Off The Streets
Progress Report
July 2026 - September 2026

Key Work Undertaken

The second quarter of the 2026/2027 financial year has been exceptionally busy for Off The Streets, with a significant focus on delivering an engaging, inclusive and varied Summer Programme for children and young people across Swffryd, Llanhilleth and Brynithel.

Throughout July, August and September, our team worked tirelessly to ensure that our regular youth and community work opportunities continued alongside an expanded programme of activities, trips and opportunities designed to reach a wider range of children and young people within the Lower South Ebbw Fach Valley.

During this quarter, we facilitated over one hundred and thirty sessions, encompassing our regular weekly provision, activities delivered through the Food & Fun programme in local schools, and additional opportunities including cinema trips and swimming trips. This programme of delivery reflects our continued commitment to providing accessible, high-quality youth and community work that supports children and young people to thrive, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Our approach throughout the quarter has focused on creating positive experiences, building trusted relationships and encouraging children and young people to develop new skills, explore different interests and engage with their local communities. By combining structured activities with informal learning, physical recreation, creative opportunities and trips beyond their immediate surroundings, we have continued to provide safe and welcoming spaces where children and young people can feel included, valued and supported.

Summer Programme - Enrichment, Exploration and Positive Experiences

Our Summer Programme was a key priority throughout July and August, providing an extensive range of activities designed to keep children and young people engaged, active and connected during the school holidays. The programme offered opportunities to experience new activities, develop practical skills, build friendships and access experiences that may otherwise be difficult for some families to afford.

Our cinema and swimming trips provided opportunities for children and young people to enjoy experiences outside their usual session environments, supporting social interaction, independence and confidence. The Animals Interactive trip offered a further opportunity to explore new interests and engage with an experience beyond their local communities, while our ukulele taster session introduced participants to music and encouraged creativity, experimentation and self-expression.

We also incorporated a range of food-based activities, including barbecues and our Around The World project, which encouraged participants to explore different foods, cultures and traditions in an enjoyable and accessible way. These activities supported practical learning, teamwork and curiosity, while providing opportunities for children and young people to share experiences with their peers.

Environmental awareness and community responsibility were also important features of the programme. Our litter-picking competitions encouraged participants to take pride in their surroundings and recognise the positive contribution they can make to their local environment. Alongside this, activities celebrating the International Day of Friendship provided opportunities to explore the importance of positive relationships, kindness, inclusion and respect.

The Summer Reading Challenge was another valuable element of our provision, encouraging young people to engage with reading and discover the enjoyment of books during the school holidays. By incorporating literacy into our wider programme, we aimed to make reading feel accessible and enjoyable while supporting continued learning outside the classroom.

Our involvement in the Food & Fun programme also enabled us to extend our reach through sessions delivered in local schools. This helped create additional opportunities for children and young people to access activities, engage with positive experiences and benefit from our approach to inclusive community provision.

Collectively, the Summer Programme provided a broad range of opportunities for children and young people to stay active, develop interests, socialise and experience new things in a supportive environment. By offering activities that combined enjoyment with opportunities for learning and development, we continued to demonstrate the value of accessible youth and community work in supporting children and young people's wellbeing and personal growth.

July - Community Connections and Outdoor Participation

During July, we encouraged participants to make the most of their local surroundings through activities linked to the Viaduct Run and Love Parks Week. These themes provided opportunities to promote physical activity, explore local green spaces and encourage children and young people to recognise the value of the outdoor environments available within their communities.

Our focus on outdoor participation supports our wider commitment to wellbeing, helping children and young people engage in positive activities while developing an appreciation for the places in which they live. Opportunities to spend time outdoors can also provide valuable settings for informal conversations, relationship-building and shared experiences between participants and youth workers.

By incorporating local spaces and community-focused themes into our sessions, we continued to encourage participants to view their neighbourhoods as places of opportunity, recreation and connection.

August - Community Celebration at Llanhilleth Summer Fete

A significant highlight of August was our delivery of our fourth-annual Llanhilleth Summer Fete, which continued our commitment to bringing people together and creating positive opportunities for local families and residents.

