

# Fairer Aberdeen Annual Report 2021-22

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund is allocated by Aberdeen City Council to tackle poverty and deprivation. The Fund is dispersed and managed by the Fairer Aberdeen Board, a subgroup of the Community Planning Partnership, made up of representatives from priority areas, the Civic Forum, the Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland and ACVO (Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations). The Fairer Aberdeen programme is aligned with the themes from the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Economy, Adults Children and Young People. In 2021-22 funding of £1.6m was made available to support work in priority areas and across the city with vulnerable groups and individuals.

Funding was awarded to 38 projects within the main programme, as well as a Community Support Fund to support community engagement, an Employment Support Fund to support costs associated with getting people back into work.

Grants ranged from £3,200 to £159,500 in value. A total of 35,610 people were involved in, or benefited from, funded initiatives, 11,099 of them were under 16 years old. 643 volunteers contributed 114,280 hours of volunteering time with a value of over £1.7m\*.

\*Volunteering time is generally valued as the median hourly pay rate in the area, in Aberdeen this was £15.00. (Office of National Statistics, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE))

“The impact of the pandemic will be felt for some time, particularly for those most affected. Mental health issues and isolation have left communities feeling vulnerable, but we’re resilient and have learned how to adapt and make our services more accessible for the people we continue to support.”

The Fairer Aberdeen programme is aligned with the themes from the **LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN** and **LOCALITY PLANS** in priority areas: **ECONOMY, ADULTS & CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

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Community Planning Aberdeen



## **FAIRER ABERDEEN FUND**

**£1.6m** invested  
**35,610** people supported  
**643** volunteers **114,280** hours of volunteering time  
**£1.7m** value of volunteering

### **ECONOMY**

**236** people into work  
**43** young people moved on to employment, education or training  
**611** people involved in employability programmes  
**26** sensory impaired people supported to stay in employment  
**3,032** people receiving money advice and income maximisation advice  
**£6m** client financial gain, an average of **£5,600** per person  
**5,326** Credit Union savers **£1.8m** affordable loans provided  
**557** tonnes of free food distributed, equal to **1.3m** meals  
**975** food bank users referred to other services  
**3** community pantries with **232** members  
**5** community projects/flats supported in disadvantaged areas

### **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

**11,099** children and young people supported  
**495** parents and families with complex needs supported  
**231** young people accessed **1,824** counselling sessions  
**149** young people involved in producing youth media

### **ADULTS**

**355** people accessed counselling provision provided locally  
**487** people took part in adult learning  
**81** people involved in producing community media  
**103** older people were supported to develop digital skills  
**14** volunteers provided meals and facilities to rough sleepers

# ECONOMY

- Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty.
- Ensure those experiencing in-work poverty have access to all appropriate benefits.
- Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.
- Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities.
- Increasing the number of people in Aberdeen in sustained, fair work.

**Pathways** supports people into employment by providing tailored support for people from the first stages of job seeking through to securing and maintaining employment. They identify and encourage participation of hard to reach residents through weekly drop-ins, work clubs, established links with partner agencies and individually tailored one to one Keyworker support.

With Covid-19 restrictions lifted the service has returned to community venues. The pandemic has impacted on the mental health of many clients, requiring additional support and time to build confidence. 383 people received support and 206 moved into work. 7 volunteers contributed 320 volunteer hours.

**NESS (North East Sensory Services) Employment Service** provides an employment service to blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing people who live in Aberdeen City. They provide specialist support enabling people to access relevant employment, education, and training opportunities and to sustain opportunities which have already been accessed.

They worked with 62 clients. 4 people moved into work and 28 were sustained in their current jobs.

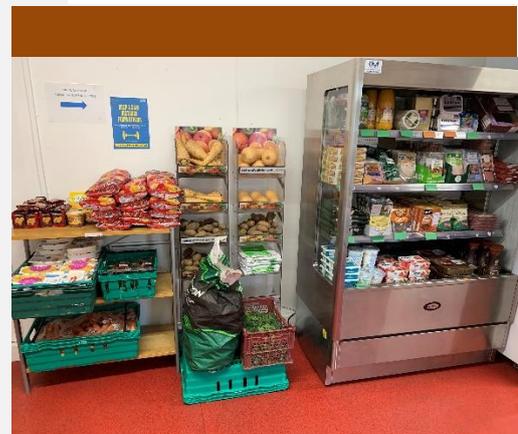
**CAB Money Advice Outreach Project** provides advice and information using community centres as drop-in centres, assisting clients to maximise their income from welfare benefits and to reduce levels of debt.

