

**THE  
BERN<sup>N</sup>ICIA  
FOUNDATION**

# Annual Report

2020/21



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## **Our Vision**

Optimise Inclusion, Maximise Inspiration

## **Our Mission**

To use our capacity, insight, ingenuity and networks to advantage the people and communities of the North East Region.

## **Our Priorities**

Inclusion

Inspiration

# Introduction

The North East boasts some of the world's most beautiful countryside, a stunning coastline and vibrant city centres. We have a proud industrial heritage and areas of significant cultural and historic interest. We're also seeing the rise of digital industries and world-class businesses committed to operating from our Region.

This all makes our region a fabulous place to live, work and visit, with many people profiting from a strong sense of pride and belonging.

Every day we are inspired by people's creativity and perseverance but recognise that some may feel isolated or detached from their community or are disadvantaged and feel less prepared to confidently compete for opportunities.

Bernicia's core business as a Housing Association, entirely focussed on the North East Region, gives us insight into the opportunities and challenges faced by our people and communities, and we want to do all that we can to help.

So much so that in 2019 Bernicia created The Bernicia Foundation, as a charitable subsidiary within The Bernicia Group.

With a £1million funding pledge up to 2023, The Foundation builds further upon Bernicia's great work, by granting financial support to projects and initiatives that deliver real and lasting community benefit, alongside helping inspirational young people to fulfil their potential.

That £1m pledge is funded by Kingston, the commercial arm of The Bernicia Group, which sees its profits top sliced and channelled into the Foundation's grant programmes, clearly demonstrating the "profit for purpose" ethical framework under which Bernicia's commercial companies trade.

The two funding programmes available - Inclusion and Inspiration - were established to encourage social and economic inclusion and support inspirational and talented young people to achieve their potential.

Through each of these programmes we support initiatives for people to develop the skills and self-belief to thrive, activities that encourage people to enjoy life to the full or offer a helping hand to give them a boost towards fulfilling their potential.

The range of challenges presented this past year delayed the commencement of Foundation funded programmes, meaning none have yet been operational for 12 months. Within this report therefore our review is primarily based upon the nature of funding and anticipated beneficiaries. In future years we will measure outputs and outcomes alongside these, to demonstrate the real and lasting impact of The Bernicia Foundation's funding.

# The Bernicia Group Structure

## Bernicia Housing Association

(not for profit)

Quality, Affordable, Homes and Services

### The Bernicia Foundation

(Charity)

Social Wellbeing

Financial Wellbeing

Supporting Young Talent

### Kingston

(commercial trading)

Residential Block Management

Open Spaces

Living Spaces Estate Agency



# Executive Summary

The Bernicia Foundation was created as a grant giving charity in 2019, when it was given a £1million funding pledge by The Bernicia Group.

The Foundation is overseen by 4 Trustees and operates 2 funding programmes;

- Inclusion Programme
  - Supporting Social and Economic Inclusion and Wellbeing
- Inspiration Programme
  - Supporting young people to pursue their talent and reach their potential

The Foundation has successfully allocated £468,500 of grants to organisations and individuals since its creation.

The first round of allocations was made in February 2020, although due to Covid the release of funds was deferred until June 2020.

Subsequent funding rounds were awarded in October 2020 and February 2021. In addition to this, a Covid Emergency Relief Fund was agreed for expedited distribution to organisations delivering support to people experiencing severe hardship.

## Distribution of Funds:

	Inclusion Award	Inspiration Award
Round 1	£130,000	£3,250
Covid Relief Fund	£193,500	0
Round 2	£77,000	0
Round 3	£64,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£464,500</b>	<b>£3250</b>

In addition to the funding awards, a total of £32,760 in fees has been paid to The Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN).

Because of Covid restrictions impacting on many young people's ability to pursue their talents, no applications to our Inspiration Programme were received in rounds 2 and 3. A campaign to promote this programme will be delivered for forthcoming rounds.

In total £200,000 of Covid relief funding was made available across our local authority operating areas.

## Profile of Inclusion Programme funding and beneficiaries;

	<b>% Funding</b>	<b>Projected Beneficiaries</b>
<b>Tackling isolation and loneliness</b>	25%	842
<b>Removing barriers to employment training and volunteering</b>	25%	837
<b>Improving financial wellbeing</b>	23%	3165
<b>Building citizenship and confident/aspiration</b>	14%	310
<b>Promoting independence</b>	9%	520
<b>Reducing child poverty</b>	4%	40

Again, because of the challenges of 2020 and the deferred funding release to round 1 recipients, none of the organisations funded by the Foundation have been fully operational for 12 months since the receipt of funds.

This was acknowledged by Trustees, with an understanding that some flexibility and latitude would be needed in respect of the volume of beneficiaries, considering the constraints and unpredictability of social distancing and other measures. It remained an imperative of the Trustees however, to allocate funding in the spirit of the projects, to ensure that however the services were delivered, beneficiaries were not left without essential community support at such a difficult time for everyone.

A relatively unusual feature of the Inclusion Programme is that The Foundation will fund the core costs of organisations, rather than just a specific project or outcome. This has been exceptionally well received by the third sector, especially given current pressures.

