TOGETHER MIDDLESBROUGH & CLEVELAND®

A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE DIOCESE OF YORK AND CUP

FLOURISHING LIVES & COMMUNITIES MAKING AN IMPACT THROUGH COVID-19

Review 2020



FOREWORD

From the Chair of Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland, The Right Reverend Paul Ferguson, Bishop of Whitby:

"When 2020 began, we could not have imagined how the year would turn out. As the months went on, and Coronavirus became the main item on the daily news, many people were directly affected through illness and thousands very sadly lost their lives. Millions more stayed well but were indirectly affected, because activities were restricted in lockdown, limiting everyday human contact, and deepening loneliness.

It has been a crisis time for a huge number of companies and businesses, resulting in short-hours working and redundancies. And, of course, there is concern that the disruption to children's and young people's lives, mainly through school and college closures, will cause lasting damage.

Anyone reading these words could say 'Yes, I know, it's been the same for us all.' But it hasn't. The direct and indirect effects of Coronavirus have hit people hardest when they are already living with those factors that make life difficult, or that get in the way of their welfare and flourishing — things that Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland has been working for several years now to address.

We continue our partnership with the Church Urban Fund, motivated by Christian faith, whilst serving all the people of our communities equally. As ever we are so grateful to our supporters, donors and champions.

In this report you can read of the imaginative ways in which our new Chief Officer, Kate Jeffels, and her team have responded to the needs of people of all ages in South Teesside in the particular challenges of 2020."



+ Paul Whithy

- The Right Reverend Paul Ferguson, Bishop of Whitby and Chairman of Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland



















"I wanted to take the opportunity to give personal thanks to so many who have supported Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland, in so many ways, through the most difficult year in our history! To our fantastic team, who have gone above and beyond, despite facing their own difficulties in this extraordinary year; our amazing Board of Trustees for their unswerving support; Mandy Robinson, PA to the Bishop of Whitby, and Barbara Edwards, for their administrative skills and support; all our funders, old and new, who believed in our work in such uncertain times; Mark and the team at Civil Society Consulting CIC for giving us resilience and so much more; our partners across South Tees for working with us to support the most vulnerable.

And, of course, most of all a very big thank you to all the incredible residents of Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland for their continued strength, and for pulling together to ensure our communities come through this to look to a brighter future together!



- Kate Jeffels, Chief Officer, Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland



Trustee Board

Chair: The Right Reverend Paul Ferguson, Bishop of Whitby

Treasurer: John Hinman

Father Adam Gaunt - Reverend Lindsey Goodhew - Kate Morris - Reverend Stephen Sutton

Philip Watson - Catherine Evans (Treasurer Jan -June 2020)

Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland Champions

TM&C has an expanding network of Champions who help the charity by raising awareness of its work and fundraising. Finance, food, clothing and household items – as well as the individual's valuable time and skills – are shared across all the local communities we support.

The Team

Kate Jeffels: Chief Officer

Julie McGee: Food & Friendship Project Co-ordinator

Billy Barnes: Faithfully Ageing Better Project Worker, Warm Welcome

Jenna Casey: Feast of Fun Project Officer (Jan-May 20)

Caroline Nakachwa: BAME Development Officer

Karen Deen: Food Insecurity Project Officer

Emma Crabtree: Virtual Business Support Assistant

IMPACT & KEY ACTIVITIES

For almost a decade now, Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland (TM&C) has been tackling a wide range of social issues including loneliness, homelessness, food inequality and other life-challenges faced by children and families. The charity supports churches, faith groups and community organisations to develop their social action so that they can combat poverty and inequality throughout Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland.

During the year long Coronavirus crisis, the charity has stepped up to meet the growing needs of local people, churches and communities in an area of the country which has been one of the most adversely affected by the pandemic, expanding its emergency work to help even more vulnerable and socially-isolated communities to cope and sustain themselves; and, receiving short-term extra funding to do so.

The pandemic has sorely exposed and deepened pre-existing – very high – levels of socio-economic deprivation. Middlesbrough itself is one of the highest risk areas for Covid-19 and residents have the highest risk of dying from the 'disease of deprivation' (The Lancet 2020) nationally. At the time of writing (March 2021), Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland remain in the top areas of the country for infections and higher mortality.

