



Mentoring Scotland's Young People
.....
intandem report
2020/21



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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INSPIRING SCOTLAND



Foreword by Celia

We all need consistent, trusting relationships. For children and young people, the presence of 'one good adult'¹ can positively impact their mental health, confidence, and self-belief.

But for young people who have come through the care system, building trust is often difficult, and supportive role models can be hard to find. intandem, Scotland's national mentoring programme, funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by Inspiring Scotland, connects young people and volunteer mentors to establish a meaningful, supportive relationship, for the good times and the bad.

In Scotland, over 3,500 children and young people live at home under a compulsory supervision order (CSO) as part of the care system. Being in care is often linked to social disadvantage, however children and young people living at home on a CSO have the poorest outcomes. The reality is that 85% of children are referred to the Hearing system solely because of concerns for their care and protection. intandem is focused on supporting these children and young people to develop positive relationships, to help them overcome the barriers that come with a difficult childhood, and build their confidence to ask for support when needed. Weekly mentoring provides space for these positive relationships to flourish.

“It is clear that Scotland must not aim to fix a broken system but set a higher collective ambition that enables loving, supportive and nurturing relationships as a basis on which to thrive.”

(The Promise, The Independent Care Review)

A year like no other

With increased isolation and anxiety and limited access to social networks, many of us have found the past year extremely challenging.

But lockdown has been even harder on young people already coping with complicated home lives. For our mentees, having a trusted mentor who consistently offered a listening ear was essential.

“Knowing I have someone to talk to has helped a lot.”

(Response to Young Person Survey, June 2020)

Picture: Celia Tennant,
Chief Executive, Inspiring Scotland

1. <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/about-us/professional-support-sites/mental-health-improvement-and-equalities/child-and-youth-mental-health/one-good-adult/>



Picture: intandem visits Bute House, 2020

Sharing a mentoring relationship also helped our volunteers, with both parties benefitting from their shared connection.

“ It has given me more confidence in dealing with different situations. It has given me a greater insight into the difficulties young people can face. I enjoy the company of my young person and like hearing his chat each week.”

(Response to Volunteer Survey, August 2020)

Our intandem community is built on shared values of respect, openness, commitment and aspiration.

Our working relationships have strengthened this year. After the initial rapid response to meet the immediate needs of children and families, our portfolio of 12 committed partner organisations worked together to develop online services, interpret the latest guidance and share solutions.

We established new ways of bringing our community together, connecting with young people and volunteers online.

We launched our young advisory group, bringing together young people from across the country with experience of intandem mentoring. Their voices will be instrumental to the future of intandem.

Our popular national volunteer events offer continued learning and a supportive space for mentors to share experiences. We are humbled by the incredible commitment of our volunteers, who continue to dedicate their time to supporting children and young people.

Aspirations

intandem mentoring relationships are reliable, consistent and long term. They have continued to provide connection throughout this difficult year.

“ It has been good to maintain contact and for them to feel they still have my support. It lets them vent frustrations to someone outside the family and talk about any concerns.”

(intandem Volunteer Mentor)

Our collective ambition is that all children and young people who are in care or on the edge of care have the resilience and confidence to succeed in life. We are committed to enabling all young people to have at least one long term relationship with a positive adult role-model.

“ Overcoming trauma requires a foundation of stable, nurturing, loving relationships. For above all else, the Care Review has heard that children want to be loved, and recovery from trauma is often built on a foundation of loving, caring relationships.”

(The Promise, The Independent Care Review)

**Celia Tennant
Chief Executive**

intandem: enabling young people to fulfill their own aspirations

With the support of a mentoring relationship, intandem enables children and young people to bring about positive change in their lives. Setting and making progress towards their own goals and aspirations, young people report changes in the following social and health & wellbeing outcomes:

- Increased self-confidence
- Improved self-esteem
- Improved social relationships
- Reduced social isolation
- More positively engaged in local community, in all aspects of their daily life

intandem is closely aligned to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework outcomes and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. We work towards helping all children and young people to grow up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential, live in inclusive, empowered, and resilient communities, and experience improved mental and physical wellbeing.

