
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/49/25/TM
Contact Officer:	Tony McEwan Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee with developments in relation to the Communities part of the Committee.

1.3 Updates have been provided on the following areas:

1. Crimestoppers off road bike campaign
2. Antisocial Behaviour Awareness Week
3. Early Adopter Affordable Childcare
4. Summer Programme 2025 – Inclusive Communities
5. Young Scot Partnership
6. Your Journey, Your Choice Campaign
7. Inverclyde Fire Skill Course
8. Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project
9. Libraries as community spaces
10. Outreach
11. Children & Young People
12. Author events
13. Staff development
14. The HERDS - Art Fund Project
15. Inverclyde Stem Festival
16. 2025 ICON Awards
17. Fixing our broken planet
18. Exhibitions
19. Inverclyde Music Service

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee notes the updates provided in this report

Ruth Binks

Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 Updates

3.1 Crimestoppers off-road bike campaign

Inverclyde Council's Community Safety & Resilience Team joined with Crimestoppers in coordinating the local launch of a national campaign aimed at tackling the illegal and dangerous use of off-road bikes, e-scooters, and similar vehicles. The campaign, led by the Victims and Community Safety Minister Siobhian Brown, Crimestoppers Scotland, and supported by Police Scotland, was rolled out in Inverclyde at the end of June, in response to growing concerns about reckless vehicle use in public spaces.

Inverclyde has seen rising reports of anti-social behaviour involving off-road vehicles, with damage to greenspaces such as Whinhill Golf Club and near misses involving pedestrians on pavements.

The Community Safety & Resilience Team has been collaborating with partners to raise awareness of the issue locally and to promote public reporting.

The campaign highlights the impact on public safety and taxpayer resources, urging residents to report sightings and information—such as vehicle descriptions and locations—to support enforcement. The campaign also reinforces legal requirements, noting that off-road vehicles can only be used on public roads if fully licensed, insured, and taxed, or with landowner permission on private land.

The Council continues to work with partners to address this issue and encourages residents to report concerns anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or through Fearless.org ([Illegal off-road bike activity across Scotland | Crimestoppers](#)).
[Spotlight on dangerous and illegal use of off-road bikes across Scotland - Inverclyde Council](#)

3.2 Antisocial Behaviour Awareness Week

As part of Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week (30 June–6 July 2025), Inverclyde Council hosted two public information sessions to support residents affected by nuisance behaviour. The events took place at Boglestone Community Centre on Wednesday 2 July (12–1pm) and Grieve Road Community Centre on Thursday 3 July (2–3pm) and were promoted by local housing associations alongside The Council.

Staff from the Council's Community Safety & Resilience Team and the Community Wardens Team were available to listen to concerns and offer advice, including how to report incidents. The initiative supports the national Resolve UK campaign under the theme 'Making Communities Safer' and aims to raise awareness of issues such as noise, intimidation, vandalism, and verbal abuse, while signposting victims to support services.

The value of the community engagement was evident when, during one of the information sessions, council staff were alerted to potential rogue traders operating in the area, enabling swift referral to the appropriate enforcement agencies for investigation.
[Tackling anti-social behaviour - Inverclyde Council](#)

3.3 The Early Adopter Affordable Childcare

The Early Adopter Affordable Childcare Service provided regulated childcare delivered by qualified staff over a four-week period during the summer holidays, targeted at families on low incomes and those within the child poverty priority groups. Provision was offered from Newark Primary, St Joseph's Primary, and Wellington Pre-5 Centre in Gourrock, with a £25 per child per day subsidy and additional support available through Universal Credit.

Of the 600 affordable childcare places made available in Newark and St Joseph's, uptake in Port Glasgow was 597 (99%) and 409 (68%) in Greenock. 14 children in Port Glasgow accessed 129 subsidised spaces, and 5 children in Greenock accessed 45. Local childminders were also invited to apply the subsidy, enhancing choice and flexibility. Over 1,000 childcare sessions were accessed by families across Inverclyde, with the majority attending the Newark/Port Glasgow site.

