



OYCI

IMPACT REPORT

2023/24



**OYCI**  
Ochil Youths  
Community  
Improvement

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# OUR MISSION AND VALUES

**All young people in Clacks can flourish**

**OYCI creates space and opportunity for young people to be themselves while they figure out what is important to them, and what they might want to learn and achieve.**

## Our Values

### We offer

- Fun and safe participation
- Relationships based on respect
- Seeing the potential of the whole person
- Opportunities to build confidence

### We operate with

- Kindness
- Inclusivity
- Fairness and equality
- Collaboration

**Helping others and improving our community**

Developed in collaboration with our youth board, these are the principles we operate within.

We spoke a lot to the young people about the word 'flourish', as it's not a term many people use, but we felt it summed up our aim more than simply 'succeed', and the young people agreed.

They all agreed that OYCI is somewhere you can be yourself, and after looking at various values we all felt very comfortable with what was selected.

**FUN**

**WELLBEING**

**VOLUNTEERING**

Everything we do falls into one - but frequently two or all three - of these categories. Fun is a non-negotiable, when young people have fun they feel safe, they make friends, they learn skills, and they have a great time. Wellbeing is across the board, everything we do supports the mental health of our young people. This year our volunteering has stepped up a notch, with lots of opportunities for young people to get involved and gain accreditation for their time and effort.

# WHAT DID WE DO?

<b>Games Nights: Either digital on our switches/PS5, board and card, or party games.</b>	<b>Festival of Fun: our end of summer fun day with inflatables, games, and more</b>
<b>Play in a Week: Create, rehearse and perform a brand new play!</b>	<b>Cooking &amp; Baking: Using seasonal produce</b>
<b>Stress Free Sundays: Chilled sessions taking place outdoors</b>	<b>Coding Club: Creating games and learning coding languages</b>
<b>Fun, Food, and Friendships: After school club</b>	<b>Artivism: The creative wing of Dream Big</b>
<b>Dream Big: Our youth social action programme</b>	<b>October holidays programme: A week of games and crafts with daily lunches</b>
<b>Connect (S1 - S6): Drop in social club</b>	<b>Clacks Youth Theatre: In both Tillicoultry and Alloa</b>
<b>Drama Club: Creative after school club</b>	<b>Crafty Builders Club (using Minecraft): Friday night Minecraft club</b>
<b>Creative Digital: Filming and editing short films</b>	<b>OYCI Christmas Party: Games, snacks, music and fun.</b>
<b>Super Saturdays: Arts and crafts</b>	<b>Japanese Garden Stop Motion Animation: Partnership project creating a stop motion animation</b>
<b>Summer holiday programme: Including water sports, a sponsored walk, a Taylor Swift themed event, Play in a Week, outdoor activities and circus skills</b>	<b>Easter, October, and February holiday programme: A week of games and crafts with daily lunches</b>

Our youth-led activities are free for anyone aged 10 -18. Wide-ranging, designed by young people and constantly evolving to meet their needs. We offer weekly activities after school and evenings Tuesday to Friday and at least one weekend session. Food is provided at every session.

This table details our core activity in our base and after school clubs.

We also delivered our transition programme, Hi5, across 6 primary schools to 156 p7s.

Our leadership programme gives S2 - 6 the opportunity to gain skills, training, and accreditation.

# WHO TOOK PART?

**143 young people took part in a session at our base or after school**

**2804 sessions were booked via our booking system**

**The age breakdown of participants was:**

**10: 15%**  
**11: 32%**  
**12: 22%**  
**13: 12%**  
**14: 7%**  
**15: 7%**  
**16: 3%**  
**17: 2%**

**59% of participants were girls, 41% boys**

**Our most popular activities were Festival of Fun, Games Nights and Play in a Week**

**The most bookings by a single young person was 32 across the year**

**Our busiest month was November, and our quietest June**

**235 young people took part in one of our outreach events**

# FUN

## Summer programme

Our holiday programmes have a big focus on fun – after all, the young people are on holiday! Summer 2023 included a wide range of activities over 4 weeks, including watersports, Play in the woods (play in a week but in the woods), craft sessions, gaming sessions, a special P7 mixer designed to get to know future classmates, and we culminated in our ever popular Festival of Fun.

As always, our summer programme attracted new young people.

Young person A arrived at the base anxious and teary for his first ever session, reluctant to say bye to his mum. We gave him a tour of the base and introduced him to the other new people and after he'd finished lunch he had settled and was happily making posters and enjoying himself. The following day, he bounced in with barely a backwards look at Mum who informed us her had returned home **“absolutely buzzing.”** He is now an OYCI regular.

