South Ayrshire Locality Planning Funding for Young Cares 2025-2026

Young Carers Activity Programme - Evaluation Summary

Thanks to funding from South Ayrshire Council Locality Planning Funding, a varied programme of outdoor activities was delivered for local young carers throughout the year. Activities included sailing, stand up paddleboarding, beach days, outdoor adventure sessions, a joint South Ayrshire CAyrFest event and residential-style activity days at **Dolphin House Outdoor Centre, Culzean Country Park**.

Overall across all six localities in South Ayrshire, we received funding for we delivered activities to approximately 500 young people and over a thousand adults and young people at the recent CAyrfest event at the riverside stadium.



The programme provided young carers with valuable opportunities to take a break from their caring responsibilities, enjoy new experiences, and spend time outdoors in a safe and supportive environment. Participation levels were high, and feedback from young people was overwhelmingly positive.

The programme also offered opportunities to experience the benefits of blue and green health: connecting with nature in green spaces on land and blue spaces along the coast and at sea. Outdoor adventure sessions, beach days and sailing gave young carers opportunities to be active, enjoy natural surroundings and spend time together away from everyday caring responsibilities. Time in these environments can support mental wellbeing and provide space to relax and connect with others, although benefits vary between individuals. Experiencing nature on land and at sea added a valuable dimension to the programme's focus on respite and wellbeing.





Key outcomes achieved included:

- Increased confidence through learning new skills and overcoming personal challenges.
- Improved resilience and wellbeing through participation in adventurous outdoor activities.
- Development of new friendships and stronger peer support networks.
- Greater social inclusion for young carers who often experience isolation due to their caring role.
- Enhanced self-esteem and a sense of achievement from trying activities such as sailing and paddleboarding.



The funding has made a significant positive impact on the young people involved. Many participants developed lasting friendships, grew in confidence, and demonstrated increased resilience throughout the programme. Young carers also had the opportunity to take part in activities and enjoy experiences they would not otherwise have been able to access, such as sailing on the Firth of Clyde and seeing dolphins. These outdoor experiences created lasting memories while helping young carers improve their physical and mental wellbeing.



Overall, the project has been highly successful and has provided meaningful opportunities that many participants would not otherwise have been able to access. The support from the Locality Planning Fund has enabled local young carers to enjoy enriching experiences, build life skills, and strengthen their connections with others in their community.

Vincent McWhirter

The Outdoor Partnership, Ayrshire