



Introduction

Off The Streets is a Youth and Community organisation that works with children and young people aged six plus to provide safe, supportive and engaging opportunities within their communities. Our sessions are free to attend and aim to create inclusive, accessible spaces where participants can socialise, learn new skills, express themselves and build positive relationships with peers and youth workers. Across all sessions we aim to provide free snacks and refreshments - supporting families bridge the gap of food poverty whilst also ensuring that children and young people are able to participate fully in activities within a welcoming and safe environment.

Our work focuses on creating opportunities that support -

- Positive and purposeful engagement
- Personal and social development
- Physical activity and healthy lifestyles
- Emotional and physical health and wellbeing
- Community connection, cohesion and belonging

We currently deliver our work through three core community locations, Swffryd, Llanhilleth and Brynithel, providing regular and consistent engagement opportunities weekly throughout the year.

Our Work In 2025 & 2026

Over the past financial year, Off The Streets has continued to grow and strengthen the support we provide to children and young people across the communities we serve. Through the consistent delivery of weekly sessions, holiday programmes and targeted initiatives, we have been able to maintain regular contact with participants and build strong, trusting relationships with them over this time. This consistency has been a key factor in creating a stable and reliable offer whereby children and young people know they are welcome, respected and supported by project staff and the organisation as a whole.

Our sessions have been designed to be inclusive, accessible and responsive to the needs of the children, young people, their communities and issues facing them. Through providing sessions including structured activities, informal engagement opportunities and spaces for discussion and reflection, we have encouraged and enabled participants to explore their interests, develop new skills and build positive relationships. Children and young people have been encouraged to take part at their own pace, supporting them through the process to feel comfortable and confident within session environments..

Through this approach, we have created safe and supportive spaces where children and young people have felt able to express themselves openly, share their ideas and seek guidance when needed. Many participants have continued to view the sessions not only as places to take part



in activities, but also as trusted environments where they can talk to project staff about challenges they may be experiencing on an interpersonal level, at school, at home or within their relationships.

The relationships built through consistent engagement have allowed our team to better understand the needs of the children, young people and communities we work with and, in turn, has enabled us to provide appropriate support, encouragement and guidance. This has enabled us to support participants to develop important life skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving and emotional awareness and management.

As a result, many children and young people have demonstrated increased confidence, improved social interaction and a greater willingness to engage in positive activities within their community. By continuing to provide these safe, welcoming and structured environments, Off The Streets has played an important role in supporting participants to recognise their strengths, build resilience and begin to realise their potential, encouraging them to further improve their achievements and attainment.

Core Weekly Sessions

Throughout the year we continued to facilitate our core weekly sessions across three community locations. These sessions provide safe, welcoming and structured environments where children and young people can engage in positive activities, develop friendships and access support from experienced youth workers.

Activities delivered during sessions include -

- Group games and team activities
- Creative arts and crafts
- Sports and physical activity
- Skill-based workshops
- Informal learning opportunities
- Social engagement and peer support

Through these sessions, participants develop a range of personal and social skills including -

- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Stronger communication and teamwork skills
- Greater emotional awareness and resilience
- Increased participation in positive activities

The consistency of these sessions has helped build trust between participants and project staff, allowing participants to feel safe discussing challenges they may be experiencing in their lives. As aforementioned, providing free snacks and refreshments as part of our offer also supports participants to engage and participate fully whilst supporting them and their families.



LEAP Leaders Programme

During the past financial year we introduced the LEAP Leaders Programme, supported through a successful Social Prosperity Fund grant. LEAP stands for Leadership, Empowerment, Activation and Participation - all attributes linked to the work undertaken and development of young volunteers of which are part of the initiative. The programme was developed to support young people aged 12+ in developing interpersonal skills and becoming more actively involved in shaping our organisations activities, alongside supporting their peers and communities.

Participants in the programme have had opportunities to -

- Develop leadership and teamwork skills
- Build confidence in communication and decision making
- Contribute ideas and help shape our organisations activities
- Support participants and peers within sessions
- Take ownership of aspects of programme delivery and our youth and community offer

The programme has enabled young people to grow and develop, alongside increasing their sense of responsibility within their community. Many participants have demonstrated increased willingness to take initiative and support others, highlighting the positive impact of structured leadership opportunities for young people.