Three further funding rounds remain within the profile of the £1million funding pledge, with a total of circa £445,000 available to the Inclusion and Inspiration Programmes up to 2023.



# Governance and Management

The Bernicia Foundation is both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bernicia Group.

It is governed by a Board of 4 voluntary trustees, who meet tri-annually; twice to determine the allocation of grants, and once to reflect on progress against the objectives, measures and targets of grant allocations.

The Foundation doesn't directly employ any staff, although it is supported by lead officers from The Bernicia Group, who provide direction and governance assistance to ensure it runs effectively and efficiently.

The Trustees are further supported by CFTWN, who assess and monitor applications, ensuring the integrity of these and that delivery of objectives remains in line with funding criteria and good practice.

Their services include;

- Due diligence checks on all eligible applications (those failing due diligence are not assessed).
- Assessments of the remaining applications against the agreed criteria and timetable, for decision at The Bernicia Foundation trustee meeting.
- Providing the panel with assessments of the applications categorised as high, medium and low priority, plus recommended rejections and their reasons.
- Attendance at panel meeting to provide insight into the assessment and answer any queries on the organisations, their applications and their assessment.
- Collecting completed monitoring forms from successful beneficiaries to ensure grants have been spent in line with terms and conditions and alerting The Bernicia Foundation of any issues if they arise.
- Promotion of the fund if required.

Having secured formal charitable status in 2020, the Charity Governance Code for smaller charities has been adopted to ensure good governance is practised across The Foundation's activities. There is also a risk map in place to ensure potential risks for the Foundation, and The Bernicia Group are controlled.

# The Board and Management Team



**John Holmes**

Chair of Trustees



**Avril Gibson**

Trustee



**Carole Meredith**

Trustee



**Beth Hazon**

Trustee



**Andrea Malcolm**

Lead Officer



**Mike Axe**

Company Secretary

# Inclusion Programme

We're motivated to do our utmost for the region because of the hardworking, determined, kind and passionate people we come across every day.

But we know that some feel isolated or detached from their community or disadvantaged and ill prepared to confidently compete for opportunities.

This is where our determination to help comes in. Through our Inclusion Grant Programme our ambition is to give people back their sense of purpose, their fresh start, their new lease of life and their feeling of belonging; supporting people from all walks of life with that helping hand to develop their skills, find and benefit from opportunities, and create better futures for themselves and the communities they live in. We're doing this through two specific inclusion priorities;

- Social Inclusion;
  - Tackling isolation and loneliness
  - Promoting independence
  - Building citizenship and confidence/aspiration
  
- Economic Inclusion:
  - Removing barriers to employment, training and volunteering
  - Reducing child poverty
  - Tackling fuel poverty
  - Improving financial wellbeing

And during 2020 we've done just that, granting over £271,500 to 30 organisations who's fantastic, community led work, will have a real and lasting impact on the people they have committed to help.

Here we profile just a small sample of the work of the organisations funded. A full list of all recipients, and a summary of how they will use their Inclusion Grant is presented within the appendices section.

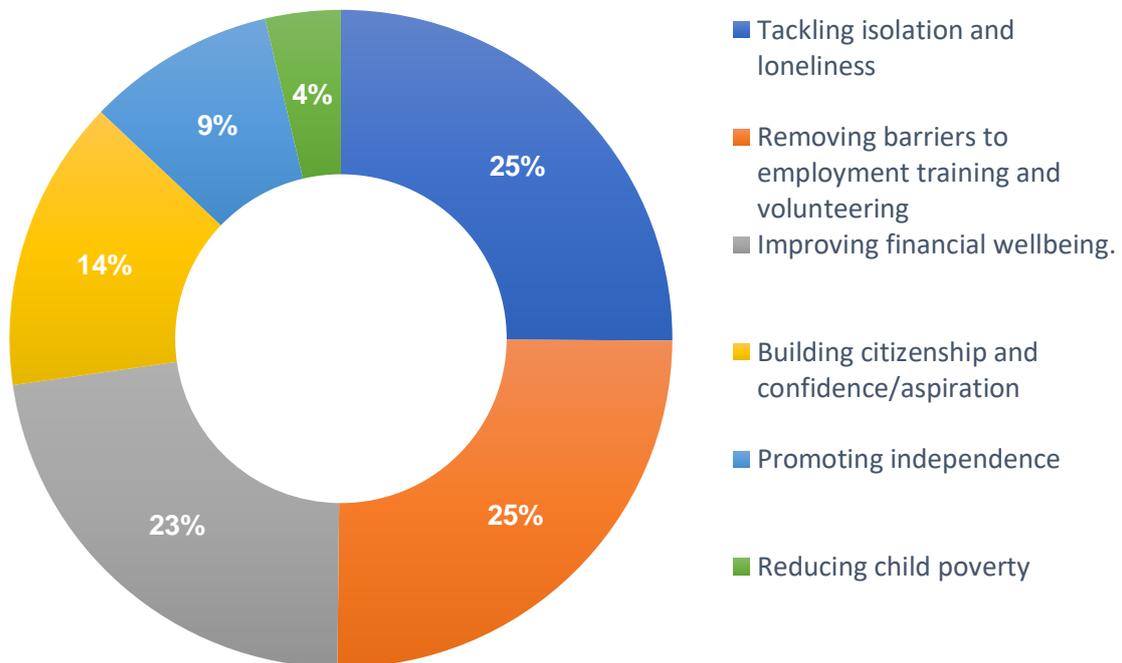
'Distinctive' is a programme for young people with disabilities to help them overcome the issues of social isolation and is available to those who require higher levels of support. The programme is run for 3 hours a week, over 39 weeks a year, with up to 30 young people, aged 12-19 attending each session in a supportive and caring environment. Trained workers provide crafts, group games, team building exercises, cooking, IT based leisure, sports and physical activities. Attendees take part in directly planning the programme. Members complete a baseline self-assessment at the beginning and end of the programme, to demonstrate the impact it has had.