COVID-19 IMPACT:

- Feast of Fun: TM&C coordinates a holiday hunger support programme for vulnerable families experiencing great hardship during the school holidays. This year 44 different communities have benefited, which is DOUBLE the number of communities reached in the previous year. Working with local groups, churches, and organisations, by the end of 2020 the charity had delivered food and activity resources to 11,409 children and their families and provided 86,676 meals this is a FIVE-FOLD increase in activity during the Covid-19 crisis (see pages 5-6)
- Positive Pathways out of Homelessness: Using a relational approach to working with the homeless, and those at risk of becoming homeless, TM&C worked with faith organisations and key delivery partner DePaul to reach around 300 beneficiaries throughout the pandemic – the majority of this was achieved via virtual one-to-one and peer group support (page 7)
- Warm Welcome: One of the goals of TM&C is to reduce social isolation and reduce loneliness, and this
 project works with well over 300 people and 18 different groups to establish and develop places of
 welcome to reduce social isolation for the over 50s. During the pandemic, this has been converted
 to a telephone befriending service benefiting more than 80 older people every month (see pages 9-10)
- Food & Friendship: As part of the Ageing Better programme, this TM&C project establishes and develops regular group meetings and people come together to meet, share food and friendship. Food & Friendship also aims to reduce social isolation for those over 50. TM&C works with almost 100 people in 10 groups and like the Warm Welcome project, Food & Friendship was adapted during the pandemic to provide a telephone befriending service
- Just Finance Foundation COVID Cash Recovery training: Helping people and communities hardest
 hit financially by the pandemic has been a priority, and TM&C has provided 'train the trainer' Covid Cash
 recovery training courses to 210 local community leaders and charity workers, therefore benefiting
 over 2,000 low-income people and families (page 11)
- Extra emergency funding: TM&C has secured short-term, emergency funding totalling £193,000 –
 helping to fund core charity costs, greatly increased additional Feast of Fun (tackling food insecurity)
 activities, and to kick-start new work to support ethnic minority communities and others hardest hit by
 the pandemic. TM&C commissioned a Covid-19 social action research study to assess the pandemic's
 impact on faith communities, civil society and ethnic minorities; this underpins TM&C future planning
 and an inclusive Recovery for All project (page 12)

FEAST OF FUN AT HOME

Our Feast of Fun programme has reached 44 different communities across Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland. It is designed to combat holiday hunger for vulnerable families facing severe hardship and the programme has increased five-fold throughout the pandemic, benefiting more than 11,000 children and their families. This has been achieved through a partnership of local churches, community groups, ethnic minority organisations and schools.



"Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland has enabled us to provide food hampers to those who would have slipped through the system. By working closely with community members we are able to target families who are most in need. Throughout the pandemic Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland has given us the opportunity to provide consistent help through the whole of 2020."

Nusrat Hussain, Community Hub@Newport Settlement – Helping and feeding 15 families and 41 children

Feast of Fun provides holiday activities with healthy food for children in low-income families living in deprived communities across Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland. For many families the school holidays are a struggle with the children at home 24/7 and no free school meals, so the weekly budget has to stretch further for food and there is little left for activities and treats. Working with local schools, the most vulnerable families are supported to participate. It is a vibrant grass—roots response with local people at the heart, including a large number of older people who volunteer, consequently reducing their loneliness and isolation - and further building strong relationships in local communities. For 2020 Feast of Fun worked in at least 30 communities, supporting even more children and their families.

You can't understand how much this means to me and how much this will help me and my family, I'm so struggling."

Parent, Southbank

In 2020, the schemes ran as **Feast of Fun at Home** to comply with the specific COVID-19 guidelines and social distancing requirements. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to run trips and face-to-face activities. However, this was replaced with food parcels, or healthy lunches, delivered socially distanced to homes; or collected by families from safe collection points; and activity packs to use at home to provide entertainment and educational content.

In the summer holiday alone the programme was more than five times the size of that in 2019, delivering 51,746 meals in this 6-week period, compared with around 9,800 in 2019. The need was so great that an additional scheme at Christmas was organised. In total, the 2020 programme delivered 86,676 meals, and activity packs, at a cost of £82,000, almost 2.5 times that of the previous year. The charity incurred significant additional costs related to the increased need; the method of delivery, due to COVID restrictions; and additional expenses around PPE and hand sanitisers.

