

Welcome to

You+h
focus:
North East



Annual Report 2017



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Pete Stout receives OBE

We are all very proud at Youth Focus: North East that our chair Pete Stout was able to collect his OBE from Her Majesty The Queen at Buckingham Palace in November. Pete is pictured above with his partner Marcia Holmes who attended the ceremony along with his son Kit. With over 40 years of practice across the youth sector, Pete was rightly recognised as one of the outstanding professionals in the country. Pete's work has made a positive difference to the lives of countless young people and professionals, and receiving the OBE is fitting recognition

Chair's Introduction

It is both a pleasure and a privilege to write this forward on behalf of the Board to this the Youth Focus: North East Annual Report for 2017.

What an astonishing and successful year it has been for our charity. Youth Focus: North East continues to be the premier youth development organisation in the North East of England, leading on and developing ground breaking initiatives and programmes as well as providing innovative strategic support to the sector.

The Board throughout the year met regularly to review progress and offer challenge and support to our excellent and dedicated senior management team. Directors' individual and collective knowledge and experience has been harnessed and focussed on the work of the charity and the furtherance of its aims and objectives. It is pleasing to report that we are on target to achieve all key elements of the current Strategic Development Plan. Finances have been extremely well managed, reported on and externally audited.

We opened our second set of offices in the centre of Middlesbrough to support our development work in the South of the region.

We have also strengthened and expanded our workforce during the last twelve months in order to allow us to deliver our extended youth offer. It is pleasing to report that we have appointed high calibre staff to these new positions that are adding to our forward momentum and drive for quality in all we seek to achieve. During the year, two of our longstanding staff gained promotion to national roles, we thank them for their contributions over the years and wish them well in their new posts. It is also very important to recognise the key contribution that a number of volunteers have played during the last twelve months, these young volunteers have contributed significantly across all of the programmes in the delivery of our work, committing many hundreds of hours for the benefit of their peers.



Pete Stout

Chief Executive's Introduction

I am proud of what we do at Youth Focus: North East. I know this is an obvious statement from a person who is employed to advocate and promote the organisation. However, it is also what I believe. The quality of our work and the way that we work with young people stands out for me. Every day, the people that make up our organisation are trying to bring about change, perhaps something small, perhaps something grand, but, at each moment, it is to try to change the world for the better. We have over 70 young volunteers who are committing their time and energy to support others and taking responsibility for their own lives. These young people are challenging the notion that young people are not willing to give, and unable to be active members in our communities.



Through our work on addressing youth loneliness, we are trying to bring about a change in understanding and how we accept difference. Through our work in youth unemployment, we are trying to create pathways to sustained jobs, places in training or apprenticeships for hundreds of young people. In addressing mental health issues for young people, we have worked to change the way that services are commissioned and coordinated. Through our local Challenge model, we are developing new opportunities for young people who want to be involved in volunteering and social action within their own communities.

Through new programmes, such as the Youth Investment Fund and Our Community Matters in Tees Valley, the Big Days and Fast Friends work on youth isolation and loneliness, our You+Us programme on social action, and opening our new offices in Middlesbrough, our work is progressing into new areas and addressing new issues. We now have greater involvement of young people in the governance of our organisation, through the Youth Board and Young Trustees, who are helping to shape the future of Youth Focus: North East.

Some of our ambitions are lofty and perhaps unattainable, but we continue to try to make a positive difference. Maybe the change we bring about is small, individual, local. But when that change is created and supported, with hundreds of young people, we can make a little bit of the world, a little bit better.



Leon Mexter

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You+h
focus:
North East



Our offices

Our work in Tees Valley has continued to grow, and July 2017 saw us move to a new office at the Cleveland Craft Centre in Middlesbrough town centre. The new premises, including a dedicated training room, are better situated in terms of public transport and parking, enabling us to work with more young people and professionals than we have been able to do so previously. For the team based in Gateshead, the move to the town centre continues to support the development of our work —the bespoke seminar and training rooms allowing us to develop a regular drop-in for lonely and isolated young people, deliver a range of projects with young people, host seminars for the sector, and also provide space which is being hired by a range of organisations.



