

Penny Scott, project manager, Let Go



Photograph © Simon Veit-Wilson

breaking the cycle

According to the Home Office, one in four women and one in six men reading this article will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives. Equally surprising is the fact that it takes an average of 35 separate assaults before a victim calls the police. This makes domestic abuse (defined as threatening or violent behaviour between adults who are, or have been, in a relationship) one of the most common, but also one of the most under-reported, crimes.

A person can experience domestic abuse whatever their gender, age, race, faith, class or sexuality but most often the perpetrators are men and the victims are women. The threat of further violence makes many people think twice about going to the police and until the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act was passed in 2004, the number of cases reaching court and resulting in successful prosecutions was low.

The new Act has given victims more protection and provided the police the opportunity to prosecute perpetrators themselves, without the involvement of the victim, if necessary.

In 2000, Northern Rock Foundation commissioned Professor Marianne Hester (then working at Sunderland University) to look at why so few domestic abuse cases were reaching court. There are statutory and voluntary services involved at every stage - from the immediate intervention when an assault has taken place, to helping the victim and his or her children to use counselling services and to find somewhere else to live, to working with the perpetrator. One of the research findings was that the different agencies tend to be so focused on their own priorities and practices that they overlook what could be achieved if they worked more closely together. The Foundation concluded that one way to break the cycle of violence might be to invest in local partnerships with responsibility for tackling domestic abuse. It set aside £4m for two five-year pilot projects and a seven-year evaluation, so that the lessons learned could be widely shared and appointed an advisory group of senior figures from the statutory, voluntary and academic sectors to oversee the project.

Two grants were awarded: one to the long-established Gateshead Domestic Violence Forum (now renamed the Gateshead Domestic Violence Partnership) and one to the more recently formed Cumbria Domestic Violence Strategic Management Board. The Foundation's ambition is to increase the effectiveness of partnership working in reducing the incidence and

consequences of domestic abuse. In Cumbria and Gateshead, the police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Service, primary care trusts, local authorities and voluntary sector providers have undertaken to train staff, improve the recording of incidents and share information.

Each partnership is supporting a service that provides crisis intervention (within 24 hours of an incident being reported), continuing support for the victims and their families, and programmes for perpetrators. The Gateshead service is Safer Families, which builds on a project that has been operating for some years, while in Cumbria, a new service, Let Go, has been set up in Eden District and the rural area around Carlisle.

Gateshead Council's Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, Kate Israel, is chair of the Gateshead Domestic Violence Partnership. 'Safer Families was being cited as an example of good practice at conferences and we were having visits from government ministers,' she explains, 'but it was a small team - only five people - and we knew there was more we could do. We were lucky enough to have a manager with a vision and the drive to make a real difference for victims of domestic violence. This included the development of a crisis intervention service, because we know that the earlier we intervene, the more likely we are to achieve a positive outcome for the victim. That's why we applied to the Foundation to be part of this initiative.'

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breaking the cycle

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Photograph © Victoria Spencer



Jo Grant, chief executive, Aquila Way

The team now has 15 members of staff, most of whom work directly with victims, children or perpetrators. 'We are still doing our core, long-term work but we've been able to increase the support that we provide to victims and bolster our services for children and our work with perpetrators. For example, our group work with perpetrators used to depend on volunteers working alongside a lone perpetrators worker. If there was no co-worker available, group work sessions sometimes had to be cancelled. We've now got a small team to carry out this work and therefore a more consistent approach. We can see more people and be more effective.'

The Partnership has become more effective too. Its predecessor, Gateshead Domestic Violence Forum, was larger and tended to spend a lot of its time discussing the challenges involved in delivering services. 'I think we've got a stronger sense of direction now,' says Israel. 'We've produced a strategy and an action plan to which we are all committed, and a greater sense of ownership of all the services that we provide across the partnership to address this issue. We feel more confident that we are a partnership. That's why we changed our name.' The Partnership includes representatives of the Council's Community Based Services and Learning and Children Group, the Youth Offending Team, the Probation Service, the Crown Prosecution Service, Northumbria Police, the PCT, Gateshead Housing Company and the housing charity, Aquila Way, which manages the Safer Families service on behalf of the partnership.

