

VOLUNTEER IT YOURSELF

Our First Ten Years

2011–2021



OUR JOURNEY

TIM READING, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, VIY



VIY started in 2011 with a simple idea: **Why not help a group of young people in Streatham, south London, fix up and improve their own youth club whilst giving them the chance to learn and apply new vocational trade skills in the process, mentored by local builders and tradespeople.** It seemed a compelling ‘win-win’ - helping save a valued youth club at risk of closure, whilst also enabling young people at the club, many of whom were excluded or disengaged from mainstream education or training, to gain work experience and boost their employability.

10 years and more than 600 VIY projects later, the same idea seems more relevant than ever, especially with the impact of Covid-19. More community places and spaces - so often at the heart of well-being, joy, and cross-generational and cross-cultural connectivity in our communities - are struggling to survive. The pandemic has also put many young people, especially those who are marginalised or from deprived communities, at risk of social scarring as well as of becoming disengaged from employment, education or training.

So our social mission remains focused on achieving impact in three key areas:

- Helping transform and secure local community places and spaces that matter
- Boosting young people's skills and confidence, helping them progress into employment
- Encouraging and enabling volunteering, mentoring and skills-sharing as the rocket fuel for achieving both of the above

We're also helping to switch young people on to the idea of construction as a relevant, inspiring skills and career pathway at a time when the UK construction sector is facing a skills gap and needing to do more to attract young, diverse talent.

So ultimately, this review is both a celebration of VIY's journey to date while also teeing up the road ahead, as we look to further scale up our work and impact across the country in response to increasing demand from local communities and the many brilliant cross-sector organisations we partner with - and I look forward to reporting on 'Our Second Ten Years' in 2031!

HEADLINE IMPACT

OUR FIRST 10 YEARS IN NUMBERS

FACILITY RENOVATION/
REFURBISHMENT
PROJECTS
ENABLED



682

YOUNG
PEOPLE
TAKING PART



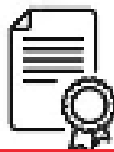
12,744

SKILLS
MENTORS
TAKING PART



1,136

CITY & GUILDS
ACCREDITATIONS
ACHIEVED BY
YOUNG
PARTICIPANTS



5,124

EMPLOYMENT,
EDUCATION
OR TRAINING
PROGRESSIONS
ACHIEVED BY YOUNG
PARTICIPANTS



1,743

(Figures as of 30 November 2021)

OUR FIRST PROJECT IN 2011 AT THE
JOHN CORFIELD COMMUNITY
CENTRE IN STREATHAM



OUR MILESTONES

HERE'S TO 10 YEARS

2011

- FIRST PILOT PROJECT IN SOUTH LONDON

2014

- NAMED AMONG 'BRITAIN'S 50 NEW RADICALS' (BY NESTA AND THE OBSERVER)
- 1,000th YOUNG PARTICIPANT

2016

- START OF THREE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH WICKES
- 100th PROJECT
- FIRST INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF VIY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NESTA

2018

- AWARDED FORMAL CITY & GUILDS TRAINING CENTRE STATUS
- PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY THROUGH THE GOOD GROWTH FUND
- 1,000th EET (EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING) PROGRESSION

2020

- 1,000th TRADE SKILLS MENTOR
- VIY NORTH OFFICE OPENS IN LEEDS
- START OF THREE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH SPORT ENGLAND, BENEFITING 225 GRASSROOTS SPORTS CLUBS AND FACILITIES
- DULUX AND TRAVIS PERKINS BECOME NATIONAL SUPPORTERS



IT'S AMAZING TO SEE HOW FAR WE'VE COME - PROJECTS IN 2021 THAN WE DID IN OUR FIRST

WE'LL HAVE COMPLETED MORE FIVE YEARS COMBINED!

