

# Big changes start locally

2017 – 2018  
Impact review



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“Attending the program has helped me so much. I felt so isolated before, like I was being judged, but no one here has made me feel like that. I am much more confident now, I have made friends and I love spending time with my daughter. The relationship with my own mum is also stronger than ever.”

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**Participant**

Barnardo’s Start Up Project, Newcastle, funded through the North East Fund.

# Welcome

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**2017 was a BIG year for the Virgin Money Foundation. During the year we awarded £2.99million in grants to charities and social enterprises who make vital changes happen in their local community.**

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We are proud to support those working hardest to bring transformational and long-lasting change in the communities that most need it, in particular by:

- Using our brand and our network to **reach, convene and inspire** people who want to play an active part in changing their communities for the better.
- **Investing** in solutions, providing a range of small to large grants, backing social entrepreneurs to drive lasting change for the better.
- Providing vital **non-financial support** to beneficiaries, for example through matching them with skilled volunteers, pro-bono support or training.

Our beneficiaries tell us that this is a powerful combination that helps us

to make a bigger difference and be more effective in our support – which we acknowledge is made possible by the generosity of our benefactors and partners, including Virgin Money, DCMS and the Big Lottery Fund.

In spring 2017 we launched the third year of our North East Fund, supporting local charities whose work is resulting in young people securing jobs, people in housing distress moving into affordable housing and new social enterprises, bringing money and employment opportunities to the area. This report provides an overview of the full 2017/18 funding programme, which, delivered in partnership with the DCMS, follows the government’s tax year.

2017 saw Virgin Money Foundation forge a relationship with the Big Lottery Fund and the #iwill campaign to launch a funding programme supporting young people in the North East of England to take positive action, developing social action projects and taking leading roles in shaping their community. The launch of our #iwill Take Action programme not only increased the level of money available

for vital local charities working with young people, but also backed young people’s ideas and the youth voice with a view to making social action part of the fabric of everyday life. The impact of this has been felt not only within the community but within our Foundation as the #iwill Take Action Youth Panel we formed participate in the shortlisting and assessing of applications. Their insights have added significant depth to our assessments and breadth to our decision making – and reinforces our belief in the value of truly diverse representation in all of our decision making.

Our grantmaking during 2017 included our first major award outside of the North East. In January 2017 we awarded £300,000 to Scotcash, a Community Development Finance Initiative (CDFI) tackling financial exclusion through the provision of affordable loans. Our award helped them to expand their provision, previously only available in Glasgow, into Edinburgh.

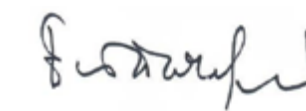
Behind the scenes we developed the building blocks for two new funding programmes that we went on to

launch during 2018, Making A Splash in Norfolk and our Heart Of The Community Fund in cities across the UK. We look forward to telling you more about these initiatives next year.

We hope that you will enjoy the stories within this report of changes happening. Within each of them you will hear the human story of circumstances changing and new hope taking root. It is our privilege to have a small part to play in the work being done by the extraordinary charities and social entrepreneurs that we are proud to have supported during 2017.



**Nancy Doyle-Hall**  
Executive Director



**Edward Wakefield**  
Chair of Trustees



# Highlights

## 2017 & 2018

January 17

Made first 3 Ripple Fund Awards.

March 17

The roof goes on the Emmaus House.

May 17

Launch of the 2017/18 North East Fund.

August 17

Launch #iwill Take Action Fund.



Scotcash makes its first affordable loan in Edinburgh.

September 17

Emmaus community opened in South Shields.

October 17



Chai Café (Hospitality and Hope) opens and serves its first cup of coffee.

YMCA Oyster Mushrooms launched.



November 17

The First Key to Social Action projects begin.  
#iwill Take Action Youth Advisory Panel residential training takes place.

December 17

The refurbishment starts at Edberts House.



January 18



First young person drives their moped to work (Wheels to Work).



# North East Fund Overview

The North East Fund, delivered in partnership with the DCMS, supports organisations that promote long-term change in those communities that need it most by:

- **Enabling** homeless people or people at risk of homelessness to find an affordable home.
- **Supporting** young people to secure a job and overcome any hurdles to sustaining their employment.
- **Creating** and supporting social enterprises that are innovative and which create local jobs.

