

# VOLUNTEER IT YOURSELF

IMPACT REPORT  
2022–2023



VIY Lead Mentor, Jasper, with VIY Volunteer, Billy  
Kingfisher Boxing Club, Great Yarmouth, 2022

# Benefitting both people and places

Our 2022-23 impact report gives a snapshot of our work over the past year across our key regions and reflects how VIY combines national reach with a regional approach, ultimately delivering local impact for people and communities.

The 'people and place' impact stories in this report also reflect how VIY brings people together through volunteering and gives them a greater sense of belonging in their communities. This feels particularly important at a time when a [recent report on isolation and loneliness in the UK](#) highlights how young adults aged 16+ who are NEET\* or at risk of becoming NEET (i.e. VIY's target audience) are at appreciably higher risk of becoming socially isolated and experiencing loneliness compared to young people who are not NEET/at risk. We know this can then severely impact on a young person's mental health, their opportunities to develop new skills and their future life chances.

We also know that the community places at the heart of each VIY project – from youth and community centres to sports facilities and arts and cultural venues – play a vital role in combatting isolation and loneliness by providing physical spaces for people to meet, interact, have fun and get involved.

So by challenging young people to help renovate and transform these facilities through VIY, developing new skills and boosting their health and wellbeing in the process, they really are, as we like to say, doing 'something constructive' that's good for themselves and also great for their community.

**Tim Reading,**  
CEO and Co-Founder, VIY

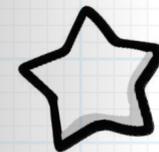
\*not in education, training or employment

**Doing #SomethingConstructive**  
for youth, communities and volunteering  
– [see our 2022-25 strategy](#) –  
which sets out our mission, vision  
and areas of impact

**Growing our reach and impact in 2022-23**

**86**  
community spaces renovated

**896**  
City & Guilds trade skills accreditations achieved



**258**  
adult volunteers from trade partners and local communities involved



"Since the VIY project has been going on, many new people have been phoning to find out how they can join the club, including previous members returning from before the pandemic."  
Chrissie Roe, Founder, TPF Parkour Club, Norwich



"Construction is something I want to go into now after trying warehouse work and realising it wasn't for me."  
Kyle, 17, Volunteer on three VIY projects, Manchester

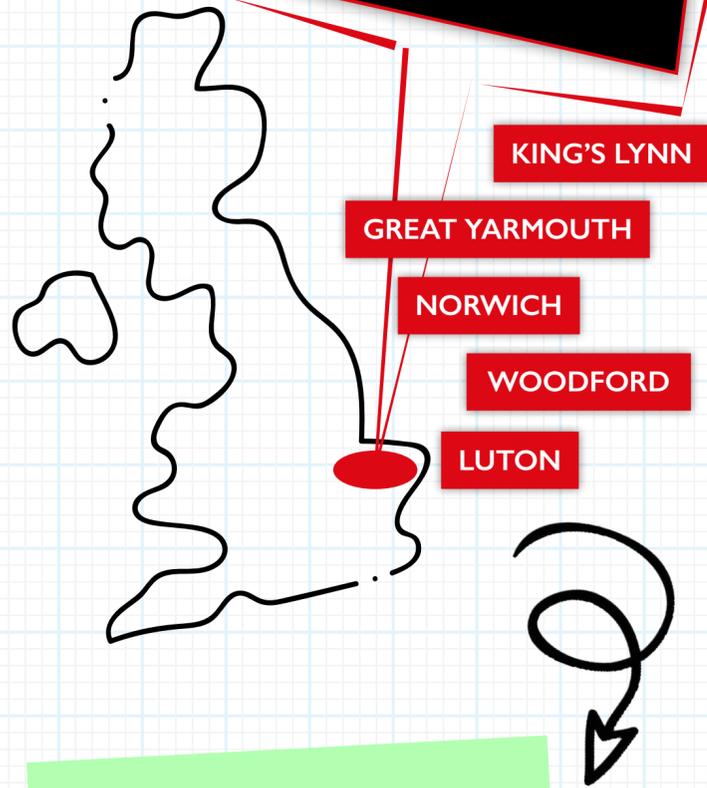
**1,003**  
young people taking part in VIY

