

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



You+h
focus:
North East

PETE STOUT, CHAIR TRUSTEE

2022 proved to be yet another challenging year for the UK's charitable sector in not only attempting to recover from the effects of the pandemic but also feeling the impacts of Russia's illegal war in Ukraine which created soaring energy prices and inflation running at over 10%. This high rate of inflation is not expected to reduce significantly over the coming period and therefore creates an ongoing challenge. Charities are a lifeline for many people, particularly those with little or no disposable income; this group forms the vast majority of our young service users their families and guardians spread across the North East of England.

Youth Focus North East was only able to weather these external storms because of good and prudent planning, strong and effective foundations, appropriate risk management strategies and well thought through decisions to protect the charity and its work.

Against such a daunting backdrop we still managed to expand our vital work and maintained and attracted a vast range of funders and supporters, all of whom we are deeply grateful to. Youth Focus has always promoted the notion of open and effective working relationships and dialogue between Trustees, Staff and Volunteers. This in turn has fostered a common sense of purpose, direction and understanding and has meant that the maximum amount of time and energy can be devoted to developing high quality work.

The two major themes of our work are direct service provision to young people, and strategic infrastructure development and support to the youth work sector. Both of these two arms were clearly well supported during 2022, direct service provision to young people included youth research, youth voice and representation, international links, arts development, hospital and school-based youth provision and outreach work in community settings.

Infrastructure to support the youth work sector included becoming a recognised training centre for youth work, co-ordinating a plethora of events, seminars and conferences both across the region and nationally. Launching the 'Youth Starts Here' campaign to recognise the importance of youth work. Supporting and developing the North East and Cumbria Funders Network. Delivering the Youth Endowment Fund, Peer Action Collective research and action projects involving fifteen linked organisations. Supporting and developing several new local Youth Alliances across the region. Much of the infrastructure work formed part of the North East Youth Alliance, National Lottery funded initiative, jointly planned, and delivered with NE Youth.

Much positive development work was also undertaken internally within Youth Focus itself during 2022 to strengthen the organisation, this included introducing a more advanced financial management system, undertaking an in-depth review and redesign of our 'Theory of Change' which will also lead to an upgrading of our CRM, Salesforce, to better demonstrate impact. Following a review, the Board decided it was vital to further strengthen the Senior Management Team. A new structure was

designed and implemented to effectively manage the expanding range of initiatives, programmes, and related increase in staffing. It is pleasing to report that three existing members of staff were promoted along with one external candidate to form the new Senior Management Team to support our Chief Executive Kevin Franks plans to develop our charity to the next level.

During 2022, two longstanding Trustees, Hannah Blair and Emily Vasey stepped down from their role as Trustees due to work promotions and pressures. Both young women had served Youth Focus for several years, they both made a vital contribution and will be sadly missed. The Board of Trustees decided to conduct a skills audit before embarking on a process to select new Trustees. The Board reflected on the outcomes of the audit and established a clear action plan for the recruitment of new members to further strengthen and widen representation on our Board of Trustees. We look forward to welcoming, over the coming months, up to five new Trustees to support the development of our Charity.

This Annual Report is testimony to what is achievable when you listen to young people, provide the right kind of structures, provision and support, assemble the resources to make a difference and most importantly bring together a team of highly skilled and qualified staff who are motivated to enable things to happen. Through all that you will read this Annual Report clearly demonstrates the potential of what is possible, young people need the best if they are to fulfil their individual and collective potential. The organisations and individuals who support young people also themselves need to be supported and encouraged to continue and expand their vital work, if not society and humanity will be the losers. We need to make a real and positive difference to the lives and aspirations of young people, delay should not be an option, please join us in our quest!



KEVIN FRANKS, CEO

As we look back on 2022, it is with a growing sense of a return to normality (whatever that is) following the Covid 19 Pandemic. As an organisation we continue to grow and currently have 33 employees on our staff team. A number of these are sessional youth workers, delivering much need youth provision in local communities, and we now have staff based in the Great North Children's Hospital in schools and working in partnership with the Cultural Sector. Our developing work on Peer Researchers has brought us to the attention of new audiences, and has been extremely well-received.

We know, only too well, the disproportionate cuts that have been faced by the youth sector since austerity in 2010 and the negative impact this has had on young people and communities; with many young people in our region simply never having heard of a youth centre or experienced an engagement with a youth worker. Alongside this we are facing a current crisis in regards to recruitment and retention of staff at all levels. Many experienced youth workers have left the sector for more secure jobs or simply because the projects they worked on ended and in some cases the organisations that employed them have closed. For too long there has been a lack of understanding about youth work. Many wouldn't accredit it to being a career or 'proper' profession and this has exacerbated the problem when it comes to recruitment and investment into the sector.

However; there is a growing sense of optimism that youth work is making a much welcome return as a recognised intervention that makes a positive contribution to improving the outcomes of young people. As we move forward we want to ensure Youth Focus North East plays its part in the revitalisation of youth services in our region. We operate as both an infrastructure support body and a direct deliverer of services to young people and communities.

Through our infrastructure support we enable organisations across our sector to come together to collaborate, share and learn from best practice and have their views heard. We support them to be well informed on the policy, practice and strategy developments that affect young people. We hold and deliver the function of the Regional Youth Work Unit and are proud co-founders of the North East Youth Alliance. Our direct support to young people and communities is mainly delivered from our two operating centres in Middlesbrough and Gateshead comprising youth centre, outreach work and community based activities to increase wellbeing and improve community cohesion.

Having our foundations firmly rooted in youth work practice via our direct delivery ensures we remain connected to the young people and organisations we serve through our role as an infrastructure support organisation. The dual roles are mutually beneficial and are equally important to us in our overall aim of 'improving the lives of young people through high quality youth work' and this annual report is a testament to the hard work and support of our staff, trustees, partners and funders.



ABOUT US

Youth Focus North East is an independent charity, established in 1989, with the overall vision to improve the lives of young people through high quality youth work. We exist for the benefit of young people and the organisations which support them.

Our organisation is rooted in the values of good youth work.

Honesty - Respect - Equality - Inclusion

We pride ourselves on being a caring and learning organisation. One in which people are encouraged to take risks, learn from mistakes and achievements, and where young people are central to all we do.

We operate as both an infrastructure support body and a direct deliverer of services to young people and communities.