The Include 2 Improve programme has been proven to encourage economic inclusion, particularly for BAME women. The Inclusion Grant contributes toward the core costs to employ both a Bengali speaking and Arabic speaking worker. The workers advise on all legal subjects, such as housing, employment and consumer issues, welfare benefits and immigration issues. Where specialist advice is needed, they act as interpreters. Since recruiting the advisors, female participation has risen from 9% to 40%.

The Odysseus Mentoring Project focusses support on some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, aged 6 to 25 across the region. Participants have a safe environment to talk about and explore difficult situations and barriers to transitioning back to their family and life outside of custody. Issues include relationships, bullying, emotional problems, self-harm and anxiety. Everyone has their own pattern of support, so they can progress at an appropriate rate.

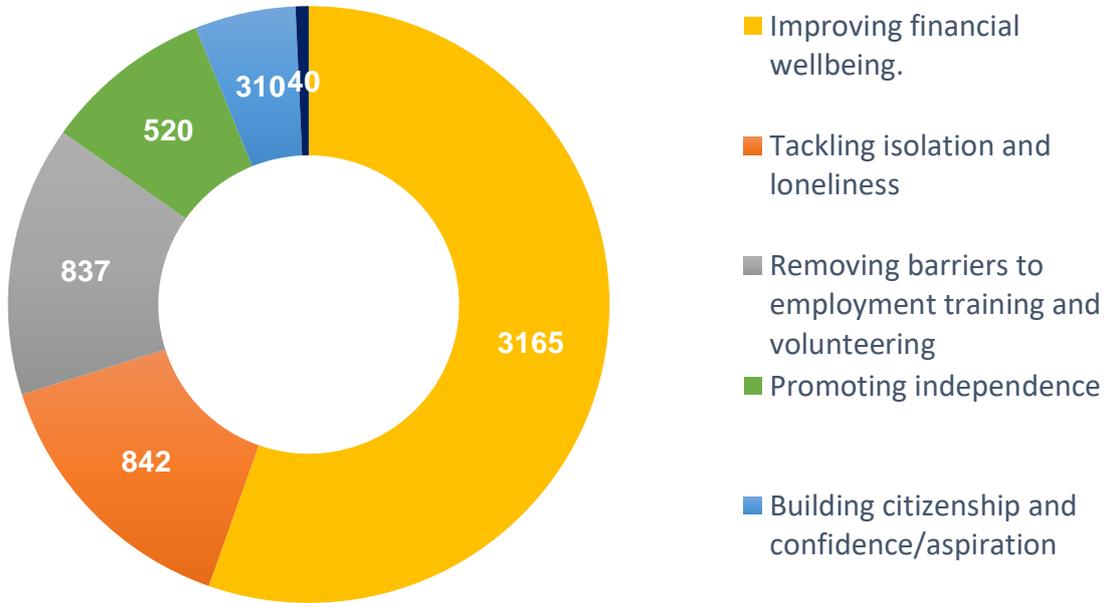
The graphic below illustrates the profile of funding given to support the objectives of the Inclusion Grant Programme. This shows the top three priority areas attracting funding are Tackling Isolation and Loneliness, Removing Barriers to Employment, Training and Volunteering and Improving Financial Wellbeing.

