



**Above:** Depute Lord Provost at the time, Councillor Jennifer Stewart and participants at Rubislaw Quarry

# SPORT ABERDEEN AND WE TOO! CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN OF ALL ABILITIES TO GET ACTIVE IN SUMMER

Two award-winning charities teamed up to deliver relaxed canoeing sessions for children of all abilities as part of a free activity programme in summer 2021.

Aberdeen City Council's Summer of Play programme supported the wellbeing of children and young people across the city who had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We were one of several partners offering a huge range of free activities based on what young people and their families said they missed most during lockdown.

In partnership with award-winning charity We Too!, an organisation which empowers families of children with disabilities in the north-east, we delivered relaxed canoeing sessions at the city's historic Rubislaw Quarry, specifically designed to allow children of all abilities to enjoy the sport in a safe and welcoming environment.

We Too! supported Adventure Aberdeen staff with additional training and resource packs and each family session had an additional staff member on hand to help support all participants.

**Graeme Dale**, Sport Aberdeen Head of Sport and Active Communities, said: **"This has been a very challenging year and it is so important to support young people of all abilities not only in**

**reconnecting with family and friends but also by giving them the opportunity to try something completely new."**

**"Our relaxed canoeing sessions, delivered by specifically trained staff, create a safe place for young people with additional support needs to take part in a fun activity. The sessions are completely free of charge and the response we've had has been fantastic."**

**Phionna McInnes**, Chief Executive of We Too! said:

**"The feedback has been incredible from families who have been unable to attend previous sessions, not just due to the pandemic, but also due to shielding, young carers roles and financial considerations. Fantastic, positive memories are being made this summer by all families within the area and we are delighted to be able to play our part."**

The Summer of Play programme provided a huge range of activities which were completely free to participants.

The activities were based on a consultation undertaken by Aberdeen City Council with children and young people being directly involved in shaping the programme, suggesting activities they missed most during lockdown and wanted to return to once Covid-19 restrictions eased.

Priority access to the programme included low-income families and those who had experienced significant negative impacts associated with isolation and lack of participation in normal activities during the pandemic.

Almost 6,000 sessions were delivered through the Summer of Play programme across a range of different sports and activities, with over 50% of these attended by children from within priority groups. Over 300 care experienced children and young people accessed activities, ranging from multi-sport sessions across the three localities, free spaces at holiday camps, outdoor activities and 'Learn to Swim' programmes.

Depute Lord Provost, Councillor Jennifer Stewart was at Rubislaw Quarry to see the relaxed canoe sessions at first hand.

**Councillor Jennifer Stewart** said:

**"It was wonderful to be at Rubislaw and see the participants experiencing the freedom of being on holiday, of being outside and enjoying adventure – a true gift of experience.**

**"We've had a tremendous response from children and young people to our huge and unprecedented Summer of Play. It's such a pleasure to be able to provide our young people with the fun and enjoyment that they have missed over the last year.**

**"With partners such as Sport Aberdeen and WeToo! Aberdeen City Council is delivering the biggest tailor-made programme of play and creative activities in our history. Importantly, as we work towards becoming a UNICEF-recognised Child Friendly City, the Summer of Play has been co-designed by our children and young people who told us exactly which activities they have missed most because of the impact of the pandemic."**



**6,000**  
**FREE SUMMER OF PLAY SESSIONS DELIVERED**



**300+**  
**CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED**



**50%**  
**OF ATTENDEES FROM PRIORITY GROUPS**

