

Impact Report 2024

20 years of making Cambridgeshire
a better county



Cambridgeshire
Community
Foundation



Kindly supported by:



Over £32 million awarded



Projects funded in every ward in Cambridgeshire



10,000+ grants

Thousands of organisations supported



Welcome

I am immensely proud to welcome you to Cambridgeshire Community Foundation's impact report which marks our 20th anniversary. We hope you will join us in celebrating the progress we have made, as we reflect on our work.

Since being founded, we have supported thousands of remarkable non-profit organisations across all of Cambridgeshire through over **10,000 grants**, totalling over **£32 million**.

Their work has contributed to a better quality of life across the county, including reducing inequalities and disadvantages.

None of this could have been achieved without the collective effort and generosity of our supporters, volunteers, staff, and trustees, as well as the unwavering commitment of the local organisations that we proudly support. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey over the past 20 years.

There is so much more to do. Recent challenges, such as the cost-of-living crisis, have seen people face increasing pressures in our community.

Despite awarding a record total of over £4 million in our last financial year, we are also seeing our largest ever disparity between the demand for grants and the funding available.

Together, we can achieve profound impact through the transformative power of compassion, collaboration and philanthropy. Let's continue building a stronger, more vibrant community, where everyone can thrive.



Michael O'Toole, CEO

Over the past two decades, the Foundation has been a force for lasting, positive change in our community.

Thanks to our generous supporters, we have been able to fund vital community projects and empower grassroots initiatives. Together, we have uplifted those most in need and fostered a sense of fairness, unity and resilience in our community.

Your continued support holds the power to continue strengthening the fabric of our shared home for years to come. I extend my heartfelt gratitude for everyone's dedication to our shared vision.



Julie Spence OBE QPM CStJ, President

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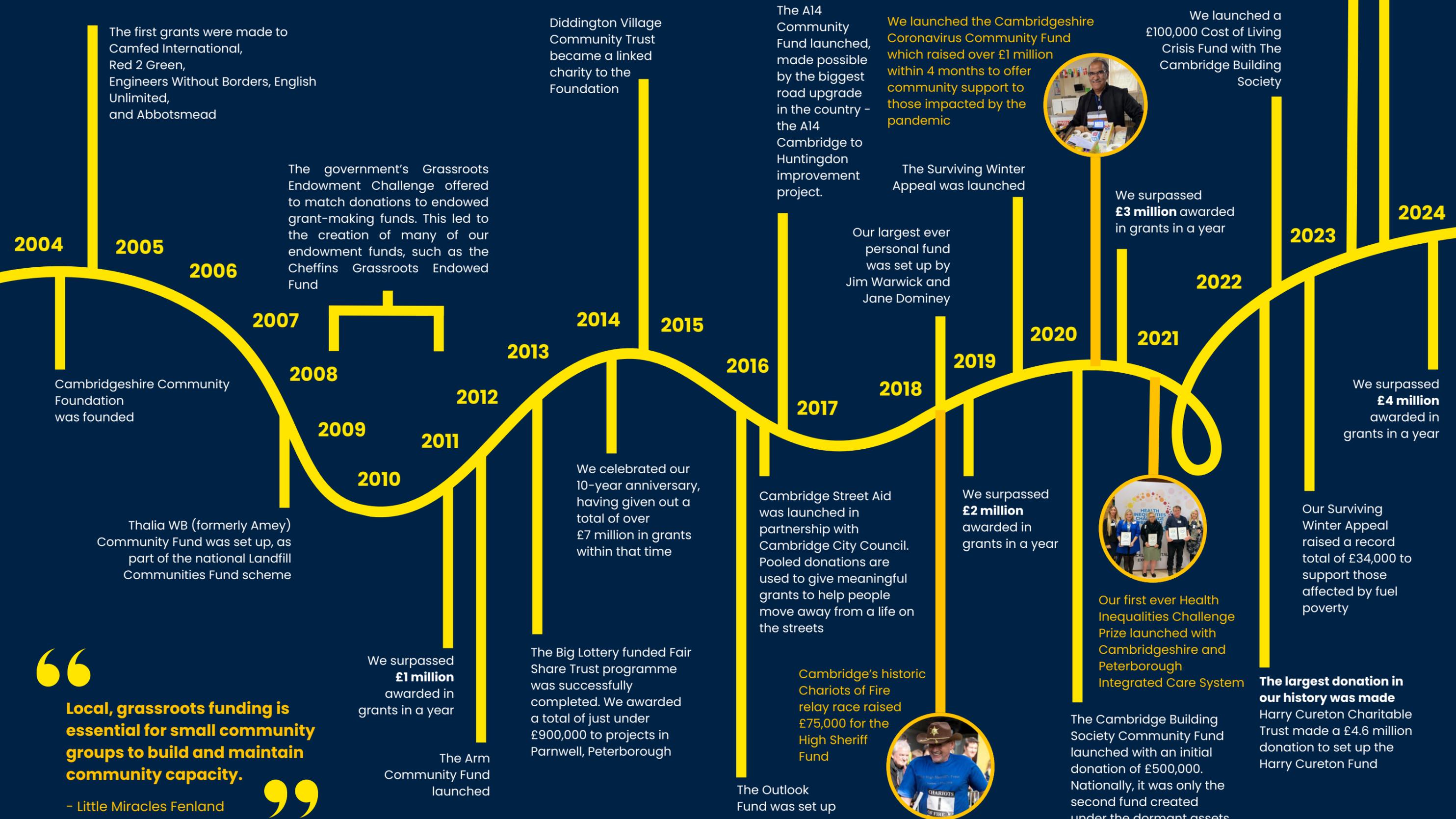
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Highlights from the past 20 years