ED SELLWOOD, CO-FOUNDER AND COO, VIY

2012

- FIRST PHASE NATIONAL ROLLOUT, SUPPORTED BY BIG LOTTERY FUND
- BIG SOCIETY AWARD FROM NO.10

2015

- INCEPTION AS A CIC (COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY)
- SECOND PHASE NATIONAL ROLLOUT, SUPPORTED BY NESTA'S CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ACTION & INNOVATION FUND
- LAUNCH OF NATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS WITH THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY
- 1,000th CITY & GUILDS ENTRY LEVEL 3 ACCREDITATION ACHIEVED

2019

- 500th PROJECT, 10,000th YOUNG PARTICIPANT
- FEATURED BY CHANNEL4/ALL4 ON GUY MARTIN'S BUILDING BRITAIN
- SECOND INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF VIY WITH SPORT ENGLAND
- ESTABLISHMENT OF EXTERNAL ADVISORY BOARD

2021

- LAUNCHED VIY KICKSTART PROGRAMME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TRAVIS PERKINS PLC
- COMMENCED WORK WITH YOUTH FUTURES FOUNDATION AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND
- 5,000th CITY & GUILDS ENTRY LEVEL 3 ACCREDITATION ACHIEVED



VIYVOICES

THREE PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR VIY EXPERIENCE



A YOUNG PERSON

My experience on VIY really got me interested in carpentry and joinery and gave me some entry level skills and a qualification as well as information about possible careers in construction. It helped me to decide what to do after leaving school and gave me a goal. So I have now signed up at college to start a Level 1 course in joinery and construction skills.

Kian Thompson
Former student at a SEN (Special Education Needs) school in Rotherham

A MENTOR

I'd never volunteered in this way before but I think VIY is a great model for inspiring young people to learn a trade and to consider the construction sector as a job pathway. Also, I personally found the role of mentor really satisfying and rewarding. And a great opportunity, as a local builder, to give back to my local community and offer a helping hand to young people.

Adam Low
Multi-trader and Volunteer Mentor, south London



A VENUE MANAGER

VIY has been a life-saver for All Stars. The work carried out through VIY has breathed new life into the gym, refurbishing tired and scruffy areas and expanding our kitchen into a bright, attractive usable space suitable for a community cafe which will go a long way to helping the club become self-sustainable.

