



Strategic Plan

March 2024 – February 2027
To be reviewed at mid-point, September 2025

Executive Summary

Growing2gether is the only programme in Scotland to pair young people facing disadvantage as mentors to children needing additional support and combine this with classroom training in life skills. This early intervention programme builds well-being, skills and attainment. We tackle the barriers that prevent young people reaching their unique potential, including poor mental health, poverty, challenging behaviour and disengagement from school and society.

Our Vision

A world where all young people can realise their unique potential, improve their lives for the long term, and contribute to stronger communities.

Our Mission

We give young people facing disadvantage the support they need to thrive, raising aspiration and to make positive choices in their lives. We build their mental health, educational engagement and life skills, so that they can contribute to their communities.

Our Values

We value:

- Introducing/evoking meaning and purpose
- Igniting self-awareness and self-belief
- Expanding relationship/connection to Community

- Loving youth-led co-creation
- Fostering the realisation of potential and inherent strengths
- Providing a safe place to explore Self
- Learning through playful curiosity and fun

Our Activities

Growing2gether began life as a part of the Ecologia Youth Trust in January 2017. The partnership with Ecologia, a youth charity which was founded in 1995, has proved fruitful and has supported considerable growth. Having established our work in 11 Highland schools, reached over 1,750 children and young people, and demonstrated our sustainability, the Board of Ecologia Youth Trust and the senior team of Growing2gether jointly agreed in 2021 that Growing2gether should begin a new phase as a separate, independent charity.

In August 2022, we registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in our own right and have established our Growing2gether Trustee Board. Our focus remains to connect young people to their community as mentors to children in need of extra support and through the opportunity to deliver youth-led community projects and to join our Youth Participation Board. Through this we will build young people's mental health, educational engagement and life skills.

This 2024-27 Strategic Plan has been reviewed and updated by our Board of Trustees in January 2024.

Our Aims for 2024-27

Having conducted a thorough strategic review, and assessed our current internal and external context, we have prioritised the following aims for the next four years.

AIM 1: REACHING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

- We will have supported a growing number of vulnerable children and young people to reach their potential through tested therapeutic or community-centred models by:
 - rolling out our innovative Growing2gether Nursery Mentoring Programmes in Scotland to reach 2,352 children and young people;

- o rolling out our Growing2gether Youth Social Action programmes (previously known as Growing2gether in the Community) in Scotland to reach 200 young people and 4 communities (Inverness/Alness/Tain in Highland and Forres in Moray) with youth-led projects;
- o As part of the above 2,552 (2023-2027) total, we will offer small group mentoring in Tain, Alness and Inverness to 60 young people with Mentoring programmes, to support targeted young people with increased mental health needs.

AIM 2: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

- We will have listened to the needs of communities and young people to develop community-strengthening projects, which increase young people's skills and confidence, empower them to achieve their potential and give them a voice to break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage, by:
 - o Listening regularly to the needs of young people and the wider community in Scotland, through our programme consultations and via our Youth Participation Boards to ensure that our programmes remain impactful.

AIM 3: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS

- We will have supported our community-based partners to develop innovative, holistic, child-centred approaches and to become self-sustaining by:
 - o supporting partner schools to deliver a sustainable Growing2gether programme, independently of our facilitator team;
 - o building a more sustainable portfolio of partners, and increasing organisational capacity, social bridging and impact funding in the wider field of youth development.

AIM 4: BUILDING OUR ORGANISATION

- We will have strengthened our organisation to deliver more for children and young people, by:
 - o raising total charity income of £3,168,800 over 4 years (2024-27): increasing our restricted/unrestricted income by average 36% by year 3; and diversifying income sources, to become 40% less reliant on trust/foundation/statutory funding by end 2027;

- o developing a new trading arm to diversify income and share our expertise in skills to transform the lives of more young people by training others (e.g., youth professionals);
- o ensuring we have a strong Trustee Board (including young people with lived experience) who provide robust governance to the charity;
- o putting in place a succession plan for key staff and trustees;
- o upskilling staff and building our staff teams;
- o ensuring we have the systems, policies and processes in place to run as a sustainable and independent charity

Table of Contents

1. About Growing2gether	7
2. Our Approach	8
3. Our Work in Scotland	9
Growing2gether: What we have achieved	9
New Programme: Growing2gether in the Community	11
Response to COVID	12
4. Strategic Review	13
Opportunities and Threats in Context	15
Response to Context	18
Risk and Assumptions	19
5. Finances	
Annual budget	20
Monthly Budget	21
Current Funding Split	22
How Funds Spent	23
5. Aims and Objectives	24
Appendix 1: Past youth-led Growing2gether in the Community projects	31

1. About Growing 2gether

Growing2gether is the only programme in Scotland to pair young people facing disadvantage as mentors to children needing additional support and combine this with classroom training in life skills. This early intervention programme builds well-being, skills and attainment. We tackle the barriers that prevent young people reaching their unique potential, including poor mental health, poverty, challenging behaviour and disengagement from school and society.

Our Vision

A world where all young people can realise their unique potential, improve their lives for the long term, and contribute to stronger communities.

Our Mission

We give young people facing disadvantage the support they need to thrive, raising aspiration and to make positive choices in their lives. We build their mental health, educational engagement and life skills, so that they can contribute to their communities.

Our Values

We value:

- o Introducing/evoking meaning and purpose
- o Igniting self-awareness and self-belief
- o Expanding relationship/connection to Community
- o Loving youth-led co-creation
- o Fostering the realisation of potential and inherent strengths
- o Providing a safe place to explore Self
- o Learning through playful curiosity and fun

Our activities

Growing2gether began life as a project of Ecologia Youth Trust in January 2017. Having established our work in 11 Highland schools, reached over 1,750 children and young people, and demonstrated our sustainability, the Board of Ecologia Youth Trust and the senior team of Growing2gether jointly agreed in 2021 that Growing2gether should begin a new phase as a separate, independent charity.

Our focus remains to connect young people to their community as mentors to children in need of extra support and through the opportunity to deliver youth-led community projects and join our Youth Participation Board. Through this we will build young people's mental health, educational engagement and life skills.

