UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

PREVENTATIVE POWER: COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS PARTNERING WITH HEALTH

A series of case studies demonstrating the power of place based partnerships
Summer 2025

Commissioned and funded by

point north

Document produced Summer 2025 by

place matters

TOWARDS A NEIGHBOURHOOD HEALTH SERVICE: UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIP

UK Community Foundations (UKCF) brings together 47 accredited community foundations, covering every neighbourhood in every region of the country. Together, we support communities through local giving and philanthropy, enabling individuals and businesses to invest in the places where they live, work or have roots.

Each year, we direct more than £170 million into local people, community groups and grassroots charities that are improving health and wellbeing, addressing poverty and strengthening local resilience.

What distinguishes our model is our long-term presence in communities. We are rooted in place, with trusted relationships and networks at a neighbourhood level. We place communities at the centre of decision making and see them as active partners in shaping the services that affect them.

The case studies in this report illustrate the powerful impact of collaboration between the NHS and community foundations. Across the UK, this partnership has contributed to reducing inequalities, improving mental health and tackling social isolation. By increasing agency at community level and enabling locally led experimentation, these partnerships demonstrate the value of trust-based, inclusive approaches to health.

UK Community Foundations welcomes the Government's commitment to a neighbourhood health service. We view this as a critical step toward reducing health inequalities and easing unsustainable pressure on the NHS. A neighbourhood-based approach is also essential to achieving the three major shifts in the Government's 10-year health plan:

1. transitioning more care from hospitals to communities,
2. leveraging technology in health and care, and
3. prioritising prevention over treatment.

Equally vital is a shift in culture: towards co-design with communities, greater transparency in decision making and a willingness to share power at local level.

If the 10-year plan is to be a generational opportunity to set the NHS on a more sustainable and inclusive path, communities must be positioned as collaborators in both policy development and delivery. The NHS will need to build trust and reduce disparities through equitable, local partnerships that reach across all parts of society.

Community foundations have high levels of public trust and long-standing relationships with grassroots organisations. As these case studies show, we have a strong track record of enabling local voices, while building a culture of collaboration, accountability and shared purpose. Our network is already delivering demonstrable improvements in health and wellbeing through innovative pilot programmes with the NHS. We've also shown how long-term flexible funding, permissive operating environments and shared learning can support innovation, managed risk and adaptive local delivery.

The scale of the ambition in the 10-year plan presents an opportunity to reframe local working, share what works and embed community insight across the system. We are committed to being a strategic partner to the NHS, working together to shape a neighbourhood health service that places communities at its heart.

Emma de Closset
UKCF Chief Executive



SUPPORT FROM OUR FACILITATORS, PLACE MATTERS

At Place Matters, our mission is to accelerate the impact of place-based change - defined as community-led, cross-sector collaborations that create thriving neighbourhoods. We study and support many such initiatives across the UK.

While collaboration is a term used by many, genuine collaboration is rare. True collaboration, where partners share ambitions, align goals, and take coordinated action, requires more than good intentions. It demands commitment, resources, and supportive infrastructure. This is where we think community foundations have the potential as a transformative catalyst in advancing place-based health and well-being.

Core to the NHS priorities are health equity, social determinants of health, and community-based prevention, yet its structure often limits engagement at grassroots level.

Similarly, many community organisations lack the capacity to partner directly with large healthcare institutions. What's often missing is a trusted intermediary, an organisation that can bridge the gap between communities and service providers, to coordinate efforts, and ensure community voices remain central. As these case studies show, community foundations are already playing that role everyday, across the country. They bring in additional funding and create collaborative systems where the whole truly exceeds the sum of its parts.

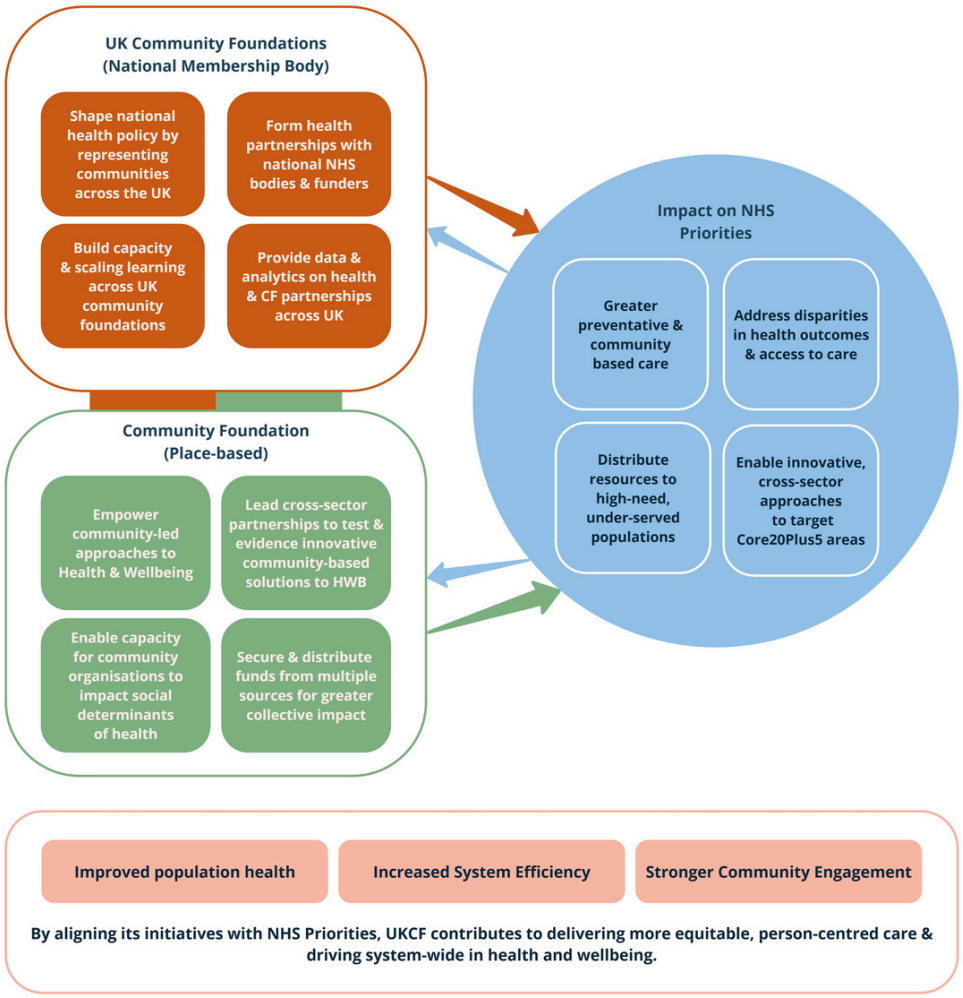
We are excited to see how the partnerships between community foundations and the health sector develops, alongside the 10-year NHS strategy and the expanding capacity of community foundations in leading these vital place-based partnerships.

Emily Sun,
Co-CEO of Place Matters

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AND HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

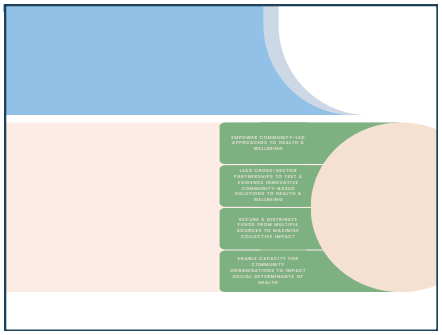
Our framework seeks to explore the value and impact that a deeper relationship between UKCF, Community foundations and NHS ICBs could bring to the NHS as well as those that use its services.