Alongside childcare provision, wider supports were delivered to strengthen family engagement and build new relationships. A Uniform Swap Shop held at the B'Hub in Port Glasgow supported 17 families to access school clothing. Family sessions in the Grieve Road area promoted the Early Adopter Childcare, with financial wellbeing, and employability, with 47 families participating.

For families of children with Additional Support Needs, a co-designed Summer Stay and Play programme was delivered at Boglestone and Ravenscraig. In response to feedback, twilight sessions were introduced for children who found earlier sessions challenging, resulting in participation from 195 children and 102 parents.

Feedback across all elements of the summer offer was overwhelmingly positive, with families valuing the inclusive, flexible nature of the provision, the quality of experiences, and the professionalism of staff. The Summer programme also supported stronger relationships with families and acted as an opportunity to access the Early Adopter and Fairer Futures Partnership services.

3.4 Summer Programme 2025

Inclusive Communities Services collaborated with local partners to provide a diverse range of holiday programmes during the summer of 2025. These coordinated activities included affordable childcare, playschemes, youth work, active schools' programs, school transitions programmes, childcare services, community programs, and family stay-and-play sessions. Many of these services were offered free of charge to children and families.

Inverclyde Leisure on behalf of Inverclyde Council operated the playschemes in seven venues across Inverclyde for four weeks and supported 9165 children on a first-come, first-served basis. This was an increase of around 11% more young people attending from the previous year.

The number of free swims over the summer holidays saw a slight increase with 11343 swims being recorded over the period of the first four weeks of the summer holidays across all the pools with the local authority. For the first time, 8 free ASN hour-long swim sessions were also provided with over 240 attendances being recorded at these sessions, with very positive feedback being received by parents.

The Active Schools program offered free access to 43 summer sports sessions, including four sessions specifically designed for children with additional support needs. Over 718 attendances were recorded from 267 distinct young people, with 32% coming from low-income families. 24% having additional support needs. The delivery of holiday provision was supported by 13 volunteers of which the majority are senior pupils, 98 volunteer hours were delivered through holiday provision. In addition, 123 young people with additional support needs engaged in Active Schools sport for all sessions.

The Youth Work Team successfully delivered a vibrant and varied summer program across Inverclyde. The program was designed to offer diverse opportunities for engagement, highlights of the summer included 15 evening drop-in sessions at our I Youth Zone buildings, which provided a safe and welcoming environment for young people to socialise and participate in a range of activities. Additionally, our Pop-Up Detached Events created fun and inclusive experiences

directly within local communities, featuring BBQs, sports, and arts across four afternoon and four evening sessions. The team also organized specialised sessions at venues like Bullseye and Elev8, offering unique recreational opportunities.

A key focus of this year's program was skill-building and new experiences. We piloted two successful two-week Scrان Zones in Grieve Road and Inverkip, where participants learned to cook a complete three-course meal from scratch. Our Junior and Senior Geek Zone groups met four times, fostering creativity and a shared passion for games. A dedicated movie Popcorn Day and Inverclyde's inaugural youth Colour Run provided high-energy, celebratory events that were a huge hit with participants.

The summer concluded with a spectacular Games Experience at Lady Octavia Sport Centre, an immersive event inspired by a popular Netflix series, marking the third successful edition of this thrilling program. The positive feedback and high levels of participation throughout the summer underscore the value and success of these initiatives.

Throughout the summer, services were successfully delivered to meet the specific needs of Inverclyde learners. The provision of adult literacy services continued with two weekly sessions at the Greenock i-Youth Zone, helping individuals improve foundational skills. Furthermore, learners had the opportunity to enhance their employability through six weekly sessions held at Auchmountain Halls and Port Glasgow Library, where they could pursue SQA ICT qualifications.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision remained a priority, offering support through two weekly family sessions at the Southwest Community Hub and the Fox Street Church. These services were supplemented by collaborative initiatives, such as walking and cycling programs, which provided learners with additional opportunities to practice language skills and engage with the community in practical, social settings.

