

Social Value

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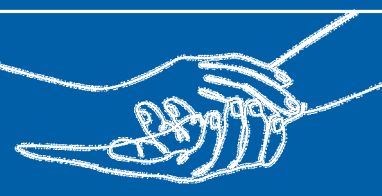




NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

2023/24
at a glance

£3.8m
Social Value
Delivered in total

<p><u>22</u> Projects benefitting <u>22,105</u> people</p> 	 <p><u>£67k</u> Spent on Community Projects</p>	<p>Helped <u>458</u> households with benefit advice and increased income by <u>£488k</u></p> 
<p>Tenant involvement groups generated <u>£103k</u> of social value</p> 	 <p>Community projects generated <u>£2.3m</u> of social value</p>	<p>Improvements to properties generated <u>£1.38m</u> of social value</p> 
 <p>Positive move-ons from supported housing generated <u>£30k</u> of social value</p>	<p><u>£54k</u> social value delivered by contractors</p> 	 <p><u>83</u> new homes delivered—<u>£13.7M</u> invested in development</p>

What is social value?

North Star use HACT’s Social Value Insight tool to measure the impact of our projects where possible. HACT define social value as: “a measurement of the benefits that your services and programmes bring to people and communities.”

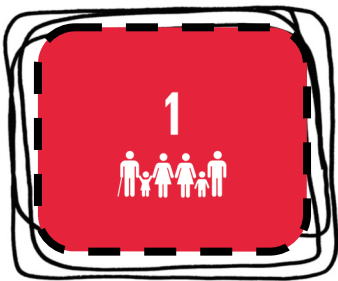
You can read more about HACT Social Value Bank Methodology here:
<https://hact.org.uk/tools-and-services/uk-social-value-bank/>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>) underpin the community investment work we do at North Star.

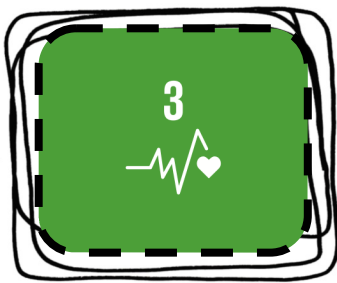
The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

At North Star we have focused our work on four of the 17 goals, which we believe we can have the most significant impact on. Below, we have set out how our work has contributed to these goals.



No Poverty

Projects supported	—	5
Funding Invested	—	£8,722
Social Value Ratio	—	£1 : £37.69
People supported	—	6,019



Good Health & Well-being

Projects supported	—	10
Funding Invested	—	£20,307
Social Value Ratio	—	£1 : £45.71
People supported	—	14,844



Quality Education

Projects supported	—	2
Funding Invested	—	£2,500
Social Value Ratio	—	£1 : £188.26
People supported	—	221



Sustainable Cities & Communities

Projects supported	—	5
Funding Invested	—	£18,079
Social Value Ratio	—	£1 : £32.22
People supported	—	1,021

Our 2023/24 Value for Money report gave an estimated social value figure of £4m. The actual figure in this report is £3.8m. This is due to a number of projects reporting outcomes that do not currently have a HACT Social Value Bank metric.

We spent £17k on running costs and maintenance for our 3 community buildings.

Tenant Connections @ North Star

North Star has committed to carry out a programme of involvement activity to put the voice of tenants at the forefront of its strategy, decision making and continuous improvement. Ensuring tenants have a voice in our organisation and that that voice is heard at all levels is a key part of our culture and the socially responsible way in which we operate.

This year we have ensured that our involvement activities are representative of our tenant population as a whole and that we hear voices from across our wide geography.

We have continued to operate our dynamic model of tenant involvement engagement. This means we form the majority of groups based on recent tenant experience, interest or direct impact of the consultation subject.

We have undertaken a programme of smaller tenant events across our geography to give tenants the opportunity to engage with staff and contractors directly.

Finally, we have begun development and implementation of our Recommendation Tracker. This tool is designed to allow tenants and staff to track our response to tenant recommendations for service change and improvement. As we move into 2025, our new Tenants' Voice Panel, along with our board, will oversee this tool, giving them real time feedback on how tenant voices impact upon how North Star operates.