This 2024-27 Strategic Plan has been reviewed by our Board of Trustees in January 2024.

Legal Status

Growing2gether registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC051919) in August 2022. We have established a Trustee Board of five Trustees with extensive business, teaching and psychotherapy experience and we are actively recruiting new Trustees to strengthen our Board.

Our Approach

We aim to support young people and children to raise their self-belief and aspiration and to grow into their unique and abundant potential, as well as become a positive force for change in their communities.

We are part of the Findhorn Community, an international holistic education centre and United Nations (UN) recognised eco-village, established over 50 years ago in Scotland. The Community is known internationally for its innovative models for sustainable living, not only environmentally (e.g., addressing climate change), but also in social, economic and cultural terms.

We place respect for the diversity of individuals, communities, and cultures at the centre of our work. We strive to strengthen community relationships and to meet the present needs of communities without compromising the ability of future generations to thrive.

Our Niche

Our ethos, grounded in the values of the Findhorn Foundation, gives us a unique approach. We seek to plant seeds of innovation, which as they flourish, support children and young people to thrive and ultimately lead their communities to greater sustainability.

We do this in two main ways:

- Modelling new approaches to supporting young people. For example, our Scottish-based Growing2gether programme, an early intervention programme that addresses the needs of young people's social and emotional development. Young people gain work experience as mentors to small children in a nursery setting. Whilst supporting the learning of a small child, the young people realise that they have a valuable contribution to make to their community.
- Ongoing Intervention: Empowering young people to lead, for example, our Scottish Community programme 'Growing2gether Youth Social Action' builds young people's relationships with their community by enabling them to design youth-led projects that address local needs, whilst increasing their employability skills, self esteem and relationship to social capital and citizenship.

2. Our Work

What we have achieved

The intensive group work that the Growing2gether Nursery Mentoring Programme offers is unique and not provided through Curriculum for Excellence. Highland Council's targeted interventions work one to one, and Third Sector options are light touch. 'Learning by doing' and then assessing outcomes, helps young people facing challenges to engage more positively in the community and practice new skills/behaviours with the children, nursery staff, and each other, coached by skilled facilitators using positive psychology. Through mentoring, young people are given an experience of their unique potential and an insight into who they can become. 95% of Growing2gether participants would recommend the programme to others.

"I finally feel like I am ok as a person, I always thought everyone else was better than me, but being in this group has helped me to try different things."
Susan, who lived in a women's refuge when her mother fled an abusive relationship.

Working in partnership with Highland Council, schools, and parents, Growing2gether was launched in January 2017. Young people also wanted Growing2gether: 86% thought volunteering as a team to mentor a child could build confidence (*Survey, 270 young people, Highland*). They asked for improved mental health/to find solutions to bullying; 92% wanted a qualification (*Survey 120 potential participants, 2017*).

Growing2gether has been delivered in 11 secondary schools taking students from deprived areas of the Highland region (parts of Inverness, Tain, Golspie, Invergordon, Fortrose, Thurso, Dingwall, Alness and Grantown). We also piloted a programme in East Lothian for looked after children and were accepted onto the Children and Young People's Framework in Dundee. We have trained 11 Highlife Highland Youth Development Officers, funded by Highland Council, and 10 school facilitators to deliver Growing2gether in future. This sustainable approach shares skills and further embeds the importance of early intervention to the benefit of more young people.

In 2023, we started delivering our programmes across multiple Local Authorities, (Highland, Moray, Dundee, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire).

To date, we have reached over 1750 young people and children facing disadvantage.

Outcomes for young people:

- 24% increase in mental health and wellbeing
- 80% of young people agreed that the programme made them aware of themselves and the consequences of their actions.
- 83% agreed that education provides them with more opportunities in the future.
- 81% agreed that Growing2gether has made them feel more confident in their abilities.
- 85% (programme finishers) received a personal development qualification (Level 4 SCQF - Self Awareness and Self in Community Units).
- 88% of parents agreed Growing2gether gave their child clarity about their future.
- Working with our partner Highland Council, who track long-term outcomes, initial studies show that 93% reached a 'positive destination' (work, training, further study).

"Growing2gether provides an incredibly valuable learning opportunity in our school. We have witnessed pupils at risk of disengaging, develop a real sense of value and worth as a result of the programme. The quality of the provision and evaluative approach taken by Growing2gether is excellent."

Head Teacher, Dingwall Academy

Growing2gether is unique because it also benefits the mentored children, who are selected by nursery teachers because they have social/communication/personal challenges. The mentoring provided by the teens (reading/numbers/play) builds skills the children need to progress in school and life.

"The children's self-confidence has increased by being mentored. They build positive bonds with the young people and our more vulnerable children gain much-needed one-to-one time."
Head Teacher, Danleigh Primary

We look forward to developing our activities further, and will focus our ambitions for growth by expanding our programmes throughout the Highlands and beyond. Our vision is to reach 2,552 young people and children on the Growing2gether programme and 200 young people on the Growing2gether Community programme (Youth Social Action) by February 2027, across Highland, Moray, Dundee, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire

Funded by the Scottish Government/European Social Fund (Aspiring Communities), in 2019, we were able to pilot a new programme, Growing2gether in the Community youth-led groups. This new programme was developed because our young people told us that, after mentoring, they wanted to continue giving back to the community. Growing2gether graduates are offered the opportunity to plan/develop their own community project, responding to the needs of their community. Over 16 sessions, the young people learn leadership, project planning and communication skills, increasing their confidence/social inclusion.

Through our Community Programmes, to date, we have supported young people to deliver twenty youth social action projects, indirectly reaching 14,000 people in the community. As part of the project, we support the young people to find knowledgeable volunteers from the local community as mentors on their community project. As a recent innovation, we also train young people (Young Leaders) to co-facilitate the programme alongside our skilled facilitator staff.