3.5 Young Scot Partnership

The service has enhanced its reporting this year by using interactive Power BI software to create a two-page infographic summary Young Scot Partnership Indicator (PI) Report for Inverclyde, covering the past twelve months. A copy of the summary highlighting the service's achievements can be found by within Appendix 1 of this report.

3.6 Your Journey, Your Choice

Inverclyde Council Inclusive Communities service will be launching a promotional campaign aimed at encouraging positive behaviour among young people on buses. The campaign, titled "Your Journey, Your Choice," focuses on key messages such as travelling safely and respectfully. It encourages young people to speak up if they feel unsafe, to be a role model for others, and to be respectful to fellow passengers, staff, and drivers.

The campaign also reminds them that antisocial behaviour could result in losing access to transport. The initiative is supported by Police Scotland and the British Transport Police. A sample of the campaign messaging is within Appendix 2 of this report.

3.7 **Inverclyde Fire Skills Course**

A group of young people learned all about team building, problem-solving and health and safety as part of a Fire Skills course at Port Glasgow Community Fire Station. S3 pupils from St Columba's High School and Clydeview Academy took part in the week-long course in May, which is run in partnership between Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Inverclyde Council.

They learned vital skills then rounded off the week with a practical demo in front of representatives from their schools, their families, elected members from Inverclyde Council and other partner agencies. They received certificates to mark their participation by Provost Drew McKenzie and the work carried out during the week will be used as evidence towards accredited awards by Inverclyde Council's Community Safety & Resilience and Youth Work teams.

3.8 **Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project**

Following the appointment of a Heritage Coordinator in January 2025 to lead delivery of the Connecting Inverclyde heritage project (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund), engagement with interested groups and individuals is now underway. This has included programming in support of both the Gourock Highland Games and the Comet Festival, alongside the Heritage Coordinator's active involvement in the Port Glasgow 250 commemorations. A partnership project underway with Inverclyde Libraries will see the launch of a new Port Glasgow Dungeons and Dragons (D+D) Campaign in August. This campaign has been developed with young people from Port Glasgow, and explores the history of the town through the prism of D+D adventures. Alongside engagement activity, the Heritage Coordinator has convened the first meeting of the Inverclyde Heritage Forum, output from which will ultimately inform a refresh of the Action Plan underpinning the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy.

3.9 **Libraries as Community Spaces**

Inverclyde Libraries is actively supporting the 'Flippin' Pain' campaign as part of the Self-management of Chronic Pain Sub-group hosted by the HSCP's Maximising Independence team. Flippin' Pain is a UK-wide public health campaign focused on changing how people think about, talk about, and treat persistent pain. In May books and self-help information about persistent pain were made available in all library branches. The library service will also participate in the Persistent Pain Community Appointment Day taking place at The Beacon Arts Centre on 23rd October.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has asked Scotland's libraries to help inform the public about Pension Credit as part of its Pension Credit Campaign. Relevant information will be made available in all library branches.

Playlist for Life is a UK-based charity that advocates for the use of personal playlists of meaningful music to help people with dementia. The organization believes that music can tap into memories, emotions, and parts of the brain that are often untouched by the disease. The playlists are used to improve mood, reduce anxiety, and stimulate conversations, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for those living with dementia and their caregivers. The Playlist for Life organisation has now launched the 'Soundtrack to Inverclyde' community playlist. This will be promoted through Inverclyde Libraries to encourage the Inverclyde community to get involved and submit a song which is meaningful to them. The aim is to provide a mix of music from all eras, genres and cultures, reflecting the communities and people that live in Inverclyde. 'Soundtrack to Inverclyde' will be celebrated on National Playlist Day on 19th September.

