

Making Change Happen...
Aim High

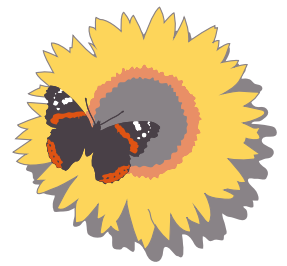


**Communities,
Lifelong Learning
and Employability**

Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024



Midlothian



Introduction

Our staff, volunteers and partners have worked well to plan, support and secure improvement for learners and communities. This report includes data and stories from participants that show the impact of our work across youth work, adult learning, family learning, employability and community capacity building.

In addition I would like to draw your attention to our top successes which include:

- Helping local people of all ages through CLLE to secure the highest ever number of qualifications
- Highest ever number of people from a minority ethnic group took part in CLLE activities
- Working in partnership to secure external funding for CLLE activity
- Working in partnership to deliver a feasibility study for a Woodburn Community Hub
- Working in partnership to support those most affected by the cost of living crisis including children
- Improving Skills for Learning, Life, Work and Wellbeing for All Ages (Based on Matter of Focus Template) - Matter of Focus home of OutN

We will continue to offer a mix of digital and face-to-face approaches to meet the needs of local people.

We need to develop further our learning offer to encourage more people to take part in CLLE activities to reach our aim of returning to pre covid levels. This is challenging as we have less funding for staff to make this happen for youth work, adult learning and community capacity building.

I would like to thank our staff team, volunteers and partners who are driven to help local people change lives and communities, drawing on their skill set and enthusiasm to rise and adapt to the challenges and opportunities which come our way.



Annette Lang
Group Service Manager
(CPP & CLLE)

- We support people, families and communities to improve their chances through skills for learning, life and work.
- We support people to access learning & improve their qualifications.
- We support people to get or change their job or volunteer.
- We support communities to improve local areas and services.
- We are part of the Children, Young People and Partnerships service in Midlothian Council.

Improving Skills for Learning, Life, Work and Wellbeing for All Ages

(Based on a Matter of Focus Template) - Matter of Focus home of OutNav

What we do	<p>We have good conversations with people and communities about what they want to change, improve and create a sense of belonging.</p> <p>We offer a programme of opportunities, including funding, to help people learn, gain new skills, qualifications and secure jobs.</p> <p>We co-design learning programmes for all ages to help people feel connected and improve wellbeing.</p>
Who with	<p>Local people of all ages who are looking for support to get involved in their community, take their next steps, volunteer, learn a new skill in a group, gain a qualification, secure employment or a new job.</p> <p>Partners who apply for grants to improve Midlothian</p>
How they feel	<p>Increased sense of belonging. Increased pride.</p> <p>Increased confidence. Increased sense of self belief.</p> <p>More able to handle challenges, including financial ones.</p> <p>Partners feel they are part of a shared endeavour.</p>
What they learn and gain	<p>People know what matters to them.</p> <p>People have the confidence, skills and qualifications to make decisions and influence services that improve the community they live, learn and work in.</p> <p>People have access to programmes and opportunities.</p>
What they do differently	<p>People manage their choices and wellbeing for themselves, their families and communities.</p> <p>People consult with others and include their views and opinions to influence decision making.</p>
The difference this makes?	<p>People have improved wellbeing, new skills, qualifications, better finances, and for some, a new or higher paid job or career.</p> <p>People have increased support networks and contacts in their community.</p> <p>People give back to their community.</p>

Financial Resources

Most of our services are offered free to the public, apart from let charges and charges for some adult learning classes.

We have an income target of £490,076 which we meet through contracts, external funding and charging for some adult learning classes. The adult learning income target is £25,000.

We do ensure a scale of charges to support those on low incomes. We also manage the grants the council awards to community groups and third sector organisations.

Our Funding 22/23	Amount 23/24
Core Staffing CLLE	£2,205,282
Large Grants every 3 years (annual amount), Grants to Community Council (CC)	£520,000 £10,000 (CC)
Employability Funding from Scottish Government for parents and an all-age service including young people	£1,277,000
INCOME TARGET (from fees, charges and external funding)	£490,076

Our Key Achievements.



