

Making Change Happen...

Aim High



**Communities, Lifelong Learning
and Employability Annual Report**
April 2022 – March 2023

Midlothian 



Introduction

Our staff, volunteers and partners have worked well to plan, support and secure improvement for learners and communities. This report includes data and stories from participants that show the impact of our work across youth work, adult learning, family learning, employability and community capacity building.

In addition, we have supported people affected by the Cost of Living Crisis through our 16 trusted partners cash first network, created a wash and dry free laundry service and supported the British Red Cross to offer a free reheatable meal home delivery service. We have worked with a strategic partner to evaluate the new support measures put in place to support those most affected by the Cost of Living Crisis. We have also worked with the Improvement Service to review our work and priorities with partners to reduce child poverty.

We will continue to offer a mix of digital and face-to-face approaches to meet the needs of local people.

I would like to thank our staff team, volunteers and partners who are driven to help local people change lives and communities, drawing on their skill set and enthusiasm to rise and adapt to the challenges and opportunities which come our way.



Annette Lang
Group Service Manager
(CPP & CLLE)



Dreghorn Woods: outdoor skills

Improving Skills for Learning, Life, Work and Wellbeing for All Ages

(Based on a Matter of Focus Template) - Matter of Focus home of OutNav

What we do	<p>We have good conversations with people and communities about what they want to change, improve and create a sense of belonging.</p> <p>We offer a programme of opportunities, including funding, to help people learn, gain new skills, qualifications and secure jobs.</p> <p>We co-design learning programmes for all ages to help people feel connected and improve wellbeing.</p>
Who with	<p>Local people of all ages who are looking for support to get involved in their community, take their next steps, volunteer, learn a new skill in a group, gain a qualification, secure employment or a new job.</p> <p>Partners who apply for grants to improve Midlothian</p>
How they feel	<p>Increased sense of belonging. Increased pride.</p> <p>Increased confidence. Increased sense of self belief.</p> <p>More able to handle challenges, including financial ones.</p> <p>Partners feel they are part of a shared endeavour.</p>
What they learn and gain	<p>People know what matters to them.</p> <p>People have the confidence, skills and qualifications to make decisions and influence services that improve the community they live, learn and work in.</p> <p>People have access to programmes and opportunities.</p>
What they do differently	<p>People manage their choices and wellbeing for themselves, their families and communities.</p> <p>People consult with others and include their views and opinions to influence decision making.</p>
The difference this makes?	<p>People have improved wellbeing, new skills, qualifications, better finances, and for some, a new or higher paid job or career.</p> <p>People have increased support networks and contacts in their community.</p> <p>People give back to their community.</p>

Financial Resources

Most of our services are offered free to the public, apart from let charges and charges for some adult learning classes.

We have an income target of £473,495 annually which we meet through securing contracts, external funding and charging for some adult learning classes. The adult learning income target is £25,000.

We do ensure a scale of charges to support those on low incomes. We also manage the grants the council awards to community groups and third sector organisations including Community Councils.

Our Funding 22/23	Amount 22/23
Core Staffing CLLE	£2,256,261
Grants Large every 3 years (annual amount), Grants Community Council (CC) and Small Grants (SG)	£520,000 £10,000 (CC) 89,000
Employability Funding from Scottish Government for parents and an all age service including young people.	£885,679.11
INCOME TARGET (from fees, charges and external funding)	£473,495

Our Key Achievements.



High levels of satisfaction

- 98.3% of people were satisfied with our services



Increasing numbers as we aim to be back to pre-pandemic levels by 2025

- 535 projects provided in 14 towns and villages (501 in 11 towns/villages 21/22, 412 in 20/21, 586 in 19/20).
- 21% increase in registered participants (5,927 in 22/23, 4,911 in 21/22, 2,003 in 20/21).



