

OPEN PROJECT

Led by young people



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

VISION

A community where young people take a lead and feel valued.

MISSION

Provide the opportunity, support and training for young people so that they can bring their ideas to life

VALUES

Youth-led

Young people are the experts in their own lives, they know the answers. We are here to help them solve the issues they face.

Growth

We take a person-centred approach to young people's growth and development. Creating an environment where change is embraced

Open-minded

We take a non-judgemental approach in everything that we do.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR TEAM

PEER EDUCATION

DA CAFÉ & PEER MENTORING

OPEN SPACE PROJECT

PEER RESEARCH

IMAGINE A MAN

ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

THINKING FORWARD

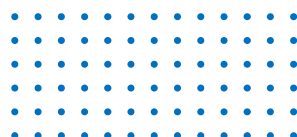
TIME 2 SHINE LEADERS

YOUTH INFORMATION

FINANCES

THANK YOU!

OUR FUNDERS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"We want every young person in Shetland to feel connected, valued, empowered and heard. We will do this by providing opportunities for young people to stand up and take a lead. Young people are the heart of our project and are the driving force behind all of the work we do.

All of our peer education workshops are designed, developed and delivered by young people. Our café project was started up by a group of young volunteers and it continues to be led by the OPEN Board. The value of using peer research has become evident this past year and we expect this part of our project to continue growing to involve young people in service design and ensure their voices are heard. We also plan to go fully youth-led having young people sitting on our board of trustees leading the way forward for OPEN and our vision. We also want to create more employment and voluntary opportunities for young people as we grow.

Currently, our organisation employs 4 full-time members of staff and 5 part-time members of staff and we have 33 active volunteers.

We have received grant funding from 14 different sources totalling £250,000 in 2022-23. Continuous future funding is being identified on a monthly basis to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

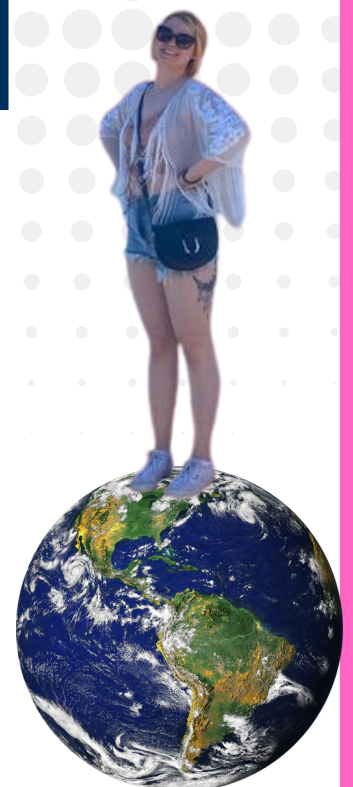


We speak a lot about giving young people a voice, but not everybody wants to listen. By giving young people the power, they can make decisions needed for change



JESSICA CARLYLE

**ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
LEAD - TIME 2 SHINE**



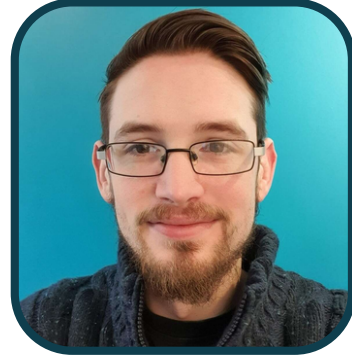
OUR TEAM



Una Murray
*Project
Coordinator*



Saul Day
*Project
Coordinator*



Wayne Leask
*Development
Worker*



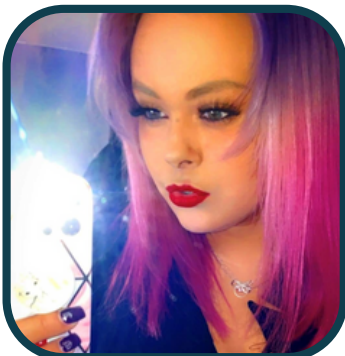
Jessica Carlyle
*Development
Lead*



Shannon Boston
Peer Researcher



Akira Foster
Peer Researcher



Johan Tait
Youth Worker



Alex Tresadern
*Youth
Information
Worker*



Mariel Leask
*Relief Youth
Worker*

PEER EDUCATION

Tuesday Night Meetings

Over the last year we have seen a massive increase in our volunteers, we have a steady 15-20 that come on a weekly basis to our Tuesday night meetings and a total of 22 new volunteers since April 2022.