High levels of satisfaction

- 98.3% of people were satisfied with our services



We need to support more participants, although with reduced resources, as we aim to be back to pre-pandemic levels by 2025

- 509 projects provided in 12 towns and villages (535 in 14 towns 22/23, 501 in 21/22, 412 in 20/21, 586 in 19/20)
- 20% decrease in registered participants (4,947 in 23/24, 5,927 in 22/23, 4,911 in 21/22, 2,003 in 20/21)



Increasing numbers of qualifications 23/24

- 93.9% of people reported improved key skills
- 2,531 qualifications achieved (2,163 in 22/23, 1,355 in 21/22, 477 in 20/21, 1,543 in 19/20) – an increase of 17%
- 350 young people started Duke of Edinburgh awards with 190 awards gained (11% increase) (354/171 in 22/23, 194/48 in 21/22)
- 164 day and evening courses were offered, including 33 accredited courses. (174 classes (23 accred) in 22/23 157 classes (24 accred) 21/22, 143 classes (2 accred) in 20/21, 136 (15 accred) in 19/20).
- 477 adults attended our paid Adult Learning courses. (388 in 22/23, 398 in 21/22, 93 in 20/21, 1,384 in 19/20).
- 1 person accessed Individual Training Accounts to fund accredited training (31 in 22/23, 60 in 21/22, 61 in 20/21, 17 in 19/20) – ITA's no longer available
- 4,751 young people attended positive destinations projects, including youth clubs (5,238 in 22/23, 5,136 in 21/22, 1,010 in 20/21, 522 in 19/20). E.g. 465 home visits
- 514 adults and children attended Family Learning (355 in 22/23, 299 in 21/22, 6 in 20/21, 435 in 19/20)
- 972 young people took part in School Work Experience placements (104 in 22/23, 65 21/22, 0 in 20/21, 770 in 19/20).
- 298 young people attended the vocational learning centre weekly e.g. construction skills (414 in 22/23, 344 21/22 85 in 20/21, 148 in 19/20)
- 411 people engaged with Parental Employability Support Project (254 in 22/23 177 in 21/22)
- 109 people were supported with their Modern Apprenticeship (128 in 22/23, 110 21/22, 110 in 20/21, 146 in 19/20).
- 78 young people were supported at our Croft Street Hub with learning, qualifications, work experience and employability support. (86 in 22/23, 81 in 21/22, 92 in 20/21, 56 in 19/20)



Learning practical trade & life skills



Supporting a wide range of people

- 754 participants were from a minority ethnic group (664 in 22/23, 428 in 21/22, 219 in 20/21, 553 in 19/20).
- 377 participants were from areas of deprivation (302 in 22/23, 275 21/22, 154 in 20/21, 742 in 19/20)
- 174 people were supported with ESOL, Literacy or Numeracy (227 in 22/23, 182 21/22, 169 in 20/21, 202 in 19/20).
- 799 people received 1:1 support (776 in 22/23, 861 in 21/22, 473 in 20/21). This included 43 people with a disability/ barriers to work (48 in 22/23, 62 in 20/21, 94 in 19/20).

