

Macdonald leads members debate to mark 20 years of The Big Project

Gordon Macdonald MSP led a members debate in the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday celebrating 20 years of the BIG Project, a local organisation based in Broomhouse Primary School.

During his contribution Mr Macdonald highlighted some of the incredible achievements of the project thanks to the commitment of the staff and volunteers which has had a huge positive impact on both the children and young people in the area and the local community.

Sascha Macleod, Director of The BIG Project attended the debate along with staff, trustees, volunteers and young people accessing the service.

Mr Macdonald said: "The BIG project has now for over 20 years contributed hugely to improving the lives of local children and young people. They have built valued relationships with local families and are now the major provider of services for local children and young people in the 5-18 age group living in Broomhouse. Their credibility within the local community is high and are regarded as the local go-to organisation for children and young people's services."

"Broomhouse has changed dramatically for the better since I

first moved to Edinburgh in 1982 and lived in the neighbouring estate of Parkhead. It has new schools, community centre and housing but more importantly a sense of community and that must be in part due to the hard work of The BIG Project staff and volunteers who have supported and nurtured young people across the local area over the last two decades.”

Sascha Macleod said: “The Trustees, staff, volunteers, and young people of The BIG Project were delighted to be invited to the Scottish Parliament by Gordon Macdonald MSP to celebrate our 20th Anniversary, and mark the contribution we have made to improving the lives of the children and young people across the Broomhouse area of Edinburgh, through the provision of high quality community based youth work.

“The BIG Project has received accolades before, but sitting in the Scottish Parliamentary Chamber, hearing the recognition of these accomplishments in Gordon’s speech, and echoed during the ensuing debate, engendered an immense sense of personal pride in each of us and we left feeling very honoured to have been there. Gordon has been a long standing supporter of The BIG Project and I would like to thank him very much for all his support and for presenting a congratulatory motion recognising the impact of The BIG Project.”



Mr Macdonald centre with members of The BIG Project at Holyrood

The full text of the motion debated:

S6M-06158: 20th Year of The BIG Project

That the Parliament congratulates The BIG Project on its 20th anniversary; understands that The BIG Project was set up in 2002 in the Broomhouse area of the Edinburgh Pentlands constituency to support children and young people, aged five to 18, to learn, achieve, have fun, and feel good about themselves; appreciates that the project aims to combat low aspirations and lack of facilities and engender a sense of stability and continuity for children and young people, many of whom have experienced social exclusion and discrimination; notes The BIG Project's unique approach and partnership with the local primary school; acknowledges that the project has built valued relationships with local families and is now the major provider of community-based open access, universal services for local children and young people in the area; further understands that by adopting a preventative approach, the project delivers attractive and enriching educational opportunities and experiences to develop and reinforce children's skills, confidence, and self-image in a safe and supportive environment; praises the project for delivering open access youth work, targeted work and individual support, as well as promoting activities and interests, not as an end in themselves, but as part of a wider developmental process; understands that the activities allow the children and young people to develop new interests, acquire new skills, build trusting and valued relationships, improve their health and wellbeing, and receive support and guidance from adults, equipping them with the skills and confidence to become motivated and contributing citizens of tomorrow, and wishes The BIG Project well in its anniversary year.