

£200k fund released to combat social exclusion

The VINCI UK Foundation is continuing the fight against social exclusion with a new round of grants for local charities that strengthen communities and improve access to employment, housing and mobility for society's most disadvantaged.



The VINCI UK Foundation has awarded a total of £201,834 in grants – between £3,000 and £15,000 – to 33 local charitable projects across the UK and Republic of Ireland promoting social integration and cohesion.

In addition to receiving funds for the purchase or upgrade of transport, equipment or facilities, each project is sponsored by at least one VINCI employee who will offer their time and skills over a 12-month period.

“One of our goals at VINCI is to have a positive impact on the communities we work in – and the grants and sponsorships offered through the VINCI UK Foundation provide a tangible way for us to achieve this. Many of the charities are personal to our sponsors and it is an honour and a privilege to assist their incredible work in whatever small way we can,” says Ruth Ottley, head coordinator for the VINCI UK Foundation.

This year's chosen charities include:

- **A-T Society**

Sponsored by Freyssinet, the A-T Society supports children and families affected by ataxia-telangiectasia disorder through initial diagnosis, medical treatment, and the challenges of everyday living. The Hertfordshire-based charity will use the £10,000 VINCI UK Foundation grant to develop videos and other digital resources that improve access to health information, independence, and wellbeing.

www.atsociety.org.uk

- **Exeter Community Initiatives**

Sponsored by Eurovia, Exeter Community Initiatives involves people facing poverty, inequality and homelessness across Devon in community projects to boost their wellbeing and skill sets – and get their lives on track. The £4,974 grant from the VINCI UK Foundation will equip a workshop where those struggling with mental health issues, addiction and unemployment can learn woodwork/carpentry, sewing/upholstering and design to refurbish and upcycle furniture. By volunteering in the shop-front, participants will also develop valuable retail skills.

www.eci.org.uk

- **Firefly Cancer Awareness & Support**

Sponsored by VINCI Energies UK & Rol, Firefly Cancer Awareness & Support runs a fleet of eight vehicles offering free transport to cancer patients and their families in the borough of Doncaster to regional treatment hospitals. The charity will use the £10,000 grant from the VINCI UK Foundation to replace a vehicle that has reached the end of its serviceable life, thereby sustaining the level of service it provides to the local community.

www.firefly-support.co.uk

- **iCan Health & Fitness**

Sponsored by Nuvia, iCan Health & Fitness is a community-run sports facility in Carlisle for women who might not feel comfortable or welcome at a typical gym. iCan offers fitness classes and programmes to help marginalised or vulnerable women take responsibility for their own health in line with social prescribing and the NHS long-term plan, boosting their wellbeing and reducing isolation. The £10,000 grant from the VINCI UK Foundation will pay for refurbishments at the facility.

icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk

- **Independence at Home**

Sponsored by VINCI Construction, Harrow-based Independence at Home provides grants towards the purchase of equipment to help people living with disabilities or long-term illness increase their mobility and independence. Specialist equipment allows them to visit shops, for example, or join in with school or social activities, which they would otherwise be excluded from doing. The £3,200 contribution from the VINCI UK Foundation will help Independence at Home meet its goal of supporting an additional 50 people in 2020.

www.independenceathome.org.uk

- **South Buckinghamshire Riding for the Disabled Association**

Sponsored by Bachy Soletanche, the South Buckinghamshire Riding for the Disabled Association provides lessons for children and adults with a range of disabilities, helping them to reap the self-confidence, fitness and wellbeing benefits of horse riding. The VINCI UK Foundation has awarded the association £9,111 to refurbish its kitchen facilities, ensuring a safe and hygienic space for volunteers and staff to eat and socialise.

southbucksrda.org

- **Young Futures**

Sponsored by VINCI Construction Grands Projets, Young Futures offers support, therapy and accommodation for young people leaving local authority care, helping them avoid unemployment, homelessness, exploitation and crime, and fulfil their potential. Young Futures will use the £14,000 VINCI UK Foundation grant to refurbish its central London community flats, where care-leavers can learn – in a safe and supportive environment – the realities of independent living and the life skills they need to secure and keep permanent housing.

www.youngfutures.org.uk

More details can be found at www.vinci-uk-foundation.co.uk.

Image caption: Pupils at the Fitzwaryn School for special needs in Wantage, Oxfordshire, in front of the new minibus purchased by The Ray Collins Charitable Trust with a grant from the VINCI UK Foundation in 2018.

ABOUT VINCI UK Foundation

The original VINCI Foundation was established in France in May 2002. Since then it has supported more than 2,500 charitable projects, each receiving an average grant of £10,000 and the support of up to four employees. The Foundation distributes more than £3.3 million globally to good causes every year.

The VINCI UK Foundation was launched in early 2016 with the specific goal of promoting social cohesion and fighting exclusion and isolation in the UK and the Republic of Ireland, by combining the skills of VINCI staff with financial assistance to be a long term partner for the community.

Businesses contributing to the VINCI UK Foundation are VINCI Energies UK & RoI, VINCI Construction UK, VINCI Construction Grands Projets, VINCI Concessions, Bachy Soletanche, Eurovia, Freyssinet and Nuvia.

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