**Where the money went:**



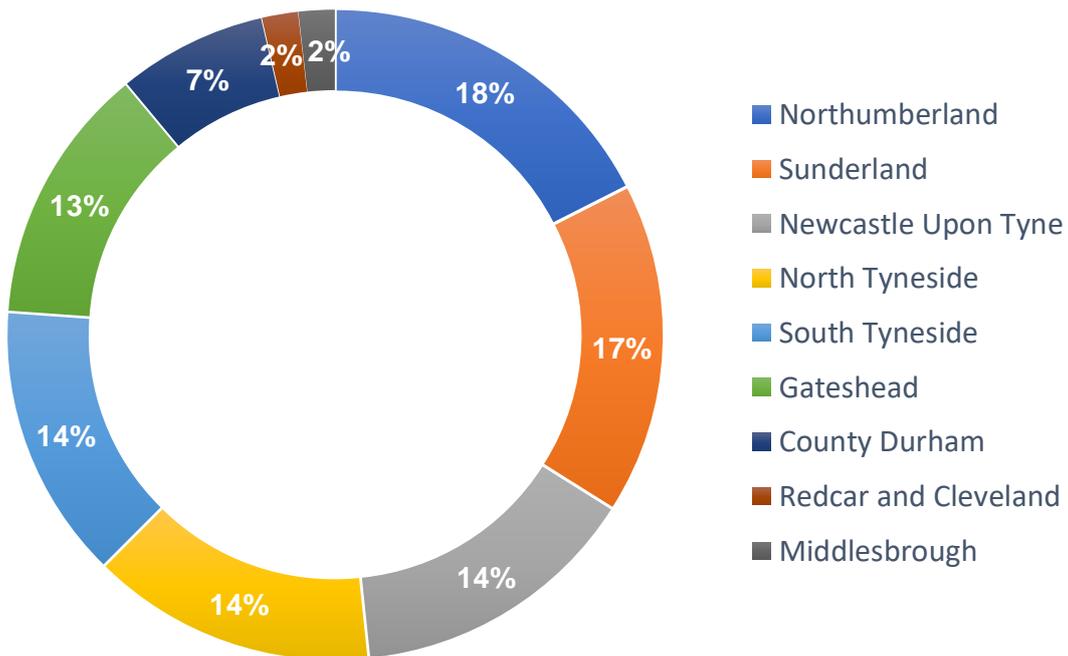
### How many people will benefit?

The number of projected beneficiaries expected to participate in each of the projects awarded funding is outlined below, showing a similar picture to the above;



### Where the beneficiaries mostly live:

When making funding awards Trustees are mindful of Bernicia's operational area and funding cold spots, here is an overview of the localities to benefit;





# Inspiration Programme

Our region has a wealth of young people, bursting with talent and ambition that needs to be harnessed, encouraged and promoted.

Some of our young people however may be disadvantaged by circumstances that limit their chance to succeed, so with the Inspiration Grant Programme we want to give them that helping hand to achieve their potential.

Their challenges are diverse, including financial constraints, family complications, health problems and physical and learning difficulties. The thing that unifies them, is their talent and potential - from sporting ability to academia, performing arts to creative flair and anything in between.

Above all their drive and utter determination will motivate and inspire others.

This past year has had a significant effect on some of our young people's ability to pursue their dreams and passions, with lockdown restrictions and travel bans having a huge impact on their training and development plans.

There were however 4 exceptional young people to receive funding from the Inspiration Grant Programme. Here is a summary of how a grant from The Foundation will support one of these talented young people in the future;

## Fred - £1000 award

- Fred is a talented climber and will use his grant to access personal training with the Precision Climbing Team to support his involvement in the GB climbing squad.
- Climbing training and competition was disrupted so GB Climbing has rolled over the Development Squad for 2021 and Fred's place is secure for that year. In 2021 he will enter a new age category with the opportunity, depending on Covid restrictions, to represent GB at European climbing competitions.
- Based in Northumberland, Fred must travel considerable distances to access training facilities and competitions. 2021 also brings the opportunity to train at an international facility before a competition

We're keeping in touch with Fred and the other inspirational young people to see how they take their activities on to the next level, and hope their will and determination inspires others to reach for the stars too.



# Covid Emergency Relief

At the peak of the Covid lockdown measures, when significant numbers of people and households were ill-prepared for the hardship that would ensue, Trustees agreed to advance £200,000 of the Foundation's £1million funding, to be distributed across our local authority areas.

The awards were made unconditionally, via our local authority partners nominating organisations to us that could quickly mobilise and use the funding to support households in need. Each local authority area was allocated funding based on Bernicia's stock profile within their area. Channelling the funding this way meant we rapidly reached a wide spread of communities across the North East.

In total 25 organisations received funding, with the normal day to day activities of the recipient organisations including the following:

- Health Promotion
- Mental Health Support
- Disability Support
- Rural Support
- Homelessness Support
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers Support
- Youth Support
- Elderly Support
- Community Support
- Advice and Counselling
- Voluntary Sector Support.

With the objective of this funding being to alleviate severe hardships, and the imperative being to administer funds quickly, no specific outputs/outcomes were attached to the funding.

There were key themes running through many of the projects; co-ordinated food deliveries, shopping, prescription services, care calls and physical, socially distanced visits to more vulnerable people. Some paid petrol allowances to volunteers. Activities, activity packs and personalised responses (like celebrating birthdays) were also popular. Zoom calls kept support groups interacting.

Lockdown was and continues to be particularly hard on people with learning disabilities and mental health problems, so there was a consistent focus on keeping this client group socially engaged and active. Several projects said that older people really valued the contact and wanted more time to chat.

Other organisations provided very focussed individual responses. White goods and electricals were purchased to set up homeless people in their own accommodation,

whilst tents and sleeping bags were provided to those who couldn't be found a home.

Help with the increased cost of utilities was a common theme. So too was help in getting access to services. A lady with dyslexia received help when she was getting into financial difficulties because she struggled with the information she received, and to complete relevant paperwork. A learner who couldn't keep up with their online studies without equipment, was provided with a Chromebook.

Some beneficiaries did use the Foundation's funding for a specific purpose, with East Durham Trust for example, directly using the resource to provide food and activity packs for over 800 people.