"The students were really engaged, which was especially great since they would see the results in their own neighbourhood community centre. It was brilliant to see and learn from the other VIY Mentors in both teaching and conversation too."  
Esme, Volunteer Trade Mentor  
Sunnybank Community Centre, Sheffield

**18%**  
of NEET learners have progressed into education, further training or employment to date

Projects completed  
✓ 19  
in 2022-23

East of England



# WORKING IN THE MOST DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES

VIY worked in Bedfordshire, Essex and Norfolk in 2022-23 – and Norfolk in particular has become a hub region for us. We have greatly expanded our activities across the county, delivering projects in the most deprived communities, thanks to funding from Norfolk County Council through the UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF)\* – and also in partnership with Norwich Council's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) programme.

86% of projects delivered by VIY in 2022-23 were located in or serve the 20% most deprived local neighbourhoods nationally, according to IMD\* statistics

40% of the populations of Great Yarmouth and Norwich live in the most deprived 20% of areas in England



Norwich Lads Boxing Club, April 2022

22% of VIY volunteers in 2022-23 came from ethnic minority groups

- ✓ Female facilities fitted
- ✓ 50% more females & 8 VIY volunteers now training at the club
- ✓ None had attended previously

56% of venues VIY have helped in 2022-23 reported increased engagement among women and people from marginalised backgrounds as a result of their VIY projects



Transforming a vacant high street shop into a skillshare space for local community groups, Drayton Road, Norwich, Jan 2023

\*projects where the postcode of the venue is either an IMD 1 or 2 location, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

\*The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for 2021/22. It aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK to pilot programmes and new approaches to prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. It invests in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.

East of England

# BUILDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S FUTURES

21% of all VIY learners in 2022-23 were female\*

VOLUNTEERS TO PEER MENTORS



Volunteers to Peer Mentors: hear what receiving paid work with VIY meant to Kelsie and Liam

Awarded our 6,000th City & Guilds Entry Level 3 trade skills accreditation in March 2023



77% of VIY learners indicated that their confidence had increased in at least four of the eight fusion skills measured, including listening, teamwork and problem solving



Honey, 17

"I found this experience eye opening. I have never tried practical work before but have loved it! VIY has given me a career direction and I can't wait to start my carpentry course."

Honey was previously home-schooled then found herself NEET at 16. She joined the Aspire NEET re-engagement provision at City College Norwich to build her confidence and explore progression options for the future, having struggled in the classroom environment and staying focused.

Honey pushed herself outside of her comfort zone to give VIY a go, and loved it so much she's now volunteered on seven projects, achieving five Entry Level 3 City & Guilds accreditations. She really enjoyed being practical and getting stuck in. Honey has applied to do Level 1 Carpentry in September at City College Norwich.

- Strengthening partnerships to support NEET young people
- ✓ 105 students from City College Norwich have taken part in VIY in 2022-23
- ✓ Through the Aspire & MINT teams, who support those disengaged from education, who are home schooled or facing barriers to employment
- ✓ 28% have progressed back into further training or employment, like Honey
- ✓ 27% have volunteered again with VIY

I have found that students who are very disengaged in college have thrived on the VIY projects where they are able to learn in a practical environment - and some have already decided to pursue vocational training in construction next year.

**LUCY HUGHES**  
EMPLOYMENT JOB COACH  
ASPIRE TEAM, CITY COLLEGE NORWICH

\*women make up just 1% of the UK's tradespeople, according to ONS figures.

Projects completed  
✓ 26  
in 2022-23

East Midlands



# OFFERING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

Five professional decorators volunteering through Armstead, part of the AkzoNobel family, featured by On The Tools [here](#)



Creating an outdoor learning space for people with disabilities, with 22 young volunteers, all with special educational needs, at Flower Pod community garden, Newark



41% of our young volunteers in 2022-23 had special educational needs and/or a disability



Refurbishing Nottingham clubs for Young People

Instagram icon: "Teaching young people skills, giving them an insight into life in the real world and about the trade felt great - it's an opportunity a lot of us didn't ever have."  
[@nice\\_decor\\_lancashire](#)  
aka Nathan Carter,  
VIY Volunteer Decorator

Click to hear from Kate Fell, Teacher at Newark Orchard special educational needs school, about what the VIY experience means for the young people she works with [here](#)



40% of VIY projects in 2022-23 involved greening outdoor space

Much like Norfolk, Nottinghamshire and the wider East Midlands has been a growing hub region for VIY since 2022, thanks to the UK Community Renewal Fund, and now the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)\* too. With high levels of unemployment and low-paid work disproportionately affecting younger people, those from ethnic minorities, women and those with disabilities, Nottingham's vision is to build back fairer. Our work directly supports their vision to be a city which offers opportunities for everyone.