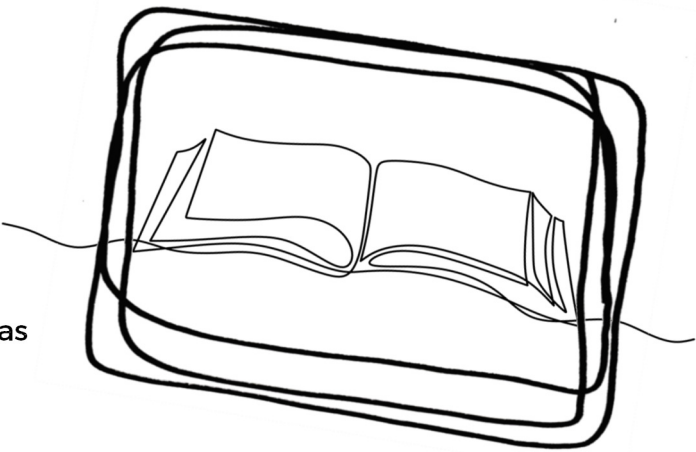
Examples of connection work...

Consumer Standards Group

The Consumer Standards Group looks at North Star's compliance with and performance against the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards. With a new set of standards being published this year, the group are ensuring tenant voice is at the heart of our response to and, work with them.

In 2023/24 the consumer standards group:

- Provided a tenant led response to the engagement on the new standards
- Along with tenants from other HA's met the regulator to discuss the standards and how they will be monitored.
- Helped North Star prepare for the new standards by agreeing on key terms such as what they defined being treated with 'fairness and respect' is.



Tenants' Voice Scrutiny Panel

In 2023/24 Tenants' Voice Scrutiny Panel delivered their final report to board ahead of the switch to our new Tenants' Voice Panel in 2025.

The final report focused on North Star's third Customer Commitment—'We will provide you with a safe home that is in good repair. If we don't, we will make it easy for you to tell us and make sure you understand how we will make it right.' The group made recommendations that have improved how North communicates with tenants about repairs and how North Star ensures it is taking account of any vulnerabilities a tenant may have.

North Star would like to say a huge thank-you to every person that has taken part in Tenants' Voice Scrutiny Panel since it was established in 2011. In that time it has led major changes and improvements to the organisation.

We have valued the work of everyone involved and appreciate the amazing amount of time and effort that people have put in.

We look forward to working with our new Tenants' Voice Panel in the future and the change and improvements it will bring.



Stories from our projects...



Cornerhouse Youth Project

The allocated funds were used as part funding for a detached youth work pilot project in the Mandale & Victoria Ward. Through our existing & well established presence in this community, we had noticed the amount of young people who were out in community spaces without any supervision or support.

The greatest achievement of this project has been the sustainable offer of a detached youth work presence in this community. This funding allowed the pilot project to get 'off the ground' at a pace. The evidence gathered during the project allowed Corner House Youth Project to evidence the need for a more sustained offer in this ward. They subsequently used the findings from the pilot to secure 2 years worth of funding from the OPCC CURV (Cleveland Unit for Reduction of Violence). The legacy of the investment in this pilot is that there are now 2 evenings per week, where there is a detached youth work presence in this community. There has also been an investment in greater school holiday provision, an 'opening up/gentle exposure' of multiple other services being brought into the community spaces.



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The Young@Heart 2021 CIC Warm Hub and Bistro Project



I really enjoy my nights out, everyone is so lovely and it's on my doorstep



The Young@Heart 2021 CIC Warm Hub and Bistro Project is an initiative focused on supporting the local community through a welcoming and inclusive space aimed at reducing isolation, promoting well-being, and enhancing community cohesion. This project combined the concept of a "warm hub," a place where individuals could gather for social support and warmth, with a community bistro offering healthy meals, workshops, and events.