In our Tuesday meetings this is where we have the time as a group to work on developing new workshops and also improving our current ones. We have just completed our child protection workshop which is to be piloted in schools in the next academic year. We have also finished the pilot of the change workshop which is now added onto our school delivery packs and soon will be done in all the schools. We also use this time to train up our volunteers, this year we have completed Peer Education, Peer Mentoring, and Youth Work skills training.



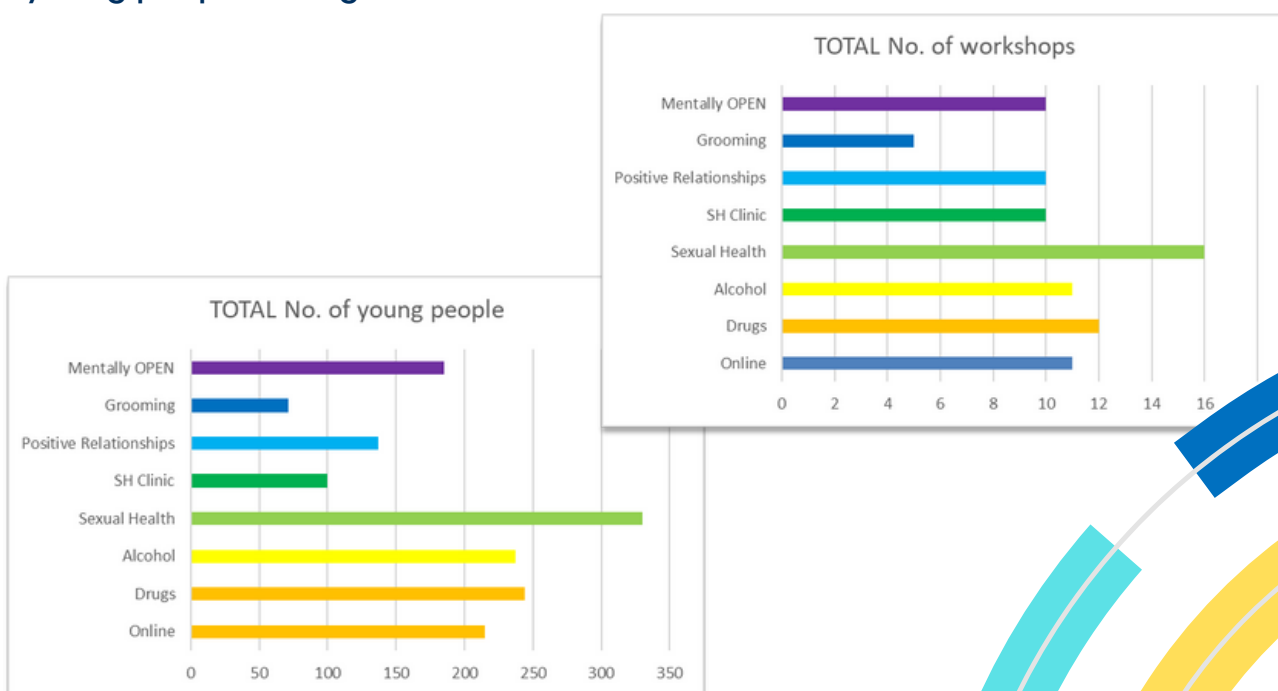
PEER EDUCATION

We used the time on a Tuesday to go out for a sponsored walk. This was to go around the centre of Lerwick and find disused buildings that could be used as a space for young people. On the walk we visited a total of 14 buildings and raised a total £229.75 to put towards refreshments at Da Café.



We also have a total of 17 volunteers receiving Saltire Awards this year, an absolutely phenomenal number and such an incredible achievement for all our young people.

Our Schools Delivery Programme has been incredibly successful. We have had a crazy year with completing a total of 85 workshops with a total number of young people hitting 1519.



