

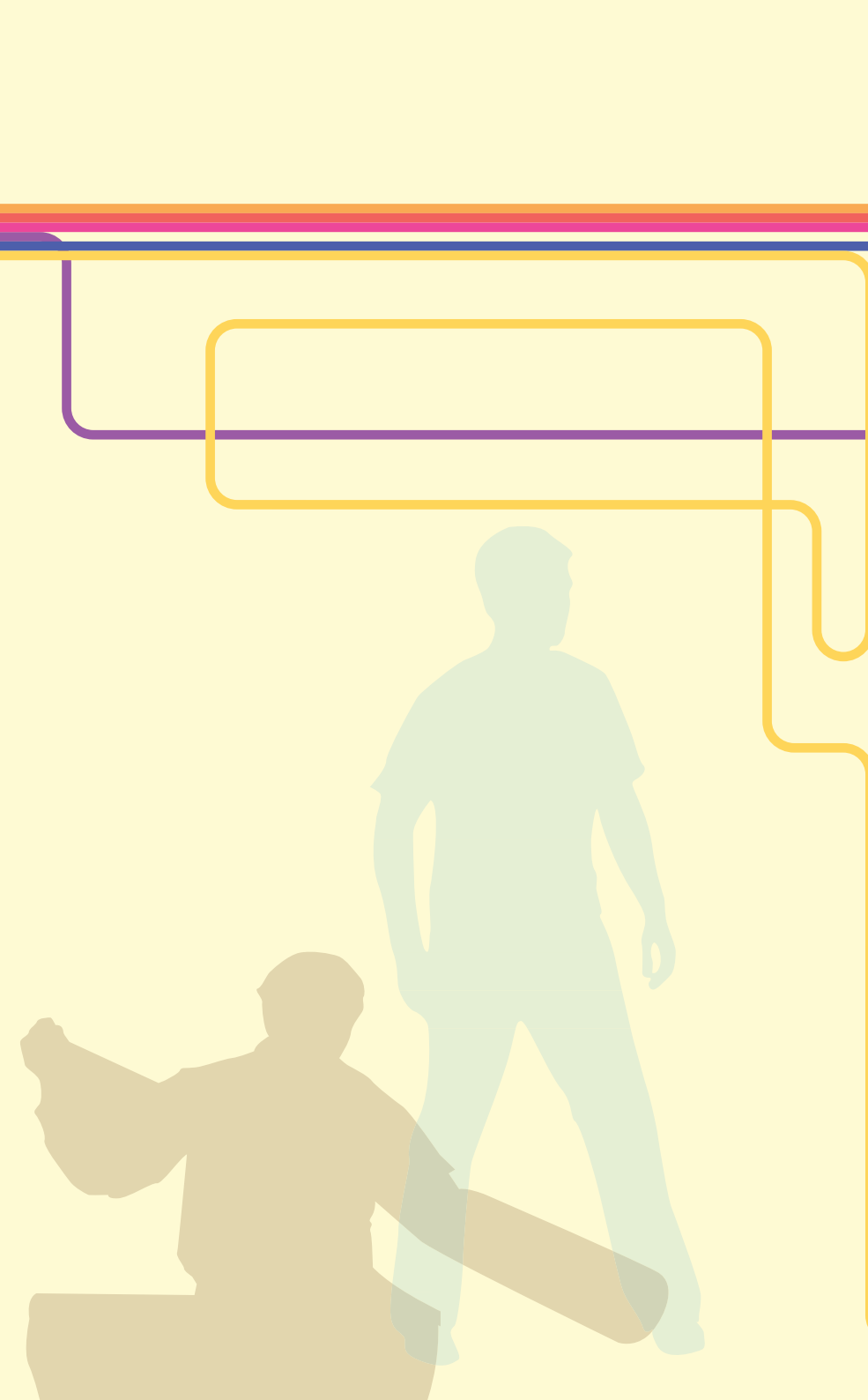
For further information please contact **Claire Gibson**, Project Co-ordinator for Opportunities for Change, **0131 652 2555**

The Opportunities for Change project has been developed in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Borders Council, West Lothian Council, Midlothian Council, East Lothian Council, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Courts, Includem and Venture Trust.

Includem is an independent organisation in the voluntary sector. Includem is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland (207985) and is a registered charity (SCO 30233).



**Opportunities
for change**



A life of crime isn't easy

The first time you get lifted it's scary. You don't know what's going to happen. Your folks go mad. Your girlfriend / boyfriend gives you a hard time. You promise it won't happen again.

Then you start to get used to it. It's easy. You know the ropes and what happens next. You can handle it and it's no big deal. Your friends and family stop giving you grief about it.

Now it's a habit. Your life's a mess. Your family wants you out the house. Your girlfriend / boyfriend wants someone who's around more. Your real mates are avoiding you. You're doing drugs and drinking too much.

With help, you can do something about it.

Opportunities for Change

Q WHAT IS IT?

A It's exactly what it says – an opportunity to change the way your life's going. It's an opportunity to stop committing crimes. And it's an opportunity to stay out of jail.