Muf Akay
Club Manager, All Stars Boxing Gym, west London

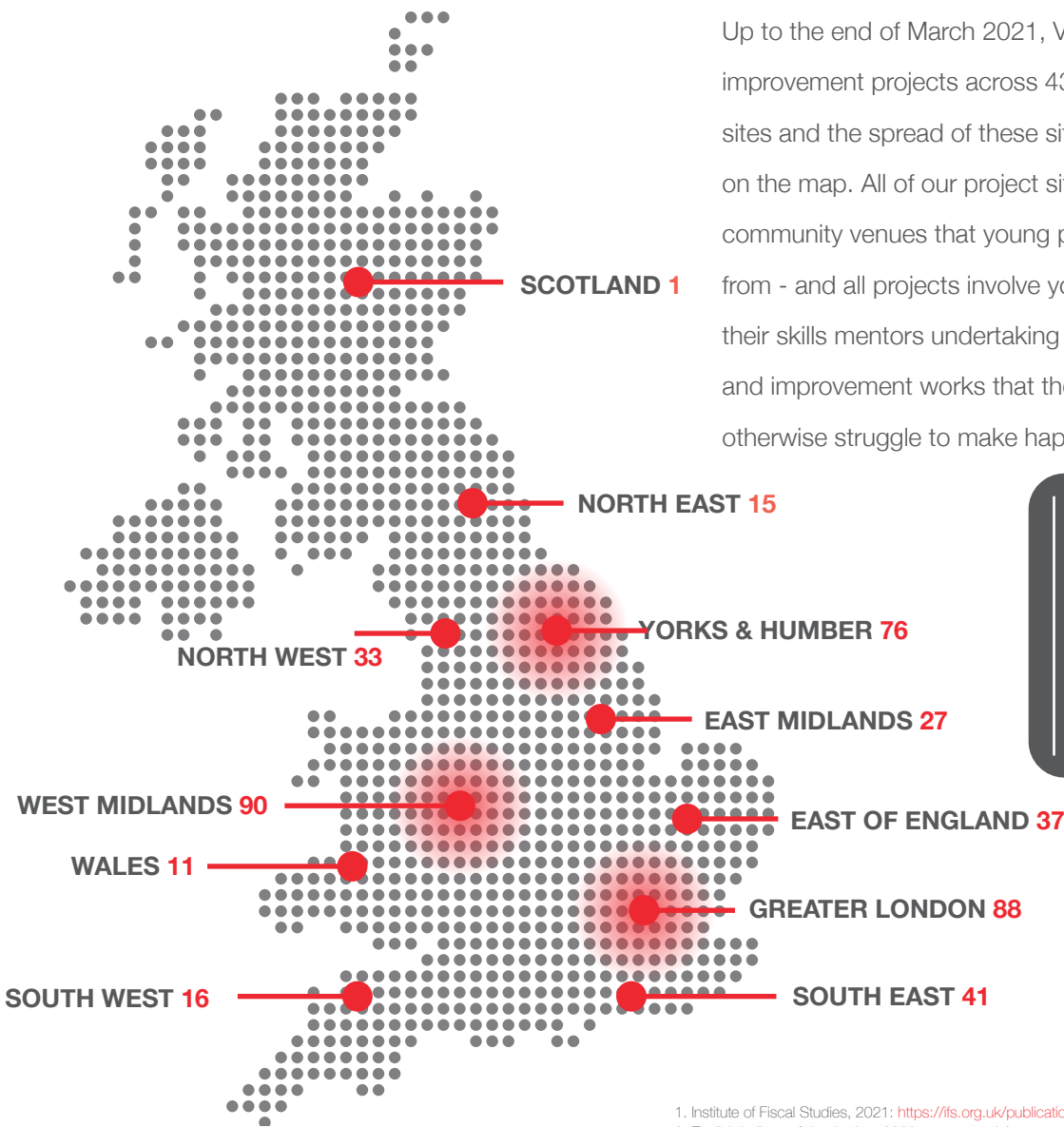


PLACES AND SPACES

SUPPORTING IMPORTANT COMMUNITY VENUES IN NEED

The Covid-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on our need for local community spaces and services more than ever before. Many of these spaces and services were already under threat due to local government non-education funding cuts (for example, of 10-25% in England and Wales since 2009¹) and the further impact of Covid has forced many community spaces providing vital activities and services to close their doors. To counter this, VIY is working to help local places and spaces that matter become more secure and sustainable.

Up to the end of March 2021, VIY delivered 626 facility improvement projects across 435 different community sites and the spread of these site locations is shown on the map. All of our project sites comprise important community venues that young people use and benefit from - and all projects involve young volunteers and their skills mentors undertaking essential refurbishment and improvement works that the venues would otherwise struggle to make happen.



52% OF OUR PROJECTS HAVE BEEN LOCATED IN THE 30% MOST DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES NATIONALLY AND 20% IN THE 10% MOST DEPRIVED²

1. Institute of Fiscal Studies, 2021: <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15673>
2. English indices of deprivation, 2020: www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-indices-of-deprivation

BREAKDOWN OF PROJECT VENUES BY TYPE:



“ Our previously empty space has been completely transformed. Thanks to the VIY project, our venue is welcoming, ready for use and also safe and extremely functional and accessible to wheelchair users. ”

Hannah White
Manager, The Sound Lounge, Sutton

PLACESANDSPACES

SUPPORTING IMPORTANT COMMUNITY VENUES IN NEED

MOST COMMON WORKS UNDERTAKEN ON VIY PROJECTS:

- REFURBISHING TOILETS/WASHROOMS/CHANGING FACILITIES
- UPDATING KITCHEN AND CATERING SPACE
- RENOVATING ACTIVITY, STUDIO AND EVENT SPACE
- IMPROVING DISABILITY ACCESS
- GREENING OUTDOOR AREAS
- RECONFIGURING AND REPURPOSING SPACE
- GENERAL REFURBISHMENT, INCLUDING PAINTING AND DECORATING

MOST COMMON BENEFITS REPORTED BY VENUES OFF THE BACK OF IMPROVEMENT WORKS ENABLED BY VIY:

- INCREASED CAPACITY
- WORKING WITH NEW AUDIENCES
- HOSTING NEW ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES
- BOOSTING INCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY
- IMPROVED DISABLED ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY IN GENERAL

Our skatepark was in such desperate need of renovation and, as a new charity, trying to acquire the funds to undertake such a project had been very challenging. The support offered by VIY has allowed us to turn our vision into reality and also give young people an active role in the development of a facility that many see as being essential to their physical and mental well-being.