Feedback from recipients tells us that they greatly valued the financial support during a very difficult period. Our unfettered funds gave them the freedom to deliver an emergency response, using their judgement and expertise to best meet demand in a rapidly changing and sometimes escalating environment, to many households experiencing severe hardship. We know too that the funding helped some charities leverage other funding sources quickly.

Several beneficiaries have recognised our support in their newsletters, social media and websites.

A list of all covid emergency relief beneficiaries, along with an overview of the support they provided, is presented within the appendices section.



## Appendices

- a. Funding and Spend Profile
- b. Small Charities Code of Governance
- c. Inclusion Grant Programme - recipients
- d. Covid Emergency Relief Fund - beneficiaries
- e. Grant Programme eligibility
- f. The Bernicia Foundation – Development Timeline

## A. Foundation Funding & Spend Profile

	Mar-20	Oct-20	Feb-21
<b>Brought forward</b>		£165,069	£76,531
<b>Funding</b>	<b>£502,800</b>		
<b>Grant Allocation</b>	-£326,811	-£77,618	-£64,000
<b>Fees incl. VAT</b>	-£10,920	-£10,920	-£10,920
<b>Carried Forward</b>	£165,069	£76,531	£1,611

£250,000 of funding is expected to be made available in October 2021 and £250,000 in October 2022 which will allow the Foundation to award grants in 2022 and 2023.

## B. Small Charity Code of Governance

The Bernicia Foundation has adopted the Small Charity Code of Governance. Whilst the Code is not a legal or regulatory requirement, The Bernicia Group is committed to adopting and demonstrating good governance across all its activities and has therefore adopted this code as good practice for its charitable subsidiary.

The seven key principles of the Code and our summary evidence of compliance is presented below;

Code Requirements	The Bernicia Foundation
<p>1. Organisational purpose</p> <p>The board is clear about the charity's aims and ensures that these are being delivered effectively and sustainably.</p>	<p>Set out in Articles of Association and Charity Commission submission. Agreed at inaugural meetings July &amp; Oct 2019. Considered in each grant making round Feb &amp; Oct 2020, Feb 2021.</p>
<p>2. Leadership</p> <p>Every charity is led by an effective board that provides strategic leadership in line with the charity's aims and values.</p>	<p>Board experienced in charitable sector and in acting on Boards. Supported by experienced senior officers and experienced third-party advisor</p>
<p>3. Integrity</p> <p>The board acts with integrity, adopting values and creating a culture which help achieve the organisation's charitable purposes. The board is aware of the importance of the public's confidence and trust in charities, and trustees undertake their duties accordingly.</p>	<p>Board members agreed Terms of Reference and adherence to Bernicia's various probity policies. Evidence of practical use of Declaration of Interest process.</p>
<p>4. Decision-making, risk and control</p> <p>The board makes sure that its decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely and that effective delegation, control and risk assessment and management systems are set up and monitored.</p>	<p>Agreed funding programme, supported by risk map and decision-making protocol. Grants assessed by independent, experienced third-party, prior to decision in minutes of board meetings. Timely update to applicants on outcome and monitoring of performance.</p>
<p>5. Board effectiveness</p> <p>The board works as an effective team, using the appropriate balance of skills,</p>	<p>Board has wide experience amongst individual members in business, charitable sector and operating at Board</p>

experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions.	level. Supported by experienced third-party advisor and senior officers
<p>6. Diversity</p> <p>The board's approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership and decision-making.</p>	Board members have diverse skills and background and seek to support wide range of projects and causes.
<p>7. Openness and accountability</p> <p>The board leads the organisation in being transparent and accountable. The charity is open in its work, unless there is good reason for it not to be.</p>	Public guidance for applicants on eligibility and process. Timely notification of outcomes and, for successful applicants, grant conditions. Monitoring process in place. Grants publicised where practical.



## C. Inclusion Grant Recipients

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award
<b>Round 1 (14 no.)</b>		
Pathways 4 All	Youth programme for people with disabilities.	£9,767
Pallion Action Group	Part-time co-ordinator for community hub to develop volunteers to support social inclusion and access training.	£9,984
Age Concern Tyneside South	Support for older people to improve their financial wellbeing.	£8,179
Sunderland CAB	Include 2 'Improve' dedicated BAME advice and support project to support financial inclusion and wellbeing	£10,000
Sunderland Women's centre	Core costs for project to remove barriers to employment training and volunteering to BAME women from areas of deprivation	£10,000
Northumbria Coalition against Crime	An early intervention programme for young people at risk of offending or reoffending.	£10,000
Northumberland community voluntary action	Assisted shopping project in South East Northumberland	£10,000
Bright Futures NE	'Young mums and mums to be' support group to increase financial inclusion and reduce child poverty.	£9,989
Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project	Salary costs for a Youth Careers Worker	£10,000
Someone Cares	Support programme for women survivors of abuse to manage economic and financial wellbeing.	£8,540
Reviving the Heart of the West End	Action to enterprise programme to develop a social action project to help build citizenship, confidence and aspiration	£9,993
Teams & Bensham Community Care	Lunch club for older residents to support social inclusion	£6,139
Real Lives:Real Choices	A learning programme for adults with complex needs to find pathways to employment, training & volunteering.	£10,000
Chrysalis at Tynedale	Engagement programme for people living with dementia and their carers	£7,470