Increasing numbers of qualifications 22/23

- 81% of people reported improved key skills
- 2,163 qualifications achieved (1,355 in 21/22, 477 in 20/21, 1,543 in 19/20) – an increase of 59% e.g. 487 Foundation Apprenticeship modules and 577 swimming awards.
- 354 young people started Duke of Edinburgh awards (82% increase) 171 awards were gained (194 started 48 gained in 21/22)
- 174 day and evening courses were offered, including 23 accredited courses. (157 classes, 24 accredited 21/22, 143 classes, 2 accredited in 20/21, 136 classes, 5 accredited in 19/20).
- 388 adults attended our paid Adult Learning courses. (398 in 21/22, 93 in 20/21, 1,384 in 19/20).
- 31 people accessed Individual Training Accounts to fund accredited training (60 21/22, 61 in 20/21, 17 in 19/20)
- 5,238 young people attended positive destinations projects - youth clubs (5,136 22/23, 1,010 in 20/21, 522 in 19/20), 667 home visits
- 355 adults and children attended Family Learning (299 21/22, 6 in 20/21, 435 in 19/20)
- 104 young people took part in School Work Experience placements (65 in 21/22, 0 in 20/21, 770 in 19/20). Work Experience Review underway
- 414 young people attended the Vocational Learning Centre weekly e.g. construction skills (344 in 21/22) 85 in 20/21, 148 in 19/20) – an increase of 132%
- 254 people engaged with Parental Employability Support Project (177 21/22)
- 128 people were supported with their Modern Apprenticeship (110 in 21/22, 110 in 20/21, 146 in 19/20).
- 86 young people were supported at our Croft Street Hub to take part in learning opportunities, gain qualifications, work experience and employability support. (81 in 21/22, 92 in 20/21, 56 in 19/20).



Mask making as part of a Dynamic Youth Award. Required both planning and experimenting with materials.



Supporting a wide range of people

- 664 participants were from an ethnic minority. (428 in 21/22, 219 in 20/21, 553 in 19/20).
- 302 participants were from areas of deprivation. (275 in 21/22, 154 in 20/21, 742 in 19/20).
- 227 people were supported with ESOL, Literacy or Numeracy (182 21/22, 169 in 20/21, 202 in 19/20).
- 776 people received 1:1 support, (861 in 21/22, 473 in 20/21). This included 48 people with a disability/significant barriers to work (62 in 20/21, 94 in 19/20).