\*The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.

East Midlands

# BOOSTING SKILLS AND WORK READINESS

88% of VIY learners indicated that their career aspirations for the future have increased having taken part in a VIY project



Dominic, 22

**VIY Volunteer at The Old Library, Mansfield, April 2022**

- ✓ No past experience in trade skills or interest in construction, prior to VIY
- ✓ Has now successfully progressed into a higher level Painting & Decorating course
- ✓ Looking to gain employment as a Decorator



Aaron, 28

Aaron was NEET on becoming a VIY Volunteer at Evolve Community Centre, Nottingham, March 2023 – supported by VIY to secure further paid work with local firm D&K Painting and Decorating.

"VIY's made me feel really good. I now want to learn more construction skills like plastering, groundwork and brickwork, to become a multi-trade, and they're supporting me to look for local opportunities."



LEVELLING UP

56% young people said VIY had made them consider a job or career in construction

Evolve Community Centre was the first of 17 new projects being delivered by VIY across three council areas in Nottinghamshire supported by UKSPF, benefitting unemployed and economically inactive young people aged 16-30.



Nottingham City Council



Broxtowe Borough COUNCIL



NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Projects completed  
✓ 6  
in 2022-23

# West Midlands



# ENABLING ACTIVE COMMUNITIES



**During year 2 of 4, working in partnership with Sport England:**

- ✓ 42 local sports clubs and other active spaces renovated, match-funded by Sport England
- ✓ 611 young people volunteering
- ✓ 95% reported an increase in average number of people using their club as a result of their VIY project

Four volunteers from Telford Priory School, who were excluded or had poor attendance, returned to mainstream school with dramatically improved attendance after participating in this VIY project.

**GEN22**



Strengthening local access to sport by creating storage for a Paddlesports Hub at Ackers Adventure, Birmingham, December 2022

Whilst activity levels for young people and adults has **recovered to pre-pandemic levels**, there is still a way to go to help more people, particularly from ethnic minorities and more deprived neighbourhoods, to become more physically active. We continue to help develop local sports clubs and other active spaces across the country, building on the legacy of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games - and with the support of Active Partnerships, Sport England and many of our brand partners.

**91%** of young people said participating in a VIY project has increased their overall feeling of happiness and wellbeing



Providing employability-boosting volunteering opportunities through the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Gen22 programme by renovating Telford Rugby Club, June 2022



Creating inviting spaces for physical activity, like Canley Community Centre, Coventry



West Midlands

TOOLSTATION

Travis Perkins plc

### Redditch Youth Hub

**Redditch needed a central space from which to help local young people**



We converted two disused units, a former food bank underneath the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, into one space, complete with a new kitchen, storage for their outdoor sports activities and a full repaint. Fit for local youth work teams to use as an all new hub to work with young people in the town centre, with astounding outcomes:

- ✓ A dedicated space for youth outreach now signposted by NHS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and local social services
- ✓ Safe space for 1:1 support
- ✓ High demand increasing staffing numbers

### One of 10

projects funded by Toolstation since 2021, supporting construction skills training for young people. 2023-24 sees our support expand across the Travis Perkins Group through co-funding, volunteering and early careers opportunities

**10%** of VIY projects involved transforming disused spaces in town centres or high streets to help communities build back better



### Insight from Luke Maguire, Enhanced Youth Support Officer, Redditch

"One young man had recently gone through substance misuse and looked unlikely to complete our course. By day three of the VIY Redditch Youth Hub project, this young man had actively decided against taking a substance the night before, all because he wanted to come in, complete his work and take ownership of what he was tasked with that day. This project potentially influenced a young man to make a decision that could have saved his life. That's the true impact VIY can make."