Through our infrastructure support we enable organisations across our sector to come together to collaborate, share and learn from best practice and have their views heard. We support them to be well informed on the policy, practice and strategy developments that affect young people. We facilitate programmes to build skills and capacity and develop leadership and sustainability in the sector.

We hold and deliver the function of the Regional Youth Work Unit regionallyouthunits.com/about-us and are proud co-founders of the North East Youth Alliance neya.org.uk.

Our direct support to young people and communities is mainly delivered from our two operating centres in Gateshead and Middlesbrough comprising youth centre, outreach work and community based activities to increase wellbeing and improve community cohesion.

Co-production is at the heart of our practice as a youth work organisation. We understand there is no 'one catch all' approach and that young people have to be provided with a variety of opportunities suitable to their interests, abilities and needs. We see the purpose of co-production as providing young people with the opportunity to 'be the change', rather than the problem.

Having our foundations firmly rooted in youth work practice via our direct delivery ensures we remain connected to the young people and organisations we serve through our role as an infrastructure support organisation. The dual roles are mutually beneficial and are equally important to us in our overall aim of improving the lives of young people through high quality youth work.

Chief Executive

Kevin Franks

Director of Youth Work

Laura Bush

Director of Youth Programmes

David McCreedy

Regional Youth Development Manager

Heather Insull

Operations Manager

Caroline Garrity

Lead Youth Worker

Helen Kennedy

Katy Dawes

Lisa Peacock

Simone Banks

Emma Abbott

Clair Jackson

Zoe Jackson

Laura Bennett

Programme Manager

Rebecca Harrop

Youth Support Worker

Tilly Stephenson

Peer Researcher

Megan Stratton

Administration Officer

Denise Bennett

Barry Flux

Communications Support Worker

Judith Bennett

Sessional Youth Worker

Scott Hughes

Caitlin Stephenson

Jodie-Leigh Foster

Sue Todd

Lucy Hopkinson

Bethany Risker

Daniel Trewin

Amelia Bradley

Samantha Logan

Lidsay Wayman

Elizabeth Race

Liani Weston

Mark Risker

Sarah Porteous

Adele Buttery

TRUSTEES

Pete Stout - Chair

Marc Mason - Treasurer

Mark Bagnall

Thomas Adams

Norma Tullock

David Hesselberth

Jill Golightly

Karen Marshall

Emily Vasey

Hannah Blair

OUR WORK IN NUMBERS 2022

YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDING PER MONTH (2019 - 2022)

MONTH	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	250	404	136	315
February	419	366	313	380
March	520	220	194	659
April	441	54	287	520
May	405	54	287	520
June	358	101	312	323
July	607	152	318	301
August	487	159	281	481
September	261	161	343	366
October	401	264	407	329
November	636	359	287	302
December	385	308	335	305

YOUNG PEOPLE PER AUTHORITY (2019 - 2022)

LA AREA	2019	2020	2021	2022
Middlesbrough	1224	1068	1312	1400
Gateshead	200	57	54	337
Redcar and Cleveland	275	200	188	203
Durham	92	17	25	83
Newcastle upon Tyne	258	94	115	64
Sunderland	47	4	15	41
North Tyneside	29	12	11	27
South Tyneside	5	0	5	24
Northumberland	19	0	8	14
Hartlepool	59	6	2	12
Stockton on Tees	159	6	6	6
Darlington	118	25	3	4
No Data	25	66	28	5

HOURS OF DELIVERY PER PROJECT 2022



#IWILL COMMUNITY SPACES CO-OP FOUNDATION

Funded by the Co-op Foundation, the Spaces programme originally supported young people in improving the design and use of a community space in the Pallister Park area of Middlesbrough. This received extremely positive feedback from the community members and from partners.

Through Spaces young people have delivered a range of social action projects that benefit not only themselves and their peers but also the local community. They take the lead in the planning and delivery of every stage of the projects they undertake, and have delivered projects ranging from local heritage photography to food hampers to an Eco Shop.



CASE STUDY

The remit for this project was to integrate with the Grove Hill Linx youth club to decide what their young people wanted to achieve.

As in all YFNE social action projects the focus and remit is directed by the young people involved so they have control and ownership of the process and outcome.

After introducing what social action was and highlighting the budget available (£400) the young people had to devise a Dragon's Den style pitch to secure the funding and present it to a panel. By this time they had generated lots of ideas including outdoor planting, a mural and entertainment in local care homes. They eventually and diplomatically agreed to make gift bags for their local hospital both for youngsters on the children's ward and staff on ICU 2.

The young people then developed their budgeting skills by deciding how many bags to fill, the contents and additional costs such as the mini bus to deliver them. They made priority lists for the staff gift bags to include stress relieving items and some fun, cheery things for the children. As delivery was going to be near Easter they also used this as a focus for the contents. The young people then designed 30 gift cards (15 for staff, 15 for children) and wrote the following message:- Donated by the young people from Linx Grove Hill Youth Club, supported by Youth Focus North East staff and funding from the Co-op Foundation.

The young people also decorated 30 water bottles to include with every bag - with the top 6 attendees at the session decorating spare ones for themselves.

The highlight and culmination of all their hard work was delivering the gift bags to the James Cook University Hospital where they presented the bags to staff from the wards and had photographs taken to remember the day.

The project was an amazing success and a credit to the young people involved, Linx staff and Youth Focus North East!



MAKE THAT CHANGE DULVERTON TRUST

Make That Change is funded by the Dulverton Trust and aims to support young people aged 10 - 18 to link up with their local community and work towards making a positive impact on the area. We involve locally based grassroot organisations, who share a desire to involve more young people in their own delivery models, and a belief in the power of social action as a vehicle of change.

CASE STUDY

Participant, Amber 11, was asked how do you feel you have changed by taking part in this project and she said *"I believe in myself more, my confidence has grown but mostly with who I am confident being with, I have so much more patience than before and awareness of how other people behave and why"*.

Amber has had such a positive experience she requested to continue to be involved in Make That Change second stage which is in a neighbouring rural community. This is unheard of in the area for young people as they rarely interact across the villages. Amber also requested that she be considered as a Young Leader and even designed a badge that her and the others wear with pride. At just 11 years old Amber has such potential to move onto lots of our other projects and we know

'Make That Change' is a multi-generational, community based social action project. Facilitated by our youth workers the project is inclusive, educational, fun and underpinned by young people taking the lead. As part of this project, Youth Focus North East are undertaking work within the Village of Brotton in Redcar and Cleveland.

will make a superb Young Champion focusing on Youth Voice. Amber said her most significant change was her understanding of others. Amber had the chance to work alongside young people with learning challenges, older teenagers along with some older adults. She was able to interact with everyone and develop her communication skills and confidence to be 100% herself around everyone.