Let Go, in Cumbria, is managed by Impact Housing and its project manager is Penny Scott. 'The original proposal to the Foundation was to work across Cumbria, but it was turned down because it was too big. The Foundation was interested in us working in a smaller area, where the impact could be more easily measured.' There was already an Eden Domestic Violence Forum and a few years earlier, it had commissioned a report from the School of Applied Social Sciences & Business Studies at St Martin's College, Lancaster. This highlighted the challenges faced by victims living in small rural communities, including concerns about confidentiality and negative perceptions of women's refuges and 'safe houses'.

'My first task was let people know about the project and to build up a list of contacts,' Scott explains. 'I made appointments with social work teams, education welfare officers, benefits workers, Eden Community Alarms, anyone I could think of. The key to making a service like this work in a rural area is to make sure that all the agencies involved have a good grasp of the difficulties that victims of domestic violence face. People feel there is a stigma attached to domestic violence. We might be talking about families who have been settled in an area for generations. It is important to get people to be more alert, more aware, to develop a community response.'

Scott, who set up a women's refuge in Wigan in the late 1970s and worked in child protection and as a social worker on Merseyside and in Cumbria before joining Let Go, has been impressed by people's willingness to work together.

'Partnership is hard work, but I think there is something special about Cumbria. You haven't got a lot of anything. There aren't huge organisational structures, so you do have to work very closely with others. That's the culture here.'

Let Go now has six domestic violence advisers, a children's worker, a play therapist, an administrator and two voluntary counsellors. The police are key players in the partnership, reporting incidents to the team, who contact the victim within hours of receiving the information. 'If the person has a mobile phone, we will use that,' Scott explains, 'or we may go through a third party, to avoid creating any extra risk.'

One of the reasons why domestic abuse cases fail to reach court, is that victims have second thoughts and withdraw their statements. Both the Cumbrian and Gateshead partnerships are now able to spend more time supporting victims through the process and the number of prosecutions is rising. A breakthrough in Cumbria has been the establishment of a specialist domestic violence court for the north of the county, funded by the Home Office. 'It is now taking an average of ten weeks to get a case to court, instead of the year it was taking,' says

Scott. 'Having to wait that length of time was incredibly stressful.'

The key role of the police is evident in Gateshead too. 'Our work with the police has come on leaps and bounds,' confirms Kate Israel. 'They now have a team of people who understand domestic violence and the sensitive issues around it. They know how to talk to people.' Last Christmas, Northumbria Police ran a publicity campaign on domestic violence and they are making good use of their powers to prosecute without the involvement of the victim. At the time of writing there were eight prosecutions in progress.

The enlarged Safer Families team offered crisis support to 700 people last year. 'We haven't shouted it from the rooftops, exactly,' admits Aquila Way's chief executive, Jo Grant, 'but I do think that domestic violence has begun to move centre stage. More people are talking about it and it is featuring more in other strategies, on drugs and alcohol, for example. We have a lot of committed individuals in our partner agencies and in the community. Partnership working is not theory, it's personal. It's about hard work and being prepared to add to your skills.'

Israel agrees and acknowledges that the receipt of a £1.9m grant, the rapid expansion of the Safer Families service and the commitment to a long-term evaluation process has at times been challenging. 'It has given us the opportunity to thrash out what being a partnership really means,' she says. 'We are now clear that it means more than focusing on your own part of a service. It means taking responsibility for the whole and that's exactly what we are doing.'

Funding for the partnerships continues until 2010 and the evaluation report will be published in 2012.

For further information

Penny Scott
Project Manager
Let Go
Tel: 01768 840683

Jo Grant
Chief Executive
Aquila Way, and
Operational Manager
Gateshead Domestic Violence Partnership
Tel: 0191 491 5700

Kate Israel
Chair
Gateshead Domestic Violence Partnership
Tel: 0191 433 2353



Sean O'Brien
2007 Writer's Award winner

one for the poets

'The more money we can keep away from novelists the better!' joked the poet to the journalist. Sean O'Brien, the winner of the 2007 Northern Rock Foundation Writer's Award, was being interviewed for the Radio 4 programme Front Row. 'I think attention to poetry comes and goes in waves,' he said. 'The important thing is that the work continues.'

