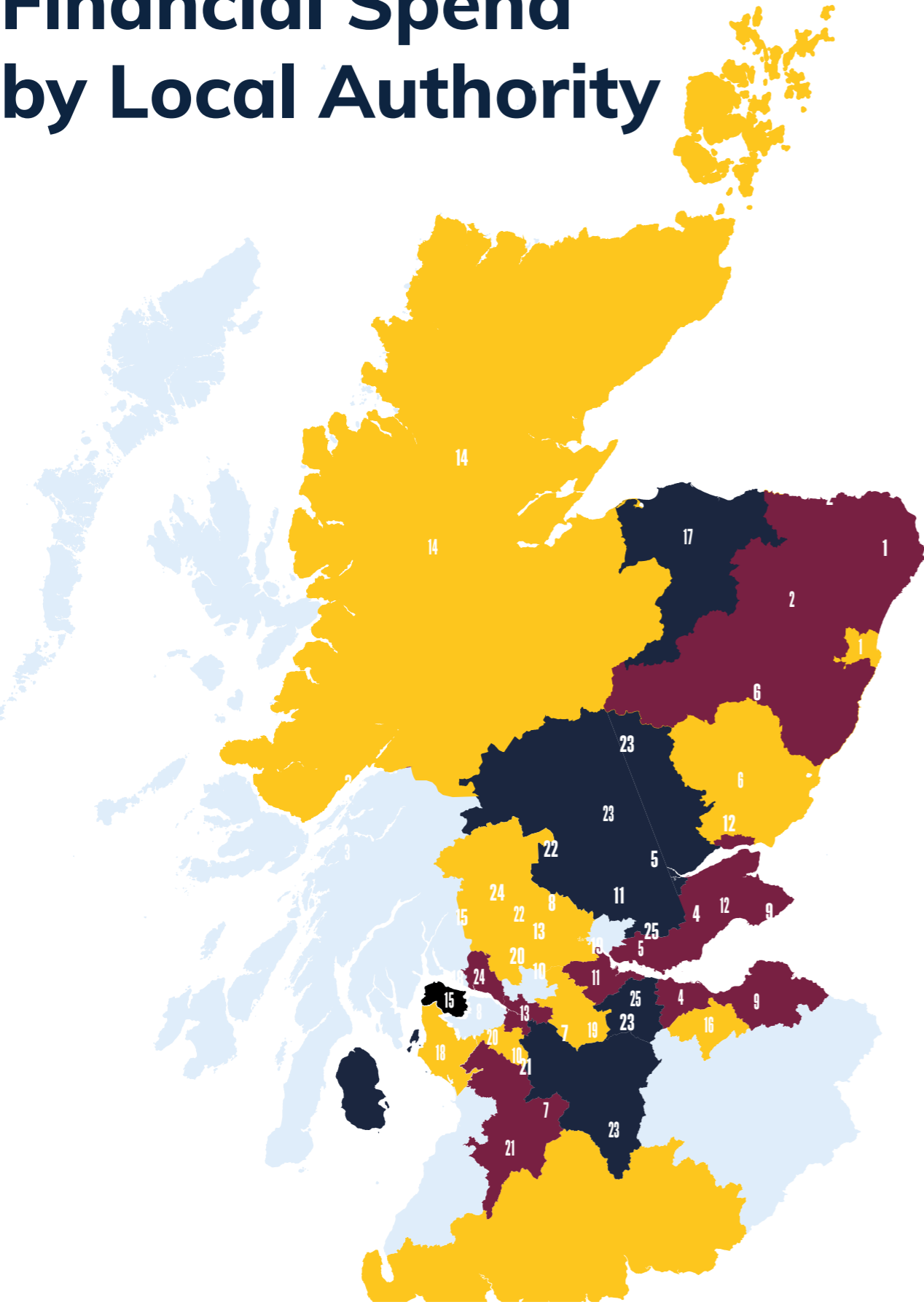
I enjoyed working with others and I hope to go on and do some volunteering with my local club. I'm also keen to do Sports Coaching at College in the near future, so this has helped me loads.  
**According to Malaukai (participant)**



I can see Malaukai's confidence has grown through his time on the course. All the skills and tips he picked up will really him on our Sports Leaders course he will do in S6.  
**According to Mrs Hanson (PE Teacher)**



# Financial Spend by Local Authority



LOCAL AUTHORITY	NUMBER OF YP SUPPORTED	SPEND
1 / ABERDEEN CITY	76	8294
2 / ABERDEENSHIRE	52	5675
3 / ANGUS	61	6657
4 / ARGYLL & BUTE	0	0
5 / CLACKMANNANSHIRE	258	28158
6 / DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	0	0
7 / DUNDEE CITY	315	34379
8 / EAST Ayrshire	62	6766
9 / EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	75	8185
10 / EAST Lothian	19	2073
11 / EAST RENFREWSHIRE	0	0
12 / EDINBURGH CITY	705	76949
13 / EILEAN SIAR	0	0
14 / FALKIRK	350	38199
15 / FIFE	318	34706
16 / GLASGOW CITY	467	50974
17 / HIGHLAND	384	41909
18 / INVERCLYDE	175	19099
19 / MIDLothian	9	982
20 / MORAY	41	4474
21 / NORTH Ayrshire	269	29358
22 / NORTH LANARKSHIRE	186	20300
23 / ORKNEY	0	0
24 / PERTH & KINROSS	82	8949
25 / RENFREWSHIRE	49	5347
26 / SCOTTISH BORDERS	0	0
27 / SHETLAND	0	0
28 / SOUTH Ayrshire	167	18226
29 / SOUTH LANARKSHIRE	272	29686
30 / STIRLING	82	8949
31 / WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE	210	22919
32 / WEST Lothian	108	11787

# Children's Rights and Other Policy Areas

**The Scottish FA is committed to ensuring all our projects have the child at the centre in terms of delivery and/or overall impact.**

The Partnership with the Scottish Government via 'CashBack for Communities' enables the Scottish FA to deliver projects that actively benefit young people's lives and we have worked with internal and external stakeholders to ensure children's views/rights are listened to and respected.