**We'll now be working with Redditch and Bromsgrove District Councils through UKSPF to provide even more opportunities like this for local young people, whilst transforming seven local community spaces in 2023-24.**

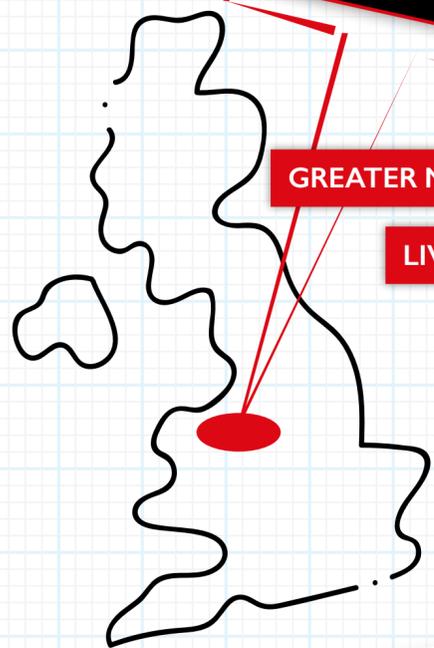
“

We saw young people who were normally school refusers turn up during their school holidays to join the VIY sessions. Of the young people who took part, two have already gone on to paid employment, two are being supported to gain a CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card and one is training to obtain a forklift driving licence. The nature of the VIY project approach really does capture the hearts and minds of the young people who often fall through gaps with other services.

**SARAH MCINTOSH**  
REDDITCH & BROMSGROVE  
COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM

Projects completed  
✓ 13  
in 2022-23

North West



GREATER MANCHESTER

LIVERPOOL

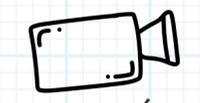
GMCA  
GREATER MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY

# DEVELOPING CROSS- SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

The VIY approach naturally attracts and brings together a mix of cross-sector partners and collaborators, from local authorities and grant-giving foundations to sports bodies, trade and construction companies, home-builders and other brands wanting to benefit people and places – and we've seen some brilliant examples of this in the North West over the past year, especially on projects we've delivered in Liverpool and Greater Manchester.

“ VIY have been absolutely brilliant in pulling all of this together. Getting young people to push forward themselves or their friends to volunteer, finding really good facilities that they can help and improve. The beneficiaries are the people who live in that area, but also those people who volunteer who will probably remember this for the rest of their lives. And it could lead on to a full time job and a career of their choice.

STEVE ROTHERAM  
FORMER BRICKLAYER AND MAYOR  
FOR THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION, ON  
VISITING THIS LIVERPOOL PROJECT



See this project on [BBC North West Tonight](#) - in partnership with Persimmon to help inspire the next generation of construction apprentices

Persimmon  
Together, we make a home.



Completing 8 of 30 grassroots cricket club renovations through the [Inspiring Generations](#) cricket strategy



“ VIY is a great example of how this strategy will be used to make a positive difference to individuals and communities through cricket. I look forward to seeing the impact they have on both the young people they support, educate and train and the cricket clubs themselves.

SANDY MITCHELL  
HEAD OF COMMUNITY GROWTH  
LANCASHIRE CRICKET FOUNDATION



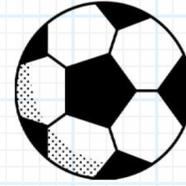
94%  
of young people  
said that they would  
recommend taking  
part in a VIY project  
to others



Transforming City of [Liverpool Gymnastics Club](#) (former training ground of Beth Tweddle MBE!) ahead of the World Gymnastics Championships 2022

