

Scottish Borders LEADER Case Study: Stable Life

Organisation:

GYP Borders

Funds:

Total Project Costs - £196,968.34

LEADER grant - £98,854.27

Cash match funding - £89,398.00

In kind match funding - £8,716.07

Aim: To use the horse and its environment to challenge “referred” young people about the impact their behaviour has on relationships and employability and support a positive and sustained change in attitude.



Activities:

- 191 young people under 25 and 132 people aged over 25 participated in the programme
- Tailored 6 month programme of weekly support sessions both on one to one and group basis using the horse as a tool to facilitate change
- Worked in partnership with Addaction and Criminal Justice Department enhancing experiences for young women offenders
- Group interactive activity sessions to learn life skills such as independent living
- Supported work experience placements at local riding stables
- Created 3 part time jobs as well as volunteering opportunities

Impact:

- 80% of participants showed either a moderate or significant increase in confidence / self esteem
- 78% of participants showed either a moderate or marked improvement in their behaviour / attitude.
- 98% gained social, life and employability skills.
- 9 young people re-engaged with school, others have gone on to college placements or been supported into jobs and several have secured work experience placements at local stables.
- One young offender and mum commented: “I loved looking after Donald (the pony) as I am not trusted to look after anything now and I feel I have no choices. I was a bit scared but it was great and I know now I have to show that I can do more!”
- Increased the services available to young people in areas such as mental health, women offenders, the socially isolated and those not attending or excluded from school.
- 5 of the young people supported are now operating as peer supporters on a voluntary basis.
- Feedback from participants “Jack (pony) is not lazy he is just misunderstood and I know how that feels. Come on Jack, you can do it!”; “I feel proud and learned that if I put my mind to it and work my best then I can do anything I want to do, I like myself more and challenge myself out of my comfort zone”.
- Raised the profile and enhanced the reputation of GYP Borders leading to new and stronger partnerships with agencies and schools.

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