

Substantial Funds Still Available to Launch Young People's Projects in Aberdeen

People are being encouraged to apply for funding from the Big Lottery Young People's Fund for local initiatives aimed at helping children and young people. With £339,000 still to be awarded in the Aberdeen area, the fund could assist with the development of a new project or help to sustain an existing project in the community.

Aberdeen's Young People's Panel is run through VSA's Aberdeen Volunteer Centre. Consisting of young people between the ages of 16 and 25, they come together once a month, using their local perspective to consider applications which have been made to the Young People's Fund for projects within Aberdeen. The financial support comes from The Big Lottery Fund, which aims to tackle disadvantage and to help regenerate the communities which are most in need.

Kay Ritchie, Young People's Panel Worker said:

"The Panel feed back their opinions on the applications to a national committee who use this local knowledge to come to a funding decision. Panel members gain experience in team work and communication, as well as committee work and in depth reading and understanding of written applications. Most importantly of all they have the opportunity to make a real difference to youth services in Aberdeen."

A recent project backed by the members of the Aberdeen Young People's Panel is The Blue Horizon Youth Project. The project was first set up in December 2005, and received a Big Lottery Young People's Fund Grant of £80 000 in 2006. They used some of this money to buy the venue for their youth activities – a double decker bus. The bus, which they will launch this summer, is currently being refurbished to house facilities ranging from a youth café to music and cinema equipment. Young people in the Kincorth and Cove areas of Aberdeen will benefit from the project, which provides them with a safe place to go in the evenings and a wide range of activities for them to take part in.

Representatives from the Aberdeen Young People's Panel met earlier this month with adults and young people from the Blue Horizon Youth Bus Project. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Young People's Panel to see the developments to the project stemming from their financial support.

Mark Johnston, Blue Horizon Development Director said:

"The Street Outreach Bus Project in South Aberdeen is nearly ready to go. The bus will provide a base for teenage activity, recreation and informal education to improve opportunities for young people and alternative focus to anti-social behaviour."

The bus facility is undergoing a major refit at Keillors Coachbuilders in Arbroath and should be rolling out of the factory in June. An official launch is scheduled for mid-day on Friday 29 June and the bus and its staff will begin operations in July in time for the summer holiday season. We have

been working towards this for some time now with a lot of volunteer energy and the vision is about to be realized, that's a real achievement for this project and the community".

The Aberdeen Young People's Panel will consider applications from anyone with an idea that will help young people living within the city. To discuss the application process or for further information, please call 0870 2402391 or visit www.biglotterfund.org.uk/Scotland.

Unfortunately the last training day for Aberdeen Young People's Panel members is now past, but there is still plenty money to be awarded to projects in Aberdeen. If you are aged 16 – 25 more information can be found by visiting www.youngscot.org/biglotteryfund.

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Contact details

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Notes to Editor

1. The Big Lottery Fund is the largest of the National Lottery Distributors and gives out half of all the funds made available to the good causes by the National Lottery. It can fund a wide range of organisations and types of activity, for example community projects such as projects which educate or inform people or improve health.
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/Scotland.
2. The Young People's Fund has £20 million to support projects working with young people across Scotland, with £419 000 allocated specifically to Aberdeen.
www.youngscot.org/biglotteryfund.

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