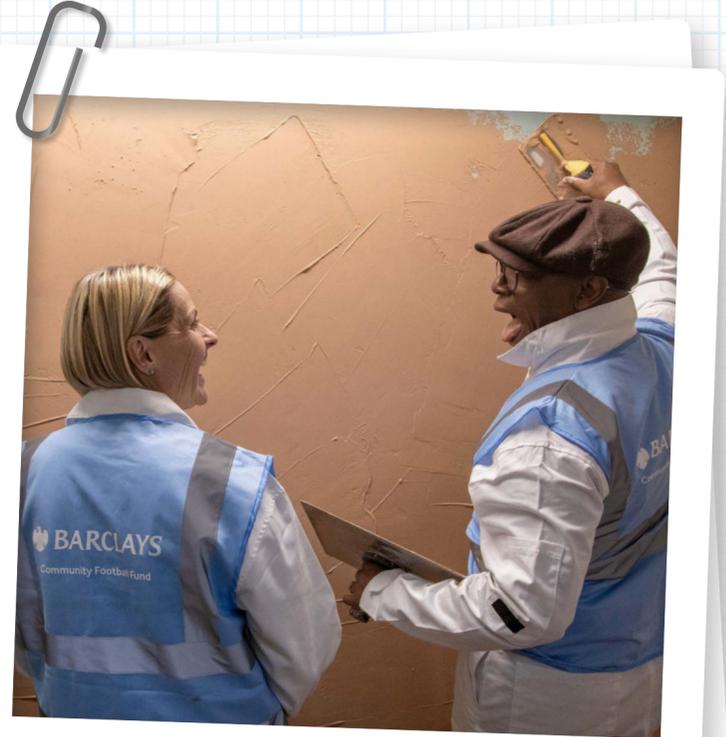
North West

# FROM GRASSROOTS TO GREATNESS



**New partnership with Barclays Community Football Fund, tackling inequalities in football, particularly access for girls and under-represented groups – part of our work to create inclusive facilities at grassroots sports clubs and community spaces to diversify participation.**

“Great to be part of getting the girls’ changing facilities up and running at Cheetham Hill Sports Club in Manchester. It’s all part of creating equal access to football with the @BarclaysFooty Community Football Fund. @ianwrighto @VIYproject”  
Kelly Smith MBE @kelly\_smith10, February 2023



A ‘Plasterclass’ from Ian Wright + Kelly Smith MBE at Cheetham Hill Sports Club



Separating open changing space to create female and disabled changing facilities, Cheetham Hill Sports Club, February 2023

**Dulux donated 4,848 litres of paint towards 49 projects in 2022-23 - and began a new 3 year partnership with VIY**



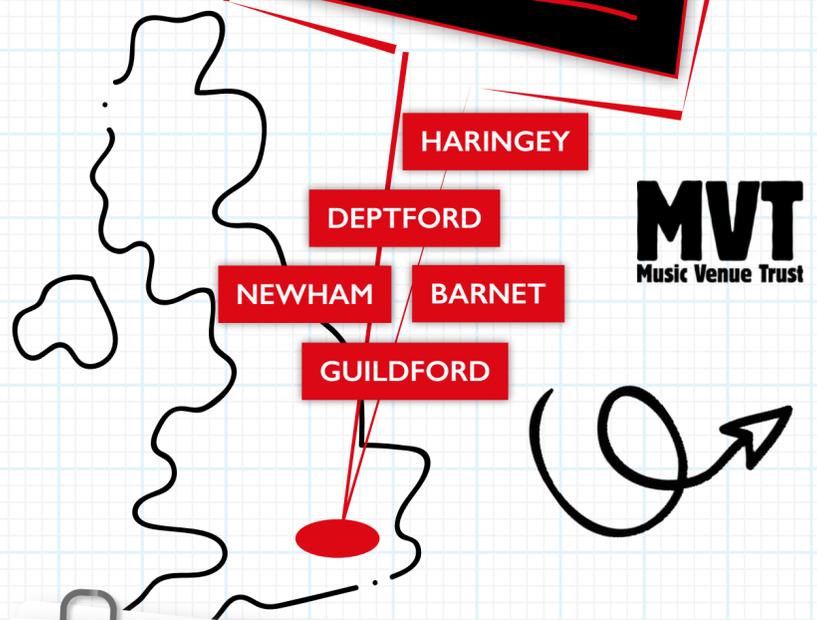
Showcasing the power of paint to transform rundown spaces into inspirational places, like this mural, designed by local artist @myrodoodles & painted by young people at Cheetham Hill Sports Club