All of the applications recommended for funding come from organisations that can demonstrate a commitment to making a difference to the lives of vulnerable people living in communities facing multiple challenges across the North East. 100% of the funding supported activity in places listed in the top 20% on the deprivation index nationally.

The 2017/18 North East Fund opened on 4 May 2017 and closed to applications on 17 January 2018, having received 151 applications for requests totalling £5m.

The average award was for £33,500. 27 grants were approved for funding. The total amount awarded was £1,006,632.



David Mitchell at Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project, Sunderland, funded through the North East Fund.

## Outcomes

The North East Fund has been running since August 2015. So far we have distributed £3,006,331. This funding has resulted in...



635

people moving into a tenancy



530

young people entering and sustaining a job

49 jobs created in the social enterprises we have funded, 19 of which directly funded by the Foundation



57 jobs supported in homelessness and youth organisations



26 new jobs created in homelessness and youth employment organisations



# North East Fund 2017/18







 Bright Futures helped me massively 

# Bright Futures

**In 2016 Bright Futures received a grant to develop and deliver a programme to support young women aged 16-25 into sustainable employment. Over the year it worked with 79 young women with 34 of them successful gaining employment and 15 going onto training or further education.**

Bright Futures took its learning from this grant to develop a more intensive support programme for those young women who face multiple barriers to employment. Some of those it works with have experience of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking, some are isolated young mums. This programme is funded through the 2017-18 North East Fund.

In addition to the grant, Bright Futures accessed a wide range of other support and training. “We’ve completed social media training, had volunteer support to help us to better market our services and recently accessed specific training around GDPR. As a young women’s

charity we were aware that we needed to recruit more women onto our Management Committee. Through our links with The Virgin Money Foundation we were able to advertise the role and were lucky to meet Erin Price, a Virgin Money HR Professional, who has since taken on the role of Vice Chair.”

Mary, 21 was supported by Bright Futures this year. She told us “Bright Futures helped me massively in my hunt for a job. They would send me job opportunities when they found

them, meet up with me for coffee on a regular basis and help me look for jobs. We looked over the roles I applied for together and they helped me to tweak my CV, so it would stand out. When I did get an interview, they met me before and we went over interview techniques and possible questions so I felt ready. They offered extra support, like courses to help with my confidence but they did that themselves by helping me to achieve. They helped me to get a bus pass and new clothes for starting work”.

**“Without Bright Futures I wouldn’t be where I am today. I’ve been employed for 10 months now and I love working. They gave me the confidence and extra skills to go to an interview and get the job and I can’t thank them enough.”**

**Mary**



The grant award is **£48,989**



# Grants Awarded North East Fund 2017 – 2018

Between May 2017 and January 2018 we awarded the following grants through the North East Fund. The Fund was fully spent by the time it closed and a range of grants were made across the region helping young people to find work, people to secure a home and enterprises to set up and grow. These grants were made with thanks to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport who partnered with The Virgin Money Foundation on the Fund.

## Social Enterprise

### Hospitality and Hope - £33,800

To employ staff to work in the new social enterprise café and provide training opportunities and a pathway to employment for its homeless clients.

### The Community Network CIC - £40,600

To employ an outreach worker to drive the centre's income-generating activities, as well as covering the cost of employing two apprentices.

### The Millin Charity - £27,000

To support the Women's Trading Collective which will bring a range of new products to market.

## Homelessness

### 700 Club - £20,613

To support the Bridge2Home Bond Scheme in Darlington, providing access to affordable accommodation in the town.

### Berwick Youth Project - £28,450

To support Young People living in supported accommodation to move into rented accommodation.

### Changing Lives - £50,000

To provide therapeutic interventions to support women to recover from abusive relationships and move into safe and sustainable accommodation.

### Handcrafted Projects - £40,210

To fund the salary of a worker to enable the charity to renovate derelict properties to provide accommodation for homeless people.

### Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau - £49,373

To fund the Housing Advice and Tenancy Support Service, supporting people at risk of becoming homeless to secure rented accommodation.

### Humankind - £49,954

To support a programme to bring 20 abandoned properties back into use and to purchase a further 20 properties across Teesside and County Durham.

### My Sisters Place - £41,981

To employ a Housing Manager to develop a property portfolio providing stable and appropriate housing to survivors of domestic abuse.

### Nacro - £40,588

To expand its current provision of rented accommodation to vulnerable women across County Durham.

