



Community Learning, Development & Employability

Annual Report 2023-2024



Contents

Foreword	4
Performance Highlights	5
Performance Challenges	5
CLDE Team Structure	6
Budget	7
Core Funding	7
Employability Funding	7
Multiply Funding	8
Other External Funding	9
Affiliations	10
Community Learning Development & Employability Team Plan 2023-26	11
Key Performance Indicators	13
Service Areas Summary	14
Adult & Family Learning Overview	14
Employability Services Overview	15
Youth Services Overview	16
Orkney CLD Partnership	17
Orkney CLD Inspection	18
Work with adults & families	19
Multiply Programmes	19
Summer Cooking for Families	20
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	21
New Year New Thinking	22
SVQ Vocational Routes	23
Funday Sunday	23
Fast Track to Hospitality	24
I-Learn Training	24
Get Online Week and Digital Friends	25
National Numeracy Day	26
Community Learning Classes 2023-24	26
Young Parents Group	28
Driving Theory	28
The Jedi Council	29
Work with communities	30
Annual Halls Event	30
Eday Training Visit	31

Awareness Raising	32
Work with young people	33
Fireskills	33
MyBnk Financial Education Programme	34
Prom Pop-Up Event	34
Let's Learn and Jam.....	35
Youth Clubs	36
Case Study - Westray Boat Build	37
Beats for Change DJ Project 2023.....	37
Youth Worker Training	38
Friday Afternoon Diversionary Activities.....	39
Wellbeing Wednesdays.....	39
Young Scot Local Action Group – Loneliness Project.....	40
Fast Forward.....	41
Youth Work Offer	41
Pupil Engagement Team – Year 1	42
Summer Transition Programme	44
Blide Tuesday Group	45
Youth Awards Ceremony	45
Youth Scotland Awards.....	46
Youth Achievement Groups	46
Duke of Edinburgh's Award.....	47
Youth Forum	47
Scottish Youth Parliament.....	48
Scottish Youth Parliament Sitting in Orkney.....	48
Edinburgh Democracy Visit.....	49
Big Ideas Residential	50
Summer Holiday Programme Isles Visits 2023+	50
Contact Details	51

Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2023-24 Annual Report for Orkney Islands Council's Community Learning, Development & Employability Service (CLDE), which outlines just some of the amazing achievements and work that CLDE has been involved in from 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

This year we have attempted to reduce the length of our annual report. This is not a result of the CLDE Service doing less. On the contrary, last year, CLDE were busier than ever before. This team do so much, it simply cannot be adequately reflected in one report. We therefore have just mentioned some of the activities and opportunities that CLDE have progressed, to demonstrate our key achievements over the last 12 months. If anyone would like further information about anything in this report, please use the details at the end of this report to contact the Service.

It never ceases to amaze me how much our dedicated staff achieve and deliver. This is due to their continuous hard work, dedication, passion and focus on using person centred approaches to support individuals, groups and communities to overcome challenges, achieve positive outcomes and fulfil their potential.

That is the key role of Community Learning and Development (CLD), to support people to make positive changes in their own lives or in their community, by using a range of different approaches, including youth work, community-based adult learning, family learning, volunteer development and community development.

This annual report coincides with Learning: For All. For Life: A report from the Independent Review of Community Learning and Development (CLD). This is one of the most significant and comprehensive analysis of the current state and future needs of CLD in Scotland. The Scottish Government are currently considering the recommendations from the review, but it is clear it will serve as a crucial document for guiding the future of CLD across Scotland. Crucially the report highlights the importance of lifelong learning and its role in creating a more inclusive, adaptable and progressive society. CLD makes a difference.

Throughout 2023-24, CLDE continued to work in a variety of areas including offering vital employability support to those of all ages, delivering and supporting targeted and universal youth work provision, including wider achievement and accreditation opportunities, providing support and guidance to community groups and organisations and the provision of adult and community learning opportunities.

During this period, CLDE also continued to work with our wider CLD partners to ensure the wider CLD sector continues to work collaboratively to deliver statutory CLD support for all ages and stages in life. The Community Learning & Development Partnership, continued to work collectively to progress the CLD Partners Plan 2021-2024, something that was highlighted in the positive CLD inspection visit by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education in March 2024.

I hope you enjoy reading just some of what the CLDE Service has been up to over the last year. Whilst it clearly demonstrates the positive work that the team are involved in, we do continue to face significant challenges across our service. An increased demand for CLD-led support services, at a time of restricted investment in CLD, limits our ability to provide sustained and sustainable support to those who need it the most. However, through the passion, good-will and determination of our staff, CLDE continues to do brilliant work, helping learners and communities achieve amazing things.

Kerry Spence, Service Manager, Community Learning, Development & Employability, Orkney Islands Council

Performance Highlights

The Community Learning, Development & Employability (CLDE) team in Orkney Islands Council, cover a broad range of delivery practice including youth work, adult learning, family learning, volunteer development and community development.

During 2023-24, there were many positive outcomes achieved across CLDE, some of which are detailed in this CLDE Annual Report. Analysis of the data performance and review from 2023-24 also shows many areas of progress and improvement trends, including:

- External funding increased to our highest level ever in 2023-24, with £174,289 in additional grant funding drawn into CLDE, an increase of £153,703 on the previous year.
- Including external funding channelled through the Local Authority from No One Left Behind and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply Initiative, the CLDE Service secured overall additional funding of £687,165 for CLD activity in 2023-24
- In 2023-24 the number of children and young people engaged in CLD activity rose to 1185, an increase of 8.8% on last year. This is our highest level since reporting on national KPI's began in 2019-20
- This year we saw the number of nationally recognised awards achieved by young people, through CLD activity, rise from 214 last year to 238 in 2023-24
- The number of adults reporting improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes through CLD activity has increased by 19% on the previous year, from 317 to 377
- During 2023-24 the CLDE Service reached 3502 people, through one off promotion and engagement events, the highest number since this indicator started to be collected
- The number of learners with the Adult & Family Learning Service rose to its highest level, increasing by 119% on last year to 182 learners. The number of teaching hours was also at the highest recorded, with delivery of 1838 learning hours in 2023-24
- In 2023-24, 105 people were engaged in employability support, which is the highest level since the CLDE Service started delivering employability support in 2020-21. From this 105 people, 53 progressed from the service with an 83% positive progression rate
- 2023-24 saw 197 Dynamic Youth Awards completed, the second highest number ever for CLDE. Only 2021-22, saw more which was due to the additional Covid funding to support this work

Performance Challenges

Alongside these major successes and achievements, the CLDE team has also faced some significant challenges around capacity, resources, and ability to recruit. Our main challenge, however, is the continuous short-term nature of funding across the CLD sector. The way funding is currently allocated and administered presents significant challenges in the planning and delivery of services. It impacts greatly on the staff we have and reduces our ability to recruit and retain staff, but more damaging than anything else is the effect it has on the people we work with. CLD focuses on working with those most in need of support, and this support is often complex and required over a longer period of time, so security of funding to sustain that support is essential.

CLDE Team Structure

James Wylie, Corporate Director
Education Leisure & Housing

Frances Troup, Head of Service
Community Learning, Leisure & Housing

Kerry Spence, Service Manager
Community Learning, Development & Employability
1 FTE

Walter Gorman, Team Manager
Adult & Family Learning 1.0
FTE

Lindsey Johnson, Team Manager
Employability Services 1.0 FTE

Cheryl Rafferty, Team Manager
Youth Services 1.0 FTE

Senior Adult Learning Support
Worker
Adult & Family Learning
0.8 FTE

Adult Learning Support Worker
Adult & Family Learning
0.6 FTE

Adult Learning Support Worker
(Multiply) Adult & Family
Learning 1.0 FTE

Adult Learning Support Worker
(Multiply)
Adult & Family Learning
0.8 FTE

Vacant Community Learning
Officer Adult & Family Learning
1.0 FTE

Adult Learning Support Worker
Adult & Family Learning
0.4 FTE

Adult & Family Learning
Clerical Assistant 0.5 FTE

Sessional
Community Learning Tutors
2.0 FTE

Employability Key Worker
Employability Services
0.68 FTE

Employability Keyworker
Employability Services 0.5
FTE (ended August 2023)

Employability Clerical
Assistant Employability
Services 0.68 FTE

General Youth Worker
Employability Services
0.7 FTE

Employability Key Worker
Employability Services
1.0 FTE (From Sept
2023 - March 2024)

Vacant, Community
Learning Officer
Employability Services
1.0 FTE

Community Learning
Officer Youth Services
1.0 FTE

Youth & Family Learning
Worker Youth Services
0.5 FTE

Youth & Family Learning
Worker Youth Services
0.5 FTE

Community Learning
Officer (Strategic Equity
Fund) Youth Services
1.0 FTE

Youth Engagement
Worker (PEF) Youth
Services 1.0 FTE

Youth Engagement
Worker (PEF) Youth
Services 1.0 FTE

Sessional
Youth Workers 1.05 FTE

Community Learning Development & Employability
Clerical Assistant 1.0 FTE

Key:

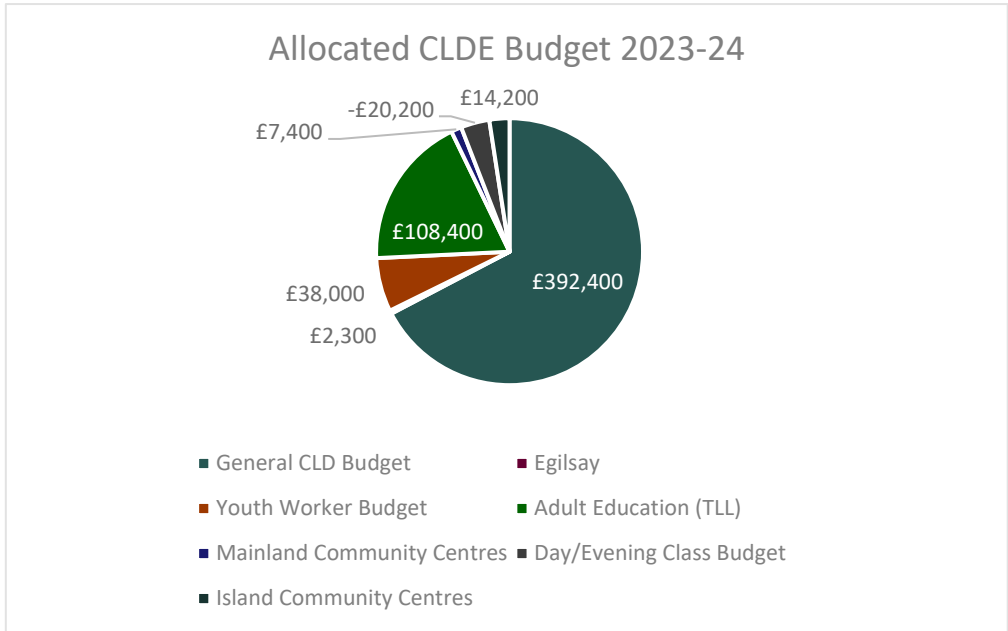
Core funded

Externally funded

Budget

Core Funding

During 2023-2024, CLDE received a total budget allocation of £542,500.



From our core funding, the actual expenditure for 2023-2024 stood at £482,150 showing an overall underspend of £60,350 across all CLD budgets. This was mainly due to the inability to recruit into some key vacant posts within the service.