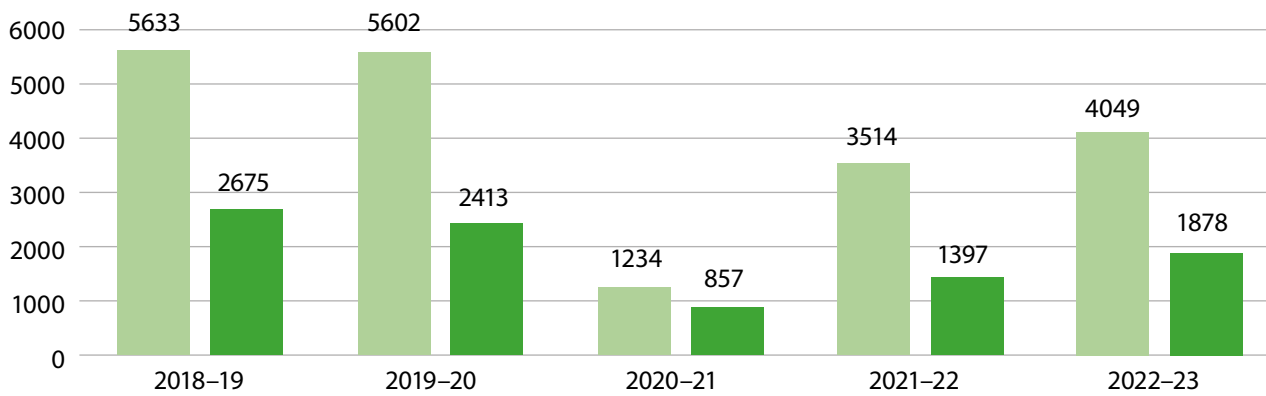


Supporting communities

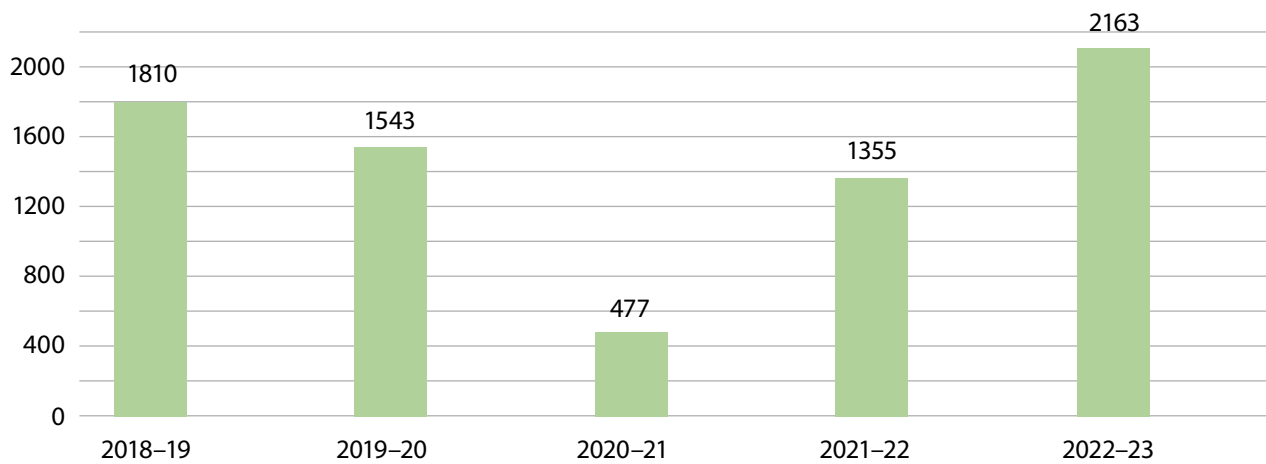
- 260 activities supported 73 community groups (258 activities, 83 groups in 21/22.)
- 1,739 adults and families attended free community projects (1,318 in 21/22, 813 in 20/21, 1,355 in 19/20).

Number of registered participants

■ Under 18 years old
■ Over 18 years old



Number of qualifications achieved



How we contribute to people building skills, for learning, life and work.

SQA Mental Health course and Wellbeing course

"I signed up for this course because I was at a place in life looking for community volunteering opportunities. I happened to be visiting Lasswade High School and out of curiosity went to look at the notice board. I saw this Mental Health course information on display and felt strongly to apply thinking it could open up some doors of opportunity.

Meanwhile on calling into the local Community Centre, the Co-ordinator there told me about a Mental Health Charity that might be of interest to me. I made contact with them and signed up for a volunteer position.

My mental health awareness was minimal but this course has been increasing my knowledge of mental health issues with a greater awareness of how I could be of help to other people.

The course is really friendly and informal and people can open up about their own mental health. It has encouraged my participation in group discussions and increased my confidence in inter-personal skills.

I am really looking forward to doing the next 2 units of the course and gaining an SQA level 4 qualification in a subject area that I would not get an opportunity to do if it were not for Midlothian Council."

Flexible Learning

"I would like to say that the 'Influences on Mental Health and Wellbeing' course has been amazing. I am disabled and can have episodes of poor health regularly. I missed two of the sessions due to being in hospital and I'm so grateful you took the time out to help me and save me from missing out from the course. Also you were very patient with my lack of computer skills which gave me the confidence to go onto the next part of the course.

The things I have learned from this course will help me with both my private life and my work skills as a foster carer for Midlothian Council, courses like this can be daunting for me as I have additional needs, and I am grateful you made it work for me. I am really looking forward to doing the other two units and getting a mental health qualification."

Vocational Learning at Loanhead

"Thank you so much for this and for the whole 6 weeks of your time. The kids have loved the sessions and have come back each time buzzing with what they have learned.

The Bike ability leaders were all very impressed with them when they knew exactly what to do to check a bike before riding!"

Coping Strategies and Building Resilience SQA Level 4

"I think this course has been excellent, both this unit and the previous unit I have studied. What I have learned has been, and will continue to be, invaluable to me not only on a personal level but in my role as a trustee and board member of a local charity which is concerned with the wellbeing of children and young people in Midlothian.

The course materials are excellent and have been expertly delivered. The mix of learning directly from the tutor, doing research on our own or in groups, and comparing experiences with others has worked very well indeed. If anything I can only say that this course should be much more widely advertised and available. I only found out about it by chance and I am so glad I did.

Mental health issues are so prevalent at the moment that any help and information that can be provided to individuals, employees, employers, parents and carers is money well spent."

12+ Young People's Programme

"The 12 + programme has been an essential part of the education process for some of our pupils this academic year. The programme has helped young people retain contact with school and allowed access to the curriculum which suits learning needs. These pupils cannot sustain a full day in class in a mainstream school and the variety the 12+ programme offers has been a life saver to these pupils having time out of the school environment allows them to sustain time within school to achieve NAT 3 qualifications.