Community events such as the Summer Fete provide an important opportunity to strengthen relationships beyond our regular youth and community sessions, bringing together children, young people, families, community groups and local organisations in a welcoming environment. They also help celebrate the strengths of our communities and provide opportunities for residents to connect with one another.

Our continued involvement in local events reflects our belief that youth and community work extends beyond the activities delivered directly to children and young people. By supporting community engagement and creating opportunities for people to come together, we contribute to stronger local connections and help promote a shared sense of belonging.

The Summer Fete also provided an opportunity to maintain Off The Streets' visibility within the community and reinforce our role as an organisation committed to supporting local children, young people and families.

September - Creativity, Inclusion and Personal Development

Following the busy summer period, our September programme continued to provide a varied mix of creative, physical, educational and social activities, ensuring that children and young people could remain engaged as they returned to their usual school routines.

Literacy Day activities helped maintain our focus on learning beyond the classroom, while food-based sessions, including pizza making, pitta bread pizzas, sub sandwiches and caramel apple dip'n'mix, offered opportunities to develop practical skills and explore food in an enjoyable, hands-on way. These activities encourage independence, creativity and teamwork while providing informal opportunities to develop confidence in trying new things.

Activities such as our Games Night provided a setting for positive social interaction, cooperation and shared enjoyment. Activities such as these are an important part of our provision, offering children and young people opportunities to build friendships, practise communication skills and strengthen their relationships with peers in a safe and supportive environment.

September also saw our UsGirls provision explore our Women in Wales project. This initiative created opportunities for participants to engage with Welsh women, their achievements and their contributions to society. Through themed activities, the project supported cultural awareness, discussion and learning while providing an opportunity for girls to explore identity, representation and the achievements of women in Wales.

National Fitness Day, alongside delivery of our Multi-Sport sessions, provided a further opportunity to promote physical activity and highlight the importance of movement and active lifestyles. By incorporating fitness into our regular provision, we aim to encourage children and young people to explore different ways of being active in an inclusive and enjoyable environment.

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Inclusion Week and activities linked to the International Day of Sign Languages also supported our ongoing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. These themes provided opportunities to raise awareness of different experiences and communication methods, encouraging participants to develop empathy, respect and a better understanding of the importance of making activities and community spaces welcoming to everyone.

World Clean Up Day gave us another opportunity to promote environmental responsibility through litter picking. By involving children and young people in practical activities that benefit their surroundings, we encourage them to recognise that they can make a positive contribution to their communities and take an active role in caring for shared spaces.

Fair Trade Fortnight also provided opportunities to explore the importance of ethical purchasing, fairness and the wider impact of our everyday choices. By introducing these topics through accessible activities and discussion, we encouraged children and young people to think more broadly about the world around them and the ways in which individual actions can influence others.

Together, September's activities continued to support a broad range of developmental outcomes, from practical skills and creativity to physical wellbeing, cultural awareness and community responsibility.

Supporting Young People and Strengthening Communities

Throughout the quarter, our work has continued to reflect the core values of Off The Streets - providing safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces, building positive relationships, supporting personal development and helping children and young people to feel connected to their communities.

Our varied programme has provided opportunities for children and young people to participate in activities that extend beyond their usual experiences. Whether trying a new instrument, visiting the cinema, taking part in a cooking activity, exploring different cultures or contributing to environmental projects, participants have been encouraged to develop confidence, discover interests and engage positively with others.

Our emphasis on accessible provision has remained particularly important throughout the summer holidays. By offering a broad programme of activities and trips alongside our regular sessions, we aimed to ensure that children and young people had opportunities to remain active, connected and engaged during a period when their usual school-based routines were not available.

Our work has also continued to benefit the wider community. Through litter picking, community events, local partnerships and the delivery of activities in schools, we have created opportunities for participants to contribute positively to their surroundings while strengthening connections between Off The Streets and the communities we serve.

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Importantly, our approach recognises that positive change does not always happen through one significant intervention. It is often built through consistent relationships, repeated opportunities to participate and the reassurance that there is a safe space where children and young people are welcomed, listened to and valued.