O'Brien is no stranger to prizes, but at £60,000, this is the biggest by some way. Like other winners before him, he will use it to reduce the amount of time he has to spend on income-generating activities other than writing. 'It will enable me to stop doing quite a lot of reviewing and journalism and there will be less running about the country doing readings in places you wouldn't wish to go unless they were paying you,' he told Front Row, politely declining to say where those

places might be. O'Brien was born in Hull but has travelled widely, working in universities in Japan, Denmark and Ireland as well as the UK. He has written several poem-films for television and is a frequent radio broadcaster. He was 'writer in residence' at Newcastle's Live Theatre from 2001-2003, before becoming Professor of Creative Writing at Newcastle University and is currently Vice Chair of the Poetry Society.

The Writer's Award has now been running for six years, managed for the Foundation by New Writing North. There will be no competition next year. It will be re-launched in 2009 as a biannual prize worth £75,000, over three years and it will be extended to writers born in Cumbria or the North East who may now be living and working elsewhere. The Foundation is committed to making awards in 2011 and 2013.

adding value

A review of the Foundation's Money and Jobs grants programme, by David Wilkinson and Diane Wade of Whole Systems Development, will be published this summer. The main aim of the programme, which has been running since 2003, is to help disadvantaged people and communities 'to increase their assets, income and economic activity'.

The Foundation wanted to find out whether this aim was being achieved; it wanted to learn more about the approaches being used by the recipients of its grants; and it wanted to reflect on the role of an independent, charitable foundation in a field already thick with government agencies and initiatives. The research involved visits to nine community based organisations, a review of paperwork and interviews with Northern Rock Foundation staff.

Their report will present four main findings. Poor people are getting richer both financially and in terms of personal well-being as a result of the Money and Jobs Programme. Interventions funded by Money and Jobs add particular value in reaching 'the hard to reach'.

They are successful in engaging people in 'pre-contemplation' and 'contemplation' stages of personal change pathways to employment and better personal financial self-management. Community-based organisations are, in general, better at this kind of engagement than statutory agencies and are therefore making a distinct and valuable contribution to social and economic provision and to the government's current active labour market policies. Northern Rock Foundation's approach as a 'light touch funder' is widely appreciated and works well.

In her foreword to the report, the Foundation's director, Fiona Ellis, writes: '...there are challenges for us, too, in how we continue to engage with organisations without becoming controlling, and how we support them individually and collectively to track and promote their achievements. How have we responded? First, we've made a commitment to continue the Money and Jobs programme for five more years. Some argued that we should not do so, that worklessness and financial exclusion were solely the responsibility of government. Our belief is that the sector needs more investment from charitable funders before it can fully prove its worth in the field, so we are sticking with it. Second, we are taking up the challenge of finding and sharing better data; publishing this report is one example. More practically, we'll be working closely with funded organisations and providing them with expert help to improve their knowledge management and to work collectively and collaboratively to increase their impact. Indeed, it will be a condition of our grants that they do so.'

The report will be available to download from the Foundation's website, or by contacting Jo Woolley on 0191 284 8412.

circles of

Those who like to keep an eye on grant-making trusts and foundations in Britain cannot have failed to notice the subtle changes that have taken place in the sector in recent years. The sheer diversity of charitable funders, from the very large to the very small, from the specialist to the generalist, from the traditional to the contemporary, makes it dangerous to generalise, but some trends are evident.

The sector is busier: there are more organisations funding charitable activity and there are more and different kinds of people working for grant-makers. Some funders are moving away from solely responsive grant-making and setting up initiatives of their own and a small but significant number have become increasingly willing to get involved in trying to influence public and voluntary sector policy and practice.

As a relatively young organisation, Northern Rock Foundation has taken its time to step into this arena. Director Fiona Ellis explains why: 'When the Foundation was set up, one of the conditions was that it would try to address the underlying causes of poverty. Well we couldn't have started to do that straight way. You need to have a good grasp of what the issues are before you have the legitimacy to speak about them.'