It highlights the multiple ways in which community foundations add value, and how this relates to NHS priorities. These are brought to life through real examples described in this report's case studies.



INDICATING VALUE ADDED IN EACH OF THE CASE STUDIES

Throughout this document, each case study identifies how their programme benefits the community foundation-health partnership as per the framework above. These elements are highlighted at the edge of each case study.



CONTENTS

	Community Foundation	Name of Programme
7	Essex Community Foundation	Mental Health Inequalities Fund
8	Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation	Luton Collaboration Fund
9	Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation	Community Recovery Fund
10	Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation	Mental Health Collaboration Fund
11	Point North	The Chester le Street Primary Care Network (PCN) Community Investment Fund
15	Quartet Community Foundation	Bristol Community Health: Health & Wellbeing Grant Programme
16	Wiltshire Community Foundation	Delivering the NHS Community Investment Fund in Wiltshire
17	Wiltshire Community Foundation	Wiltshire Targeting Health Inequalities
18	Community Foundation for Surrey	Mental Health Scale-Up Fund
20	South Yorkshire's Community Foundation	NHS Charities Together@ The South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Health Community Partnership Grants
21	Cornwall Community Foundation	Health Improvement Fund
22	Cornwall Community Foundation	Health and Wellbeing Fund
24	Northamptonshire Community Foundation	NHS Volunteering For Health
25	Somerset Community Foundation	The Somerset Fund
27	Cumbria Community Foundation	NHS North Cumbria Discharge Support Fund
29	Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	Healthier Futures Fund

MENTAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES FUND

Essex Community Foundation

To support community and voluntary organisations who have ideas, projects and initiatives that will reduce the health inequalities for marginalised and historically underserved communities.

TIMELINE	2 years september 22 - August 2024
LOCATION	Mid and South Essex
BUDGET	£185,000 and £200,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Mid & South Essex ICB
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	14,638

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

Essex Community Foundation (ECF) led the programme to provide support to smaller grassroots organisations, and were able to engage marginalised and under represented communities in reducing the health inequalities. For example, we were able to support Women of Grace, a survivor led organisation of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and all forms of gender-based violence. The programme focused on supporting those organisations that were likely to require greater levels of support, while simultaneously experiencing greater barriers to accessing this support. Priority was given to those working with the communities listed below, The programme, however, was open to new ideas and originality and as such the list is not exhaustive:

- Ethnic Minority community
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Carers
- Gypsy, Roma and traveller communities
- Those with co-existing substance misuse needs
- Veterans
- Older People
- LGBTQ+ People
- Those on low Income

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

ECF focuses on building our relationship with marginalised and underrepresented groups as a response to our community listening projects. We were able to use that knowledge and relationship to engage grassroots groups that our partnering ICB were not aware of. The fund supported a number of groups to have impact - below are some examples:

- Micro Rainbow provides services to support the mental health inequalities and intersectional experiences of people identifying as LGBTQI who are refugees or asylum seekers in Thurrock.
- Maldon CVS and the facilitation of a suicide prevention programme for the farming community. The programme successfully created safe spaces for individuals to discuss their mental health challenges and seek support.
- Parents 1st and the support of perinatal mental health for women in Basildon, Thurrock, and Castle Point. The programme provided critical peer support and professional guidance, leading to significant improvements in the mental health of participants.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The programme has identified the strength of communities (civic society) to create wellbeing and prevent the the need for statutory services. However demand for funding far exceeded the available resources, with a notable increase in applications towards the end of the year. This led to difficult decisions regarding the allocation of funds.

The programme was able to identify small grassroot groups, however smaller organisations with limited resources still face challenges in securing funding, highlighting the need for more support and capacity-building initiatives for these groups.

We saw a shift in funding priorities from project-based initiatives to core activity support. This trend reflects the growing need for sustainability within mental health services, especially in a post-pandemic and cost-of-living crisis.

We continue to fund these new groups with our other fundholders and many are growing, however there is currently no further funding available from the ICB.
See here for further information on the programme.

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

LUTON COLLABORATION FUND

Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation

To build partnership and strengthen VCSE work in areas of health inequality by developing community-based support for those disproportionately impacted by Covid 19

TIMELINE	April 2022 to Dec 2023
LOCATION	Luton
BUDGET	£294,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS Contained Outbreak Management Funding (COMF)
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	7764

- EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE ROLE OF THE VCSE IN SERVICE DELIVERY
- ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The programme aimed to build on previous work to grow a culture of collaboration and partnership within the VCSE sectors and to encourage, pilot and test innovative approaches to a holistic offer of support in targeted communities where health equity was a concern.

Based in and delivering work in the target communities, five lead organisations brought 14 partners together to provide support for the most vulnerable communities, ranging from mental health services, food poverty support, advice services and warm space provision.

The partnership's priorities were to enhance support for those disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, those experiencing poor mental health and social isolation and people vulnerable to and made vulnerable by Covid-19, including but not exclusively across all ages, disability and carers. The work included developing partnerships to assess and learn from exemplary initiatives already in place, new programmes, and harnessing capacity within local sectors.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The collaborations required strong leadership and support from the community foundation as VCSE partners struggled to form partnerships in a sector that , at times, can be operating in silos. But that investment of support and coordination helped all to deliver exemplary work, much of which has gone on to shape Local Authority and Public health teams thinking about service provision and commissioning approaches and a move to a more systems thinking approach..

The partnership delivered support to 7764 beneficiaries across a range of connected services with a focus on 3 areas of Luton that are listed as areas of deprivation, LSOA.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

Learning by the lead partners and foundation was extensive and has gone on to inform new ways of working in Luton.

Many of the partners reflected on their role as an 'emergency service', with the levels of their engagement, with at risk/vulnerable groups, becoming even more vital, where and when the divide for global majority people, became even more visibly evident and vulnerable groups, required a higher level of support.

When asked about collaboration/partnership working groups recognised the potential opportunities it provided but also the support needed to build capacity to work more effectively. In turn the feedback was that with this approach more long terms impact could be achieved and wider health inequity addressed more sustainably.

See here for further information on the programme.

COMMUNITY RECOVERY FUND

Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation

The programme aim was to provide urgent post Covid 19 support to organisations who were most directly supporting marginalised groups in Luton to continue to provide vital services.

TIMELINE	March 2021 to Dec 2022
LOCATION	Luton
BUDGET	£1.35m
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	COMF Contained Outbreak Management funding
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	53832

- EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VITAL ROLE VCSE CAN PLAN IN SUPPORTING PH PROVISION
- SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT
- ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The programme came directly after Covid-19, and was aimed at ensuring the survival of core charities in Luton who were delivering services that supported the most vulnerable and those most impacted by Covid-19 to continue to deliver their valuable work.