Summary of Impact

The July to September quarter has demonstrated the breadth and reach of Off The Streets' work, with 150+ sessions delivered across our regular provision, school-based Food & Fun activities and additional trips and experiences. This level of delivery reflects the dedication of our team and our continued commitment to ensuring that children and young people across Swffryd, Llanhilleth and Brynithel can access meaningful opportunities within their local communities.

Our work has supported our core values in several key areas -

- **Wellbeing and positive relationships -** summer activities, trips, games and shared experiences have created opportunities for children and young people to socialise, build friendships and enjoy positive interactions in a supportive environment
- **Learning and personal development -** the Summer Reading Challenge, ukulele taster session, cooking activities and Around The World project have encouraged participants to explore new interests, develop practical skills and learn beyond the classroom
- **Inclusion and cultural awareness -** Inclusion Week, the International Day of Sign Languages, Fair Trade Fortnight and the UsGirls Women in Wales project have provided opportunities to broaden perspectives, explore diversity and encourage respect for others
- **Physical activity and healthy lifestyles -** swimming trips, National Fitness Day and outdoor activities have encouraged participants to remain active and explore enjoyable ways to support their physical wellbeing.
- **Community pride and environmental responsibility -** litter-picking competitions, World Clean Up Day and involvement in the Llanhilleth Summer Fete have encouraged children and young people to engage with their surroundings and recognise their role within the wider community
- **Accessible opportunities and community reach -** our Summer Programme and Food & Fun delivery has enabled us to extend our work beyond our usual weekly sessions, creating additional opportunities for children and young people to participate in positive activities

As we move into the next quarter, we remain committed to building on this momentum and continuing to deliver responsive, inclusive and engaging youth and community work opportunities. The experiences provided throughout this quarter demonstrate the importance of creating opportunities that are not only enjoyable but also support children and young people's confidence, skills, relationships and sense of belonging.

Through our continued work across the Lower South Ebbw Fach Valley, Off The Streets will remain focused on its central aim - supporting children and young people to thrive while contributing to safer, stronger and more connected communities.

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Partnership Working

Blaenau Gwent Libraries / BG Arts
During this year's Summer Programme we were able to work with BG Arts & Blaenau Gwent Libraries. This work enabled us to support and encourage children and young people to take part in library and literacy-based activities. A large cohort of young people took part in the Summer Reading Challenge, encouraging them to read a specified number of books in order to win a prize at the end of the summer. We were also able to take a group of young people to an Animals Interactive trip at Abertillery Library, giving young people the opportunity to explore and become more familiar with their local library whilst engaging in a fun activity. We also were able to bring together a group of young people to participate in a Ukulele taster session, encouraging participants to pick up an instrument (which was a new experience for many), and engage in a session of tutorship by a local musician.

MotorMango Arts
We were pleased to work with Cindy Ward from MotorMango Arts again this year. Cindy facilitated a total of four creative sessions with our UsGirls cohorts. Throughout the sessions young people were able to get creative and make items of personal design to take away. The sessions gave young people the chance to have fun while learning about recycling and reusing materials.

Aneurin Leisure Sports Development Team / Food & Fun Programme
This summer marked four years of our work with Aneurin Leisure Sports Development Team and supporting their work within the Food & Fun Programme. This year our team facilitated Into The Pot cooking workshops in five schools throughout Blaenau Gwent, both primary and secondary phase. The sessions encouraged and enabled children and young people to learn skills and techniques relating to food preparation, serving and cooking. The sessions were a resounding success again this year with over one hundred and twenty participants being reached throughout the five schools.

Helen Cunningham / Blaenau Gwent Council / Blaenau Gwent Play Team
During the beginning of September we approached Helen and the Councils Play Team to engage in the Paint Your Park initiative happening within the local borough. We engaged in a site visit with both Helen and Sharon Gapper at Swffryd and Llanhilleth play areas, taking the opportunity to discuss options and create a plan for refreshing both parks. As such, two days were written into the calendar to undertake the Paint Your Park project. Our team and our participants are very much looking forward to participating in the work and seeing the results we will make together with, and for, the community.