476 clients received money advice and income maximisation advice with a total financial gain of £638,000, an average of £1,340 per client.

**St Machar Credit Union** improves access to affordable financial services and products and develops credit union membership, by providing and promoting easy access savings accounts for adults and juniors and low-cost loans within the community.

Over the year they gave out affordable loans of over £1.8m, meaning 3,900 people had access to affordable credit, avoiding payday loans or doorstep lending.

Affordable food provision is being increased by the development of community pantries, to deliver a more sustainable approach to food poverty



- 236 people into work
- 43 young people moved on to employment, education or training
- 3,032 people receiving money advice
- £6m client financial gain
- 557 tonnes of free food distributed, the equivalent of 1.3m meals\*
- 975 food bank users referred to other services
- 3 community pantries with 232 members
- 5 community projects/flats supported in disadvantaged areas

**Prince's Trust Team Programme** provides a 12 week personal, social and employability skills development programme for participants aged 16-25 who are disadvantaged, with a high proportion having complex needs including offending behaviour, drug and alcohol issues, behavioural issues, problems with literacy, numeracy, mental health, and homelessness.

Over the year 25 people completed the programme, 4 moved into work and 15 into education, training or volunteering.

\* Food Standards Authority calculation of 2,381 meals per tonne, used by FareShare

**PATHWAYS**  
Social return on investment for every £1 of funding received by Pathways there was a return of £4.67

**Care and Repair** provides advice and financial assistance to older people and people with disabilities, to maximise household income and raise charitable funding on behalf of individuals to carry out repairs, improvements, and adaptations to the home.

Over the year 312 households were assisted with income maximisation and charitable funding, achieving a total financial gain of £519,230, an average of £1,664 per household. 1112 households in priority areas received assistance with repairs, adaptations, and handyman services.

**CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East)** provide services to tackle food poverty. They maintain and develop Community Food Outlets and Pantries to provide access to healthy, affordable food in priority areas.

557 tonnes of FareShare food were distributed to 232 Community Food members. 23,937 emergency food parcels were provided for 15,293 people and to partner organisations and services.

650 food bank users were referred to other agencies and 325 people accessed financial support through their SAFE Team. 281 volunteers contributed 67,440 hours of volunteer time.

**CFINE SAFE** (Support, Advice, Financial, Education) provides financial capability support on benefits, budgeting and debt, and a referral system to direct beneficiaries to agencies who can support them to resolve issues. SAFE provides a holistic, person-centred response to the multiple and complex needs of people on low incomes and reliant on emergency food provision.

Over the year 1434 clients were seen, 203 of them received financial gain of £3,367,615, an average of £16,589 over the lifetime of the award.

**CFINE SAFE Disability Action** provides financial capability support for those affected by disability. Confidential non-medical advice is provided, as well as for their carers. Covid restrictions had an impact on visits to both hospital and home but face to face appointments have now restarted.

581 clients were seen, 68 of them reported financial gain of £1,540,935 an average of £22,661 per person

**Cummings Park Community Flat, Printfield Community Project Tillydrone Community Flat and Seaton Community Flat** provide resources for community activity; venues for a range of organisations that offer support, information and advice; and support community capacity building and adult learning. They support people with welfare reform issues and help to address isolation.

**Seaton Community Flat** there were 685 attendances at sessions provided by 11 partner agencies. 24 people attended sessions supporting people back into work and 49 people attended sessions aimed at increasing skills and creativity.

A total of 370 people were supported, and 10 volunteers contributed 94 hours of volunteer time.

**Cummings Park Community Flat** 5 partner agencies used the Flat to deliver advice and support for a range of issues including employability and financial inclusion. The total number of contacts accessing activities was 268 and the number of users of the Flat facilities, including phone, computers and enquiries was 32.

119 people accessed support and 17 volunteers contributed 1,104 hours.

“A Client was made redundant from oil & gas and living off savings in order to make ends meet. We supported the client to claim Universal Credit and ensured his mother, who he is the main carer for, was receiving all the benefits she is entitled to. We referred the client to SCARF and as a result, he was eligible for full funding through Warm Homes Scotland Scheme for free underfloor insulation, a new boiler and gas central heating system which is to be supplied and fitted at no cost.”

## CFINE SAFE

**Printfield Community Project** 150 children and young people participated in activities in the project and 47 in the After School Club. 8 children under 3 years were registered.

