

A Collaborative Youth Work Hub

AYL

Our Purpose

To inspire and motivate young people to achieve their potential.

Our Mission

We empower young people to discover their potential, helping them to get work-ready by building confidence, resilience and life skills through the power of 1-2-1 mentoring, real-world experiences and practical skills development.

Our Vision

To guide every young person towards a positive future, arming them with the skills to succeed in work, training, further education and life.

Our Values

We Open Minds

By challenging perceptions and encouraging curiosity, not just for the young people we support, but for mentors, volunteers, businesses, the public and ourselves.

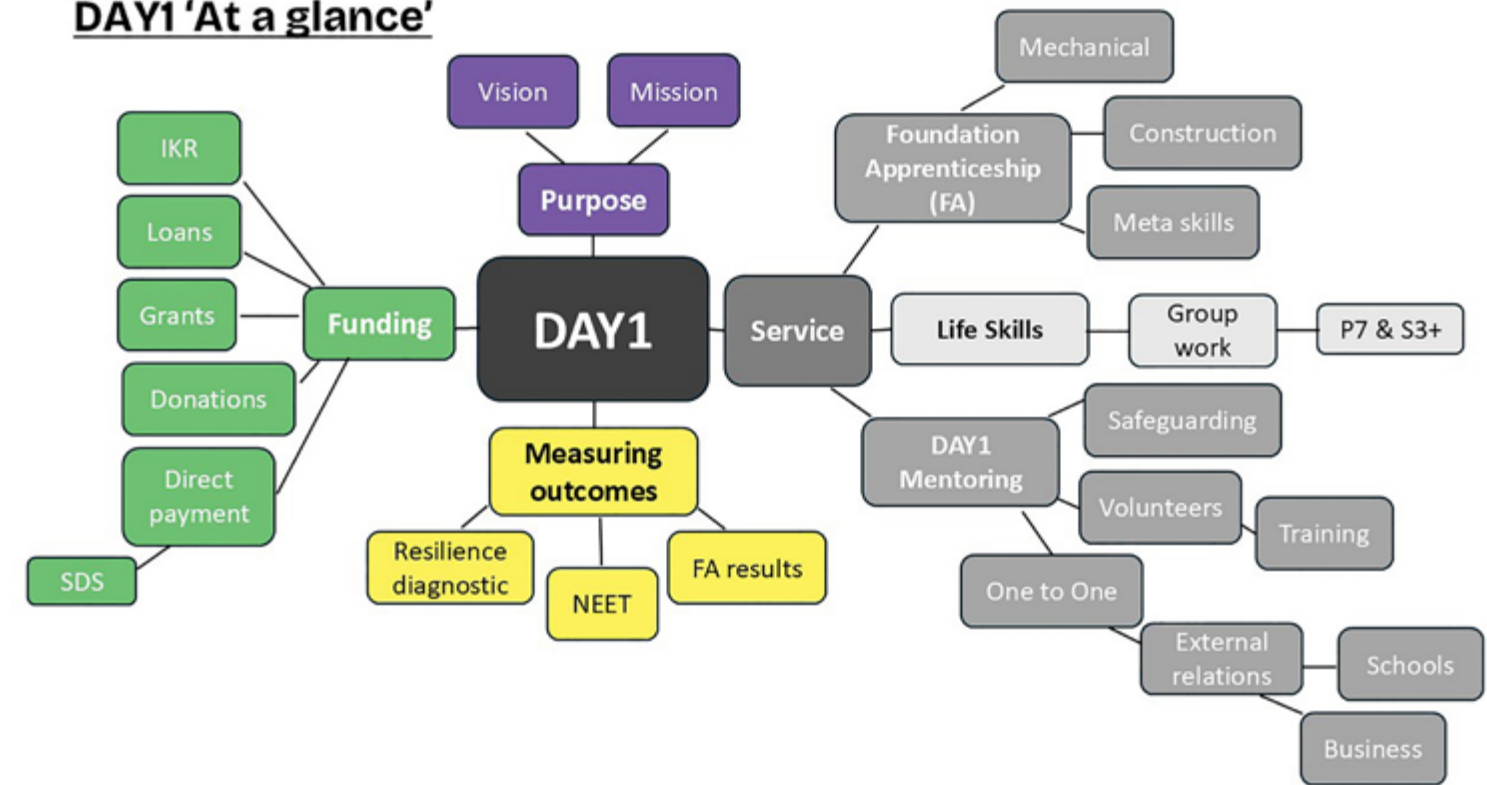
We champion ambition

Continually seeking new ways to evolve and better our services. We also believe in the boundless potential of every young person and strive to achieve positive outcomes for all who come through our programmes.

