**Lidl Northern Ireland contributes an incredible £420k to charitable causes in 2018**

***Lidl rises to the challenge as it races ahead of target with £193k raised for charity partner NSPCC***

* 156,304 meals donated through a nationwide initiative with FoodCloud saving local charities around £213,145.
* 55 charities and community groups working with Lidl and FoodCloud were supported in the region, benefiting from £213,145 in-kind donations to FoodCloud.
* £193,884 raised for NSPCC, Lidl Northern Ireland’s charity partner which provides support to local children.
* Over 850 people are employed directly in Lidl Northern Ireland’s 38 stores

Lidl Northern Ireland announced in a 2018 Impact Report today (*18 Jan*) that it had raised more than £420,000 for local charities and community groups, including almost £194,000 for its staff-chosen charity partner NSPCC Northern Ireland, which works to keep children safe.

The community impact assessment reflects the positive impact Lidl is having throughout Northern Ireland with £13,140 also raised through its regional donation fund.

The total of £420,169.50 raised by Lidl Northern Ireland for charities right across Northern Ireland reflects its commitment to continually deliver for all the communities in which it operates.

Lidl Northern Ireland also made a series of major new direct investments in its local Northern Ireland supplier network. The retailer sourced £80 million from over 50 local suppliers, further cementing its commitment to local producers and the community.

Lidl Northern Ireland embarked on a two-year charity partnership with the NSPCC in November 2017 in which it pledged to raise a total of £250,000 before the end of 2019 – almost 80 percent of that total has now already been raised thanks to the efforts of its customers and over 850 staff and successful initiatives such as the recent Christmas Trolley Dash.

Conor Boyle, Regional Director for Lidl Northern Ireland, said:

**“On behalf of all our customers and staff, I’m delighted and proud of the huge, outstanding efforts that have been made to ensure that we returned so much to our communities in 2018 and we look forward to delivering much more in the year ahead with everyone’s continued help and commitment.”**

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**“We remain ardently committed to our communities and to ensure that we deliver the largest positive impact from the range of environmental, social and charity programmes we operate and I’m so pleased that, collectively, we have made such a significant and positive difference,”** Conor added.

NSPCC Northern Ireland, which operates three service centres in Belfast, Foyle and Craigavon, as well as two Childline bases in Belfast and Foyle, was chosen as the charity partner by Lidl’s local employees.

Commenting on this year’s successful Lidl partnership activity, Catherine Nuttall, Head of Fundraising at NSPCC Northern Ireland, said:

**“Everyone at NSPCC Northern Ireland has been overwhelmed by the support of our partner and friends in Lidl across Northern Ireland over the last 12 months.**

**“The incredible amount of money they have raised is enabling us to keep local children and young people safe through services such as our ‘Speak Out. Stay Safe’ schools programme, our Childline service and our Helpline for adults concerned about a child.”**

**“Lidl are not only changing children’s lives through financial support, crucially they are helping us to raise awareness of the problems and issues facing children and young people today and letting everyone know the role they can play to help keep children and young people safe. We really appreciate everything they have done so far and really look forward to continuing our partnership with Lidl NI.”**

In addition to its fundraising success, Lidl NI was also responsible for more than 156,000 meals delivered to people in need in every county in Northern Ireland in 2018 as part of its partnership with social enterprise innovator FoodCloud, which connects retailers that have surplus food with local charities in their community.

The 156,043 meals were distributed by all 38 Lidl Northern Ireland stores to 60 local charities – saving around £213,145 between them – as part of a ground-breaking scheme that diverted 71 tonnes from waste and cut carbon emissions by 227 tonnes.

**"In less than two years, Lidl has helped over 60 charities across Northern Ireland, rescuing surplus food from stores that might otherwise have gone to waste**,” Iseult Ward, co-founder and CEO of FoodCloud said.

**“This food represents a significant investment to the charity sector which is an incredible achievement. We look forward to working with Lidl throughout 2019 to expand our services and work towards a world where no good food goes to waste."**

**ENDS…//**