Designed to support delivery of objectives identified in the Luton Borough Councils Outbreak Management Plan, a large grant programme of multi-year grants (up to 2 years) was awarded to community organisations in Luton working in priority areas including:

- Mental health (including work delivered from outside the clinical sector that supports mental health)
- Social isolation (including carers respite)
- People vulnerable and made vulnerable by Covid-19 (across all ages)
- BAME communities disproportionately impacted by Covid-19
- Impact on women disproportionately impacted by Covid-19

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

This was the first Public Health project that Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation (BLCF) had done with Luton Council as a partner. It was a test of how quickly we could generate a programme and distribute funds outside of the complex procurement and and financial processes on the local authority as the funds were made available and had to be committed in 5 months. BLCF showed our agility and flexibility to Luton council to ensure this funding, which was significant, could reach those in need quickly.

Nearly 54,000 beneficiaries were supported during this funding year across 41 awarded grants.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The approach demonstrated the ability of the foundation to be agile and quick to respond to the need of our partner, through bringing expertise in VCSE sector support, good local trusted networks and our ability to reach into corners of the community that are hardly reached. Our transparent and effective and accessible systems, meant marginalised groups were able to access support and systems quickly and without barriers meaning the equity of the fund was addressed at the start. Further more our proportionate approach to monitoring and data collections meant that the right questions were asked and groups were able to respond and deliver again the programmes outcomes successfully.

The partnership established and recognised the role of BLCF as an 'expert' in grants management.

See here for further information on the programme.

MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION FUND

Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation

The programme aim was to establish a network of VCSE partners for the ICB and PH teams to engage with to reach young people across the dispersed communities of Central Bedfordshire to improve access to mental Heath support.

TIMELINE	2023-2024
LOCATION	Central Bedfordshire
BUDGET	£132,376
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	ICB and Public health
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	82

- EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT
- ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

To create collaboration partnerships to deliver work focusing on supporting the mental health of 16 – 25-year-olds, each one being led by a local organisations and a focus on a priority area of need.

The aim was to raise awareness with CBC and the local ICB into the valuable work and services being delivered by the VCSE sector and the commissioning model across the county wasn't aware of.

It was also to encourage greater collaboration between VCSE partners so they could better position themselves and build their understanding of how to collaborate and be able to enter and apply for commissioning work.

This stems from a lack of VCSE infrastructure in the Central Bedfordshire county. BLCF offered our help to build these collaborations and help the VCSE sector through curated relationships to demonstrate how the ICB could work better and use the breadth and reach of the VCSE sector.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The foundation established its self as a significant delivery partner which could be agile and activate new collaborations and a process to address issues of access to relevant and appropriate mental heath support in a geographic areas where this is patchy and disconnected.

The short term of the funding meant that groups had to develop their collaborations quickly and that wasn't easy and so some of the issues around capturing engagement and understanding better ways to work were not fully realised, however 3 crucial collaborative partnerships were formed and 82 young people became direct beneficiaries with a further 480 indirectly supported during this funding year.

The role of the foundation was critical in supporting VCSE groups to understand their strategic position in working with the ICB and its built a confidence and a professional respect between ICB/PH and the VCSE that we hope will inform future collaborative working.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

As a legacy Central Beds have now established a resource and service to provide support (Wellbeing Practitioners), groups were at least able to signpost young people to that service instead when their projects ended.

This pilot programme helped to identify key learning around collaborative type work, whilst acknowledging that many groups are often at different stages of their journey with a formal partnership approach. Those that participated in this programme reinforced this, with a real mix of abilities/experience.

Where partners were very small organisations they required a lot of support from BLCF to get them to a place of delivery. However, by working in partnership we saw greatest achievement was a collective focus on improving young people's mental health. For some collaborations they reported the massive impact to the lives of those who took part in these services. *See here for further information on the programme.*

THE CHESTER LE STREET PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (PCN) COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND

The Chester le Street Primary Care Network (PCN) Community Investment Fund was set up to address local health needs and inequalities.

TIMELINE	Awarded in 2020 - delivered over 2 years
LOCATION	Chester-le-Street
BUDGET	£312,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Donor contribution, Pelton Parish Council, Point North match
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	12370

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the fund was to:

- Introduce and/or integrate social prescribing within services
- Support vulnerable groups affected by/during the COVID-19 outbreak
- Tackle poverty e.g. food poverty, 'holiday hunger'

In response to the pandemic, the first round of grants prioritised supporting community organisations who were responding to the outbreak of Covid-19. The set up of the fund was:

Flexible & open funding: Allow locally-based groups to address community needs and mobilise their resources to support the most vulnerable and to deliver services that were most appropriate to their needs.
Multi-year funding: Stability and structure to allow groups to plan and develop their projects to provide greatest impact.
Local panel : Local social prescribers and community panel members were responsible for grant-making decisions and ensuring that projects were timely, relevant and served a purpose.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Over two years, the programme awarded 35 grants totalling nearly £312,000, with Point North's contribution accounting for 20% of the figure. The impact was substantial and measurable, with 82 people supported to achieve independent living. 1,205 people reporting improved health outcomes, and 18 individuals securing sustainable employment. The Fund also proved significant in connecting local infrastructure with statutory providers. Organisations provided preventative care and social integration and adapted to provide critical services during the COVID-19 lockdown, including food distribution and mental health support. Projects funded responded to the high rates of child poverty in the area by providing a good start for children and young people.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The importance of flexible funding became clear, allowing organisations to adapt and respond to emerging local needs, such as the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the role of social prescribing in connecting individuals to the right support systems. This programme demonstrated the critical and crucial role that community organisations play in addressing a health crisis, in this case a global pandemic, through hyperlocal, community-led projects.

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

WHEELS 2 WORK

About: Wheels 2 Work aims to help County Durham residents to access or sustain employment, apprenticeships or further education which would otherwise be difficult to get to/from due to public transport connections or unsociable hours work patterns.

2020 hit Mike* hard.

In one devastating year, the 31-year-old from Shildon lost his father to COVID-19, his job, and found himself spiralling into debt. Mike's mental health was deteriorating but he was desperate to turn things around both for himself, his partner and three-year old daughter who were depending on him.

Hope eventually came in the form of a job offer as a supermarket delivery driver. But with the depot miles away from home and shifts running from early morning to late night, Mike faced an impossible situation. Unable to get credit for a vehicle due to an Individual Voluntary Arrangement, he remembered something his late father had mentioned when they were looking for transport options earlier in 2020- Wheels 2 Work.

The strain of asking people for lifts is unbelievable, Mike explained. That's when Wheels 2 Work stepped in, quickly providing him with a bike that would change everything.



"It's been a godsend," he says. "The person I contacted was on furlough but she went out of her way to help me. Even my daughter loves the bike and helps me wash it on weekends."

Thanks to his father's final piece of advice and Wheels 2 Work's support, Mike didn't just get transport to work - he got his life back on track. Now he's building a stable future for his family.

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

FEEL GOOD FAMILIES

About: Feel Good Families aims to provide opportunities for families that live within the Ashfield District through community based activities and events we aim to encourage families to Move, Play and Smile together.

I used to sit in Team Around the Family meetings feeling completely invisible.

The professionals would talk about my children and our family, but I couldn't find the words to speak up. I had so much to say, so many concerns about my children, but the confidence just wasn't there. I had no voice, and all I wanted was to be heard.