We promote a rights-based approach to develop both our mentoring relationships and our programme as a portfolio. We believe everyone should have fair access to opportunities to reach their potential and lead happy and healthy lives. We are acutely aware that poor outcomes are a reality for many with experience of the 'care system' as result of inequality of opportunity and disadvantage.

On the following pages, some of our children and young people share their experiences of intandem mentoring.

All children and young peoples names have been changed throughout this report and many of the photographs are not the actual young person to protect their identities.



Picture: Rachel (intandem Mentor) and Ryan

“The kindness is overwhelming. I really don't know what else to say apart from you are all like part of my family now and I am so grateful for all the hard work you have put in with Ross. So thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

(Parent)


Jamie's story

Jamie, 17, lives at home with his mum, dad and three of his eight siblings.

Before being matched with a mentor, Jamie's schooling was disrupted by a volatile home life. With both parents working part-time and Jamie's mum suffering from physical and mental health issues, Jamie was heavily relied upon to help with chores and childcare. While mum was supportive of Jamie's hopes to attend college, dad felt Jamie should leave education to contribute to the family's finances, leading to conflict in the home.

Being matched with mentor Laura three years ago allowed Jamie a safe space to express his frustrations. They have built a positive relationship, with Laura supporting him to enjoy free time for himself, and pursue a love of the outdoors, with many an hour spent on her allotment, as well as encouraging him to focus on his schoolwork.

Despite ongoing family challenges, lockdown has brought positive changes and over the past year, his mentor and intandem coordinator have built a stronger relationship with Jamie's mum. Following conversations about Jamie's future, mum agreed that she would look after the younger children at set times, allowing Jamie to work online with his mentor to complete schoolwork. Happily, this approach has resulted in Jamie passing all required work, meaning he is able to return to school for sixth year, and now has a conditional place at college to study HNC childcare.



“I always believed I was a clever woman, but my, Jamie has shown me up and I realise I have no idea what Maths is! He just gets it. Such an intelligent young man and a pleasure to say I know him.”

(intandem Coordinator)

Reflections: a year in Covid

The past year has been challenging for everyone.

We have captured what young people, volunteers and charity partners have told us and will take these reflections and learnings into the future for intandem to inform how we move forward, while ensuring intandem continues to meet the needs of our young people and volunteers. What we have heard:

Our children & young people


- Relationships built on trust meant wider support was identified and provided.
- Mentoring contact was tailored to respond to each young person's wishes.
- Lockdown increased feelings of low self-esteem and isolation.
- Anxiety about socialising and school increased.
- Young people have shown resilience despite the challenges.
- Activities build common ground but it's the relationships that make the difference.

Our volunteers

- Volunteer mentors stepped up to consistently be there for young people throughout.
- Mentors "persisted" with mentoring despite challenges.
- Volunteers embraced and adapted to remote mentoring to sustain and strengthen relationships.

Our coordinators and partner charities

- Local partners listened and responded immediately to young people and their families.
- intandem coordinators were vital in bolstering matches and were the glue when things got tough.
- Coordinators kept the fun in mentoring by creating new online and outdoor activities.
- Partner charities had a "can do" attitude – there was never a question of stopping mentoring.
- Coordinators stepped in and up to support volunteers and families when they were struggling.

A close-up portrait of a woman with long brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a patterned scarf and a dark jacket. The background is a soft, out-of-focus brown.

Picture: Jennifer, intandem Mentor

“This has been a saviour for Emma throughout the pandemic. The emotional support Angie provided Emma after the removal of her siblings has been phenomenal.”

(Emma's Social Worker)



Picture: Connor

87% of intandem families were able to access another support through our partner charities.