Youth-led projects delivered so far include films educating on teen pregnancy, the publication of a book addressing self-harm, a joint baking project with homeless people and the design, production and sale of inspirational tote bags addressing mental health issues, created a film on Stereotypes of young people that has been taken in to school PSE classes and Assemblies in the Highlands, and a project on bullying in communities where young people worked with Eden Court. (See Appendix 1).

We have now built on the success of these youth-led projects to broaden our community focus to give our young people a range of opportunities to engage beyond our Growing2gether nursery programme, supporting a longer development pathway. Our new initiative, Growing2gether Community, provides a supportive community for past participants, comprising not only Growing2gether in The Community youth-led projects (now rebranded as Growing2gether Youth Social Action) but also the potential to join the new Youth Participation Board, Young Leader training and community events at Findhorn, where we are based. This approach will give the charity a greater impact on young people and a wider reach.

Growing2gether Community is supported by funding from the Scottish government (Inspiring Communities) focusing initially on Alness, Inverness (Merkinch) and Tain. Over the next 3 years, we will deliver 18 Growing2gether Youth Social Action projects as part of this funding, reaching 96 young

people. We also have additional funding to support a Youth Social Action project in Forres in September 2024 and the ambition to fund many more community programmes between now and 2027.

Central to Growing2gether Community is our new Youth Participation Board (12 young people with lived experience) who will give a voice/support to beneficiaries beyond Growing2gether. *“Many young people are overlooked and feel like their voices don’t matter because adults won’t take their views into consideration. Supporting and encouraging young people to voice anything that matters to them is so important,”* YPB Member. The YPB has begun to work closely with our Trustee Board, supported youth friendly communication materials for schools, helped develop an Alumni database, and delivered at the Gender Inclusion Conference with University of Highlands & Islands. The YPB has been supporting the development of the additional 2 Modules of the Self Development SCQF Level 4 (Self in Work) through our newly developed Young Leader Training programme.

The YPB will also develop a Communication Plan for our past Growing2gether participants, including the creation of a Young Person’s Newsletter, sharing young peoples experience of the programmes as well as an Annual Youth Voice Survey to help us understand youth needs and develop our projects, provide community topics for the Growing2gether Youth Social Action projects and give young people a wider voice on issues that concern them.

Response to Covid

COVID-19 has had a major impact on our original plans for expansion. Since March 2020, we were unable to deliver our Growing2gether programmes due to school closures. We adapted Growing2gether into a 12-week digital offering for small groups, called Growing2gether Online, which covers important skills such as communications, re-engaging in the community and goal-setting. This contributes a unit to an accredited Level 4 qualification. We were able to start resuming face-to-face Growing2gether programmes in September 2021.

COVID also highlighted an urgent need to provide more support to young people: Our two surveys (100 young people) showed that young people were worried about their mental health: 75% said they were experiencing anxiety, worry or loneliness. Already struggling at school, 70% were concerned about returning. 86.7% said support to reach their potential was important. 68.5% wanted follow-on time with a Growing2gether facilitator. To meet this increased need and in response to school feedback, we have developed a new youth-led mentoring service, using the coaching skills of our experienced facilitators. We have begun offering youth-led small group mentoring, with topics determined by young people for each session, depending on their needs. We are also offering one-to-one, youth-led mentoring where needed. Our Youth Participation Board also highlighted the importance of delivering youth-led projects to address the issues faced by the community due to the pandemic.

Our new services will be evaluated and we will ascertain if there is a long-term need and access to potential sources of funding. Initial evidence shows a clear need for follow-on mentoring with a trusted adult to ensure that young people can achieve their educational,

personal and work goals and build their mental health. *“It is good to have someone who listens and who is not family or school ... it feels safe and I know it helps me knowing there is someone I can talk to.” “It would be really good to get a mentor to help build my confidence and find a job for when I leave school.”*

Our main focus, long-term, will always be to deliver face-to-face Growing2gether programmes, where we have a track record of impact. To ensure sustainable outcomes for our highly vulnerable young people, our ambition is to incorporate follow-on mentoring into our established nursery mentoring programme in pilot geographies. This will allow us to provide bespoke coaching support to young people, helping them create a formalised development plan to achieve their educational/work potential. This new support will include local careers, further education, work experience and volunteering, working closely with the school and local partners, including corporates. Central to this programme, will be building the mental health and confidence of the young people so they engage in opportunities. Growing2gether Community will also ensure this wrap-around support for our young people, providing a supportive community and a long-term development pathway.

Previously, most of our beneficiaries were girls, and we are seeing an increasing impact on boys, particularly in relation to their mental health. We are keen to explore this impact further and to continue to increase the number of boys on our Growing2gether nursery mentoring and community programmes.

3. Strategic Review

Opportunities and Threats in Context

In setting our priorities for the coming years, we have completed a detailed review of the internal and external context, and consulted closely with our partners.

Global and Scottish Trends

The Scottish Government’s national performance framework sets clear outcomes for all of Scotland, linked to the global Sustainable Development Goals. We contribute in particular to the outcome for children and young people: *We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.* Performance is measured against a set of national indicators. These currently show that children’s development and wellbeing is not improving, but there is a growing sense that children’s voices are being heard. We can help Scotland make a bigger difference for our young people. We can contribute to:

- The importance of youth voice and youth-led interventions to overcome barriers to involvement (ASL Review Action Plan 2020/Locality Plans of Community Planning Partnerships).
- The Scottish government's emphasis on the need for evidence-based, early interventions to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of every child and young person (Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027, currently being refreshed to reflect post-Covid priorities). Mental health is also strongly linked to inequality/poor educational achievement, as reflected in the Greener, Fairer Scotland Action Plan and the Local Poverty Action Plans of NHS Boards. This need has increased due to COVID, with many young people reporting mental health concerns (especially girls, who make up 75% of our beneficiaries). COVID: Mental Health and Recovery Transition Plan 2020 (Scottish government and COSLA)
- The increased emphasis on the importance of relationships, a holistic approach to the wellbeing of every child and strong partnership working to develop resilient communities and families to support young people. Growing2gether is well placed to respond to these needs and to provide increased opportunities for young people to build their confidence and skills for learning, life and work.
- An increased concern about climate change, the environment and the importance of raising awareness of how communities can impact this. As part of the Growing2gether project, we highlight climate change to make young people more aware of the environmental issues in their own community. The projects will also include an educational visit to Findhorn. This will be youth-led and will involve local community volunteers and local renewables companies to support the young people to access green, high value work (Scottish government's Climate Change Plan 2018-2032.)