Caroline Garrity, Office Manager

“With established bases in Gateshead and Middlesbrough, both within easy reach of local bus and rail stations, Youth Focus: North East has a strong regional presence to continue to support the youth sector and offer a wide range of projects and opportunities to young people across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, and to the South of the region in Durham and Tees Valley.”



Our Youth Matters—Tees Valley

Youth Focus: North East was delighted to be named as one of the 86 organisations across the country who received funding from the National Lottery and Department for Culture, Media and Sports' Youth Investment Fund. This programme provides new opportunities for young people to get involved in their communities, support their personal development and get the skills and confidence they need to enter the workplace.

The Youth Investment Fund has enabled Youth Focus: North East to really work in different ways with a range of local partners in order to create provision in communities that have none, or in areas where local provision has been cut in recent years. We will work with at least 14 organisations over the next 3 years, including support to the work of 9 new and 5 established open access youth providers. As well as developing longer-term strategies for delivery, bespoke training for staff and methods to develop co-production, there are very practical outcomes to our initial work through the Youth Investment Fund - we have supported the set-up and delivery of new youth provision in the rural villages of Stillington and Moorsholm. We have also created the Tees Valley Youth Providers Network, to develop more co-ordinated provision and explore ways organisations can come together to support each other and enhance delivery of services and support for young people. At the heart of all of this work are young people—with the first meeting of our Youth Investment Fund youth steering group taking place in August 2017.



Emma Abbott

"We have established a steering group of young people from across the Tees Valley to plan

and co-deliver Our Youth Matters project and to ensure young people's voice is at the heart of our delivery."



Julie Thornton, Involve Tees Valley CIC

"Involve Tees Valley CIC was created by people who are crazy enough to see outside the box and think they may change world. Working with Youth Focus: North East, we are excited to develop a new youth project for Tees Valley through the Youth Investment Fund."





Youth Employment Initiative

Youth Focus: North East has completed the second year of the Youth Employment Initiative, part of the 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. We are part of the Personalised Education, Employment and Enterprise Pathways' Partnership with Belle Vue Centre, Corner House @ Newtown, Endeavour and Safe in Tees Valley. Together, we are supporting young people aged 15 to 29 years old who are unemployed or inactive living in the Tees Valley area to move forward into an area of interest within education, employment or training.

Our dedicated team have supported young people to source specialist training that suits their learning styles and needs. We have subsequently seen an increase in engaging young mothers and have secured flexible training for a number of young people in the hair and beauty sector, through the development of good working relationships with local providers, such as Savvy's Health, Hair and Beauty Salon and Training Academy based in Middlesbrough. We have also made links with employers and training providers in construction and heavy goods driving and have supported young people to access these routes to either upskill and/or gain employment in these sectors.



Laura Bush

"To date, 151 young people have been supported by Youth Focus: North East to

move towards their education, employment or training goals. In addition to this figure, support is also being continued into 2018 for many young people in order to secure positive career or educational outcomes".



Jonathan Harris, aged 21

"Youth Focus: North East has helped me to realise a future I never even believed could be true. Thanks to the excellent support of all the team I am now taking the right steps in order to be a youth support worker."



Tees Valley Pathways Youth Employment Initiative



European Union
European
Social Fund



Talent Match North East

Through their involvement in the design and delivery of provision, young people can create their own solutions to unemployment. Youth Focus: North East has been commissioned to ensure young people are meaningfully involved throughout all aspects of the Talent Match North East programme.

As the programme has developed, the roles of the Young Person Steering Group and Talent Match Champions have aligned, and the groups have this year reformed as Talent Match Leaders. In their new role, the Talent Match Leaders have supported the programme's employer engagement activities by co-designing and delivering local events for employers and young people.

As the Talent Match programme enters its final year, The Talent Match Leaders are preparing to launch their contribution to the programme's legacy – an employment charter. The Leaders want to capture and promote the positive values and personalised, flexible approach offered by Talent Match.



Alex Black

"The partnership approach of Talent Match North East has

presented our volunteers with a fantastic opportunity to engage with a range of audiences in a number of different settings. Not only have young people been able to share and voice their own opinions, they've been able to listen to the views of others".