Pupils have learned practical skills to help with life and work. Socialisation skills have been developed by working with a variety of new young people and staff. Duke of Edinburgh has also been delivered."

Feedback from Dalkeith High School

"this is the best thing that has happened to me"

"being able to do my stuff (qualifications) how I like to (learn individually) and get them (qualifications) when I would never have got them at school"

"I didn't like you at first (I thought you were a snob) but you are the only person who has said they would be there and has been"

"Through engaging with the project my student's confidence has increased as well as their social circle. To give something back they have started volunteering at a riding stable since Feb this year."

Young Carer's Project

"The YC project has given me a break from my responsibilities as a carer and I have attended lots of the activities that the project has organised. I have also started to attend youth work opportunities within my local area.

The YC project also gave them the opportunity to be involved in the interview processes, to help select staff members for the Midlothian Young Carers project team. This opportunity helped them develop their communication skills, team building skills and confidence: all good life skills that they can draw on as they progress through secondary school and beyond."



Modern Apprenticeship

'At one point I was thinking of giving up and you encouraged me along the way. You didn't just support me in the completion of my Modern Apprenticeship, you were also an amazing support and cared for my welfare when things weren't going so great both personally and at work. I felt comfortable blowing off steam, having a rant and having a laugh. I can't believe I did it and you've made me feel so proud of myself.'

Adult Literacy and Numeracy

"Being a part of the Friday writing class is a fun and enjoyable experience. I have dyslexia which was diagnosed later in life. This meant there was a gap in my reading and writing skills due to a lack of intervention in my earlier education.

The class has given me the space to learn reading and writing skills at a comfortable pace and has been an invaluable support to my learning. The skills I have gained in the class have positively impacted all parts of my life, being able to communicate more effectively in my everyday as well working life.

In the last year I have earned an Adults Achievement Award, am currently studying a degree with the Open University in BSc Biology. The tutors have been amazing and continue to support my learning, having my coursework proofread, practicing my writing and reading skills helps me towards my goal of one day working in the field of science.

The Friday class is a great support network of attendees, we learn from each other and support one another as we aim for the goals we have set for ourselves."

Focus Service supporting those with disabilities secure employment

"Working with Calum at FOCUS has given me confidence. I feel I am more able to speak my own mind and give my opinions. It has helped with job applications and in getting interviews. I have learning difficulties and I needed help with writing a CV. This has made a big difference. I now feel that I can approach people and ask about job opportunities and give them my CV. I can now go to job interviews independently and feel more confident during an interview. I now have a part time job because of their help and they continue to support me with any form filling or things about my job that I don't understand."



Bricklaying

Learning English as a Second Language

"I learn so much, it helps me in my take-away business, its brilliant".

"I was able to apply for and be successful in finding a new job. The course definitely helped me to be able to do this. Thank you."

"It gave me the confidence to apply for a better job and to be successful in the interview. I couldn't have done it without their help".

"It's useful because we learn a lot of useful new vocabulary. We can use this vocabulary in our daily lives."

"Before, I didn't know much vocabulary but the class has helped me to build my vocabulary. I feel more confident speaking to people in English now."

"I learn more English, like the videos and home-work for me this is good, the group is really good"

"What we talk about is always a surprise. It's nice to chat in a relaxed place. The teachers are very good. I like that I can join the class from home because it is very relaxed. I feel more confident in the class now and can speak more."

"It's nice to meet new people and give your opinion about different things."

Wellbeing and Animal Handling

"I attended the animal handling course at the Drum and I truly believe it is one of the best things I have ever done. My tutor is absolutely fantastic at helping people really build their confidence and be more outgoing. It has really improved my wellbeing teaching me to be more mindful and confident and just made me want to do more in all aspects of my life."



"I really loved doing this course, I was going through some trauma and grief. I felt so anxious and uncomfortable coming out of my house and scared and nervous to meet new people.

But after doing this course it's helped me immensely with my confidence and anxiety and grief as this course has brought me joy.

My tutor was very friendly and gave me the confidence to do this course and she done amazing and I thank her and the other great staff for helping me overcome my fear and to believe in myself more."

Bespoke Support through Youth Work Approaches – Croft Street Hub and Beyond...

