



SCOTCH WHISKY  
ACTION FUND

MANAGED BY



Girvan Youth Trust



@ScotchWhiskySWA

Organisation: **Girvan Youth Trust**  
Date of Award: **2021**  
Amount Awarded: **£19,335**  
Project Name: **StreetLights**



Girvan Youth Trust (GYT) is a youth driven and community owned grassroots organisation providing multiple diversionary opportunities, engaging with young people aged 8-24 in Girvan, and the surrounding seven rural villages, with the aim of supporting them to achieve their full potential. The Trust engages with approximately 500 direct beneficiaries per year through in-house activities and outreach work in the community, on the streets, and within local schools.

## The Project: StreetLights

In 2021, GYT received a grant of £19,335 from the Scotch Whisky Action Fund (SWAF) to deliver the StreetLights programme. The grant enabled GYT to continue to employ two youth workers for twelve hours per week for a year to spend most of this time out on the streets of Girvan engaging with at-risk young people. Work predominately took place during evenings after school. However, they also work with local schools and deliver some sessions directly to young people in the school environment.



The youth workers delivered awareness sessions to those consuming alcohol, as well as discussions and information around the legalities of their practices with the aim of helping the young people to steer away from crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as strengthen community cohesion more generally.

## The Impact:

A total of 194 sessions were delivered which was equal to 611 session hours. This allowed GYT to engage with just over 250 local young people aged from S1 up to 18 years – and they have also started some early engagement with upper primary school pupils as well.

During delivery, particularly during school holidays, at weekends and during town events, many local young people can be found under the influence of alcohol and in situations which can lead to risk taking behaviours - this is where the youth workers step up as they are not only there to informally educate and deliver a harm reduction approach but also to provide support to those who need it. For example, during the September weekend whilst the



shows were in town, GYT doubled its delivery to have four youth workers out as they knew it would be needed. The youth workers came across a young person, who was under the influence and had fallen asleep on the beach wall. They woke them up and did a welfare check, the young person then gave us their mobile phone and asked us to call their mum to collect them as they knew they couldn't remain safe in the condition they were in. Parents were called and the youth workers waited with the young person until they were collected.

GYT's work with schools provides short term, targeted intervention work with young people who are identified as being currently involved in, or on the periphery of being involved in, anti-social behaviour. Following discussions with the school it was decided that it was best to deliver these sessions during school time as the identified young people are a "captured audience". The project has been established to address the number of anti-social behaviour issues in the local community - these include vandalism, risk taking behaviours and underage alcohol consumption. Partners involved in this project are Girvan Academy and Community Safety. Sessions are tailored to the group of young people. For example, a group of school leavers focussed on life skills (i.e. cooking, budgeting, setting up a bank account etc) whilst having inputs from Police Scotland and SAC Housing (tenancies, ASB Orders).

Following on from support within the targeted sessions, GYT have supported three young people into employment: one as a Care Assistant in a local nursing home currently undertaking her SVQ, one as a full-time waitress at Trump Turnberry and one as a Summer Programme Assistant. They also supported another young person to open her first bank account. Her parents were unsupportive and wouldn't co-operate for example she had no ID and parents refused to go to the bank and use their ID/account to verify hers. Without the support of GYT she would not have a bank account and be unable to receive her wages.

## Case Study

**William\*** is a young male in secondary school who has been known to the StreetLights Team since he was in primary school known to regularly participate in risk taking behaviours such as underage alcohol consumption, drug taking and other anti-social behaviours. This developed from him copying the behaviours of his older sibling who he hangs out with in social settings. When he first became known to the StreetLights Team, pre-COVID, he was very combative, resistant and had a strong distrust of the Youth Workers. He would often 'show off' to get a reaction and was often taken advantage of by his older sibling as a source of amusement to their peer group e.g. spiking his drink with vodka. His older sibling then took no responsibility for him and was often left to his own devices. Through his involvement with Targeted Intervention Groups in school time as well as his own personal experience of having to rely on the youth workers to assist him home safely, his attitude has become more positive towards us and as such he actively seeks the street based youth workers out.

**Grace\*** is a young female who has a chaotic home life with many family issues and lack of support system. She can regularly be found intoxicated, engaging in risk taking behaviours which then leads to anti-social behaviour. Grace can be very quiet when in company and tends to “follow the crowd” – even when she doesn’t want to. She became engaged with the StreetLights Team through its Detached Youth Work delivery and then subsequently became part of the project’s school based programme. Over the last six months, Grace has increased her confidence and is visibly thinking about her actions before she carries them out. She also has become more confident in standing up to her peers and expressing her own views and opinions rather than following the crowd. Grace has also chosen to “stay off the drink” the last three Saturday evenings and instead has made the choice to attend the Saturday Night Drop In rather than be on the streets consuming alcohol which then leads to poor decision making. With support from StreetLights, and the wider Girvan Youth Trust Team, Grace has secured herself employment but has also matured and is taking a more adult approach to her behaviours and responsibilities.

\*names have been changed