Callum Oxley, aged 24

Talent Match Leader and Young Researcher:

"Talent Match has been a great support and has helped me gain confidence and new friends. The staff are awesome!!"



Managed by





Virgin Money #iwill Fund

Youth Focus: North East is delighted to have received funding from Virgin Money Foundation as part of the National #iwill campaign. We are working in partnership with The Key, Groundwork, Baltic and Middlesbrough Football Foundation to support the National Campaign's aims to get six out of ten young people age 10-20 involved in volunteering and social action by 2020. Our own work focuses on delivering 50 local challenges in 50 local areas across the North East over the next three years. Staff who work at Virgin Money also want to get involved and will volunteer their time to assist the development of the projects.

Under the umbrella of the national #iwill campaign sits the #iwill Take Action Fund, which has its own Youth Advisory Panel, recruited and supported by Youth Focus: North East. The panel is a group of young people from across the North East who have been brought together from the partners. The Youth Advisory Panel has been involved in training and development sessions to learn the skills needed to be able to assess, monitor and shape the work of the #iwill Take Action Fund.



Zoe Jackson

"We are just at the start of this journey. We are currently in contact with schools, colleges, NHS

staff, older people services, fire cadets and other youth organisations to support the delivery of new and exciting youth-led local projects."



Craig Bateman, aged 20

Ambassador of the National #iwill campaign and also a member of the Youth Advisory Panel says:

"The Youth Advisory Panel is an exciting opportunity to help grow social action projects in the North East. By being part of the panel, I hope to work with others to realise the double benefit of social action; that taking part in social action not only develops my own interpersonal, team-work and communication skills, but also gives something back to the wider community too."



Proudly supporting
youth social action



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport



NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED



money
foundation



Youth loneliness and isolation

We have just completed the first year of our pilot piece of work to explore and begin to tackle youth loneliness and isolation, a programme funded by the Co-operative Foundation. We are delighted that the Co-operative Foundation has recently approved another two years of funding to support the development of such an important part of Youth Focus: North East's work.

Youth Focus: North East is developing a volunteer network with students from Newcastle University and Northumbria University. The students are researching issues of loneliness and isolation among their peers, looking at what works to make a positive difference and are developing a number of ideas for practical support. An important piece of work for us has been around supporting young people to identify ways to discuss loneliness and isolation, especially as it can be a very dark and sensitive subject. We are working with young people to co-produce a film to raise awareness of the issues around youth loneliness and isolation, which they feel will help people to begin to talk about something that currently feels like a taboo subject.

In September of 2017, we began holding a fortnightly drop-in for young people who are experiencing loneliness and isolation, giving over our office space to the group to connect, chill out and make new friends in a safe and supportive environment.



Sarah Warren

The Big Days Project involves young people aged 10 - 20 years in planning and organising events

in their communities area around key days of the year such as Christmas, and anniversaries to help combat loneliness and isolation in both young and old. We will be creating a network of young volunteers who will provide practical help, support and friendship.

Steve Watson, Youth Loneliness and Isolation Lead

"We have worked with a core group of young people over the last twelve months who have experienced loneliness to explore a range of associated issues and to identify and employ practical positive actions to address the challenges they face."

**Tackling
Isolation &
Loneliness**

**Calling All
Community
Super
Heroes**

Our Community Matters

**Bringing
Generations
Together**

**People
helping**

people



Our Community Matters

In November 2017, we began the project Our Community Matters, which is funded by Big Lottery's Reaching Communities. The project will be led by Youth Focus: North East and delivered in partnership with Tees Valley Rural Community Council. The aim of the project is to increase a sense of community and wellbeing between young people and older people in rural areas of Tees Valley to address loneliness and isolation. We will take an intergenerational approach to addressing loneliness and isolation in rural areas of Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-On-Tees and Hartlepool and the project will consist of young people aged 13 to 25 years old and older people aged 50 years plus.

The two groups will work together to plan, design and deliver a local challenge based on the model of 5 ways to wellbeing covering one or more of the themes; connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give to others. We will deliver in rural settings to bring together young people and older people to develop an idea, plan a local challenge with a budget of £500 and evaluate the impact of their challenge upon themselves and their local community.



