



## **Young people from Clydebank are changing closes**

A group of young people from Clydebank have transformed flats in the area as part of a leading charity's efforts to help young people make a positive difference in their local community. Their hard work was honoured by Gil Paterson MSP at a presentation event held on Friday 24 February.

Eight young men and four young women, aged 16-19, took part in the Inspiring Scotland Challenge set by children's charity, Action for Children. The group were set the task of redecorating closes and shared areas in Clydebank Housing Association flats.

Paul McCann (18) said: "The Challenge was hard work but it has been worth it. I am really proud of what we have achieved and I hope the residents are pleased with the improvements we have made to the buildings."

The young people's hard work was recognised at a presentation event attended by Gil Paterson, MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie. He said: "I would like to congratulate the team for all of their hard work, commitment and creativity. The young people involved in the Challenge have undertaken a wide range of activities, and I'm sure the families from the area are very grateful for their efforts."

Brushes and rollers were donated to the Challenge by Ralph Russell, managing director of local decorating firm RJ Russell. He said: "The group has done a fantastic job, I am very impressed. It is so uplifting to witness young people giving something back to their local community and I am pleased to have had the opportunity to support the Challenge." Participant Paul McCann has since been employed by RJ Russell and will be provided with college input.

The Challenge took six weeks to complete. As well as cleaning and painting closes and shared areas in Clydebank Housing Association flats, the group also took part in Barclays Money Skills Workshops and completed a Nil by Mouth Workshop on reducing sectarianism in communities.

The Inspiring Scotland Challenges programme, delivered by Action for Children, aims to provide young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to benefit local communities. It also encourages them to engage with other groups in order to improve inter-generational relations and to promote a more positive image of young people.

Tony Scally, group manager of children's services at Action for Children Scotland, said: "The young people involved in the Clydebank Challenge should be immensely proud of what they have achieved over the past few weeks. As well as making a positive difference in the local community, they have developed skills and gained experience that will stand them in good stead for the future."

Action for Children delivered the programme in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Council, who support Inspiring Scotland Challenges as part of their 'More Choices, More Chances' strategy, and Clydebank Housing Association.

Sharon Keenan, Depute Director of Clydebank Housing Association, said: "We are delighted we have been able to assist in the successful delivery of this Inspiring Scotland Challenge for the benefit of our tenants and residents, local community and, of course, for the young people themselves.

"We are impressed with the quality of work and commitment from the young people as well as the level of support, training and guidance provided to them by the Action for Children Scotland team throughout the six week Challenge.

"We hope that the young people themselves feel that participating in the Challenge has been worthwhile and rewarding and will lead to bigger and greater things for them in the future".

**Photocall:** Photos of some of the work in progress and some final images of the work are shown below.

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**Notes to Editor:** visit [www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk) for more information.