Summer Holiday & Half Term Programmes

School holiday periods can present challenges for many families, particularly where access to affordable activities may be limited. To address this, Off The Streets has continued to provide free Half Term and Summer Holiday programmes throughout the year, which were very well attended and well received. These programmes continued to provide extended opportunities for children and young people to take part in positive and constructive activities during school breaks, helping to reduce social isolation, maintain consistent engagement and support their wider communities.

As always we strived to include a wide variety of activities, workshops and sessions, including -

- Sports and physical activities
- Creative workshops
- Group challenges and team activities
- Skill development sessions
- Trips and off-site experiences

Our Summer Holiday and Half Term programmes have continued to provide valuable opportunities for children and young people to build friendships, remain active and access safe environments during periods when regular school structures are absent. Feedback from



participants and families highlighted the importance of these programmes in providing accessible, enjoyable and inclusive opportunities during school holidays.

Supporting Children & Young People's Wellbeing

A significant part of our organisation's work has continued to centre around supporting children and young people with personal challenges that may affect their wellbeing, behaviour or participation. Throughout the past year, project staff have supported participants with issues including -

- Awareness and personal experience of drug and alcohol misuse
- Personal hygiene and self-care
- Emotional regulation, including managing anxiety and anger
- Behavioural challenges and conflict resolution

Through trusted communication, purposeful conversations, mentoring and guidance, project staff have supported participants to develop healthier coping strategies and greater self-awareness. Providing consistent trusted adults within youth and community settings has allowed participants to seek advice and support in a safe and non-judgmental environment. This support has played a crucial role in helping participants build resilience, interpersonal skills and to improve their overall mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Trips & Experiences

Over the past year we were pleased to organise a range of trips and experiences for participants. For many children and young people involved in Off The Streets, these activities represent opportunities they may not normally have access to due to familial financial constraints or social barriers.

Trips and experiences have supported participants to -

- Explore new environments
- Develop independence and confidence
- Strengthen friendships and teamwork
- Create positive memories and experiences

These opportunities have supported participants to broaden their horizons and have provided valuable developmental experiences outside of our regular session environment.

Participation & Engagement Figures

Participation and engagement figures are based on the financial year of 2025 to 2026. These figures have been gathered from weekly sessions, holiday programmes and



excursions from April 2025 to March 2026. Figures are based on each individual engagement our organisation has had with a participant throughout the year, this could mean that children and young people who continue to re-attend sessions are counted more than once.

Area	Number of Engagements
Swffryd	1705
Llanhilleth	1568
Brynithel	1147
Trips & One Off Events	269
Total Number of Engagements	4689

Feedback From Families

Feedback from parents/families has been gathered from conversations at sessions or catch-up meetings. Parents/families are aware that their comments are being used for reporting purposes. Some words have been added or corrected for clarity and understanding of the statements made.

Parent/s Location	Parent/s Comment
Brynithel	My daughter has come out of her shell so much. She's been coming to Off The Streets for nearly 3 years now and in that time myself and our family have seen her come on leaps and bounds. She's got additional needs and attends a special school but that has never stopped the [Off The Streets] staff getting her involved in activities and she's even become a young volunteer. She's proud of herself and tells everyone at school what she's been up to. She has learnt to be more organised and has so much more confidence.
Llanhilleth	I love Off The Streets and everything they do for not just my daughter but our community. They provide so much for the local kids and work hard to make sure everything is fair for everybody. They have supported our family and have helped my daughter to get involved in dance classes and even helped us to get her the right clothes so she wasn't left out



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	when going to summer school classes. Thank you to Off The Streets.
Swffryd	My son has been going to sessions at Off The Streets for nearly 2 years. When he started he would only eat certain things at home and wouldn't talk to anybody because he couldn't speak well. Since he's been working with the staff he has tried lots of new foods and I've even had to buy some that he likes for home. He now talks lots more and has even started at a local football club.
Brynithel	My son is getting older now so I worried what he would start getting into but Off The Streets have kept him really close. They've given him the chance to volunteer and he's now hoping to go into a training course. I've seen a massive change in him over the past year or so and he's so much more mature. He can handle his anger so much better and we actually talk about anything he's worried about.
Llanhilleth	My daughter has struggled with her emotions and behaviour for a long time. Off The Streets have worked with her so well and they've never judged our circumstances, I can't thank them enough for how they've treated her. She now understands so much more about her feelings and she feels more able to cope and manage her anger.
Swffryd	They [Off The Streets staff] do so much for the kids, not just mine. They do brilliant work and help so many families. They've helped my daughter so much that she's now a young volunteer, everytime she comes home and tells me what she's been up to she's so proud. A big thank you to the staff for everything they do.