Macmillan Advice Service and Ardgowan Hospice held drop-in sessions in Gourock Library over a 10-week period to offer support to members of the community affected by cancer. Your Voice held a pop-up information session in Greenock Central Library to encourage library visitors to

engage with the ongoing cancer screening survey that is taking place in Inverclyde, which aims to understand why engagement with cancer screening is currently low in the area.

Inverclyde Libraries now hosts T.I.M.E Inverclyde - an LGBTQ+ youth empowerment community group – in Port Glasgow Library for a monthly adult book group. The group is open to anyone 18+ and focuses on reading and discussion LGBT books.

Sight Scotland Veterans donated a ClearView Magnifier to Central Library during Hi-Vis fortnight when libraries were promoting services to people who have a visual impairment. Staff will support people in how to use the magnifier and enable them to read a wider range of texts.

3.10 **Outreach**

Inverclyde Libraries' Development team has been out and about over the summer months, including outreach activity at the Gourock Highland Games, and the Kilmacolm and Port Glasgow Agricultural Show in May; and at the Comet Festival in June. During the Comet Festival Newark Castle hosted the library service and Scottish folk tales storyteller Allison Galbraith at a series of well-attended storytelling sessions. All outreach activity seeks to promote the resources available to all Inverclyde residents through the branch library network.

In support of Inverclyde Libraries' commitment to sustainability, several branch libraries participated in School Uniform exchange schemes in partnership with their local schools. Spaces were made available for parents to drop off and collect items appropriate to their child's school. In addition, Inverclyde Libraries now offer withdrawn stock to care homes, sheltered housing complexes and the local hospital. This allows the stock to extend its useful life, but without the pressure some people and/or establishments might feel when library books have a return date.

3.11 **Children and Young People**

'Story Garden' is the theme of this year's Summer Reading Challenge, which launched on Saturday 21st June in the community garden at Greenock South West Library. In the run up to the summer holidays, the Children and Young People's team spoke to pupils at school assemblies to promote the challenge. The Adult Development Team also organised an Adult Summer Reading Challenge, with a complementary 'green' theme.

A programme of summer holiday activities ran across all libraries, with a wide range of activities including a visit from a beekeeper, storytelling at Wemyss Bay train station, a family film show, and a visit from teen author William Hussey. The team also attended two stay and play sessions at Boglestone and Grieve Road community hubs to promote library services.

During Bookbug Week in May the theme of 'Bookbug's Big Bedtime' was celebrated across branches with bedtime story sessions and toy sleepovers. Bookbug continues to be a hugely important resource for families in Inverclyde – sessions have been delivered for new mums in Inverkip Community Hub as part of overarching wellbeing support; and at the Gourock Highland Games, the Comet Festival, the Beacon Arts Centre, and at the Big Beach Clean Picnic at Lunderston Bay. Bespoke Bookbug sessions for families with Care Experienced Parents, and Au-some Bookbug sessions for families of children with additional support needs have been delivered in Central Library.

The HSCP Oral Health Team attended Bookbug sessions across all branches offering advice and free toothbrushes and toothpaste for young children. Library staff tailored these sessions to include dental themed stories and songs. Free dental packs for young children are also available by the community fridges at Central Library and Port Glasgow Library.

During Refugee Week in June a Moomin storytelling evening was held in Central Library, with all branches displaying a Moominhouse for members of the public to decorate their own room, tying in with the 80th anniversary of the first Moomin book publication which was the official book of this year's Refugee Week.

3.12 **Author Events**

Inverclyde Libraries secured part-funding from Scottish Book Trust for five Live Literature sessions during 2025-26 totalling £550. Three sessions will be used for adult programming and two for children and young people. The library service also secured a bursary from Creative Scotland through the Galoshans Consortium Partners for author and former Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho to deliver a session during the Galoshans Festival for local school pupils. This event will be hosted by the Beacon Arts Centre and is based on his poetry collection 'Spooky Poems Aloud'.