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strong evidence of demand and need through 3 years of consultation● Strong values and ethos● Continuity in founder's involvement● Strong relationships with partners, common values and commitment to collaboration● Strong relationship with Alumni● Strong relationships developed with Parents through Community Programme● Solid funding base with respected funders (Trusts/Scottish government/corporate)● Proven ability to manage grants● Willingness to self-reflect and learn through community/youth consultation● Experienced staff team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Low brand awareness and promotion● Low individual unrestricted donor base and sources for core funding● Funding base not diversified enough● New board will need to form and develop solid governance culture● Need for succession planning● Small staff teams/multiple responsibilities● Need to deliver Growing2gether as face-to-face model to cover core/staff costs

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expansion into new local areas ● Emphasis on community focused interventions ● New partnerships with other youth-focused organisations (Third Sector/ local Community Planning Partnerships/LA) ● Good fit with Scottish government priorities for young people/rural deprivation/looked after ● Online projects/youth-led mentoring: a new opportunity during COVID-19 ● Partnering with a research body to increase evidence base/fund projects ● Replacement of EU funding ● Impact on nursery/primary children (Early Years' focus in Scotland) ● Using our skills to train others and increase early intervention impact on young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continuing impact of COVID-19 in schools ● Poverty of parents/unemployment impacting young people's futures ● Local authority, institutional and other public funding much reduced due to austerity/COVID ● Funders focused on charities struggling in short-term/not on long-term issues ● Competitors, especially big charities with better contacts and wide reach and those re-focusing on mental health ● Loss of EU funding due to Brexit ● Misconception that we are part of statutory provision because we work with schools ● Low awareness of our impact among Local Authorities, especially in new geographies

Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder Group	How We Engage	What We Will Do
Children and Families in our projects	Therapeutic training School exchanges Focus groups/ Surveys Youth Participation Board Local Community Planning Partnership panels Quality Assurance	Seek more qualitative feedback for monitoring and evaluation, project development and to prove need Always put young people at the centre Give young people a voice
Partners	Regular communications Learning exchanges/best practice	Support them to develop long terms plans and report
Staff	Build personal relationships, staff engagement/satisfaction	Ensure consistent quality feedback to and from staff
Donors – individual supporters/trusts/ corporates	‘Thank You’ cards & emails Newsletters/Monthly e-updates Social Media Reporting/Project visits	Seek more feedback Raise brand awareness Cultivate relationships for stronger commitment (donor care) Gain a wider donor base
Scottish Government	Regular meetings (Scotland) Utilising our organisational membership with SCVO Conferences/PR/consultations	Raise brand awareness Cultivate relationships Understand how we fit their priorities
Local government/ community (Highland)	Membership of local Community Planning Partnerships - regular mtgs Expand to Dundee/ Aberdeen Expand to Moray/East Lothian	Continue to build a strong partnership with local government Share best practice to increase positive outcomes for young people Train Youth Development Officers / CLD youth workers in the Local Authorities we operate in (LA-funded) to increase skills/extend reach.

Schools and nurseries	Local panel, regular visits, meetings, evaluation reports and financial support received. Carry out pricing analysis v competitors. Market the value of our intervention.	Continue to grow our engagement/secure funds Increase skills of school staff through training to reach more young people
Findhorn Community	Community events to build supporters/volunteers Encouraging dialogue	Tell them more about what we do/why
Children's organisations, Youth Highland and TSIs	Networking Seeking dynamic new partners Speaking at conferences/articles on early intervention	Share good practice Develop fruitful partnerships Combine interventions for greater impact, e.g. Who Cares? Scotland, MCR Pathways, Eden Court, Aberlour, Forces Children Scotland, Local Development Trusts & grass roots organisations

Response to Context

In response to our context analysis, we have reviewed our work in depth and plan to make some important changes over the coming period.

We will:

- Regularly review our youth-led practices to ensure that we are a youth-centred organisation and that we empower young people in the most effective ways and seek feedback from all stakeholders.
- Honour our Values and build a vibrant learning community amongst our staff as well as those we work with.
- Build our relationship with the Scottish government and Local Authorities for new opportunities beyond EU funds.
- Adapt our funding model to increase the support we receive from individuals (donations/community fundraising), major donors (via peer-to-peer) and corporates, reducing our reliance on institutional funding.
- Grow income from Trusts with different levels of gifts, multi-year grants and a focus on core funders to reduce risk.
- Strengthen relationships to retain and grow existing funders (e.g., National Lottery Community Fund/Robertson Trust/Children in Need/Gannochy Trust/schools).
- Build core funding to support the growth of the charity.
- Build relationships with schools to ensure retention and access school funding
- Grow a social enterprise approach in our Growing2gether programme to offer our facilitator training as a tool for working with vulnerable young people in Scotland.
- Partner with a Scottish University for external research on the efficacy of Growing2gether programmes.