Our largest ever grant of £322,737

was awarded to Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) to develop their new Volunteer Cambs programme and volunteering portal

We launched the Healthier Futures Fund with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, offering our largest ever multi-year grants



“
Local, grassroots funding is essential for small community groups to build and maintain community capacity.
 ”
 - Little Miracles Fenland

Supporting local charities and community groups

Funding guidance

Our friendly Grants Team is on hand to answer questions on our funding opportunities and application process, as well as to help check if an organisation is ready to apply.

Partnerships for comprehensive funding support

We work with partners including the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service, Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service and Hunts Forum, to collectively offer comprehensive support to those seeking funding.

Troubleshooting and project visits

We help to troubleshoot should issues with spending a grant arise. We also have a dedicated team of volunteer project visitors who visit projects when they are nearing completion to answer any further queries. Project visits are also an opportunity for supporters to come along and engage with projects that they have helped.

Meaningful reporting

We are committed to the IVAR principles of grant reporting. Non-profit organisations work with limited resources and are pressed for time, so we strive to only request essential reporting that we need and will use.

Highlighting local causes

We take pride in promoting the local organisations and projects we support.

“**The Foundation's support is vital for organisations like ours. Not only do they ensure that we can continue what we're doing, but they also make us feel supported.**

Most funding applications are complicated and drawn out, transactional and faceless, but the Foundation's application was collaborative and straightforward. It was easy to navigate, which made it straightforward to clearly document the work we do.

When we got the award, we were absolutely blown away. It validated us. We felt truly supported. It gave us such confidence, that we then applied to become a registered charity. The award and endorsement from the Foundation has really grown us as an organisation.

- Caroline Deeprise, Founder of The Angels Foundation UK





First grant awarded in **2022**
2 grants in total
Total grant value of **£11,500**

Up The Garden Bath

Bringing the Peterborough community together through gardening

Up The Garden Bath was established in 2019 to upcycle unwanted waste materials, such as old bathtubs, into garden planters and accessories.

A new community garden

They received a grant to establish and run a community gardening club, focused on teaching about environmental improvement and food production.