We nurture growth

By offering a safe and supportive environment for young people, where they can build confidence and resilience with guidance from trusted mentors.

DAY1 'At a glance'



DAY1 Services

Our services support our Vision and Mission and centre on three themes:

- **One to One Mentoring** for S4+ stage pupils has been our core activity for 20 years and is managed by one full time coordinator and up to 40 volunteer Mentors each year. The purpose of the mentor/mentee relationship is to assist the mentees to remove themselves from being at risk of NEET (Not in Employment, Education, Training). For an explanation of NEET, see the 'Outcomes' section below. Included in the Highland area communities we serve are those who sit in the lower socio economic quintiles, i.e. 4 and 5. These are perhaps the hardest to reach and face the toughest challenges.
- **Life Skills and Personal Development** courses are run as a group activity aimed towards the younger person, in this case P7s and S3s. The young people being referred are those who are deemed as at risk of dropping out of school and straight into becoming NEET even at this younger age. The Life Skills program is designed to help them discover new interests, enhance self-confidence and ultimately encourage re-engagement with school so that they both start and complete their secondary schooling.
- **Foundation Apprenticeships** are an SQA Accredited, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) approved training program to support young people, some of whom are at risk of dropping out of school. The aim of the course is to help young people reengage with the sort of technical learning that employers require. Run from within our social enterprise business at Inverness Kart Raceway, this program moves beyond training solely in technical skills to focus too on those all-important meta-skills which help create well rounded potential employees of the future. The course material and delivery are audited by SDS and outcomes are measured and reported annually. As of February 2025, we have 100 young people moving through the FA program each year.

Day1 Outcomes

The primary aim of our outcomes and the theme that runs through all our services, is to prevent young people from disadvantaged backgrounds slipping into becoming another NEET statistic. NEET is a Government term standing for 'Not in Education, Employment or Training'. To be NEET between the ages of 16 and 19 has grave social and economic consequences both for the individual and for society as a whole. To be NEET at 16 to 19 years old is to be open to the risk of long-term unemployment, a lifetime of under-employment, potential criminality, drug abuse, homelessness, early pregnancy and long-term state dependency. The key word here is 'prevent' and we do that by intervening at key stages in the young person's journey both within school and in their transition from it.

- **One to One Mentoring:** Hard-nosed measurement against NEET, i.e. whether the young person is in education, employment or training. We do this both at the end of their year's mentoring and for up to five years beyond.
- **Life Skills and Personal Development courses:** For P7 aged children, a successful outcome is whether or not they begin engaging at school and transition successfully into a sustainable attendance at Secondary school. In addition, feedback is secured from teachers and guidance staff directly.
- **Foundation Apprenticeships (FA):** Hard-nosed outcomes are measured against each young person's attendance, completion and SQA qualification attainment. These three outcomes are set by SDS and used nationally. DAY1 works tirelessly at establishing industry sector future Modern Apprenticeship opportunities for our trainees and has established a strong and respected position with partners in this sector. With a new-found, hard wired, work ready attitude, trainees find themselves in great demand. Meaningful re-engagement in school and securing college placements are also powerful indicators of the strong outcomes being achieved by the DAY1 FA.





DAY1 Funding

DAY1 is largely self-funded through our social enterprise business Inverness Kart Raceway (IKR). IKR was established 10 years after DAY1 was founded and until then we were reliant on a range of so-called 'traditional' funding bodies including: Robertsons Trust, National Lottery, Children in Need, Laidlaw Foundation and more.

IKR itself was funded through a mix of grant and loan from Scottish & Southern Energy, Social Investment Scotland, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and banks.