Helen Kennedy

"I am excited to be taking on the challenge of working in rural Tees Valley and supporting local groups to think differently in order to develop new, inspirational ideas to help improve mental health and wellbeing in their local communities."



Rita Lawson, Chief Executive of Tees Valley Rural Community Council (TVRCC)

"This Partnership between Youth Focus: North East and TVRCC is continuing to flourish and grow through the successful Reaching Communities funding for an intergenerational social action project in the rural areas of Tees Valley. Both Janice McColm, my Senior Community Development Officer and myself are looking forward to working with Laura Bush and her team in developing and delivering this exciting project. Oh, whilst at the same time developing the next big exciting partnership project."



Ladders

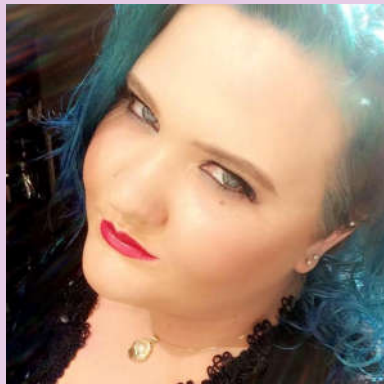
This year we have worked in partnership with Generator, the UK's leading music development agency, to deliver employability support to young people on the Ladders programme. Ladders is a three year programme aimed at supporting 18-24 year olds to kick-start their career within the creative and digital industries; opening up opportunities for young people to work alongside industry mentors to develop their understanding and skills to be able to progress professionally within these sectors.

Youth Focus: North East has also recruited a group of volunteers (Ladders Champions) to support the promotion of the Ladders programme through direct outreach work where they have been able to inform and recruit eligible young people for the programme in the Newcastle and Sunderland areas. The young people who we have connected with are of varied ages, backgrounds and levels of experience within the creative and digital sector, which has created an exciting opportunity for young people to connect with other young people, they may not have normally met.



Simone Banks

"Working alongside young people to support the Ladders programme, and creating avenues for young people to scope new opportunities and skills related to the creative and digital industries has been an enlightening and exciting experience"



Mirander De-La-Haye, aged 21

Ladders Champion:

"I've really enjoyed being a part of the Ladders project; it's wonderful to see my articles published online. Writing has always been gratifying for me and being able to share the experience with other bloggers has been wonderful."



Wellbeing Challenges

We met some fantastic young people from the Coalfields area of Sunderland, completing four Wellbeing Challenges with them during 2017.

A group of young people from Hetton Secondary School who were part of the school's speech and language provision wanted to take a group of residents from Hetton Downs sheltered accommodation on a trip to The National Glass Centre in Sunderland. The young people planned the whole visit from start to finish. Pupils from Bernard Gilpin Primary School worked to create a nature garden in an unused space at their school. A young men's group and the women's group, Mrs Brown's Girls from Fencehouses YMCA worked together to deliver an Easter Family Fun Day.

Youth Focus: North East worked alongside the management committee and local people who use Penshaw Community Association on a bit of a DIY SOS project to transform their run-down committee room into a bright and multi-functional area to be used by a whole range of groups who use the centre.

Young volunteer from Hetton Secondary School

"I don't feel as shy working with other people in the group. I was nervous about meeting the ladies, but when I did ask questions I found what they had to say interesting".



Lindsey Milner, Chair, Penshaw Community Association

"The room is looking amazing. Many thanks to Youth Focus: North East and Pauline Hopper (Sunderland City Council) for doing this for us."



Newcastle Gateshead Young Commissioners

Working alongside commissioners of mental health services across Newcastle and Gateshead has provided the opportunity for the Young Commissioners to inform and influence the mental health system in Newcastle and Gateshead as part of the Expanding Minds, Improving Lives, programme. Members of the group have met regularly with representatives of Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group, Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council to discuss progress and the challenges of improving mental health support and services for young people. The Young Commissioners have shared their views on how they think the developing 'single point of access' could and should work in order to really make a difference in the lives of young people. The Young Commissioners created and delivered My Mind: My Life – a young person's mental health festival, which took place at Tyneside Cinema's Pop-Up Film School. The October half-term saw the two year anniversary of the Young Commissioners project, with an amazing eight members from the very first training session still involved today.