60 young people were provided with healthy lunches during the school holidays. 20 residents were supported to be part of the Woodside Network 250 people were supported, and 30 volunteers contributed 300 volunteer hours.

**Tillydrone Community Flat** 12 agencies used the flat to deliver advice and support services for a range of issues including Health, Education, Employability and Financial Inclusion. There were 3,577 recorded uses of the Flat facilities, including use of washing machine, phone and access to computers.

198 people got support with welfare reform issues and 112 were supported with mental health and social isolation. A total of 438 participants were involved, 100 of them under 16 years old. 12 volunteers contributed 700 volunteer hours.

# PATHWAYS

As Covid restrictions have lifted we have been able to return to most of the venues used before and are now offering the same number of in-community sessions each week. As a result, we now offer clients a mix of face-to-face, online and telephone support to suit individuals' needs.

Throughout the pandemic clients reported much poorer mental health, with concerns, particularly amongst long term unemployed and older people, about the potential health impacts of returning to work.

This is still a concern for some, even as we return to more normal ways of living. As a result, the Keyworkers often spend a lot of time rebuilding clients' confidence, gradually improving their employability so that they feel able to re-enter employment.

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need.

Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.

Improving pathways to education, employment and training

Young people receive the right help at the right time to improve outcomes for young people at risk of becoming involved in the Justice System.

Services for young people support their personal, social and educational development, enabling them to develop their voice, influence, and place in society and to reach their full potential

**11,099** children and young people supported  
**495** parents & families with complex needs supported  
**231** young people accessed  
**1,824** counselling sessions  
**149** young people involved in producing youth media

**Middlefield Youth Flat and Under 11s work** supports young people, especially those with low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

Over the year 95 young people participated in 1335 sessions at the Youth Flat, as well as 25 outreach sessions, 75 of them were under 16. 75 young people took part in diversionary activities designed to reduce youth crime and exclusion rates.

**Fersands Youth Work Support** provides a wide range of youth work services to encourage young people to experience new activities, gain new skills, build relationships, and learn about health issues, employment, and other issues relevant to them.

Over the year 110 young people participated, 96 of them under 16 years old. 8 volunteers contributed 300 hours volunteer time.

**Home-Start** coordinate home visiting support to families identified as at risk and hard to reach, working to prevent further crisis and family breakdown.

30 families in priority areas were supported. 26 families reported reduced isolation, and 23 reduced levels of family conflict or stress. 4 families no longer required Social Work support. 19 families were supported with financial issues, 3 people moved into volunteering and 7 into employment. 28 volunteers contributed 784 hours of volunteering time.

**Choices Relationship Revolution** delivers an early intervention programme to break the cycle of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and to raise awareness, challenge prejudice and stereotypes amongst young people.

Over the year 715 participants were involved, 108 educational workshops and 45 drop in clubs were held. 96% of young people reported being able to identify violent and exploitative relationships and 95% an increased knowledge of existing support services following participation in the workshops.

There were 3 young people trained and supported to volunteer and 85 volunteer hours contributed.

**SHMU Youth Media** provides creative opportunities for young people (between the age of 12-19), primarily from the priority areas of Aberdeen, to train and take part in all aspects of the production of regular radio programmes.

A total of 149 young people participated, 138 of them under 16 years old. 25 volunteers contributed 5,875 hours of volunteering time.

**Befriend A Child** provide accessible group activities for children involved in the Befriend A Child scheme. One is based at Woodside Primary School, accessible to children from Tillydrone, Seaton, Fersands, Woodside and the other is in Cummings Park.



42 children attended the youth clubs regularly. 10 volunteers contributed 1,200 hours of volunteering time.

**St Machar Parent Support Project Positive Lifestyles** provides support to young parents, helping them identify issues and to engage with the relevant agencies before they reach crisis point, preventing future long term need for statutory services.

465 people participated in the programme including 144 kinship carers. 66 people were supported to claim grants totalling £28,688.

**Mental Health Aberdeen** provides ACIS Youth Counselling, where 121 young people accessed 1124 counselling sessions. ACIS Youth also operates in Torry, where 51 young people accessed 470 counselling sessions in Primary and Secondary schools. 5 new youth counsellors were trained to ensure a local supply of fully equipped and trained youth counsellors.



**Geronimo – Time to Play** is delivered by Aberdeen City Council's Creative Learning for parents and their early years children (0-5 years) to play and be creative together. Through play, creativity and risk Geronimo aims to improve parents' confidence in taking part in their children's learning and to be confident in their own ability to think creatively and be able to find

opportunities to play in any environment; a supermarket queue, at home when feeling busy, or out in the rain.