Partner Organisation Feedback

The Hold-Up



The Hold Up

Off The Streets Letter of support March 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

THU Arts Collective, aka The Hold Up, is a Welsh arts organisation that uses creative practice and Hip-Hop pedagogy to build skills, confidence, and pathways for individuals and communities who are often overlooked.

It has been a pleasure to begin working with Alana and the team at Off The Streets. Although our formal partnership began in September 2025, we had been aware of the organisation's work for some time. Their reputation for the positive and impactful work they do with young people across Blaenau Gwent had been shared with us by partner organisations, community members, and participants from our own workshops and projects. In fact, attendees, parents, and youth workers have often encouraged collaboration between our organisations, recognising the natural alignment between our approaches.

Since establishing this partnership, we have successfully delivered a creative consultation and several workshops with the Off The Streets team and the young people they support. These early sessions have already led to plans for further workshops and the development of a multi-week, participant-led creative project, which we are excited to bring forward together.

The young people we work with there are engaging and highly enthusiastic, as are the staff. Their commitment to supporting their community aligns closely with the values and goals of THU. We have witnessed first-hand the positive impact Off The Streets has on young people's lives; fostering connection, resilience, and hope across the community. Their work is an essential part of the local support network, and we are proud to stand alongside them.

Yours sincerely,
Nic Havard

Director
THU Art Collective CYF
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Ffin Dance



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To whom it may concern,

Off The Streets and FFIN DANCE have been working together for several years to combine our resources and skills. The benefits to our both groups with this multi-organisational approach are continuing to develop and grow as we continue to share; I've highlighted below what we have experienced thus far ~

- **improved outcomes** for children and young people who may be vulnerable or at risk as well as those who are not
- **reduced duplication** of services which has filled gaps in provision
- **empowerment and stronger communities** building confidence and resilience

Over the many and varied projects that we have rolled out together, strong friendships have been made, giving the participants a sense of pride and belonging. This has in turn, proven to encourage further combined work, self-confidence and a reduced fear of isolation.

FFIN DANCE has similar goals to Off The Streets and share a vision for our community.

We very much enjoy working with Alana and the team at Off The Streets and hope to be continuing our combined work for many years to come.

If there are any further enquiries, then please feel free to contact me on any of the above contacts.

Yours faithfully

Sue Lewis
Artistic Director | FFIN DANCE

Patron | FFIN DANCE
Brigadier Robert Aitken MBE, The Lord Lieutenant for Gwent



Participant & Project Case Studies



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Background of Child/Young Person

X is ten years old and regularly attends our Llanhilleth sessions and some sessions in our other working areas, mainly UsGirls sessions. X has been a participant of Off The Streets since they were approximately seven years old, so for around four years. X has always been an outgoing participant, oftentimes quite loud and boisterous in their nature, sometimes to a negative extent. X's mother has approached our team a few times over the past couple of years in order to receive support from us in order to manage X's behaviour, mood and emotional instabilities. X has sometimes been excluded from school (internally and externally) due to their behaviours and emotional outbursts.

Notable Positive Changes

With X being a regular attendee of Off The Streets sessions, our staff have been able to build a trusting relationship with them. In the past year, X has regularly been supported by staff on a one-to-one basis, and in group settings, in order to positively engage with our work. During this period, and with continued purposeful work facilitated, our team has seen X grow into a well-rounded and thoughtful young person. X has learnt to manage their emotions, now rarely having outburst of anger, instead being able to walk away and control their overwhelming feelings. X now engages in activities fully, taking time to process and reflect on what is being asked of them, and also being mindful of their peers. Very recently staff supported X to undertake an organisational survey, in which questions were asked of them regarding, if and what they may have learnt through their engagement and participation at Off The Streets sessions and activities. Notably X stated that yes, they definitely have learnt lots at Off The Streets, and when prompted to give more detail about the answer stated that - "I have learnt how to manage my anger and my emotions, I feel like I can cope better now". Mam has given positive feedback as to the work that has been undertaken with X that has gotten them to this point. Mam feels that something really great has been achieved here.