Families and communities

- Families were able to ask partner charities for help.
- Partner charities connected and sign posted families to statutory and community support.
- Some families benefitted from the additional time spent together and felt better supported.
- Relationships between families and coordinators deepened, resulting in a greater appreciation of the benefits from mentoring.

Our mentoring program

- Technology enabled connection with online platforms being key to the endurance of mentoring relationships.
- Lockdown highlighted the benefits of partnership working and connecting across communities.
- The importance of the outdoors for wellbeing has become more evident than ever.
- People embraced online support, so connections and conversations continued and sometimes even improved.
- Changes in delivery such as volunteer training has been easier to manage than anticipated.

“ The intandem project is effective, very well organised and training is at a very high standard and lives are being changed. Young people who are disadvantaged through a plethora of circumstances get a chance to be loved, valued and encouraged to become young men and women Scotland would be proud of. intandem has proved it does not always take a whole lot to change a life, but with dedicated and measured personal care and good listening, futures that were closed are now wide open.”

(Mission Development worker from Church of Scotland Inverness Presbytery)



Cara's story

Cara was placed into foster care over the summer after being removed from the care of her parents on an emergency basis.

Despite this taking place during what was already a period of upheaval, with schools closed and restrictions in place due to the pandemic, Cara showed a great deal of resilience and settled in as well as she possibly could. However, she had little to connect her to her previous environment besides her relationship with her mentor. Having this existing bond helped give Cara some sense of normality and provided a positive, consistent presence in her life during a difficult time.

Later in the year, Cara sadly experienced a very significant bereavement when one of her parents passed away. Being able to maintain contact with her mentor provided Cara with some stability when everything else in her life was changing, and the mentoring relationship has become one of the few constants in her life.

Cara is looking forward to seeing her mentor again, and they have been making plans together for their upcoming meetings. Being able to set some positive goals and look ahead has been hugely beneficial for Cara. At present, she's uncertain about her future and where she will stay as she grows up. Having a mentor can't change this, but the relationship has helped to provide support and stability and a trusted space for Cara to explore her emotions during an extremely challenging period in her life.

“Being able to maintain contact with her mentor provided Cara with some stability when everything else in her life was changing...”

(Foster Carer)

intandem framework

- **intandem is community based**

Mentors are recruited from the local community so they can help the young person to find out about local resources and have the confidence to use them, such as leisure centres, parks and cafes.

- **intandem is weekly**

Mentors meet with their mentees once a week, online or in person. This is usually for a couple of hours, sometimes longer depending on the planned activity, and sometimes less if it's an online session.

- **intandem volunteers are given training and support**

Mentors take part in quality training (in person and online) to ensure they are properly equipped to mentor to the best of their ability. Training covers topics such as child protection and confidentiality, boundaries and understanding bias.

- **intandem is long-term and open-ended**

We ask for a minimum commitment of one year but mentoring lasts for as long as the young person wants. Our average match is over 17 months.

- **intandem young people**

intandem young people at the point of being matched with their mentor are 8–14 years old and are under a Compulsory Supervision Order from a Children's Hearing while living at home.

- **intandem is completely voluntary**

intandem is about choice. Mentoring is completely voluntary for both mentor and mentee. Young people decide if they want a mentor and get to choose their mentor.

- **intandem is about setting goals**

Mentors support their mentees to set goals and aspirations that are important to them, whether that's trying new things, engaging more with learning, increasing their self-confidence, all while having fun!

A photograph of a man named John, an intandem mentor, smiling. He is wearing a red and grey jacket. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor setting.

Picture: John, intandem Mentor

“ I meet my mentor every week and we talk about our week bad and good things: she understands me and we get on very well and we can talk about anything.”

(Young Persons Forum member)



Katie's story

Eight-year-old Katie was referred to intandem after her family and social worker saw how the service was benefitting Katie's older brother, who had already been matched with a mentor.