That's when I decided to join the advocacy course. I knew what I needed; ways to handle the stress of these meetings, strategies to help each of my children with their different needs, and most importantly, the skills to deal with professionals. The key thing I wanted to get out of the course was to be able to speak up, have a voice and to be heard as I always feel that people don't listen.

The course changed everything. I learned techniques that I now use in every meeting - how to prepare beforehand so I feel calmer, how to organise my thoughts, and most importantly, how to speak up clearly.



Now I write down my key points before each meeting, which helps me stay focused and confident when I'm there.

For the first time, I'm actually being heard. I've managed to get positive outcomes for my son that I never thought possible before. After years of struggling to speak up for my children, I finally have the tools and confidence to be their voice.

BRISTOL COMMUNITY HEALTH: HEALTH & WELLBEING GRANT PROGRAMME

Quartet Community Foundation

The BCH Programme offered multi-year funding to enhance community health through prevention, early intervention and self-care. It used a 'funder plus' model, improving healthcare delivery, increasing VCSE resilience and driving systemic change.

TIMELINE	Awarded in 2021, for up to 2 years
LOCATION	Bristol
BUDGET	£1.28m
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Bristol Community Health CIC residual funding
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	23,922 beneficiaries

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Photo credit Open Minds Active, a grantee of the programme

KEY PROJECT AIMS

The BCH programme went beyond traditional grant making, with innovative elements to help maximise impact and explore new approaches. Working with partners to support applicants and grantees, the programme provided multi-year funding to support stability, innovation and organisational development. It introduced a bespoke impact tool to measure contributions towards the Sustainable Development Goals and fostered peer learning among grantees.

Key aims included addressing community health priorities through prevention, early intervention and self-care initiatives, supporting individuals with or at risk of long-term conditions, and expanding the reach or depth of service delivery. The funding also aimed to enhance the resilience of health-focused VCSE sector organisations.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Over two heavily oversubscribed funding rounds, the programme awarded 47 grants worth nearly £1.3m, benefiting an estimated 23,922 people and meeting seven Sustainable Development Goal themes. Projects enhanced services, built organisational resilience and leveraged additional funding; for every £1 granted, organisations leveraged an additional £1.24.

Peer learning sessions and professional pro bono support further enhanced impact, with 98% of project outcomes rated highly by assessors.

By working with Quartet Community Foundation, BCH funding was able to reach small, local organisations: almost two thirds of the funding went to organisations with incomes under £500k, enabling them to pilot new services, expand reach, enhance staff capacity and strengthen governance or fundraising. The grants transformed how many organisations operate, building their resilience, sustainability and capacity to address health inequalities.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The BCH Programme demonstrated the value of multi-year grants and capacity-building support, enabling organisations to trial new approaches, strengthen income streams and build resilience. Designed with input from health sector organisations, the programme aligned with Bristol's One City Health & Wellbeing Board priorities. Quartet embraced a participatory grant-making approach, and refined its "funder plus" model in response to first-round feedback to better target capacity building support.

Lessons from the programme have shaped Quartet's broader funding strategy, which has supported over £4m in health and wellbeing initiatives since 2022. Quartet continues to align funding with regional health priorities and partnerships, complementing statutory funding to maximise impact across the West of England.

DELIVERING THE NHS COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IN WILTSHIRE

Wiltshire Community Foundation

WCF's collaborative approach and speedy response enabled targeted delivery of a new source of NHS funding increasing investment and capacity in small, local voluntary and community groups whilst also expanding the impact of WCF's existing programmes.

TIMELINE	January to March 2023
LOCATION	Wiltshire
BUDGET	£100,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS South West Community Investment Fund
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	20000

- LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT
- ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

Wiltshire Community Foundation (WCF) developed a timely response to enable the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) ICB's delivery of the South West Community Investment Fund in Wiltshire creating a positive impact in the final months of the financial year. The collaboration enabled investment into Wiltshire's local voluntary sector through the creation of new Community Grant Cost of Living Uplift grants and the expansion of WCF's existing programmes: Surviving Winter which supports older people in fuel poverty and those with people disabilities/health conditions adversely affected by the cold and WCF's Cost of Living Response Programme. By working with WCF, the ICB's investment increased the capacity of small, local voluntary and community sector groups working in the heart of their communities enabling them to continue, expand or adapt their services, increasing their support and activities for local people most impacted by the increasing cost of living crisis

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

With £50,000 of the NHS's investment WCF created a new Cost of Living Uplift grants programme for VCS groups under pressure from increasing running costs and demand, quickly distributing 58 small grants (£500 to £2500) to small/medium local groups: 19 helped cover increased energy costs, 15 increased transport costs, 24 increased staffing costs, and 21 enabled groups to extend their activities, overall c. 20,000 local people benefitted.

£20,000 of the fund, contributed towards WCF's Surviving Winter, during 2022/23 the total programme invested £260,000 supporting nearly 900 people - providing grants to pay energy bills alongside advice on energy efficiency, support to maximise income/apply for benefits and help to reduce loneliness and isolation.

£25,000 contributed towards WCF's Cost of Living Response Grants, which overall provided 29 grants totalling £110,000: to help meet peoples physical needs incl. food or warmth, providing debt or benefits advice, increase transport and other running costs.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

As a familiar and trusted local partner, WCF and the NHS Place Director and Local Authority Director of Public Health, collaborated to create a timely response. WCF was creative, building on knowledge of local needs and priorities, to ensure proposed solutions would be impactful.

Partnering with their local community foundation meant that NHS funds reached local VCS groups quickly. This was particularly crucial during 2023, at the height of the cost-of-living crisis, when groups were facing increased demand and they, and those they supported, were hit by increased costs.

For this funding, WCF's track record of delivering long standing programmes was also key, the alignment of priorities created the opportunity for the NHS to 'add' funds to expand and extend delivery. However, whilst WCF was able to be responsive and develop solutions at short notice, looking forward the opportunity for more development time alongside multi-year funding will maximise impact and sustainability of outcomes.

See here for further information on the programme.

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

£20,000 of the NHS South West Community Investment Fund contributed towards WCF's Surviving Winter, during 2022/23 the total programme invested £260,000 supporting nearly 900 people - providing grants to pay energy bills alongside advice on energy efficiency, support to maximise income/apply for benefits and help to reduce loneliness and isolation. The programme supports older people living in fuel poverty and people with disabilities/health conditions adversely affected by the cold. WCF's Surviving Winter programme is delivered in partnership with Age UK Wiltshire, Warm and Safe Wiltshire, and Wiltshire and Swindon Citizens Advice.

Mr P's story: "Mr P is 82 and lives alone after recently being widowed. He has Parkinson's and suffers from severe discomfort in his shoulder following a dislocation. We identified Mr P as being eligible for Attendance Allowance and arranged support with the application. He was awarded the higher rate of benefit. Mr P was living on a very low income and was classed as being in fuel poverty so was eligible for a Surviving Winter Grant. He was also provided with information about a council tax discount and the priority services register and will receive a revised benefit check based on the outcome of the Attendance Allowance application. Mr P, who was very pleased with the support, said: 'Thanks so much for your help, I didn't realise that all this help was available'."