"School didn't work for me I was bullied to the point I didn't want to go to school from my size to my face but because I never went I was failing. My teacher took me a walk to discuss options she said that there was a place I could go to help me so I went for it then it was like a new adventure. I was so scared but I got to meet some of the staff which made it not so scary. My first day I made some friends and they played a big part but I didn't just come to Croft Street to see my friends.

The staff were so nice when you weren't up to doing work or if you were having a bad day they would talk to you about it.

I have achieved so much since being here. I have got a lot of qualifications. I applied for a job and I met a lot of new people since being here. I then moved on to young person's guarantee they helped me apply for a bus pass and they offered to help me apply for college. In the future I plan to apply for college and hopefully be successful.

If I had to do it again I would because it helped me so much the staff are so nice and always know how to put a smile back on your face. I had a good experience here and I was so lucky to get a second chance because if not I don't know what the future had for me."

Community Capacity Building Support

The 'communities' members of the CLLE team work with a wide range of community based groups. During the period 2022 – 2023, team members worked with 73 organisations across Midlothian.

Funding

As part of a varied role, team members act as Link Officers between the Council and groups who have received funding. This role enables community groups to get access and support when undertaking their activities.

A total of 50 organisations were supported by link officers - this included organisation receiving LACER funding, large/small grants, groups who received food bank funding and organisations who secured UK Shared Prosperity Funds.

Training

Community Councils are voluntary organisations set up by statute by the Local Authority and run by local residents to act on behalf of its area. As the most local tier of elected representation, Midlothian Community Councils play an important role in local democracy.

As well as representing the community to the local authority, Community Councils facilitate a wide range of activities which promote the well-being of their communities. They bring local people together to help make things happen, and many Community Councils protect and promote the identity of their community.

There are 15 Community Councils in the county and an overarching group, Midlothian Federation of Community Councils.

The CLLE team provide support on governance, organisational matters and training events.

In March, 30 representatives from 10 Community Councils participated in a training session that enabled participants to meet with CLLE team members and the Councils Planning team to discuss and influence important changes in planning provision in the county.

This event provided information and support aimed at developing skills and knowledge so that Community Councillors will be able

to effectively engage with their communities to develop Local Place Plans and encourage communities to be active participants in planning for their futures.

Feedback

"The session was very helpful and informative"

"Having access to the Council's CLLE and Planning Team, to be able to ask questions and be involved in the Planning process was rewarding".

"I will be able to take back lots of info to my community council".

"Looking forward to further training in the future".

Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths (MTRaP)

MTRaP is sub group of Midlothian Federation of Community Councils and works with a range of national and local organisations to influence the development of issues such as Active Travel, Core Paths provision and wider transport related issues in Midlothian

Group members have worked with Transport Scotland to examine and influence the potential development of the grade separation project at Sherrifhall. The group has contributed to the development of the plans for the introduction of enhanced bus priority measures along four key bus corridors. The group works closely with Midlothian Council's Roads and Maintenance departments. Since 2019, the council has worked in partnership with MTRaP to create a 'joint priorities' repair initiative. In autumn 2022, Community Councils surveyed their community members to look at the priorities for work on footways and carriageways. This has enabled local people, through MTRaP, to influence the planning of the Roads Capital Works Programme.

Additionally, through partnership work with the Council's Maintenance team, MTRaP have been able to influence improvements in winter service provision, support the purchase of new equipment and highlight any concerns or issues that their communities may have. This collaborative work has led to the council being able to become more effective and making improvement in its service delivery.

Living Well in Central Dalkeith and Woodburn and Shaping Places

Central Dalkeith and Woodburn was selected as a project town through the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme delivered by Public Health Scotland and the Improvement Service. The aim is to change our collective approaches to the places where we live, work and play, promoting strong partnership working around data driven knowledge on inequality with citizen involvement to create system change. Place and Wellbeing assessments will help to inform the work of the Living Well in Central Dalkeith and Woodburn group, a partnership group, aiming to reduce inequalities in the area. CLLE were successful in securing funding from UKSPF to support the delivery of this work till the end of March 2025.