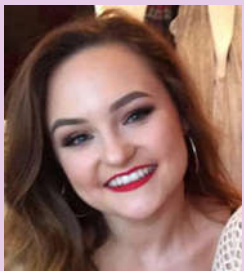
The group are looking forward to working with representatives from South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust in early 2018.



Steve Watson

"The Young Commissioners project has given young people the platform to work alongside

commissioners of mental health services. There is still a way to go, but young people have shown that they can take an effective part in strategic and operational discussions around improving services, rather than only being involved in consultation



Taylor Johnston, aged 19

Young Commissioner:

"I have enjoyed Young Commissioners a lot and I've had the chance to expand my knowledge, which has helped me in other situations."





Regional Impact Network

The Regional Impact Network for the North East is led by Youth Focus: North East. This is one of nine Regional Impact Networks supported by the Centre for Youth Impact.

The current network membership currently stands at close to 100 members and during 2017 we have facilitated four network meetings covering topics on visual methods to collect data, designing a local youth services and activities appraisal tool, young evaluators and asset based approaches to working with young people.

As part of our work on the Regional Impact Network and the Centre for Youth Impact we were able to access and offer free training on developing Theory of Change for members of the network.

The Regional Impact Network is an important development for the region. It acts as a conduit to share best practice from the North East at a national level and is creating a body of practice around impact, which is benefiting young people and organisations across a range of sectors.



Kevin Franks, Lead contact in the North East:

"The network exists to support youth organisations to undertake meaningful evaluation and impact measurement. It does this by providing a 'safe space' in which members can share issues or challenges that they are facing in their work, seek advice from peers, and access support that enables them to develop solutions that work for them and that will inform their practice."

National Evaluation and Learning Programme

We are delighted to be involved in the National Evaluation & Learning Programme of the Youth Investment Fund. Kevin Franks, our Deputy CEO, is a member of the Learning and Impact Co-Design Core Group element of the national evaluation which will generate learning that will be used across the sector and beyond the lifetime of the three year project.

Other Projects

Sector Connector Workshops

Delivered in partnership with Sported, one of the leading Sport for Development charities in the UK, the free Sector Connector workshop entitled 'How to engage young people within youth work provision using sport and physical activity' explored how youth work organisations can better engage with, and understand, the role of sport within their work with young people.

Street Law

For the 6th year in succession we have supported Newcastle Law School's Street Law project. 'Street Law' is a term used to describe projects which involve law students sharing their knowledge and helping to raise awareness of the law and legal rights. The Newcastle Law School project focuses specifically on engagement with children and young people. The aim is to raise awareness and educate young people about aspects of the law, and to develop positive attitudes towards the law and legal system.



Other Projects

Intergenerational Practice Training

We were commissioned by Newcastle University School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape to deliver training on intergenerational practice to develop students' skills in inter-generational working. A total of 15 students participated in the training to test the principle of young people in the community getting their families involved in neighbourhood planning in locations in Northumberland and Durham.

Work with Young People with Special Educational Needs

We returned to Stockton Borough Council during 2017 to share the findings and recommendations from our work over the previous years in the borough, with young people with special educational needs, with a new group of partners. Youth Focus: North East staff gave presentations at the Stockton Special Educational Needs Coordinators briefing day in February and also met with representatives of the local authority responsible for the development of their Bright Minds Big Futures strategy. We hope that colleagues in Stockton continue to develop the different ways that young people with special educational needs can inform and influence the services they access and the support they receive.



North East Young People's Awards 2017

After seven successful years of the PoSBOs, 2017 saw us hold the North East Young People's Awards. The change in name reflecting the standing our awards are held in by young people, partners and funders, as well as reminding us all that the awards really do highlight the fantastic work of the young people of our region in making a positive difference in their communities.