The space we provide during a co-designed youth led initiative can often be a challenge. It can be hard to not fall into the trap of rushing the group along and social action projects are often only short term. The benefit of Make That Change is that the funders were insightful enough to allow us to work in one area for 6 months. This provides opportunities to try and fail, and try again. The time frame also offered the group the chance to explore different roles and responsibilities. Everyone got the chance to shine.



THE DULVERTON TRUST

FUTURE YOU

The Community Renewal Fund - branded as Future You - was a government funded project, aimed at supporting unemployed Gateshead residents to increase their confidence and skills, to help them to find employment.

A partnership with Gateshead Council, NE Youth, Citizens Advice Bureau, Gateshead Age UK, Connected Voice, and 2 Way Tenancy Solutions. Youth Focus North East worked with residents to offer them youth work experience, supported under 25s experiencing isolation and loneliness, and delivered a Level 2 Award in Youth Work Principles, giving learners an opportunity to learn more about youth work and gain crucial experience for a career in the youth work field.

"I think I wanted to progress as I had been volunteering for so long. As a volunteer I was helping out but now I have the course under the belt I can further and educate others with it. It is great that I can do that now."

FREE SPACE SAGE GATESHEAD



The Free Space project, a weekly session held, aims to connect young people through a love of music.

Free Space is a collaborative project delivered jointly by Sage Gateshead and Youth Focus North East and comes from a piece of consultation we carried out in early 2021. People tell us that Sage Gateshead feels as though it is for a specific group of young people; for example, those who are very proficient at playing musical instruments. Sage Gateshead has funded this project because they want to be more inclusive through a broader offer to a wider group of young people.

If you are a virtuoso violinist you are welcome at Free Space; you may not be able to play a note but have a love of music that you want to share or explore with others - you are also welcome at Free Space.



POSITIVE PATHWAYS NORTH ORMESBY BIG LOCAL

SPRINGWELL & SALTWELL PARK

Our North Ormesby youth provision is funded by the Big Local initiative. Big Local is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

Positive Pathways North Ormesby provides a safe space for young people aged 10 - 18 to develop friendships and life skills in an informal educational manner. We deliver themed sessions around the personal challenges young people face and which they identify as being important to them, including; deprivation, mental health, employability, risk taking behaviour and improving their physical activity.

Many young people who attend our sessions at North Ormesby recognise the issues they are surrounded by and are passionate about advocating for a better environment for not only them but the other residents around them. These young people are so proud to be from here and it shows through conversations and also social action projects they have achieved. We are consistently hearing what young people want for themselves and their futures which has enabled our team to deliver activities and bring in organisations to continue to raise their aspirations and realise that anything is achievable if you just put your mind to it.



SAFER PARKS POP UP

Join Youth Focus North East at
our pop up youth space for
10 - 18 year olds

Lots of activities for you to get involved in!

A safe space for you to come chill and chat with youth workers

3PM - 7PM
Mon - Wed
Saltwell Park

THIS SESSION IS FREE
POP ALONG AND SAY HI

Pop-up activities in Saltwell Park and detached youth work in Springwell in Gateshead helped us open a dialogue with young people about their thoughts on anti-social behaviour in their local area.

Young people told us about how they defined anti-social behaviour and why they thought young people might be involved in it, and what they would like to see that would make them feel safe in the spaces that were important to them.

We found lot of young people have heard the label 'anti-social behaviour', but much fewer are clear on what they think it really is. Some suggested that behaviour that could be described as anti-social could come from a lack of anything better to do.

Young people were interested in helping us discover what kind of things we could offer that could help provide a safe space for them; our hot drinks and football gear was a popular fixture during our pop-up sessions in Saltwell Park.



GREAT NORTH CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

A partnership between Youth Focus North East and Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NUTH), has resulted in new roles for two workers to work with young people and young adults (age 16 - 25) with diabetes, within the GNCH. This is part of an exciting project funded by NHS England to transform the long-term health and social outcomes of young people with diabetes, helping to promote the social development of young patients aged 16 - 25 years via a range of activities, combining education with enjoyment, challenge resilience and learning.

Alongside this project, a further Youth Worker is supporting young patients across the hospital with the aim of improving the advocacy for groups of patients currently under represented, assisting in the transition to adult and tertiary care, accompanying young people to hospital appointments and undertaking support on the wards.



AMPLIFY MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

A partnership with Musinc, to create a 'free space' for young people aged 10 - 16 in Middlesbrough with a key focus around music.

Amplify builds and develops youth voice within the Musinc project, breaking down barriers for young people in accessing Middlesbrough Town Hall and its facilities, create a neutral space free of expectations for young people to share interests, thoughts and ideas on music and culture and encourage engagement with other young people from a range of backgrounds.



ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD



We are working alongside Youth Focus North West and Youth Work Unit - Yorkshire and Humber to form the Youth Advisory Board.

This opportunity allows young people to lead on the projects and the policies they want to work on, as well as engaging in a range of activities and tasks that directly connect to Arts Council England policy and programme development. In the last year, this has included opportunities such as speaking at national meetings and presenting thoughts on key policy areas, taking part in consultation work and listening to other young people and hearing their views.

The Youth Advisory Board have had the opportunity to travel to other regions and engage in arts and culture whilst developing their skills, knowledge and network.

"It doesn't matter whether you're 'good' at art, it's all about enjoying it!"



"I joined YAB to try and make sure that the issues that young people care about are reflected in the art that they see around them."

YOUNG BORO CHAMPIONS #IWILL TAKE ACTION

Young Boro Champions is a group of young people from East Middlesbrough. This project enables young people to explore ideas and the challenges facing their community, raise their aspirations, be supported to be the decision makers, manage a larger budget, take the next step in their social action journey and encourage more young people to be involved.

CASE STUDY

Following the successful completion of the distribution of Christmas hampers to nominated people in the TS3 area, it was agreed we would join the Youth Focus North East youth club in Thorntree to deliver our next social action project.

There were initially nine young people showing interest but this expanded to up to 12 at times. Numbers were, understandably, reduced during school holidays but overall attendance was good and consistent.

The young people were introduced to the concept of social action and working within available budget and were keen to be involved in something different to their usual youth club sessions.

