



Newsletter

Welcome To Spring!



Welcome to Outfit's fourth newsletter—since we were last in touch in November 2008, we have run an average of eight programmes a week through the winter, mainly land-based but making the most of the weather, and enjoying the snow. We have settled very well into our new base in Lossiemouth, and we are running our Easter Programme from it in early April. We hope you enjoy this update—please get in touch if you have any questions or comments.

Chairman's Overview

Outfit-Moray moves forward to meet the challenges of the current economic situation which is both complex and long-term. There are many challenges and many unknowns which make it difficult to predict what will happen and consequently what to do. At Outfit-Moray we are not caught in the 'glare of the headlights frightened to move', rather we recognise that we need to:

- Keep doing what we do making the outdoors accessible and affordable and providing challenging, adventurous and interesting activities for young people – helping them to grow and develop.
- Continue to work with partners so that we can meet their needs in a new 'climate', share resources and co-operate more closely.
- Support the local Social Enterprise Network working towards a more coherent and integrated partnership that meets the expectations of the single outcome agreement between the Scottish Government and the Moray Council.
- Continue to be creative and develop new ideas
- Work hard to be more sustainable.



We are now well established in our new base at Lossiemouth. It really is a great location for us with excellent space which enables us to do more and think in different ways. The last few months have been challenging and exciting. Dan and Gemma joined the team and have made a significant contribution in a very short space of time. One of Gemma's tasks is to develop programmes specifically for girls and this is progressing well. Dan is leading a new project with young people preparing for work whilst Steve has been engaged in developing new programmes with the Youth Justice Service (*The Quest*). Ross, our Chief Instructor is co-ordinating our wide range of programmes currently nine per week (he still manages to get out at two or three times as well), whilst Richard and Caroline are working very hard at fund raising and evaluation. Our team of volunteers is expanding and we welcome Harry Ewan who has joined the team as a handyman. Harry has made a significant difference in a very short space of time.

"I really feel like we made a difference to the kids we took out: some of them hadn't been on a mountain bike before and they loved it!"
Outfit Volunteer

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Outfit Purpose:
We engage young people through outdoor learning to support them to reach their potential

Activity Update



We have had a busy winter dodging the snowstorms, and working with a number of new groups which has been stimulating and inspiring. In February we started to work with a group of youngsters with visual impairments, and we have been developing a new programme to focus on understanding risk and choice-making for work with Youth Justice. We have also been working with an older group of young people, helping them to gain organisational and life skills in order to prepare them for work. An overview of these new groups is given below.

The Quest

During January and February, Out!t developed and carried out a new type of activity concept to work with

“Every time the young person came back from a Quest session, he was flying high” Youth Worker, Moray Youth Justice

young people from Youth Justice who were having difficulty understanding the consequences of risk-taking and how to make the right choices in their lives. The activity involved a game of choices called The Quest that ran over a number of weeks, and involved the young person collecting clues and ‘money’ marked on maps in different locations which

led to a box containing treasure and a ‘bomb’ which needed disarming. Along the way, the young person was periodically approached by a ghostly ‘Monk’ whose role was to challenge the young person on the choices that they were making. We ran the Quest with a 15 year old, and then a 10 year old over a period of six weeks. The activity was extremely successful for the 15 year old, but needs tweaking for younger age groups.

The concept gained very positive feedback from youth workers at Youth Justice, who felt that it was an effective and innovative way to address the issue of risk with their young people. The 15 year old was going through a particularly hard time in his personal life, having recently being removed from his home and placed in foster care. The effort he put into the Quest was truly amazing considering the position he was in. He is now beginning to go back to school and has stopped drinking and using drugs as much. He is trying to improve his life by making the right choices for himself. It is fantastic to see young people discovering that there is a better way of life for themselves with support from Out!t and Youth Justice.



A meeting with The Monk

Visually Impaired Group

Gemma is currently working with a visually impaired group for 10 weeks. The young people have difficulty judging depth and distance, their eyes are extremely sensitive to bright lights and they have restricted field of vision, peripheral and central. One young person also has auditory impairment, and can only hear out of one ear.



Whilst working with the group we have taken part in a number of activities including climbing, kayaking, bush craft, team games and hill walking.

We have noticed that most of the group come to each activity very anxious and unsure of themselves. Throughout the activity they all show a huge amount of enthusiasm and try their hardest. They are all very determined and self motivated individuals.

Since their time with Out!t-Moray, the young people have learned a great deal about themselves, in particular how much more capable they are than they originally thought and how they can exceed their previous limits. We have seen their confidence and self esteem grow since we first met them. They all have made great friendships and had a lot of fun too!

Get Ready For Work Group (16-25 year olds)



The Get Ready for Work scheme is being jointly run by Moray Youth Action and the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). As part of a wider programme, aimed at making school leavers more employable, some specially selected young people are spending one day a week with Outfit-Moray. During the programme we are using the outdoors to help work on key skills such as self confidence, decision making, perseverance, risk assessment and time keeping.

The young people involved in the project are aged between sixteen and nineteen and are all looking for help to make them more employable having recently finished formal education. The programme will last for ten weeks and will be followed by a second programme starting at the beginning of May.

Easter Programme (3 1st March to 3rd April)

During the school Easter holidays, Outfit is running four days of great value outdoor activities for young people aged 10 to 15. Each day will feature two activities from a wide range including mountain biking, canoeing, rock climbing, abseiling, archery, bush craft, surfing and power-kiting. The cost is £25 per day, with a discount for two or more days, and the sessions will run from our Base at Shore Street, Lossiemouth.



This is a new venture for Outfit which we hope will be very successful. We are planning to run a further two week programme during the Summer holidays which will be based at a number of different locations in Moray.



If you are interested in more information, please just email us, or give us a call.

2008/09 Statistics (April 1st 2008 to March 1st 2009)



Every year we set ourselves targets and outcomes against which to measure ourselves. This year has been one of big changes for Outfit-Moray, both in terms of two key members of staff leaving and two more joining, and a complete office and store move from Elgin to Lossiemouth. As a result, we will be short at the end of our financial year against our target for the number of sessions run by about 70 sessions. This has been caused by the time lag between Ibrahim and Mike leaving, and Dan and Gemma starting and getting up to speed with leading sessions, and the bad weather in February which led to six sessions being cancelled. We are currently running at full capacity, and running an average of 10 sessions a week, with activities and programmes now booked well into the Summer.

Number of different young people worked with	984
Total number of sessions run	300
Number of programmes run	94
Number of different organisations worked with	65
Number of sessions cancelled	12

"That was the best day of my life!" Young person, Lossiemouth High School after a mountain biking day