### Oasis Aquila Housing - £50,000

To continue to fund a bond scheme helping homeless people to access good quality rented accommodation.

## Youth Employment

### A690 Youth Initiative - £49,975

To work with young people in Sunderland who are not in employment, education or training, supporting them into sustainable employment.

### Blue Watch Youth Centre - £17,500

To continue to run a programme supporting young people in Sunderland into sustainable employment.

### Bright Futures - £48,989

To expand on its current programme to get young women in South Tyneside into sustainable employment.

### East Durham Business Service Ltd - £35,200

To run a youth employment programme offering tailored support to help identify each young person's development needs and move them into sustainable employment.

### Five Lamps - £12,000

To support job clubs operating in locations across Teesside, supporting young people into sustainable employment.

### Food Nation - £35,072

To establish a training programme for unemployed young people giving them practical experience while running a street food stall at various locations across the North East of England.

### Foundation of Light - £40,000

To support an employability programme within the charity's Coaches Academy. The learners gain a range of practical qualifications and skills which will help them pursue a career in the sports coaching industry.

### Fourth Action - £15,658

To work with a group of 50 young women who are not in employment, education or training to help them secure employment, self-employment or training.

### Justice Prince CIC - £43,000

To employ an outreach worker and two apprentices, to support its work moving young people into employment.

### Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project - £31,609

To enable the charity to continue to run its employability programme that has been running since the 1980s, supporting young people into employment.

### The Cornforth Partnership - £48,048

To help a group of young parents and a wider group of young people from the village to secure and sustain employment.

### The Junction Foundation - £49,945

To work with a group of young people who are not in employment, education or training, moving them into sustainable employment.

### Wheels to Work County Durham - £24,518

To operate a scooter hire scheme which helps people access employment, training or education that would otherwise be inaccessible due to poor public transport connections.

### YMCA North Tyneside - £49,702

To engage young homeless people in training activities that prepare them for the world of work.

### Youth Almighty Project - £32,847

To work with young people from Sunderland who are not in employment, education or training to help them into sustainable employment.

2017/18 total =

# £1,006,632



# Ripple Fund Overview

The Virgin Money Foundation's Ripple Fund supports sustainable regeneration in local communities, enabling activity that is likely to have a 'ripple effect' – activity which will create skills and confidence to tackle other important issues and therefore build stronger communities.

Regenerating a local area rarely happens by focusing on one issue in isolation. In its first year, the Ripple Fund has supported a cross section of organisations that are approaching the regeneration of their communities in different ways, each of which demonstrated the ability for the work to be maintained long after our input has ceased, and which whilst approaching the task of regeneration from their own specific angle also produces rich secondary benefits.



“Emmaus North East is hugely grateful to The Virgin Money Foundation. The grant we received enabled us to complete our residence and provide accommodation, work and support to 15 previously homeless people. Two years later the project is showing impressive results enabling people to turn their lives around and be an inspiration to others.”

**Sue Wilson,**  
Founding Chair and President,  
Emmaus North East

## During 2017 we awarded the following Ripple Fund Grants:



Photo credit: North East Theatre Trust Ltd.

### Live Theatre £300,000

Live Theatre is an award-winning playwriting theatre in Newcastle. The award is to enable them to replicate their successful Live Tales programme into the Music, Arts and Culture Quarter in Sunderland, an area undergoing arts-led regeneration. This Ripple Fund award comprises both capital and revenue funding for Live Tales and a partnership with Virgin Money Foundation focused upon regeneration in Sunderland that benefits local young people and evidences the impact of their work.



### Scotcash - £300,000

Scotcash helps people to access affordable credit and build their financial skills and resilience. The Foundation awarded a grant to enable Scotcash to expand into Edinburgh. Scotcash have received volunteer support from Virgin Money colleagues in Edinburgh including event planning, the use of the Virgin Money offices for the launch of the new site and pro-bono business analysts to provide data on customer behaviour, risk and business strategy.

### Emmaus - £250,000

Emmaus North East was set up by a group wanting to respond to the growing levels of homelessness in the North East. Their vision is for an Emmaus community that contributes to the economy through thriving social enterprises. The Foundation awarded a grant to enable Emmaus North East to complete the refurbishment of its new community home in South Shields, regenerating a property that has stood empty for many years and contributed towards the setup of their social enterprises in South Shields. In addition to the award, Emmaus have benefited from training for their staff and support to work with Amber to curate with Emmaus residents a photography exhibition depicting human stories of homelessness in the North East.

