

Crime proceeds to steer young people away from offending.

More than £18 million seized from criminals has been committed to fund projects which divert disadvantaged young people away from crime.

The Cashback for Communities scheme reinvests criminal assets into community projects which support young people into positive destinations, diverting some away from potentially criminal or anti-social behaviour.

The next phase of funding will take total investment in the programme, which is unique to Scotland, to almost £110 million since it began in 2008.

CashBack has funded a variety of projects in the past 11 years including the Celtic FC Foundation, the National Autistic Society and Impact Arts which all provide opportunities to raise the attainment, ambition and aspirations of young people from areas of deprivation.

Minister for Community Safety Ash Denham said:

“We want every young person growing up in Scotland to have an equal chance of success no matter their circumstances – CashBack has a vital part to play in expanding young people’s horizons and helping them reach their full potential.”

“Since Cashback for Communities began in 2008 we have delivered nearly two and a half million activities and opportunities for young people across all local authorities in Scotland.”

“The next stage of CashBack will have particular focus on projects that support young people and communities most affected by crime. I’m pleased to say that we have increased funding for this latest phase by £1 million – taking the total amount available over three years to £18 million.”

“The numbers of children referred to the Children’s Reporter on offence grounds or prosecuted in the courts have fallen substantially over the last decade and our Cashback programme supports that progress by giving many of Scotland’s most disadvantaged young people a wide range of positive opportunities to challenge themselves and inspire those around them.”

Patrick O’Sullivan, 25, from Glasgow, was helped by the Celtic FC Foundation employability programme to become a sports coach after being released from prison.

He said: “Barlinnie is not a nice place to be in but it was my own fault. Committing crimes is just not who I am. I don’t know what went through my head when I was doing it.”

“The Celtic FC Foundation staff who were working with me on the CashBack course were just so positive. They told me that if I stuck at it and did everything they asked me to do, then I would get a reward at the end.”

“And the reward is I’m still sitting here today working for Celtic FC Foundation as a community coach. I run sessions for children and adults. Some of the people I work with have additional needs like Autism and Down’s Syndrome. It is really rewarding to see them going home with a big smile on their faces after the football practice sessions.”

The CashBack for Communities Programme funds partner organisations to deliver, monitor and report on initiatives across all 32 Local Authority Areas in Scotland. Applications are invited from organisations who wish to become a **CashBack Partner** for Phase 5 of the programme which runs from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023. Organisations must have a proven track record of delivering activities and opportunities to young people, families and communities most affected by crime.

Background

The CashBack for Communities programme is a unique Scottish Government Programme which takes funds recovered through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and invests them into community programmes, facilities and activities largely, but not exclusively, for young people at risk of turning to crime and anti-social behaviour as a way of life.

Phase 5 of the CashBack for Communities programme will be open for applications from 12 noon on 15 May, running until 28 June. Please click here for more details or to apply for funding <https://cashbackforcommunities.org/funding-opportunities/>