



outfit
actively developing potential ■ moray



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

EnerG Project Evaluation Report

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I. Introduction

Outfit Moray is an award-winning charity and social enterprise delivering outdoor learning, adventure and nature exploration programmes which transform lives. Founded in 2003 and becoming a charity in 2006, we have worked with over 15,000 children and young people across Moray; building confidence, self-esteem and resilience, providing positive role models and encouraging the acquisition of life skills and new experiences, through challenge and positive risk taking.

We are a visionary, ambitious and passionate organisation, committed to making a difference to the lives of others and particularly those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. Our unique approach to learning, education, training and development applies to all that we do, whether working one-to-one with children referred to us, running holiday and respite weeks for vulnerable children, outdoor learning and adventure programmes with schools, or activity sessions to improve health and well-being in adults.

We take a holistic approach to our work; founded on the principles of charity, care and compassion, building trust, valuing courage, patience and integrity, developing social skills and team work, respect for human dignity and taking a selfless approach to the needs of others. It is our aim to encourage positive growth: mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually, to provide hope for a better future, to improve happiness, health and well-being and to create a sense of life purpose.

Outfit Moray provides a supportive structure for a number of charitable and socially enterprising projects to flourish in line with our Vision and Mission. We apply our core values to these projects and actively promote them as part of our work in caring for others and our planet. Outfit Moray strives to be carbon neutral, to reduce waste and to encourage recycling and upcycling. We are signatories to Scotland's Climate Change Pledge.



2. Outfit Moray's Vision, Mission, Values and Outcomes



Outfit's Vision

To change lives by creating the opportunity for everyone to take part in outdoor learning and adventure irrespective of their ability, financial position or location.

Outfit's Mission

To actively develop potential and make a difference to the lives of others and in particular young people, their families and communities, through accessible and affordable outdoor learning and adventure: building self-confidence, growing self-esteem, encouraging life skills and improving health.

We take a holistic approach to developing potential, using outdoor adventure to build trust, to challenge and to provide focus; valuing courage, compassion, patience, perseverance and integrity. We encourage risk awareness and positive risk taking, teamwork, leadership and a selfless approach to others. It is our aim to increase happiness and improve well-being, encourage resourcefulness and create a sense of purpose in life.

Our Values

- **Always show compassion**

Compassion underpins everything we do, we care about others and want to use outdoor learning, adventure and nature exploration to transform lives, to bring about societal change

through our programmes and to be positive role models for our beneficiaries. With compassion comes empathy, unconditional actions and a selfless approach to others.

- **Never exclude anyone**

We want to enable everyone to benefit from our work and as a charity we do not judge but accept those who are referred to us on a non-deficit basis, providing a nurturing and encouraging environment for everyone to learn; to make changes to their lives; to provide positive and lasting memories; to improve their health and increase their happiness.

- **Be the inspiration for others**

We have a wealth of expertise and experience and have a desire to share this for the benefit of all. Just as we have been inspired by our love of the outdoors so too do we want to inspire others. Through the very positive outcomes of our work we want to inspire more supporters to allow us to continue making a difference.

- **Live the spirit of Adventure**

A sense of adventure and being at one with our environment is something which we all share; the enormity of the natural world and our place in it; the broadened horizons; the clarity of thought; the opportunity presented and the perspective that we can gain. We live this spirit and want others to do the same – it is life changing!

- **Make our enthusiasm infectious**

Enthusiasm frames our work, it drives us to look beyond the now and to find new ways of working. We want to share our passion and our energy, encouraging others to be dynamic and share our excitement at being able to make a positive difference to the lives of others.



Outfit's Outcomes

Everything we do aims to make a positive difference to the people that we work with, whether it is simply having an enjoyable experience, or whether it is supporting someone to understand more about themselves and how they can make changes to their lives.

Our work is based around a number of key outcomes, or differences, that help us to structure our programmes and to ensure that we are having the biggest impact that we can. Outfit's five main outcomes are:

- To improve people's health and well-being

- To improve people's confidence and self-esteem
- To improve people's employability and life skills
- To increase the provision of outdoor learning and adventure opportunities for local people
- To increase the provision of volunteering, training and job opportunities in our local area.



The Work We Do

During the last 12 months we have run a wide range of programmes for young people, with a focus on those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, including young carers, young offenders, young people suffering from abuse, young people with a disability, young people living in areas of social deprivation or rural isolation, and young people with challenging home lives. We have run a mixture of one-off sessions, programmes running over a number of weeks or months, programmes within schools, holiday activities and one-to-one work. Over the past 3 years we have also run a residential respite break programme, with a successful pilot on the West Coast of Scotland for sixteen 8-12 year olds. More recently we ran this same programme in the Cairngorm National Park.

