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Foundation



2017 Mid-year Progress Report



**Jamie Ward-Smith,**  
Chair of Trustees

'Earlier this year, we relaunched the Co-op Foundation - the Co-op's own charity - with an exciting new plan to help disadvantaged communities work together to make things better. From tackling youth loneliness to investing in some of the most deprived areas of the UK, our work complements the Co-op's other great activity in communities. I'm thrilled to be able to share these highlights, just 6 months into our new three-year strategy. I look forward to regularly updating our supporters and partners on our progress, our impact - and of course the co-operative difference that drives everything we do.'

## Tackling youth loneliness

The Co-op Foundation is building a national network of projects tackling loneliness among disadvantaged young people. By helping our partners collaborate and share learning, we're facilitating a national conversation about youth loneliness and strengthening local practice.

Our first 5 pilot projects which began in October 2016 are well on their way to helping a target of 305 young people, through a range of approaches to tackling loneliness.

### Envision

'Community Apprentice' project builds young people's sense of community, helping them tackle social issues they care about.

### Youth Focus: North East

'Fast friends' brings young people together to explore what loneliness means to them and identify action they can take to address it.

### The Prince's Trust

'Get Started With Art' is running art courses, with follow-up support, for young people in Bristol experiencing isolation and struggling to access opportunities.

### Royal Exchange Theatre

'Heard not hidden' is helping young deaf people in Rochdale to come together and make friends through creative activities.

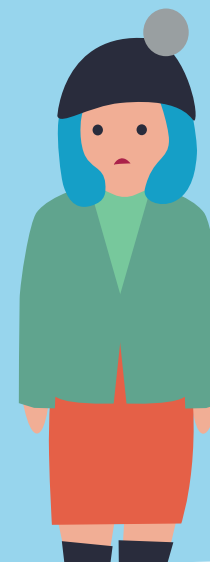
### Manchester Metropolitan University

Have trained a group of young co-researchers, who are investigating how loneliness affects young people and will share their findings widely across the UK.

These projects received  
**£139,500**  
of Co-op Foundation  
funding

**32%**  
of 16-24  
year olds feel  
lonely 'always'  
or 'often'

(source: Co-op/British Red Cross 2016)



Another 6 partners have joined our network so far this year, focusing on times of transition when young people are at higher risk of loneliness.

### Ovalhouse

Is working with award-winning children's playwright Mike Kenny to develop a play about youth loneliness, with input from workshops in South London schools.

### Changing our Lives

Will help young people with disabilities make new friends based on shared interests.

### Clean Break

Will use theatre to help young female ex-offenders tackle loneliness and isolation.

### Become

Will coach young care leavers, aiming to achieve profound, positive, and sustainable improvement in their wellbeing.

### Carefree Cornwall

Also working with care-experienced young people, will focus on enabling them to volunteer as peer mentors.

### Whizz Kidz

Will run a leadership programme for young wheelchair users.

These 6 projects will  
directly benefit  
**680**  
young people  
to tackle loneliness  
in the next year

We've committed  
**£120,000**  
to support these new  
partners' projects



Highlights from 2017 so far

Supported  
**358 Co-op  
Colleagues**  
to volunteer with  
community projects

Built a network of  
**10 charities**  
tackling youth loneliness  
and working together to  
share what works

**230  
people**  
have given their views  
to help shape our  
future priorities

Launched our  
**£2million  
#iwill fund**  
to help young people  
take action to tackle loneliness  
in their communities



**12 young  
co-researchers**  
working to investigate  
how loneliness affects  
young people

**50  
Members**  
made an #iwill pledge  
to support youth social  
action at the Co-op AGM

Proudly supporting  
youth social action

**#iwill**



# What's next?

## Our priorities for the second half of 2017 include:

- Awarding the first £400,000 from our #iwill fund to projects using youth social action to tackle loneliness
- Expanding our youth loneliness network UK-wide, working with new partners in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Making 4 pilot investments to support community enterprises in disadvantaged areas
- Developing new tools to measure our impact and its co-operative difference



## Case Study - tackling loneliness through youth social action

When Giordana arrived in the UK from Italy, she often felt lonely as she didn't speak much English and didn't know where to go to meet other people. Three years later she took part in Envision's 'Community Apprentice' project, and decided that she wanted to help other new arrivals to the country find support and friendship.

Working with a group of school-friends, and with help from local charities and businesses, she created a project to help new migrants and refugees find out about free social activities and sources of practical support.

## Get in touch

Follow us on twitter [@Coop\\_Foundation](https://twitter.com/Coop_Foundation) | Visit our website [www.coop.co.uk/foundation](http://www.coop.co.uk/foundation)

If you'd like to raise funds to support our work, or for any other information, email us at [foundation@coop.co.uk](mailto:foundation@coop.co.uk)

Co-op Foundation is a working name of Co-operative Community Investment Foundation, a charity registered in England & Wales (1093028).

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