Employability Funding

CLDE took responsibility for No One Left Behind (NOLB) and the employability support agenda in 2019. The CLDE Service receives no Council core funding for our Employability work. The CLDE Employability Service is funded solely through annual Scottish Government fund coming through the No One Left Behind initiative.

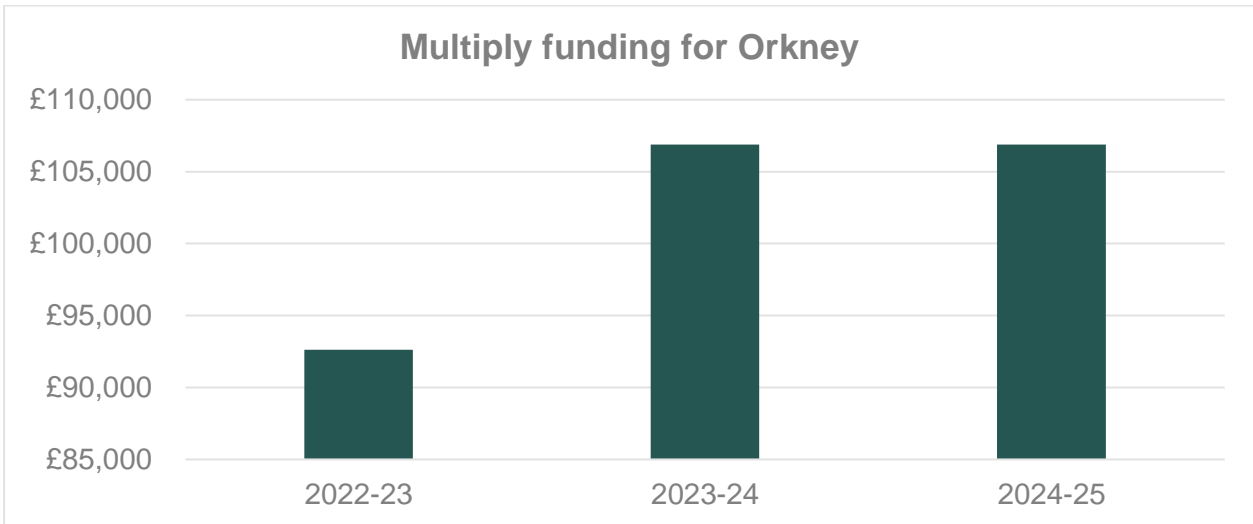
During 2023-24, the Local Employability Partnership received a total budget of £406,000 which was split across No One Left Behind and Parent Employability Support funding pots.



The concept of No One Left Behind is that the Local Employability Partnership should be able to focus the funding on key areas of need, rather than be prescribed by varying funding streams. However, since 2019, employability funding has continued to come in through various targeted funding strands such as Young Person’s Guarantee, Parent Employment Support Fund, Disabled Parent Employment Support Fund and Long Term Unemployed. This year the funding has come in through two funding streams, No One Left Behind and Parent Employment Support Fund.

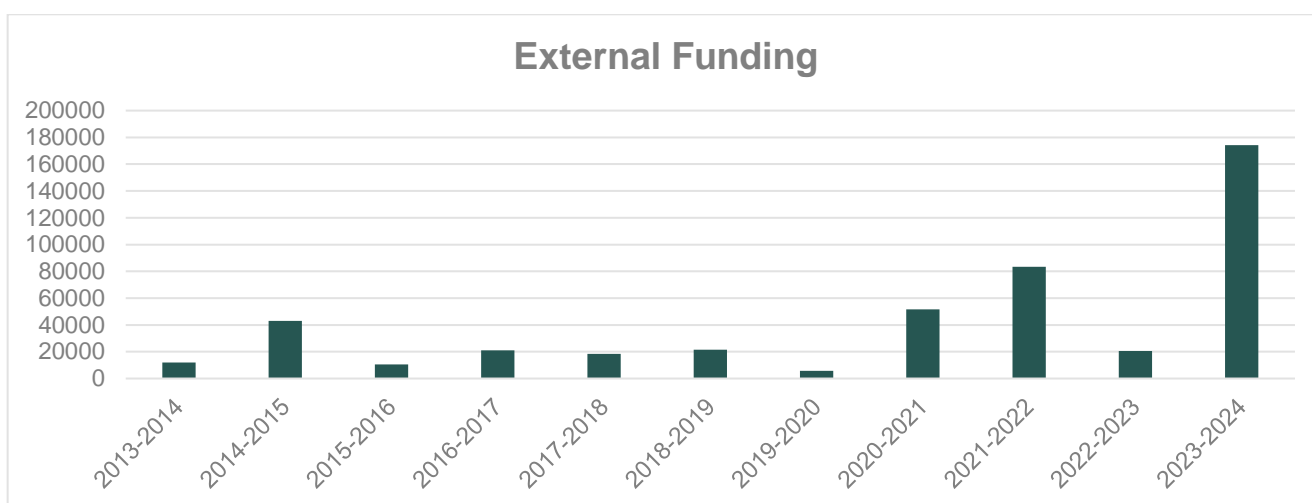
Multiply Funding

The UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), part of a suite of ‘levelling-up’ funding, has two elements, ‘Core’ and ‘Multiply’. The Council’s Community Learning, Development & Employability Service (CLDE), are leading on the ringfenced Multiply element of the scheme. The focus of the Multiply funding is to deliver bespoke adult numeracy programmes over the next three years to help transform the lives of adults, by improving their functional numeracy skills through free personal tutoring, digital training, and flexible courses. The total Multiply funding for Orkney of £306,379 will be made available over three financial years. Currently there is no indication that this funding will continue beyond the end of March 2025.



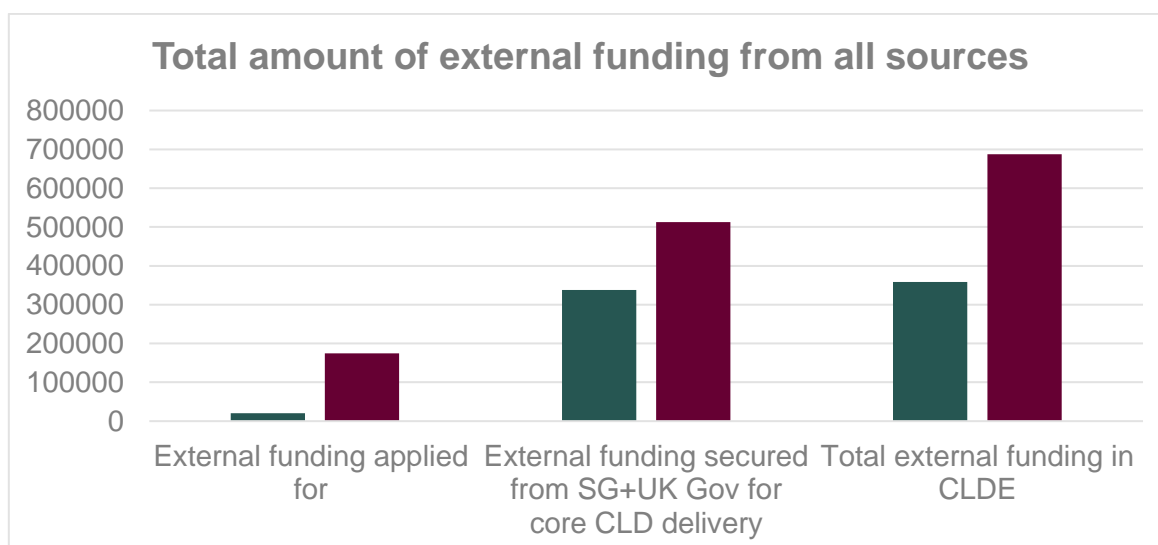
Other External Funding

Every year the CLDE team applies for additional external funding to help deliver planned priority actions. During 2023-24 the CLDE Service secured an additional £174,289 in external funding to support various CLDE Service projects activities and events. The funding came in through 15 different grants, varying from £800 from Youth Scotland towards the Youth Forum inclusive sports activities, up to grants of £56,000 from the Strategic Equity Fund for a Community Learning Officer post to manage the Pupil Engagement Team. This impressive draw on external funds is the highest level of grant funding CLDE have ever secured in one year, (747% increase on last year) which demonstrates the increased recognition and support for using CLD approaches to help people achieve positive outcomes.



This funding is over and above the £512,876 of external funding allocated to CLDE through two other funding streams. £406,000 from No One Left Behind funding for employability and £106,876 Multiply funding for adult numeracy provision.

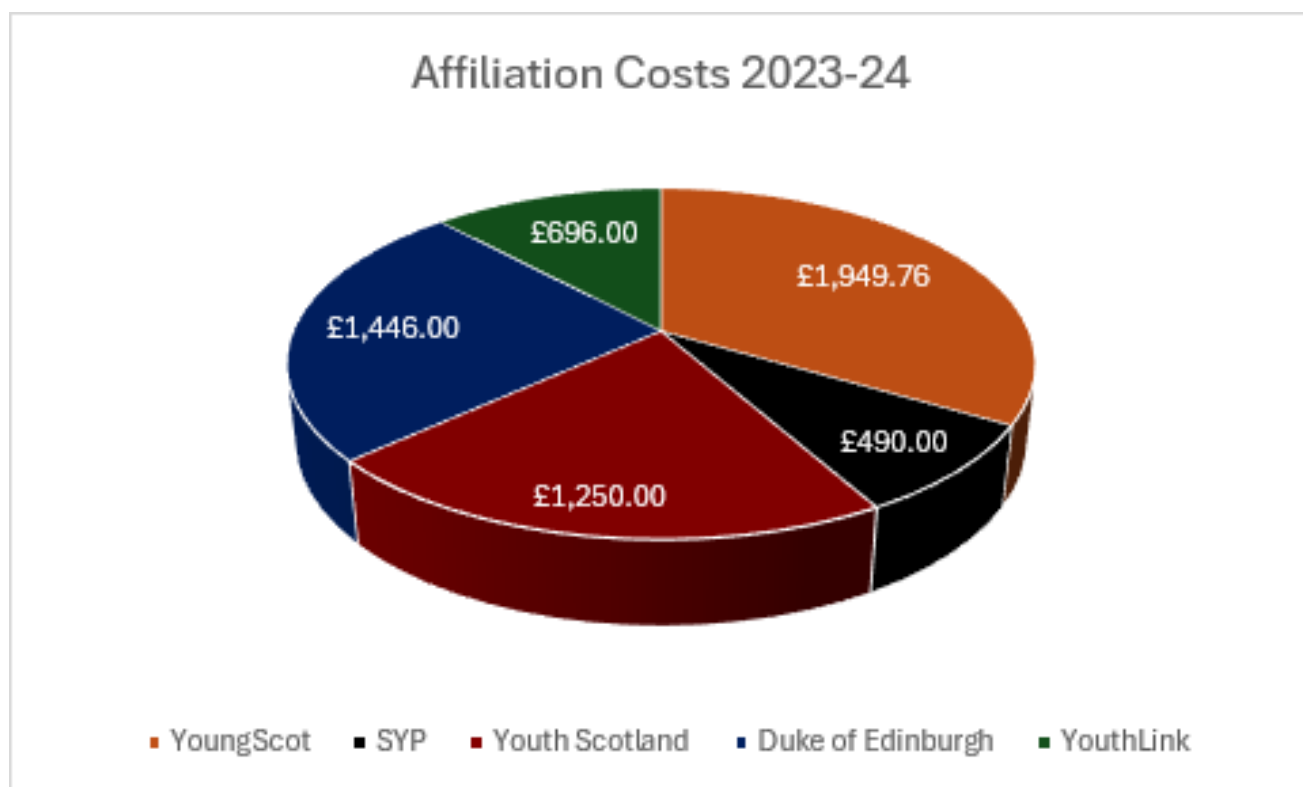
Including external funding channelled through the Local Authority from No One Left Behind and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply Initiative, the CLDE Service secured overall additional funding of **£687,165** for CLD activity to support adults, young people and communities in Orkney during 2023-24.