<b>Round 2 (8 no.)</b>		
NE Youth	Increasing social inclusion, reducing isolation and loneliness and supporting young people into work.	£9,200
Pendower Good Neighbour Project	Hub for socialising, training initiatives, and information/support for people suffering hardship.	£9,815
North Tyneside Disability Forum	ACTION training project for young people excluded from mainstream options.	£9,869
Hextol Foundation	Meaningful training, volunteering and work opportunities for people with learning difficulties	£10,000
International Community Organisation of Sunderland	Migrant integration into jobs programme, removing multiple barriers, improving financial wellbeing and aiding integration.	£9,734
Northumberland Federation of YMCAs	Y Reach outreach programme for disadvantaged young people	£10,000
Escape Intervention Services Ltd	Covid-19 mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people	£9,000
Chester le Street Community Association	Additional staff to manage covid safety protocols to enable social hub to run inclusion programmes to reduce isolation for older people.	£10,000
<b>Round 3 (8 no.)</b>		
Search CIO	Community development worker engaging with older people in disadvantaged areas.	£10,000
Meadow Well Connected	Connect kids club – afterschool sessions for primary aged children to socialise, eat well and take part in activities.	£10,000
Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre	Social inclusion project for older vulnerable people	£5,000
Northumberland Domestic Abuse Service	Project for those in abusive relationships and at risk of harm to become more independent and confident.	£10,000
Gateshead and South Tyneside Sight Service	Vision support – a transition pathway and employment development programme for people who are blind and partially sighted.	£9,000
Tees Valley Women's Centre	Support for women to overcome barriers of debt, physical safety, hunger, housing, mental and physical health.	£5,000
Gateshead Older Persons' Assembly	Promoting social and financial inclusion and removing barriers to gaining employment for those seeking economic stability.	£10,000
Cleveland Housing Advice Centre	Raising awareness of the rights and benefits due and managing challenging situations relative to their accommodation, supporting financial inclusion.	£5,000

## D. Covid Emergency Relief- Funding Beneficiaries

<b>Northumberland County Council</b>		
<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Grant Value</b>	<b>Feedback on Actions/Activities</b>
Northumberland communities together	£25000	Hardship funding supporting those with loss of employment, loss of income through furlough, delays to benefits, help with home study, Extra costs of family at home. Advice and signposting. Bereavement and mental wellbeing support. Coordinating activities of support organisations and supporting volunteering.
Adapt NE	£20000	
Real Deal Plus Ltd	£20000	
CVA Bluth Valley	£20000	
North Northumberland Voluntary Forum	£20000	
Leading Link	£20000	In addition to the above, helped a woman (who was fleeing dv and had been sofa surfing) to get a new home, she is now in her home and we are helping to provide things for her house. We are having a summer camp for 140 kids – daily 24 in groups of 8 – had to hire toilet because no one would open one.
<b>Sunderland City Council</b>		
<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Grant Value</b>	<b>Feedback on Actions/Activities</b>
Pallion Action Group – West Ward	£2400	Sunderland City Council (SCC) chose VCS groups already supporting Virtual Community Hubs. SCC supported shopping and food, so groups agreed on activity packs for children, families and elderly, with additional merchandise donated by other partners. The groups compiled the packs and together with volunteer drivers delivered them. The packs were extremely well received.
Youth Almighty – West End	£2400	
SNCBC – East and Coalfields Wards	£11200	
Sunderland NIP North Ward	£4000	

North Tyneside Council		
Beneficiary	Grant Value	Feedback on Actions/Activities
Justice Prince CIC	£1250	<p>We set up a team of Covid19 responders which included several local people volunteers and our senior management staff. The team cooked and delivered twenty-five high quality three course hot meals per day plus additional hot soups which were all delivered direct to the doorstep every day during lock down. Over 150 people benefitted from this service. In addition, weekly food hampers have and continue to be delivered to 65 low income families living in Longbenton, Battle Hill and East Howdon. For many this was the only food they would eat all day. It also highlighted the importance of the social interaction aspect of the food delivery. Many commented upon this being the highlight of their day, and how good it was to see a friendly face and have a brief chat all be it at a safe distance. People told us how they found this very reassuring making them feel valued, less isolated and not forgotten!</p> <p>Our community garden continued via pre booked slots enabling families with small children living in flats to access open space, and young people to let off steam helping with gardening tasks.</p>
LD North East	£1250	<p>The Bernicia money is helping us meet communication and transport costs. We are doing a lot more support over the phone now. We're making well-being calls to people, particularly those on their own. "These calls are to make sure people are okay. "We are trying to support people get their daily exercise and a lot of help is to support people's mental well-being, to keep them occupied. Three to four weeks into lockdown and families are finding it tough. So, we're buying things like craft kits for people, wool for people who knit, dropping that off or getting it posted out and things like jigsaw puzzles. We are also looking to order things for our children's project, sunflower growing kits to send out to the kids.</p>
Dreamshine	£1250	<p>We launched our telephone befriending service in April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 our volunteers have helped residents across North Tyneside feel less lonely and isolated. As well as providing a listening ear, we have also been able to</p>