VIY is now also Community Partner to the Dulux Decorator Centre network of 230+ UK stores, with the sales of tin openers & stirrers in each store going towards our Painting & Decorating accreditations



Projects completed  
 ✓ 17  
 in 2022-23

London & South East



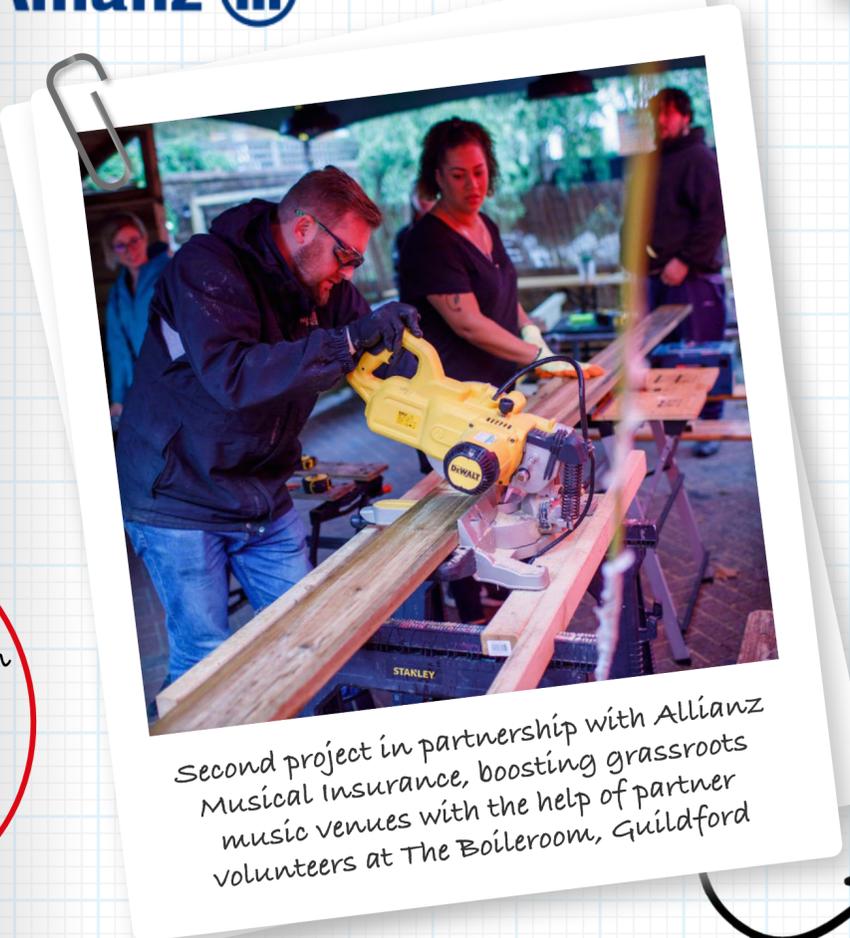
At a time when many young people lack the opportunity to participate in arts, cultural and creative activities, VIY continues to help make local performing arts and live music venues more secure and accessible – particularly, for example, with a third of grassroots music venues currently struggling to survive (source: Music Venue Trust).

# ACCESS TO ARTS AND CREATIVE SPACES

Final 10 Young Londoner's Fund (YLF) projects, supporting 100 students in 15 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) to learn trade and employability skills in inner-city London across three years.



Boosting skills and connections to music for young people through YLF - building furniture and record boxes for [The Record Shop](#) social enterprise in North London, May 2022



Second project in partnership with Allianz Musical Insurance, boosting grassroots music venues with the help of partner volunteers at The Boilerroom, Guildford



First project helping Barclaycard do #SomethingConstructive for grassroots music and arts venues.