Whilst it is hugely positive that we access additional resources to expand our delivery and meet local needs, it also creates challenges, as all of this funding is short term, which has a detrimental impact on recruitment, staff and most importantly on the people we are working so hard to support. It is imperative, that we find ways to continue the good work that is taking place to provide sustained support and opportunities for those most in need.

Affiliations

Youth Services commit almost £6000 every year on affiliations and annual charges to national organisations to allow us to deliver youth work accreditation and opportunities for young people. During 2023-24 affiliation charges totalled £5831.76, which equates to over 15% of our £38,000 youth work budget.



Community Learning Development & Employability Team Plan 2023-26

In 2023, the CLDE Service developed a new 3-year plan following review, self evaluation, consideration of other linked partnership plans and professional discussion with staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

The CLDE Service has done well against the actions set in the CLDE team plan as summarised below. Out of a massive 55 actions, the Service has successfully achieved and completed on 44 of them (marked green). Work has started and continues on 8 actions (marked amber) and just 3 actions have not been progressed (marked red). Further details of how actions were achieved are dispersed throughout this report.

Inclusion and Wellbeing		RAG
Promote Equality	Develop baseline and sustain outreach work	Green
	Develop baseline and increase free learning opportunities	Green
	Increase UNCRC awareness across the community	Green
	Progress poverty alleviation opportunities in collaboration with partners	Green
	Work with learners to alleviate barriers to participation	Green
	Provide digital and IT training and support	Green
	Provide training to increase local childcare provision	Green
Improve health and wellbeing	Expand targeted CLD provision and support to help improve skills & wellbeing	Green
	Establish methods for evidencing health & wellbeing outcomes	Green
	Work with partners to coordinate and develop specific and targeted programmes to improve health & wellbeing outcomes	Green
	Develop baseline and increase family learning opportunities	Green
	Define and promote the CLD offer	Green
Strengthening Engagement	Develop a relevant and representative youth voice structure	Amber
	Support Education in a review & expansion of parental engagement	Amber
	Work with Community Planning to develop consistent and constructive community engagement approaches	Amber
	Increase support and engagement for employers	Green
	Coordinate and promote community development support and delivery across Orkney Island's Council and the wider partnership	Green

Learning and Achievement		RAG
Positive Progressions	Identify and promote pathways through CLD	Green
	Establish a progressive understanding and knowledge of pathways and opportunities available	Amber
	Develop key CLD related partnership strategies for Orkney (AL, FL)	Red
	Ensure CLD input into the wider skills agenda in Orkney	Green
	Expand outcome focused delivery through new CLD posts	Amber
	Work with partners including the Council to encourage wider opportunities for those often left behind	Green

Wider achievement	Promote and raise awareness of accreditation and wider achievement opportunities and the associated benefits they bring	
	Maintain training across partnerships to increase capacity to deliver accredited awards	
	Increase numeracy learning opportunities across Orkney	
	Develop a baseline of wider achievement opportunities for all ages	
	Clarify the role of CLD in providing workplace learning support across Orkney Island's Council	
Learning Environment	Identify and develop an accessible youth community and family centre space with office accommodation for CLDE	
	Promote develop and pilot a learning hub in the Isles	
	Use data to determine focused community development support and targeted work	
	Establish, promote and coordinate use of the Employability Hub	

Systems and Processes		RAG
Evaluation and Learning	Establish a framework for regular self-evaluation	
	Establish a process for regular monitoring and evaluating plans against intended outcomes and targets	
	Create a regular evaluation process for learners	
	Develop a clear understanding of what we are measuring and how	
	Provide training and support in agreed planning, reporting and monitoring systems	
	Expand the range of methods used for evaluation	
Workforce sustainability	Invest in CLD qualification routes for staff	
	Promote continuous professional development opportunities for staff and wider partners	
	Undertake a CLD workforce training needs analysis	
	Support the establishment of carved roles within the Council	
	Raise awareness of CLD as a profession	
	Clarify training requirements and processes for part-time and casual staff	
	Develop joint training programmes for staff across the sector	
	Review recruitment processes across CLDE	
Resource and management systems	Expand and develop use of SharePoint & Office 360	
	Develop systems to effectively comply with GDPR	
	Establish uniformed systems for recording, monitoring and report across programmes and services	
	Develop joint key performance indicators for partnership collection	
	Develop the use of SEEMiS for wider achievement recording	
	Expand the use of Hanlon across CLDE	
	Establish a reliable system to ensure CLD meet all requirements to maintain SQA Centre status	
	Review of health and safety policies, procedures and practices	
Undertake a review of required areas with CLDE (YS, AL)		

Key Performance Indicators

CLD is needs led and targeted to those who are most disadvantaged, based on local data and intelligence. Each year CLDE collects key data which is gathered nationally by Community Learning Development Managers Scotland (CLDMS), a body representing local authority CLD services and delivery and has membership across all 32 councils. They gather this data to provide a coherent global picture of the level of delivery and the impact of the work in the sector.

No.	Key Performance Indicator	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
KPi1	Number of adults engaged in CLD activity	163	277	585	636
KPi2	Number of adults receiving completed nationally recognised awards through CLD activity	19	27	52	50
KPi3	Number of adults gaining wider achievement awards, local awards and those not nationally recognised, through CLD activity	8	21	9	40
KPi4	Number of adults engaged in family learning through CLD activity	432	85	43	121
KPi5	Number of children/young people engaged in family learning through CLD activity	600	79	44	112
KPi6a	Number of children engaged in CLD activity	57	79	98	271
KPi6b	Number of young people engaged in CLD activity	169	664	991	914
KPi7a	Number of children receiving completed nationally recognised awards through CLD activity	5	10	3	8
KPi7b	Number of young people receiving completed nationally recognised awards through CLD activity	24	363	214	238
KPi7c	Number of young people receiving sectional certificates towards above Awards	23	2	4	9
KPi8	Number of young people gaining wider achievement awards, local awards and those not nationally recognised, through CLD activity	1	0	13	0
KPi9	Number of adults with improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes through CLD activity	131	92	317	377
KPi10	Number of children/young people with improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes through CLD activity	206	Not fully recorded	586	527
KPi11	Number of community groups receiving capacity building support through CLD activity	104	69	83	84
KPi12	Number of adults and young people taking part in influence and engagement activity through CLD, including community planning / participatory budgeting / local and national consultations etc	178	1257	116	393
KPi13	Number of adults and young people reached and engaged with through one-off promotional events / drop-ins / community events / engagements / etc.	272	1539	1231	3502

Service Areas Summary



Adult & Family Learning Overview

The Adult & Family Learning Service encompasses The Learning Link, which is an adult learning centre dedicated to adult and family learning opportunities. The Learning Link help adults improve their skills and confidence in literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Adults can gain accreditation in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. All learners are involved in the design and delivery of their learning journey to ensure it is relevant to them. Learning takes place in small groups and on a one-to-one basis for those learners with more complex barriers to engaging in learning.

During 2023-2024 the Adult & Family Learning Service actively engaged with local partner agencies, to raise awareness of adult literacies and learning opportunities and to identify projects to work on collaboratively, to ensure there was no duplication or gaps in provision.

Many referrals come through partner agencies who are often working with people who are facing barriers to participation or progression. Over this period, staff also participated in a number of one-off events, which are good for promoting the service, networking with partners and ensuring we have a better understanding of local needs and opportunities.

Adult & Family Learning have **3.3fte core funded staff** and **2fte staff, externally funded staff** through the UK Shared Prosperity Funded, Multiply Initiative. The service also has **sessional Community Learning Tutors** who deliver a variety of community learning classes throughout the year and **6 volunteer tutors** who deliver an amazing amount of work supporting The Learning Link and the learners. In November 2023, the service welcomed a new member to the team who has a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience working with adults, children and families, so work has progressed with partners to develop family learning opportunities within the community.

The Learning Link worked directly with 182 learners during 2023-24, completing 1838 learning hours collectively

47 learners received one-to-one support totalling 583 learning hours

135 Learners participated in group activities completing 1255 learning hours

Adult & Family Learning staff engaged with 1465 people at one-off events

Volunteer tutors gifted 156 learning hours supporting learners

“My confidence has improved, I have new ways of doing things, I feel I can go forward to try these things/ never feel afraid to ask for help.” - Learner

“I loved working alongside my tutor, she was very supportive and very understanding. I never felt pressurised and enjoyed doing maths work.” - Learner

“It was somewhere I enjoyed going as I felt listened to and never judged”
- Learner

Employability Services Overview

In 2023-24 Orkney Islands Council’s Community Learning Development and Employability Service (CLDE) employed **4.06fte staff** through No One Left Behind external funding, to deliver the Council’s Employability Service.

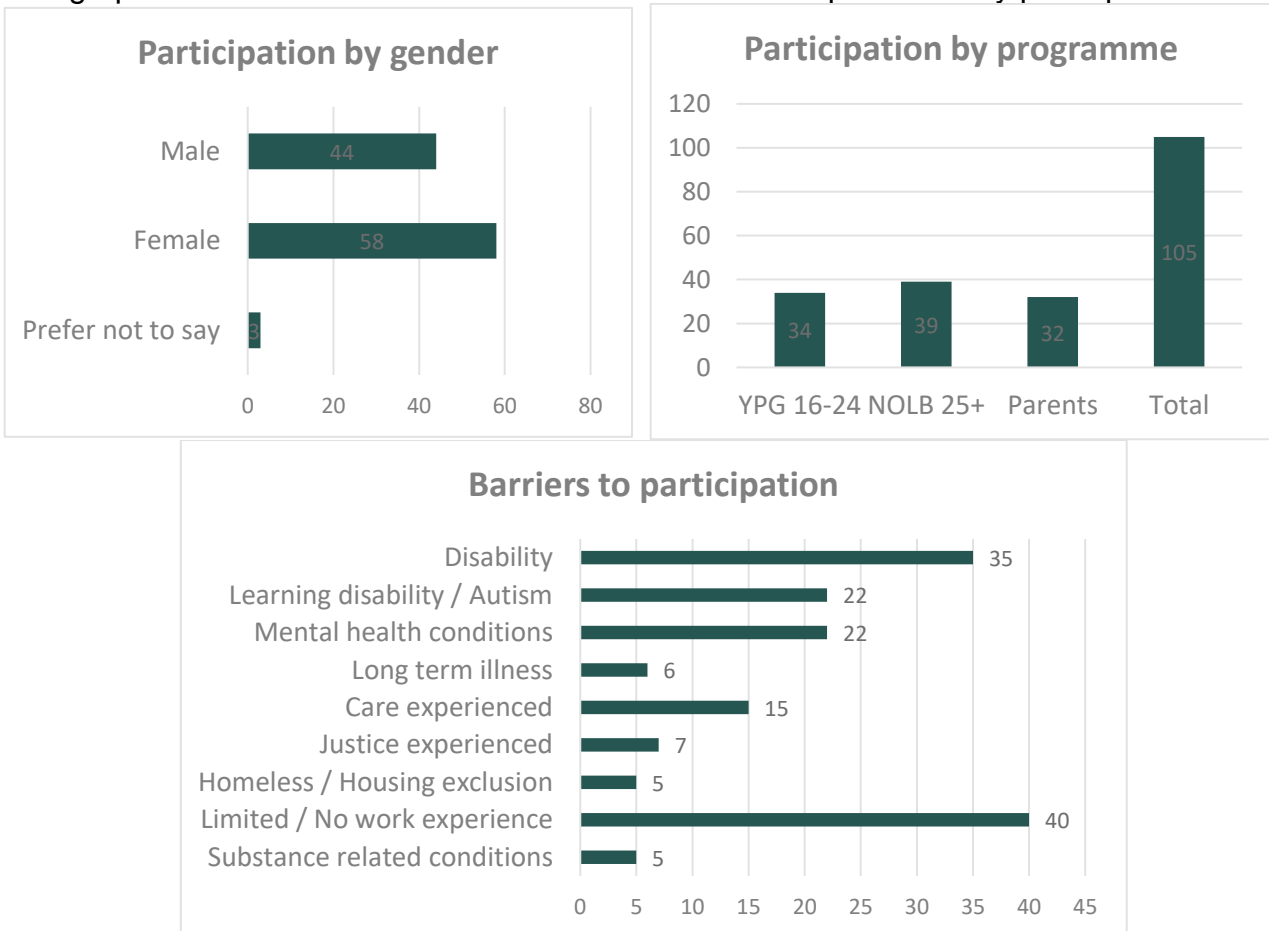
The Employability Service worked with 105 individuals during this reporting period, through a range of one-to-one and group work support.