With face to face work returning, sessions were delivered in Woodside, Torry, Cornhill and Northfield as well as Camp Geronimo in an outdoor setting at the Grove. 185 people took part in sessions, 106 of them under 16 years old.

**shmuTRAIN (Station House Media Unit)** offers comprehensive employability support and skills development training to young people aged 14-19, using community & digital media to engage young people, increase motivation and develop core skills such as confidence, communication, and teamwork, and to support young people to move on to a positive destination.

**Social return on investment for every £1 of funding received by shmuTRAIN there was a return of £3.69**

**shmuTRAIN**

40 young people participated in the programme. 34 of them moved into positive destinations, 4 into work, 5 into further education and 15 into training. 14 young people secured an SQA and 29 showed improved communication skills and increased readiness for work.

## ADULTS

**Those who are convicted are supported to engage with relevant services and reduce reoffending.**

**Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.**

**Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.**

**SHMU Adult Engagement Support Service** works with ex-offenders, following their release, to create strong, supportive community networks and develop effective community based multi-agency working.

23 offenders participated in the programme within prison and 14 in the pre-release programme. 25 participants engaged with appropriate support services post release. 27 participants secured a positive destination after release, 22 volunteering in the community, 2 into education, 3 into training and 10 into employment.

**GREC Language and Integration Project** provides employability ESOL classes within priority areas and a

Language Café to offer opportunities to build confidence in speaking English.

57 people of 33 nationalities participated. 90% of participants reported increased confidence and skills in employability related English and 80% that their mental health had been positively impacted by the project.

**Aberdeen Foyer Reach** delivers personal, social, wellbeing and employability skills development programmes, aimed at participants who are in recovery from any long-term condition e.g. substance misuse, mental illness or physical illness.

25 clients participated in the course and 6 secured employment, training or education as a result. 3 volunteers contributed 200 hours of volunteer time.

Services for adults focus on improving health, mental health and wellbeing, learning and skills development, community capacity building, volunteering, and reducing isolation

**379** people accessed counselling provision provided locally

**286** people took part in adult learning

**80** people involved in producing community media

**80** older people supported to develop digital skills

**19** volunteers provided meals and facilities to rough sleepers

**45** ex-offenders supported



### **Aberdeen Cyrenians Street**

**Alternatives** provides a volunteer led service offering practical support to people in Aberdeen City who are sleeping rough or who have no access to cooking or personal care facilities.

50 service users attended sessions and 6444 food parcels were given out. 14 volunteers contributed 2912 hours of volunteering time.

**Mental Health Aberdeen** provides adult counselling in Torry, where 149 clients accessed the service and 893 counselling sessions were provided; and in Calsayseat Surgery, where 114 clients accessed 998 counselling sessions.

**Pathways to Wellbeing** provides locally based, easily accessible counselling services.

They provided counselling for 92 people accessing 788 counselling sessions. 7 volunteers contributed 320 hours of volunteering time.

**Printfield Feel Good Project and Tillydrone Health & Well Being Project** provide Complementary Health sessions to increase relaxation and wellbeing.

59 people accessed 320 sessions and 1 volunteer contributed 40 hours of volunteering time.

**SHMU Connecting Communities Through Community Media** supports the production of community media in regeneration areas, exploring and addressing local community issues and developing skills by providing training and support, developing opportunities for underrepresented voices to be heard across the city; creating a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities, fostering a spirit of engagement and partnership working; developing transferrable skills in participants; and contributing towards increased social capital.

31 volunteers were supported to produce community magazines and 50 volunteers were supported to produce radio programmes, including 6 community shows broadcast weekly in priority areas.

241 organisations worked in partnership with SHMU over the year and a total of 258 participants were involved. 81 volunteers contributed 25,963 hours of volunteer time.

**Silver City Surfers** provide one to one computer tutoring for over 55s in the City Centre, and Northfield/Cummings Park areas, so they can confidently learn how to use the computer and surf the internet safely in a welcoming and social environment.

Help and support was provided to 103 learners and 13 volunteers contributed 220 hours.

**Police Scotland Operation Begonia** is a joint initiative involving Police Scotland and partner agencies with the two aims of preventing sexual exploitation and supporting those who find themselves involved in selling or exchanging sexual activity. It provides dedicated, directed patrols with the aim of using a trauma informed approach to signpost those involved towards services and more positive destinations.