Tosh Wilson
Chief Operating Officer, LS-TEN Skatepark, Leeds



PROJECT DURATION:

VIY PROJECTS
TYPICALLY VARY IN
DURATION FROM LESS
THAN ONE WEEK TO
4-6 WEEKS, DEPENDING
ON THE SCOPE AND
SCALE OF THE
IMPROVEMENT
WORKS REQUIRED



OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

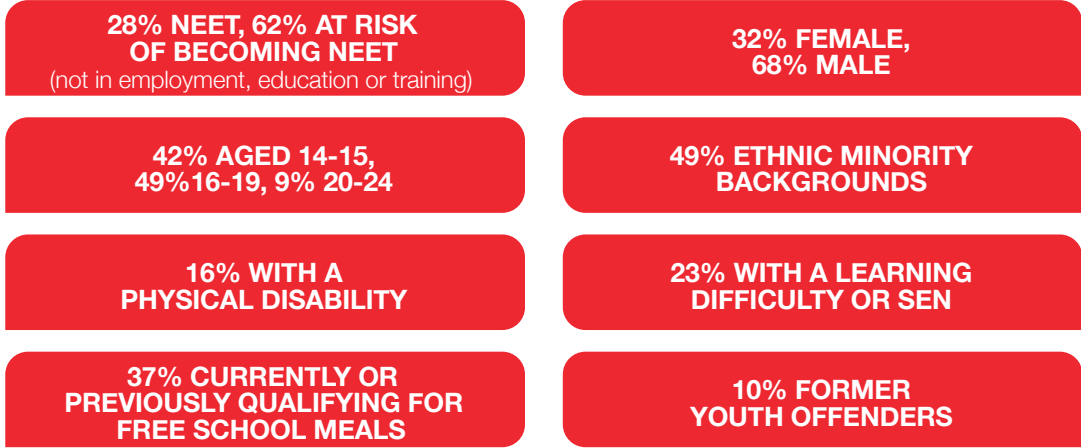
LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND BOOSTING THEIR EMPLOYABILITY

VIY is motivated to help bridge the construction skills gap and tackle youth unemployment and we focus on working with young people who are not in employment, education or training or at risk of disengagement and unemployment. Our learner journey covers three principal stages: engagement, participation and progression.

ENGAGEMENT

Young people hear about us and join us via a range of local, regional and national youth service providers, as well as through our project venues who typically already work with and support the young people we aim to reach and benefit.

A LITTLE MORE ABOUT OUR PARTICIPANTS¹:



OUR PRINCIPAL REFERRAL PARTNERS:

- YOUTH WORK ORGANISATIONS
- ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROVIDERS
- SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
- PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS
- DEPARTMENT FOR WORK & PENSIONS/JOBCENTRE PLUS
- LOCAL AUTHORITY YOUTH SERVICES TEAMS
- YOUTH OFFENDING TEAMS

PARTICIPATION

Under the guidance of VIY trade mentors, our young people learn and apply vocational trade skills on the job whilst also developing greater confidence and broader employability skills at the same time. A young person's VIY journey can span a single VIY project or multiple projects over an extended period, depending on their appetite and goals.

4,568 YOUNG PEOPLE (38%) GAIN AT LEAST ONE ENTRY LEVEL 3 CITY & GUILDS CONSTRUCTION SKILLS ACCREDITATION¹

RANGE OF PRINCIPAL CITY & GUILDS EL3 TRADE SKILLS UNITS ACHIEVED:

- SITE HEALTH AND SAFETY
- RECOGNITION AND USE OF HAND TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN CONSTRUCTION
- SITE CARPENTRY
- PAINTING AND DECORATING
- PIPEWORK/PLUMBING
- TILING
- BRICKWORK
- FINISHING SKILLS



“ As well as giving me new technical skills and increased confidence, VIY taught me how to act in a working environment. You're treated like an adult in the way that you have to turn up on time, act professionally and get the job done to a decent standard.