Due to lockdown, Katie initially attended sessions online, before her first face to face meeting took place at a local park in November when restrictions allowed. The first meeting was a great success. Katie chatted away happily to Louise, discussing activities she might like to try and asking questions about Louise's job as a teacher.

They have continued to meet every week, taking part in a variety of activities both in-person and online. All their meetings in-person have been outdoors, involving visits to local parks something Katie really enjoys. Online activities have been focused on arts and crafts and have included drawing, decorating coasters, painting canvases, designing clocks and painting garden fairies.

As an intandem volunteer mentor, Louise has met Katie every week, which has been key to building trust. Katie's family are very supportive and help her to get online for all her meetings. This family support has also been instrumental in helping the match succeed.

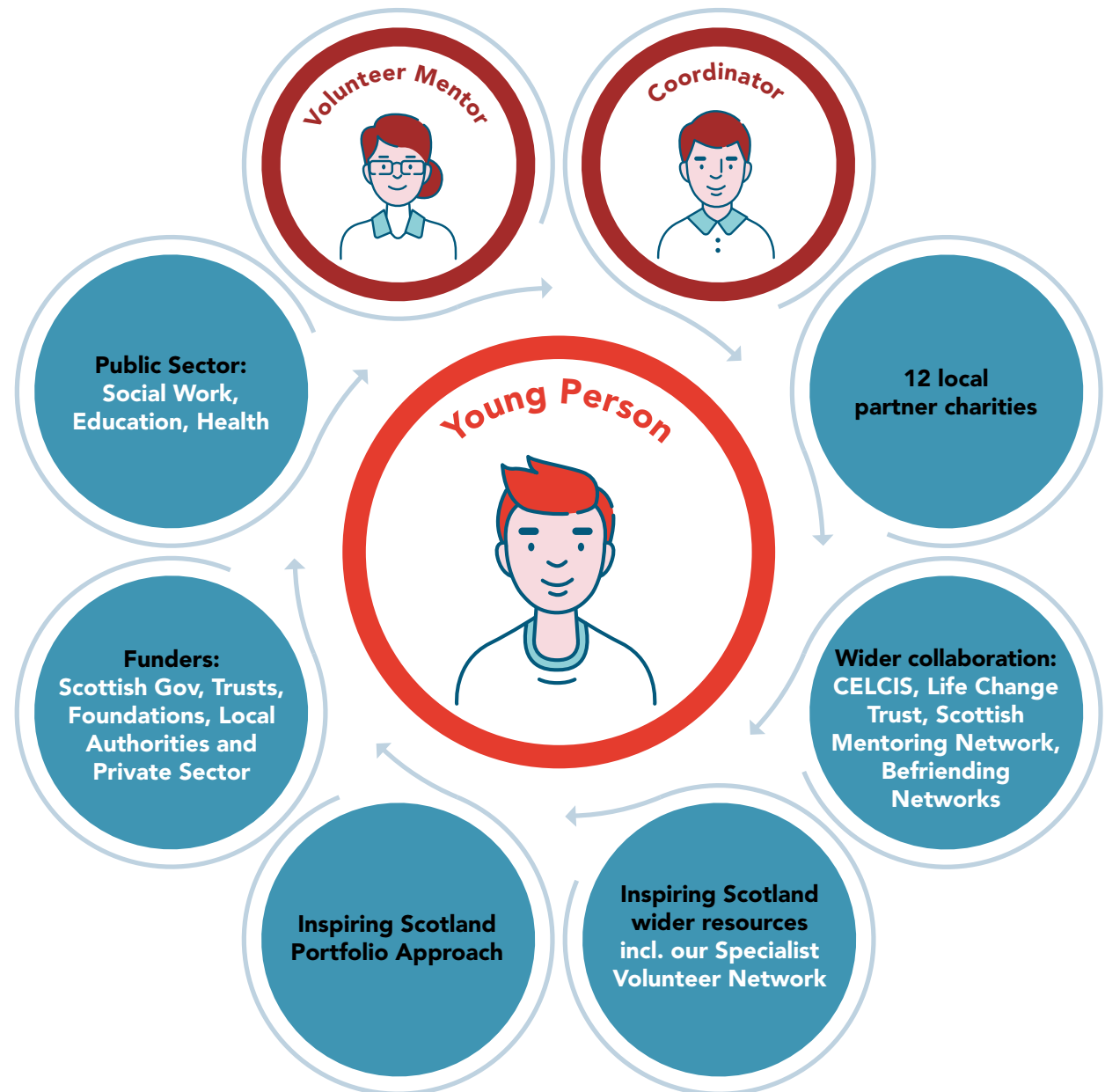
Katie's dad says Katie is really enjoying her meetings with Louise and looks forward to them every week. As restrictions ease, Katie and Louise will be able to experience more in-person activities together, which will build on the positive momentum they have developed.