The young people generated lots of ideas ranging from litter picking, garden planting and animal fostering but eventually unanimously voted on a fun day based at Thorntree Community Hub.

The young people were quick to grasp the budget constraints, practical issues and managing expectations and worked extremely well together to prioritise what would make the fun day a success.

They used a voting system regarding events at the fun day and were keen to cater for everybody's needs both young and old and include vegan food on the menu.

They devised a letter for local businesses to ask for donations and designed a leaflet advertising the event. They had all generated ideas for the title of the event and decided on "The Big Boro Bash". We then delivered letters and leaflets to local shops and all the young people demonstrated confidence when explaining about the event and behaved in a way that was a credit to Youth Focus North East. They proudly wore their "staff badges" with the Young Boro Champions logo to further encourage involvement and responsibility.

A shopping list of required items was then devised and a menu and price list agreed on. The young people expressed preferences for various roles on the day taking into account their skills and interests.

The climax of the project was the actual event. Included were bouncy castles, food, arts and crafts, activities, tombola and raffle plus face painting and balloon artistry. Entrance to the event was free and over 100 people attended. It was a huge success; raising £400 of funds which the young people decided would go back into their youth clubs.



Proudly supporting
youth social action

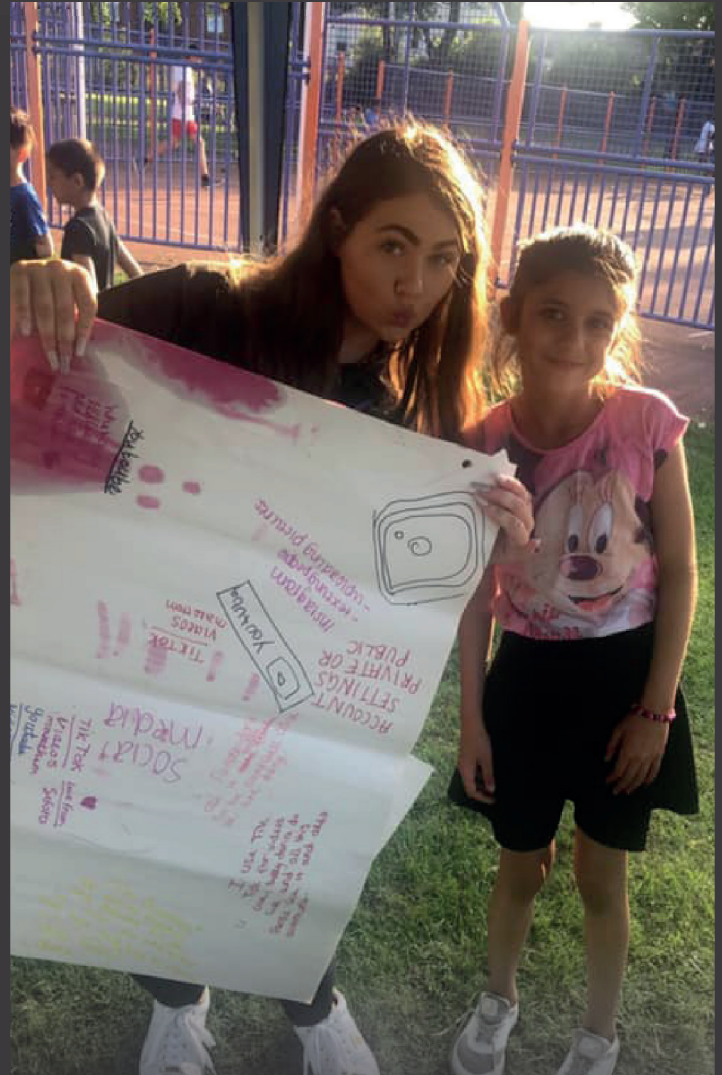


CHILDREN IN NEED POSITIVE PATHWAYS

POP 'N' DROP PARK END

Funded by Children in Need, Positive Pathways delivers youth activities for young people living in East Middlesbrough. This project provides new and fun experiences through open access and 1-1s to explore opportunities, raise aspirations, be positively challenged and be supported to be the decision makers of their own pathway.

During our club sessions, the young people engage with different organisations that vary from Arch, to the Police. Through the session we aim to make the young people to both feel safe, and to gain a good understanding of these organisations. Our main focus is giving young people a voice in which activities they'd like to do, what food they would like introduced into the sessions, and generally help them to make healthy choices. We also deliver a range of sports activities to suit the needs of the young people, to expand both their knowledge and experiences around physical activity to lead a healthy lifestyle in the future.



Based in the Park End area of Middlesbrough, Pop N Drop is delivered from the skate park located at the heart of the ward. Across the year of 2022, Pop N Drop in Park End has been an active and engaging part of the community come rain or shine!

Young people have been able to connect with the local Police and Crime Commissioner's team to talk about important topics like hate crime and online crime through an online workshop, develop skills through team-building activities and learn about each other through art and problem-solving activities. The Pop N Drop has been very popular over the year with regular attendees often numbering over 30 a session.





YOUTH ENDOWMENT FUND PEER ACTION COLLECTIVE

The Youth Endowment Fund – Peer Action Collective (affectionately referred to as PAC) has provided the young people associated with YFNE and our many partners with some fantastic opportunities throughout 2022. This national study on serious youth violence allowed our consortium to employ 12 amazing young peer researchers to work within youth work organisations across the North East. They designed and conducted their own research study from start to finish. While the study had to be focused on serious youth violence, they were able to choose what topic within this they wanted to focus on. Topics included; racism, gender, cyberbullying and education.

298 Participants between the ages of 10-25 took part, giving their views and opinions and having their voices heard. All 11 research studies were analysed by the peer researchers and details of these findings can be found on our website, under 'What We Do – Case Studies'

youthfocusne.org.uk/direct-delivery/

When looking at all of the studies together as a group three main themes were identified;

- The role of the peer group as both a support system and a negative influence
- Lack of mental health support for young people and lack of education (for example, on different countries and cultures, on sexual violence and misogyny and on cyberbullying)
- A lack of support within the education system.

The project produced a number of impactful social action projects to combat these findings and aim to reduce and/or prevent serious youth violence in their communities. Young people created educational and influential videos, music, artwork and posters, they designed education packs for adults and academic style posters to promote their findings. They engaged with 180 young changemakers to bring these projects to life, working with The Key to ensure every young person gained important skills and confidence as a result of taking part.