Congratulations to our 2017 winners:

| | |
|--|--|
| Young People's Health and Wellbeing Project Award: | My Beautiful Heart |
| Young Carer Award: | Katarina Moore |
| Young Employee/Apprentice Award: | Charlotte Tams |
| Young People's Environmental Project Award: | Hemlington Linx Young People's Allotment |
| Best Intergenerational Project Award: | Tales of Children's Lives |
| Inspirational Young Person Award: | Dani Heron |
| Young People's Social Action Award: | Gateway North East Stars and Mini Stars |
| Young Volunteer Award: | Kieran Spencer |
| Young Activist Award: | Lillie James |
| Best Youth Project Award: | Silx Teen Bar |



2009

Young people
benefiting from our
projects

881

Number of subscribers to
our E-bulletin

429

Organisations in our
Network

23

New Young Volunteers

6000

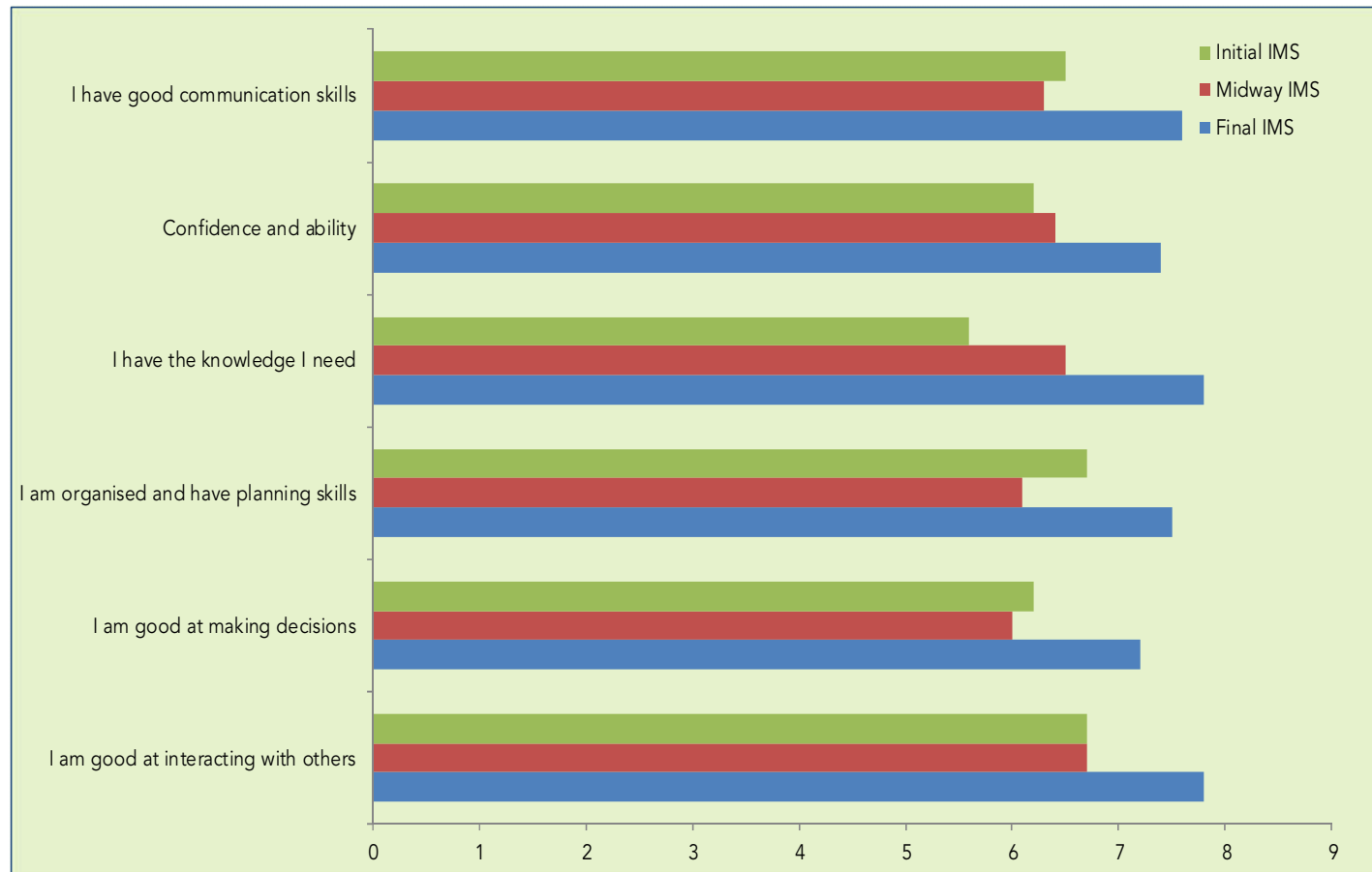
Hours of direct delivery
to Young People