“Katie is really enjoying her meetings with Louise and looks forward to them every week.”

(Parent)

intandem relational mentoring framework

intandem mentoring and support of our young people takes many connected relationships. This diagram illustrates key relationships and shows that by working together, collectively and collaboratively, we can enable more young people to fulfill their potential.



“ At a recent planning meeting Karen expressed that she really looks forward to her time with her mentor. This is the first service that she has been optimistic about ”

(Social Worker)

Nicole's story

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Nicole was referred to intandem when she was 14, following concerns about her school attendance and some of her friendships. It was hoped that having a mentor could help Nicole build a trusting relationship away from her existing peer group, where she could find positive, alternative activities to focus on.

Nicole was matched with mentor Jane, who encouraged Nicole to discuss her aspirations for the future. Nicole shared that she was keen to gain qualifications and go to college. She had doubts about her ability to change but agreed to work with Jane on decision making and setting goals.

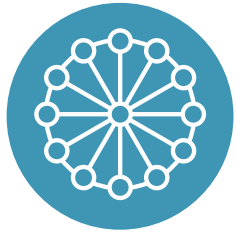
They discussed Nicole's strengths and interests, and while Nicole initially struggled to identify any, she soon realised she had a keen interest in sports. Jane encouraged Nicole to get involved through school PE classes, supporting Nicole to access activities herself as a means to build her confidence.

Jane supported Nicole with coping strategies which increased her self-esteem. As Nicole's self-confidence grew, her school attainment improved. After a year of mentoring, Nicole's attendance increased from 40% to 90%, and Nicole obtained qualifications in English, Maths, Craft Studies and PE. As well as this achievement, she secured a holiday job in a local hotel and has started college. With college being a new experience, Nicole and Jane have agreed to continue with mentoring. Nicole is now on a positive path to the future. Her self-confidence and decision making have improved and her relationship with her parents has grown stronger.

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a black polo shirt and white shorts with blue trim, is captured in a dynamic pose on a grassy field. She is holding a worn, brown football with both hands, looking intently towards the left. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

After a year of mentoring, Nicole's school attendance increased from 40% to 90%, and Nicole obtained qualifications in English, Maths, Craft Studies and PE...

intandem in numbers



12

partner organisations



19

local authorities



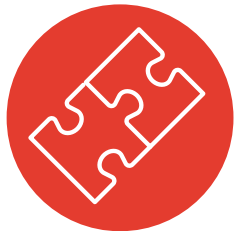
1030*

volunteers recruited



664*

volunteers trained



385*

matches made



125

matches currently meeting weekly



559*

referrals made



£3.84m

funding invested

Children & young people

as reported at March 2021

62%

of matches have been meeting for over a year.

17 months

the average length of a match.

10%

of matches have been meeting for over 36 months.

95%

of young people reported an increase in self confidence in Glasgow.

Volunteers

100%

have a better understanding of the challenges young people can face.

98%

have learnt new skills.

92%

reported their mental health had improved.