We took young person B to Bridge 8 for watersports. She has struggled with mainstream education and anger issues, and has the day presented many triggers, all of which were handled and she worked brilliantly with her crew to paddle their canoe. Young person B has subsequently been removed from mainstream education but continues to attend OYCI and thrive in projects she takes part in.

Young person C, suffers mood dysregulation, arrived at the first day of Play in the Woods extremely tired and not knowing anyone. By the final performance she had a new set of friends and enough confidence to not just perform, but receive laughs!

Mum fed back at the end **“This has been a wonderful experience for her. I know she has loved it, and we are hugely impressed. Thank you”**



# FUN

## Games Nights

Our popular games nights are relaxed, fun sessions where young people can choose to game on our PS5 and switches, pick one of the many board or card games, or play one of the many games our youth workers have in their toolkits. We give the young people access to tech they may not have at home, such as VR, which young person A commented they “**had so much fun** playing that thing.”

The relaxed nature of these sessions allowed young person B, who has an unstable home life, to drop in and say hi. They weren't able to commit to activity at this point but felt able to pop in hi to staff and chat about anything that was going on in their life, get advice... and maybe even play a game.

Staff note time and time again that when it comes to a game, young people tend to get along together, help each other, and come out of their shells.



## Fun, Food, and Friendships

Fun, Food, and Friendships is an after school club designed for S1-S3 pupils to (you guessed it) have fun, share food, and make friends. The club is youth led and over 23/24 they have participated in crafts, teambuilding, karaoke, relaxation sessions, a dragons den, cake craft, and more. FFF is a place where our young leaders can help out, leading games and supporting younger pupils.

Young person A, despite only being in S3, was keen to put their training into action, commenting; “I've done the young leader training so can I help every week? I can do the games?”

Young person B led a session on soft archery to very positive feedback from her peers – she had delivered the session well, with good instruction and that they felt safe participating.

A council representative came to the group to ask what was missing in the community. The group found it hard to answer, saying that **OYCI fills the gap for them.**



# WELLBEING

## Connect

Our longest running club for S1 – S6 every Thursday. The club is youth led and these terms have been crafts and games focussed – allowing the young people to come along and really decompress after a day at school.

Young person A was having trouble with bullying at school and arrived for a Connect session and was able to freely discuss the issues with her peers and with staff as they played a game. Staff noted that she left the session feeling much better, and kept them updated with the situation until it was resolved.

Young people B + C started with us a few years ago and are from a care-experienced background. They were withdrawn, quiet, and sometimes disruptive. They were moving from the area and had their final OYCI night at Connect, where they joined in, laughed, and were completely different to the YP we first met. On leaving, YP B independently offered OYCI his VR headset.

## Hi5

Now in it's 5th year, Hi5 supports the transition of Primary 7s going to Alva Academy, focussing on soft skills such as communication, team work, conflict resolution, and friendships. Hi5 helps the P7s explore their hopes, fears and expectations of high school whilst promoting positive mental health. The award sits at level 2 in the SCQF framework.

Young person A has ASD and has recently transitioned up to High School, the social connections he gained through participating in Hi5 and other OYCI activities have reduced his social isolation and eased the transition to a new school, as well as provided much-needed breathing space for his parents knowing he is safe and included while at OYCI.

**100% of teachers stated that completing the Hi5 award was a positive experience.**

Teachers fed back:

“M was engaged and getting involved with different activities – he is usually less confident with new things/environments”

“J was working better with his peers than he usually does”

“B invited girls she wouldn't normally play with to join her game”





# WELLBEING

## Cooking and Baking

Our cooking and baking is run in small groups, repeating the same three-week course several times to optimise the number of young people that can participate. Over the 23/24 year we ran courses in:

Cooking with eggs - young person A's parent told us they had been delighted to be presented with perfect poached eggs one breakfast time!

Sustainable cooking - this block provided us with the most honest feedback we have ever received from young person B, who is normally quiet and takes a back seat; **"Wow! That was a lot more fun than I thought it would be... I didn't expect that!"**

Chocolate and cakes - unsurprisingly the most popular sessions, with delighted parents being brought home chocolatey treats!

These sessions taught young people skills to create their own food, allowed them to discover the meditative nature of cooking (sometimes!) and gave them the confidence to take these skills home to share with their families.



# VOLUNTEERING

## Leadership

There have been various opportunities for young people to take Leadership roles through OYCI at Alva Academy, supporting them to share their learning, develop skills & gain accreditation. Some of our young people have progressed through the awards from Hi5, DYA, YAA then becoming Young Leaders and in some cases employed as Sessional Support workers with OYCI.