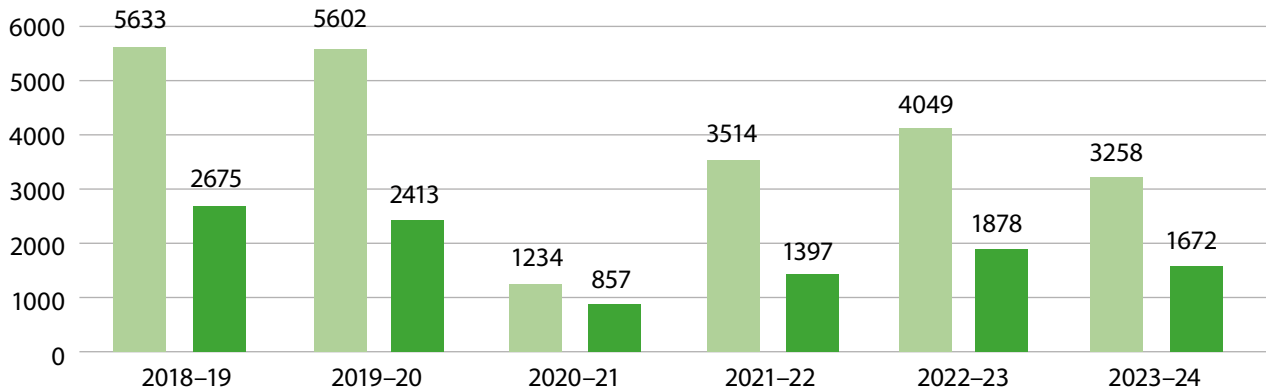


Supporting communities

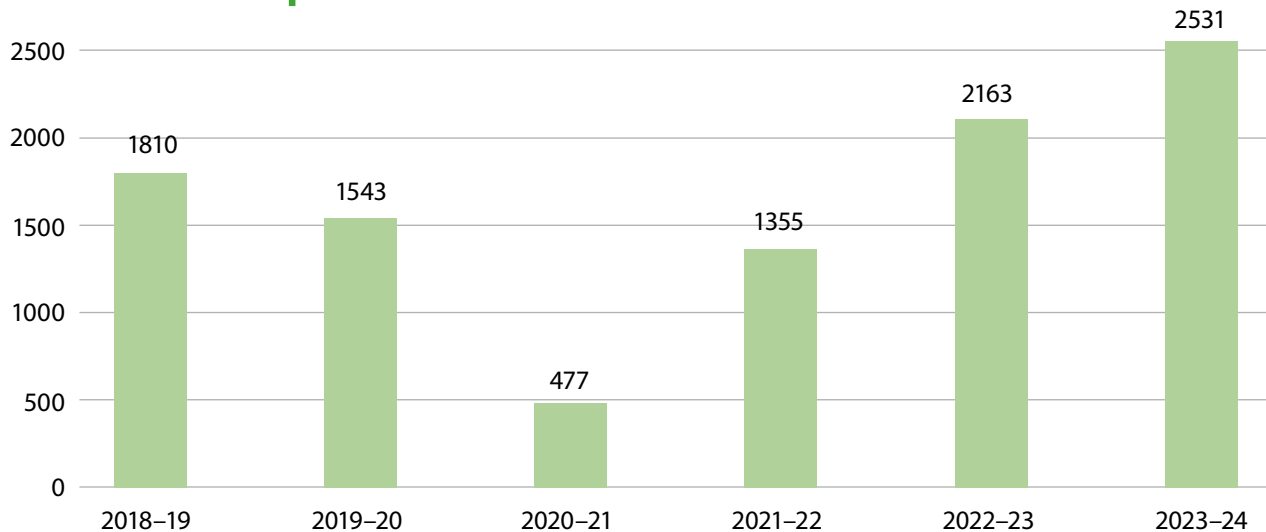
- 183 activities supported 58 community groups (260 act/73 grps in 22/23, 253 act/83 grps in 21/22)
- 1,115 adults and families attended free community projects (1,739 in 22/23, 1,318 in 21/22, 813 in 20/21, 1,355 in 19/20).

Number of registered participants

■ Under 18 years old
■ Over 18 years old



Number of qualifications achieved



Croft Street Hub and Community Garden, Dalkeith.

My learning journey so far with Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability

“Coming from the traveling community and due to my upbringing of traveling around a lot I had received very little formal education and had absolutely no qualifications at nearly 26 with 3 children I really wanted to change that to better myself and children’s life.

I genuinely didn’t know where to start or how to even go about accessing education or gaining qualifications I then found CLLE on Midlothian website and contacted them in January 2023 by February I was attending my first course at the drum for wellbeing with horses which I received 2 qualifications for and they were the first qualifications I had ever gained which was an amazing feeling. Within the next few months of finishing the courses I’m attending at the moment I will have gained 9 different qualifications and awards in just over a year which feels like a massive accomplishment to me.

CLLE has really given me the guidance and support I needed which in hand has given me the confidence and motivation to continue on my learning journey to keep pushing myself now knowing I will be able to work hard and be able to have a career that will make me happy and hopefully my children proud but I really couldn’t have done it without CLLE.”

Youth work aligned with swimming

“I have learned so many things from Rookie Lifeguard Club, I’ve rescued my friends , done CPR I can’t wait till Friday night to get back in the pool.”

CLLE Duke of Edinburgh

“You have no idea what it means to be able to go to Holyrood Place to collect my Gold Award, I have ASN. My Mum and Dad are so proud of what I have achieved. I loved the Gold Expedition as in previous expeditions I had to have 1-2-1 adult supervision. The Gold award I was able to manage my own medication and behaviour with the help of my group. We all set alarms on our watches for when I needed to take my medication and they watched me take it and then text CLLE staff to tell them It was done. I now volunteer to help the Newbattle Open Group as an adult helper so I can help people like me. I can’t stop talking about this, the Gold Residential was a buzz as we were doing Environmental work with the local Ranger. Being able to clear and repair paths, wildflower beds, cut down all the looping branches and make wildlife habitats with them and repair local cycle routes to keep cyclist of the busy roads was great fun even with the people from Penicuik who I did not know at the time. This has given me more self-confidence and belief that I can achieve anything.”

Midlothian: a great place to grow!