3.13 **Staff Development**

In the lead up to the schools' summer holiday and the launch of the annual Summer Reading Challenge all library staff have undertaken both annual Child Protection Training delivered by the Council's Children's Rights Officer as well as bespoke Reading Agency training around this year's challenge theme of 'Story Garden'.

Library staff Health and Wellbeing Champions within each branch continued their personal development by attending training on the topic of Consumer technology to support self-management of long-term health conditions'; another key role library staff undertake in providing access to trusted health information to customers.

3.14 **The HERDS – Art Fund project**

The Watt Institution participated THE HERDS - a public art and climate action initiative with global reach. As part of the project the Watt team worked in partnership with local schools and the community to collect ocean plastic from River Clyde beaches and transform it into 3D-printed puppets representing local marine animals impacted by plastic pollution. The project culminated with a puppet procession at the Watt, helping to celebrate World Ocean Day. This project extends work ongoing at the Watt to encourage dialogue informed by their Natural Sciences collection about the climate crisis. Puppets and resources produced during this project will form part of a new display within the museum space.

3.15 **Inverclyde STEM Festival**

The Watt Institution hosted the Inverclyde STEM Festival Family Day on Saturday 14 June. The event attracted an audience of over 800 across a full day of activities including Lego engineering; electronic snap-circuits; cardboard construction; 3D scanning; and digital music making.

3.16 **2025 ICON Awards**

In recognition of the work ongoing at the Watt Institution to explore themes linked to the climate crisis, they have been shortlisted as a finalist in the 2025 ICON Awards in the Net Zero category.

3.17 **Fixing Our Broken Planet**

The Watt Institution has been selected as one of only three venues across the UK to be a partner in the Natural History Museum's (NHM) Fixing Our Broken Planet Campaign. As well as receiving funding from NHM the Watt will have access to staff expertise, collection resources, and exhibition content. This project will enable the Watt team to learn more about our collections, and explore new ways to tell stories that address climate change, and themes associated with empire and colonialism.

3.18 **Exhibitions**

As part of the Council's wider celebrations of Port Glasgow's 250th birthday, an exhibition about Newark Castle has been installed in the Watt Hall. Signposting between the Watt Institution and Newark Castle, encouraging visitors to explore both sites, is a key element of the exhibition.

A new exhibition exploring links between the Watt Institution collection and the Glasgow School of Art is now installed in the Art Gallery. This exhibition showcases work by former pupils and tutors at the art school, exploring the breadth and importance of the Council's fine art collection.

3.19 **Inverclyde Music Service**

While the Inverclyde Music Service enjoys its summer break, confirmation has been received of the continuation of YMI (Youth Music Initiative) funding from Creative Scotland, to deliver innovative and engaging music tuition for all Primary 5 pupils across the authority area.

Early review of the 2024/25 academic session shows an increase of almost 11% in pupil participation on the previous year. 1,650 pupils are now receiving music tuition through the service, across Inverclyde Schools. The focus in the coming academic session will be on maintaining these participation levels, whilst promoting and encouraging participation in bands and ensembles.

Looking ahead, the IMS team have confirmed two dates for your diary. The Christmas Concert will take place on Thursday 4 December, and the Spring Gala Concert will take place on Thursday 26 March. Both concerts will be held in Greenock Town Hall.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk		x
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

4.1 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

4.2 Legal/Risk

N/A

4.3 Human Resources

N/A

4.4 Strategic

All updated provided in this report align to the priorities of the Council Plan and Partnership Plan.