The Foundation has always been interested in research and in using the findings to inform its funding programmes, but it was the region-wide consultation on its policies and programmes, which finished in 2006, that gave it the confidence to make better use of its knowledge, networks and reputation to influence others. 'It was quite unexpected in a way,' Ellis says. 'By doing our day-to-day grant-making, we found we had earned a mandate to do other things. We knew we wanted to do more hands-on policy development and we were pleased to find, during the review, that people really appreciated our independence and thought we could use it more. We recognise that we need to spend most of our time in the grant-making helicopter, but what our grant recipients and colleagues were saying was that, from time to time, it's okay to land and get involved in what's going on, on the ground.'

Rock Reports has routinely reported on research programmes and pilot projects initiated, or jointly funded, by the Foundation. The lead story in this issue, on the domestic abuse initiative, is one example. The penal reform initiative (2004 – 2006) followed a similar pattern of identifying an issue that reflected the Foundation's objectives and its values, working with a panel of experts to establish the questions that needed asking, commissioning research or awarding grants for action research in pursuit of some answers, and publishing the findings.

In identifying new areas to explore, it is important to keep track of what others are doing and the Foundation benefits from being a founder member of the Woburn Place Collaborative, a recently formed group of progressive grant-makers with a shared interest in social justice. Ellis is, however, well aware of the dangers of grant-makers becoming arrogant about the extent of their influence. 'Nobody has given us a mandate to become politicians,' she says. 'The US experience is worth noting. There are a number of foundations in America that have very clearly influenced presidential policy in recent years. It is well documented that foundations have had a huge influence on controversial issues such as abortion, militarism and sexual politics and they are proud to have done so. It is incredibly important to choose your topics with care and to know why you are doing it. We can't just go off into a realm of our own. There have to be very good reasons for choosing a subject and our partners, and a clear rationale for what we do next.'

Public service reform

Four years ago, the Foundation supported a bid from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) to set up an office in the North East. 'It became obvious to the IPPR that the North East would be an interesting place to be, from a public policy point of view,' Ellis explains. 'There is a strong regional identity,

a lot of interesting activity at local level and some very specific regional issues and influences. IPPR won't take government money, because it has to remain neutral, so we and the Millfield House Foundation agreed to fund its core costs.'

The relationship with IPPR North continues. This year the Foundation will become one of the funders of a 15-month Commission on Public Service Reform in the North East. Public service reform is a priority for every political party and the Commission will be politically neutral. It will audit the recent reform and renewal of public services in the region (health, education, criminal justice and aspects of the welfare system) and on the basis of that, will recommend future strategic directions for the North East and changes to local and national policy. Specific topics will include the reality of policy implementation, how public services contribute to social justice, whether investment and reform meet distinct local and regional needs, and the role and impact of public services in the economy of the North East.



influence

Understanding the VCS

Meanwhile, the Foundation is commissioning a major study of the scale, role and contribution of the voluntary and community sector in the North East and Cumbria. Fiona Ellis again: 'It's well known that there isn't enough good data on the voluntary and community sector nationally, but it really came home to us when, two years ago, we were trying to predict the impact of the anticipated reduction in EU and SRB funding here. We tried very hard to find in-depth information and we failed. The fact is that no one has a really reliable model for measuring the voluntary sector at a regional level. The Charities Aid Foundation, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and others collect some data, but it's too broad, too high level. There is an obvious gap to fill here.'

The lack of data is an obstacle to effective lobbying; it limits understanding of organisational growth and of the sector's needs and it creates a barrier to effective partnerships with the public sector.

It also causes confusion within the voluntary and community sector, particularly among organisations working in the same field. As a result it's not just the sector but the public that loses out.

