

| Organisation Name       | Reference |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| The Bridge Project (BP) |           |

| Visit Date      | Visited By   |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 12 October 2023 | Jim Marshall |

| Grant Summary  |
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| <p>Grant was for £58,382 over 2 years to employ a part time Young Carers Support Worker. This was to allow BP to provide more 1-1 support to directly help Young Carers to continue in higher and further education or assist in their employment prospects.</p> |

| Visit Details (People met, premises visited etc.)   |
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| <p>Visited BP's office in Musselburgh</p> <p>Met</p> <p>Emma Scarliffe, CEO<br/>Niamh Mitchell, Support Worker<br/>Simen Holm, Fundraising and Communications Manager<br/>Briefly introduced to rest of BP team</p> <p>2 Young Carers receiving support from BP</p> |

| Information about the Organisation   |
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| <p>BP aims to inspire and support young carers to build a confident future, enabling them to reach their potential and fully participate in the life of their communities. Based mainly in East Lothian where there are estimated to be 2,000 to 4,000 young carers.</p> |

| Issues and Comments  |
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| <p>I really enjoyed my time at BP chatting to the team and a couple of Young Carers.</p> |

This is an impressive organisation and it is clear that BP is making a difference to young carers lives by running a number of courses and sessions in their Musselburgh offices.

I was also impressed by the friendliness of the team and their explanations of their own work.

East Lothian is on the surface an affluent area just outside Edinburgh with a vibrant farming community, but this hides areas of social and economic difficulties. Although Edinburgh is a short distance away, many of the Young Carers have never been there due to lack of confidence and/or poor transport links.

These transport links also affect BP's work as many can't easily get to Musselburgh. All BP employees must drive and have a car to ferry young people from/to BP and home.

Many of the BP programmes have waiting lists, a sign of the success and popularity of the programmes.

BP produce questionnaires/workbooks on such areas as self-esteem and sleep to help the young carers think about how they can help themselves in these areas.

Emma and her team took me through some of the work they are doing and introduced me to two Young Carers they were working with. By co-incidence both were helping their parents look after autistic siblings They talked about the challenges they faced before they joined BP eg missing school, not wanting to tell teachers about their situation, not getting sufficient sleep to do homework, not being able to make friends etc.

Now, with help from BP, one has a place at university and is starting their own circle of friends. The other is applying for jobs and hoping to start driving lessons. Both are still part of the BP community.

Emma also showed me around the offices, they were well equipped with space for 1-1 meetings and larger rooms for group discussions. Space and access to laptops for internet access and a kitchen to talk about and demonstrate the importance of healthy eating.

Emma runs a strong organisation that is making a real difference to these young people's lives.

#### **Other Feedback**

Emma spoke very favourably of the work they have been doing with Cranfield Trust and some of the benefits and introductions from these discussions.

Fundraising is increasingly challenging so next 12 months or so will be one of consolidation.

BP's work is beginning to get recognised on the national stage:

- In June 2023 Emma was shortlisted as one of three finalists in the Inspirational Leader category at Scotland's National Youth Work Awards.

- In July 2023 one of the Young Carers who started receiving support from BP when she was 16 and has since gone to college and become a BP mentor herself, was a finalist for The Health and Wellbeing award at the Young Scot Awards.