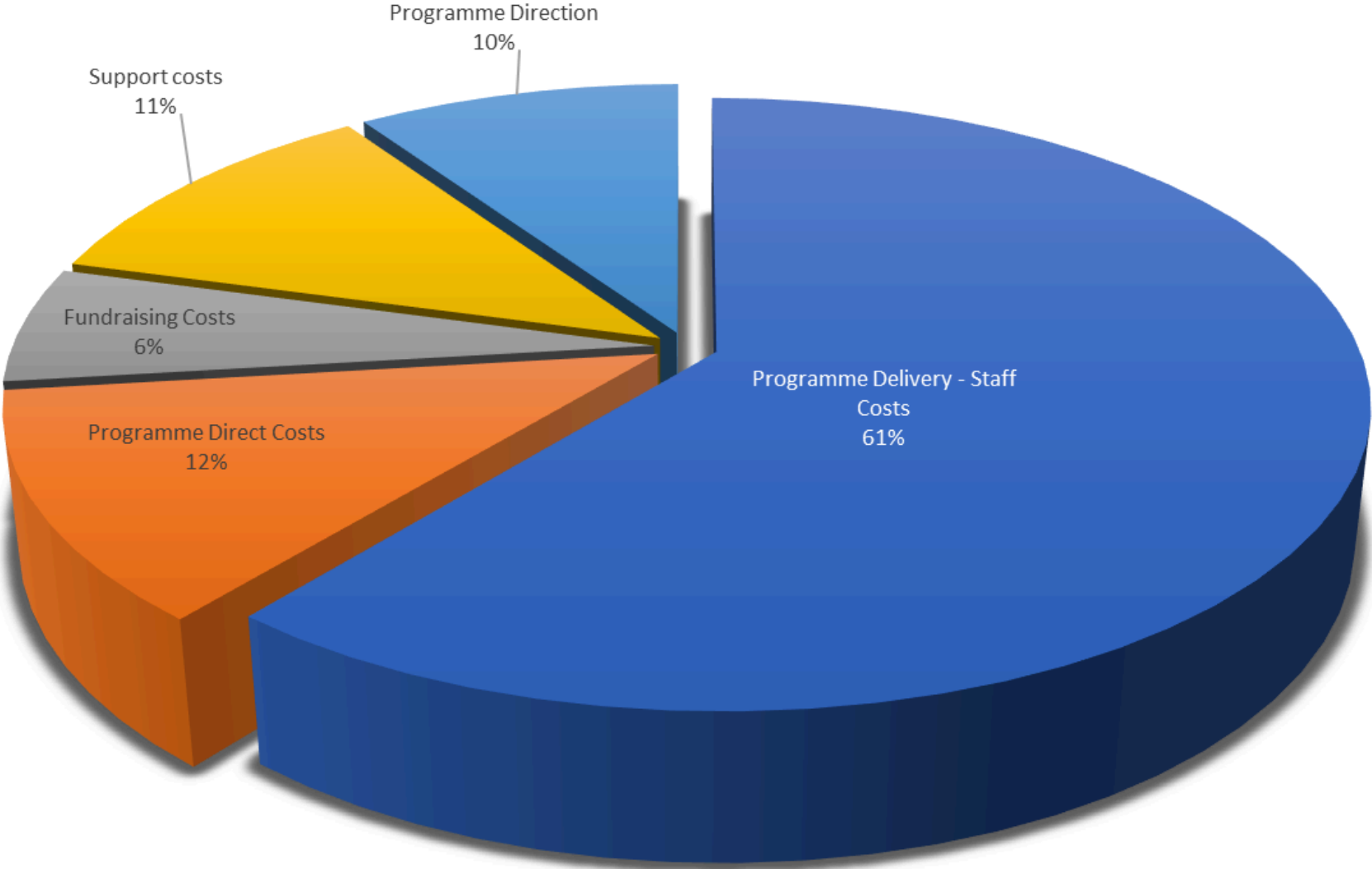
Risks and Assumptions

Our assumptions are that:

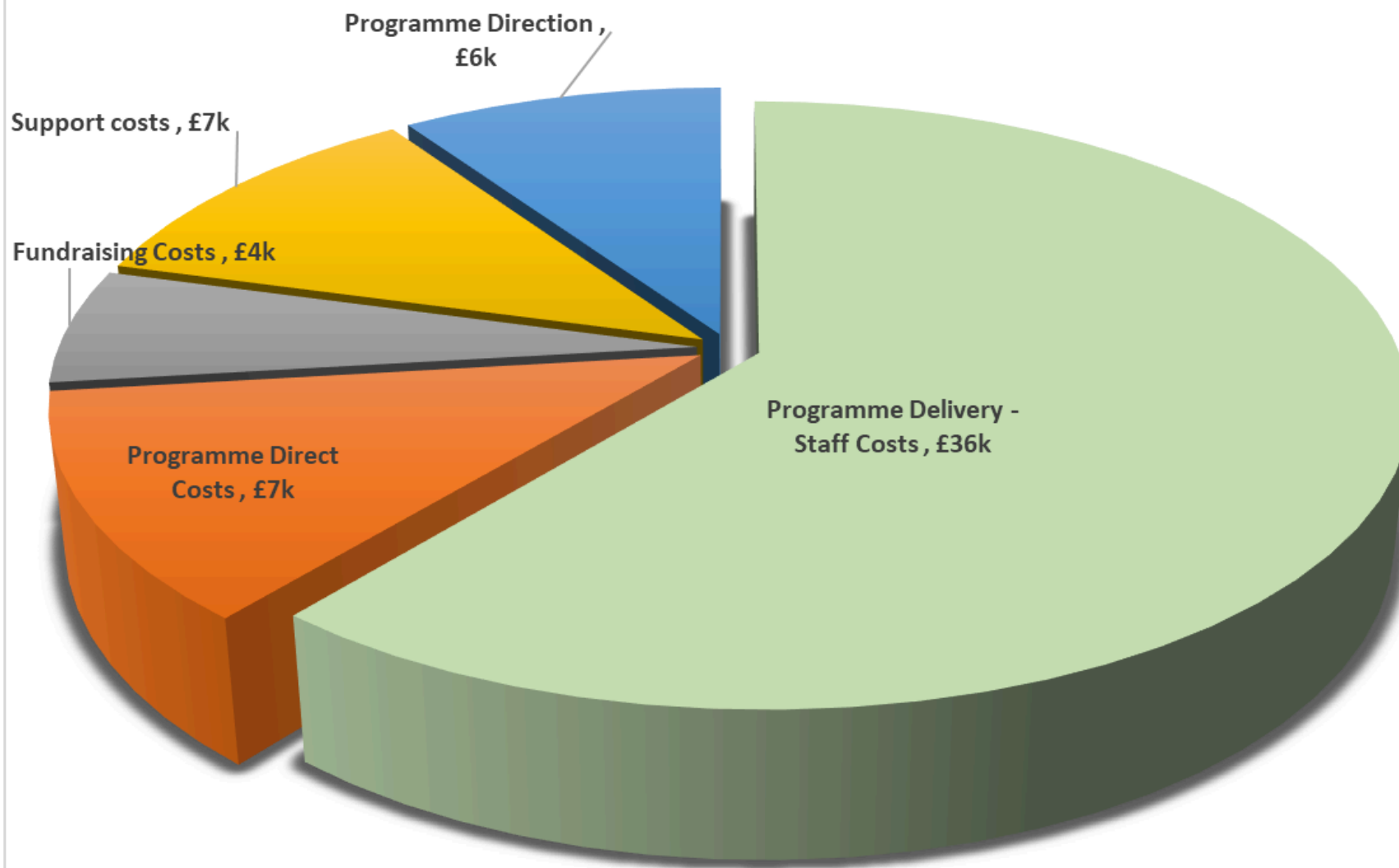
- Funders will continue to support us as a SCIO that is expanding into other Local Authorities.
- We will continue to attract an experienced Trustee Board who can support us to achieve our charitable objectives and can access new sources of funding.
- We will maintain good relations with our original 'incubator', Ecologia Youth Trust
- Young people will continue to be attracted to the benefits our programmes can bring and want to continue their journey with the charity so we can develop our programmes going forward to meet their needs.
- Trusts and Corporates will be attracted to the innovation of Growing2gether and will understand the sophistication of the programme's evidence base.
- Supporters will understand that the Growing2gether programme is unique with a focus on mental health, filling an important gap in provision.
- Highland Council, Education Scotland, schools and other partners will continue to champion the Growing2gether programme.
- Other Local Authorities/schools will be attracted to the Growing2gether programme and will provide funding.
- Funding can be found to support the Director of Fundraising
- We will be able to grow by diversifying our funding sources