14

Young People on our
Youth Board

Impact Measurement and Statistics

Youth Focus: North East collects information from young people via our Impact Measurement Surveys (IMS), which take place at the beginning of a project (Initial IMS), at the mid-point of delivery (Midway IMS) and on completion (Final IMS). The chart below shows the average progression on a set of core skills and abilities, based on a self-assessment by young people on a scale between 1 (low) and 9 (high). The chart shows the improvement shown at the final IMS stage compared to the beginning. It also highlights that young people's improved awareness of their skills and abilities can fluctuate during projects, for example some young people realise they may not be as confident as they initially thought once a project or piece of work is underway.





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Our staff team

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Leon Mexter

Programmes Director

Kevin Franks

Office Manager

Caroline Garrity

Programmes Officer

Laura Bush

Regional Development Officers

Alex Black

Zoe Jackson

Steve Watson

Youth Support Workers

Emma Abbott

Simone Banks

Helen Kennedy

Victoria Mason-Port

Administration Officers

Denise Bennett

Barry Flux

Caroline Fraser

Freelance Support Staff

Tom Browne Wendy Gill

Anna Spencer Julie Thornton

Trustees

- Tom Adams
- Mark Bagnall
- Rhiannon Bearne
- Beth Farhat
- David Hesselberth
- Marc Mason
- Kevin Morris
- Pete Stout OBE
- Norma Tullock
- Emily Vasey



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- Website - www.youthfocusne.org.uk



Funders

- Ballinger Charitable Trust
- Big Potential
- Centre for Youth Impact
- Co-op Foundation
- Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)
- Durham University
- European Social Fund (Youth Employment Initiative)
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Gatsby Foundation
- Generation NE / Newcastle Futures Ltd
- Generator (Ladders)
- Local Sustainability Fund
- Newcastle University
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Reaching Communities England (Big Lottery Fund)
- Safe in Tees Valley
- Stockton Borough Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Sunderland University
- Virgin Money Endowment Fund
- Virgin Money Foundation
- Wise Group
- Youth Investment Fund (DCMS and Big Lottery Fund)

To all of our funders, a huge thank you. Without your support none of our work with young people would be possible.

Statement of Financial Activities for year ending 31 March 2017

| | Notes | General Unrestricted Funds £ | Designated Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | Total Funds 2017 £ | Total Funds 2016 £ |
|------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Income from: | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 3 | 202,940 | - | 332,384 | 535,324 | 320,983 |
| Investments | | 3,279 | - | - | 3,279 | 4,852 |
| Other | | 6,071 | - | - | 6,071 | 1,405 |
| | | <u>212,290</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>332,384</u> | <u>544,674</u> | <u>327,240</u> |
| Expenditure on: | | | | | | |
| Charitable activities | 4 | 141,097 | - | 357,282 | 498,379 | 375,604 |
| | | <u>141,097</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>357,282</u> | <u>498,379</u> | <u>375,604</u> |
| Net income/(expenditure) | | 71,193 | - | (24,898) | 46,295 | (48,364) |
| Transfers between funds | 16 | 12,167 | (14,847) | 2,680 | - | - |
| Net movement in funds | | <u>83,360</u> | <u>(14,847)</u> | <u>(22,218)</u> | <u>46,295</u> | <u>(48,364)</u> |
| Reconciliation of funds | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 21,680 | 144,638 | 55,811 | 222,129 | 270,493 |
| Total funds carried forward | | <u>105,040</u> | <u>129,791</u> | <u>33,593</u> | <u>268,424</u> | <u>222,129</u> |

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.





Youth Focus: North East gained ISO 9001 which further underlined our relentless drive towards total quality in all that we seek to do and manage.