As an organisation, and a staff team, I feel that this outcome is resoundingly positive and shows that the work we have facilitated with this young person has truly worked for them. The whole staff team continue to be proud of this young person and their commitment to developing their interpersonal skills and resilience.

Benefits of Work to Child/Young Person

Overall, I feel that Off The Streets has had a significant positive impact on X's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and social development. The organisation and staff's consistent support, the development of trusted relationships, and providing structured activities have all helped X develop coping strategies, improved emotional control, and stronger interpersonal skills, demonstrating that our aims and objectives have been effectively achieved and maintained.

Please be sure **NOT** to use a child or young person's name within this case study. Please refer to the individual as **X**.
DO NOT use any information that could be seen as a breach of confidentiality about the child or young person - no personal details or informing characteristics to be shared.
Please be honest and enthusiastic - give as much detail about the child or young person's progress and engagement as possible.



Background of Project

LEAP Leaders (Leadership, Empowerment, Activation and Progression) is a youth-led volunteering initiative developed by Off The Streets. The project was launched in September 2025 following the successful award of a Social Prosperity Fund grant awarded by the local council. The project has enabled us as an organisation to further invest in developing young leaders within the community.

The project has brought together a group of seven young people who expressed a strong interest in becoming volunteers and taking on more responsibility within their local communities. From the outset, the group demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment, actively shaping the direction of the project rather than simply participating in pre-designed activities. LEAP Leaders was designed to provide young people with opportunities to develop leadership skills, build confidence, and contribute positively to their communities. The programme has focussed on empowering participants to plan, organise, and deliver activities that engage their peers while promoting personal growth and social responsibility.

Notable Positive Changes (Organisational and/or for Participants)

For the Participants

The seven participants have shown significant personal development over the course of the project and we've seen notable positive changes in the following ways -

- Increased confidence - young people who were initially hesitant have grown in confidence, taking on leadership roles in group settings and public-facing activities
- Leadership skills - participants have developed skills in planning, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving through organising events and supporting session
- Sense of ownership - the group has taken genuine ownership of the project, with young people driving ideas and decision-making from the beginning
- Peer support and influence - by supporting weekly sessions in their communities, they have become positive role models, encouraging and engaging other children and young people

A key highlight of the project so far has been the group's involvement in planning and delivering a Christmas event celebrating Welsh heritage, demonstrating creativity, teamwork, and cultural awareness. Through this project they created activities for their peers to participate in and also taught others about various parts of Welsh heritage and culture. The group also participated in a Team Building Trip during December in which they attended ice skating together. This trip helped strengthen relationships and build trust amongst the group. For some participants, this also meant overcoming personal fears, contributing to increased confidence and resilience.

In February half term, the group, alongside some of our other participants, took part in a First Aid course. Through this they gained practical, life-saving skills and a further sense of responsibility. As well as this, the group further showcased their development by organising their own celebration event. They collaborated with our organisational partners, The Hold Up, to deliver a day of hip hop workshops and activities, reflecting their interests and



strengthening community connections. They were also celebrated and thanked by their peers, families and staff to show them appreciation for all the hard work they have done.

For the Organisation

Through the development and facilitation of this young volunteers project, our organisation has seen positive changes in the following ways -

- Youth-led approach strengthened - the project has reinforced the value of co-production, with young people actively shaping delivery
- Increased engagement - with the involvement of peer volunteers our organisation has been supported to attract and retain more young people in weekly sessions
- Stronger partnerships - further collaboration with external partners has expanded opportunities for participants and has enriched our programme delivery
- Positive organisational culture - the success of the LEAP Leaders project has embedded a stronger focus on participant voice, leadership and meaningful participation across the organisation

Comments from Participants

T / 15 / Brynithel - "My favourite part about becoming a LEAP Leader has been supporting other children and young people, I know what it can be like to struggle so I feel like I've been a good role model to others."

A / 12 / Llanhilleth - "I've really enjoyed being a LEAP Leader, I think we've done some really good work together and I feel more confident in supporting staff with the sessions!"

R / 12 / Swffryd - "I look forward to our meetings, I've made new friends and built my confidence. I think my favourite part about being a LEAP Leader is helping staff run activities for the younger children."