A lady we worked with lives by herself and is local to the bistro, she attends all sessions when she can. She has no family and counts Young@heart's projects as 'warm welcoming and home from home' She has made new friends and 'looks forward to coming for a bite to eat and getting involved in new things' She has limited mobility and seldom goes out. Volunteers assist her to and from the early evening events, with the friendly personal touch she has gained the staff's trust ; "I really enjoy my nights out, everyone is so lovely and it's on my doorstep"

Contractor Social Value – Ian Williams @ Evenwood Hub

This year, our repairs contractor, Ian Williams, upgraded the kitchen at our community hub in Evenwood, County Durham.

The hub is used by a local group, Evenwood Community Action, to deliver a wide range of activities including coffee mornings and lunch clubs. Following a visit from the council, they were advised they required some extra equipment to ensure their activities met the necessary health and safety standards.

This included an extra sink for hand washing and some more space for a larger oven and cooking hobs.

Ian Williams stepped in to complete the work donating 27 hours of labour time and over £800 of materials.

The group are over the moon with the improvements and the difference it has made to the services they provide.



Stories from our projects...



Beyond Limits—Healthy Eating and Breakfast Club

The Healthy Eating and Breakfast Club aimed to educate people about healthy eating on a budget and provided a weekly breakfast club. The project included live cooking demonstrations and nutrition classes to help participants make nutritious meals from basic ingredients. Over the course of the project, we conducted 12 breakfast club sessions, 32 nutrition classes, and various cooking demonstrations and challenges.

The project successfully engaged the community, provided essential nutritional education, and supported families during the school holidays with healthy meals.

For example, Olena and her mother, refugees from Ukraine, arrived in the UK after fleeing the devastating impacts of war. The family had already endured unimaginable loss.

After receiving emergency aid, Olena and her mother were invited to participate in the Healthy Eating and Breakfast Club. The organisation not only offered them a chance to enjoy a nutritious meal but also encouraged them to volunteer, providing a sense of purpose during an incredibly difficult time.

For Olena and her mother, the Healthy Eating and Breakfast Club provided more than just nourishment—it offered a lifeline during a time of profound loss and uncertainty.



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Curious Arts—Stockton Pop-Up Pride

Stockton Pop Up Pride 2024 was a daylong celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community of Stockton, giving visibility to these communities by creating a safe space for them to be celebrated in their own town. Stockton Pop Up Pride 2024 aimed to increase the learning opportunities, financial opportunities and wellbeing via a fully inclusive programme.

The major achievement for this project was the development and delivery of Stockton Pop Up Pride, completed in collaboration with Stockton Pop Up Pride Volunteer Community Committee. Through monthly meets where committee members were able to build a community among themselves, be up-skilled in the area of event development, meet and create friendships with other members of the LGBTQIA+ community in their area and work together on a project which each of them are very passionate about.

The delivery of Stockton Pop Up Pride impacted Stockton very positively, creating a space and inclusive place for members of the LGBTQIA+ community to feel supported and celebrated, thus positively affecting the wellbeing of the community.

As a case study around the upskilling of the Community Committee, one member of the committee, who previously had no experience of event production or development prior to joining the committee, was able to accept volunteering and paid opportunities on a wide variety of events around the North East. due to the experience and confidence this experience has given them,



...a space and inclusive place for members of the LGBTQIA+ community to feel supported and celebrated....

Stories from our projects...



Doorways Middlebrough – Meet, Greet and Eat

Doorways provide a home cooked two-course meal three days a week for the most vulnerable in the community. North Star funding has enabled our charity to continue to provide this service.

Achievements include sign posting service users to addiction services where our clients are given the opportunity to turn their life around by overcoming addictions and receiving the specialist health service they need. Doorways have linked up with specialist practitioners, health, police, housing, hostels.

A Doorways volunteer, a prior user of our service (Ian, surname withheld GDPR), previously admitted to a drugs rehabilitation centre out of the local area has fought and overcome his 34-year substance addiction and after much determination and support from Doorways charity is now a volunteer within the Doorways Hub/café, his life has become meaningful and has a purpose. Working and liaising alongside statutory practitioners and with Stages Hostel we have acquired a short-term safe house tenancy until permanent accommodation can be found.