		signpost to a range of different organisations and provide practical support to make life that little bit more bearable during lockdown.
Cedarwood Trust	£1250	Delivered 2,476 information leaflets. Prepared meals 5,149, Delivered meals 4,724, 418 meals collected from centre. 70 foodbank referrals Wellbeing support calls 1,020, 146 adult welfare referrals (social services) 854 volunteer hours.
BAY Foodbank	£1250	13,500 meals distributed in March across over 1000 food parcels (double what we distributed in February) Sadly, we reached the grim milestone of 30,000 food parcels delivered in total on 20th April 2020. We had 247 NEW service users added to our ever-growing database in March and April and will be expecting many more once the furlough scheme ends later this year. We have placed an order for masks and hand gel which when combined with social distancing measures should help us keep the service running! From their website "A massive thank you to Bernicia for their incredibly generous donation of £1,250! It will help support the charity in so many areas!"
Family Gateway	£1250	<p>Our team of Family Entrepreneurs are seeing an increased demand for support in terms of numbers and complexity as people struggle with isolation and lack of access to services and food. The stress of isolation, often in cramped conditions with children who would normally be at school or outside, is resulting in some concerning mental health escalation, food poverty, family conflict and potential child neglect. The staff are pulling out all the stops to increase contact with families and children, find creative ways of engaging them in exercises and activities and reduce escalation of dangerous and concerning issues.</p> <p>The lack of access to internet for some families limits their access to some virtual and online classes and groups and we are having to be incredibly agile in responding to their needs using a range of different means.</p> <p>We are also delivering free family meals to local families from our café, Howdelicious, thanks to generous donations. We are, however, challenged by lack of resources and funding as income losses in our Community Hub and trading activities result in accommodation costs that cannot be covered. This impacts our ability to cover the costs of the support for families and children during this time.</p>

Anxious Minds	£1250	Counselling. Before the outbreak we were supporting around 250 services users a week, plus drop in centres and schools. We supported almost 1000 people with very little funding providing telephone support and online counselling with our team of 40 volunteer Counsellors and Psychotherapists. It deeply upsets me to see how little other funders value counselling services a lifesaving service. You can only imagine how busy we are now.
Walking With – Refugee service	£1250	Food Parcels
<b>Durham County Council</b>		
<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Grant Value</b>	<b>Feedback on Actions/Activities</b>
PACT House	£6250	Crisis food parcels, foodbank, furniture and household items small clothing bank. Furlough pack to support family for 4 weeks for those without income and waiting for payments. Prepacked toiletries and sanitary packs, cleaning packs and baby packs. Collecting prescriptions, errands, chopped wood for elderly lady. Youth worker and Mental Health counsellor care calls and group zooms. 130 afternoon teas in community for nominees such as volunteers and front-line workers. Fuel cost help. Daily challenges, games and fancy dress via social media and community radio.
Health Express Crisis Support	£6250	Combination of funding partners, stakeholders and volunteers to provide main course and desert delivered to the door, enough for 2 - 3 days. Everything cooked and prepared at Auckland project kitchens by Chefs and trainees. Day one at end of March delivered 71 meals. By mid-May up to 400 to 650 meals per day. Scheme rapidly grew and recruited volunteer drivers, up to 6 per week, that were furloughed from employment, using own vehicles to supply wider range of local villages. At the depot kitchen set up a system of volunteer hamper packers and bulk order teams. Supplied to over 560 individual addresses, then also set up a series of hubs who would once a week collect between 100 - 250 meals and they were a sub

		<p>distribution unit delivering within their neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Scheme ended 30 June - 21017 meals delivered and well over 1,500 hampers.</p>
East Durham Trust	£6250	<p>With the funding provided by Bernicia we provided and delivered packed lunches and arts and crafts activities to 925 adults and children across East Durham. We directed the support to families who were accessing the Trust's emergency food parcel project FEED, as we knew these families were in financial need. We also approached local children's services, schools and other support services to encourage referral of families who needed the help most.</p> <p>Packed lunches to families along with craft packs was particularly important during the half term school holiday due to vouchers not being issued in lieu of Free School Meals. The Trust is continuing delivery of packed lunches until the last week of summer holidays, which will also contain basic stationery materials such as a pen, pencil, rubber, pencil case and ruler.</p>
UTASS	£6250	<p>One of the absolute key things has been the support and flexibility of our funders, who have trusted us and been willing to work alongside us to deliver the best possible service to our local communities, without the usual need for detailed forward plans, application forms, projections etc. This really helped us make sure that as much capacity as possible was available to coordinate and deliver activity on the ground, getting support to those who needed it, as quickly as possible. Without this willingness to work with us to do what was needed, we could all have found this situation overwhelmingly different.</p> <p>We recruited 110 volunteers for delivery of shopping and prescriptions from our local shops, pre-cooked meals, recipe kits, activity packs and birthday cakes for isolated young people, as well as counselling and keep in touch (KiT) listening ear telephone services. We also provide the only Post Office facilities in Upper Teesdale 2 days per week as many elderly community members rely on this service to get their pensions</p> <p>Since April we have been delivering activity packs and fortnightly Cook Your Own Tea @ Home recipe bags to almost 60 young people, which included a recipe and all ingredients to make a tasty meal. We set up a Facebook Drop in Group for young people to engage with and hold weekly online chat sessions where young people can speak with qualified youth</p>