The vast majority of our programmes are heavily subsidised by us or free of charge to ensure that as many young people as possible are able to benefit from the opportunities we offer. We have run a variety of programmes ranging from one-off sessions to longer-term programmes, and have worked with groups that have ranged from intensive one-to-one work to larger groups of up to eight or more young people. We run a wide range of activities including climbing, biking, canoeing, kayaking, archery and bushcraft. These sessions/programmes are tailored to meet the needs of the young people participating.

Evaluation Methodology

We employ a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods to measure our outcomes, using techniques that are appropriate for the programmes we run and the young people that we work with. We use different evaluation techniques for different groups and we are constantly reviewing the effectiveness of these approaches.

We use information from statistics and questionnaires to gain quantitative data to measure our outcomes, in conjunction with feedback forms, case studies, one-to-one reviews and group

evaluations which give us a more holistic picture of the differences we are making. The techniques that have been used are described in the following sections.

The information is presented in a variety of ways, using tables and graphs to represent quantitative information. Qualitative data is displayed in the form of reports, case studies and quotations.

Our Projects

We split our work into five projects:

EnerG (which works with young people who have additional support needs or who are having difficulty in their lives)

Activ8 (which provides activity programmes for young people after school hours and during holidays)

Innov8 (our adult volunteer programme that provides training and development opportunities for adults who want to make a difference to the lives of local young people).

Gener8 (the work we do with families and corporate groups)

Bike Revolution (a project started back in 2012 which aims to reduce CO2e emissions and promote healthier lifestyles by refurbishing and reselling second hand bikes, running bike maintenance courses, carrying out bike 'health checks' in schools and the local community, and running awareness-raising sessions to highlight cycling opportunities)



3. EnerG

During the last twelve months, Outfit Moray has worked with **over 1,000 young people** with additional support needs in Moray, run **over 200 sessions** and worked with **over 20 different organisations**.

We have worked with a wide variety of local youth organisations including Cornerstone, Quarriers, North East Sensory Services, Action For Children, Elgin Youth Café, Moray Women's Aid, Moray BSL Services, and many of the areas primary and secondary schools.



The vast majority of EnerG programmes are heavily subsidised by Outfit (usually between 75 - 90% of the full cost) or free of charge to ensure that as many young people as possible are able to benefit from the opportunities we offer. If groups are free of charge, we try to encourage the young people to support Outfit in other ways, for example carryout a fundraising activity toward the cost of their programme.

We have run a variety of programmes ranging from one-off sessions to longer-term programmes, and have worked with groups that have ranged from intensive one-to-one work to larger groups of up to eight young people.

Some of the programmes have been very specific in the targeting of various groups of young people and details of these will be found further into this report.

The key aims of the programmes are to increase self-esteem, team working skills, responsibility, communication and educational engagement, and many young people that participate in these programmes have a variety of support needs, including low self-esteem as a result of bullying or domestic circumstances, difficulties with anger management, problems with communicating and socialising effectively with peers, and challenges with working with others in a group.

The evaluation that has been carried out has taken a variety of forms, depending on the young people that we have worked with. This year, we have focussed on:

- a. The use of a feedback form for young people at the end of the programme which allows them to reflect on their learning experience
- b. Target setting so that young people can review their progress through the programme
- c. The use of a feedback form for teachers which provides a valuable insight into longer-term changes the young people have made

The Ignite Project

Our Ignite project is part of our EnerG strand, and provides disadvantaged young people aged 14-18 who are struggling to find a direction in their lives with the opportunity to participate in 8-week development programmes which aim to increase their confidence, life skills and employability.



The project uses outdoor education principles to support young people aged 14 – 18 who are either at school and have no positive post-school destination in place, or who have left school and are not in education, employment or training. The programme helps the young people to better understand themselves and their potential, and provides tailored and inspirational 8-week courses which support the young people to gain qualifications, experience, motivation and the confidence to move onto employment, training or further education.

The last 12 months spans three Ignite courses (one partial and two complete; one ending in March 2018). Over this time, Outfit Moray has worked with 21 different young people Moray, and run 30 sessions for 3 different organisations. The sessions incorporated outdoor/indoor activities such as climbing, abseiling, mountain biking, bike maintenance, bush craft and first aid training.