The gardening club worked to regenerate the garden at Allama Iqbal Centre in Peterborough. The community centre is situated in one of the most socially and economically deprived areas in the city.

The garden became a safe space to encourage the local community to come together, learn how to grow their own food and harvest their own crop. The garden yielded an array of vegetables, fruits, herbs and medicinal plants.

The project was accessible to everyone, promoting social cohesion in a shared community project. Both children and older people enjoyed getting involved and working as a team, regardless of backgrounds, skills, knowledge or language barriers.

The gardeners not only beautified the local area, but were also able to learn new skills relating to gardening, wildlife conservation, sustainability, food production and healthy living.



500
community
members involved



“The funding has been a catalyst for improving neighbourhoods, community development, cross-cultural and inter-generational connection, preserving green space in our city, and self-reliance through food production.”

- Up The Garden Bath

Abbey People

Community support in one of the most deprived wards in Cambridge

Despite Cambridge being considered an affluent city, this wealth is not equally distributed. Abbey is one of the most deprived wards in Cambridge. It scores highly on the Index of Multiple Deprivation, indicating a high level of complex needs. Abbey People regularly see people suffering from food and fuel poverty, who have mental and physical health needs, a history of trauma and debt issues. Some people can be totally overwhelmed and not know where to begin to meet their needs.

Abbey People have been supporting the development of the ward since 2013, increasing community cohesion and supporting the most at-risk members of the community. They run community events, gardening projects, youth clubs and more.

Over the years, Abbey People have received grants to fund some of their initiatives which support people in crisis and help local residents feel connected to their community.

First grant awarded in **2016**
16 grants in total
Total grant value of **£106,454**

“**The Foundation’s funding over the years has been transformative to how we’ve been able to support our community. From quick, responsive funding during COVID lockdowns, to funding to keep our community hub open.**”
- Nicky Shepard, CEO at Abbey People

Abbey Food Hub

The Abbey Food Hub began in response to COVID-19, in March 2020, to support those facing food insecurity. The Food Hub has since continued to open its doors three times a week, year-round. It is accessible to the whole community, offering food that has been donated or would otherwise go to waste.

300
households use
Abbey Food Hub

“**I struggle a lot with affordable food for myself and my five children. Going to the Food Hub means that my children can eat healthy food and reduce food waste and I can have peace of mind knowing they are fed well.**”
- Abbey Food Hub user

With high levels of loneliness in Abbey, the Food Hub offers an important social activity for both volunteers and hub users. Particularly during the pandemic, visiting the Food Hub was the only chance for some people to speak to anyone all week.

One beneficiary started accessing the Food Hub for food and to charge their phone. With time, they developed positive relationships with staff and volunteers. They now volunteer too and describe the Food Hub team as “family”.

Lending a helping hand through drop-in sessions

Abbey People’s drop-in sessions support disadvantaged people, helping to find solutions to things that cause the most stress and worry in their lives. For example, they help to read and fill in complicated forms that some people don’t have the literacy skills to complete.

The importance of the drop-ins simply as a safe space for people who need someone to talk to cannot be understated either. Some people don’t need help, but stop by as it’s their only opportunity to have a chat.

The impact of the drop-ins is big and small at the same time. The immediate outcomes may be small, but the knock on effects over time of people feeling supported to make positive changes in their lives is significant.

Support at Christmas

Many Abbey residents struggle to meet their basic needs, so saving for Christmas is often an impossible task. To help, Abbey People distributes Christmas hampers with food and gifts to households that have been referred due to poverty, ill-health or loneliness. This offers support at a time when people are vulnerable to going into debt.

Also, many single households and senior residents don’t have family to see at Christmas or can’t travel. The hamper and visit from a volunteer lets them know that they are loved at a time that can be quite lonely.

Creating work experience opportunities for young people

The Barnwell Baristas project offers young people a chance to get real-world work experience, in a safe, controlled environment where they can improve their skills and confidence in a way that meets their needs.

Most of the young people who complete their training go on to either education or employment. Some also choose to continue volunteering with the coffee van.