The Key UK assisted the young people to use their social action framework, training the peer researchers as Key+ facilitators. This framework includes young people self-reporting how confident they are with skills such as negotiation, problem solving and coping with stress. They do this at the beginning and the end of the project as a way to assess the skills they have learned and show them their improvements in a tangible way. They use a plan, think, pitch, do, review model with young people being supported through the whole process. The input from The Key helped to elevate the social action projects with over 12 amazing projects being produced overall and ensured that all 180 changemakers benefitted from the process.

In December we held the first ever North East PAC Showcase event at the Baltic. The event showcased all of the amazing research and social action projects to key stakeholders in the North East. The peer researchers each presented on stage and hosted their own stalls during the breakout time, talking about both their research and social action projects and encouraging others to get involved and make an even bigger impact. It gave young people the opportunity to talk directly to the adults in their lives about the issues which matter to them.

Overall we are proud to say that the North East PAC has been a huge success. Spread across the whole of the North East, working with numerous youth work organisations, producing amazing, impactful research and social action and engaging, listening to and working with hundreds of amazing young people.



YOUTHCRAZY 2022

In July, Youth Focus North East staff members Rebecca and Lisa travelled with six young people from the North East to Belgium to represent the UK and participate in Youthcracy 2022. The project brought together young people from the UK, Italy, Slovakia, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany. Participants explored democratic processes through a week-long simulation game. The young people created their own mini society, forming their own political parties, holding elections and passing new 'laws'.

The UK young people not only participated in the event itself, but participated in many different fundraising activities to contribute to the trip. These included hosting a community fun day at St Chad's Community Project, bag-packing at Tesco in Trinity Square, Gateshead, a sponsored walk while on the trip and another upon their return with NE Youth's Hadrian's Wall challenge.



"I have had a great week and so happy to have met you all. I have had so much fun. And thank you @lisayfne and @rebeccayfne for this opportunity"

"Yous' have all made me feel so welcome!! Also thank you to @rebeccayfne and @lisayfne for giving me this opportunity. One of the best experiences"

"Thanks everyone, it's been one of the best experiences of my life and I would do it all again tomorrow if I could"



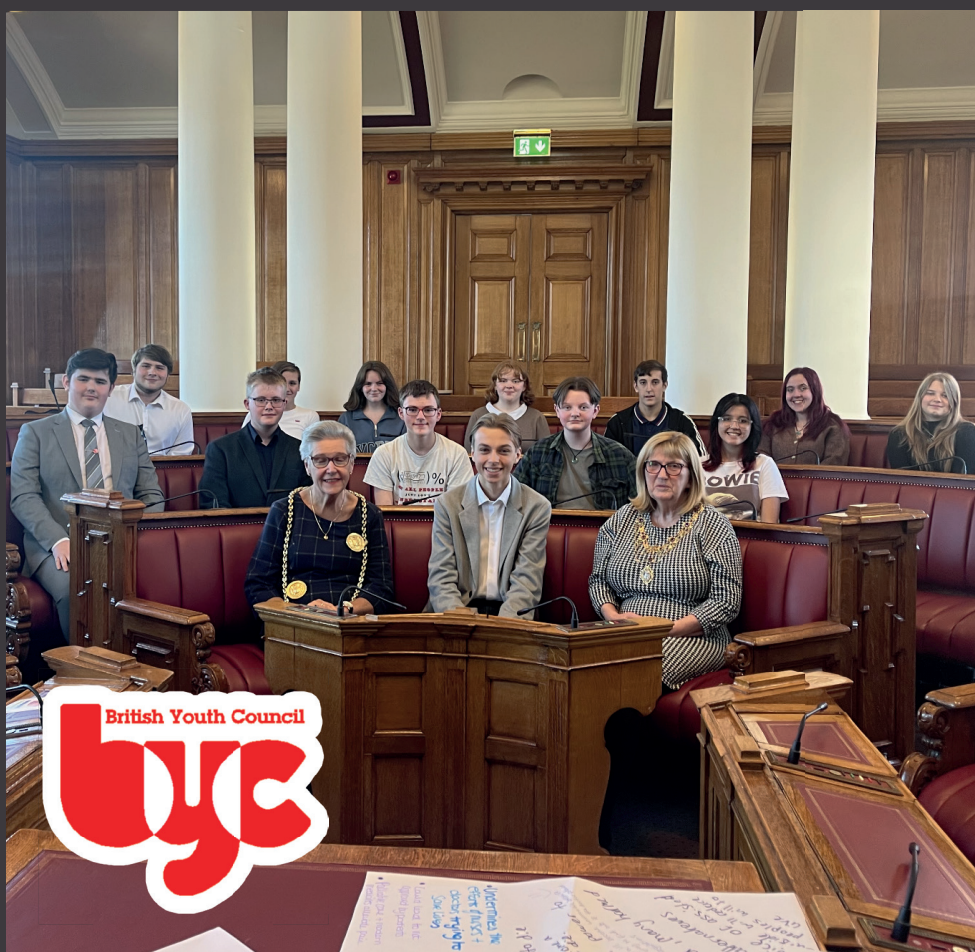
BRITISH YOUTH COUNCIL YOUTHCON OCTOBER 2022

As part of the work we do with the British Youth Council (BYC) we work across the 12 Local Authorities across the North East supporting the local leads and Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs). An MYP is an individual aged between 11 and 18 elected by young people to represent their local area in the UK Youth Parliament.

We host monthly meetings with both local leads and MYPs to update on current programmes, upcoming events and offer support as needed. MYPs are given the opportunity to shape monthly meetings. These meetings include support around the campaign development, specific skills and link with decision makers.

Throughout the year we hold an event called YouthCon. These events bring young people from across the North East to meet with decision makers and influence change, explore the current campaign theme, and develop skills. Youth Con is planned alongside our regional steering group member and local leads offer to host the event. One example is from the Youth Con we hosted in October.

On Saturday 8th October, we facilitated the October 2022 YouthCon. We had young people who were Members of Youth Parliament and Youth Councils from across the North East attend. We held the event at South Shields Town Hall, in the Council Chamber to debate Health and Wellbeing in preparation for their visit to the House of Commons the following month.