Each person was supported to co-produce a holistic individual development plan detailing personal goals, aspirations and targets, individuals were then supported to achieve these and make positive steps towards training, education and sustainable and fair work.

Regular review sessions with a designated Employability Keyworker ensures effective monitoring and reviewing of progress and the opportunity to reflect on future support requirements. It also allows Employability Keyworkers to gather feedback, explore good practice and identify areas of improvement for future service delivery.

In 2023-24, **40 individuals** were supported by the CLDE Employability team to work towards and gain a variety of accredited qualifications, resulting in **56 accredited courses being achieved**. Topics included: Constructions Skills Certification Scheme Green Card; Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety; Early Years Childcare for Nurseries, Lone Working; Microsoft Excel and Word; Employability; Manual Handling and Driving Theory Test.

The graphs below illustrate the breakdown and barriers experienced by participants.



53 individuals progressed from the CLDE Employability service and **52 continue to access support**. Of those who progressed, **27 individuals moved on to employment/self-employment**. **One young person progressed to a Modern Apprenticeship**, thirteen people advanced to Further/Higher Education, two returned to school and one individual progressed to sustained volunteering.

This equates to an 83% positive progression rate.

Although this is an impressive positive progression rate, it should be noted that some of the individuals we are working with are presenting with more significant and complex needs. This, combined with reduced staffing capacity to deliver the intense one-to-one support required, is an ongoing challenge for the team.

Youth Services Overview

The delivery of youth work opportunities by the CLDE Youth Services team has continued to grow over this last year. During 2023-24 Youth Services had **3fte core funded staff** and **3fte externally funded staff**, through the Strategic Equity Fund and Pupil Equity Funds from Papdale Primary and Kirkwall Grammar School. Youth Services also have a number of **sessional youth workers**, who run youth clubs in various settings across Orkney. This year youth clubs numbers have remained relatively consistent and Youth Services were delighted to once again be able to recruit to offer a youth club in Sanday.

This year was a busy one for Youth Voice activity, as Orkney hosted the Scottish Youth Parliament Sitting here in July. This was followed by the Scottish Youth Parliament elections in November. Orkney's Youth Forum members and Young Islanders have also been busy and involved in a range of events.

It has been another busy year for the team delivering a range of programmes to support Orkney's children, young people and wider families. There have been a number of varying opportunities for young people including Fireskills; Lets Learn and Jam; Young Scot Loneliness Project; and MyBnk financial education programme.

The establishment of the Pupil Engagement Team (PET), which consists of **one FTE community learning officer and 2 FTE Pupil Equity Workers**, means that the range and offer of delivery can be expanded. This project was brought about by funding from both the Strategic Equity Fund and the Pupil Equity Fund from Kirkwall Grammar School and Papdale Primary School, which allowed the CLDE Youth Services team to collaborate with these schools to use a range of youth work approaches to support young people with confidence, attendance and achievement.

Youth Services engaged and worked with 871 young people, 10 years old and over.

231 young people received a nationally recognised award.

177 children (under 10) engaged in youth services activity.

Orkney CLD Partnership

Partnership working is central to the CLD approach; therefore, it is not surprising that CLDE sits on a number of local and national partnerships. A key partnership for coordinating and planning CLD activity across Orkney is the Community Learning Development Partnership. This partnership is responsible for the Orkney CLD Partners Plan, working collectively to identify needs and deliver CLD collaboratively, to improve outcomes for Orkney's learners and communities.

Orkney Islands Council has a statutory duty to produce a Community Learning and Development Plan with partners every 3 years to ensure adequate and sufficient provision of community learning and development support across the local authority area.

The 2021-24 CLD Partners Plan for Community Learning and Development was produced by the re-named Orkney CLD Partnership, detailing how CLD will be delivered across Orkney during this time, ensuring services are planned for and delivered in a strategic and collaborative way.

Over this year, the plan was monitored, evaluated and reviewed to ensure effective progress was being made and that the plan remained relevant to new and emerging needs.

Over the second year of the plan, partners worked across all the actions. From the 21 actions set out in the plan, 10 were completed, 10 were on target to be completed within the timescales set and 1 had not been completed within the timescales set.

For the final year of the plan, any completed actions were removed, language and timescales were updated, and a small number of additional actions were added based on new areas of relevance to the CLD sector. Specifically, actions were added to the plan focused on delivering training on sexual exploitation, investigating social prescribing opportunities, the expansion of adult learning pathways and creating a lived experience panel to influence and inform the work of the CLD Partnership.

The full Orkney CLD Partners Plan 2021-2024, the new plan for 2024-27 and summary leaflets of the plans can be found in the related downloads section here: [Community Learning and Development \(orkney.gov.uk\)](https://www.orkney.gov.uk/community-learning-and-development)



Orkney CLD Inspection

Education Scotland HM Inspectors of Education evaluate and report on, the quality of Community Learning and Development (CLD) provision within local authorities, in line with The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and associated guidance for local authorities.

During 2023, HM Inspectors developed arrangements to undertake CLD progress visits in all 32 Local Authorities within the academic year, in a bid to support improvement and provide external assurance of the quality of CLD provision in Scotland.

Through progress visits, HM Inspectors take account of the extent to which local authorities are fulfilling their statutory duties in relation to CLD and evaluate the progress local authorities and their CLD partners are making to improve the quality of provision and services.

Orkney's CLD progress visit took place in March 2024. During the visit, the Inspectors spoke with learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, volunteers and other key stakeholders. The published report can be accessed on the Education Scotland website at (<https://education.gov.scot>).

HM inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement – and considered progress made against identified proprieties in the CLD plan.

In terms of the Orkney CLD Partnership, a number of positive areas were found, particularly amongst the leadership and governance of CLD, planning for improvement, the support given to staff, partners, volunteers and the breaking down of barriers for all learners. Inspectors identified a significant increase in the number of young people and adults engaged in CLD activity and that inclusive opportunities were helping to reduce barriers to participation and disadvantages. The report stated, "Across the wide range of CLD activity, learners are gaining confidence, knowledge and developing key skills which are helping to improve life chances."

During the inspection, HM Inspectors identified the leadership and governance of CLD across Orkney, as an area of highly effective practice which they would like to share more widely.

This is a tremendously positive report which recognises the hard work, dedication and commitment that is shown across the CLD sector to work collaboratively for the benefit of learners and the community. Special thanks and praise should go to the CLD Partnership who have worked so hard to ensure the coordination, expansion and delivery of CLD and CLD values in Orkney.

Work with adults & families

Multiply Programmes

Funding from the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for 2023-24 was crucial for the delivery of a diverse range of numeracy and maths learning opportunities in our community, many with the opportunity of formal accreditation with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). According to the Scottish Government's findings, 56% of adults in the UK have low numeracy skills. This is equivalent to 1.9 million working-age adults. The mission at The Learning Link is to try and do something positive about these statistics to improve life chances for people in our community and allow them to improve their skills for learning, life or work.

2023-24 saw our Multiply team devise several numeracy classes, programmes and opportunities which were delivered both during the day and in the evenings to ensure opportunities were more accessible.

Some of the courses offered included Numeracy and the Language of Maths (ESOL); Confidence with Maths; Numbers and Money (ASN); Get more for your Money; National 3 Numeracy classes, and National 4 Numeracy classes.

33 Adult learners signed up for help with numeracy under the Multiply Programme

6 people achieved qualifications in Numeracy at National 3 and National 4, with others still learning and aiming to achieve a qualification



"It helped me get back into education." – Participant

"At work I feel better and quicker on the till." – Participant

"It helped me with budgeting finances and got me into a routine to help with my mental health." – Participant

"I'm leaving not only with a maths qualification, but with confidence I didn't have before." – Participant

"It gave me the confidence to start on the N5 programme and gave me the chance to do it." – Participant

"I have more confidence when buying things, shopping, working out finances and budgeting." – Participant

Summer Cooking for Families

As part of the CLDE summer programme, the Adult & Family Learning Service led on a summer cooking course for families. The course aimed to provide family learning opportunities, promote numeracy learning, develop the cooking abilities of families and raise awareness of the benefits of healthy living.

Tesco's local Community Champion supported the programme, covering the cost of the ingredients for the programme.

Timings were chosen to fit around families, and the course, which was oversubscribed, ran over a 5-week period. Each week the families worked together to follow the recipes provided. The children and adults enjoyed the opportunity to try new techniques and different types of food, alongside developing their understanding of time, fractions, weights and measures. After the preparing and cooking, all the participants joined together to sample the meals produced.



The course was a real collaboration across the CLDE Service with Adult & Family Learning supported by Youth Services to ensure the young people attending were appropriately supported.

All of the families that attended the course received a Certificate of Achievement and gave very positive feedback on the course.



"It reminded us to spend time together every day."

- Participant

"Started eating healthier things after trying them and trying to incorporate them at home."

- Participant

"It was amazing." – relating to the numeracy activities"

- Participant

"It has been a lovely mix of cooking and play with some learning – thank you."

- Participant

"I liked cooking as a family"

- Participant

8 parents and 15 children were involved in the summer cooking for families' programme

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

2023-24 has been an exciting one for the delivery of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). One of the classes provided was a conversation class and was for learners with little or very basic English skills. Topics were chosen by the learners to increase their confidence in speaking and listening in everyday life situations.