Since project inception, we have worked with Moray Council that referred school leavers via their Opportunities for All Scheme then with groups from Milnes High School, Speyside High School, Elgin Academy and Elgin High School. The pilot group had 7 participants, who were all

school leavers. Only one member of this group finished the course. There was no enthusiasm; as a group they were difficult to motivate and formed quite a destructive relationship together. This served us well when setting up subsequent courses which were far more successful, although not without their challenges.

All the groups had issues of low self-esteem and low confidence and this was shown in a number of behaviours. There was a fair bit of name calling and jokes, some young people even lashing out but on the whole situations were diffused by diverting attention back to the activity in hand. Those who completed the whole course achieved a level 2 NICAS award, Paddle power passport level 3 (kayaking), Go mountain biking level 2 and first aid qualifications. These qualifications are linked to National Governing Body organisations.

These qualifications have had a marked increase in confidence and self-esteem which consequently reduced the level of negative behaviour. Picking up team working skills while on the activities, some individuals showed leadership by helping others which would enhance employability in the future along with their first aid qualifications.



The majority of participants stated that they had tried something new. All also completed forms stating how they felt before and after the activities. Over the whole course, participants stated that they were ok before they started and on average they scored as happy after the activity.

The winter months proved quite a challenge in motivating the groups due to the cold but once the activity started things did improve. As is commonplace with a difficult group of young people the “control” aspect in their behaviour was

commonplace. Examples would be that they would ask to do a different activity to the one that was agreed for the day. This would lead to the participants being sulky but this again dissipated once the activity began.

Case Study I – Male A

Male A played an active part in the group and he appeared to enjoy all the activities. He showed improvement in key areas. For example, he was nervous while mountain biking at first but his confidence improved on the next occasion he sat in the saddle. He was particularly good at achieving set tasks and working on his own which was evident while doing the bike maintenance classes. He responded relatively well when he was being called names by the others but did snap from time to time. Staff were on hand to diffuse this issue and offering support when needed. An interesting team member with some intriguing habits, he always took little soft toys on the activities with him. He was on the whole a great team member in a mixed ability group.

From Male A’s mother

“I have seen a real positive difference in my son since Christmas. He is more confident at school, he says he’s more settled and that he feels he belongs giving him that sense of inclusion.”

“The realisation that he can achieve anything he sets out to do has now dawned and he talking of teaching history in the future.”

“I am in no doubt that this project has developed his self-worth, self-esteem and as a result he BELIEVES he can achieve anything he sets out to. He is now seeing opportunities where before he was seeing limitations in himself.”

“Your hard work in making these projects happen is very much appreciated. It’s totally changed his outlook and for that I am grateful”.

Case Study 2 – Male B (when things don’t go so well)

For the first 3 sessions B showed that he was a very capable and confident mountain biker engaging very well during these days, however he became very disruptive after these sessions. B was very difficult to work with as was very confrontational and deliberately did not follow instructions and at times especially during the canoeing some of the decisions he was making were unsafe. We spoke to him on several occasions and gave him multiple warnings regarding his behaviour and how it was impacting others within the group. His attitude did not improve so a decision was made to remove him from the programme with consent from the School. This was unfortunate for B as he showed he had potential to actively participate to a high standard during the course but his attitude let him down.

Quotes from the Young People

1. Do you think this programme has been worthwhile and if so why?

“Yes because we got to learn new skills.”

“Yes I think it has been worthwhile because I’ve learnt how to fix a bike and what to do if someone is hurt.”

2. Would you recommend this programme to anyone else, reasons why?

“Yes because it’s good experience for your life.”

“Yes because it was fun and enjoyable.”

3. What have you enjoyed most about being on the programme?

“Outdoor rock climbing because I found it difficult but fun.”

“I enjoyed the bike shop and first aid the most.”

4. List 3 skills that you have developed during the programme?

“Confidence, courage, teamwork.”

“First aid, fixing bikes, teamwork.”

“Confidence, tie a knot, climbing.”

5. Do you think you can transfer any of these skills into your daily life and if so which ones?

“I think the skill I can transfer is what I learned in first aid.”

“I can transfer first aid in real life by helping someone. I can fix my own bike if it ever breaks. I can work with a team to get a job done quicker.”

Bushcraft and Teambuilding

During the last twelve months we have run a number of Bushcraft and Teambuilding activities for groups identified by schools that have been struggling with a number of different issues that have impacted on their development. The young people in these groups have been assessed as having much lower developmental ages than their actual age, leading to behavioural difficulties in class. The programmes were designed around a variety of outdoor adventures that would challenge the participants and re-engage them in learning new skills.