### Edberts house - £216,508

Edberts House is a vibrant community development organisation. Their original base, once a disused building at the centre of High Lanes Estate, had become so popular that it needed extending and refurbishing to allow the community to use it for many years to come. The Foundation awarded a grant to enable Edberts House to complete the work on their property and support the core costs of the organisation. In addition the Foundation awarded funding for leadership development and recruited a HR expert from Virgin Money as a new Trustee.



### Back On The Map - £288,935

Back On The Map is a Sunderland-based community organisation regenerating a neighbourhood through purchasing, refurbishing and renting out previously empty or problem properties. The Foundation's award, combined with a loan from Sunderland Council enabled Back On The Map to develop a £1 million property purchase pot.



Photo credit: GLT Partners Ltd.

### Keyfund - £56,500

Key Fund Investments is a prolific social enterprise lender based in Sheffield and operating across the North of England. The Foundation's award was to set up and deliver a social enterprise incubator in Newcastle. In addition to the award, the incubator is working with Virgin Money to host events and provide business mentors to the participants of the incubator.



Edberts feels like my family – I treasure the atmosphere and love and care



## Ripple Fund

“I never believed it would happen – I never thought anyone would help us make that building how we needed it to be. Now it looks amazing, and it makes all the years of volunteering feel worthwhile – like someone noticed what we were doing and believed in us and wanted to help.”

**Crystal Dunnigan,**  
Local resident.

Edberts House began in 2009 and has been working with the community ever since, creating opportunities for people to connect to one another, connect to support services and connect to decision makers to influence change in their own area. Until recently, it was based in a small, three bedroom house. For years people had wanted to expand the building to allow greater scope for its work to expand.

When Edberts secured funding through the Ripple Fund, the community excitement turned to focussed design and the long 12-month journey of creating a new Edberts building began.

It was launched in March 2018, with community involvement at the heart... people unpacking boxes and cleaning up and deciding where old and new furniture could sit side-by-side to create a new fantastic hub, right in the centre of the community.

“We had wanted to get our hard hats on for years and knock the walls down – but we started to think it would never happen.”

**Jacqui Dewhurst,**  
Edberts Steering group.

“Someone once said to me that coming to Edberts felt like ‘the old days’ when the community came together to support each other and you knew everyone,” said Sarah Gorman, Edberts CEO. “I feel like the support we have had from Virgin Money Foundation harks back to an earlier era in the North East when mining and ship building were at the heart of our communities, providing not only employment but activities and social opportunities too – really helping to build communities. Not only did we

get the grant but we were successful in recruiting a new Board member from Virgin Money – bringing years of experience from a very different sector – and we’ve accessed further training and professional development opportunities through the Foundation. The building has become a very tangible picture of transformation and now people really believe change can happen. The Virgin Money Foundation made it possible.”

Since the building launched, the programme has included children’s groups, lunches, exercise and learning opportunities and much more, and footfall is growing by the week. The building will also become a focus for enterprise opportunities, used for growing small businesses skills.

“Edberts has given me the opportunity to get back into work and meet amazing people.”



Grant award

£216,508



# #iwill Take Action Fund Overview

The Virgin Money Foundation backs the ideas of local people to make big changes in their community – this includes young people!

We do this to ensure that young people have the opportunity to shape the world in which they live. The Virgin Money Foundation match funded £850,000 from Big Lottery Fund to create a £1.7million, three year #iwill Take Action Fund.

Through the #iwill Take Action Fund we provide grants under three themes:

- **Our Physical Environment:** We want to empower young people to make the communities they live in a better place.
- **Our Health:** We want to encourage young people to tackle health issues that affect their community.
- **Our Culture:** We want young people to use art and media as a tool to raise awareness of the issues that matter to them and their communities.

We launched our #iwill Take Action Fund in August 2017, awarding five strategic partnership awards totalling £743,261. These awards were followed by the opening of the main grants programme which will continue to award grants until Spring 2019.



Photo credit: North News.