Our Financial Picture

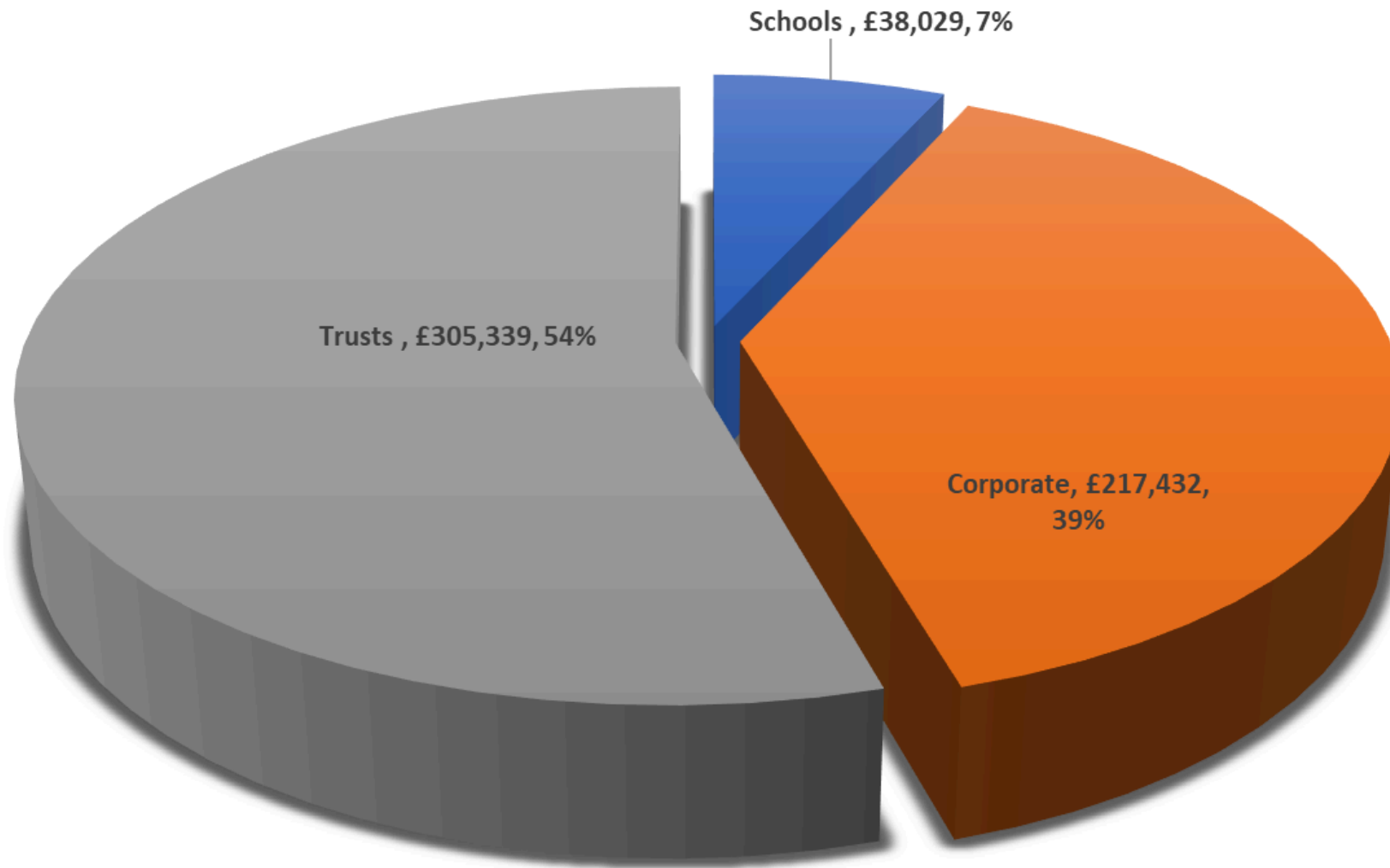
Annual Budget 2024/25 - £714k



Monthly Budget 2024/25 - £59k



Current Funding Split covering costs until Feb 2024



4. Aims and Objectives

AIM 1: REACHING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE		
We will have supported a growing number of vulnerable children and young people to reach their potential through tested therapeutic or community-centred models		
OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR/TARGET by end 2027	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
1.1 We will have rolled out our innovative Growing2gether programmes in Scotland to reach 2,352 children and young people	<p>We will have delivered 147 Growing2gether programmes between March 2024 and February 2027 in over 25 schools and nurseries.</p> <p>Our young people have the strong mental health they need to thrive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% agree that the programme has made them feel more confident in their abilities A 30% increase in self esteem 72% agree that the programme influenced them to make good decisions about their lifestyle (i.e., not drinking or taking drugs) Growth of Mindset increases by 30% by end of programme <p>Our young people have the skills they need to succeed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% increase in engagement at school, reported by teachers. 85% young people earn an accredited SCQF Qualification, Level 4, Self in Community and Self Awareness Units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Highland Council, Moray Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and Dundee Council, regular review and update of policies and procedures such as child safeguarding including digital safety. Regular update of programme curriculum. Regular quality assurance and meetings with facilitators to ensure fidelity/efficacy of the programme using the Practice Model Guidance for GIRFEC. Ongoing interaction with young people through focus groups/surveys/Youth Participation Board to ensure we meet their needs and continue to improve and develop our programme Monitoring and Outcome Evaluation: evaluation reports produced 3 months post-programme (Sept and March) and disseminated to stakeholders/others interested in best practice for early intervention. Networking/consultation in Dundee, Moray and Aberdeen with schools/LAs/local community/young people to understand competitors, issues and need for the programme and to source funding Evaluate follow-on mentoring with a view to developing a new follow-on programme beyond Growing2gether to strengthen further the long-term mental health, educational and employment outcomes of young people.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% agree that education provides them with more opportunities in the future <p>Growing2gether Plus: 4 group pilot of extended programme, plus 4 group roll-out over 3 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening relationships with schools to recruit young people facing disadvantage, including more boys.
<p>1.2 We will have rolled out our Growing2gether Community, Youth Social Action programmes in Scotland to reach 200 young people and 6 communities with youth-led projects</p>	<p>We will have delivered 25 youth-led projects between 2024 and 2027, with over 200 young people (including 25 trained Young Leaders), addressing key community issues.</p> <p>Our young people have the sense of purpose, connection to community, and life skills they need to thrive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 92% have learned valuable skills that they can use in life 92% feel contributing to the community has been a valuable experience 76% want to become more involved in their community in the future. <p>25 Young Leaders will have been trained in employment and facilitation skills to co-deliver projects.</p> <p>Up to 30 Community Mentors (depending on projects) will have been recruited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing community/young people consultation to research place-based community issues, to understand the demand for Growing2gether Youth Social Action, review impact and develop programme. Work in partnership with Third sector mentors on Growing2gether Youth Social Action programmes Continue rigorous outcome evaluation of each cohort and publish reports Publicise projects and consider inclusion of youth-led materials in other Growing2gether programmes/website Expand our business development initiatives to reach our projected numbers increase our partnership base for wider working across the region