Ramone MacDonald, 17
Volunteer at Shard End Youth Centre, Birmingham

The power of projects like VIY comes from the real-life impact it can have on young people. It enables those involved to feel part of something, and to gain a sense of pride about what they've managed to accomplish as individuals and as a team, working with people they've never met before.

Staff member
Catch22, national youth work organisation and VIY referral partner



1. All figures detailed here are related to the 12,063 young people to have participated in VIY projects up to the end of March 2021

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND BOOSTING THEIR EMPLOYABILITY

PROGRESSION

Next step progression opportunities for young people can be directly identified and facilitated by VIY, for example through our employer partnerships, and are also reported by our referral partners who support young people in and out of VIY. We typically track young people up to six months post their VIY experience to understand how they've progressed.

1,695 YOUNG PEOPLE
(14%) REPORTED AS
ACHIEVING AN EET
(EMPLOYMENT,
EDUCATION OR TRAINING)
PROGRESSION¹

70% OF
PROGRESSIONS HAVE
BEEN CONSTRUCTION-
RELATED¹

OF THE 1,695
PROGRESSIONS, 39% HAVE
BEEN INTO EMPLOYMENT
AND 61% EDUCATION AND
TRAININGS¹

WE HELP YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROGRESS BY:

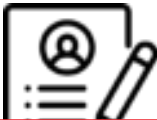
- PROVIDING WIDER WORK-READINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING CO-DELIVERED BY OUR EMPLOYER PARTNERS
- MAKING CONNECTIONS TO SPECIFIC FURTHER TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES VIA OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

PRINCIPAL PROGRESSION OUTCOMES:

TRADE
APPRENTICESHIPS



JOB OPPORTUNITIES
WITH TRADE/
CONSTRUCTION
SECTOR EMPLOYERS



COLLEGE
CONSTRUCTION
COURSES



RE-ENGAGING
IN FULL-TIME
EDUCATION



PROGRESSING
FROM SECONDARY
TO FURTHER
EDUCATION



¹.All figures detailed here are related to the 12,063 young people to have participated in VIY projects up to the end of March 2021



OUR MENTORS

SHARING SKILLS AND INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE

At the heart of the VIY model, young people are mentored by, and work alongside, professional tradespeople who share their skills and experience on the job. The majority of our mentors, like the young people they support, are local to the projects we undertake and the communities in which we work - making VIY a great example of local people working together to improve their community and environment.

I found it extremely rewarding to pass on my skills to young people who were very enthusiastic about the projects they wanted to undertake and willing to learn on the job. To see the sense of achievement on their faces was brilliant and I only hope that this experience will motivate them to consider construction and engineering as rewarding career paths.

David Owen
Engineer, pattern-maker
and VIY Mentor, West Midlands

Since 2011, more than 1,000 tradespeople have volunteered as VIY mentors, recruited locally according to each project's needs. Over the years, we've also built a core team of 30+ Lead Mentors, based regionally, who play a key role in site-managing and delivering our projects on the ground. All are fully supported throughout their time with VIY, including induction, training and DBS checks prior to starting work with us.

I wasn't very academic at school and I know that having a positive opportunity to learn outside of the classroom was a release for me from the everyday pressures of schooling and I hope it's the same for younger people today – and combining this with the transformation of buildings that are really important for local communities makes VIY one of the best initiatives I've ever encountered.

Kate Kerr
VIY Mentor on eight projects
over two years, Portsmouth

WHERE OUR TRADE SKILLS MENTORS COME FROM

- OUR RETAIL TRADE PARTNERS
- BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTOR EMPLOYERS
- ONLINE TRADE RECOMMENDATION SITES
- INDUSTRY MEMBERSHIP BODIES
E.G. FEDERATION OF MASTER BUILDERS
- COMMUNITY NETWORKS LOCAL TO OUR PROJECTS



The young people really put the effort into the work and learning new skills, and often spoke about how optimistic they were about their futures now that they're learning a trade... I was so impressed by the work of one of the young people I mentored, I offered her a part time job.