Each service is funded as follows:

- **One to One Mentoring:** Currently funded by IKR and by occasional private donations. There is also the potential to add 'traditional' funding at any time.
- **Life Skills and Personal Development courses:** Currently funded by IKR.
- **Foundation Apprenticeships:** Funded annually by SDS through the national scheme administered by Scottish Funding Council.



A Collaborative Youth Work Hub

DAY1

What is the Youth Work Hub?

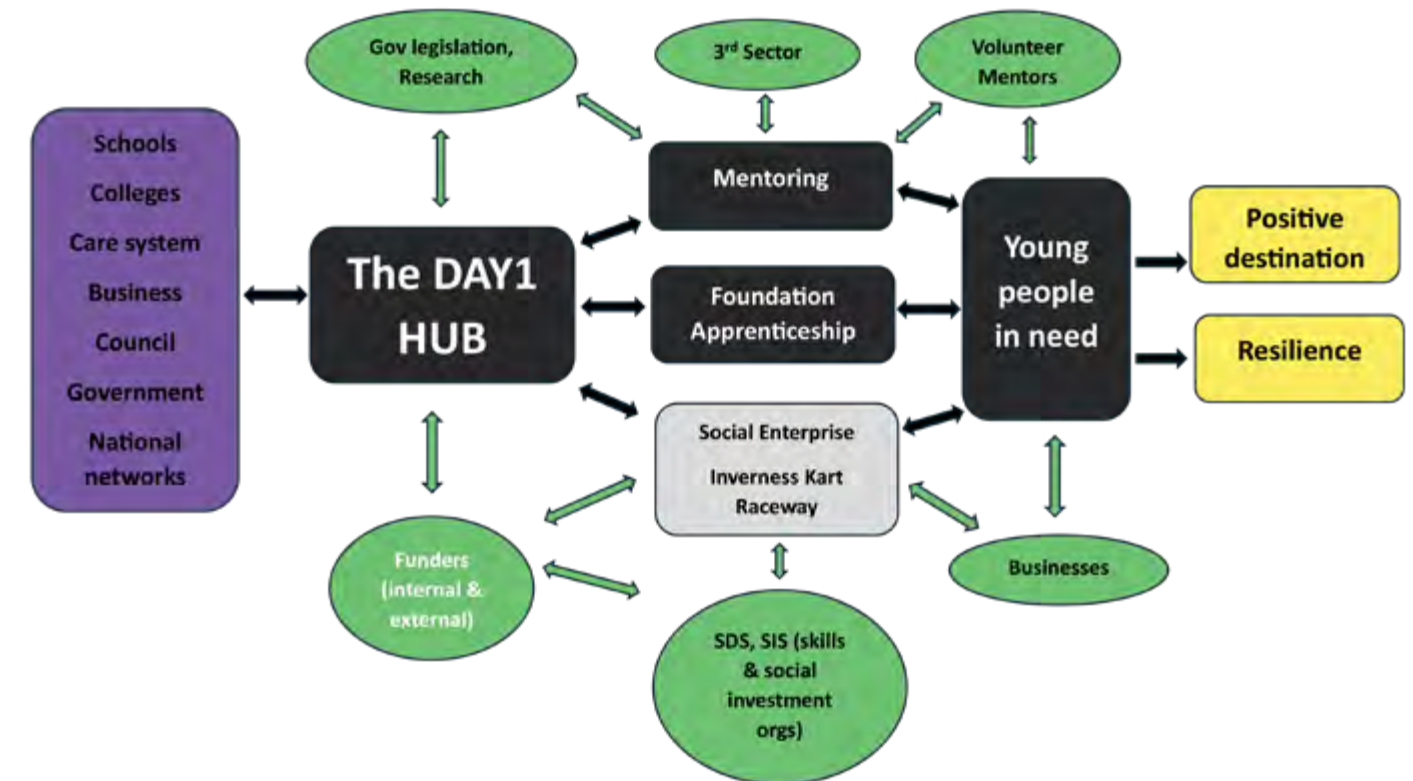


DEFINITION: The DAY1 youth work hub (The Hub) is a unique series of structured, long-term collaborations built to provide young people from disadvantaged backgrounds with an opportunity to live to their potential.