The Hold Up
We have continued our collaborative work The Hold Up throughout this quarter. Working in close collaboration with the Urban Arts collective and our own participants of the LEAP

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Leader project, we created a Website Development project. The project itself has been designed and co-ordinated by the young people themselves. They have worked hard, with support from both ours and The Hold Up's team, to create a website for Off The Streets, and to plan a Launch Event for the website itself. The project has been particularly successful in engaging young people in learning new skills and building their experiences of teamwork and volunteering.

Participation Figures

	Female Interactions	Male Interactions	6-10 Years Interactions	11+ Years Interactions	New Participants	Total Number of Sessions Facilitated	Total Number of Interactions
July 2026	253	368	212	417	18	50	622
August 2026	379	392	351	420	30	65	771
September 2026	201	286	155	331	19	40	488

Feedback - Organisational

Kirsty - Blaenau Gwent Young Carers Service
Alana delivers fantastic cooking sessions which the children really enjoy. She always comes prepared with fun recipes that are easy for the children to make again at home. The colourful menus she provides are easy to follow, and a lovely resource for families to use together. Alana plans ahead by bringing additional activities for the children if there is extra time at the end of a session. She is flexible, inclusive, and makes sure every child has the opportunity to join in and give it a go. Her colleague is equally supportive and contributes positively to the sessions.

Cindy Ward - MotorMango Arts
This summer's programme of arts and crafts sessions with Alana Insley group of young people was -as always- a lovely workshop to run. Well organised with Alana's small team and good attendance for each evening averaging around 8 girls, who engaged really well with all the skill based crafts, working will tools and learning making methods with a variety of new and recycled materials, to create their artworks. Having a lot of fun making and connecting to others in their community.
This year in our four 'drop in' sessions - two sessions in each venue - we made Junk jewellery including; braided wire bracelets, earrings and key rings. The second session we created memory bugs / butterflies, with brass wire wings, recycled bead eyes and feet. For the body they wrote a short message to a loved one, or themselfs, with coloured marker pens on a tapering strip of crystal clear sticky back plastic. Once they had carefully rolled it up, the

message disappeared, becoming a 'forever secret', forming a long brightly coloured bead for the body of the insect. All went home with at least one or two creations each session.
The summer holiday can seem a long time for young people. Having access to a ‘free to attend’ activities in an easy to reach venue within the local area, with help to attend if they live a little further away, is a vital resource for these teenagers in valley communities, especially with the continuing increase of the costs of living, most family budgets are being squeezed tighter than ever. Our young people need to stay connected and these sessions give them a place to hang out and have fun in a safe and inclusive welcoming environment.
I look forward to running further sessions with Alana and the ‘Off the Street’ team in the near future.

Cameron Herring - Aneurin Leisure Sports Development Team
‘Off the Streets’ once again played a crucial role in our summer provision this year, particularly through their ‘Into the Pot’ sessions, delivered as part of the Food and Fun programme.
The programme was delivered across Blaenau Gwent during the first 12 days of the summer holidays, providing a wide range of activities across the eight participating schools. Alongside the physical activity sessions, the ‘Into the Pot’ sessions gave over 250 pupils the opportunity to learn how to prepare and cook healthy meals, including healthy cheesecakes and fruit salads.
Without this provision, many of the children involved may not have had access to similar opportunities to develop their cooking skills and gain a greater understanding of the important role healthy eating plays in maintaining an overall healthy lifestyle.
Having worked with ‘Off the Streets’ on the programme for the past four years, we look forward to continuing this partnership in the future. We are grateful for the support of Alana and her staff, whose contribution helps provide children with valuable and varied experiences that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to access.

Bethan Lewis - BG Arts
Working in partnership with Off The Streets as part of the Youth Libraries Project has helped to address barriers to participation by enabling us to engage a new group of young people who may not otherwise have accessed library services. Many of the young people who engage with Off The Streets live in communities furthest from their local library and, as a result, were not library members prior to their involvement in the programme.
Through outreach sessions delivered within their regular youth settings young people were introduced to library services and resources, provided with access to a collection of library books, and encouraged to take part in the Youth Summer Reading Challenge. Participants also engaged in music activities as part of the Read to the Beat Summer Reading Campaign and were supported to visit their local library through the provision of transport. As a result of these activities and the support of the Off the Streets team, 18 young people have become library members and are motivated to engage with their local library service.
This partnership has helped to ensure that library services are accessible, relevant and inclusive. We hope to continue working with Off The Streets to enable more young people across Blaenau Gwent to benefit from the wide range of opportunities, resources and activities available through our libraries.