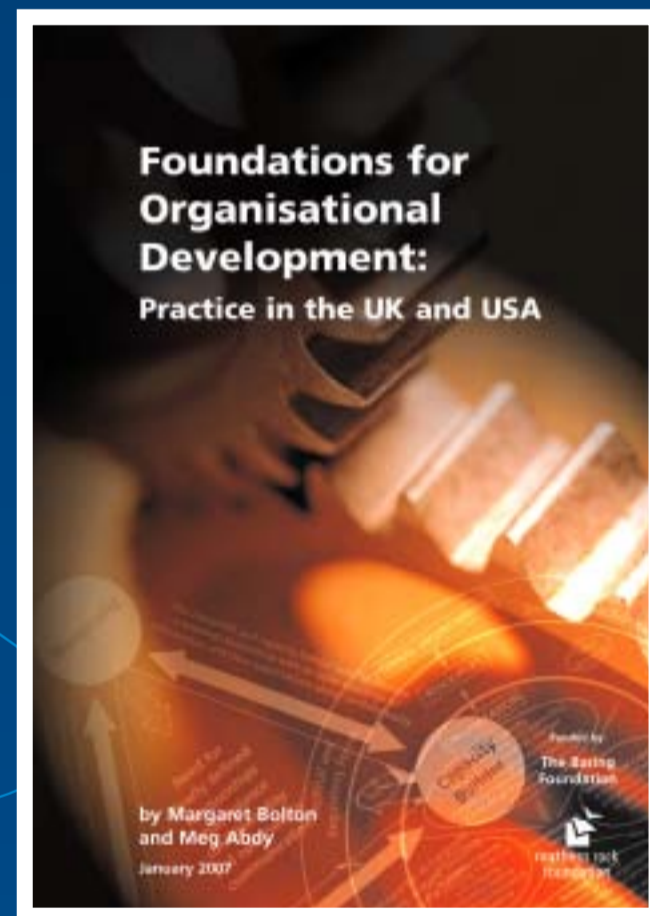
The researchers will be appointed this summer and their work will be completed in July 2012. The Foundation has appointed a 12-member advisory group, which will be chaired by Cathy Pharoah, former Director of Research at the Charities Aid Foundation and a Visiting Professor in Charity Funding at the Sir John Cass Business School. The researchers will produce detailed and regularly updated information on the voluntary and community sector in the North East and Cumbria that will add value to existing and emerging national data. They will make regional and national comparisons, wherever possible and they will collect evidence of how the shape and size of the sector are affected by changes in policy and funding. The ambition is to set up a website that will provide the public with access to data during the course of the study.

Heads together

Grant-making trusts and foundations have a long history of collaborating with each other on a project-by-project basis. A recent example of this was a report, co-commissioned by Northern Rock Foundation and the Baring Foundation, on organisational development programmes for the voluntary and community sector, in the UK and the USA. The research, by Margaret Bolton and Meg Abdy, was jointly managed by the two foundations and they share responsibility for promoting it.

It is a common failing of research projects and consultancies that the findings are not as widely read as they should be. This is something Northern Rock Foundation is setting out to tackle.

A series of reports, branded Think, will be launched later this year and David Wilkinson's study of the impact of the Money and Jobs programme (see page 3) will be among the first to hit the shelves. 'Policy change doesn't happen because someone writes a book,' acknowledges Fiona Ellis. 'It happens because the research is sound, because the contacts you make are good and because your timing is right. Packaging though, is vital, which is why we are launching the Think series. You have to get your results to the people in power and we think these publications will help us to do that.'



More information

Commission on Public Service Reform in the North East
www.ippr.org.uk/ipprnorth/research

The voluntary and community sector research
Rob Williamson
Director of Policy and Communications
Northern Rock Foundation
Tel: 0191 284 8412
Email: rob.williamson@nr-foundation.org.uk

Foundations for organisational development
by Margaret Bolton and Meg Abdy
can be downloaded from:
www.nr-foundation.org.uk/learn_research.html



2007 Main grant-giving by geographic area

Region	Amount (£)
Durham	851,405
Cumbria	889,663
Northumberland	1,032,308
Tees Valley	1,791,688
Tyne and Wear	2,208,747
Region-wide	1,576,104
Main grant-giving total	8,349,915



2007 Investments by programme & activity

Programme / activity	Amount (£)
Money and Jobs	1,239,813
Independence and Choice	1,196,319
Strong and Healthy Communities	925,426
Building Positive Lives	1,158,176
Safety and Justice	1,684,199
Culture and Heritage	906,052
Better Buildings	1,139,930
Exceptional grants	100,000
VCS training and development	1,632,340
Policy work	253,303
Special initiatives	1,000,000
Loans	300,000
Total investments	11,535,558

connected for life

In 2005, Northern Rock Foundation awarded the Durham-based charity DFW Adoption a grant to pilot a service to strengthen the link between birth and adoptive families. The focus was the adopted child, but the expectation was that all parties would benefit. The grant was matched by BBC Children in Need.