The total number of beneficiaries who received support from Feast of Fun at Home in 2020 was 11,409, of which 8,600 were children and young people; and 2,809 were adults in the families of those children.





RECENT 'FEAST OF FUN' FEEDBACK

"We were able to signpost some families to further support, such as school uniform banks, food banks.... And, support them in terms of mental health and wellbeing.

Emma Dacey, Hope Church East Cleveland

- Helping and feeding 61 families and 111 children

"The meals and crafts went down well and people were very appreciative - some said it was a 'highlight of their week' receiving the food parcels."

Shona Joselin, Guisborough Bridge Association – Helping **52 families** and over **100 children**

"Food and contact with other people during lockdown was immensely appreciated."

Barbara Edwards, St Barnabas Church Linthorpe – Helping **19 families** and **42 children**

"The families are overwhelmed by the support, the food and activities - this means so much to us."

Kath Dean, The Genesis Project

- Helping and feeding 100 families and 300 children

"Many food drops involved chatting on the doorsteps with families that hadn't seen friends for months due to lockdown..."

Matthew Cross, Blaze

- Helping and feeding 15 families and 27 children









POSITIVE PATHWAYS OUT OF HOMELESSNESS

Positive Pathways is a partnership project between TM&C and DePaul UK to deliver support to the homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Middlesbrough.

Working with some of the most marginalised people locally the activity is based in central Middlesbrough, and it provides a twice weekly drop-in. Building trust and boosting self-confidence people experiencing homelessness are actively listened to, given a warm welcome and helped to develop their wellbeing and a better more positive future. They are connected to specific specialist support to meet their basic needs and helped to achieve longer-term positive life choices.

During Covid-19 TM&C has offered virtual peer support group activity (online 'drop-in's) and one-to-one telephone & Zoom support, all designed to tackle their housing, self-care and mental health needs. The approach is highly relational and person-centred. The pandemic has reduced people's social networks and exacerbated the personal challenges they face. Each week, the project has helped on average between 17 and 26 people experiencing homelessness. Please see the two Stories of Impact case studies, for Gillian and Beth.

Stories of impact POSITIVE PATHWAYS



GILLIAN – Case Study

"Gillian is a young woman in her mid-20s. A regular client of the drop in brought her to us as she had been thrown out of her house share after an argument and had nowhere to go. She had two large suitcases with her and was facing the strong possibility of having to rough sleep that night. She had been offered a campervan on her father's drive in Redcar, but she could not enter the house, as the family is medically vulnerable from COVID-19 and had to shield. This was far from ideal as she had no financial means of getting there, and it was not a suitable long-term solution in very cold, winter weather.

We liaised with the Rough Sleeper Coordinator, and Positive Pathways offered Gillian some food and a hot drink, and whilst chatting discovered that her mother lived in Newcastle. Gillian was encouraged to make telephone contact with her mother, which she did and her mother responded positively. The Rough Sleeper Coordinator was able to access some funding to purchase a train ticket to Newcastle and a potential rough sleeper scenario for Gillian was avoided."

BETH – Case Study

"Referred from another local organisation, Beth was struggling with the lockdown procedures, especially as many of the activities that she enjoyed were cancelled or online. We managed to start a conversation with her – introducing her to Positive Pathways, discussing all the issues she had. She reported being very isolated and living in insecure shared accommodation. It also turned out that her aversion to anything online was a result of the bullying she been receiving via social media from a previous friend. Her mental health had suffered – and this was made worse by her OCD and depression - and so we helped her develop some coping strategies. She needed help too to access basic foodstuffs via the foodbank.

The team offers regular emotional support so things don't spiral for Beth. This support is over the telephone. Feedback strongly suggests that she is now able to keep herself well, and is getting the food that she needs."