Begonia was set up to reduce harm to women and men involved in the on street sex industry and to protect communities from any real or perceived threat, risk and harm caused by prostitution.

During the year 261 women were engaged with and 25 new women encountered through street work patrols and referred to partner agencies. Begonia patrols access rape alarms, toiletries, and snacks to give out when needed. There were 720 hours of dedicated additional patrol time undertaken in Aberdeen to address on street prostitution. 56 male perpetrators were stopped, educated, or charged regarding kerb crawling offences to try and discourage males from frequenting identified areas, in support of local communities.

## shmu ADULT ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

This year has been another challenging one with continued restrictions around the support that we can provide to our clients face-to-face in the community, their homes, and in our building. When restrictions eased, we increased our face-to-face support, prioritising those most isolated and in need of wellbeing support. As the year went on, we were able to introduce some face-to-face meaningful activity, with our Making Recovery Visible courses and Adult Services Peer Group. These groups were kept small in size and were adapted to be delivered in a safe and appropriate way.

We continue to utilise the 'email a prisoner' service and Link Centre phone calls to engage with prisoners pre-release, as face-to-face meetings are still challenging with restrictions and ongoing lockdowns, but we do prioritise in-person meetings where we can.

We have continued to see a significant rise in mental health issues over this last year, as well as the prolonged effects the pandemic has had on other aspects of people's lives, i.e., sustaining employment, physical health, financially, motivation, isolation etc.

Feelings of isolation and disconnection have been a big issue for those we support over the last year, we have responded by running creative courses and peer support & activity groups to bring people closer together, both online and in-person. As we move into Covid recovery, we intend to prioritise this area of work, providing more accessible courses and groups to adults with barriers

In response to growing mental health concerns across our communities, we are leading on a Trauma Informed initiative across Aberdeen, endeavouring to create a movement that encourages organisations, communities, individuals to become Trauma Informed. Our Trauma Informed Aberdeen Steering Group was set up this year and is meeting monthly. We also led on a national trauma informed training programme for practitioners working with young people in the arts.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“Being on the Fairer Aberdeen Board is an important role; it has a big impact on the city. We need to represent our own communities but also see the bigger picture.”



**Regeneration Matters** is a forum of community representatives from all the regeneration and priority neighbourhoods in Aberdeen City who nominate 7 members to sit on the Fairer Aberdeen Board along with 3 representatives from the Civic Forum. The group continued to meet virtually every month to discuss issues of interest across all the communities, as well as managing the Community Support Fund to support community engagement and empowerment. Over the year the Fund supported Community Networks, printing and distribution of Community Newsletters, IT support and communications.

For more information on joining the group email [faireraberdeenfund@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:faireraberdeenfund@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

The Fairer Aberdeen Board allocated £75,000 to undertake a PB event during February 2022 with an additional £25,000 made available through the ACC Environmental Policy Team. A steering group made up of partners and community representatives prioritised the funding for initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of young people, recognising the impact the pandemic has had on their mental health and wellbeing, relationships with their peers and their activities and social lives. Improving the mental health of young people by engaging them with the natural environment and tackling climate change was also a priority.

The steering group worked in partnership with Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership's Health Improvement Fund and ACVO's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to support 23 organisations providing a wide range of activities including dance, theatre, music, singing, street art, outdoor learning, environmental improvements and outdoor activities and sports.

The projects supported by participatory budgeting will contribute towards achieving Local Outcome Improvement Plan stretch outcomes under people and place while also supporting the aims of the Aberdeen Adapts Climate Adaptation Framework.

- Street Soccer Scotland
- Children 1st
- Fresh Community Wellness
- 55th (Kincorth) Aberdeen Scout Troop
- Aberdeen Sikh Sangat (Aberdeen Gurudwara)
- The King's Community Foundation
- Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust/Lochside Academy
- The River Dee Trust
- Bonnymuir Green Community Trust
- Heathryfold and Auchmill Wood Group
- Aberdeen City Council Family Learning
- Create Aberdeen
- Mental Health Aberdeen
- Sport Aberdeen
- Sunnybank Community Centre
- Barnardo's Aberdeen
- Avenue
- Bon Accord Care Ltd
- Citymoves Dance Agency (SCIO)
- Old Torry Community Centre Association
- Shazam Theatre Company
- Early Intervention
- Northfield Youth Action Group



THANK YOU

Thank you to all the participants, staff and volunteers who have contributed to this report and to the Fairer Aberdeen programme over the year

PB FUNDED INITIATIVES