Creating a new permanent home and radio station for Aaja Music on Deptford High Street, South London, December 2022

64% of VIY Mentors like Jada (pictured left), have worked on more than one project with us this year

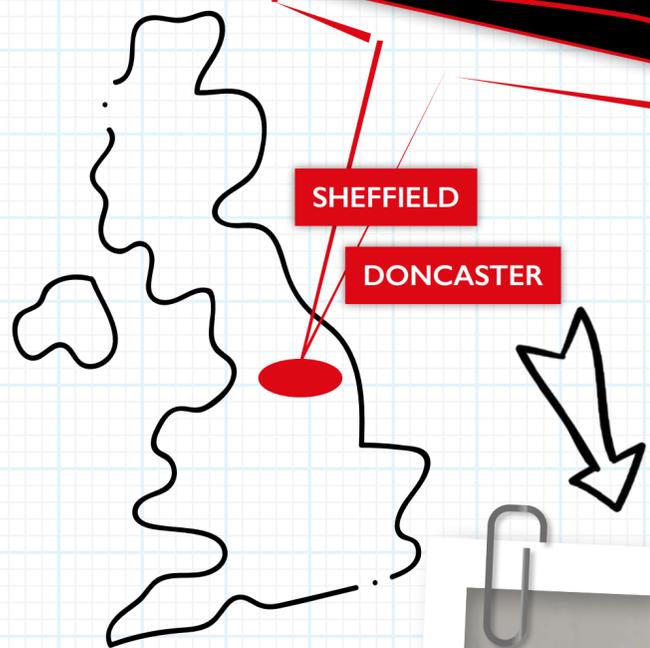
Thanks to funding from the Postcode Innovation Trust for the training and induction of our skills mentors



16% of all VIY learners in 2022-23 have been referred through an Alternative Education Provision (AP) including PRUs and 'free schools'

Part of our vision to inspire more people to volunteer in their local communities.

# Yorkshire & The Humber



SHEFFIELD

DONCASTER

Yorkshire & The Humber and South Wales are two regions where we first worked more than 10 years ago and both are re-emerging as delivery hubs for VIY, linked to growing relationships with local supporters and partners such as Cardiff Council, Keepmoat Homes and Places for People.

“ Any first step on a journey is the most important one, which is why VIY's programme is so important for young people. It offers that very first step towards a career in construction and a bridge into apprenticeships - with invaluable support for the individual and recognition through City & Guilds. We know that a work-related learning activity or employment encounter can reduce their chances of being NEET by up to 25%\* - for many, VIY will be their first formal recognition of success and a powerful motivator to continue their journey. ”

**ANGHARAD LLOYD-BEYNON**  
POLICY STAKEHOLDER AND PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER  
CITY & GUILDS, HOME NATIONS

Bringing Sunnybank Community Centre back to life with and for the local community in Sheffield, with Places for People



See Sunnybank Community Centre thriving at their reopening celebration

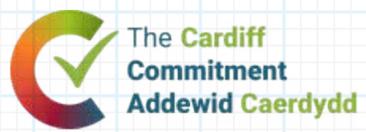
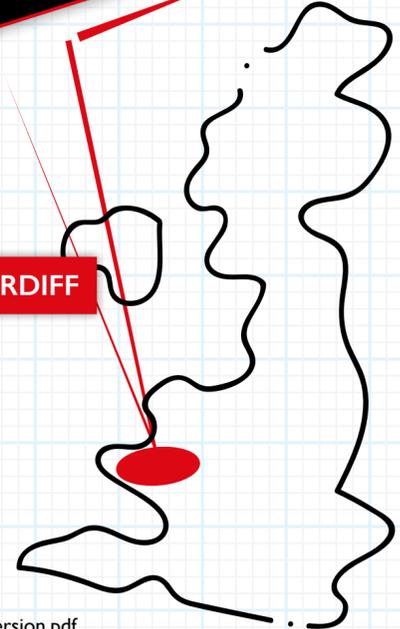


Young students at Greenhill PRU, Cardiff, learning trade skills whilst helping improve their school environment

Working in partnership with Cardiff Council to help boost ambition and skills in young people according to the needs and opportunities within industries, like construction, on their doorstep in Wales

# South Wales

CARDIFF



\*<https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Research-summary-website-version.pdf>

Yorkshire & The Humber

# Community spaces, surviving and thriving

Returning to The Bridge School, featured in our [2021-22 report](#) where 32 students with special educational needs (SEN) from 10 local schools created a community cafe, to be run by students at risk of unemployment.