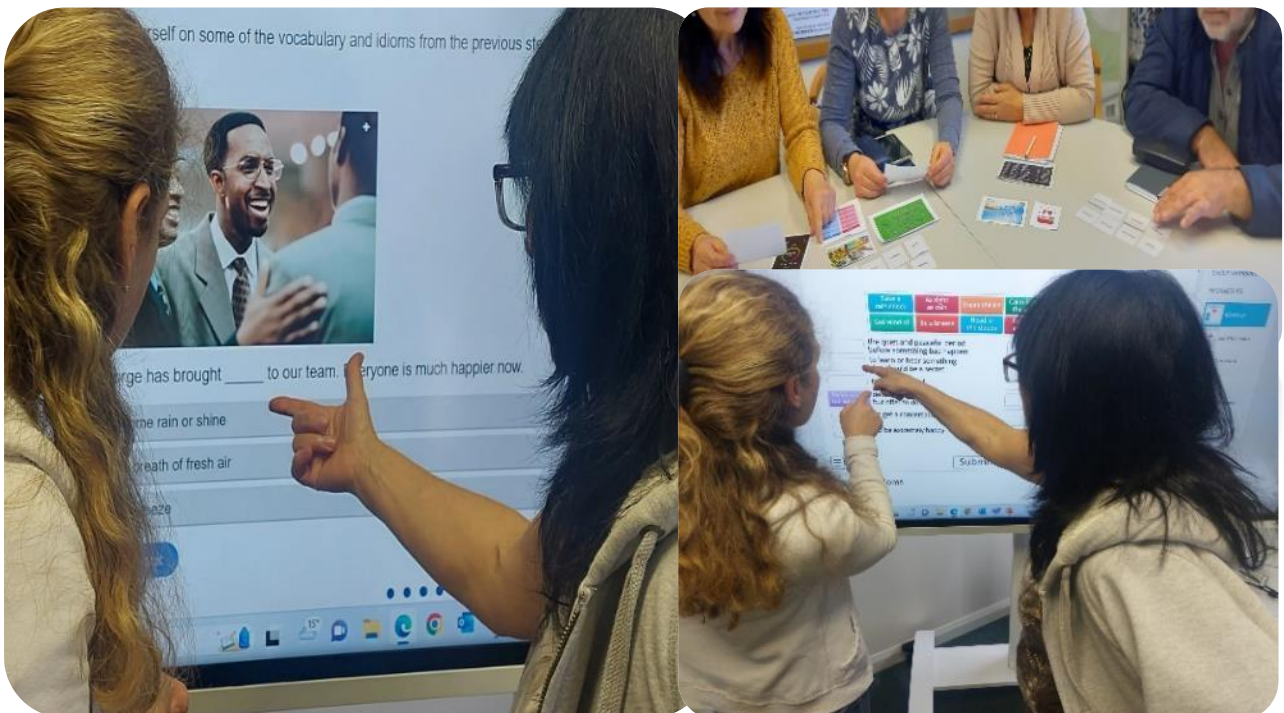
Adult & Family Learning started with one mixed ability group, which was non-accredited, but as the numbers grew, more classes had to be created to meet demand, therefore a beginner's class and an intermediate class were both offered.

The experienced Adult & Family Learning staff, aim to be as flexible as possible with all programmes designed to meet the needs of the learners whilst also covering the core competencies of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Although the current classes are non-accredited, a lot of qualification requirements are covered, and key skills developed. Both classes aim to make learners more confident in playing a part in the local community and as a result, many learners have gone on to a range of positive outcomes including finding employment; volunteering; or starting a successful business.

The intermediate class is for more experienced learners who may want to work towards a qualification. Learners had the opportunity to study and prepare for a qualification, which could be gained through UHI Orkney. However, due to changes in staffing, UHI Orkney are currently unable to deliver ESOL qualifications directly. As a result, UHI Orkney and CLDE are working closely together to ensure ESOL accreditation is available locally through the SQA. Once approved by the SQA, formal ESOL accreditation will be on offer from The Learning Link at National 2,3 and 4 levels.

18 ESOL learners attended the classes and received 370 learning hours in total



New Year New Thinking

The New Year, New Thinking programme was set up in conjunction with two elements of Orkney's CLDE team - Employability and The Adult & Family Learning team.

The aim of the 7-week programme was to help learners to be more aware of how they spend their money, what help is out there for them and how they can make wise money decisions.

The programme was open to the community and a mix of learners engaged. This included young people who would like to gain their own tenancy in the future, young people who had recently started to live independently and parents with young families. Many of the learners had struggled historically with education and faced barriers to accessing learning, that they wanted to engage in.

The programme was a mixture of practical support, along with expert advice.

Each week the learners were assisted in exploring ways to help them in the current financial crisis. Whilst on the programme participants had access to partner organisations that added value and information to the programme. This led to a number of new referrals, and all of the learners and outside speakers reported positive outcomes. Various organisations supported the programme by delivering information sessions including: Voluntary Action Orkney; Citizens Advice Bureau; The Blide Trust; Thaw Orkney; Women's Aid, Warm Works and the Food Bank.

During the weekly sessions individuals had the opportunity to develop and embed their cookery skills, using simple, affordable and fresh ingredients. Learners reported feeling more confident in low-cost meal planning and preparation, increased practical cookery skills and more informed about local support available to families and households. In addition, all learners felt that taking part in the course was beneficial for their mental health.



"I liked doing this course, everyone is kind."
- Participant

"I actually cooked a meal for myself for the first time and enjoyed it"
- Participant

"Doing the course has encouraged me to cook with my daughter which is great as she learns new things as well."
- Participant

SVQ Vocational Routes

Working with Orkney Islands Council's Organisational Development Team and UHI Orkney, the Employability Service developed new and fully funded pathways for parents to engage with vocational training and gain qualifications in their chosen vocational area.

Working collaboratively a variety of courses were offered to allow individuals within identified groups and on income bands A-E, within Orkney Islands Council, to progress within their employment and also support recruitment and retention within the Council. Courses included -

- SVQ2 Business and Administration
- SVQ3 Business and Administration
- ATT Certificate in bookkeeping
- ATT Foundation Certificate in Accountancy SCQF Level 6
- ATT Diploma in Accountancy SCQF Level 7
- Bricklaying PDA SCQF Level 7
- Carpentry and Joinery PDA SCQF Level 7
- SVQ3 Hospitality Supervision and Leadership SCQF Level 7
- Introduction to a Career in Social Care SCQF Level 5
- CMI Level 6 First Line Management.

1 parent has enrolled to complete the ATT Diploma in Accountancy SCQF Level 7 qualification

2 parents have enrolled and started on the SVQ3 Hospitality Supervision course

Funday Sunday

In July 2023, all three CLDE teams, Employability, Adult & Family Learning and Youth Services worked alongside the Yard Plant Nursery, to plan and deliver a Sunday Funday activity day.

The day comprised of a variety of family learning activities including planting flower and strawberry baskets, rock painting and a numeracy scavenger hunt. Families also received an information and activity pack which included family learning activities and information on local support agencies including CLDE Services, Homestart, Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau and Orkney Money Matters.



Throughout the day 174 individuals attended from 54 families

"I did this last year and really enjoyed it. We now have our own house, and we planted some of the plants from last year in the garden. Having the first hour as a quieter session was perfect for my daughter as she may not have coped with a busier session"

- Participant

Fast Track to Hospitality

A Sector Based Work Academy Programme was created in partnership between CLD Employability Team, UHI Orkney and local industry to combine practical skills and knowledge about hospitality and tourism in Orkney, with hands-on experiences to support learners back into the workplace.

The UHI Orkney team created an intensive 5-week course which covered many areas, key to working in the hospitality industry. These included industry visits to local hospitality venues, work experience in the college cafe, bar skills and mixology, allergen and COSHH awareness, personal development sessions and practical catering skills. Individuals also had the opportunity to complete a Level 2 Food Hygiene course through the Digital College.

Working across the Local Employability Partnership, the CLD Employability team were able to identify individuals who were interested in gaining skills and confidence and make steps towards employment in the sector. Attendance on the course was positive with average attendance of 87%.

Following the course, participants were offered work experience in the hospitality sector.

10 individuals completed the course in full

6 individuals completed and passed their Level 2 Food Hygiene certificate

“Great course, great tutors, great fun”, “Thank you so much for the experience, and will be sad not to be with you all again.”

- Participant

“It was amazing, I just don’t want this course to finish. I learned so many new things, I am very happy.”

- Participant

I-Learn Training

Increasing literacy and digital skills among Orkney Islands Council staff was an option for learners this year. Many staff who work for the Council have to complete mandatory training through iLearn, and without the ability or confidence in their digital skills, this was a barrier to completing the training. The offer of help from The Learning Link was circulated among Orkney Island Council managers and supervisory staff.

4 staff members were support and are now more confident and competent to take on the i-learn training



Get Online Week and Digital Friends

The Learning Link hosted 'Get Online Week' in October 2023 which was held in Kirkwall and Stromness Library's. The aim was to encourage people with no digital skills to give it a try. Those who attended were given information about the opportunities to gain skills and confidence using technology.

In previous years The Learning Link provided an informal group setting for senior citizens to get together each week to share skills, learn from each other, and ask staff for guidance and support on digital skills, however, space has always been very limited at The Learning Link and the building is not fully accessible.

Adult & Family Learning staff approached Age Orkney, and it was agreed to deliver the Senior Computer Club in the Age Orkney premises in Victoria Street, Kirkwall and a new 'Digital Friends' group was established.

As with previous groups, learners had a range of equipment, which included laptops, iPad/iPhone, and android devices. Adult & Family Learning provided devices to attendees who didn't have their own devices during the sessions.

Each week, staff from The Learning Link, and Age Orkney, worked together to provide support, training and guidance. Topics covered included: closing apps/windows properly; installing & uninstalling apps; checking reviews on Trustpilot; sending/receiving text messages; checking privacy settings on Facebook and how to follow topics of interest; sending emails as well as recognising scam/phishing emails and how to report them; using Messenger and Facetime to stay connected with family and friends; Word Processing tasks; booking sessions at the Pickaquoy Centre; taking photos and finding them; strong passwords; securing devices with screen locks; allowing system updates and much more.

The last session before the Christmas break, staff arranged a Christmas Bash. There were fun quizzes where learners had to go online to find the answers, food and music.

22 senior citizens attended the sessions with a total of 174 learning hours delivered



"It has been good to learn how to keep safe online, and the support is great."

- Participant

"It's been good for meeting and chatting online as I do get lonely. I get great satisfaction that I can do things for myself."

- Participant

"I enjoy getting out and joining in discussions, this group has become part of my social life."

-Participant

National Numeracy Day

National Numeracy Day is a national, annual event to promote working with, and improving, number skills across the UK.



This year, the Adult & Family Learning Service, in partnership with Orkney Library & Archive, organised an inclusive event which promoted The Learning Link and Orkney Library Services. UHI Orkney staff attended to promote the courses and qualifications available through UHI Orkney. Youth Services staff were also present, to work creatively with children and young people through an array of fun activities.

People who attended were encouraged to take the National Numeracy Challenge and discuss any anxieties they have when working with numbers. Participants received information and guidance and were able to discuss opportunities available to them locally.

The Adult & Family Learning Service staff provided an overview of learning opportunities available, with the main focus being to promote Multiply opportunities and explore numeracy and numbers in a fun and engaging way.



Over 200 people of all ages attended the event

115 local adults completed the online numeracy challenge

Community Learning Classes 2023-24

Our community learning daytime and evening classes continue to deliver great positive outcomes for participants, including bringing people together, strengthening communities and building people's skills and confidence.

During 2023-24, CLDE organised a range of daytime and evening classes. Our most popular classes were Tai Chi, Yoga, Meditation, Birdwatching and Finding Wildflowers, Plants and Trees, with some of these classes fully booked within 24 hours of opening.

Feedback from learners indicates that these classes are popular because they give people the opportunity to relax or to learn in



stimulating yet comfortable surroundings, which contributes significantly to their overall health and wellbeing.