Case Studies

Male K on an eight-week Bushcraft and Teambuilding Programme

At the start of the programme, K wouldn't engage with others in the group and would wander off and do his own thing quite regularly. K had a few big meltdowns that were quite time consuming and had the potential to get out of hand. K enjoyed coming out from the start; however, he wasn't very keen on getting involved with any of the activities and would often isolate himself. K would get very disheartened if he did something and the outcome didn't go exactly as he had imagined. By the end of the programme, K had become a lot more engaged with the group. He interacted with the others a lot more frequently and made some new friends along the way. He would still wander off from time to time or sulk if things didn't go his way, but it wasn't as frequent. K became a lot more involved in the activities, sometimes being the driving force behind getting them done. With his newfound confidence K would often lead the group in tackling activities.

Female G on an eight-week Bushcraft Programme

G was very wary of the different activities initially. On the first session she stated that she'd never painted before (while painting shingle on the beach). The group provided her with lots of new experiences and an environment to try! By the end of the programme she was throwing herself into everything and assisting others in the process. She became a great team player, consistently looking out for the others. G was able to verbalise the tasks she enjoyed and could assist others in the review process too.

Male H on an eight-week Bushcraft Programme

H would not initially engage in any activities. He kept himself away from the rest of the group. He would attempt to distract another member of the group and be disruptive in many ways. He would struggle to stay within the set boundaries during the first few forest sessions. By the end of the programme, H was able to join in the activities with support and encouragement. This improved greatly during the beach sessions with only a few reminders being necessary. H enjoyed talking on a 1:1 basis and indeed has a broad knowledge on certain topics. His

increased ability to follow instructions has made it more enjoyable for group participation as a whole.

The Respite Breaks Project

The breaks are based at residential locations in Scotland, and would provide vulnerable and disadvantaged young people with a range of fun and exciting outdoor education and other activities including rock climbing, archery, canoeing, games and gorge swimming. The breaks were run by qualified and experienced instructors, and supported by volunteers. The staff to child ratio was 1:2. All of the breaks are free of charge for the young people, and 12 young people participated in each week. The weeks provided the young people with a break from the pressures of their everyday lives, and would build confidence, skills and resilience to better deal with their lives at home. The vast majority of the young people who took part in these breaks are young people who are suffering from neglect or mental, physical or sexual abuse.



During the last 12 months we ran one break and worked with 12 young people. We used the existing networks and resources of local agencies and organisations supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged young people to recruit young people for the break, including the Moray Council Social Services and partner charities with whom we currently work, including North East Sensory Services, Cornerstone, Quarriers Carers, Moray Women's Aid, and the Aberlour Childcare Trust.

We aimed to achieve a number of positive outcomes for the young people and wider community through this project including:

1. Improve young people's health and wellbeing - The respite breaks will help to improve the young people's mental and physical wellbeing by giving them a break from the pressures of their everyday lives, helping them develop coping mechanisms and giving them the opportunity to take part in activities they may never have tried before. Most of the activities will take part outside and will involve physical activity, therefore improving young people's physical health, and helping young people to enjoy being active, and improving sleep quality and patterns through the week. The young people will eat simple, healthy food, and will learn in a fun way about the benefits of healthy eating. They will have a break away from computer games and mobile phones, and will learn the enjoyment and benefit of chatting to others and playing interactive games without computers.
2. Build young people's confidence and self-esteem - through the activities we will run and the environment we will foster, we will allow the young people on our breaks to feel valued, to achieve and succeed, to have fun, and to be listened to. The young people will be fully involved in the activities during the week, and will be supported to actively participate and to offer suggestions, and all challenges will be made achievable.

Throughout the week, young people will be helped to understand their strengths, and how to bring out the best in themselves and the others in their group.

3. Increase young people's resilience to deal with day-to day life - by giving young people a break away from the pressures of their everyday lives, and by working with them to build confidence, make friends and create special memories of the week, young people will return home rejuvenated and refreshed, and with new coping skills for whatever they have to deal with at home. The adult leaders at the respite break will work with the young people to identify and maximise the positive things about their home lives, and how to deal with the more negative things.

During the breaks, we evaluated them before, during and after the week, encouraging the young people to work out what they wanted to gain from the week, and then reviewing this with them regularly. The mentors had a meeting with their children every night where they explored what had been the highlights of their day as well as learning from things that had not gone so well. These relationships formed the backbone for the week and each day we recorded progress against key developmental indicators that would form part of our evaluations.