Bella Hindle
Self-employed painter and decorator and VIY Mentor, Southend

I initially agreed to volunteer for one day on a local project, but I discovered I really enjoyed passing on my skills to young people. 11 years later, my highlight was a visit from a young lad we'd help progress into a plumbing apprentice, then into a job as an underfloor heating engineer. He returned about a year later to thank us, showed me his new van and told me all about his success.

Imran Younas
Self-employed tradesman and
VIY National Head Mentor, Birmingham



OUR MENTORS

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR 1,000+ MENTORS TO DATE

21% FEMALE¹

36% HAVE REPEAT VOLUNTEERED WITH VIY

9% FROM ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES

54% OF THE MENTORS AGED BETWEEN 25-49, 38% AGED 50+²

OLDEST MENTOR 85 YEARS OLD

**62% IN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT
26% PART-TIME OR SEMI-RETIRED
12% OF MENTORS FULLY RETIRED**

**3.5 DAYS AVERAGE
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER DAYS
CONTRIBUTED BY A MENTOR**

**FOR 27% VIY IS THEIR
FIRST VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE**

1. At a time when only 1% of professional tradespeople in the UK are female

2. Majority of VIY Mentors are 40+ male demographic, conventionally an audience with low levels of volunteering - see Nesta and DCMS 'Age of Inclusion' https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/The_Age_of_Inclusion.pdf



OUR PARTNERS

COLLABORATION IS KEY

Working in partnership with a diverse mix of cross-sector organisations and stakeholders, including local authorities, youth service providers, construction sector employers and brands, grant-giving foundations and national sports governing bodies, has always underpinned the VIY approach.

These partners and collaborators have helped us to get the job done, from identifying and funding projects, referring young people and mobilising trade mentors, to donating materials and offering further training and employment opportunities for our VIY graduates.

So this is a chance to say thank you to all of our partners, collaborators and funders to date, with a special mention to the following organisations:



LOOKING AHEAD

INCREASING OUR IMPACT

More than ever, as a result of the Covid pandemic and its impact on people and communities, we are significantly expanding and developing our work in response to increasing demand from local communities and our cross-sector partners and stakeholders UK-wide.

Accordingly, VIY is developing a new three-year strategy, linked to the delivery of at least 300 new local community projects involving and benefiting 5,000+ young people over 2022-2025. Our strategic goals include:

- Strengthening our focus on supporting young people who are disengaged from mainstream education and training or unemployed or at risk of disengagement/unemployment
- Prioritising the achievement of entry-level skills outcomes to enable those furthest from the job market to readily engage and take the all-important first step towards employment
- Building our capacity and working at depth in our existing and emerging hub delivery regions UK-wide for greater impact and sustainability
- Deepening our work with employer partners to increasingly identify and facilitate progression pathways beyond VIY for young people, especially traineeships and apprenticeships
- Building our data and impact measurement processes and systems to best evidence the ultimate impact and value of the VIY model for young people and local communities

#SOMETHINGCONSTRUCTIVE

OUR WORK IN 2022 WILL ALSO BE UNDERPINNED BY THREE KEY CAMPAIGN MESSAGES:

Enabling young people and trade mentors **to do something constructive** by volunteering and working together in their communities to benefit local places and spaces that matter

Attracting young people **to do something constructive** by developing new vocational trade skills through VIY and to progress into the construction sector as an accessible, relevant and rewarding career pathway

Working in collaboration with employers and partners **to do something constructive** to address the construction skills gap and youth unemployment, while also boosting social equality and inclusion

If you're interested in VIY's work, from partnering on projects and referring young people to recruiting experienced tradespeople as mentors and providing progression opportunities for VIY participants, please get in touch: info@teamviy.com

Follow the latest from us on social:

 /volunteerityourself
   @viyproject