12+ Project Impact

“Over the past two and a half years, my experience working with CLLE has had a transformative impact on my life. Before joining CLLE, I struggled with severe mental health issues, living with autism & severe anxiety, and a history of self-harm and suicidal behaviour and violent outbursts towards staff during my time in school. This behaviour led to challenges accessing educational opportunities and left me feeling unsupported and isolated by the school and from my friends.

Since becoming a part of CLLE, I have found a sense of happiness, support, and belonging that I had never experienced before. The caring attitude of the staff and the supportive environment have provided me with a sense of safety and security that has allowed me to flourish. Unlike my experiences in school, I have felt little need to self-harm or act on suicidal thoughts while with CLLE.”



Adult Easter sessions in care work at Dalkeith Library.

“CLLE my journey has provided me with invaluable opportunities for personal growth and development. I have particularly enjoyed participating in outdoor activities such as accessing local county parks. I for the first time had a visit to the national museum in Edinburgh this allowed me experience different cultures from around the world I especially enjoyed the Egyptian exhibit Working with my keyworkers has expanded my horizons and sparked my curiosity about the world around me. These experiences have been instrumental in boosting my confidence and helping me feel more comfortable and supported in social situations.

Overall, my time at CLLE has been life-changing & empowering me to overcome past challenges. I have built resilience and embrace new opportunities for growth and fulfilment. The supportive community at CLLE has provided me with the foundation I needed to thrive in later life by learning valuable life skills such as cooking and money management, and I am grateful for the positive impact it has had on my life.

Impact statement for Mental Health and Wellbeing SQA level 4 course

The Mental Health and Wellbeing course appealed to me as my children’s mental health suffered during the lockdowns. I realised that the course would be a good opportunity to educate myself about mental health, so that I could overcome some of the fear I felt about it.

I learnt so much! We all have mental health, that it fluctuates throughout our life, and that if we think back to what we did at low points to help us get better, we can then replicate those actions. I began to see that there were many similarities with managing physical health - this totally destigmatised mental health for me. Speaking to the other people on the course gave me a greater understanding of the mental health challenges other people face

I have been a full-time parent for nearly 16 years and I had lost faith in my abilities with those aspects of my life. My CLLE tutor feedback from the assignments was so encouraging. I applied for a part-time job just recently and secured the role. I would not have had the confidence to do this before the course. This is a fabulous life changing course with a certificate at the end of it.



Focus Service supporting those with disabilities secure employment

Employability Highlights

No One Left Behind

The Parental Employability Project has supported 298 parents over 2023/24, 186 new parents and 114 existing parents.

80 entered employment or progressed within their employment to more hours or a higher paid job. 80 parents entered self-employment or progressed within their self-employment to increase their income levels.

36.78% of parents achieved a work-related accredited qualification totalling 275 qualifications. 9 parents stated Further or Higher Education.

Employability Impact Quote:

"I am very grateful of having the support of PESF and having my own Keyworker to help me get a job, I needed a job during school hours and my key worker told me that Midlothian Council were running a programme called (LTU) Long Term Unemployed programme which is six month paid work placements in various sectors. My key worker asked me if I would like to apply for this great opportunity, I agreed". I have now secured a permanent position due to the support I have received with my English, CV and interview preparation."

Parental Employability Support Project funded through NOLB Scottish Government has operated a successful LGV Driver Programme in March 24.

Employability Impact Quote:

"I was in a low paid job, struggling to make ends meet for my growing family, Thanks for giving me the opportunity of doing the LGV driving training course as without this I feel that the future was a struggle but now it is looking very positive."

Employability for All Ages (who are not parents including young people)

255 young people and adults are being supported overall, with 80 of these starting in quarter 4. 32 new into employment, 11 into college and 75 gained qualifications. Intensive support has been provided for 7 young people with disabilities who have started with the programme in the last quarter.

"My youth key worker takes me out of the school environment. I feel believed in, encouraged and helps with advice and guidance. I applied for lots of jobs and pleased that I got a job. I am also pleased that I am doing my education subjects again. I do not think I would be this far on if it wasn't for meeting my youth key worker every week."



Lifelong Learning in action



Community Capacity Building Support including managing and securing new funding streams

Shared Prosperity Funding UK

CLLE manage the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which was introduced in 2022 as a successor to the previous EU Structural funds. Midlothian Council and its partners were awarded a total of £3.5 million for 2022 – 2025 across three Core Investment Priorities: Communities and Place, Support to Local Business and People and Skills and the Multiply programme which focuses on improving adult numeracy for those aged 16 plus. 40% of the Core Investment Priorities funding was ring fenced for City Deal activity and to date the majority of the funding across the whole UKSPF programme has been fully committed until the end of March 2025.