Following the week, we asked the referral agents to provide us with detailed feedback and then to contact us with any significant developmental progress during their first term back at school.

Below are some quotes from the young people, guardians and social workers that highlight the impact of the week:

“Being able to go on the holiday respite break was the best thing I did this summer”

“It was great, I wasn’t sure about it, I thought I’d miss home, I did, but there was so much to do.”

“For X his time with you on the respite week has resulted in significant positive change. He had previously struggled to communicate with adults and see them as people to share things with and receive support from. You have changed this, thank you”

A **short case study** is provided below:

Case Study

Female A

A was referred from the NHS School Nurse. Her life was being affected through being a young carer to her mother, who herself is affected by mental health and alcohol misuse. Both have been affected by the death of an older sibling to A in a water-based incident. The family are affected by poor living conditions increasing their social deprivation.

Mum was keen for A to develop water confidence and understanding in an outdoor setting to demonstrate that water activities can be safe and fun with the risks managed.

A, over the residential participated in all activities. In the first two days the activities, she participated in water activities including gorge walking where she showed no hesitation of getting in the water and taking part. When her head went under the water she was a wee bit panicky as she did not get the breathing correct under water. Staff stayed close whilst heading up the river. She did jump off the rock in to the water.



Tuesday the group kayaked on Loch Morlich. There were no issues with participation. She stayed in her boat whilst kayaking and in the afternoon, she joined the group in swimming and jumping off an inflatable canoe for about 2 hrs. She presented a really confident person. There was no mention of her sibling during the first two water activities.

Tuesday night presented issues with sleeping, she was awake to 2am.

She presented

severe anxiety over:-

- Her older sibling's death in a water environment
- Home accommodation quality
- Heating and floor cleanliness
- Dad comes and goes causing instability. Her words were that Dad comes into their lives and then leaves them.



We were not presented with anxieties during the day when she is occupied. This becomes apparent in the late evening, where her anxiety heightens through thoughts of mum and concern for mum's welfare without her.

Aversion to risk, such as mountain biking and being apprehensive did show in her slowing down on a hill or when she had been on a pump track and forestry tracks. You would not have known she had just learned to ride a bike with the assistance of Active Schools. She did mention that she has a bike but no helmet and would like to use her bike more. The fear of having an accident overcomes her rational thinking and enthusiasm, which seems to dissipate by the morning. This presents itself in severe anxiety.



From the behaviours that A has shown this week, we feel that she would benefit from grief counselling. She worries about her mum a lot especially in the evening when she becomes tired and a fairly emotional. She has a fantastic natural talent and we felt that she uses her drawing ability as an escape. Through discussions it was mentioned that she doesn't sleep very much and

spends a lot of time online learning about very grown up subjects, which shows in her ability and interest in learning and absorbing information. As the week progressed the anxieties about mum and bed to go home at night increased nearing bed time. For the last few nights we used a sleep relation app which proved successful and she was asleep within 15 minutes of going to bed.

The team felt that it would be beneficial for our feedback to be passed to the school nurse to support the young person. It will be interesting to see how A develops in the coming months.

4. Evidence of Need

We know that the services we provide to young people are needed, as the demand for our programmes for local young people has continued to grow from supporting 100 young people a year to over 1000 a year since our work began in 2003, and there is no other outdoor education provider offering the opportunities to young people and communities that we do in Moray and the surrounding areas.

We are beginning to fill the gap left when local authority outdoor education provision was completely cut in the re-organisation of local government in 1996, and until our formation, there had been no provision in Moray since then.

We are helping to develop several of the core skills that the Scottish Qualifications Authority describes as the "broad transferrable skills that help to develop the main capabilities people need to be full, active and responsible members of society", including helping young people in key areas such as working together, problem solving, sharing, taking responsibility, being accountable, developing social skills, and developing self-confidence and self-esteem. We know that we are making a significant difference to the young people we work with, with some young offenders not re-offending since attending Outfit programmes, and many young people now having the confidence to make friends and take an active part in school or community life.

The feedback that we receive from young people, teachers and leaders of agencies and community groups helps us to improve the service we provide to young people, but also indicates that there is a continuing need for our work.

5. Conclusion

The last twelve months has been another busy one for Outfit, and we have continued to develop our positive relationships with local organisations to increase the services we provide for young people. Your support has been vital for enabling us to deliver this work.