PEER MENTORING

Peer Mentoring Review

OPEN completed a review of the Peer Mentoring Project in early 2022 to look at strengthening the opportunities of the Peer Mentoring Project and reducing any barriers. The findings of this review showed that the best way forward was to combine the Peer Mentoring Project and Da Café. As such we trained our volunteers in both youth work skills and Peer Mentoring skills to be confident in building relationships with young people in a mutually safe space. While volunteering at Da Café the young people can identify young people who might be interested in becoming a Mentee.

Training

We covered two different training sessions.

Peer Mentoring Skills – focusing on learning the theory behind the mentoring approach and how it differs from Befriending, counselling, Advocacy and Coaching. We also looked into practising their mentoring skills and building up their confidence, this included understanding boundaries within their mentoring relationships.

Basic Youth Work skills – focusing on leading group work, Qualities and roles of a youth worker, Boundaries, and Confidentiality.

Relationships

We have three 1:1 mentoring relationships set up currently that are all meeting weekly or Bi-weekly. Two have been set up through our new working model in Da Café. We also have another relationship being set up, also through Da Café.



DA CAFÉ



Da Cafe is a free youth space organised in partnership between the OPEN Project, the Olive Tree and the Young People attending. Da Cafe has created space that young people aged 14-25 have a space to socialise with peers, where they can have a sense of belonging and ownership over the space.

OPEN has had 2116 young people attending Da Café over 63 sessions. The support from the community has been overwhelming, with donations to support the food/drink for young people, and support for the work OPEN are doing. Below are a few quotes from the community.

The public has donated £2043.80 through Pay if Forward donations at the Olive Tree.

“ Da Café is an excellent resource for young folk. Good luck with your fundraiser! ”

“ My daughter says the cafe is the highlight of her week! ”

“ What a fabulous service for our teens and young adults! You deserve lots of support! ”

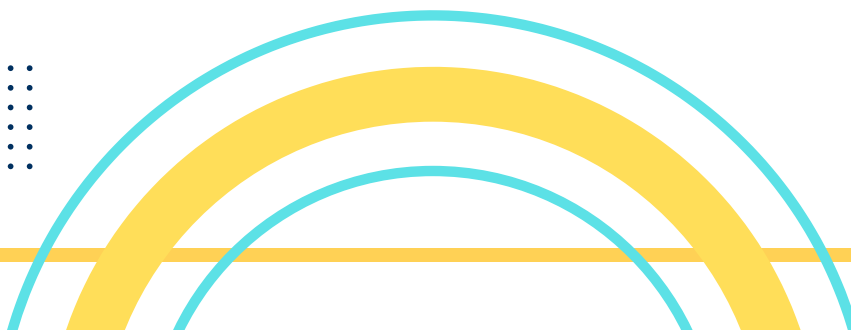
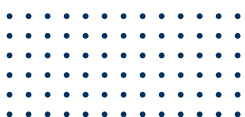
OPEN SPACE PROJECT



The OPEN space project started in 2021, the aim of the project at the time was to ask young people if they felt that there was a need for a space for them in Lerwick, taking a lead on community action research so that young people can influence changes in their communities that they would want. We conducted research in variety of ways, focus groups, interviews, survey and padlet. Young people felt passionate about feeling stigmatised within the community and not having a space to go affected their sense of community, young people wanted a place to belong that was theirs and felt as though access to public buildings weren't as accessible to them as they are to other members of the public due to their age and businesses and other adults in the community pre judging the young people. The Open Space projects final report was ready to be taken out into the community to be presented in hopes for some sort of system change in September 2022. We presented at the Children and Education committee and felt that the gaps were taken on board by councillors, the Hub was provided for young people on the back of this but because young people weren't involved in the choice we feel young people didn't have the influence we would have hoped for but do feel they were listened too.

PRIORITIES

- Young people need a space in their community where they feel a sense of belonging and ownership - run by young people for young people aged 14-25
- Cheap food is provided and the service supports young people to develop their life skills
- Peer support, youth information, training opportunities and activities provided to improve their mental health and well-being



PEER RESEARCH

OPEN Space Project -

The OPEN Space project started in 2021, the aim of the project was to ask young people if they felt that there was a need for a space for them in Lerwick, Taking a lead on community action research so that young people can influence changes they want to see in their communities. We conducted research in a variety of ways, such as Focus groups, Interviews, Online Surveys, and Padlet. Young people felt passionate about feeling stigmatised within the community, and not having a space to go affected their sense of community, young people wanted a place to belong that was theirs and felt as though access to public buildings weren't as accessible to them as they are to other members of the public due to their age and businesses and other adults in the community pre judging the young people. The Open Space projects final report was ready to be taken out into the community to be presented in hopes for some sort of system change in September 2022. We presented at the Children and Education committee and felt that the gaps were taken on board by councillors, the Hub was provided for young people on the back of this but because young people weren't involved in the choice we feel young people didn't have the influence we would have hoped for but do feel they were listened too.

