

Government announces £4 million boost towards opportunities for young people

Minister for Civil Society and Youth Baroness Barran has today announced that the Government will invest an additional £2 million into the #iwill Fund, which will be matched by The National Lottery Community Fund to create thousands of new volunteering, social action and community activities for young people.

Since its launch in 2016, the #iwill Fund has used a £54 million joint investment between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and The National Lottery Community Fund, in collaboration with over thirty funders, to create more than 650,000 engaging opportunities for young people led by hundreds of programmes across the country, with a particular focus on benefiting those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

For example, thanks to the #iwill Fund:

- UK Youth, British Red Cross and Young Women's Trust are delivering a programme called EmpowHER, which is enabling girls and young women to change their communities, increase their self-esteem and supporting their wellbeing by providing inclusive and meaningful social action opportunities. For example, students from a small rural primary school near Stroud sold cards and cakes to support the British Red Cross' Independent Living 'First Call' service.
- Young Minds in Haringey, London are delivering a new and contemporary approach to increasing social action amongst boys aged 10-14 from black and minority ethnic communities, with 'Action to Achieve'. Year 7 pupils across five school 'hubs' are being trained and supported by teachers to deliver after-school and lunchtime social action projects within the local community.
- Leonard Cheshire Disability is empowering young disabled people with their 'Can Do Sport' project, enabling them to be a catalyst for change in their local community by harnessing the potential sport has to make positive changes through physical activity, upskilling, and social action. The project specifically targets a younger age group, under-represented in social action, where they've identified a need for earlier intervention.

The announcement was made by Baroness Barran during a series of visits to mark International Youth Day, underlining the Government's continued support for young people.

The Minister visited Urban Foxes, a project by Leicester City's charitable

arm Leicester City in the Community, which engages young people through a range of urban sports such as skateboarding, parkour and BMX, and has seen strong interest so far, with the prospect to grow following the successful Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The project is offered by Premier League, who have match-funded £1.5 million into the #iwill Fund.

Minister for Civil Society and Youth Baroness Barran said:

I'm acutely aware of how the pandemic has impacted the lives of young people, and I can reassure them that it's a Government priority to ensure they are supported and given access to opportunities that can help them develop and grow.

I'm delighted that an additional £4 million will now be added to the £50 million we have provided to this important fund, which means even more young people can make a positive difference in their communities whilst developing their own unique skills and knowledge.

It was also fantastic to see the work the Premier League and Leicester City in the Community are carrying out with the Urban Foxes programme to help young people get into sport this summer. I encourage everyone to explore the opportunities on offer to rediscover summer safely with their families.

This additional funding forms part of the Government's dedicated support for young people. Over £100 million from an unprecedented Covid-19 support package for the charity sector has been provided to organisations supporting children and young people during the pandemic, including the £16.5 million Youth Covid Support Fund which provided emergency funding specifically for youth services. In addition, the National Citizen Service is providing thousands of young people opportunities to develop skills for life and work outside of school across the summer.

The Youth Investment Fund also remains a manifesto commitment for this Parliament, of which £30 million has already been committed to provide capital investment in safe spaces for young people this year, so that they can access support from youth workers, and enjoy beneficial activities including sports and culture.

The Minister's visit to Urban Foxes highlighted the Government's Rediscover Summer campaign to help inspire families to get out and about safely and make the most out of the school holidays.

The Minister also spent the week visiting The Skill Mill in Birmingham Targeted Young Women's Programme in Sandwell, Leicester New Parks and Sands United Football Club in Northampton.

David Knott, Interim Chief Executive at The National Lottery Community Fund, said:

The work of the #iwill Fund has had an incredible impact on young people, empowering them to design and deliver projects that will benefit their peers, their communities and young people of the future. Thanks to National Lottery players and Government funding, this additional £4 million investment will provide even more opportunities and enable young people to help their communities build back from COVID, prosper and thrive.

Allison Tripney, Head of Community at Leicester City in the Community, said:

It is very encouraging to see more funding allocated to creating opportunities for young people after what has been a very challenging time.

We're proud to host the launch of this fund with our PL Kicks funded 'Urban Foxes' programme as a fitting backdrop; aiming to provide further positive opportunities for young people too.

James Hope-Gill, CEO at Skateboard GB, said:

It is great to see the activation of the Urban Foxes project which allows youngsters to try other sports such as skateboarding. Leicester City in the Community do a great job of promoting alternative sports and this will play a part in strong growth of the skateboarding community in Leicester, which recently got a boost with the opening of Skate Parlour Skatepark in the city.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The #iwill Fund

- The #iwill Fund is made possible thanks to £54 million joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support young people to access high quality social action opportunities.
- The #iwill Fund brings together a group of organisations who all contribute funding to embed meaningful social action into the lives of young people.
- The #iwill Fund supports the aims of the #iwill campaign – to make involvement in social action a part of life for young people, by recognising the benefit for both young people and their communities.

- By bringing together funders from across different sectors and by making sure that young people have a say in where the funding goes – the #iwill Fund is taking a collaborative approach.

The #iwill movement

- The #iwill movement is a collaboration of over 1000 organisations and 300 young #iwill Ambassadors from across the UK. They are united by a shared belief that all children and young people should be supported and empowered to make a positive difference on the issues that affect their lives, their communities, and broader society.
- The #iwill movement is supported by an independent coordination hub, hosted by Volunteering Matters & UK Youth.
- Take the lead by signing up to the Power of Youth Charter at www.iwill.org.uk or follow us @iwill_campaign on twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

The National Lottery Community Fund

- The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK – they are proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. National Lottery players raise £36 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since June 2004, they have made over 200,000 grants and awarded over £9 billion to projects that have benefited millions of people. They are passionate about funding great ideas that matter to communities and make a difference to people's lives. At the heart of everything they do is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, their funding is open to everyone. They are privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.