A Doorways volunteer has fought and overcome his 34-year substance addiction and after much determination and support from Doorways charity is now a volunteer within the Doorways Hub/café



Evenwood Community Action – Christmas Trip – ‘Aglow’

The project was organised by Evenwood Community Action and centred around a Christmas trip to “Aglow,” which took place on 22nd December 2023. The aim was to provide a special experience for community members, particularly those who might not have had such opportunities due to financial constraints.

The chosen venue, “Aglow,” was selected for its festive atmosphere, offering an enjoyable outing during the holiday season. The trip also included a hot meal, ensuring a complete and enriching experience for participants. The decision to select this venue was influenced by the positive feedback from previous outings and the desire to create a memorable experience. The community’s needs were considered during the planning process, and tenants were consulted to ensure the trip would be well-received and meet their expectations.

One participant explained how they otherwise wouldn’t have had the opportunity to attend such an event due to the cost. They had also expressed their gratitude for the hot meal provided to each attendee, stating it was the only time they had been able to take their family out to a restaurant during the festive period due to financial pressures.



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Stories from our projects...



Katwalk Kimberleys – Sewing for Beginners

The project taught sewing courses for beginners at community hubs and venues and also at our own training suite.

The learners were taught how to use a domestic sewing machine safely and all the different stitches, how to change a needle, wind the bobbin and make sewing projects.

One learner has suffered from severe depression from the age of 15. They rarely leave the house and get very anxious when they have to go anywhere.

We had numerous phone calls and they eventually gained trust in me to support them. They attended the course and have been back a few times since bringing friends with them.

Their friends report that they have seen a massive difference in the learner's confidence and they have bought themselves a sewing machine to do more practice at home. They eventually want to come and work with us when opportunities become available.



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The Moses Project – Fresh Start Housing

The project supports men aged 25 and over who struggle with addiction and who often experience homelessness. Our main goal is to overcome the challenges of breaking free from addiction and rebuilding their lives through stable homes, relationships and employment. Through mentorship we equip them with critical life skills like financial management, meal preparation, bill payments and managing a home. The North Star support allowed us to provide starter packs for men moving into a flat ensuring they had the basics like bedding, cutlery and a kettle.

Jordan's journey into substance misuse began shortly after losing his job, a pivotal moment that spiralled into a cycle of despair and isolation. His addiction led to the breakdown of family relationships and eventual homelessness, leaving him in a state of hopelessness.

Realising the need for change but unsure where to start, Jordan was introduced to The Moses Project by a former beneficiary who had successfully turned his life around. With cautious optimism, Jordan reached out to us, seeking a lifeline out of his current situation.

We offered Jordan not just hope but tangible support, guiding him through the process of rehabilitation. Our comprehensive approach helped Jordan address not only his addiction but also the underlying issues that contributed to his downward spiral. For the first time in years, Jordan felt understood and supported, reigniting his belief in the possibility of a brighter future.

Upon completing his rehabilitation program, we helped Jordan in securing a tenancy for a flat. Recognising the challenges of starting anew, we provided him with a starter pack, which included essential household items ranging from kitchen utensils to bedding.



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Stories from our projects...



Groundwork – Growing For all



We successfully grew radish, beetroot, strawberries, potatoes, onions, some carrots and lots of tomatoes.



The project runs weekly, on a Monday. We provide ingredients for the lunches – stir-fries, soup, sweet potato fries, jacket potatoes as a sample of ideas. We started our project by making 2 raised beds, bird boxes and a bee hotel.

We discussed what we wanted to plant and grow and set out to sow them. Weekly we'd check our crops, weed and thin out, water and then harvest.

We successfully grew radish, beetroot, strawberries, potatoes, onions, some carrots and lots of tomatoes. We have to replenish the bird feed every week but it was a bit late for our bee hotel.

We held a celebration event for the Kings Coronation where there were over 50 people in attendance and an additional seven people joined in with our gardening sessions for a couple of weeks, due to their own ill health. We also sit and chat, play some dominoes or cards and help each other.