<p>1.3 We will have reached 60 young people with our newly developed Mentoring programmes, originally developed in response</p>	<p>We will have delivered to 60 young people, 1-1 and small group mentoring to meet the needs of the young people on our programmes and as additional support to progress from the nursery mentoring to community programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run new programmes. Ensure fidelity/efficacy through QA of every programme Produce outcome evaluation of additional mentoring Assess outcomes, develop programmes and decide on roll-out depending on results and funding

to the Covid-19 Lockdown, to support targeted young people with increased mental health needs. (Part of 2,552 total in 1.1 above)	Outcome evaluation outcome targets for each service (e.g., mental health/educational engagement/qualification) to be quantified.	
---	--	--

AIM 2: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES We will have listened to the needs of communities and young people to develop community-strengthening projects, which increase young people's skills and confidence, empower them to achieve their potential and give them a voice to break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage.		
OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR/TARGET by end 2027	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
2.1 In Scotland, we have regularly listened to the needs of young people and the wider community through our programme consultations and our Youth Participation Board to ensure that our programmes remain impactful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 100 young people, 10 members of the wider Highland community, 18 schools, 18 nurseries and representatives of 3 local authorities will have been engaged in identifying community need ● 6 communities will have benefitted from Growing2gether Youth Social Action projects dealing with local issues. ● Community networks will have been strengthened via up to 30 Third sector In the Community mentors and six meetings between Young Leaders and local Community Planning Partnerships. ● Monitoring has been put in place to ensure our programmes are adapted to meet current local needs in challenging times, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Surveys/focus groups with young participants and their parents/carers ● Regular meetings with Growing2gether nurseries and secondary schools ● Community surveys/focus groups led by young people. Past participant presentations to new participants ● Community Consultation plan/strategy led by YPB ● Advisory panel inc. local people ● Community celebrations ● Signposting of local services for young people through a new youth-led section on our website. ● Develop Project Cycle Management, to review consultation data, government guidelines, and programme alignment, and adapt/develop programmes.

	(e.g., COVID, mental health, economic instability).	
2.2 In Scotland, we have ensured our programmes are youth-led, via our Youth Participation Board, which has consulted regularly with young people, supporting them and recruiting them to our programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have maintained a Youth Participation Board of 5-7 members, mixed gender. • We have received 500 hits on the Growing2gether `For Young People` webpage. • 40% positive feedback for the `For Young People` Page • 100 young people have been consulted by the Youth Participation Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Youth Participation Board to develop Terms of Reference, participation strategy and decision-making structure • Youth Participation Board consults bi-annually with local young people on needs, and effectiveness of Growing2gether programmes, feeding results to Growing2gether Board (cf. 5.2). • Youth Participation Board quarterly posting on <i>For Young People</i> Growing2gether webpage, reviewing youth services and signposting to important news • Development of Self in Work SCQF Level 4 Award • Give young people a voice by connecting them to wider initiatives, e.g., Highland Youth Parliament, Highland Council consultations.

AIM 3: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS

We will have supported our community partners to develop innovative, holistic and child-centred approaches which can become self-sustaining over time.