We conducted Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment on the project to ensure all aspect area delivered accordingly.

For full details on the impact assessment please follow this link – [Cashback for Communities | Football Development | Scottish FA](#).

Alongside the above, a recent study, designed using a children's rights approach to provide a safe space for children and young people to share their views and experiences about participating in football, highlighted the positive benefits children and young people experience from participating in the sport. This study can be found at the following link – [Getting it Right for Every Child in Scottish Football – Young Players Have Their Say](#).

Furthermore, the Scottish FA recently launched it's UEFA backed Football Social Responsibility

(SFSR) strategy, which outlines how the national game can positively impact society across a broad range of societal issues. The SFSR strategy encompasses both social and environmental issues, aiming to promote sustainability in a total of 11 policy areas such as child and youth protection, equality and inclusion and the circular economy. You can access the SFSR strategy by following this link. [Scottish FA Football Social Responsibility Strategy](#)

The Scottish FA encourages all CashBack partners, including clubs and key stakeholders, to comply with the Fair Work First obligations. This includes paying at least the real Living Wage to all staff aged 16 and over (including apprentices) who are directly employed by the partner and work in Scotland. Furthermore, the partner shall encourage that any UK-based workers aged 16 and over (including apprentices) who are directly engaged in delivering the CashBack activity are also paid at least the real Living Wage, including, where applicable, sub-contractors and agency staff.

Further information on Fair Work First guidance for applicants can be found [here](#).



# What the Stakeholders said

**80%** of stakeholders who responded believed their programme brought positive changes in their participants behaviours.

**97%** of stakeholders who responded believed their programme increased their participants health and wellbeing.

**84%** of stakeholders who responded believed their programme improved their participants contributions, links and social interactions.

**76%** of stakeholders who responded believed their programme reduced anti-social behaviours within their communities.

Confidence improved as the children felt part of something special.

I have seen children come out of their shell a bit more and try some different activities.

Thanks to the programme there has been a reduced number of anti-social behaviour incidents in the community.

I think this was down to the kids from different streets mixing.

One of the participants was autistic and was very anxious on the first day.

However he settled in well to the group and his confidence grew. His dad was delighted that he got that opportunity!

At the start we had 3 kids who refused to come into the stadium, by the end of the programme they were participating and had made new friends.



The behaviour of some attendees has been challenging for the coaches at times but using the resources available and working together with the schools, parents and other local organisations has allowed us to tackle these behaviours positively.

It was quite rewarding seeing kids form new friendship groups with different genders and ethnicities.

The project has allowed children to get off the street where they may be hanging about and influencing others to do bad things.



# Conclusion and Year Two Summary

**Year two of the Scottish FA's CashBack for Communities Phase 6 programme – "Achieving Goals" – has once again demonstrated the transformative power of football in the lives of young people across Scotland.**

With over 4,700 participants engaged in a wide range of activities, the programme has delivered meaningful outcomes in education, employability, health and wellbeing, and community cohesion.

Through targeted interventions such as the Football Champions, Football Leaders, Volunteer Inspire Programme (VIP), and Alternative Football initiatives like Go-Fitba, Kick About and Play Fitba, the programme has reached young people from some of Scotland's most deprived communities – with over 75% of participants coming from SIMD 1–3 areas. These interventions have not only provided safe, structured environments for physical activity but have also supported young people to build confidence, develop leadership skills, and access positive destinations including further education, volunteering, and employment.

The programme's alignment with the Scottish Government's Justice portfolio is clear. By

reducing anti-social behaviour, improving relationships with schools, and increasing awareness of the risks of harmful substance use, the programme contributes directly to the Government's high-level outcomes of reducing offending and re-offending, improving community safety, and supporting rehabilitation.

## For example:

- 96% of participants in Kick About and Play Fitba reported reduced involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- 66% of Go-Fitba participants who had previously engaged in anti-social behaviour reported they were less inclined to do so again.
- 100% of VIP participants progressed into positive destinations, enhancing employability and reducing the risk of future justice system involvement.

Beyond justice outcomes, the programme supports wider Scottish Government priorities including the National Performance Framework goals of improving mental wellbeing, reducing inequalities, and ensuring children grow up loved, safe and respected. The SHANARRI indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) were positively impacted across all programme strands, with thousands of young people

reporting improvements in confidence, resilience, and social connectedness.

The programme also continues to uphold the principles of the UNCRC and the Scottish Government's Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, ensuring that children's rights are central to all activities. The Scottish FA's commitment to Fair Work First, sustainability, and inclusive delivery further strengthens the programme's long-term impact.

## Looking Ahead to Year Three

As we move into the third year of Phase 6, the Scottish FA remains committed to delivering high-quality, impactful programmes that change lives. We will continue to build on strong partnerships with clubs, schools, colleges, and community organisations to ensure that every young person – regardless of background – has the opportunity to thrive through football.

Sustainability will be a key focus as we prepare for the next funding phase. We will work closely with stakeholders to embed successful models, secure long-term pathways for participants, and ensure that the legacy of CashBack continues to benefit communities across Scotland. Together, we will keep achieving goals – on and off the pitch.