* Cumulative since February 2017

Kyle's story


Kyle was referred to intandem after he began to have difficulties with his behaviour in the community following his parents' separation.

Kyle and his mentor Michelle were matched in February 2019, and quickly formed a strong bond. Before lockdown, they would go for a walk, cycle, or go out for meals. Kyle liked having the opportunity to try new places and have different experiences.

During lockdown, Kyle and Michelle continued to keep in touch by phone and text every week and occasionally met for a socially distanced walk.

Kyle's mentor, Michelle, has helped him realise his own potential, build his confidence, and encouraged him to go back to school, but Kyle still found school difficult and ultimately dropped out. During this period, Kyle struggled to find motivation, and would spend his days sleeping after playing computer games during the night. Michelle continued to support Kyle during this period and was always there to engage with him every week.

Kyle is now sixteen and recently secured a full-time job with a landscaping company. He says he is really enjoying the routine of working and having his own money and independence. Although their match is now coming to a natural end, both Kyle and Michelle have expressed that they wish to keep in touch, and Michelle has said that Kyle will always be a part of her life.

A close-up portrait of a young man with short dark hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a brown turtleneck sweater. He is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. The background is a textured, reddish-brown wall.

Kyle is now sixteen and recently secured a full-time job with a landscaping company. He says he is really enjoying the routine of working and having his own money and independence.

Our vision and ambition

Our Vision is that all young people who are in care or on the edge of care have the resilience and confidence to succeed in life.

We know intandem works. We are committed to matching more young people with our community of mentors. Building on our solid foundation, Inspiring Scotland will work passionately to:

- Use the intandem voice to deliver change for all young people in care or on the edges of care.
- Ensure the voice of young people is at the heart of intandem. We will listen to and learn from the members of the Young Persons Forum to ensure intandem continues to develop to reflect their wishes.
- Continue to support Scottish Government and other decision makers to ensure the needs of young people are understood and reflected in policy decisions.
- Reach more children and young people and connect them with an intandem mentoring relationship to allow them to flourish.
- Actively collaborate with others to ensure this national programme is available in all areas and continues its long-term approach.

- Expand and develop the intandem model by identifying ways of sustainable growth by understanding needs and gaps in provision.
- Continue to offer a mix of in-person and remote mentoring and explore ways to support rural communities and reach new local authority areas.
- Continue to celebrate and recognise our incredible volunteer mentors and explore accreditation of the training they receive.