The day was opened by the Mayor of South Tyneside, Councillor Pat Hay, who answered questions from the young people and took them on a tour of the Town Hall. The Mayor said: *"It was a privilege to host the event and have budding politicians from across the region visit our beautiful Town Hall."*

As well as hosting the YouthCon events MYPs are given the opportunity to attend annual conference and visit the House of Commons. Both these opportunities enable MYPs to debate issues that are important to them around the theme of the year, vote on future topics that have been put forward by themselves or others, and develop skills. This is a great opportunity for the young people to meet with other MYPs from across other nations and regions.

"It's been absolutely fantastic so glad I actually met you all in person and not over Zoom."

"Thanks to you all, it's been great to meet you all in person and I look forward to working with you all again"

BELOGG COLLECTIVE UK YOUTH/ASTRA FOUNDATION



The Belong Collective aims to be a cross sector network, which is focused on connecting practitioners to share learning, challenges, good practice, and new thinking about youth loneliness.

The focus of this work is wider than just the youth sector - supporting those who work and engage with young people to consider youth loneliness and embed effective solutions to tackle it. In partnership with UK Youth; we are leading the work to co-design resources and deliver training which will enable practitioners to support young people to articulate feelings of loneliness, explore their emotions around this challenging issue and develop practical actions that begin to help young people take positive steps forward.

The aims of the Belong Collective are:

- Cross-sector, joined up working
- Targeted support
- Bring together youth-centred resources

CASE STUDY

YFNE were asked to deliver workshops to Key Stage 2 students as an introduction to their mental health week at school. We were given two full days to kick off the planned weekly activities. Workshops were delivered to 240 children aged between 7 and 11 years, with all of these children expressing feelings of loneliness at some point in their lives. Only 9 children, when asked if they had spoken to anyone about these feelings, had said they had.

The workshops incorporated a range of topics, including discussions and creative activities to raise awareness of what loneliness and isolation is, types of feelings and characteristics present and how the young people can prevent, respond and support themselves and others in feeling less lonely and isolated. With teachers present during the sessions, we also had an opportunity to showcase how these types of sessions can be easily run with other students while the teachers were also exposed to the participants' feedback and themes coming through.



Discussions with the staff after the event revealed the level of need for loneliness and isolation to be addressed in their school as they were shocked by their students' responses. They also talked about the lack of knowledge and experience preventing them from addressing these issues as well as their capacity, and the importance of having external support. The school has actively considered the feedback and recommendations and created strategies and support enhancing the school's approaches. We will also be working closely with the school's young ambassadors to draw upon the feedback and create their own resources/support for fellow students.

STREET LAW NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

Streetlaw involves law students going into schools and youth groups to inform young people about legal issues using practical and interactive teaching methods. Since 2011, we have had the pleasure of working with Newcastle University to support their own Street Law project. The project develops and evolves every year, led by the student Street Law Ambassadors (SLAs).

As a key partner on the project, Youth Focus North East delivers bespoke interactive training sessions to undergraduate students from Newcastle Law School on effectively working with young people. The training enables them to become SLAs, delivering discussion and awareness sessions to groups of children and young people in the region.

We have recently provided an additional peer mentoring support service included within the training and programme delivery.



NATIONAL YOUTH AGENCY (NYA) REGIONAL ROADSHOW

NETWORK OF REGIONAL YOUTH WORK UNITS

In September the NYA, in collaboration with regional partners, held a series of invitation and open events to engage with grassroots youth organisations in discussions on policy development, youth work standards, programmes and youth sector investment. On Tuesday 20th September we held the NE Regional Roadshow in Newcastle.

The event was attended by 60 delegates and focused on the following themes: Sector Policy and Advocacy:

- How we can work together to influence developments in youth work.
 - Updates on national and regional engagement with the latest policy initiatives.
- Youth Work Standards:
 - How we ensure the tools are available to sustain high quality youth work.
 - Updates on safeguarding, the Youth Work Curriculum, Youth Worker training and registration.
- National and Regional Programmes:
 - How sector agencies are working to support grassroots youth work.
 - Updates on engagement opportunities for grassroots organisations
- Youth Sector Investment:
 - How recent announcements of sector investment can resource local work.
 - Updates on resources available to grow, develop and sustain local youth work.



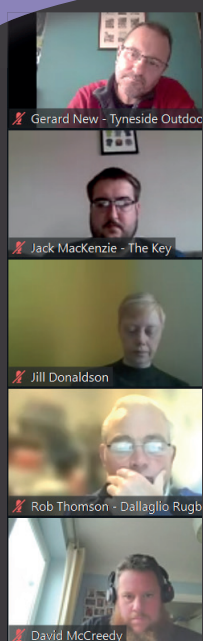
Youth Focus North East is proud to be the Regional Youth Work Unit (RYWU) for the North East of England.

Regional Youth Work Units act as hubs for developing and supporting youth work in their regions, working with commissioners, providers and young people themselves to ensure the sector is well-informed, skilled and representative to changes in government policies and young people's needs.

The Network of Regional Youth Work Units: England brings together independent organisations working across the youth sector at regional level within the nine English regions.

The Network supports and strengthens the capacity of RYWUs, sharing and promoting best practice. We work with a range of national and regional organisations to develop new initiatives and joint partnerships for the benefit of youth work and young people. In addition, the Network provides a bridge between national policy and initiatives, and local policy and delivery - enabling communication and supporting new developments.

REGIONAL IMPACT NETWORK

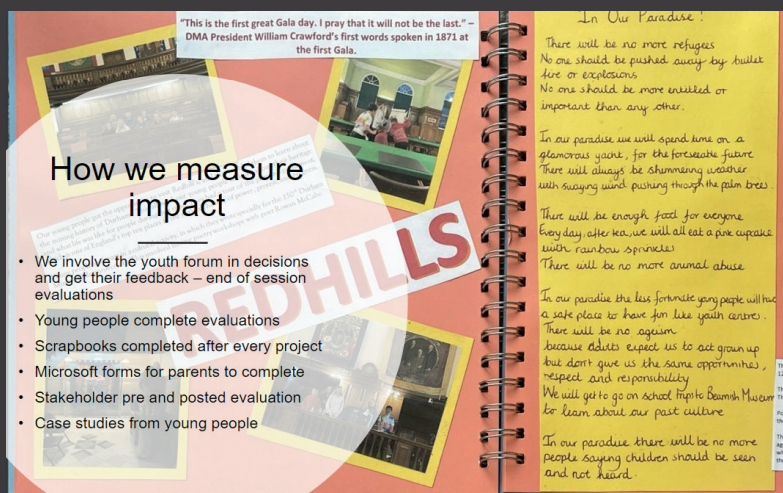


We are the North East lead for the Regional Impact Network, supported by the Centre for Youth Impact.