Childrens Services Commissioned Project - (Sept - Dec 2022).

Helen Budge, Childrens Services (SIC) commissioned us to work on rewording their vision statement so that young people's thoughts and views were a part of the future vision and had influence over it. We ran focus groups, conducted interviews and ran a survey to gather our findings. Young people generally spoke about wanting a person centred approach, more 1 to 1 interaction with trusted adults and options to pursue different passions while in school to find what they are good at. We collated our findings in our final report and were able to present back in February 2023. Young people's view were well recieved and Childrens Services used the peer research findings to influence their directorate plan.

"A future where every child in Shetland feels connected, respected and supported" Quote from a young person who came back after the interview and suggested this as a possible vision statement

PEER RESEARCH

Alcohol and other Drugs Project

The alcohol and other drugs project was launched in July 2022. The reason for our new research project came from the findings from the OPEN space project, young people themselves had identified that with nothing to do and nowhere to go that their options were limited, other than mooching about the town or paying to go somewhere there was nowhere that was their own.

We wanted to find out if because of this alcohol and other drugs are being accessed by young people. The Shetland alcohol and drugs partnership (SADP) agreed to work alongside us on the project as they had identified that there are no services available to support young people below the age of 16 if they are using substances and want to access support.

In our previous project professional researchers Amy Calder and Jennifer Russel gave us a guiding hand and guided us through our work to complete the project. The professional researchers are teachers to us Peer Researchers and provide wisdom and insight on projects, helping us plot core questions, explore ethics and keep us right.

We have currently conducted 6 interviews, 5 focus groups/workshops and have launched a survey that includes one of our core questions for the project. For us this time round we really wanted to get the research team involved so we have been keeping the research up to date with our findings, taking them through how we begin to understand the information we have so far. Our core research team are also currently working on their participative democracy certificate and will be conducting research tasks to complete their qualification. We are now planning a trip for Amy and Jennifer to come up at the end of August to start collating our findings to put in our final report for presenting back in the communities.

Below is some word clouds we have been gathering in workshops/focus groups



IMAGINE A MAN

Positive Masculinity within Shetland

Early 2022 Youthlink Scotland got in touch with OPEN to explain an opportunity to work on a project called Imagine a Man, looking into Positive Masculinity. OPEN were to become a part of a team from three localities in Scotland, Glasgow, Dundee and Shetland.

In July 2022 Wayne and Yoel traveled to Edinburgh to undertake training with YouthLink Scotland in youth work research. Using the knowledge from this day Wayne and Yoel lead youth work research with 21 young people in Shetland looking at "What is Positive Masculinity?" "What are the barriers for young people developing Positive Masculinity?" "What are the opportunities for young people to develop Positive Masculinity?"

The results were collated in a findings report (available on request) and were sent to YouthLink Scotland, along with activities we used in the research to create a toolkit for practitioners working with young people. This toolkit can be accessed via this link:



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Funding / Residential planning

OPEN's Organisation Development Lead, Jess Carlyle, applied for a small grant of £1100 to go towards refreshments and training for steering group members which was successful, this was from the Heart of the Community Fund by Scottish Sea Farms.

In June Jess competed in a pitch contest and was successful, winning £700, when the panellists asked jess what this money would go towards she said that it would be down to the young people to decide.

It was decided that the pitch money and remainder of the trainign funding would go towards a residential to visig another youth-governed project.



Training Programme

In June 2022 we delivered our Board and Leadership training day. Ayesha Huda (VAS) delivered board/committee member training in the morning, covering good governance and what it means to be a trustee. In the afternoon Jess and Wayne delivered leadership training, discussions around what it means to be a leader and using exercises that promoted skills in leadership. We also had a visit from Mr Stripey for some free ice creams!