Information and Advice Service Manager, Age UK Wiltshire, WCF Surviving Winter Partner

Miss C's story: "Miss C called the advice line initially because her oil boiler had broken down and she could not afford to get it replaced. She is currently going through chemotherapy and has other health issues, including Crohn's disease and arthritis. We referred her to an installer for help with replacing her oil boiler. In the meantime she was spending £5 a day on electric fan heaters to keep warm so we were able to credit her electricity account with a £200 Surviving Winter Grant as well as offering further advice about her future bills and heating." Miss C said: 'Thank you very much. This makes such a difference to me, it is a real help that I need right now. I really appreciate it'."

Project Manager, Centre for Sustainable Energy – Warm & Safe Wiltshire, WCF Surviving Winter Partner

These stories not only show the immediate impact health and wellbeing impacts of receiving a grant/advice through WCF's Surviving Winter programme but also longer term outcomes that help to tackle some of the wider determinants of health inequality too.

WILTSHIRE TARGETING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Wiltshire Community Foundation

The Wiltshire Targeting Health Inequalities Programme is providing accessible funding for 12 local voluntary and community groups to support/expand health prevention and early intervention activities for people in Wiltshire's most deprived areas.

TIMELINE	April 2024 to June 2025
LOCATION	Wiltshire CORE20 areas
BUDGET	£130,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	£100,000 from NHS, with match funding from other local funders
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	750

- EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING
- SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT
- ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

WCF proposed the Wiltshire Targeting Health Inequalities (THI) Small Grants Programme to enable smaller, grassroots local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, those less likely or unable to bid for funding directly, to access the NHS's Targeting Health Inequalities funding. With £87.5K of grant funding from the NHS, WCF engaged other local donors bringing in nearly £30K in match-funding to grow the total grant making to over £117K to support 12 groups active in Wiltshire CORE20 areas. THI grants are supporting prevention activities that help address health inequalities, their wider determinants and help create social support.

To complement WCF's existing grant monitoring processes, for THI WCF developed a supportive and collaborative evaluation and engagement model to support groups to collect appropriate data proportion to the size of group and nature of their activities. This additional engagement between funded groups has created connections and collaborations.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The THI funded projects are targeting local people living in CORE20 areas enabling local organisations to increase support in these communities by either expanding outreach and activities or creating new ones. New projects include targeted support for those experiencing homelessness, new older men's social groups and additional artist led activities which are creating social connections for vulnerable pensioners. The programme has enabled new services and/or increased accessibility in CORE20 areas: new counselling services, financial outreach at food banks, dementia awareness roadshows, detached therapy sessions, singing/breathwork activities for those with lung and related health conditions as well as new community transport solutions.

As a local community foundation, WCF was uniquely placed to bring additional philanthropic funding to enhance the NHS funds increasing the scale of the THI programme and in turn enhancing impact and reach to people in Wiltshire's most deprived areas.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

Designed as an integral part of the THI programme, WCF's opening engagement workshop enabled funded groups to share project aspirations and data collection ideas. The peer learning and connectivity was greatly valued: "we found it really helpful, we'll definitely be linking in with other local projects to help support our overall impact".

A further workshop will highlight project and programme outcomes to showcase the contribution and value local groups play. WCF will also seek to use the learning and impact from the THI projects to demonstrate the value of community action on the wider determinants of health inequalities, to highlight the challenges that short termism in funding creates and to make the case for multi-year funding opportunities.

Building on this experience, WCF will also explore how best to further increase connections and shared learning between the groups they support across other grant programmes and wider activities.

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

MENTAL HEALTH SCALE-UP FUND

Community Foundation for Surrey

Together we can

The MHSU Fund was set up to scale-up successful interventions for young people's mental health to achieve equity of provision across the whole county. It was initiated by private philanthropists and then the funding was matched by the LA/ICB.

TIMELINE	May 2022 - ongoing
LOCATION	Surrey
BUDGET	£4.7m
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Private Philanthropy and local authority/ICB 50/50 split.
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	12,115 to date

LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) set up a pooled fund to enable scale-up of effective preventative programmes supporting mental health in young people aged up to thirty. Previously our funding had only been able to provide 1 year grants to projects - we had funded many good projects but it wasn't sustainable and provision was very unequal across the county.

We set out to fund sustainable scale-up by providing 5 year grants coupled with pro bono support from Funder Plus volunteers who help with business and project planning. During the 5-year funding period all organisations receiving support convene annually with donors to share learning and best practice.

The fund set out to address the geographic inequalities of provision in the county, and respond to the huge increase in need for support post-pandemic.

CFS recruited 4 private philanthropists, forming an initial fund of £1m. This was matched by local authority funding to make £2m. Since that initial funding a further £2.7m has been raised to date.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

CFS awarded £1,013,666 in grants up to August 2024. 12,115 beneficiaries to date have been supported. Beneficiaries have shown improved mental health and wellbeing by a variety of measures.

The fund has improved the ability for the Local Authority and ICB to fund in a collaborative, think-and-learn manner over a 5-year time frame which wouldn't be possible using their procurement systems. The fund has doubled investment made by LA/ICB partnership by leveraging private funding. CFS designed and implemented the fund, with the LA/ICB coming on board later.

Funding was awarded to several new partnerships between large and small VCSE, public/private/VCS, etc. Support (financial and pro bono) was given to support and build collaboration. A needs analysis was carried out before funding was awarded, and collaboration with the local HEI helped to support solution development and impact measurement for emerging needs.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

All organisations that received the fund convene on an annual basis with funders to review their progress, share learning and best practice. This has resulted in several new collaborations being funded outside our funding programme by national funders.

CFS has played an active role to encourage and curate collaborations between organisations that have not previously collaborated. Provision of the Funder Plus support has been invaluable to help organisations plan for successful sustainable scale-up.

The 5-year period of funding has been as important as the size of the grants awarded to enable the groups to focus on strong, sustained delivery. We have also just awarded a further £960k to support suicide prevention in young adults - awarding two large consortiums. There are 2 further funding rounds in 2025. *See further information on the programme here.*

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

“It encouraged me to come to school, because I struggled - and now I come in because of Be Me”
A 14-year-old student with low school attendance because of anxiety.

“It was good to have something to do every week that I enjoyed, with someone that I get along with. It helped me to destress and... made me solidify my opinion on who I am”.
Jazz, 16 years old

“Thank you so much for asking my daughter (who was in Year 10) to be a mentor for the Year 8 group. I feel like I have my daughter back to who she was, as she had lost herself. She’s made better friend choices and she feels a lot happier. It was so helpful that she not only learnt things for herself, but she helped the younger ones.”
A parent’s response

“All of the girls took on board positive messages to remember when they struggle in some way. All recommended it to other pupils. They all reported that they felt listened to and had the opportunity to discuss a range of issues. It was noted that the girls continued through the year more positively”.
Head of Pastoral Care, Ashcombe School, Dorking

“Thank you for everything you and the team at Be Me Project are doing. This morning I had confirmation that a painting of mine has been published (in a mental wellbeing book). My confidence has grown little by little since joining you on the course. The feeling of “this is what I am great at'' stuck with me and spurred me on to enter the competition.”
Jane, a young mum referred to Be Me from social prescribing

NHS CHARITIES TOGETHER@ THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE AND BASSETLAW HEALTH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GRANTS 2021 – 2022

South Yorkshire's Community Foundation

The purpose of the programme was to support projects delivered by the voluntary sector, working in partnership with the NHS to support the health and wellbeing of communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic across South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw.