17 projects from both public and third sector organisations were awarded funding under Communities and Place, People and Skills and the Multiply Investment Priorities. Types of projects include support to provide community-led volunteering opportunities, capital works to improve community buildings, feasibility studies, delivery of workshops to mitigate the effects of the cost of living crisis, support to those that are facing barriers to employment across diverse client groups and the development of a numeracy pathway including the design and delivery of new numeracy courses at lower levels.

Case Studies:

One of the projects was funded to deliver Welfare Rights workshops. They have had a high level of demand for follow up one-to-one sessions for income maximisation assessments. One client worked 12 hours a week and also had caring responsibilities for their child who had a disability. The client was claiming Carers Allowance, but it became evident that they were missing out on the £185 month Carers Addition under their Universal Credit (UC) claim. They were also having to stick to the very low Carers Allowance earnings limit of just £139 week despite being offered more hours

at work. Our lead was able to explain that, as their UC was reduced by the full amount of Carers Allowance that they were receiving, they could end this claim but still be classed as a carer for benefit purposes. This enabled them to take on additional hours from their employer on top of being eligible for an extra £185 a month from Carers Addition under UC. They were also missing out on additional discounts on the electricity bill and broadband costs. This shows the impact of the workshops and how the one-to-one assessment can make a difference to people's lives during this difficult time.



Above: Crèche worker course participants.

UKSPF funding was used to support the delivery of the Shaping Places programme in Central Dalkeith and Woodburn and the Improvement Service's Place and Wellbeing Assessment in Dalkeith. The assessment highlighted that there was a need for a community space in the Woodburn area and the funded feasibility study recommends the redevelopment of the existing MARC Building into the new Woodburn Community Building. This project is proposed to enhance community engagement, accessibility and sustainability, ensuring the facility meets the current and future needs of the Woodburn community.

The Local Business Support element of the funding has been used to recruit staff to support the delivery of Community Wealth Building, Social Enterprise and Tourism, Culture and Heritage. A number of both capital and revenue small grants have been awarded to Midlothian businesses within these work streams.

Grandparent Parenting Again (Midlothian)

Grandparents Parenting Again & Kinship Carers (Midlothian) SC043967 have worked with Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Team, over many years.

Support Services accessed include:

- Governance Support and Development
- Funding Applications
- Access to relevant training

The Grandparents Parenting Again group has been in existence since 2005 and as consequence of support from CLLE the since 2013, has gone from strength to strength.

“Having access to support services provided from CLLE has had a positive impact on the group. Working in partnership with CLLE has enabled our group to develop services for 54 families providing Kinship Care (2023-2024) within Midlothian. The support provided by CLLE has enabled the group to successfully submit applications and receive funding to support our service and the families that benefit from these services. Funding has enabled the employment of a dedicated Peer Support Worker who has developed services on a one-one basis and therefore improved lives of Kinship Care families. With the support of CLLE, the Board has developed knowledge and skills which has led to improvements in the way we operate and how Kinship Carers and are able to look after the children we care for.”

Myra Orr, Peer Support Worker

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

Support Services accessed include:

- Governance Support and Development
- Funding Applications
- Access to relevant training
- Support with developing effective partnerships and engaging with the local community

“As Chairperson of the Midlothian Federation of Community Councils I am keen to express my appreciation for the ongoing support provided by Midlothian Council Officers and in particular, the Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Team members, to the Federation, local community councils and the Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths group.

The vital support provided, including funding, training, liaising with Midlothian Council departments and signposting to relevant third sector organisations has enabled Community Councils to operate more effectively on behalf of the communities they represent.”

Robert Hogg, Chairperson
Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

Cost of Living Support

CLLE has continued to support our 16 Trusted Partners to deliver cash first payments to Midlothian residents struggling with the increased cost of living. From 1/4/23 to 31/3/24 over 1,600 financial supports to the value of £210,000 were provided to residents through our Trusted Partner network. CLLE continues to support partners with guidance, training and analysis of monitoring to look at gaps and trends. CLLE have taken the lead on piloting wash and dry and reheatable food projects in response to the cost of living crisis.

Accessibility and availability of cost of living support - Information on support available to Midlothian residents is available on:
www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200301/cost_of_living

The Independent Food Aid Network produced a ‘Worrying About Money’ leaflet which is available online. Printed copies are distributed in community buildings and with partners:
www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/midlothian