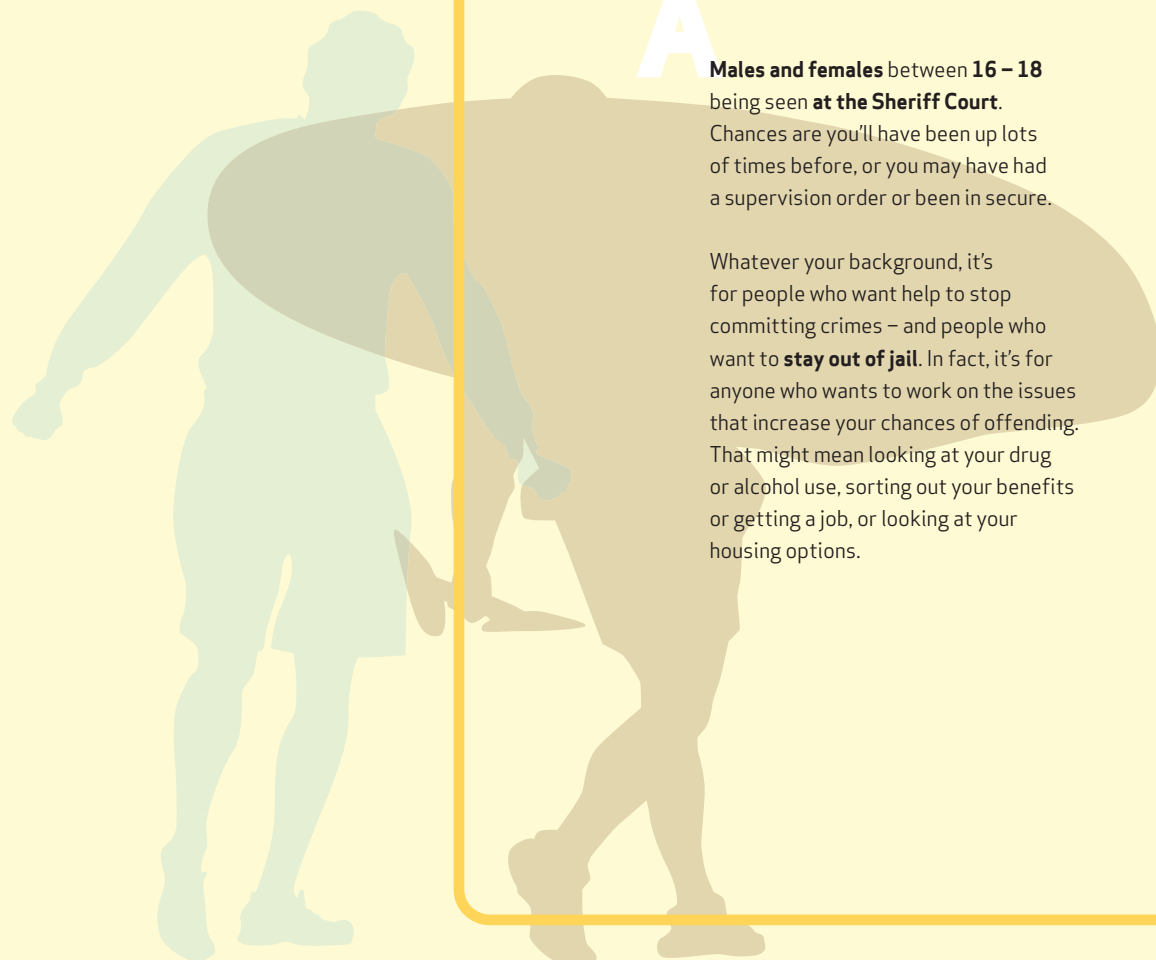
It's run by **Includem** and **Venture Trust**. We work with you, your family and any other supports you have to help you get sorted.

You'll get **regular support** from your own workers and the chance to take part in **outdoor activities** that might include a 5 day group trip in the Scottish wilderness, where you can begin to work on ways to change your life.

Q WHO IS IT FOR?

A **Males and females** between **16 – 18** being seen **at the Sheriff Court**. Chances are you'll have been up lots of times before, or you may have had a supervision order or been in secure.

Whatever your background, it's for people who want help to stop committing crimes – and people who want to **stay out of jail**. In fact, it's for anyone who wants to work on the issues that increase your chances of offending. That might mean looking at your drug or alcohol use, sorting out your benefits or getting a job, or looking at your housing options.



Q WHAT DO WE DO?

A We'll give you all the support you need to sort your stuff out. That will mean you'll get **your own workers** who will talk with you to agree on how much support you need and what we're going to work on together. **We will see you 7 days a week** at first, and can carry on doing it if you need it. As a minimum, we'll meet for 6 hours a week.

You can also **phone us 24 hours a day, every day of the year** including Christmas and New Year's Day. We'll have a worker ready to respond to any issues that come up, regardless of the time you phone.

You'll get the opportunity to take part in up to **180 hours of outdoor activities**, individually and/or as part of a group to work on your personal development. This might include a half day rock climbing, personal and social skills workshops or 5 days in the mountains living in tents!

And we'll also be asked to provide regular **updates to the Sheriff** on the progress you're making. They will need to be happy with the progress you're making and will have the right to bring you back to court if they are not.

Q WHAT DO YOU DO?

A By signing up for this project you're saying **you want to stop offending and stay out of custody** and you're willing to work hard at it.

You will be **making a commitment** - to your community, to your family, but most importantly **to yourself** to want **to change your behaviour**.

You're agreeing to **meet with other specialist workers** on anything that's been included in your support plan. This might be things like health, housing, addictions, education or employment.

You want to have **fun experiences in outdoor settings**, knowing it'll be intensive and challenging and means you'll have to work hard at making it a success.

And you'll know that we will report back to the Sheriff regularly on the progress you're making. That means **if you don't do what you've agreed to, you may end up in jail**.

But if you're serious about **making changes that will improve your life** and give you something positive to look forward to, get in touch. We've no magic wand but we'll do everything we can to help.