The ideal for adopted children is to have 'a good foundation as part of two families' but, for all sorts of reasons, including geography, illness and miscommunication, this is often hard to achieve. The project, Connected for Life, set out to do two things: to research and document a more detailed history of the adopted child, and to offer the birth and adoptive families the opportunity meet each other, to understand more about each other and to establish a foundation for future communication. It was an ambitious project but DFW Adoption is encouraged by what it achieved. Over two years it organised 16 'foundation days', so called because they were designed to provide the foundation for a future connection between the two families, or at least between the adopted child and his or her birth family. (The children themselves did not take part in the foundation days; they were for the families only.) Hand-

painted 'memory boxes', containing a 'foundation package' were prepared for each child. The package varied according to the child and the information and materials available, but typically included stories from the birth family, foster parents and significant professionals in the child's early life, descriptions of siblings, family trees, video messages and memorabilia, such as baby clothes. It was for the adoptive parents to decide what to share with the child and when.

During the course of the pilot project, memory boxes were made for 19 children. Birth parents were glad to have the opportunity to tell their story and some of the adoptive parents reported feeling 'more entitled' to parent their child as a result of this process. The impact on siblings, many of whom were themselves adopted or fostered or living with the extended family, is also thought to have been considerable. DFW Adoption is seeking funding from local authorities to enable it to offer the service to more families.

For further information

Alison Hoare
DFW Adoption
 Tel: 0191 386 3719

Photograph © Simon Veit-Wilson



DFW Adoption

a better building for Newton & Bywell

In July last year, the Tyne Valley parish of Bywell demolished its village hall. The parish serves two villages: Newton to the north of the A69 and Bywell to the south. In 2001 the parish council had undertaken a village appraisal and produced a plan.

One of its 60 or so ambitions was to upgrade the village hall. Although well used by local clubs and societies and for community events, the 1930s pebble-dashed building was too cold in winter, too hot in summer and fell a long way short of contemporary health and safety regulations and the requirements of a public entertainment license. No food could be prepared on the premises, the windows were rotting and the hand basins had cold water only. The parish, with a population of around 400, needed something better.

The hall had been leased by the Women's Institute (and was officially the Newton WI Hall) but membership numbers had fallen and the WI was happy to hand over responsibility to the newly formed Newton and Bywell Community Hall Trust. The Trust's board is elected by local residents; it includes four users of the hall and four others.

In 2004, the Trust secured a grant from Awards for All to ask the public their views on the future of the hall and to undertake a study of the various ways in which the building might be improved. It was agreed that the best bet would be to demolish the existing structure and build a new hall on the same footprint.

Trustee Adrian Hinchcliffe, who is also Chairman of Bywell Parish Council, was the unpaid project manager. 'We had a plan, but we needed £380,000 to implement it,' he explains. 'We started with a public appeal and raised £45,000, including Gift Aid, and that got us on our way.' Grants were secured from DEFRA and from the European Regional Development Fund's Transitional Fund and £40,000 came from Northern Rock Foundation. The balance was contributed by the Parish Council. The level of public funding involved meant going out to tender for the architectural and building services and the project also benefited from the involvement of local volunteers with expertise in building design and engineering.

Newton is in a conservation area and the new building, made of stone, slate and timber fits

in well. It is fully accessible and well insulated; rainwater is used to flush the toilets, and the oil tank, which fuels the central heating, has been buried out of sight. The deeds of the hall are held by the Parish Council, but responsibility for upkeep and management lies with the Trust. Income from hires and ticket sales will pay the bills. Groups, classes and clubs will use the building on a regular basis and a Social Group organises talks, dances, performances and film screenings to attract a ticket-buying public. The hall's pre-opening publicity invited local residents to indicate the activities they would support ranging from weight training and carpet bowls to local history, genealogy and first aid.

The official opening is not until July, but a number of warm-up events have attracted an enthusiastic response to the newly named Newton and Bywell Community Hall. 'We couldn't sustain it with our population alone,' Hinchcliffe agrees, 'but it is already attracting people who live a bit further away and the area does get a lot of visitors. The hall also has great potential as a training venue. I think it will become a valuable local resource.'