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

Board mentors

In the initial stages of researching about youth governance it was noted that most organisations have a 'big board' and then a youth board that would sit under them, and may have influence but no decisions making powers. We decided to flip this on its head, recruiting older, more experienced members of the community who would be able to advise and give guidance to our young trustees without being the ones making the decisions. By the end of 2022 we had recruited 2 mentors to the board and 1 more in early 2023.

Castlemilk Complex Trip

In November Jess and Una went to Glasgow to visit the Castlemilk Youth Complex, another charity that is youth governed. They had a tour of the space and sat down with the management and board to have discussions and share experiences. In early 2023 OPEN started to plan a trip for volunteers to visit the complex. This will happen later in 2023.

End of Steering Group

The steering group concluded in December 2022 to make way for forming the new OPEN Board. Over 2022 we saw 17 individual young people sit on the steering group and there was 18 steering group meetings held throughout the year. We had 10 young people who were interested on shifting from the steering group to becoming a board member.

Start of the Board

In January 2023 we held our first board meeting, we saw 6 young people attending as members and we also had 2 board mentors in attendance. There was good discussions around members and mentors experiences and shared goals. Jess ran an exercise on roles and responsibilities for office bearing roles

Initially Jess started to look at our constitution in November 2022 with steering group members. In March 2023, Jess and Una started to develop our charitable purposes, this was brought to the board and Ayesha. Ayesha helped to find tune what our purposes are and explained a lot of the legal terms in the constitution. The board made a lot of decisions in this meeting about the constitution, meaning that we are now nearly complete on our first draft.

TIME 2 SHINE LEADERS – T2S

Jessica Carlyle – Organisational Development Lead (Jan – Dec 2022)

Throughout 2022 I completed my Time 2 Shine placement, funded by the Rank Foundation. Alongside my day to day role focused around the steering group, youth governance and organisational development I also participated in different leadership days and conferences with Rank.

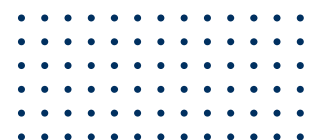
I was a part of a group with other T2S leaders from across Scotland and North England. We had conferences in Cumbernauld where we had sessions in topics such as growth mind set and public speaking. In September I attended the Rank Annual Conference in Leeds where I had the opportunity to attend different sessions centred around leadership and from other organisations around the country sharing their work. This was also a good opportunity to meet people working in other charities across the UK.

Alongside the conferences I also took part in action learning sets with my cohort, we also did other exercises that promoted leadership skills.

In November Una and I had the opportunity to visit another youth governed organisation, the Castlemilk Youth Complex, this was funded through Rank's Sharing good practice fund. This was a great experience to learn about what works for them and what the benefits are to having a board of young people.

Alex Tresadern – Youth Information Worker (Jan-Dec 2023)

Una and I discussed the idea of a Youth Information project after looking at some previous research obtained through our Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Project. We found a glaring issue with young people not knowing what kind of support they had available in Shetland. After applying for the position of Youth Information Worker, both myself and Una attended an interview with The Rank Foundation. We were selected from a candidate pool of over 50 other projects across the country for the Time 2 Shine (T2S) Leadership program. After receiving my official offer I accepted. The Rank foundation is the primary funder for my position. Alongside this they also deliver professional and personal development either through training courses or visiting other projects. On top of this it also provides the opportunity to network with other third sector organisations across the whole UK, as well as providing exposure for our project nationally.