The Hub sits at the center of a complex ecosystem of inter-relationships and is characterised by:

- Recognising and seeking to counter the potential negative impact of young people becoming NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) from the age of 16.
- Committing to engage with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those in the lowest socio-economic quintiles 4 and 5.
- Committing to increasing 'community glue' across social divides.
- Building an ever-growing team of local volunteer Mentors from across society.
- Creating long-term, structured agreements between organisations (schools, Government agencies, businesses, care providers, funders, other charities etc.).
- Involving multiple schools and care providers to ensure we maximise our reach to those young people who are most vulnerable of becoming NEET.
- Prioritising and committing to providing forward-thinking and relevant training for Mentors and Foundation Apprenticeship leaders.
- Constantly researching and innovating around our service offerings.
- Operating at the forefront of safeguarding young people under our care.
- Measuring the progress of our young people against hard-nosed, measurable and meaningful outcomes.
- Actively engaging in Government policy and legislative arenas where relevant.
- Building deep knowledge around what we do and sharing findings across relevant service sectors.

The Hub at a Glance



DAY1 Hub History

The first foundations were laid in 2005 when the founding partners, whose own children were nearing school-leaving age, noted that a growing number of young people were doing the same but without any standard qualifications or obvious future plans. The Scottish Government had been gathering figures for this group and had coined the term NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). To be NEET between the ages of 16 and 19 continues to have grave social and economic consequences both for the individual and for society as a whole.

To be NEET at 16 to 19 years old was to be open to the risk of long-term unemployment, a lifetime of under-employment, potential criminality, drug abuse, homelessness, early pregnancy and long-term state dependency. The average cost to the taxpayer, during the lifetime of someone who is NEET in 2005 was just shy of £100k.

Scotland's NEET figures, at 14%, were the worst in Europe at that time. Drawing on their

experience as parents, employers, business owners, school representatives and political activists, the founding partners put together a proposal for a preventative program which they hoped would help reverse this figure in their community. With a special focus on communities within areas of multiple deprivation, 'DAY1' was born.

From the outset, taking a collaborative approach was key. Time was taken to build understanding both of the nature and of the scale of the challenge. Schools, Care providers, Council, local businesses, funders and charities were all approached for their input and the resulting DAY1 one-to-one mentoring service was officially launched in 2006.

Set up as a company with charitable status and registered with the relevant charitable bodies, DAY1 secured its first funding package from the Laidlaw Foundation. This was to be the catalyst for winning match funding from elsewhere and within a few months, the Robertson's Trust, the Lottery and Children in Need and others had stepped in to support. This funding, alongside enthusiastic support from schools and local businesses, was to be the game changer. DAY1, now with three directors at the helm, could plan ahead for several years and start to take a more strategic view.

A blueprint for the future was formed whereby DAY1 would spend some years testing, measuring and improving its service on the ground. Pressures from funders to expand our geographical reach would be resisted while this took place. Focusing on fewer individuals (25 Day1ers per year) rather than spreading ourselves too thin too quickly soon started to pay dividend. By 2010 it became clear that our year-long, one-to-one, out-of-school mentoring by teams of well-trained volunteer mentors was delivering positive measurable outcomes. Day1ers, as they often referred to themselves, were successfully lifting themselves out of the NEET category and discovering a new-found positivity, self-confidence and ambition. Mentor/Day1er relationships often lasted way beyond the year for which they were funded and Day1ers' destinations were followed up for up to five years after they left the program. Measured against the NEET benchmark, an 89% success rate after five years, meant DAY1 had now won the integrity it needed to face the future with confidence.

In 2014, DAY1 was awarded the 'Queen's award for voluntary service'. At the heart of this public recognition were DAY1's volunteer mentors. Ordinary (actually quite extraordinary) women and men from all walks of life continued to step forward to commit to a young person in need. Meeting for two to four hours every week for twelve months, this commitment by Mentors was and still is at the heart of the DAY1 Hub.