4.5 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
x	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

4.6 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

4.7 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A

**YOUNG
SCOT**

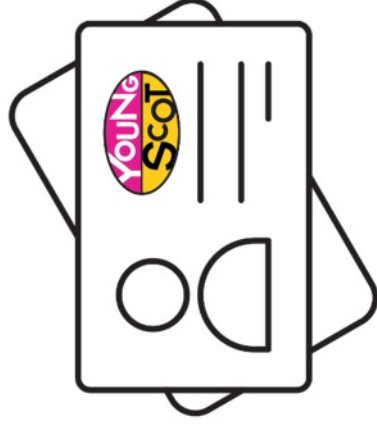
young.scot

**Local Impact
Report Summary
April 2024 – March 2025
Inverclyde Council**

Appendix 1

11,148

Young Scot National Entitlement Cards...



...issued in your area. Over **88%** of 11 to 25-year-olds in Scotland have a card. The card gives access to a wide range of services, including PASS Proof of Age and discounts.

1,654

Inverclyde young people are signed up to Young Scot Membership.

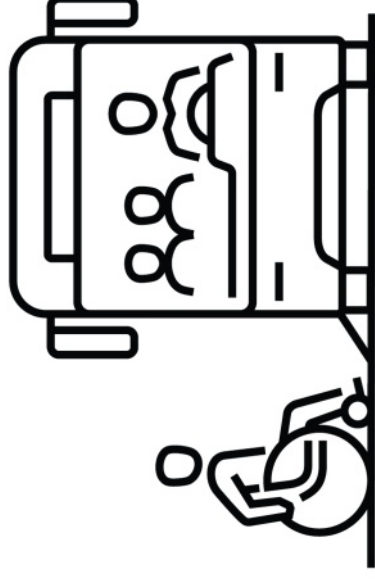
They collect Young Scot Rewards points for taking part in positive activities, use their points to access a range of exciting and innovative rewards and access online discounts.



8,409

Free bus journeys taken by young people from Inverclyde between April 2024 and March 2025

Free bus travel for U22 year olds enables young people to access education, employment and leisure, and have more flexibility to access services across the area.

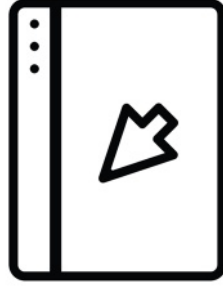


80

Young people in Inverclyde have benefitted from the Young Carers Package over the past five years.



**Young Carers
Package**
#YSCarers



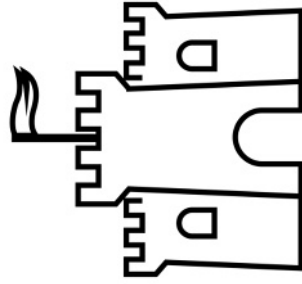
4M video views on our social media channels, and 1.6M views to our [young.scot](https://www.young.scot) website

[young.scot](https://www.young.scot) is Scotland's leading information website for young people – packed full of quality-assured information tailored specifically for young people. We share this information with young people within digital spaces they spend their time in – including TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Spotify and YouTube. 3,505 of those views were visits to your local pages on [young.scot](https://www.young.scot).

41

Inverclyde young people have contributed to local and national decision making

by taking part in our Young Scot Hive participation and engagement programme, completing surveys or using our online voting site.



Historic Environment Scotland offers £1 entry to card holders.

In April - December 2024, 16,998 visits were made to Historic Scotland properties using the Young Scot £1 entry. We estimate savings to young people of £195,000 as a result.



**YOUNG
SCOT**
young.scot

Young Scot is a Scottish registered charity (SC029757) and is a company limited by guarantee (202687) with its registered office at Caledonian Exchange, 19A Canning Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EG



Your Journey Your Choice

Whether you're commuting, exploring, or heading to school, travel safely and respectfully.

Appendix 2

Speak up: If you feel unsafe or see something wrong, tell the driver or a trusted adult.

Be a role model: How you act sets the vibe, others follow your lead.

Be respectful: Treat drivers, staff, and other passengers how you'd like to be treated.

In an emergency always phone 999.



Don't risk losing your access to transport