First project supported by Keepmoat Homes, who are supporting further VIY projects in 2023-24 in Hull through funding and employment opportunities

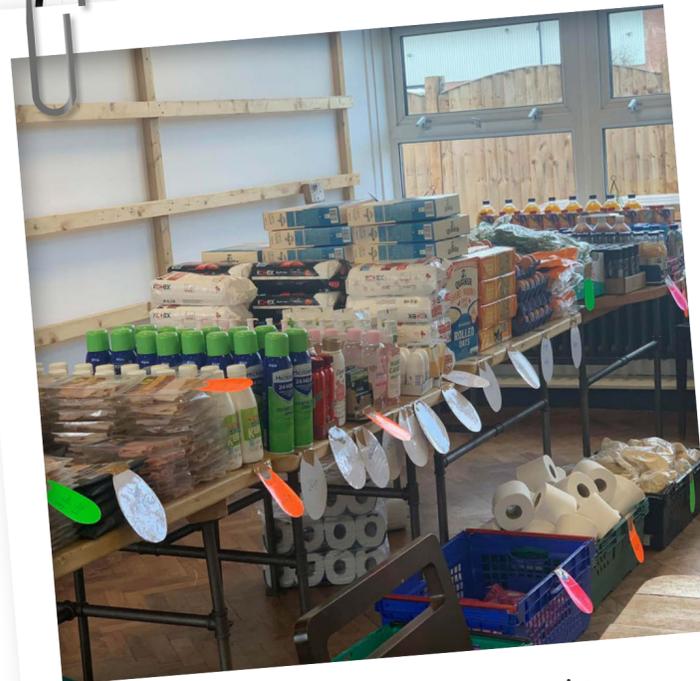


The Copper Pipe Café, Doncaster



The cafe has now worked with over 8 students from The Bridge with additional needs, all at risk of unemployment, offering work placements and supported internships. The students' hard work has paid off after being awarded the illustrious five star health & safety rating last year!

The space has also broadened its offer to provide other vital community services including baby sensory classes, a Community Pantry, helping over 100 local people access necessary and essential hygiene and food items each week, and a monthly community counsellor surgery. All of these services are supported by another 4 NEET paid young employees and volunteers through Cambeth Community Project CIC.



The Copper Pipe, Doncaster, now serving wider local needs, such as a Community Pantry

The Copper Pipe Café was also a beneficiary of VIY's partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund's Reaching Communities programme that aims to:

- ✓ Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities
- ✓ Bring people together
- ✓ Help more young people to reach their potential



78% of venues we worked with in 2022-23 said their overall confidence for the future of the facility has increased

# Our 2023-24 to-do list

Alongside Team VIY, we can't do what we do without the funding, support and involvement of our unique 'team sheet' of cross-sector partners and supporters - thanks for continuing to do #SomethingConstructive with us for youth, community and volunteering.

## National Partners

Supporting our organisation across the board



## Programme Partners

Delivering or supporting a series of projects, by region or theme



## Project Supporters

Nominating or supporting specific VIY projects



- Deliver 100 new VIY projects UK-wide
- Continue working at depth in our hub delivery regions (as featured in this report) and in the most deprived neighbourhoods and communities
- Commence delivery with multiple new local authority partners through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, including Bromsgrove & Redditch, Hull, King's Lynn & West Norfolk and York Councils
- Further develop existing key partnerships at national, regional and local levels - just like those opposite
- Expand the range of skills development and employability opportunities for young people on our projects, especially in relation to green skills and environmental sustainability (including delivery of the new City & Guilds Entry Level 3 Environmental Awareness accreditation)
- Increased emphasis on achieving employment and further training progression outcomes, including apprenticeships, for young people aged 16+ who are NEET/unemployed on joining VIY
- Invest in 'Team VIY' and further build our delivery resources, capacity and diversity across our regions, including our all-important skills mentor network



DO  
#SomethingConstructive  
with us

Aaja Music,  
South London,  
December 2022



We'd love to hear from:

- Organisations whose work aligns with the young people we're looking to support and benefit
- Experienced tradespeople who'd like to work with us
- Organisations wanting to nominate community places and spaces in need
- New partners and funders wanting to support our work
- Get in touch with us at [info@teamviy.com](mailto:info@teamviy.com) – we'd love to have a chat

Follow the latest from us on social:

 /volunteerityourself

   @viyproject