Some have jumped straight into the higher-level awards. All gaining valuable SCQF points. These awards have helped our young people when applying for college or university. They have valuable experiences and skills they can draw on from their awards journey.

Young person A has complex additional support needs, leaving school with no Highers, through her participation with us has completed a Platinum Youth Achievement Award equivalent to an Advanced Higher and has reported the massive impact doing this had on her confidence and self-belief

One of our young people recently said:

**“Being part of OYCI has helped me immensely with my confidence and helped to improve myself... I wouldn't be away to university if not for being involved with Coding Club”**

## Dream Big

Our Dream Big programme allows young people to create change in their communities, and over the 23/24 year they have;

- Created a podcast and game about body image and healthy exercise
- Created a cookbook using commonly found ingredients from the food bank
- Made over a community garden space
- Created gender pronoun badges
- Created Christmas gifts and content to cheer people up on our social media

Young person A has been removed from mainstream education and can find group work difficult but has turned up for each of these projects, sometimes opting to work independently, but on the whole engaging with the group. She faced challenges in school and within the community but has led the creation of a community garden for everyone to enjoy as part of Youth Social Action.

## Sponsored Walk

During the summer holidays a group completed a sponsored walk to raise funds for OYCI. Not only did they raise a lot of money for our running costs, the walk allowed us time with the young people to really talk about what they wanted from OYCI and where they'd like to see it go. As we hear so often from our young people, they are always thrilled when ideas they've suggested actually happen.

# SPOTLIGHT ON: CLACKS YOUTH THEATRE

In 2023/24 we received Creative Scotland funding to set up the first youth theatre in Clackmannanshire. An extensive period of consultation was done across the high schools and young people in Clackmannanshire, and we started the youth theatre in two locations; Tillicoultry and Alloa, running throughout academic terms on a Tuesday evening.

In this time period young people have completed two terms, each time building on their skills and confidence with the aim of the final term inviting a guest artist to work with them and putting on a sharing of the work in front of friends and family in the final term.

Over the time we have spent with them we have seen young people grow in confidence, teamwork, and in creative skills. Both groups work hard together and clearly enjoy being in a creative environment.



Young person A's mum told us she had been experiencing bullying at school and but never faced any trouble at youth theatre.

Young person B, who is autistic, was too nervous to take part in a sharing in term one, but throughout term two built his confidence enough to take part, and was thrilled when another parent complimented him on his performance.

Young person C told us he was shy and preferred to work alone, but over the terms has become a leader in the group, with everyone loving his crazy ideas and he's been happy to play bigger roles in scenes.

Young person D's mum told us she used to be a selective mute and now happily contributes at CYT and in other areas of her life. She feels safe and comfortable in the group and her confidence has grown.

We have seen these young people develop as part of CYT and we hope to secure funding in order to continue after this very successful pilot.

[Click here to see a video of CYT talking about their experiences.](#)

# ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

24 young people, 15 parents/carers, 4 partners and 1 supporter filled in an anonymous survey about their experience with and perceptions of OYCI. The respondents were gathered from young people at sessions and from sharing the survey via our mailing lists and social media channels. This is the same survey as we circulated in 2023 so can draw comparisons.

## YOUNG PEOPLE

When I come to OYCI...	22/23	23/24
I mostly/always have fun	75%	96%
I am mostly/always listened to	76%	96%
I mostly/always feel safe	86%	91%

**91% would recommend OYCI to a friend**

## PARENTS/CARERS

**100% of parents/carers said their young person has fun when they attend OYCI.**

86% of parents rank their young person feeling safe as a key factor in sending them to OYCI. The next most important factor is that their young person learns things, then that there is a good range of activities.

92% agree their child feels safe at OYCI, and 86% feel they learn things.

## PARTNERS

In line with 2023, 100% agreed with the following statements:

- I would like to work with OYCI again
- OYCI deliver high quality services
- I can trust OYCI
- OYCI provide a good service for young people
- OYCI add value to our community

Partners from Alva Academy and Clacks Council took the survey.

## FEEDBACK

*"You have a fantastic team and what you do is making a real difference to the lives of the young people in the Hillfoots. My child has been challenged to try things they would never have done before."* - Parent

*"I think OYCI is an amazing organisation that is supporting the development of the young people in our area. They give them a safe place to meet their friends in a stress free environment. So special in this day and age."* - Supporter

*"OYCI is brilliant"* - Young Person

*"OYCI is the best!!!"* - Young Person

# FUNDERS

None of the work we do would be possible without our funders, and we'd like to say thank you to them for their continued support.



