
Young Scot/ Dialogue Youth

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Argyll and Bute Dialogue Youth was a pathfinder project started in 2002; for what has become a national initiative more than five years ago. Dialogue Youth is the Partnership between Young Scot, COSLA, local authorities, the Scottish Government and young people.

The idea is that young people have a real and effective say in all the services that effect them, how they are designed and delivered, as well as what's still needed in our communities. Dialogue Youth is not a 'project' or a short term answer, it's a whole new approach to connecting with young people and encouraging them to be informed and active citizens. It is modern active citizenship, connecting young people with their communities and giving them a real chance to engage, inform and influence

Argyll and Bute Dialogue Youth has developed over the last eight years with different co-ordinators, government initiatives, funding, technology and policies; however the priorities for young people in Argyll and Bute has remained the same.

Young Scot aims to provide young people aged between 12 and 26 with a mixture of information, ideas and incentives that enable them to:

- Make informed decisions and choices
- Turn their own ideas into action
- Take advantage of the opportunities available in Scotland and the rest of Europe
- Have the confidence and knowledge to take their place as active citizens in their community.

Involving young people is the key to Dialogue Youth success and Argyll and Bute Young Scot has gone a long way to ensuring that young people are involved in the community planning process by providing a platform for them to express their views and ensuring they are heard.

Dialogue Youth's core functions involve:

- ❖ Developing a local Youth card incorporating new technology and based on the Young Scot card.
- ❖ Developing and maintaining local portal pages on the Young Scot national youth information portal.
- ❖ Supporting existing youth information networks and PSE and Citizenship Education programmes.
- ❖ Developing outreach information points – a new technology infrastructure in appropriate premises across the Council area.
- ❖ Acting as a central resource and research base on youth issues and youth planning, sharing information and good practice.
- ❖ Stimulating and assisting the development of partnership and collaborative action on youth issues and services.
- ❖ Developing direct contact with young people through a partnership with Young Scot's new technology based services (smartened card, National Youth Information Portal, email and SMS text messaging and social networking).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Argyll and Bute Dialogue Youth potentially offers support to over 14,000 young people throughout the region. Project Co-ordinator is based in Lochgilphead but supports a further six bases in the area: in Oban, Campbeltown, Rothesay, Islay, Helensburgh and Dunoon. Each base is supported by youth workers from Leisure and Youth Services and the voluntary sector who are actively involved in recruiting new young people, supporting Youth Groups and marketing and promoting Young Scot and Dialogue Youth initiatives. In previous years Community Learning and Regeneration staff have supported YS/ DY and it is hoped that this will continue.

Our unit has already been integrated into the local Community Planning Partnership process and is currently working with our CPP partners on a pilot project to encourage youth participation and active citizenship through the Youth Focus initiative. We also support the members of the Scottish Youth Parliament and Argyll and Bute Youth Forum.

YS/ DY can work with the Community Planning Partnership and Argyll and Bute Council to:

- Promote cross-departmental and joint agency approaches to the development and delivery of services for young people.
- Provide a focal point for engaging with young people in developing the full potential of new technology in providing accessible, relevant information.
- Stimulate lifelong learning, youth mobility, community safety, healthy lifestyles and enterprise and citizenship education through the promotion of Young Scot and the use of new

technology.

- Promote citizenship by stimulating and supporting greater involvement by young people in the life of their communities.
- Promote social inclusion by involving young people as full partners in the design, management and delivery of services and facilities.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Argyll and Bute Young Scot has a strong and trusted brand which is working well in the area, with a large number of young people already engaged through various means. The recent BVR of CLD recommended that Young Scot/Dialogue Youth become part of the new Leisure and Youth Services structure, this will provide an integrated management and support structure to further develop Young Scot/Dialogue Youth activities.

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