During 2017 we awarded the following #iwill Take Action Fund Grants:



## Baltic £150,000

Baltic is a contemporary art gallery in Gateshead welcoming over 500,000 people of all ages each year. It is nationally recognised for its learning programme providing sessions for pre-school children through to practising artists. The #iwill Take Action award funds their programme Creating Change, which aims to embed social action in three Gateshead secondary schools, working with young people on projects exploring cultural identity, young people's voice and their rights and community identity.

## Groundwork North East and Cumbria - £148,950

Groundwork North East and Cumbria has been supporting individuals and local communities to make positive change for over 30 years. The #iwill Take Action award enables Groundwork to support young people aged 11-15 to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve green spaces and educate their community on the environment, promoting behaviour change.



## Youth Focus North East - £146,097

Youth Focus North East runs a strategic support network for over 500 organisations supporting young people across the region, as well as its own youth-led programmes. The #iwill Take Action award is funding them to deliver 50 local challenges in 50 local communities working with young people across the North East to take action on the issues they care about, partnering with older members of the community.



## Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation (MFCF) - £150,000

MFCF works across Teesside delivering sport, health, education and inclusion projects to raise aspirations in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the region. The #iwill Take Action award enables them to support young people through a three-stage social action programme with a focus on health and wellbeing. Young Ambassadors are recruited by MFCF to support other young people coming through the programme.



## The Key - £148,214

The Key works across the North East helping young people to make positive steps towards employment, education, training or volunteering. Through its #iwill Take Action award The Key are working with young people across the North East to develop over 200 social action projects and training Key Alumni to raise awareness of the #iwill campaign and support those taking part for the first time.

“As Co-Founder of the #iwill campaign it is magnificent to see the tremendous positive impact young people are making in the North East through projects supported by Virgin Money Foundation's #iwill Take Action Fund. The projects supported by the Fund are shining examples of how empowering young people to take the lead on tackling issues that matter to them and their communities, creates such a clear double benefit – for the young people themselves, and the communities they are serving.”

Dame Julia Cleverdon,  
DCVO, CBE.

The grants awarded total

# £743,261





It's been an excellent opportunity to give something back to a community that has given me so much.

Craig

# #iwill Take Action Youth Advisory Panel

From day one we wanted young people to be at the core of our #iwill Take Action Fund, helping us to understand the challenges young people face but also what interests and excites them, bringing their unique perspective to our application and decision making process.

We worked with Youth Focus North East to help us find a group of young people ranging from 15 to 22, young people from diverse backgrounds, some who already had social action experience, some who were getting involved for the very first time. They spent time getting to know each other so they'd feel comfortable expressing their honest opinions, and accessed training on how to conduct themselves as a steering group and how to assess applications. Our Trustees spent time getting to know them and breaking down any perceived barriers.

Our youth panel assess all shortlisted applications, a member of the panel



attends each assessment visit and talks directly to the organisation and the young people applying. They then attend the funding recommendations panel and feedback their views.

To us it is not about 'ticking a box' to say we engaged young people – they challenge us to think in a different way, they ask questions we wouldn't and sometimes they wholeheartedly disagree with our views and we work hard to come to a consensus. They have the right of veto and they've used it.

'I may not have been with this Panel for long. In fact, I'm the newest member, but so far with this Youth Advisory Panel, I've seen the value of it. Fully fledged adults can't always figure out with stone cold logic, what the problems are for youth, and what will actually improve them, which is why this panel is such a working idea. Virgin Money Foundation may have took a risk in including such a panel, but if you ask me, the risk has turned out for the better.'

Matthew

'Since being on the Youth Advisory Panel, I have met many new people and gained a lot of confidence. I can really see how this input from young people helps to assist the Trustees, and how it also helps its members learn vital skills such as teamwork and evaluation.'

Josie

The Virgin Money Foundation would like to thank the Youth Advisory Panel for all their time, energy and insights. The #iwill Take Action Fund would not be as effective without their input.

Thanks to

Eve Stobbart (18)

Craig Bateman (21)

Josie Ball (16)

Ellie Simblet (16)

Astrud Turner (20)

Amir Mahmood (17)

Hannah Fleming (19)

Aman Akhtar (17)

Amy Lowes (20)

Matthew Evans (23)

Hannah Munslow (19)







The Virgin Money Foundation embraces a can-do attitude to solving issues and making a real difference. The offer of additional support and training has really gone above and beyond.



## North East Fund Grant Recipient 2017

Front cover photograph: Mattr Media.

Images throughout: The Bigger Picture.

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