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Helen Cunningham - Llanhilleth Ward Councillor
We are so lucky to have Off the Streets in the Lower Ebbw Fach Valley. Their ability to engage and build relationships with children and young people through the outreach that they do has such a positive and lasting impact. They are rooted in every community they are in and well networked with local services, schools, community groups and venues throughout the area. Off the Streets are also proactive and innovative in the range of events, activities and engagement they provide and get involved in. They were instrumental in getting the recent "Paint your park" event off the ground and making it such a success in Swffryd in collaboration with the borough and town councils and local community members and organisations. The turnout from local young people was incredible thanks to Off the Streets. They are an integral and consistent force delivering positive and impactful outcomes for children, young people and the wider community.

Feedback - Participants
I really enjoyed taking part in the swimming sessions in the summer holidays. It always felt amazing to go on a free trip and go and do something that I don't normally get to do. Thank you to the staff for taking us. **- Swffryd Participant**
I have always felt welcomed, safe and included at Off The Streets. The staff are helpful and they care about us. **- Swffryd Participant**
I feel like the sessions have helped me to clear my mind from anything stressful. **- Swffryd Participant**
The staff are very supportive. I've had some personal issues over the last few months and I felt like I had nowhere to turn or no one to speak to. Alana has offered me advice and support. She has helped me get my CSCS card and get to important meetings. I feel like I'm in a better place now. **- Brynithel Participant**
Off The Streets gives us lots of opportunities to do fun stuff. I especially loved the swimming trips because my family can't afford to take me very often. **- Llanhilleth Participant**
I feel like you did as much as you could do for us over the summer. Everything was fun and we got to try new things. It's the first time I played handball and I proper liked it. **- Llanhilleth Participant**
I would rate Off The Streets 5 out of 5. The staff always do fun things with us but they also care about us and help us. I think the sessions are great and I think we should have more sessions. **- Brynithel Participant**

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I like it so much, it's really fun. It makes me happy. I like being with my new friends and the women are actually really nice. And the food is always fun to make. **- Young Carers Participant**

Feedback - Families / Parents / Carers
A huge thank you to all of you for your hard work throughout the school holidays. **X** has really enjoyed the activities and had a great time, especially the cooking and swimming! **- Llanhilleth Parent**
You guys have been amazing these holidays, Parker has loved it! You've really thought about the wider community and families juggling work and family life, with such a great range of fun, age-appropriate activities. Thank you so much! **- Llanhilleth Parent**
I found it provided valuable support for working parents by offering safe and enjoyable activities for children during the summer holidays. It also benefited my child by helping him become more independent, build confidence, and try new things. He especially enjoyed the excitement of catching the bus and experiencing new activities, which made the programme both fun and beneficial for his personal development. **- Llanhilleth Parent**
The range of activities provided ranging from cooking, physical activities and swimming. The availability of the sessions, I was able to book onto the things that my child wanted to do. My child attended activities that they wouldn't have done had it not been for OTS. Some activities lasted a few hours which is helpful for working parents! My child feels comfortable attending the sessions as the staff are friendly and helpful. My child tried new foods and new activities. **- Llanhilleth Parent**
As mentioned, the fact that activities are provided at zero cost to families as well as providing the opportunities to engage and participate in activities that children would not otherwise have the opportunity to do. **- Aberbeeg Parent**
The team at off the streets are absolutely fabulous. They all go above & beyond to make sure that all children are included in all activities. **- Swffryd Parent**
It has been brilliant for our daughter to be part of the LEAP Leaders project. It has given her the chance to learn skills, especially social skills. She has made new friends and built her self-esteem and self-confidence. She now has a better sense of responsibility and independence. **- Brynithel Parent**