Creating raised planting beds

Accessibility and Availability of Cost of Living Supports

Information on cost of living available to Midlothian residents has been made available on the Council website: www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200301/cost_of_living



The Independent Food Aid Network produced a 'Worrying About Money' leaflet which is available online and paper copies have been distributed to community buildings and partners: www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/midlothian

Local Employability Partnership Plus and Scottish Government No One Left Behind Funding

We work in partnership with the third sector and training/learning organisations to agree the priorities that need supported to help local people of all ages and parents to take their next steps, secure employment or a better paid job. The Midlothian No one Left Behind Plan sets out how much we are receiving in funding and what we should spend it on because of the views of those who have utilised services and by analysing the data. Below is the number of people we have supported from 1st April 2022 to 2023 and the destination those people, we helped, moved onto.

22/23	Parental Employability Support Fund	Support for Young People 25 & Under	Support for the Over 25 who are not parents including Long Term Unemployed
Number of participants	220	503	19
Started Employment	55	83	4
Started self-employment	6	1	4
Started modern apprenticeship	2	27	1
Achieved a qualification	207	93	10
Entered Higher or Further Education	12	38	0

‘Soup 2 Go’ – Young Person’s Guarantee, Midlothian Council – Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability

The ‘Soup2Go’ enterprise evolved from an informal breakfast group aimed at young people who required additional support to access work experience, employment, education or training. The group were challenged to come up with a social enterprise idea which would benefit the local community while discretely and holistically building their communication, planning, independence and team work skills.

Following group discussions, they collaboratively came up with the idea of an enterprise that would provide hot food to the community. The group presented their idea – The How, What, Why’s & When - to Midlothian Business Gateway, receiving positive feedback, and took part in an entrepreneurial workshop, in which they set their core values for the enterprise and developed a mission statement:

‘Soup2Go is a project that has been developed by a group of young people. They are coming together each week to build their employability skills and cooking skills and working as a team to create tasty soup! They feel strongly about helping the community through the current cost of living crisis and wanted to do what they could to help.

“Serving our community, cooking in unity”

12 young people attended Soup 2 Go regularly, learning about health, nutrition and cookery techniques/processes from a professional chef; numeracy, budgeting and planning skills through costing out ingredients and organising shopping trips; allergen information and safe food

storage etc through achievement of REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene; communication, negotiation and team working skills through working with colleagues and others along with the opportunity to achieve their Saltire Award through the volunteering hours they committed to the project.

As well as providing a healthy and nutritious meal for participants and their families, at the end of each session, the soup was portioned up and transported to a community freezer in Woodburn where it was signposted by a local community pantry and available free for anyone to collect. Approximately 300 portions of soup were distributed.

The opportunity to be involved in an entirely client led project had numerous benefits for the participants:

"It's the only time I get to speak to people through the week. I really look forward to coming along"

"It gave me the confidence to take part in more group activities"

"It was great to have the chance to help the community"

"My daughter really developed her abilities from attending Soup2Go"

"I really noticed a difference in my son's wellbeing from attending the group"

Of the 12 young people who volunteered with Soup2Go:

- 1 has secured and maintained part time employment
- 1 is undertaking a Modern Apprenticeship
- 3 have college places starting September
- 2 are increasing their skills through further independent volunteering
- 1 secured temporary employment over Christmas and has further job interviews pending

- 1 has passed his driving test and is currently looking for driving related posts
- 1 is undertaking further qualifications with a view to further education next year

The group were delighted to be nominated for and receive the 'Health & Wellbeing Award' – for 'volunteers whose activities have had a health or care related focus' – at the Midlothian Volunteer Awards 2023.

Midlothian Volunteer Awards 2023:
Winners Announced -
Midlothian Third Sector Interface
thirdsectormidlothian.org.uk

Being involved in the Midlothian Youth Platform has given me a lot of guidance and support over the years I have been going. It took me from a place where I couldn't speak



publicly or confidently to where I now have represented the young people of Midlothian and spoke confidently in front of large crowds of young people and adults as well as hold meetings with decision makers. I can do this in a way now that I don't need to constantly read notes or ask someone else to present with me. I have now grown that I am starting my youth worker journey and this has given me the confidence to go to University to study teaching.

Find out more about Midlothian Youth Platform
Midlothian Youth Platform (MYP) | Midlothian Council

- We support people, families and communities to improve their chances through skills for learning, life and work.
- We support people to access learning & improve their qualifications.
- We support people to get or change their job or volunteer.
- We support communities to improve local areas and services.
- We are part of the Children, Young People and Partnerships service in Midlothian Council.