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# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

OYCI is committed to being an environmentally responsible charity that recognises its duty to reduce its carbon and environmental footprints. Throughout the past financial year, we have undertaken a range of actions to improve environmental sustainability across our organisation. The following report highlights some key areas we have been working on and will continue developing in the future

**Energy and water usage:** The premises are rented, which makes it difficult to change the utilities. However we have monitored our electricity usage with regular readings and are mindful of switching off appliances, we also have bought energy efficient appliances when purchasing.

**Waste and recycling:** We recycle plastics, cardboard, paper, glass, metals and food through kerbside services. Furniture or equipment we no longer need we try to hand over to another local group.

**Transport:** Most interactions with partners are online or they visit our base in Tillicoultry. Internal meetings are both in person and online, e.g. a staff member based in Glasgow works 2 days from home and 1 in the office. Staff travel tends to be limited to the local authority or neighbouring area e.g. Stirling. We have no foreign travel to date and very limited to further afield e.g. Glasgow and Edinburgh, this keeps transport emissions relatively low.

**Procurement:** We use local suppliers where possible. The festival of fun is a good example, as we hire a lot of equipment, most from Clacks, the inflatables supplier is Fife, and all food is bought locally. In terms of general procurement (e.g. activity resources, office supplies and cleaning products) we purchase more ethical or environmentally friendly alternatives where available and cost effective. We joined Fareshare to help with food waste but the items we were receiving were not suitable for our needs and so we decided to withdraw from this as we couldn't use much of what we received.

**Staff conduct and internal practice:** Staff are encouraged to plan sessions that make use of existing resources and equipment, encourage active travel, and to recycle items appropriately. Paper use is minimised using Microsoft Teams and SharePoint for session plans, risk assessments etc.

**Climate engagement:** We have done a lot of work on this with our youth social action group, our Stress-Free Sundays outdoors sessions and partnership work with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) national charity. This has included clearing the Ben Cleuch Garden focusing on biodiversity, completing TCV's Hedgehog Friendly award, making bug hotels, and woven fencing (dead hedging) at Gartmorn Dam.

We are really pleased with the progress that OYCI has made this year. Going forward we will continue to develop our environmental sustainability in ways that align with our core values of fun, wellbeing and volunteering.

# TRUSTEES



## **Christine Arjun (Chair/Trustee)**

Christine Arjun has been a friend of OYCI from its early foundations as a CIC and then as a trustee making the journey to gaining charitable status. "I love being a trustee for this dynamic, creative and enabling organisation where young people's voices genuinely lead the direction of programmes and activities. I look forward to bringing my experience in Education and Human Rights, both within the third and public sectors, 8 years of board membership at HELM, Dundee and my commitment to young people and poverty alleviation, to the exciting work of OYCI.



## **Erin Seaman (Trustee)**

Erin is currently a student at the university of Edinburgh, studying sustainable development. She has been involved with OYCI since it started back in 2017 and loves getting to see the amazing work they do. Erin joined the board in 2022 and enjoys working together with the other board members to ensure that OYCI is doing the best job it can do to support and provide opportunities for young people in the community.



## **Laura McPherson (Trustee)**

Laura has worked in the third sector throughout her career in a range of roles including youth work, grants administration and communications. She is currently the Communications Officer for a Stirling based charity, and is also a trustee for a local arts organisation. She has followed the development of OYCI since it's early days, and felt that becoming a trustee would be opportunity to contribute to the development of a valuable community organisation



## **Jill McIntyre (Trustee)**

Jill McIntyre works as a project manager for the Institute of Social Policy, Housing and Equalities Research at Heriot Watt University. She is a law graduate with a wealth of experience in project management, research, evaluation and policy development both self-employed and previously as Policy and Research manager at sportscotland and Private Secretary and Policy Advisor at the Home Office. Jill worked with Shona Ulrichsen on the initial young persons' consultation for EDF Energy which led to the development of OYCI. She worked with the team in the early days to scope and set up OYCI as an organisation and since then has remained involved as a volunteer on the Board. Jill lives in Edinburgh with her husband and 11 year old twin daughters Ellie and Laurie. She does several voluntary roles in her own community and would love to see an OYCI developed to benefit young people in her area too!



## **Niki Maclean (Trustee)**

Niki joined the OYCI in 2020. With experience of youth work very early on in her career, Niki was delighted to be invited to become involved again in this area of work with an organisation local to her that is genuinely youth led. With 20 years of leadership experience in the public and private sectors, Niki loves being able to work with her fellow board members and the fantastic OYCI team to help the organisation to keep growing and developing what it is able to offer.