TIMELINE	April 2022 - April 2022 (1 Year)
LOCATION	Barnsley, Rotherham, Doncaster, Sheffield and Bassetlaw.
BUDGET	£668.299
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	4960

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The programme aimed to support communities in South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It provided funding to voluntary organisations working in partnership with the NHS to deliver projects focused on:

1. Preventing avoidable admissions to NHS facilities
2. Supporting discharge into the community
3. Supporting mental health and wellbeing

Priority NHS outcomes:

- Reduction in unnecessary emergency admission/intervention
- Improved engagement with deprived communities to encourage structural changes to service provision.
- Linking with the Integrated Care System, and engaging vulnerable and marginalised groups
- Improved patient flow linked to safe and successful hospital discharge
- Improved engagement with deprived communities to encourage structural changes to service provision
- The goal was to address health inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic and improve health outcomes and experiences for individuals and communities.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

South Yorkshire's Community Foundation (SYCF) collaborated with voluntary community organisations to enhance health and wellbeing in South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw and alleviate NHS pressure. Outcomes included:

- Improved wellbeing: Participants reported enhanced physical and mental health.
- Reduced hospital visits: Early support minimised hospitalisations, easing family stress.
- Stronger support systems: Increased community connections fostered belonging.
- Healthier lifestyles: Adoption of better habits contributed to overall wellbeing.
- Successful transitions: Extra support aided hospital-to-home adjustments.
- Empowerment and resilience: Skills developed for self management of wellbeing.
- Support for caregivers: Resources provided to assist caregivers.
- Community impact: Organisations promoted mental health awareness and reduced stigma in grant making.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The success of the COVID-19 grant programme highlighted SYCF's effective fund management and community understanding, fostering trust with the NHS as a key partner in healthcare. This collaboration led to various projects, including:

Birth Trauma
Community Diagnostic Hubs
Culturally Sensitive Genetics
Health & Wellbeing
Pelvic Health
People & Community Strategy
Personalised Care and Support
Pre and Post Pregnancy
Recover Cancer Services
Green Social Prescribing Fund & Participation Fund

These initiatives reflect SYCF's commitment to enhancing community health and wellbeing, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration with the NHS.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT FUND

Sustain, maintain and enhance VCSE services to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for people and communities in Cornwall, evidencing its collective potential to reduce health inequalities.

TIMELINE	Mar 2024 - April 2025
LOCATION	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
BUDGET	£645,000
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Integrated Care Board
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	29957

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

They key aims of the VCSE Health Improvement Fund, delivered by Cornwall Community Foundation (CCF), have been to:

- Address gaps in provision that create health and care pathways to manage pain, improve health and wellbeing, manage long-term physical and mental health conditions, improve lifestyle choices, social connections and self-care
- Creation of accessible grassroot safe spaces
- Increase availability of VCSE preventative services and activities which will reduce demand on primary and secondary care services.
- Breaking down barriers to accessing services or activities in the most deprived communities
- Tackling health inequalities
- Services that reach most isolated and at risk within communities

We are measuring health outcomes across key indicators: improvements in mental health and wellbeing; increased support for people with specific needs to live independently; and improved access to services and support.

CCF's role is to reach underserved areas in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, where public health cannot provide preventative activities

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

CCF is waiting to hear if there is further budget to continue this initiative. However, we have other projects running concurrently with Integrated Care Board, including the People In Mind Community Wellbeing Fund, which is a 5-year programme investing in Cornwall's VCSE sector to support health outcomes and suicide prevention.

This programme will complete in 2028.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

CCF has been preparing the first impact report in May 2025, and will share learnings in it.

For further information please see the following associated reports:

VCSE Health Improvement Fund Distribution Report

People In Mind Community Wellbeing Fund Distribution Report

HEALTH AND WELLBEING FUND

Cornwall Community Foundation

Fund to support Cornwall's Young People

TIMELINE	March 2023 - March 2024
LOCATION	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
BUDGET	£297,069
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	Cornwall Integrated Care Board
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	2566

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The Integrated Care Board Health & Wellbeing Programme is aimed at delivering new initiatives to develop the resilience and the emotional health and mental wellbeing of children and young people up to the age of 25. Initiatives needed to link with '5 Ways to Wellbeing'. CCF distributed 33 grants to grassroots groups.

Key targets groups included children and young people:

- who have refugee and asylum-seeking status
- with long-term health conditions, complex disability or palliative care needs
- who have been subject to bullying and discrimination
- looked after children and young people
- young carers
- in families experiencing adversity, i.e. domestic abuse - poverty and parental
- mental health difficulties
- experiencing difficulties in engaging in school
- at risk of exploitation
- at risk of offending

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

2,566 children and young people (CYP) were supported, through 33 grassroots community projects. Funded projects offered a broad range of activities to support children and young people. The highest proportion provided outdoor or nature-based interventions.

1,568 CYP reported improved mental health or wellbeing
1,117 CYP reported increased self esteem and confidence
1,105 CYP reported increased resilience and/or self care
1,020 CYP reported a reduction in stress, anxiety and/or symptoms of depression
981 CYP reported they feel less lonely
949 CYP reported improved interpersonal skills
650 CYP felt they had a say in the decisions that affect them

For every £1 spent, CCF anticipates the social return on investment to be £3.09

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

This initiative was impactful as the ICB asked CCF where the need was greatest. This enabled us to meet critical community needs based on our expertise as a community-led funder. The demand massively outstripped resource, with applications totalling almost 2.5 times the amount of funding available. However, we were able to secure further match funding from CCF donors, worth £106,719. This equates to 36% of the ICB fund, so we were pleased to leverage ICB support to draw in additional funds for the sector.

We are delighted to have supported young people from a range of backgrounds and marginalised communities, including supporting groups specifically working with young marginalised people, refugees and asylum seekers. CCF has since recruited a Community Outreach Officer to ensure more diverse groups are encouraged to apply to future funding rounds. For example, we know young LGBTQ+ people experience significant health inequalities compared to their peers.
See here for further information on the programme.

Cornwall Community Foundation

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

WILD Young Parents are working towards a fair start for young parent families. Thanks to support from the Health & Wellbeing Programme, they have established WILD Voices, a parent steering group, made up of 10 volunteers. This group has offered young parents the chance to become a peer mentor to other young parents, as well as ensure their voice is represented across Cornwall to inform service and policy design. Parents involved in WILD Voices have reported increased confidence, belonging and being heard. They have developed professional skills in terms of difference in being in a WILD group and being part of this steering group.

It took months for James to come join in with a group: he was reluctant, saying he lacked confidence in himself and in being a dad. He felt connecting with his baby had been difficult. He was afraid that others would judge him. He was worried he wouldn't know how to respond if she cried. He was worried about being a parent without his partner.

At his first session, James enjoyed the group. He discussed his fears and expressed he felt lighter because of it. He then continued returning. At times as a whole family, and at others he came alone with baby.

The family continued to build their attachment and James grew in confidence. James is now a part of WILD Voices. He wants other parents to have the opportunity to realise their potential and overcome barriers to joining in, stating that he wished he had started sooner.