		<p>support workers and get help. Weekly recipe bags and science activity packs are being delivered over the summer holiday period.</p> <p>Linking up with a local qualified Social Worker, we have offered emotional support to people we have been working with. This partnership has enabled people, for example who had been referred to Talking Changes and placed on a 6-month waiting list, to access professional emotional support virtually via telephone/ video calling within a matter of days.</p>
<b>Newcastle City Council</b>		
<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Grant Value</b>	<b>Feedback on Actions/Activities</b>
Connected Voice	£7750	Support and advice to voluntary and advocacy services.
<b>Hartlepool Council</b>		
<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Grant Value</b>	<b>Feedback on Actions/Activities</b>
Hartlepool Council	£4500	Used towards the cost to purchase 8 fridge freezers, 8 cookers, 9 double beds and 17 single beds for people who have been identified as homeless during the COVID-19 crisis. These people are very vulnerable but now have a place to stay and essential goods to help them stay home and keep safe.

## E. Grant Programme Eligibility

The Bernicia Group investment pledge of £1m is a significant and welcome addition to the region's charitable sector, it is however a finite resource, so we want it to make a real impact.

We recognise the benefits of strong communities in areas where Bernicia is a major stakeholder, when making investment decisions therefore we are mindful of our operating area, along with funding 'cold spots' and high areas of need within the region.

This is reflected in considerations for the allocation of grants and the development of initiatives, to ensure these are targeted to areas where they will achieve the greatest impact.

Most of the grants we make to community groups range between £5,000 - £10,000. We do consider applications below and above this however, that demonstrate real community value.

Grants to help talented young people are prioritised for those disadvantaged in the development of their talent. We consider how a grant will eliminate or reduce that disadvantage and help them achieve their ambitions and potential.

The programmes do not fund

- Organisations with an annual income of over £750,000.
- Contributions to general appeals or circulars
- Religious/political activity, which is not for the wider public benefit.
- Routine building or equipment repairs and maintenance
- Activities which have already taken place/retrospective funding
- Grant making by other organisations/third party funding
- Privately owned and profit-distributing companies or limited partnerships
- Organisations with unrestricted reserves that exceed one year's running costs.
- Projects and initiatives operating outside of the North East Region.

## F. The Bernicia Foundation – Development Timeline

<b>March 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bernicia board approval to create The Bernicia Foundation.</li><li>○ Commitment of £1m funding up to 2022/23, funded through contributions from commercial company's' gift aid.</li><li>○ Agreed Bernicia appointed Trustees to the Foundation and Lead Officers</li><li>○ Agreed priority objectives of: Social Wellbeing/Inclusiveness, Financial Wellbeing/Inclusiveness, Supporting Young Talent and Innovation.</li></ul>
<b>May – June 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Finalise the Bernicia Foundation Terms of Reference</li><li>○ Development of Trustee's Roles and Responsibilities</li><li>○ Develop and deliver Trustee recruitment campaign.</li></ul>
<b>July 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Engaged solicitors to set up The Bernicia Foundation.</li><li>○ Incorporated July 2019 and registered with HMRC.</li><li>○ Agreed Articles of Association including, directors' term of office and charitable aims.</li><li>○ Submission to Charity Commission for charitable status.</li><li>○ Funding profile aligned with timing of gift aid from commercial companies</li><li>○ Commissioned Community Foundation Tyne &amp; Wear and Northumberland to act as advisors.</li><li>○ Developed brand, website, promotional material, social media identities, imagery and agreed the wording of literature.</li><li>○ Development and design of application forms and process (which is an iterative process as we learn from applications)</li></ul>
<b>July 2019 and October 2019 – First meetings of the Trustees</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Trustees agree their terms of reference and Bernicia probity standards</li><li>○ Agreed grant terms, funding criteria and eligibility.</li><li>○ Agreed geographic reach (North East) focussing on areas where we have homes</li><li>○ Developed risk map</li></ul>

### **November 2019**

- Promotion of new grant programme, open to applicants for 6 weeks.

### **February 2020**

- First 17 grants awarded. Covid restrictions delayed delivery with many projects significantly disrupted, requiring flexibility in assessment of outcomes/timescales.
- Further meetings ensued with recipients to assess the impacts upon them and their projects and agree revised delivery agreements.

### **March 2020**

- Special meeting of the Trustees to agree Covid emergency support to public and charities.
- Worked with Local Authorities for rapid flexible delivery of funds where needed.
- Reprofiled funding for subsequent rounds, as a result of bringing forward emergency funding.

### **October 2020 – February 21**

- Promotion of new grant round programme on various charitable grant sites.
- Agreed 16 further grants, across two rounds of funding
- Continued to engage with Inspiration grant recipients whilst waiting for their activities to restart