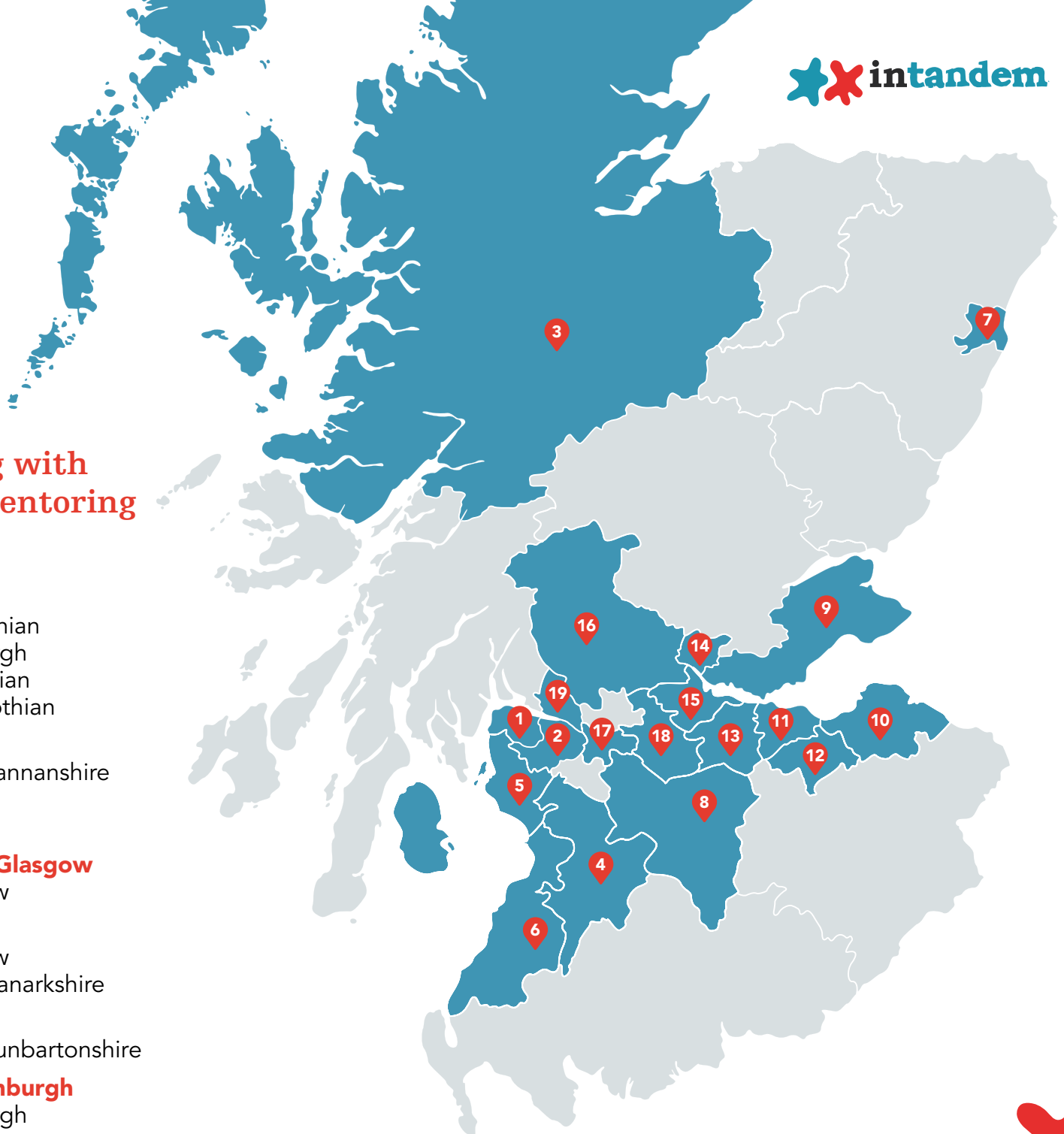
And finally, we welcome conversations with others who share our passion to make a lasting difference to the relationships we build with care experienced children and young people.

A portrait of a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a brown knitted beanie with a pom-pom, a purple scarf, and a dark jacket. She is smiling and looking slightly to the right.

Picture: Lyndsey, intandem Coordinator

“Charities with strong relationships have been able to reach the most at risk.”

(Esmee Fairbairn Insight Report: August 2020)



Our partners

intandem is currently partnering with 12 partner charities to provide mentoring in 19 local authorities.

Aberlour

- 1. Inverclyde
- 2. Renfrewshire

Action for Children

- 3. Highland

Barnardo's

- 4. East Ayrshire
- 5. North Ayrshire
- 6. South Ayrshire

Befriend a Child

- 7. Aberdeen

COVEY Befriending

- 8. South Lanarkshire

Kirkcaldy YMCA

- 9. Fife

Move On

- 10. East Lothian
- 11. Edinburgh
- 12. Midlothian
- 13. West Lothian

Quarriers

- 14. Clackmannanshire
- 15. Falkirk
- 16. Stirling

Volunteer Glasgow

- 17. Glasgow

Ypeople

- 17. Glasgow
- 18. North Lanarkshire

Y Sort It

- 19. West Dunbartonshire

YMCA Edinburgh

- 11. Edinburgh

Thank you

intandem is only possible thanks to the incredible dedication of our partner charities, our funders and volunteers who are there to support our children and young people.



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