The introduction of Multiply funding since 2022, and the recruitment of two additional Adult Learning Support Workers, with a numeracy remit, has also provided the opportunity to provide free maths classes within the Community Learning Programmes. National 3 and 4 numeracy classes were offered in the Autumn and New Year Community Learning Class programmes.

Going forward, the Adult & Family Learning Service will continue to work with tutors and participants to ensure programmes and courses are developed around both tutor expertise and learner needs and hope to expand the variety of Community learning opportunities available.

46 courses were arranged

205 learners participated in community learning classes

“I really enjoyed the course and would love to continue with this course in the future! The tutor was very welcoming as were the rest of the group and the atmosphere was perfect”

- Learner

“Class members were made to feel very welcome, old hands were greeted warmly”

- Learner

“Having had a period of long-term illness, I feel this is helping to get my brain working again. I look forward to it every week!”

- Learner



“Our tutor... has demonstrated such a dedication to all her students, and I can absolutely say that her teaching has had a positive life changing effect on my life”

- Learner

“Definite benefit to physical and mental well-being”

- Learner

“I have done this course for something like 12 years, and it honestly saved my life. I had suffered terribly with depression and suicidal thoughts, but Meg's teaching gently softened and healed my heart. This is profound work that I will always carry with me”

- Learner

Young Parents Group

A weekly young parents' group was delivered by CLDE's Youth Services and Employability teams in partnership with Orkney Health and Care and NHS Orkney.

Sessions were co-designed with parents and covered a range of sessions to promote health and wellbeing, getting involved with the local community and developing knowledge, skills and networks to make informed future choices and progress towards employment.

During 2023-24 the group benefited from a range of information sessions with other support organisations such as the Early Years Team; Childsmile; Little Rays; Citizens Advice Bureau; Orkney, Bookbug; trips to local facilities such as Pickaquoy Centre; Orkney Library and local sensory room; sessions on messy play and age-appropriate activities; health and wellbeing outings and weekly cooking activities.



5 parents regularly attend along with 5 babies and children

3 parents have progressed to employment with 2 continuing to attend the group when possible

Driving Theory

CLDE continued to support learners through Driving Theory sessions during 2023-24. This support has resulted in 2 learners passing their theory test. Both individuals are now accessing practical driving lessons and working towards passing their practical driving test.



The Jedi Council

The Jedi Council is a group of individuals with a variety of lived experience of local employability support services in Orkney, who provide a valuable and accurate insight into employability support in Orkney.

The group are now recognised as an official sub-group within the Local Employability Partnership, reporting and governance structure, with two members attending monthly meetings to report on progress made against delegated tasks.

The group have continued to meet bi-weekly during 2023-24. There are six regular attendees to meetings, however those who have made transitions to work and further education return and contribute when they can.

The focus of the Jedi Council over 2023-24 has been to review the [Orkney Employability Pipeline](#) document, make recommendations for future resource and develop a new web-based directory, which details local employability provision and support. This work has included meeting with providers and collecting relevant information on what each organisation delivers locally.

The Jedi Council are now working with the Strategy Collective to design a straightforward, accurate and easy to use web-based resource.

Going forward the Jedi Council will be responsible for managing and updating the resource, establishing processes and procedures to ensure information will be kept up to date and accurate for users. There will also be a hard copy version of the resource that will be distributed widely.



Work with communities

Annual Halls Event

The 2023 Annual Halls Event, hosted by Birsay Hall Committee saw 24 volunteers



representing 14 halls from across Orkney come together for the 22nd Annual Meeting of Community Associations. 21 people attended in person whilst, 3 attended online by Teams.

This popular event, organised by the Council's Community Learning & Development Team in partnership with Voluntary Action Orkney, gives volunteers running village halls the chance to get together to increase their skills and knowledge, celebrate successes, discuss challenges and share solutions.

Across Orkney, Community Associations do so much to ensure their community hall provides social activities, classes and services for their local community. Village halls are at the heart of community life, providing a varied and diverse range of activities which encourage the active involvement of residents and groups, celebrates the cultural richness of the community, creates opportunities for the development of individual potential, improved health and wellbeing, works to combat loneliness and social isolation and fosters a cohesive community.

Hall committees shape the programme each year, ensuring the event is relevant and useful. This year, presentations covered a wide range of topics such as funding opportunities, recruitment of volunteers, officer bearer roles and responsibilities, the Community Touring Initiative and Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO's).

It was a great day and those present were appreciative of the opportunity to network with representatives from other halls and organisations who offer support to the sector.

24 volunteers attended the 2023 Annual Halls Event

"Lots of information and thought provoking" - Participant

"Lovely to hear about what's happening throughout Orkney" -Participant

"Opportunity to meet folk from other halls" - Participant

"OIC gave a very approachable presentation" -Participant

"I feel quite optimistic about situations"

- Participant

"Given me a bit more enthusiasm to stay on the committee!"

- Participant

Eday Training Visit

Following the community consultation through Orkney Matters, island residents raised concerns about their barriers to participation in community education opportunities. Many of these concerns stemmed from issues with transport and costs involved to participate in such opportunities on mainland Orkney. Working with the Eday Development Trust, the CLD Employability Team designed a programme of informal and accredited learning opportunities requested by local residents through a questionnaire delivered through the local newsletter The Eday Sound. In March 2024, representatives from CLDE's Employability and Adult & Family Learning teams travelled to Eday to deliver training and drop-in sessions over a Friday and Saturday. The programme included Digital Skills training, delivered by The Learning Link, Basic Excel Training and Level 2 Food Hygiene certificate, accredited through the Digital College. The team also held a drop-in session at the Community Café and did home visits on request.

Feedback gathered during the visit was very positive and identified potential future support.

In total the team engaged with 40 Eday residents during their visit.

- 21 individuals accessed the Digital Skills sessions
- 10 individuals attended the Level 2 Food Hygiene sessions with 9 individuals completing the exam and gaining their qualification
- 10 individuals completed the Basic Excel training
- 2 people had a home visit
- 1 person accessed employability support
- 2 people received numeracy support
- 2 people received literacy support



“They were both very interesting and I learned a lot from the courses”

- Participant

“As community education it was amazing”

- Participant

“Informative, friendly, light-hearted”

- Participant

Awareness Raising

2023-24 saw the Community Learning, Development & Employability Service attend numerous one-off events with the aim of raising awareness of adult learning, youth work, family learning, employability support and wider CLD opportunities available in the community.

Adult & Family Learning ran a roadshow visiting Rousay, Shapinsay, Westray, Eday and Stronsay to spread the word about adult and family learning. Attending the Westray Conference, CLDE staff ran sessions about adult learning, youth work and wider CLDE support. This event alone engaged with over 250 people and through the awareness raising activity Adult & Family Learning received further enquiries about training for people to become volunteer tutors in their community.



Other awareness-raising opportunities included CLDE attendance at: Parent's evenings; NHS events; Papdale Wellbeing Fair; Sessions with Community Justice; Department of Work & Pensions; and other opportunities as they arose.

3502 people engaged with the CLDE Service through one off events

The Orkney Agricultural Shows are a golden opportunity to raise awareness with the local community, highlighting the positive outcomes that can be achieved through CLD activity and what opportunities are available within our community through the CLDE Service.

Staff from across CLDE Services (Youth Services, Employability and Adult & Family Learning) had a stall at both the Dounby and County Shows. Staff engaged with lots of people through eye-catching displays and interactive activities to spread the word about all the learning opportunities available through CLD.



Adult & Family Learning were also involved in the Orkney Scam Action Group (OSAG) stall. OSAG is made up of local partners including Police Scotland; Trading Standards; Age Orkney; CLDE; Citizens Advice Bureau and Business Gateway. The group produced valuable information on how to keep safe online, detailing how to report instances of scams, where to seek help and guidance, and where people can get help and support to increase their online skills and understanding.

CLDE engaged with 542 members of the public at the shows

OSAG engaged with 260 members of the public at the County Show

Work with young people

Fireskills

CLDE Youth Services worked in collaboration with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to deliver a ten-week Fireskills course which included Dynamic Youth Award accreditation, for a group of 9 young people. In order to hopefully encourage future recruitment to support a sustainable fire service within the smaller islands, the course was offered specifically to those residing in Papdale Halls of Residence, with any additional spaces allocated to pupils from Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School.

Participants gained an understanding of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service through practical skills. They developed communication skills and demonstrated effective teamwork. Over the duration of the course the group grew in knowledge and confidence, with 3 now considering joining the service, once aged to do so.



9 young people, including 4 from the North Isles, completed the course

“Reaching the end of the Fireskills course is a testament to the commitment of these nine individuals who took part. We commend their dedication and look forward to witnessing the positive impact they will undoubtedly make in their communities.”

- SFRS Fire Fighter

MyBnk Financial Education Programme

During November Youth Services were delighted to host UK charity, MyBnk. In collaboration with key partners a number of sessions were organised aimed at equipping young people with the skills and confidence needed to navigate their financial futures.

The MyBNK course focused on increasing access to digital financial tools, enhancing their usage skills, and improving confidence and motivation amongst young people to manage their money effectively. The programme is designed to address various aspects of financial literacy, from budgeting and saving to understanding income tax and interest rates.

Participants reported improved practical skills such as budgeting, understanding pay slips, dealing with banks, and making informed financial decisions. The participants enjoyed the interactive teaching methods, such as group work and question and answer sessions.



161 young people attended at least 1 MyBnk session

Prom Pop-Up Event

Following the success of the Prom Pop-up event in 2022, it was decided to offer it again in 2023. This event is aimed at providing young people with free outfits for their school leavers prom. An appeal to the community to provide donations of occasion wear they were willing to pass on, meant that we could run the event at no cost to the young people.

This year the focus was on sustainability of recycled fashion, while also addressing the challenging cost of living. Events were held in both Stromness and Kirkwall, and this was met with great enthusiasm with a high uptake in both areas. In addition, Youth Services also offered the Youth Café the opportunity to share the outfits with young people attending the Pride Prom which was held at the Youth Café.

41 young people attended the events with mostly all leaving with at least 1 item

“Thank you so much for this, it’s such a wonderful idea and makes life so much easier for so many people. You make such a difference to so many people’s lives so thank you!”

- Participant

“Had a great time! Supportive environment and found great stuff”

- Participant



Let's Learn and Jam

A targeted youth music programme was offered to young people to support them to gain musical skills and confidence. Delivered by music tutor Leroy Brown and CLDE Youth Services staff, young people learned a piece of music which they showcased in a performance at residential care facility St Rognvald House.



3 young people participated and completed a Hi5 Award

This Summer!
Let's Learn and Jam

Learn about :

- How to play guitar
- Guitar chords
- Playing songs

Free for 12 - 18 Year Olds

To book a place email
richard.smith@orkney.gov.uk

Every Friday 4pm - 6pm
 7th July to 29th September
 The Life Centre, Kirkwall

The Life Centre, Kirkwall
 7th July to 29th September
 Email: richard.smith@orkney.gov.uk
 To book a place email

“We’d like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in the ‘Let’s Learn and Jam’ group for their visit, and especially the young musicians for their dedication and outstanding performances. The music was enjoyed by all, and really brightened the day for residents – and staff too!”