James has become a leading force; communicating with the team and organising meetings, he wants to make a difference to other young parent families.

NHS VOLUNTEERING FOR HEALTH

Northamptonshire Community Foundation
Giving back to our county

Volunteering for Health distributes NHS funds through small grants to grassroots and VCSE organisations in Northamptonshire to trial innovative volunteer models that enhance health and social care outcomes.

TIMELINE	2024-2027
LOCATION	Northamptonshire
BUDGET	£90,000 across two years
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	Ongoing

LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT



KEY PROJECT AIMS

Volunteering for Health aims to maximise the benefits of volunteers as a vital resource in delivering health and social care nationally and locally, whilst strengthening volunteering infrastructure.

The programme is part of NHS England's response to the NHS Volunteering Taskforce which published its recommendations in June 2023, concluding that more can be done nationally and locally to maximise the benefits of volunteers and volunteering in the NHS.

A total of £90,000 is being awarded to grassroots and VCSE organisations through the small grants programme. This money is being channelled through Northamptonshire Community Foundation, which is developing, delivering and evaluating the grants programme. These will be test-and-learn projects – trialling different and innovative volunteer models through an open grants programme, closer to communities, that contribute to the 10 health and care outcomes of the Integrated Care Strategy for Northamptonshire.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The programme is still in the process of development and delivery. However, as a leading grant maker for small VCSE organisations in the county, Northamptonshire Community Foundation brings a track record of understanding community needs through data analysis and impact reporting, funding wellbeing projects, longstanding relationships with VCSE sector and understanding their strengths in supporting good health and wellbeing in the community.

With this experience, we aim to:

a. Trial different and innovative volunteer models, to contribute to the 10 outcomes of the Northamptonshire Integrated Care Strategy.

b. Utilise an open grants process to engage grassroots organisations and underrepresented communities in testing sustainable volunteer models, including flexi and micro volunteering, closer to communities.

c. Evaluate and share learning from both existing and test-and-learn projects across the ICS, to understand what works to sustain a diverse volunteer workforce.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The programme is still in development and delivery phase, therefore learning and next steps will be published when available.

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

THE SOMERSET FUND

The Somerset Fund recognises that strong, active communities generate good health. It invests small grants into a diversity of community assets and initiatives that are led 'by and for' communities.

TIMELINE	Jan 2022 - Dec 2028
LOCATION	County of Somerset
BUDGET	£110,000 (approx)
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS Somerset ICB, Somerset Council, private and corporate donations
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	30500

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

SECURE & DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES TO MAXIMISE COLLECTIVE IMPACT

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The Somerset Fund blends funding from the NHS Somerset ICB with contributions from Somerset Council and smaller donations from businesses, trusts and individuals. Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) uses our local knowledge and networks to target that funding efficiently and effectively to small grassroots organisations, typically running on less than £50,000 annually.

Underpinning this is a deep belief that stronger, more connected communities are generators of good health. While some of the grants go towards work that is more obviously a health project, all contribute to strengthening the social determinants of health in our communities. In doing so, we prioritise communities and sections in our region that are most likely to have poorer health outcomes.

It provides a simple and effective mechanism for our funders to invest in local communities, and a simple and effective mechanism for local communities to access essential funding.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Almost 300 grants averaging £1,750 have been awarded over the past 3 years, reaching communities from across the whole of Somerset. While the health focus of the funding is worn lightly, people who are involved with and participating in the activities we support we will follow one or more of the 'five ways to wellbeing'.

By its very nature we cannot measure the health benefits, but this is about supporting the things that communities value most - the things they commit their energy and resources to, as drivers of better health. These are activities where people are seen as neighbours more than as service users, as having gifts rather than needs.

Every grant reveals a story.

We have seen how a gardening club has enabled a recently bereaved woman find purpose in her life, how summer activities in a highly deprived neighbourhood helped a child with autism feel they belong, how a growing project alleviated the stress that a family with a child with chronic illness felt.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The local NHS team recognises the value of investing in local communities but does not have the capacity or networks to distribute the funding effectively and efficiently. We give them a pathway to fund grassroots community groups and projects. The feedback we receive from groups time and time again is how much they appreciate the simplicity of our processes and the accessibility of our team.

By blending NHS funds with grants from Somerset Council and private donations we make life much easier for our funders and for those seeking that funding, and we increase the impact of that money. In particular, we believe we would deter applicants that contribute to the creation of good health in our communities if we framed this as 'health' funding.

We are now looking at what we need to do to help communities that do not access this funding as readily as others, focusing on longer-term investment and different approaches to how we normally fund communities.

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

"I've lived and worked here for 24 years - and when I suffered a really serious injury the local community healed scoop me back up. My family are wonderful, but they couldn't look after me 24/7. I literally couldn't do anything as I recovered and so people set up a rota where they were doing my shopping, changing my bed, and just really supporting me.

That's the kind of community spirit that helps make our Information Centre different from others. Obviously, we're here to promote Porlock as a tourist destination. But we also make sure the local community is at the heart of everything we do. And during winter, when there are fewer tourists, 95% of our work is helping meet their needs.

Much of our role is about connecting people. We provide a space for everyone. Porlock has the oldest population in the UK and a lot of people are quite vulnerable and isolated. While we have lots of useful information on our website - like local bus timetables - I'm conscious that not everyone has the internet or email. So we organise a lot of events, Porlock Weir Sea Festival and a Star Baker event where people can make cakes and decorate them. They're all an opportunity for people to come together and feel a bit less isolated.

We keep a database of people who want to volunteer in the community, and we also have volunteers for our Porlock Lift Service who can offer local transport for vulnerable people. It's wonderful. In 2023 we organised 141 trips for our vulnerable and isolated community.

The money we received from The Somerset Fund has been incredibly helpful in supporting us to keep the Information Centre open during winter. We're working hard to make it sustainable and these pockets of funding help us meet the needs of the local community. We'd open even more hours if we could!"

NHS NORTH CUMBRIA DISCHARGE SUPPORT FUND

Supporting the discharge of patients from hospital through the provision of a person-centred community based service, that helped people regain and maintain their independence at home and prevent avoidable admissions.

TIMELINE	April 2023 to March 2024
LOCATION	North Cumbria
BUDGET	£405,775
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	932

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the NHS North Cumbria Discharge Support Fund was to: support the discharge of medically fit patients from hospital, help people regain/maintain their independence at home and prevent avoidable admissions.

Managed by Cumbria Community Foundation, the fund enabled Age UK Carlisle & Eden and Age UK West Cumbria to develop the Well@Home discharge support service.

Person-centred, the service was adapted to meet the needs of each patient over a four-week period. Both organisations worked with the Hospital Discharge Teams, Adult Social Care and other agencies to receive referrals and provide wrap around support.

Well@Home services included: 1) making the home environment safe, 2) transport home, 3) welfare and befriending visits/calls, 4) referral for meals, 5) organising adaptive equipment, 6) providing advice, guidance and advocacy, 7) benefit checks/blue badge applications, 8) referring people into social activities and 9) support with hoarding and deep cleans.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The fund enabled an innovative person-centred, community-based hospital discharge service to be delivered. From 1,178 referrals, 932 people were supported and hospital patient flows improved.

Additional support included : benefit checks (89), home visits (990), advice and guidance (188), home deep cleans/made safe (58), food provision (458), grants (31), other services (156).