YOUTH INFORMATION

Alex Tresadern - Youth Information Worker - Time 2 Shine Leader

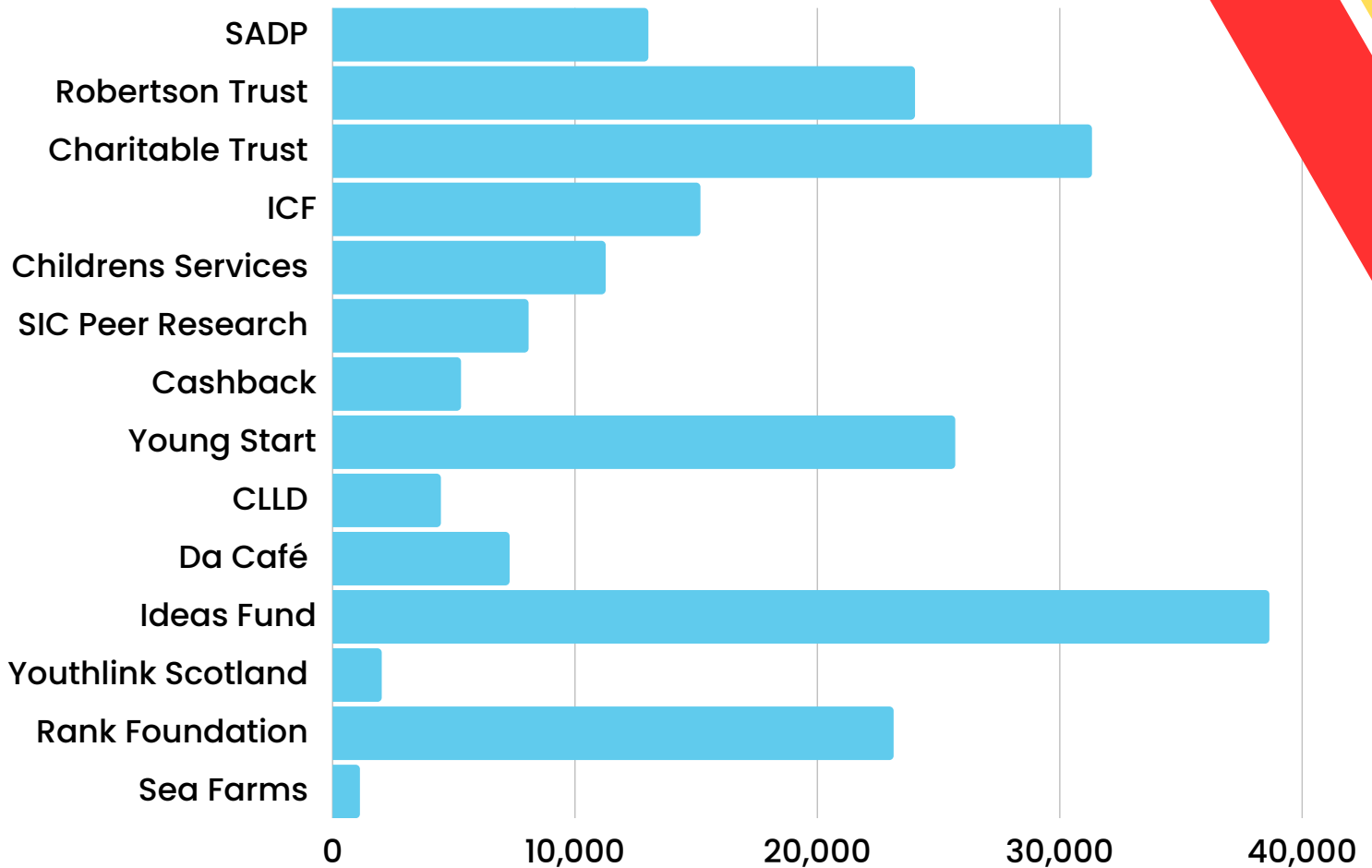
My Job title is Youth information worker. My role has 2 major parts to it. Firstly to run, maintain and manage OPEN's social media presence. The other part is to provide signposting for support services within Shetland and then to promote this support to young people by all available means: In person, Online or via social Media. I have started promoting drop in days where I go to a location and can provide signposting support for young people, particularly in further askew communities.

My aspirations for this project would be to have a robust system in place where young people could either contact the project online on a regular basis or in person to be signposted to needed services. Signs that progress had been made would be positive feedback from young people, less young people struggling to get housing or mental health support and more emphasis and attention by public and third sector service towards young people.