The Regional Impact Network is open to any organisation working with young people in the North East of England that has an interest in developing their impact measurement practice.

The Impact Network is supported by the Centre for Youth Impact (CYI) and is one of seven Regional Impact Networks across the country.

The network exists to support youth organisations to undertake meaningful evaluation and impact measurement.



In 2022 we held 3 online quarterly meetings on the theme of the Outcomes Framework 2.1, Youth Voice and Sport. We had guest speakers present how they measure and evidence impact of their work to share good practice and new ideas.

PAUL HAMLYN FOUNDATION GATESHEAD

phf Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

Our Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) work in Gateshead is designed to be a programme led by disadvantaged young people that enables them to have real influence, rather than just a voice. A programme that shifts the power dynamic between organisations towards a more collaborative approach to meeting the needs of young people with a focus on embedding young people as leaders of systemic change.

Organisations working separately are helping young people to secure positive outcomes, but we are missing opportunities to put those outcomes together and build on them in a way that then enables young people to really break the cycle of deprivation and dependency.

Traditionally, attempts to link organisations and support collaboration are led by professionals – while some young people have a voice, they are rarely allowed to make and enact decisions that result in meaningful structural change.

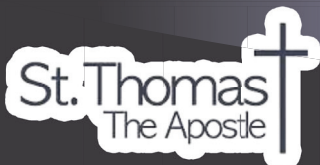


With PHF support we are working with local organisations to develop a new way of working alongside young people that takes them from being “service users” to become meaningful partners in effecting systemic local change.

With better support more young people will have a positive transition of adulthood and will learn the skills to reflect, learn and develop forward-thinking approaches.

We have achieved this through:

- Skint Club - in collaboration with Gateshead Libraries and MakerPlace, with visits from Connected Voice and New Writing North
- Connect through Cooking - in collaboration with Nourish Food School
- Dungeons and Dragons - a hugely popular roleplaying game that challenges players with problem-solving, communication and planning.



TOMMY'S POP UP PARK SPACE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ST THOMAS CHURCH

Tommy's Pop Up Park Space, running since July 2022, is based in the Thorntree Ward of Middlesbrough and is delivered in Partnership with St Thomas Church based in Brambles Farm and Thorntree. This project is funded by the You've Got This Partnership, Middlesbrough Council and Tees Valley Community Foundation.

Our youth work provision provides a safe space for young people aged 10 to 18 to develop friendships and life skills in an informal educational manner. Our sessions are themed around the personal challenges young people face, including deprivation, mental health, employability, risk-taking behaviour, and improving their physical activity.

Some of our key findings from speaking with young people about their experiences is that they are dealing with issues such as feelings of loneliness, having missed opportunities to learn informally, and feeling as if they have no voice or opportunity to be heard. This feedback has shaped the life lessons programme to ensure that all young people's needs can be met in a safe, fun and engaging way.



YOU'VE
GOT
THIS.

Middlesbrough
moving forward

Tees Valley
Community
Foundation

BECOMING A TRAINING CENTRE

In November 2022, Youth Focus North East became a training centre with the Skills and Education Group. This development has been years in the making and we are happy to partner with Skills and Education Group to deliver Youth Work qualifications. We will be beginning our offer with the Level 2 Award in Youth Work Practice and will be extending this offer during 2023 and beyond.

The Level 2 covers the units:

- Theory of Youth Work
- Engaging and Communicating with Young People
- Safeguarding
- Young People's Development

Since 2020 we have delivered 4 courses and had 53 learners gain a Youth Work qualification. We have also supported partner organisations to deliver Youth Work qualifications to another 22 learners

"This course has educated me to work with young people and give them the best outcomes in their lives. This has been a pleasure to be fortunate to work on this course. The staff Laura, Zoe and Denise have been amazing. I'd love to work with them again in the future and will pass the positive feedback to my other peers too. Thank you for allowing me to take part in this amazing course."

"I definitely have a better understanding around youth work and building relationships with young people. I will be able to have a better working relationship with young people after learning to understand them better and how as a youth worker to move forward and build professional relationships with the young people I work with and will be engaging with in the future."

"This course has already benefited my career as it has given me an outline to plan my sessions, renewed my processes of safeguarding and developed my engagement and communication skills. After each session, I am able to adapt my learning into my practice. This reflection then evaluation has allowed for our youth provision at my workplace to grow and we are now supporting more young people."



If you are interested in applying for a place on a future course or wish us to train staff and volunteers in your organisation, contact our Training and Development Centre on training@youthfocusne.org.uk

ENGAGE
TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY



**Youth
focus:**
North East

The North East Youth Alliance (NEYA) is jointly led by two core partners, Youth Focus NE and NE Youth.

The North East Youth Alliance (NEYA) has been created to support the development and sustainability of the people and the organisations working to improve the lives of young people across the NE region. Our ambition is to support a culture shift across the sector – to get people in the youth and community sector thinking and working differently.

The overall outcomes for the NEYA are:

- Improved capacity, collaboration and coordination in the youth sector leading to improved youth provision in the region,
- Increased influence of young people's voices in shaping of services,
- Increased sustainability of services and support for and with young people.

The NEYA holds a unique position within the region's youth sector, offering guidance, support, advice, training, and staff development opportunities for youth workers and youth work organisations. We enable young people to influence and affect the decisions that concern their lives and communities. We support them to get

involved in democracy locally, regionally and nationally, making a change as volunteers, campaigners, decision-makers and leaders.

We provide a bridge between national, regional and grassroots organisations; enabling communication, informing policy developments, engaging parts of the youth sector who may otherwise not be able to access national initiatives and knowledge, and provide regional intelligence to national organisations while informing organisations in the region of national developments that could affect their practice and environment.

As we look back on the first two years of the NEYA we can be proud of what we have achieved. Our Workforce Development Offer has been well received by the sector and has attracted interest nationally. We initially aimed to develop two Local Youth Partnerships and are currently working in eight distinct areas, with an increasing interest in further developments in other localities. Our Youth Voice work has not been without its challenges; but with the Regional Roadshows and formalised links with UK Youth Parliament in place we move forward with a renewed vigour and the foundations in place to realise our ambitions.