- Registered Manager, St Rognvald’s House

Youth Clubs

During 2023–2024, youth clubs were active in 7 areas - Dounby, Firth, Hope, Hoy, Sanday, Stromness and Westray. Sessions run for 20 weeks of the year with young people getting involved in planning the programme of activities, which includes sports, arts, crafts and other fun opportunities. During this period, Youth Services were delighted to be able to recruit and once again offer a youth club in Sanday.

CLDE youth clubs are focused on increasing young people’s social skills and overall well-being. Youth workers link these outcomes to the National Youth Work Outcomes and skills framework. Recent feedback from parents and carers highlighted improved confidence, increased social interaction, and overall happiness through attending youth club.

209 different young people attended at least 1 youth club session

There were 2288 youth club attendances across Orkney



“He’s more energetic, happier, more outgoing, and enjoys attending.” - Parent



“He enjoys meeting friends in a safe environment.” - Parent

“She has improved self-esteem, better social skills, enjoys independence at the tuck shop, loves the activities.” - Parent

“He enjoys activities, safe environment, positive impact on mental well-being.” - Parent

“She’s more confident, better interaction with diverse groups.” - Parent

“He loves all aspects, developing confidence” - Parent



Case Study - Westray Boat Build

During the Spring break, young people from Westray Youth Club came together to build two fabulous canoes – in just a week!

“We were approached by Archipelago Folkschool who had seen the great work by our young people on scale models of a skiff, as part of the ‘One Hundred Boats for Scotland’ project during lockdown – they asked if we wanted to take part in a Heritage Lottery Fund funded project to build full size boats with young people around Scotland.



ARCHIPELAGO
FOLKSCHOOL



Being a community with a strong seafaring tradition, it was a resounding ‘yes’ from the young people – so the team came up and we ran an intensive week-long workshop.

When we opened the kits, you could see the sense of enormity of the task ahead on everyone’s faces, but the young people got stuck in, and at the end of the week’s sessions with Archipelago Folkschool we had two fully assembled canoes, with one coat of epoxy resin.

The Westray Men’s Shed then came to our rescue with another few coats of resin - one of their first projects after setting up in Westray.

It was a very technical project. The young people who took part came away with lots of practical skills using power tools and wood working by hand – but more importantly they came away with the confidence and knowledge that through working together and taking things step by step they can achieve big things.

We couldn’t have done it without all the parents and helpers from the community. And of course, it wouldn’t have been possible without Heritage Lottery Fund support of Archipelago Folkschool.”

Karen Penn, Senior Youth Worker

Beats for Change DJ Project 2023

The Orkney Youth Services Team ran "Beats for Change", a project to teach 6 young people the art of DJing while building their organisational skills and social responsibility. Led by a Community Learning and Development Officer who has extensive DJing experience, participants learned about DJ equipment, techniques such as beatmatching and scratching, and event planning. The programme worked with a range of partners including Orkney Youth Café, Stenness Community Association, and BBC Radio Orkney and culminated in a fundraising DJ event in the Youth Cafe, organised by the young DJs, which saw 39 young people in attendance.



The event raised £115 for the RNLI.

Youth Worker Training

Each year Youth Services deliver an extensive programme of training for our youth work staff. Often this training is opened up to wider partners working across the youth work sector in Orkney.

This year we offered the following youth worker training courses:

Course	Numbers Attended
Imagine a Man – Delivered by YouthLink	7
Intersectionality – Delivered by YouthLink	6
Child Protection	13
First Aid	8



“The Imagine a man session provided me with a comprehensive look at how masculinity is shaped by various factors, which was eye-opening and very relevant to my work. The facilitator was excellent in creating a safe space for open discussion, and the toolkit is a fantastic resource that I will use in the future.”

-Participant

In March, CLDE Youth Services organised a youth worker training residential for youth work staff. It is a number of years since a residential training event was arranged. This was well attended and the staff who participated felt it was a really worthwhile opportunity. The sessions aimed to enhance skills and knowledge in youth work, focusing on practical aspects and theoretical frameworks.

Key topics included Dynamic Youth Awards; creative evaluation techniques; The Promise; and the national youth work outcomes and skills framework. The training also covered essential topics such as mental health awareness (See Me), resource sharing, and effective use of technology. By the end of the residential, participants had gained new skills, expanded their network, and were more equipped to deliver impactful youth work in their communities.



“I enjoyed the team building exercises.” - Participant

“It was enjoyable and worthwhile.” - Participant

“It was good getting to know staff better.” - Participant

“I feel more confidence in myself.” - Participant



Friday Afternoon Diversions Activities

Youth Services continued to collaborate with the Pickaquoy Centre, Action for Children and Stromness Community Centre this year, to continue the offer of diversionary activities on Friday afternoons during school term time. The sessions in The Pickaquoy Centre offer young people the chance to take part in free sports sessions and fun activities, including free use of the swimming pool. In Stromness, the sessions offer free use of the pool table; darts; games; arts and crafts and a free snack.

65 young people attended at least one session in Stromness Community Centre

255 young people attended at least one session at The Pickaquoy Centre

"These activities are great; my son goes every week and enjoys them. The fact that it is free is a huge benefit. I would really like to see it continue."

- Parent



Wellbeing Wednesdays

We are aware of the increased concerns around poor mental health and the subsequent health and wellbeing of our young people.

It was identified that for some young people over 16 years there was perhaps little for them to get involved in where they weren't involved in community clubs, therefore we worked with The Pickaquoy Centre to provide a drop in space for 10 weeks during the winter months for young people aged 16 - 24 years.

These sessions were offered thanks to funding from the Scottish Governments Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding. The sessions allowed for young people to come along, take some time out, relax, get some valuable physical exercise – and chat over a board game with the youth workers. Participants could play some squash or go for a free swim and health suite session during the pools 'chillout' session.



Over the course of the programme, 7 different young people attended, the majority of these being regular attenders

Young Scot Local Action Group – Loneliness Project

This project, delivered in partnership with Young Scot, was offered to four different localities to give a broader view of how loneliness affects young people in different areas across Scotland. The selected areas were Orkney, Hawick, Perth and Falkirk. Young people from each area discussed what loneliness means to them and how that affects young people in their area. Some of the issues raised in this discussion included: young people not knowing what services are available for their age group; rural locations; connectivity; and centralisation of opportunities.



The local Orkney group, which consisted of 5 young people, was allocated a budget of £1700 to organise an event (supported by CLDE Youth Services staff) with the aim of tackling the issues associated with loneliness. The group chose to focus on co-ordinating a number of pop-up bubble tea cafés. The group also wanted to address the fact that young people are often unsure what services they can access, therefore they focused on this element by researching and making videos, uploaded to the Young Scot Orkney page, which could be accessed by a QR code.

The Bubble Tea Café's took place in Firth, Hoy, Burray and Westray. The numbers attending the events varied across the different areas, but they were all very well received. During this time, we also saw an increase in visits to the local Young Scot website pages due to the ease of accessing the videos and information through the QR codes promoted at each event.

86 young people attended the Bubble Tea events

“The best part of today was I got out of the house.”
- Bubble Tea Café attendee

“The best part of today was talking with people.”
- Bubble Tea Café attendee



Following the success of the project the Local group in Orkney were invited to attend Young Scot in Edinburgh to launch the Youth Loneliness Toolkit which they were involved in creating: <https://young.scot/get-informed/youth-loneliness-toolkit/>

Fast Forward

As part of the work of the Community Learning Development & Employability Service to support family learning, the Youth Services team collaborated with 'Fast Forward' – a charity who deliver training and raise awareness to enable young people to make informed choices, about their health and wellbeing. 2 Fast Forward trainers visited Orkney to raise awareness with young people, parents and practitioners on the dangers relating to vaping and tobacco products and how the links between gaming and gambling could impact on the holistic wellbeing of young people.



698 children, young people, parents and professionals attended at least one of the Fast Forward sessions

“The whole session was an eye opener.” - Participant

“Lots of useful and new information.”

- Participant



Youth Work Offer

Youth Services have developed a Youth Work Offer for schools and other establishments, which provides clear details of what CLDE Youth Services can deliver. These youth work opportunities are available for secondary aged pupils and those at Primary 7 transition stage. Courses include 'Confidence to Cook'; 'Imagine a Man'; and 'Feels Good'. During 2023-24 Youth Services delivered courses in both Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy.

“The Youth Work Offer has provided several groups of S1 – S3 students with fun, practical, youth work experiences during curriculum time, that were looking to develop their confidence, self-esteem and social skills. From speaking to these young people, they have really valued and appreciated this opportunity.”

- Principal Guidance Teacher, Kirkwall Grammar School

Pupil Engagement Team – Year 1



The CLDE Youth Services team collaborated with Papdale Primary School and Kirkwall Grammar School to establish two Pupil Equity Funded in-school youth worker posts (known as Pupil Equity Workers). Along with a Community Learning Officer / co-ordinator post, initially funded until March 2024 from the Strategic Equity Fund, the main focus was placed on closing the poverty-related attainment gap for children and young people, using a community learning and development youth work approach.

Known as the Pupil Engagement Team (PET), the team provide targeted support for children, young people, and families from P1 – S3 who are at risk of disengagement or non-attendance, in line with the criteria for the Pupil Equity funding.

Pupils are offered individual and/or targeted group support sessions which are led by the young people, supported by the youth worker, and can include activities to develop or enhance social, emotion and inter-personal skills, improve wellbeing, attendance and also provide opportunities to achieve wider accreditation through youth awards.

In both schools, the youth workers provide wider engagement opportunities before, during and after the school day, such as a breakfast bar, a soft start option for young people who feel unable to go directly to class themselves, and confidence building spaces and programmes. As part of their role, both youth workers also offer support to the wider family. This can include offering low level wellbeing support, building confidence to engage with the school and signposting to alternative support organisations.

During this first year, the Pupil Engagement Team was focused on the recruitment of staff, relationship building, establishing processes, project development and exploring initiatives and activities, with the principal goal of identifying and implementing the most appropriate support required in each school, in conjunction with the young people involved.

Throughout this period, multiple activities and initiatives were trialled as a means of identifying what best suited each location. The most comprehensive measure for success in the first year was the level of engagement from the young people and schools and the positive interactions and outcomes for the children, young people and their families. Numerous clubs and groups were trialled in each school as a means of identifying universal and targeted support opportunities.



124 pupils were directly supported by the PET during 2023-24

“Engaging families is crucial to establishing and maintaining good attendance with our children. The PET engage with families that, due to various factors, may be reluctant to engage with school staff. We have noted that trusting relationships develop that include a parental openness that is less forthcoming usually. This inevitably impacts on the positively on the school relationship. Using PEF to invest in this partnership is bringing a new approach to engaging our children and families. It has opened a new route for children who are struggling with their engagement and enjoyment of school and provides a different type of support from that that the school can ordinarily offer. In our school and family meetings, children and parents are reporting to us that they are thrilled with having the support of the PET team. While quantifying the impact is more difficult at this early phase, I have no doubt that we will see impact in our wellbeing and engagement data as time moves on.”

- Papdale Primary School Head Teacher

“The Soft Start every day has been amazing! Starting each day in a small group, has really transformed some of our pupils’ experiences! Some personal gentle encouragement, having a space which feels safe and comfortable has meant that some of our most socially challenged young people start their day in a way that gives them the wherewithal to carry on all day. Breakfast Club has also made such a difference. Knowing that they can get a nutritional start here means that their brains are ready for learning.”

- Guidance Manager, Kirkwall Grammar School

Summer Transition Programme

Delivered by Orkney Island's Council's Community Learning, Development and Employability team; Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney, the summer transition programme was developed to help young people develop the skills they need as they move on from mainstream education onto further education, training or work.