Below are some graphics on young peoples views on their wellbeing



FINANCES



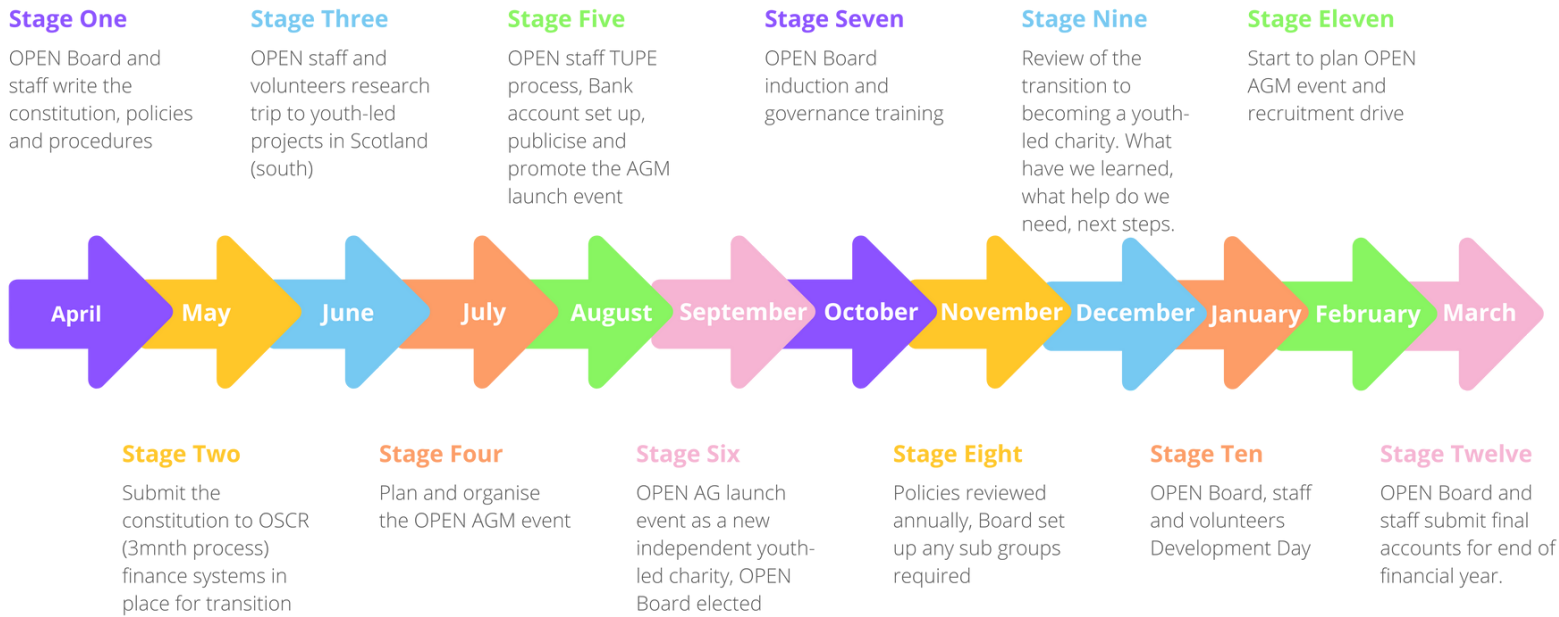
OPEN would like to thank all our funders for their ongoing support:

- The Robertson Trust are one of our long term funders and without their ongoing support OPEN would not be where it is today.
- Shetland Charitable Trust provide essential core funding for OPEN to deliver all of their main activities.
- Shetland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Children's Services and the Scottish Government, Investing in Communities funding supports OPEN peer education schools delivery programme which is delivered in all 7 Junior/High Schools in Shetland.
- The Ideas Fund administer innovative funding for the British Science Association, provided by the Wellcome Trust for OPEN Peer Research Project, including support costs from professional researchers.
- Rank provided another Time2Shine Leader for OPEN in 2023 and SIC provided additional funding to meet the overall costs for this post.
- Cashback for Communities, CLLD and Da Cafe donations have been paramount to running the youth cafe out of the Olive Tree for young people aged 14-25.
- YouthLink Scotland contributed to the costs of OPEN participating in the Imagine a Man Project.