TRANSFORM OUR REGION ROAD SHOWS

The key themes the young people brought to the roadshows that will shape the North East Strategy:

Education | Environment | Transport | Policing and Safety
Mental Health | Things To Do

In May 2022, the NEYA Youth Voice Team delivered four Transform Our Region Roadshows across the North East region. These were for young people from across the North East aged 11 to 25 years old who are passionate about change.

The aim was for young people to:

- Have their say on what life is like for young people living in the North East
- Begin to shape the new North East Youth Strategy
- Bring young people together from different areas of the North East

Over the four roadshows, we had 130 young people attend. We delivered workshops to explore life for young people living in the North East and asked each young person the following questions:

- What is good about your area/North East?
- What is bad about your area/North East?
- What do you think could be done to improve your area/North East?
- What are you proud of?

FUNDERS SECTOR AND COLLABORATION GROUP

Following a successful discussion between youth sector organisations and members of the NE & Cumbria Funders Network, on workforce retention and recruitment, in May 2022 we established a regular collaboration meeting open to organisations that work with young people, Funders Network members and other key stakeholders/partners.

The purpose of this group is to explore opportunities for better collaboration, partnership and joined up work to enable a more strategic and purposeful approach to the support and development of youth sector organisations; so they are better able to serve their beneficiaries and have greater impact. We held the initial meeting of the Group in Bensham (Gateshead) on 26th September, with 40 delegates in attendance. Feedback from the meeting included:

- Short-term funding is also unsettling for people due to lack of job security.
- Organisations need to work together and collaborate more so applications aren't duplicated.
- Organisations can become more sustainable by being enterprising but this can be challenging when their target audience doesn't have the money for things.
- Being able to evidence impact.
- Smaller and medium sized funders don't have as much money as they used to.
- The sector as a whole is unrecognised and unsupported so we need to get better at telling people what we do.
- More capacity is needed for staff development and training.

LOCAL YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS

In response to needs of the sector we are working in eight distinct areas and localities; through our work on the NEYA. We have been able to bring significant additional capacity and financial support into the region via our strategic relationship with the Young People's Foundation Trust (YPFT).

The YPFT were appointed as the preferred supplier for the Government's 'Capacity Building of Local Youth Partnerships' initiative. This project is supporting the development of 10 new YPFTs in 2023. The project includes additional support and resources, and small development grants.

MIDDLESBROUGH YOUTH MUTUAL

Progressing from the development phase in 2021/22 where we established a Terms of Reference for the group, which now stands at a membership of 40 individuals, we have held a number of partnership meetings and have agreed a series of events to develop and establish two distinct and interconnected strategies for the Middlesbrough

Young People Led – Youth Offer | Organisational Youth Offer

Two task groups have been set up and are working on the development of the strategies.

A mapping exercise of consultation recently undertaken with young people in the town has revealed their following priorities:

Health and Wellbeing
Education, Learning and Careers
Things to Do
Safety
Rights and Democracy
Environment

An analysis undertaking with local organisations has identified the following needs:

- Recruitment and Retention of Staff (ensure a youth sector workforce of qualified and trained staff, with opportunities for development and progression within the sector).
- Sustainable Funding.
- Capacity and Expertise to Income Generate.
- Workforce Development (training and continuous professional development opportunities for the youth and support workers).
- Evidence & Impact of Youth Work (need to better demonstrate the contribution that youth work makes to the lives of young people, communities and the economy).
- Networking opportunities (where people can share their knowledge, skills, good practice).

Following the needs analysis phase, we are currently delivering a range of events and meetings to develop and launch a comprehensive strategic plan to meet the collective needs of young people and organisations.

STOCKTON LOCAL YOUTH PARTNERSHIP

Youth United Stockton Alliance (YUSA) is a collective of key partners who have come together to form an Alliance to support the sustainability of high-quality open access youth provision across Stockton.

Through a principle of openness, trust and a real appreciation that bringing together all stakeholders to share their knowledge and experience for the overall betterment of children and young people within the Borough, the Alliance has gathered significant momentum and is supported by a wide range of local, sub-regional, regional and national partners at a political, strategic and operational level.

The Alliance has created a strategy which will adopt the blueprint for the next five-years to aid the sustained development of high-quality youth provision within Stockton.

Key partners are:

- BCT Aspire
- Corner House Youth Project
- Eastern Ravens Trust
- Hardwick in Partnership
- HYPE Youth Project
- The Five Lamps Organisation

The Youth United Stockton Alliance is supported by capacity building partners locally (via Catalyst Stockton) and regionally (via Youth Focus North East and the North East Youth Alliance).

Through a period of co-design between partners and external consultation, the partnership has established a clear and powerful vision for the future of children and young people in Stockton, and for the organisations that seek to support them.

The group have established a Theory of Change, and outlined their key strategic themes and priorities, which are:

- Children and Young People as Influencers
- Consortium and Partnership Development
- Influencing Policy Change
- Safe Spaces for the 21 st Century



FINANCE REPORT

Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account) For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	General Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income From:					
Donations and legacies	4	1,352	-	-	1,352
Charitable activities	5	94,391	-	762,777	857,168
Investment income	6	1,578	-	-	1,578
Other trading activities	7	1,899	-	-	1,899
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		99,220	-	762,777	861,997
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	8	22,322	-	745,684	768,006
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		22,322	-	745,684	768,006
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net income (expenditure)		76,898	-	17,093	93,991
Transfer between funds	18	(40,797)	5,719	35,078	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net movement in funds		36,101	5,719	52,171	93,991
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		166,014	60,382	190,453	416,849
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds carried forward		202,115	66,101	242,624	510,840
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.
The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

FUNDERS

UK YOUTH
healthwatch
Middlesbrough

THE **great north**
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
Foundation

Newcastle
University

Middlesbrough
moving forward

COMMUNITY
FUND

Virgin money foundation

YOUTH
ENDOWMENT
FUND

oo
Foundation

MUSINC
The Teesside Musical
Inclusion Partnership

Rooted
in Nature

NYA
National Youth Agency

The **Jack Brunton**
Charitable Trust

Tees Valley
Community
Foundation

Proudly supporting
youth social action

#iwill

W
Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION

YOU'VE
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British Youth Council
byc

Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

THE CENTRE
FOR YOUTH
IMPACT

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

VONNE
voluntary organisations' network north east

Gateshead
Council

futureyou

phf Paul Hamlyn
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ASTRA
FOUNDATION

North Ormesby Big Local

thirteen

Mind
Middlesbrough & Stockton

Sage
Gateshead

YPF
TRUST

THE DULVERTON TRUST

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