Importantly, the Age UKs demonstrated their ability to respond to each patient's individual needs, which ensured timely discharge. Delayed discharge can negatively impact patients health outcomes, put a strain on hospital resources, increase healthcare costs and hamper the efficient functioning of the healthcare system.

With the focus of the service on keeping people safe, well and supported with dignity at home, future hospital readmission was prevented. Cumbria Community Foundation is recognised as a trusted partner and enabled the NHS to fund the VCSE sector to test, develop and deliver a key new service.

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

A review of the Well@Home service was undertaken with Age UK Carlisle & Eden, Age UK West Cumbria, Cumbria Community Foundation and the Transfer of Care Hub Manager. The review focused on ensuring that the NHS funding was used to achieve maximum impact. As a result, the service across all areas became more consistent and streamlined, and the number of people supported increased.

The Well@Home service has been continued and is subject to annual funding reviews.

"The Well@Home service is an invaluable asset to our healthcare system. It's played a crucial role in ensuring effective and timely discharges from acute and community hospitals. Their fantastic engagement with all services demonstrates a strong commitment to collaboration, employing a pull model of discharge that ensures patients receive the right support at the right time. The specialised support offered enhances the overall wellbeing of patients as they transition home." Feedback from the Transfer of Care Hub Manager

See here for more information on the programme.

REAL STORIES OF IMPACT

Well@Home was contacted by the Discharge Navigator to prepare a bungalow to a safe standard for a patient to return home to after 12 months in hospital. The patient had significant health management needs, and no friends or family who could act on his behalf.

Support involved liaising with the housing provider to repair a faulty boiler. The boiler was fixed but before the patient could be discharged home, a pipe burst in the attic, the bungalow was flooded and uninhabitable, and his belongings were badly damaged.

After a further two months in hospital, the housing association found a temporary bungalow. The gas and electricity had both been disconnected so the Well@Home team spent three hours on the phone talking to the suppliers to get them switched back on and to ensure he would not be charged for the previous tenant's accrued debts. They also liaised with the Housing Officer to ensure the new supply was switched on and gas safety checks were undertaken.

Larger items, together with the patient's mobility scooter, were brought from his previous bungalow to his new home. In addition the Well@Home team salvaged what they could from his belongings, cleaned everything (including three bags of clothes) and moved them to his temporary accommodation. Two separate grant applications were made to purchase a new cooker and fridge freezer, and arrangements were made for them to be fitted.

Well@Home team members arranged a phone for him, and set up the house with essential kitchen items, curtains and light bulbs, made the bed, put the heating on and gave it a good clean.

Finally, after 14 months in hospital, the patient was discharged into an environment that was habitable, safe, warm and homely.

Since returning home, the Well@Home team have continued to support the patient. Concerns were raised about the extreme damage to his previous property and the dangerous levels of damp that have developed there since it was flooded. Given the patient's extensive health issues, it was felt that they would be exacerbated by the damp environment and that the environment was not suitable to house his extensive medical equipment.

The patient was feeling anxious and distressed about the prospect of having to return. As a result, the Housing Officer has agreed that the patient can stay permanently in his new accommodation. Without Well@Home's support, this patient's discharge from hospital would not have been possible.

HEALTHIER FUTURES FUND

Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
For a better county

The Healthier Futures Fund was established to support innovative, community-led initiatives that deliver health and wellbeing improvements for people and communities across Cambridgeshire (including Peterborough).

TIMELINE	Awarded in 2023/24 and delivered over 3 years
LOCATION	Cambridgeshire (including Peterborough)
BUDGET	£2 million
MAIN FUNDING SOURCE(S)	NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough ICB
NO. OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED	Predicted to be tens of thousands of people (fund is still in delivery)

EMPOWER COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

LEAD CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO TEST & EVIDENCE INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH & WELLBEING

ENABLE CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO IMPACT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



KEY PROJECT AIMS

The Healthier Futures Fund was designed to support NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's key health priorities while fostering innovation at the community level. The fund specifically sought projects that:
1) Pioneer adaptive approaches: Demonstrate new and original ways of working that respond flexibly to community needs
2) Champion collaboration: Embody meaningful engagement between organisations, communities, and individuals and
3) Deliver transformational impact: Create significant improvements in addressing health inequalities

The fund offered multi-year grants of up to £300,000 over three years to community organisations working across six priority areas: 1) Children's and young people's mental health 2) Frailty 3) Frequent health service users 4) People who have an irreversible progressive disease or medical condition that can significantly impact their quality of life 5) Cardiovascular disease (including, but not limited to, smoking cessation) and 6) Supporting people who are medically fit to leave hospital, providing hospital discharge support and facilitating smooth transitions to community care.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The Healthier Futures Fund has demonstrated the unique value that community foundations bring to public health partnerships through several key achievements:

- **Efficient, fair and transparent distribution:** Cambridgeshire Community Foundation successfully distributed the £2 million allocation through a robust, transparent process that maintained the high standards expected by both the NHS and community sector while remaining accessible to grassroots organisations.
- **Bridging the gap:** The Foundation's established relationships and sector knowledge proved invaluable in connecting the ICB with community organisations that were previously beyond their reach.
- **Comprehensive support:** The Foundation provided wraparound support including project management for complex multi-year grants, coordination of interim reporting, and facilitation of knowledge exchange through NHS project visits and presentation opportunities at NHS meetings.
- **Strengthening partnerships:** The fund supported organisations in navigating the increased administrative requirements that come with larger grants and partnerships, building their capacity for future collaboration with public sector partners

For further information, visit:
- Our light project case study
- Our Earth & Mind nature-based interventions

LEARNING AND NEXT STEPS

The Healthier Futures Fund continues to generate valuable insights that are informing both current delivery and future programme design:

- **Ripple effects in action:** The fund revealed the powerful multiplier effect of community-based interventions. For example, participants in a walking group, designed to encourage physical activity and reduce isolation, discovered they shared experiences of caring for someone with dementia. This led them to establish an additional peer support group, demonstrating how single interventions can generate multiple benefits and community connections.
- **Confirming the VCSE sector's value:** The programme has reinforced the pivotal role that voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations play in delivering health and wellbeing improvements that truly resonate with local people and communities.
- **The power of the trusted intermediary:** Cambridgeshire Community Foundation's established reputation and relationships within the sector proved crucial. The Foundation can interpret the requirements of large organisations like the NHS and offer tried and tested processes for groups that might otherwise be overwhelmed by such partnerships.
- **Continuous learning and adaption:** The substantial grant size (up to £300,000), while enabling significant impact, was found to create barriers for smaller grassroots organisations delivering excellent work in these areas. A new complementary programme worth £650,000 with a lower grant threshold has been co-created. This initiative will exclusively support existing brilliant work being delivered by smaller community groups, informed by their local Integrated Neighbourhoods priorities.

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

PREVENTATIVE POWER: COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS PARTNERING WITH HEALTH

If you would like to learn more about the work of community foundations, please get in touch with: *Partnerships@ukcommunityfoundations.org* ,or visit: www.ukcommunityfoundations.org. You can also connect with us on LinkedIn at @UK Community Foundations

Commissioned and funded by

point north

Document produced Summer 2025 by

place matters