We were doing a litterpick and some weeding around the grounds, when a gentleman stopped and asked us what we were doing, who we were and did we always do litterpicks. I explained the project to him and told him he was welcome to join us any Monday, the following week he did join us and has been coming back ever since and because he lives in Thornaby, he was also going over to water the plants in between sessions.

Ruskin Court and St Cuthbert's Court – Come Grow with Us

The project started with a craft session. This appealed to many residents of multiple abilities and interests across the Stockton older persons' service. The crafts enabled residents to design bird houses and decorate marble stones, to use within the Garden Project. The craft sessions were tenant led, and the tenants had to think about what materials would be weather sustainable, environmentally friendly to wildlife and our resident pets.

Following the craft preparation, we moved on to the planning of the project, there were two volunteer days where staff and tenants all worked in collaboration to start preparing the area for plants and vegetables. This got residents out of their flats and mixing with one another, talking, laughing and communicating about the seeds they were sowing.

Now that residents have become more familiar with each other and friendships have developed, along with the new inviting, welcoming garden that is communally shared, the residents have organised garden parties, a BBQ, Garden Bingo, as well as organised external day visits to the seaside, without the group being formed and friendships developing none of this would have been possible.



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Stories from our projects...



Nite Lite CiC – Essentials For Everyone

Our project ran a free market stall in Middlesbrough providing food, hygiene essentials, clothing and small household items to the most vulnerable within our community. Directly helping to reduce poverty and increase health and wellbeing.

The project is extremely beneficial to people who are struggling financially and have nowhere else to turn to for help.

We helped more people than we imagined and made new connections with people which was extremely evident at the recent North Star tenants' event.

We gained new volunteers over the course of this project which was brilliant. As a predominantly volunteer led organisation we heavily rely on the support of others, in turn there are many benefits such as making new friends, upskilling and giving back to their community.

One person said: "I was desperate, can't get no more food bank vouchers and had nowhere else to go for food".



I was desperate, can't get no more food bank vouchers and had nowhere else to go for food



Sprouts CiC – Mandale and Victoria Ward Community Projects

Since 2011, Sprouts has focused on improving the nutritional, physical, and mental health of communities by addressing health inequalities. We operate community shops, cafes, lunch clubs, youth cafes, cooking workshops, community gardens, and family pop-up events.

Our projects help participants build confidence, raising aspirations, empowering people to volunteer and seek employment.

Our open access services attract a diverse range of people, including those from the BAME community, the elderly, children, low-income families, those with special needs, individuals feeling isolated or vulnerable, and young people with SEND & BEMH who are often school excluded, involved with youth justice, experiencing sexual health inequality, sexual violence & criminal exploitation.

We are proud to say that 2024 saw Sprouts receive the Kings Award for Voluntary service, to recognise and honour an exceptional group of people who dedicate their time, energy, and passion to making a difference in the lives of others. Receiving the King's Award for Voluntary Services is a testament to the unwavering dedication and outstanding contributions of our volunteers to our community. This prestigious recognition is not just an acknowledgment of their efforts; it is a symbol of the immense respect and admiration that is held for the volunteers, who pour their hearts and souls into making our community better.



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Stories from our projects...



(This project was) the opportunity for people to hear about the stories of recovery from people in recovery



Recovery Connections – Recovery Reach Out in Darlington

The overarching aim of our events was for a number of communities in Darlington to hear about the stories of recovery from people in recovery; for us to have conversations with communities about recovery.

It was also to provide an opportunity for us to share information on ways in which community members and their family and friends can access communities of recovery in Darlington.

The Fork on the Road is our catering van and is regularly on the road at local markets and festivals. Our proposal was for our catering van to be at the centre of a number of Recovery Reach Out Sessions in Darlington.

We provided two staff from Recovery Connections catering team to staff the catering van, and they provided free food such as burgers – to local members of the community.

This was our gift to the community and it drew people into a setting where they could then speak to the other local Recovery Connections workers, Ambassadors and Volunteers. We provided a number of Recovery Coaches on both days.