Acting on the mantra that 'work is good', one of the key items in the DAY1 Mentors' toolbox was the setting up of real-life work experiences.

Relationships with businesses across the east Highlands became a central plank of the mentored experience and each Day1er could receive several such experiences as they navigated their way towards deciding what they wanted to do with their lives going forward.

In the same vein, DAY1's directors started to become nervous about the funding streams available for the charity in the long term. A more business-like approach to funding was thus formed. Several money-making schemes were set up including a partnership with a local IT software company to develop an online tool to maximise child safeguarding for both Mentors and Day1ers out in the field. 'Mentornet' continues in use to this day and has become a central communications tool not just for DAY1 but also for universities and other organisations across the globe.

In 2015, big change was afoot. Ten years after its founding, DAY1 went into the Go-karting business. Inverness Kart Raceway (IKR) was born from an ambition for DAY1 to become financially self-sustaining and wean itself off, in part or in whole, the need for constant handouts. Three years from conception and with support from Social Investment Scotland and several private companies, IKR opened its doors to a public hungry for an indoor, year-round karting offering. Set up as a social enterprise, IKR is wholly owned by DAY1 and its constitution states that 100% of any profits will go to fund its charitable activities.

And then, as often happens when you step into new places, interesting things start to happen. It quickly became clear that IKR was a magnet for the very same young people with whom we were already engaged in DAY1 mentoring. The executive team saw an opportunity to capitalize on this interest and within two years of opening its doors, IKR became a centre for delivering SQA approved Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) in mechanics for young people for whom regular schooling was not working. Using the mentoring skills built over the past ten years, a program was delivered for Skills Development Scotland that included not only technical skills but also those so-called soft skills or meta-skills that enable the building of a sustainable career. Attendance, punctuality, working in groups, respect for others, continual learning, resilience, written and verbal communication skills and more, all are a key part of DAY1/IKR's Foundation Apprenticeship experience.

And the results speak for themselves. One hundred and twenty young people undertake the DAY1 FA every year and, measured against attendance, completion and levels of attainment, DAY1's results are consistently well above the national average.



By 2022 several important developments had occurred:

- Following a decline in DAY1's mentoring service during the covid pandemic and the subsequent challenges with young people's mental health, the demand by schools for DAY1's service was growing once more.
- The Government's NEET figures, while much improved since 2005, remained too high and continued to demand action.
- The Scottish Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020v.2 placed several Highland communities in the lowest quintiles, i.e. 4 and 5.
- Young people affected by the Covid restrictions and possibly also by the negative aspects of social media on their personal development, remained in need of societal support to get back on their feet. Talk of the 'lost generation' could not be ignored.
- The world of work was changing. A growing 'knowledge' and 'green' economy required heightened technical abilities and practical skills from school, college and university leavers.
- Brexit has enhanced the need for more home-grown talent here in the UK. School leavers coached in both technical and meta skills were becoming a key resource for UK business.
- The nation's health problems were becoming critical. A growing tide of obesity, mental health issues and associated challenges including diabetes, absenteeism and lost economic opportunities, personal and organisational, needed addressing.

DAY1 had already responded to these challenges by re-orientating the 'mentoring' program towards a 'resilience' one. With input from mentors, Day1ers, staff, schools, businesses and an external advisory group, DAY1's 'Resilience program' was born.

On leaving the DAY1 program, Day1ers will be navigating a world of ever-changing working lives. Changes in technology, in communications, in teamworking, in geography, in practical skills and in the need for life-long learning, will all require a workforce who are adaptable and willing to change. 'Resilience' is to be 'agile and not fragile'.

By 2024, DAY1's Resilience program was being assimilated into both one-to-one mentoring and the foundation apprenticeship. In partnership with the Resilience Institute, a resilience diagnostic was developed for Day1ers to better understand themselves and where they might best put their energies to growing their resilience. Meantime, in and around the Hub, partners including schools and businesses are buying in to DAY1's enhanced intent to build resilient and work-ready young people.