NATIONAL POVERTY COMPARISON - IN SOME AREAS OF MIDDLESBROUGH AND REDCAR & CLEVELAND:

- Child poverty more than 1 in 3 (80% higher than average for England)
- Older people living in poverty 1 in 4
 (56% higher than average for England)
- Low income households more than 1 in 4

(Almost twice the England average)



















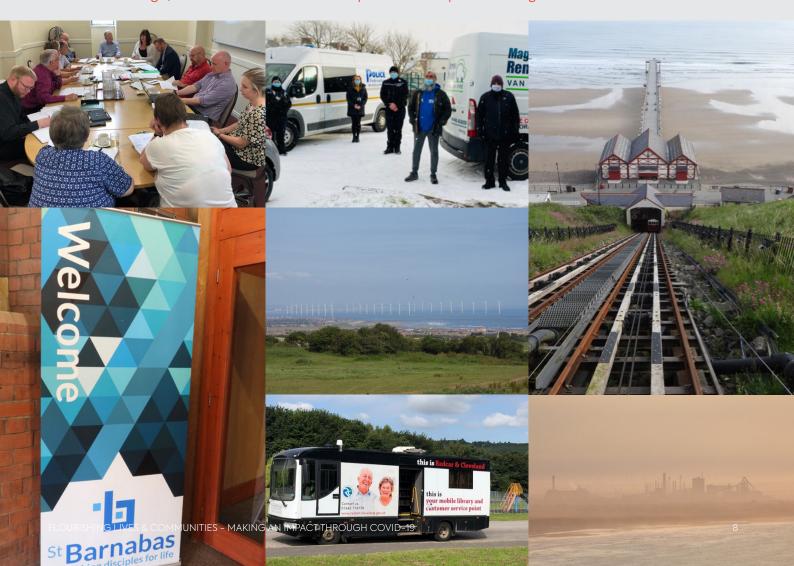


Based on Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (pre-Covid data)

According to the **Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Destitution in the UK 2020 report**, the highest proportion of people experiencing extreme hardship in the UK is in Middlesbrough, with the local authority ranked highest for destitution rates with 1.8% of households classed as destitute.

It defines destitution as people who can't afford two or more essentials like shelter, food, heating or clothing.

In Middlesbrough, 49% of wards are in the top 10 most deprived in England.



WARM WELCOME, FOOD & FRIENDSHIP & CASH RECOVERY COURSES

Reducing loneliness and boosting social connections

As the lockdown first hit in Spring 2020 TM&C quickly moved from delivering face-to face-work with people over the age of 50 who were experiencing social isolation - and switched to providing a dedicated telephone befriending service. The charity's prevention of loneliness and isolation is ordinarily delivered through two projects: Food & Friendship and Warm Welcome. This is vital work is commissioned by Middlesbrough & Stockton MIND as part of the overall Ageing Better Middlesbrough initiative.

The Covid telephone befriending service has operated throughout most of 2020, and this involved making a weekly call to have a simple chat and check on people's sense of wellbeing, as project co-ordinator **Julie McGee** explains:

"With my colleague Billy we're calling upwards of 20 people each week, often chatting for upwards of an hour, trying to stay in touch with them to make sure that they don't feel too isolated or lonely during lockdown. Our two Stories of Impact – for George and Lillian - show how important the service is."

Loneliness is particularly acute in Middlesbrough, which has been one of the areas at greatest risk of infection, and dying from, COVID-19. The issue of loneliness has been significantly compounded by successive lockdowns throughout the last year.

Stories of Impact TELEPHONE BEFRIENDING SERVICE



GEORGE - Case Study

"One of my telephone friends, George aged 85, lived alone and although he was well supported by his family, he spent many hours on his own, and was unable to leave his house, due to lockdown restrictions, as he was shielding.

George was a real raconteur and in no time at all he was telling me about his young life in Middlesbrough, his family - including his German heritage and the implications of that during the First World War. One day he told me about his family who owned a butchers shop and during the war local women trashed the shop after waving off their husbands who were returning to the front line. George told me many highly entertaining stories of his 'adventures' in the 1960s in his 'Bubble Car'. We laughed and joked for hours.

I knew that George was suffering with Leukemia, which was kept under control with medication and transfusions. There were times when he would be feeling low and unwell at the beginning of our conversations, but after chatting and telling me his family news, I knew that his mood had lifted and he felt better.

George was a romantic and loved the dreamy music of the 60s. He told me that he chose 'Unforgettable' by Nat King Cole for his wife's funeral. Full of fun, sociable, and dedicated to his family, I looked forward to our chats and to a time when restrictions were lifted and George may have been able to join us in person. Sadly George passed away in early 2021. I'll miss him. We laughed a lot, shared some sad moments; it was a real privilege to spend around 40 hours in conversation with him during the pandemic."

