

Our Place

*A closer look at
place and youth
social action in the
North of England*

**A peer
research
project**



OUR PLACE



Everything happens in a place. Everyone is from a place.

This zine shares the findings from a peer research project carried out by us - five young social activists from the North and North East of England.

Virgin Money Foundation (VMF) asked us to look at the role of place in youth social action, and working with researchers from Ludvigsen McMahon - this is what we found out.

We interviewed 30 young people and another 52 completed our questionnaire.

Social action



Young people said social action was about taking action to influence or improve things around them

Many had been coming to their project for a long time. The people there, and the place, were important to them



People liked how social action brought different people together to have fun and to work towards a common goal

Jacob

Some called it volunteering or activism. All had different reasons for getting involved

Living physical and virtual lives

Young people's physical and online lives co-exist, inter-link and were both seen as beneficial



Many young people with shared lived experiences, e.g. LGBTQ+ young people, took solace in their online communities



Online communities were often easier to access for folks with disabilities or those living in rural areas

Gage

But a balance is key

Young people talked about needing both face-to-face and online contact for their own mental wellbeing

Our place, our community



I was curious to know if social action can change how young people feel about the place they live

94%

of young people wrote that they felt 'more connected' to the place where their project took place



My interviewees said social action brought them closer to their community

Chloe

For me, I agree Social action has made me far more aware of and interested in my area

Being part of something bigger

I looked into the benefits of social action



Participants realised they didn't have to wait until they were older and more experienced to create something big and meaningful



Young people told us they had gained skills and experiences they could use in the future

Grace

Many had made new friends

Sharing their work with others gave them confidence, pride and a new outlook on life

Making a difference locally

I'm interested in the wider reach of youth action



Youth-led activities raised awareness of bigger issues, such as hate crime, climate change and sexism that were important to participants



Participants felt their actions had changed local perceptions of young people for the better

Eve

Their free events reached a lot of local people

Social action broadened people's sense of community and who belonged to that community

This research was carried out by
Chloe Warnock, Eve Rose, Gage Oxley, Grace
Simpson and Jacob Simpson.

‘Thank you’ to VMF for funding youth
social action in the North, and for funding
us to do this project.

To all the young social
activists who spoke to us -

Cheers!

A special mention goes to Jack Drum Arts,
Baltic Centre and the Change Makers - you
are brilliant and we love the work you do.

The #iwill Fund is made possible thanks
to £50 million joint investment from
The National Lottery Community Fund
and the Department for Digital, Culture,
Media and Sport (DCMS) to support
young people to access high quality
social action opportunities.

Design + Illustration by Josie Brookes



Proudly supporting
youth social action



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport



COMMUNITY
FUND

MONEY
FOUNDATION