DAY1 Hub's Operational Context

Market demand for the DAY1 service:

The provision of support for young people in need is, unfortunately, a harsh socio-economic reality. Scottish Government NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) statistics remain a concern and, with 17,500 jobless and inactive young workers here in Scotland, there is work to do. Those young people who are NEET between 16 and 19 years of age are almost three times more likely to still be unemployed by age 26 to 29.

Of those young people who are in education or employment, it is notable that only 2% are in training. Training for the skills required by the new economy will be central to young people winning and sustaining employment going forward.

The message from business is clear. With Brexit closing off easy access to foreign workforce, we must grow the skills we need closer to home. A quote from the Inverness & Cromarty Green Freeport sums up this point well:

"Inverness & Cromarty Firth Green Freeport will support the creation of thousands of well-paid jobs for generations to come. To achieve this, we need a collaborative approach to creating pathways for these jobs and organisations such as DAY1, are an integral part of this strategy. Increasing access to Foundation Apprenticeships in the Highlands will help make these employment opportunities a reality."

Foundation and full apprenticeships are increasingly being understood as part of and not separate from young people's education. Building skills relevant to employers' needs is to be a key plank in guiding both education and the funding thereof. The Scottish Government sponsored report by James Withers, entitled 'Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation' makes it clear as to how important are the post-school learning opportunities and special mention is made of the value of foundation apprenticeships.

Funding availability

DAY1 will continue to innovate within the funding arena. Core funding at present is provided by the Inverness Kart Raceway (IKR) business where 100% of profits go to fund DAY1 activities. So-called traditional funding streams such as Lottery etc. remain open for application should they be needed.

IKR is owned and managed in full by the DAY1 executive team. Its reason for existence is to create profit and thereby fund, in whole or in part, the DAY1 mentoring service and resilience program.

DAY1's Foundation apprenticeship training takes place within the IKR premises. Foundation apprenticeship (FA) funding is secured through the Government agency, Skills Development Scotland. It is likely that this funding will remain available for the foreseeable future although the mechanism for its delivery may change. Scottish Funding Council may become the final decision maker on FA contracts going forward. DAY1 is therefore putting effort into building new relationships within Government departments and with relevant Scottish Ministers in preparation for any such change.

The political sphere

With the green and construction economies looming large, employers and the Scottish and UK Governments have been clear in their stated intent to enable growth in these sectors. Supporting such growth is the need to build a workforce with the practical skills required by a developing economy. Government reports (e.g. Withers 2023) stress the importance of post-school education and the need for young people to be front and centre of this effort.

The First Minister for Scotland sums this up well, "I want every child in Scotland to have the best possible start in life, it is unacceptable for children from the poorest backgrounds to have their chances limited by circumstances outside their control."

"This Government has made clear, our priority is to close the poverty-related attainment gap, raising standards for all and making the improvements that are necessary to make Scottish education world-class." **John Swinney, First Minister Scottish Government.**



Trajectory of the DAY1 hub towards 2030

All insight points both to the social and economic need to provide resilient and work-ready young people. Demand from businesses navigating the change to a green economy and the post-Brexit need for home-grown talent are likely only to increase. Schools, colleges and third sector providers such as DAY1 will need to work in partnership to ensure education and training is both relevant and pitched at a level valued by employers.

There is a social imperative in addressing the NEET figures here in Scotland. Supporting young people in need will assist in lessening the opportunity gap built up over the past ten years. Making it more likely that those from disadvantaged backgrounds have the same chances for achieving their potential as those born to more fortunate surroundings is good for the individual and good for society as a whole. Responding to business needs, DAY1 is currently assessing the possibility of adding to their Foundation Apprenticeship offering. Business is crying out for those with a grounding in 'trades' (joiners, electricians, plumbers etc.), so a business plan is under discussion to build a DAY1 Centre of Learning. Using the mentoring and teaching skills developed over the past twenty years, DAY1 is in a good place to deliver work-ready young people into the market.

As part of the journey to the economy of the future, policy makers and regulators will require a well-coordinated engagement from all providers to enable them to balance their funding efforts and ensure consistency of service provision.

The DAY1 collaborative youth work Hub is in place, ready to seize opportunities and address most effectively the challenges to be overcome.

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Charity Number SC036896
Company Number 291616