Teesside Hospice Care Foundation – Teesside Hospice Bereavement Counselling

These funds allowed us to deliver 238 sessions, which supported 53 individuals. These sessions included: 1-2-1 counselling, Group counselling, Telephone or virtual support (aged 13 over) and a Bereavement Café.

This enabled patients to focus on: The need to revisit events surrounding a death and begin to process traumatic feelings. The need to reach an acceptance of the reality and permanence of the death. The need to remember, reminisce and talk about the deceased. The need to articulate feelings. The need to have feelings witnessed, validated and normalised. The need to address difficult feelings emerging from the death such as guilt, shame, relief and anger.

From this project, we have learnt what a huge impact our bereavement counselling makes to a range of individuals across Teesside. It has helped improve our service delivery and increase our capacity, as Teesside Hospice's comprehensive Counselling and Bereavement Support Service is currently highly oversubscribed.

The project went very well, and this funding allowed us to deliver 238 sessions of life changing support to grieving individuals.



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Overview of projects 2023/24

Organisation	Project Name	Theme	Area	Funding Amount	Levered Funding	Beneficiaries
Groundwork	Growing For All	Good Health and Wellbeing	Thornaby	£2,500	£1,000	15
Young at Heart ULO CIC	Dementia Activity Group and Carer Peer Support Group	Good Health and Wellbeing	Thornaby	£1,650	N/A	56
Evenwood Hub Community Building Improvements	Building improvements	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Evenwood	£3,106	N/A	N/A
The Moses Project	Fresh Start Housing	No Poverty	Stockton	£2,500	£2,000	23
Katwalk Kimberley's	Sewing for beginners	Quality Education	Middlesbrough	£2,500	N/A	70
Evenwood Community Action	Community Group Training	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Evenwood	£690	N/A	6
Evenwood Community Action	Community Group - North Star Tenant Event	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Evenwood	£784	N/A	88
Sprouts CIC	Mandale and Victoria Ward Community Projects	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Thornaby	£11,000	N/A	902
Sprouts and Cornerhouse Youth Project	Deatched Youth Work Mandale and Victoria	Good Health and Wellbeing	Thornaby	£800	N/A	129
Beyond Limits	Healthy Eating and Breakfast Club	Good Health and Wellbeing	Teesdale	£2,500	N/A	N/A
Recovery Connections	Recovery Reach Out Darlington	Good Health and Wellbeing	Darlington	£2,470	N/A	130
Evenwood Community Action	Christmas Trip - Aglow	No Poverty	Evenwood	£1,422	N/A	50

Overview of projects 2023/24

Organisation	Project Name	Theme	Area	Funding Amount	Levered Funding	Beneficiaries
Woodland Community Group	Farmer Christmas 2023	No Poverty	Teesdale	£800	N/A	360
North Star Supported Scheme—St Cuthbert’s, Ruskin, Aspen	Come Grow With Us	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Supported Housing	£2,500	N/A	25
Nite Light CIC	Essentials for everyone	No Poverty	Tees Valley	£2,500	N/A	5,516
North Star Supported Scheme—Rosedale Court	Make and mend	Good Health and Wellbeing	Supported Housing	£1,104	N/A	14
Autism Matters	Autism Angels	Good Health and Wellbeing		£2,203	N/A	N/A
Young@Heart 2021 CIC	Bistro Warm Hub	Good Health and Wellbeing		£2,500	N/A	N/A
Teesside Hospice	Bereavement Counselling for complex grief and trauma	Good Health and Wellbeing	Tees Valley	£2,487	£3,000	N/A
Doorways Middlesbrough	Meet, Greet and Eat	No Poverty	Middlesbrough	£1,500	£2,500	70
Curious Arts	Stockton Pop up Pride 2024	Good Health and Wellbeing	Stockton	£2,156	£7,000	14,500
Greggs Foundation	Breakfast Clubs x4	Quality Education	Evenwood, Hartlepool, Carlin How, Middlesbrough	£0—funding from 2022-23	N/A	151
North Star	Community Building Spend	N/A	Evenwood, Thornaby, Hartlepool	£17,000	N/A	N/A
			Totals	£66,671	£15,500	22,105