Benefits of Work to Organisation and/or Participant/s

We feel that participants have seen many benefits from true LEAP Leader project including -

- Development of transferable skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication, and event planning
- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- Opportunities to take responsibility and make meaningful contributions
- Stronger sense of belonging and connection to their community
- Pathways for future progression into volunteering, training, or employment

As an organisation we have also seen the benefits of facilitating the LEAP Leader project such as -

- Creation of a sustainable model for youth-led volunteering
- Enhanced programme delivery through peer involvement
- Increased reach and impact within local communities
- Development of future young leaders who can support ongoing work



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- Strengthened reputation as an organisation that genuinely empowers young people

We feel that the LEAP Leaders project has demonstrated the power of investing in young people as active contributors rather than passive participants. The group of seven young volunteers have not only developed their own skills and confidence but have also played a key role in shaping and delivering meaningful activities for their peers, as well as supporting their communities to thrive. We feel that the journey of the LEAP Leaders group highlights how providing the right support, opportunities, and trust can enable young people to lead, inspire, and create lasting positive change within their communities.

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Background of Participant

X is a 17 year old male and has been attending Off The Streets sessions for over a year, initially engaging well and building positive relationships with both staff and peers. He mainly engaged in football sessions, specifically on a Tuesday evening with peers of a similar age to him. However, more recently, staff noticed a decline in X's attendance, alongside concerns around his mental health and overall wellbeing. Recognising this change, staff proactively reached out to X to offer support and maintain connection. This early intervention approach encouraged X to re-engage with sessions and rebuild trust with the team.

Notable Positive Changes (Organisational and/or for Participants)

Through consistent support and the development of a trusting relationship, X began to open up to staff about the challenges he was facing. During these conversations, he shared concerns around his mental health, alongside reliance on alcohol as a coping mechanism and some recreational drug use. Staff have worked closely with X to provide him with a safe, non-judgemental space for open discussion. They have worked to support him in recognising the impact of his behaviours on his wellbeing as well as the entourage and guide him in having honest conversations with his grandparents, who he lives with. Staff have also signposted X and supported his access to appropriate external help

As a result of this support X is now actively engaging in therapy, demonstrating a willingness to address his mental health. He has significantly reduced his alcohol consumption and has completely stopped recreational drug use. X now feels more confident in seeking support when needed and overall presentation has improved, with X now being more outgoing and engaged - like before the issues began. X has also begun to take positive steps towards his future, including actively searching for employment and engaging in his own physical and mental health and wellbeing.

As an organisation we feel that our facilitation in this situation has highlighted some important aspects of youth work as a whole. Through effective early intervention we have highlighted the importance of recognising changes in behaviour and acting quickly to re-engage young people. The strength and trust of relationships built between staff and young people are central to enabling open, honest and purposeful conversations. The organisation's and staff's ability to support not just social engagement but also health and wellbeing needs has been reinforced through a holistic approach. Staff have strengthened their approach to signposting and supporting young people into external services such as therapy where necessary, increasing our confidence in pathways to support.

Benefits of Work to Organisation and/or Participant/s

X's journey highlights the significant impact that early intervention, trusted relationships, and consistent support can have on a young person's life. By creating a safe space and responding proactively to changes in behaviour, Off The Streets has supported X to make



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meaningful, positive changes. X is now in a much stronger position, being engaged in therapy, making healthier choices, and actively working towards his future. His progress demonstrates how targeted support can empower participants to overcome challenges and take control of their wellbeing.

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Final Comments & Next Financial Year

We are extremely proud of what Off The Streets has achieved during the 2025 - 2026 financial year. The continued engagement of children and young people demonstrates the ongoing demand for safe, accessible youth and community provision within our local communities. The introduction of the LEAP Leaders programme alongside our established weekly sessions and holiday programmes has strengthened opportunities for children and young people to develop confidence, leadership skills and positive peer relationships.

Moving into the next financial year, we aim to -

- Continue delivering high quality youth and community provision across our three core areas
- Further develop leadership opportunities for children and young people
- Expand access to trips, workshops and learning experiences
- Strengthen partnerships with other community organisations and services

We are grateful to our funders and partners for their continued support. Their investment enables us to create meaningful opportunities that positively impact the lives of children and young people in our communities.