LILLIAN - Case Study

"I began to talk to Lillian just as lockdown had started in April 2020. She was 78 years old and lived alone. She suffers with arthritis and is in considerable and constant pain. Lillian was advised to shield during the first lockdown and I spent time making sure that she was receiving her food parcels and that she was up to date with delivery of her medications. This wasn't always easy.



Lillian talks to me about her childhood. She was brought up in a very impoverished 'tough' area of Middlesbrough, but speaks with affection and loyalty about the local area, the generosity of the people, and the strong sense of community that existed when she was growing up. The area where she lived was demolished in the 1960s.

Before lockdown Lillian had a regular weekly pattern of shopping and attending clubs for the over 50s which gave her an active social life. Lockdown stopped any events and she didn't leave her home at all, or have any visitors for more than six months. She is very lonely and isolated - and sadly is estranged from her family. Her neighbours offer her support to ensure that she always has the basics. Lillian is a generous woman, and desperately misses social contact. We chat at least once each week and spend much of that time reminiscing. I'm looking forward to meeting her face-to-face when the pandemic has passed. "

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TM&C receives £22,400 from Allchurches Trust



The grant is to assist TM&C with its work on loneliness and food poverty - challenges that have been intensified by the pandemic.

"Through Allchurches Hope Beyond* funding, we hope to give churches and Christian charities the support they need to help rebuild communities, offering them opportunities to secure a brighter future beyond COVID-19. We're delighted that our grant to TM&C will help to tackle the very real issue of loneliness and isolation in the BAME community through its Recovery for All project, providing practical and emotional support in the most challenging of times."

Andrew Bass, Grants Officer, Allchurches Trust

* The Allchurches Trust created 'Hope Beyond' to support churches, charities and communities in their responses to the challenges presented by the Coronavirus pandemic. Based on their engagement with their beneficiaries, the Trust identified loneliness, digital exclusion, and the need for mental health and wellbeing support as three key priorities.







Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland receives emergency grant aid to strengthen local support delivery
In October 2020 emergency Covid-19 grants were secured to weather the ongoing crisis, scale up and increase the charity's impact, one was a grant from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (a special grant from the HM Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport through The National Lottery) and a further one from Power to Change, designed to provide support to help local organisations thrive and cope with the crisis.

COVID CASH RECOVERY COURSES

"Great course - has increased my knowledge of services on offer and places that I can direct people to for help if they have financial issues"

Covid Cash Recovery course is a free on-line course which upskills charities, community leaders, churches and faith-based organisations to provide information, signposting and resources, to help their communities recover from money issues that have arisen due to Covid-19. It includes information on general entitlements, Universal Credit, budgeting, help with bills, debt, loans and Government and charitable grants.

"Very helpful and great resources for our work - thank you"

TM&C were commissioned by the **Just Finance Foundation** to deliver COVID Cash Recovery Courses locally. This involved delivering 'train the trainer' training to a target of 150 participants, with the expectation being that each new 'trainer' then disseminates learning to at least another 10 people, reaching a total of a minimum of 1,500 beneficiaries.

Throughout 2020, and into early 2021, the course has been accessed by a wide range of people who work in local authorities, public health, voluntary sector organisations including charities, social housing organisations, police and many more. The course is a 'train the trainer' model with participants given access to all of the resources so that they can either deliver the content to their staff or local contacts, and/or use it when working with community groups and individuals.

Feedback has been very positive with all participants reporting that it will greatly assist them in helping people who are financially distressed and need support to access key financial information.

Across six months, the TM&C team **delivered training to 210 participants** – exceeding all internal targets! Based on such success and results, further emergency funding has now been secured to continue this vital financial help training in 2021. The additional 'Covid Cash Recovery' courses will aim to give financial advice to all organisations working with vulnerable people that are financially struggling in Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland.



FUTURE PLANS – RECOVERY FOR ALL

Our future plans will build on our recent uplifted social action work activities in response to the Coronavirus crisis, such as tackling food insecurity, homelessness, loneliness and isolation, and improving financial security. TM&C plans will be shaped by the findings from the *COVID-19 Impact Survey* we commissioned, which will inform this local *Recovery for All* work programme - with a particular focus on BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) and interfaith development.

BAME communities have been disproportionately adversely affected by the pandemic. As one of the most diverse areas in the North East, 12% of the Middlesbrough population is from a BAME background. As part of the Recovery for All project, TM&C will strengthen its support to all, in particular BAME-led faith-based and civil society organisations and their leaders, extending social action and social support projects.