The programme was targeted at young people who may need support to move on from school. Ten young people joined the group, with six attending regularly throughout the summer.

CLDE's activities focused on the development of life skills and the young people were supported to gain accredited qualifications through Dynamic Youth Awards and the Digital College, with online courses on Food Hygiene and Customer Service available.

Sessions also focused on online safety, with an input from Police Scotland; inputs on drinking responsibly; personal finance and money management education through the I-Lead Money Programme and an opportunity to try out VR headsets at Orkney Library and Archive.



Working with Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce, young people were given the opportunity to explore their options with visits to UHI Orkney's Hospitality Department and the Balfour Hospital. Whilst at UHI Orkney participants learnt more about careers in Hospitality, the transferrable skills needed in the sector and pathways into related careers. Whilst the visit to the Balfour helped them to learn more about the variety of non-clinical careers available and the work-based learning opportunities offered by NHS Orkney.

The programme concluded with a mock interview session where local employers came along to the group to ask young people some of the questions they could expect to be asked at an interview. Young people were supported to develop answers based on their own skills and experiences.

8 young people gained qualifications through the Digital College

A total of 13 accredited qualifications, were achieved

6 young people worked towards and completed a Dynamic Youth Award

100% of young people who attended the summer programme progressed to positive destinations

Blide Tuesday Group

CLDE have worked with The Blide Trust and young people to further develop the Tuesday Group, which is a group for young people who have care experience, and their friends. Staff work with young people to develop plans that meet their needs and work collaboratively to plan, resource, and deliver sessions. This includes sharing venues, finances and staff to deliver, monitor and evaluate the work.

The sessions support young people to develop knowledge, skills and networks that will help them in future transitions and also actively contribute to their health and wellbeing. Weekly sessions always involve cooking a simple, affordable and healthy meal, eating together and a range of other activities, opportunities and experiences agreed on with the young people.

Sessions over 2023-24 have included health and wellness sessions at Picky, teambuilding activities, MyBank budgeting sessions, road safety VR headsets and CPR training with the Fire Service, candle making, visits to local historic sights and beaches, scavenger hunts, drug and alcohol awareness sessions and a trip to the local pantomime.

These sessions have allowed CLDE staff to build positive reciprocal relationships with the young people which enables more focused one-to-one support to be offered out with the group setting as required.

3 people have gained employment during 2023-24

4 young people have progressed to further education

On Average, 7 young people attended the Blide Tuesday group each week



Youth Awards Ceremony

188 people attended the Orkney Youth Awards, which took place in the Pickaquoy Centre in March 2024, to celebrate the achievements of young people.



CLDE Youth Services in partnership with Voluntary Action Orkney's Youth Development Workers organised the event, with sponsorship from The Pickaquoy Centre, The Orcadian and Robert Gordon University. Hosted by young people from Orkney Youth Forum, Harray Young Farmers and Orkney Youth Café, this year celebrated the achievement of 101 different awards including Dynamic Youth, Youth Achievement, Saltire, First Aid and participation certificates, as well as 9 young people who received the Orcadian Community Award and 3 young people who received a Summit Award, voted for by a panel of peers. The evening also showcased local talent with entertainment from young musicians, an inspirational travel presentation by a young person, and a practical Fireskills demonstration.



Youth Scotland Awards

Every year CLDE work with partners as well as our own staff, to deliver a number of Hi5, Dynamic Youth and Youth Achievement Awards with children and young people. This year we have once again seen an incredible number of Dynamic Youth Awards achieved, with volunteering hours totalling 4182 hours. Young people have achieved this by participating in a number of different activities including: Fireskills; Confidence 2 Cook; pottery; learning to play an instrument; learning Japanese; dinosaur fact finding; science festival involvement; and participation in outdoor residentials.



8 Hi5 Awards achieved

197 Dynamic Youth Awards achieved

4182 hours voluntary hours on Dynamic Youth Awards

5 Bronze Youth Achievement Awards achieved

1 Silver Youth Achievement Award achieved

Youth Achievement Groups

Youth Achievement groups run in both Kirkwall and Stromness, with young people attending to complete either a Dynamic Youth or Youth Achievement Award.

This year the West Mainland Youth Achievement group have been working on a 'Climate Challenge'. The idea came from a consultation session where the young people highlighted an interest in sustainable fashion, upcycling and the environment. Together the group looked at the importance of bees to our ecosystem and how they are being affected by climate change. This encouraged them to make bee bombs and grow their own herbs.

The project was showcased at their 'Climate Awareness Family Café' which took place during Stromness Shopping week in July, where the young people got to tell the community what they had found out and what they were learning. They also had the opportunity to showcase their project at the Orkney International Science Festival Family Day, where they explained all about the project, planted herbs or flowers and demonstrated how to make beads from recycled newspaper and old t-shirts. The group have also volunteered at other community events such as DJ'ing at a kids disco and volunteering at a prize bingo.

17 young people regularly attend the youth achievement groups



"I had a lot of fun helping at the science festival, I made paper beads and had a great time, I would do it again."

- Participant

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

This year has seen the completion of 20 bronze, silver and gold awards across Kirkwall Grammar School and Sanday. Additionally, a partnership with Education's Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) saw 3 participants achieve their expedition sectional award.



In December, we were delighted to host a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Ceremony in the Council Chamber, where a number of young people from Kirkwall Grammar School were presented with their award certificates, as well as one young person who was presented with this year's outstanding achievement award. This was a lovely evening celebrating some of the commitment, dedication and resilience shown by the young people to complete their award.



12 Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards completed

7 Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards completed

1 Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards completed

3 expedition sectional Awards completed

Youth Forum

The Orkney Youth Forum, for young people aged 12 to 25, is dedicated to increasing youth participation in decision making and improving the local community. Meeting regularly, the Youth Forum discuss issues affecting young people and plan activities for wider community benefit.



The Youth Forum's recent initiatives have focused on inclusive sports events and creative workshops. Enabled by 'Inspire' funding, the Forum organised an inclusive and accessible sporting event for families, promoting the inclusion of people with visible and hidden disabilities. The 'Free to Move' event which took place in the Pickaquoy Centre in September, included activities such as badminton, athletics, tag, parachute, pickleball and boccia. There was also a bouncy castle for some down time between sports and there were free refreshments and free sporting goodies to take home. 60 people attended the event, from toddlers to grandparents, all of whom took turns in the sports available and gave some great feedback. The group continues to plan other events in the community.

8 active members of Orkney Youth Forum

The Youth Forum met 18 times (including 2 development days)

The Youth Forum ran 2 community events

"It was great that the bairns could join in at their own pace, not forced to fit in with a schedule, so relaxed."

- Participant

"Everyone of all abilities could play together." - Participant

Scottish Youth Parliament

Orkney's members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) play a crucial role in representing the voices of Orkney's young people, ensuring that the unique perspectives and issues of our island communities are recognised.

This year we must firstly thank outgoing MSYP Kaydence Drayak for everything she contributed during her time as MSYP, addressing a range of issues including accessibility and the right to food.



During 2023-2024 two new MSYP's took up post. Iain Pretswell and Nymeria Drayak hit the ground running in February, taking part in the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) welcome event for all MSYPs across Scotland. This was followed closely by several induction sessions on what it means to be an MSYP, which covered the code of conduct; rights and meaningful participation; political impartiality; democracy including working with decision makers; and campaigning with SYP. Between them, Iain and Nymeria have pledged to put inclusivity, an anti-bullying culture, access to services, and environmental issues high on their agendas over their two years representing Orkney's young people.



Scottish Youth Parliament Sitting in Orkney

In July Orkney hosted SYP's 79th National Sitting, which hadn't taken place on the island for over 15 years. As well as debating policy, passing motions, holding committee meetings and more, MSYP's and accompanying staff also got to experience a traditional Orkney ceilidh and managed to squeeze in some sightseeing too!



86 participants from across Scotland attended the Orkney Sitting

"What an amazing experience and inspirational event."

- Participant

"This sitting was my first visit to any of Scotland's Islands and I have genuinely gained a much greater appreciation of what they have to offer."

- Participant

Edinburgh Democracy Visit

During March, the 2 new MSYP's and a member of Orkney Youth Forum travelled to Edinburgh to meet with the MSYP's from Shetland and the Western Islands. This visit was funded through the Scottish Government Islands team. During the visit the participants and accompanying staff, met with the Scottish Youth Parliament, Young Scot, Scottish Government and also had a visit to The Scottish Parliament, where they met with Beatrice Wishart MSP, Emma Roddick MSP and Alasdair Allan MSP.

"The trip to Edinburgh was an excellent opportunity to meet other MSYPs and compare the issues and experiences which impact our respective island communities. It also gave us a solid network of people with whom we can consult and exchange ideas."

Iain Pretswell, MSYP

"Going down to Edinburgh was an amazing experience and a brilliant opportunity that I am so thankful I got to take part in. It was wonderful to meet some other MSYPs and get the chance to learn about and share each other's experiences, issues and opinions."

Nymeria Drayak, MSYP

"The visit to Edinburgh was an incredible opportunity to engage directly with parliamentary processes and gain valuable insights into how policies are shaped. It has inspired me to become a more active advocate for our island community."

Iona Dundas, Orkney Youth Forum - Vice Chair



Big Ideas Residential

Five young people, accompanied by Youth Services staff, attended the Youth Scotland Big Ideas Weekend in Stirling in August. Invited to take part as one of only two Young Islander Groups, they participated in a range of workshops from songwriting to fundraising ideas. Staff also had the opportunity to attend workshops aimed at enhancing their skills which included mindfulness, Awareness raising on sexting, and mental health with art awareness.



It was a fantastic opportunity for the young people and leaders to meet with, and exchange experiences with other youth groups from across Scotland. For many of the group this residential trip pushed them out of their comfort zone, but they were keen to take part and handled every new situation remarkably. They came away having gained confidence, skills, experiences and new friends.

“My favourite part was the mind and draw workshop. I liked the event because I got to experience a big youth work event that I normally wouldn't have that much opportunity to attend.”
- Participant



Summer Holiday Programme Isles Visits 2023

Funding allocated from the 'Young Islanders Network' allowed Youth Services staff to work with our Young Islanders to co-ordinate a visit to some of the islands during the summer break. The team consisting of CLDE Youth Services staff and young Islanders members, visited Hoy, Shapinsay and Rousay and offered a suite of sessions including a family picnic with games, crafts, rock painting and seed planting.

The team also offered a 'Ready, Steady, Cook' style session aimed at young people. The aim of these visits was to engage with children, young people and families on the islands, to find out more about each island and raise awareness of the Young Islanders Network, so that others can get involved and have their views heard at a local and national level.



43 children, young people and adults from 12 families attended the sessions across the 3 islands

“I just wanted to thank you and the team on behalf of the folk who came along yesterday. We had a fantastic day, and it was lovely to spend time with the kids bonding as well, which isn't common with jobs and various other things!”
- Participant

“It was very friendly and welcoming. My daughter has made lots of tasty, different foods, all provided free, it's great to have activities brought to the island instead of having to go to town all the time. Thank you for your time to come to the island to provide this opportunity.” - Participant

Contact Details

Community Learning, Development and Employability

Orkney Islands Council

- Posting: Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY
- Calling: 01856 873535
- Emailing: cld@orkney.gov.uk
- Clicking: www.orkney.gov.uk/cld
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/communitylearningorkney/
- Twitter: @CLD_Orkney