THINKING FORWARD

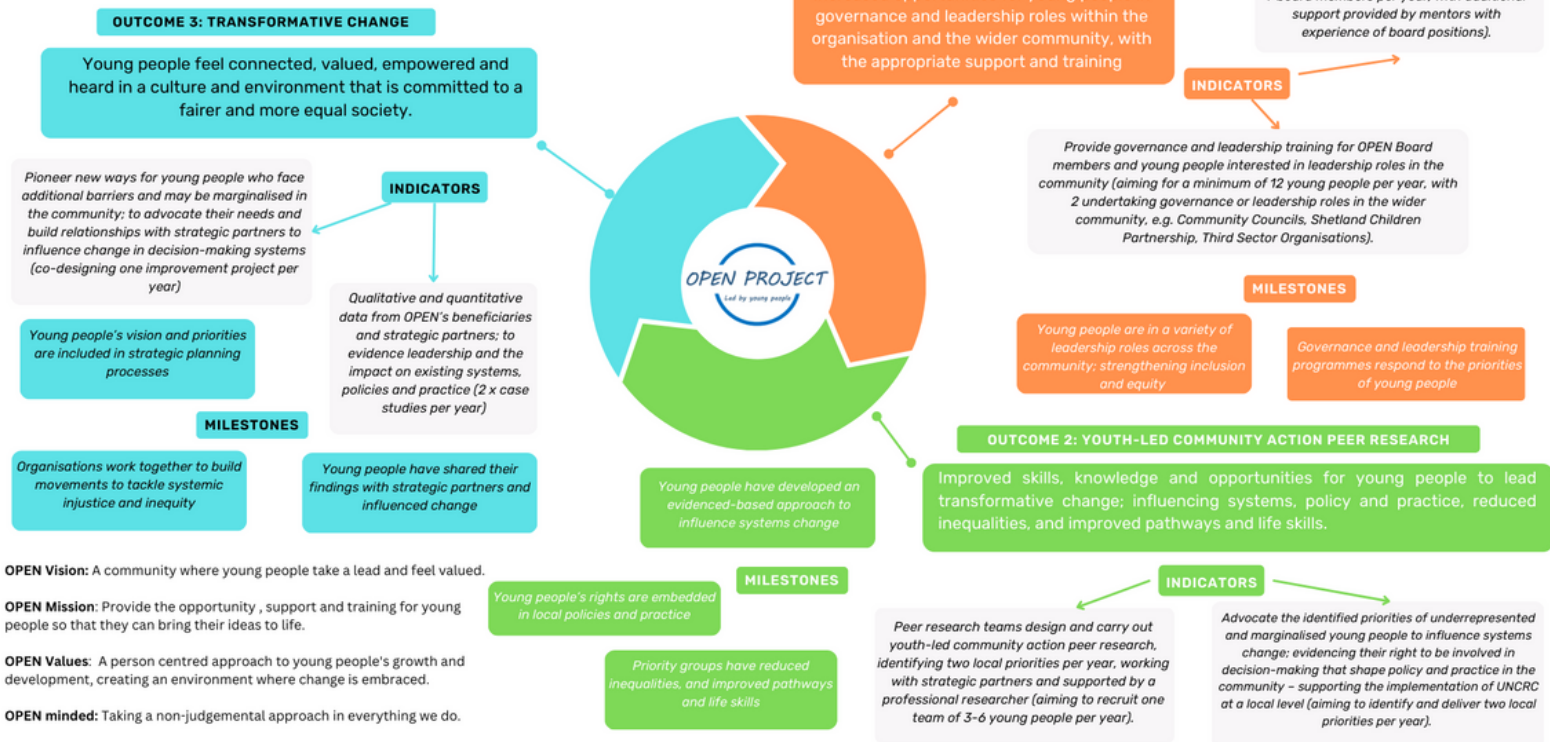
OPEN PROJECT - TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE

Timeline 2023-24



OPEN Organisational Development: Outcomes and Targets 2022-24

"We speak a lot about giving young people a voice, but not everybody wants to listen. By giving young people the power, they can make the decisions needed for change".
Quote: Jessica Carlyle, Time2Shine Leader 2022



OPEN Vision: A community where young people take a lead and feel valued.

OPEN Mission: Provide the opportunity, support and training for young people so that they can bring their ideas to life.

OPEN Values: A person centred approach to young people's growth and development, creating an environment where change is embraced.

OPEN minded: Taking a non-judgemental approach in everything we do.

Thank You

We at OPEN would like to give a heartfelt thank you to our staff, an even bigger thank you to our volunteers for all your contributions, and a thank you to all the young people who come to Da Café on Mondays and Thursdays. Finally a massive thank you to the Olive Tree and all our supporters in the community. We are excited about our future together.



OUR FUNDERS



Delivered by



SHETLAND
ISLANDS COUNCIL



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www.voluntaryactionshetland.com/what/projects/our-peer-education-network