The charity will produce a financial strategy to support a five-year development plan – and again we look to further stimulate future initiatives designed to promote intergenerational working and innovative social housing solutions to address community needs, and all based on a resilient income generation model rather than grant dependency.







FOOD INSECURITY -

WE COMMIT TO WORK TOGETHER TO:

*Continue to provide holiday hunger support through our amazing Feast of Fun network that delivered 86,500 meals and activity packs in 2020*Work together with churches, partner organisations, and families to develop sustainable solutions to food poverty*Work with our partners and our community to end local food insecurity

LONELINESS & ISOLATION

- WE COMMIT TO WORK TOGETHER TO:
- *Continue to support Middlesbrough's over 50's through our Food & Friendship groups and Warm Welcome network as the world opens up
- *Develop and expand our Intergenerational Work across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland
- *Develop work with underrepresented people including the young; men; and BAME including 'Walk & Talk' and other wellbeing initiatives

OUR VISION OF RECOVERY FOR ALL:

FINANCIAL SECURITY & HOMELESSNESS- WE COMMIT TO
WORK TOGETHER TO:

To work with churches, faith-based organisations and civil society to strengthen local communities to make positive, lasting change; to tackle poverty; and to enable everyone to thrive and enjoy life.

& INTERFAITH WORK- WE COMMIT TO
WORK TOGETHER TO:

- * Explore ways to continue to deliver, and build on, the Cash COVID Recovery training that reached 1,800+ frontline workers in 2020
- *Continue to work with Depaul UK to deliver support to those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, through Positive Pathways
- *Develop partnerships to explore future social housing models
- *Continue to listen to our BAME/Faith communities and organisations to improve their awareness of, and access to, our services
- *Continue to provide a Forum for organisations working with, and led by, our BAME /Faith communities to work together
- *Continue to be informed by our BAME/Faith communities and organisations to develop initiatives to address the issues they have identified





THANKYOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thanks and Acknowledgements

Together Middlesbrough & Cleveland wishes to thank everyone who has worked with us or supported us in any way in 2020 including:



FUNDERS:

- Allchurches Trust
- Brake Meals & More
- Church Urban Fund
- Department of Culture, Media, & Sport and The National Lottery
- Erimus Rotary Club
- Joint Finance Foundation
- Middlesbrough Borough Council
- MIND
- North Star (Endeavour Housing)
- Power to Change
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- The Albert Gubay Foundation
- The Ballinger Trust
- & Individual & Parish Church donations

PARTNERS:

- Beyond Housing
- Bowes Museum
- Caritas
- Church Urban Fund
- Civil Society Consulting Community Interest Company
- Cleveland Constabulary Community Engagement Team
- DePaul UK and the Positive Pathways team
- Feast of Fun delivery partners 2020 (all 44)

Redcar & Cleveland:

- Blaze Project
- Beacon Project
- Cleveland Ironstone Mining Museum
- Guisborough Bridge Association
- Hope 4 East Cleveland

- St Hilda's
- St John's
- St Peter's College/St Margaret Clitherow Primary
- Whale Hill Community Centre
- Youth Focus North East (Dormanstown)

Middlesbrough:

- Active Tees Valley
- Amal Trust Project
- Beverley School
- Breckon Hill Community Centre
- Coulby Newham Baptist Church
- Genesis Project
- Green Pastures
- Groundwork
- LINX Detached Youth Project
- Middlesbrough Community Church
- Newport Hub
- St Barnabas
- St Cuthbert's
- St Mary's
- Streets Ahead for Information
- St Thomas's
- St Timothy's
- Thorntree Community Hub
- Trinity Family Friendly Centre
- Trinity Youth & Children's Project
- Ubuntu Multi-cultural Centre CIC
- Youth Focus North East (M'bro)

- Investors in People & Culture
 Living Sober
- Lotus Sanctuary
- Methodist Asylum Project
- Middlesbrough Environment City
- Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation
- Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency
- Mitchell & Gordon
- More in Common
- Newport Locality Team
- North East Child Poverty Commission
- North Ormesby Locality Team
- PD Ports
- Public Health South Tees
- Quorn
- Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency
- Regional Refugee Forum
- Saabat Gallery CIC
- Teesside University
- The Together Network
- Thirteen
- You've Got This



13