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR/TARGET by end 2027	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
3.1 We will have supported partner schools to deliver a sustainable Growing2gether programme, independently of our facilitator team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 school staff members of 18 participating schools are trained as Growing2gether facilitators. • 16 Youth Development Officers employed by Highland Council have been trained as Growing2gether facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A seven-day facilitator training based on positive psychology and the Growing2gether approach • Provide on-going Quality Assurance and outcome evaluation to school staff, with supervision when needed. • SLAs with each school, outlining partnership • School facilitator co-delivering with a senior lead facilitator for one cohort • Evaluate impact/efficacy of training

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 schools meet our quality control standards for independently providing Growing2gether in schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market success of our sustainable model to all schools we are delivering in
3.2 We will have built a more sustainable portfolio of partners which has increased organisational capacity, social bridging and impact funding in the wider field of youth development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 partnerships created for consortium on social impact research, including. 1 university partner 1 research project undertaken regarding social impact funding possibilities 1 research project undertaken re. innovative solution for funding mental health work with young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and develop a consortium of partners, including 1 -2 University, for social impact research. Research, strategize for and develop portfolio for Social impact bonds. By end 2025 submit bid for SIB support. Carry out comprehensive research and apply for grants to find an innovative solution for funding mental health work with young people.

AIM 4: BUILDING OUR ORGANISATION

We will have strengthened our organisation to deliver more for children and young people.

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR/TARGET by end 2023	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES
4.1 We will have a strong Trustee Board (including young people with lived experience) who provide robust governance to the charity.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New independent board recruited, inducted and functioning well 8-10 board members with diverse and useful skills and a mix of gender and age Board has received quarterly advisory sessions from the Youth Participation Board, which has fed back the results of its consultations (cf. 2.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills mapping of trustees Trustee recruitment, esp. Trustees with strong contacts to provide funding Trustee development and training All trustees visit Growing2gether programmes and are introduced to the vision values and ethos of our work and curriculum Train Youth Participation Board in charity management and governance
4.2 Setting up and running an effective independent organisation, with the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent charity registration attained Good financial scrutiny and financial management processes in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding for feasibility study Engage legal and consultancy advice to register charity and transfer assets, staff and resources Review and transfer internal systems and procedures

systems, policies and processes in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal administrative, HR and safeguarding policies and procedures operating effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review business plan Maintain good communications with EYT board and staff
4.2 We will have put in place a succession plan for key staff and trustees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Succession plan for Trustees in place Succession plan developed for senior management and founder's roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement rolling trustee replacement process and new term limits Clarify senior management and founder's role now and in future Increase Business Development staff time
4.3 We have increased restricted/unrestricted income by average 36% by year 3. See 3 Year Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total G2G income £2,343,111 over 3 years (excluding LA contribution); £2,440,311 (Including contribution) <p>See Budget 2024-2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement fundraising strategy Grow new income sources (corporate, LA, trading, major donors and supporters) Retain existing funders so they increase donation level Retain schools and source new schools Increase funding from schools Build relationships through outcome-led reporting, project visits and meetings Increase funding through strategic partnerships, e.g., Who Cares? MCR Pathways
4.4 We will diversify our income sources, to become 40% less reliant on trust, foundation and statutory funding by end 2027.	<p>10% of income is derived from Social Impact Bonds 5% of income is derived from research partnership funding 5% of income is derived from a new training trading arm 10% of income derived from Corporates 10% is derived from individuals, especially major donors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end 2025 research, strategize and develop portfolio for Social impact bonds and, by end 2027, bid for SIB support. By end-2024 assess innovation and strategic direction of our work through research into how best to support young people facing disadvantage (e.g., social media, new digital programmes, individual/group mentoring). End 2024, build partnerships for research projects, including Highland and Island Enterprise. End 2024/2025, apply for research funding. Mid-end 2024, research possibilities for new corporate partnerships and build portfolio.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Start 2024, begin campaign for engaging new corporate partnerships● Start 2024, recruit well-connected Trustee to Trustee Board who can open doors to major donors and corporates.● Start 2024 , Develop business plan for development of new training trading arm, including exploring funding potential through partners (e.g., Highland Council/Children Scotland)
--	--	---

Appendix 1: Past youth-led Community projects

Mental Health



The group focusing on mental health consisted of students from Charleston Academy, 2 male, 1 female, aged, 14-15. They were mentored by Mikey's Line, a third sector organisation which runs a text line for people with mental health issues and a drop-in in Inverness called the Hive. After meeting with staff at Mikey's Line, the group were inspired to create a mural exploring mental health for their school. After sending out a google survey to their peers to discover what makes them happy and sad, they 'hired' the services of a fellow pupil and artist to work with them on the design which they painted as a group. The mural will now act as a mental health resource, signposting young people who have concerns or questions about mental health issues to organisations such as Mikey's Line, who can provide support.

Teenage Pregnancy and relationships



This group from Inverness Royal Academy were keen to focus their community project on teenage pregnancy/relationships. They approached local organisation, WAVE - a sex education service for young people in Inverness. They spoke to Wave's education co-ordinator about their idea of making a film. Staff at WAVE loved their idea, offering to host it on their website once finished. The group hired an actor as the male lead and were guided by an Eden Court film maker. The group showed their film at the Highland Youth Parliament Conference and were interviewed for an article in The Inverness Courier. The group will now go onto work with WAVE to develop their film into a sex education resource for the Highland curriculum.



Our Invergordon group explored the issue of substance misuse (drugs and alcohol). They felt that an effective way of promoting drug awareness was to create a poster that could be displayed in their school and at locations throughout the community where young people socialise. Their intention is to provoke discussions among young people regarding what impact drugs have on their community. The young people used some of their budget to hire a designer to help them transform their initial sketches into posters. The young people took the posters to local shops to be displayed in windows. They also sought feedback from their community and peers using a short survey. The group is keen to reach as many people as possible with their project, and now want to explore how this design can be used on Social Media platforms such as Snapchat.