The new community hall at Newton and Bywell

applying to better buildings

All applications to Northern Rock Foundation for support for new or improved buildings are now considered under the Better Buildings programme.

Capital grants are available for community facilities in disadvantaged urban, and isolated rural, areas; for arts, sports, heritage and

environment organisations providing activities of high quality and regional significance; and for voluntary and community organisations wanting to create a better environment for the delivery of services to disadvantaged people, and a better working environment for staff and volunteers.

Most grants are for between £10,000 and £500,000. Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate good and appropriate design, that exceed the most basic 'green' standards and that include plans for local purchasing wherever possible. For guidelines please visit www.nr-foundation.org.uk



picture house

The teacups are out at Belsay. This work, by the designer Geraldine Pilgrim, is part of Picture House, an exhibition that opened on 5 May and runs until 30 September.

Unlike most historic stately homes, Belsay Hall has no permanent display of furniture or pictures. Since 1996, English Heritage has invited artists and designers to fill its rooms, gardens and the neighbouring 14th-century castle with ideas of their own. The curator, Judith King, makes a point of choosing artists who will do something a bit different. This year's group of 13 includes film maker Mike Figgis, actor Tilda Swinton, fashion designers Viktor and Rolf and the Mercury Award-winning musician Antony, of Antony and the Johnsons. The exhibition is designed to appeal to the wide range of people who come to Belsay during the summer, including families and English Heritage is expecting record numbers this year. Northern Rock Foundation is a major funder of English Heritage's contemporary arts programme in the North East, alongside Arts Council England, North East. Picture House is also being supported by ONE North East, Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Heritage Lottery Fund, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Design Council England.

More information and a map can be found at www.picturehousebelsay.co.uk
Tel: 01661 881636

grant programmes and initiatives

About us

Northern Rock Foundation is a charity established in 1997, when Northern Rock plc converted from being a mutual organisation. The Foundation receives 5% of Northern Rock's annual pre-tax profits, but we are entirely independent with our own board of Trustees governing our work. Our current objectives are to tackle disadvantage and improve quality of life in North East England and Cumbria. We use a range of tools to do this.

Grant programmes

To apply for a grant your work must be eligible under our current guidance and take place within our area of benefit. Applications must be made under one of the following programmes.

Money and Jobs

Helping disadvantaged people and communities to increase their assets, income and economic activity.

Independence and Choice

Giving people with mental health problems, people with learning disabilities, older people and carers a choice of excellent services that help them to become or remain independent.

Strong and Healthy Communities

Strengthening people's well-being through community and physical activities, by improving local environments and by helping them to eat healthily.

Building Positive Lives

Helping people who lack self-confidence or motivation, or who face discrimination, to have the individual support they need to lead more positive and fulfilling lives.

Safety and Justice

Reducing the incidence and impact of domestic abuse, sexual violence, prostitution, child abuse and hate crimes, by investing in better support for victims.

Culture and Heritage

Inspiring, enjoyable and diverse culture programmes and events that raise our region's profile and make it a better place for everyone to live and enjoy life.

Better Buildings

Investing in improved buildings for cultural organisations and for voluntary and community groups.

Other activities

- Policy work informs and influences the environment in which the activities we support take place. As a neutral body we also provide independent research and analysis and space for organisations to learn from each other.
- VCS training and development aims to increase the effectiveness of the voluntary sector through courses, capacity-building support and investments in its infrastructure.

- Special initiatives concentrate on particular issues in depth. They allow us to develop work and test new approaches alongside evaluation and advocacy of emerging good practice.
- Loans and other investments provide alternative tools for supporting charitable activities.
- The Northern Rock Foundation Writer's Award is one of the UK's largest literary prizes. It recognises the past and potential work of a writer and then supports them for three years.

More information about how to apply for a grant and all aspects of the Foundation's work can be found on our website www.nr-foundation.org.uk



northern rock
foundation

Northern Rock Foundation is a registered charity.
Registered number: 1063906

Northern Rock Foundation, The Old Chapel, Woodbine Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1DD
Tel: 0191 284 8412 Fax: 0191 284 8413 Minicom: 0191 284 5411
Email: generaloffice@nr-foundation.org.uk Web: www.nr-foundation.org.uk