First grant awarded in 2014

15 grants in total

Total grant value of £211,810

Viva Arts & Community Group

A hub of arts, cultural and community projects in East Cambridgeshire

In 1997, Viva began life as a small youth theatre. Over the years, Viva has developed projects involving cultural outreach, multi-generational theatre productions, arts engagement and heritage projects. Viva particularly focuses on providing opportunities for those living in rurally isolated or culturally deprived communities across the county.

Viva is based in Soham, a rural market town. Several of its wards are some of the most deprived in the county. Soham has poor transport links, so isolation and limited access to services are very real problems.

The Viva Theatre

The Foundation supported Viva's renovations of a derelict mill in Soham, bringing it back to life as an accessible, self-sustaining community and arts centre for local people.

Music, theatre and dance for young people

As there are few opportunities for young people in Soham, Viva has also received grants to support their musical theatre projects for young people. The projects use arts as a tool to raise aspirations, build confidence and develop skills.

Tuk-tuking around Soham

Possibly the most unique community transport solution funded by the Foundation was Viva's Tuk Tuk, named Nellie. It is a fun, volunteer fuelled initiative to help combat rural isolation and improve access to services.

Nellie encourages volunteering, brings the community together and spreads joy whenever she is seen out and about.

When the last remaining bank branch closed down in Soham, many senior residents felt isolated and anxious as they relied on them for their financial activity. A mobile bank was brought into the town once a week. Nellie provided lifts to and from the site for an elderly gentleman for whom the location of the mobile bank was inaccessible. This enabled him to carry on managing his affairs in a way in which he felt comfortable, keeping his independence and having a positive effect on his mental wellbeing.



Sustainable community funding

You have helped us build a £13.7 million endowment

When a local philanthropist or business chooses to set up an endowment fund, their donation is invested to produce an income that is distributed as grants each year.

This leaves a long-term gift to our local community. The value of the fund may grow over time and it creates a permanent, sustainable funding source for grant-making in perpetuity.

This allows the philanthropic vision and values of the supporter to endure beyond their lifetime, supporting causes they care about for years to come.

We are pleased to have grown our endowment throughout the years thanks to generous local individuals and organisations who wished to leave a lasting legacy to our community. Some of our funds include the Warwick and Dominey Fund, Olive and Jesse Palmer Fund and Cheffins Grassroots Endowed Fund. Many of our funds were set up between 2008 and 2011, when the government offered to match donations to endowment funds. Our endowment was also recently boosted by a record £4.6 million from the Harry Cureton Charitable Trust to set up the Harry Cureton Fund. This was the largest ever transfer of funds through the Charity Commission's Revitalising Trusts Programme.

Despite £13.7 million seeming substantial, the reality is that we need to grow it further to keep up with the growing need for funding.

“**Rathbones has been privileged to enjoy a fifteen-year relationship with Cambridgeshire Community Foundation. Starting with an investment fund of endowments, which has subsequently grown through the accumulation of additional endowed funds and investment growth, withdrawals from their portfolio have enabled the Foundation to support its vital grant-making programme.**

Rathbones has been delighted to partner with the Foundation in their sports, cultural and fundraising activities over the years in and around Cambridge, Ely, Peterborough and the wider county. We are honoured to help celebrate its 20-year anniversary in 2024. Congratulations Cambridgeshire Community Foundation and thank you from Rathbones for the support you give to our communities across the county.

– Simon Whitmore, Investment Director at Rathbones Cambridge



The Cambridge Building Society Community Fund

A beacon of support for those wishing to have a safe, decent and affordable home to call their own.

In 2020, The Cambridge Building Society set out to support local organisations dedicated to addressing home and housing needs in our community.

They partnered with us to set up their Community Fund, which allows them to distribute funds simply and effectively through a bi-annual grant application programme.

Over £110,000 awarded so far to **12 local organisations** involved in projects related to housing and homelessness.

“**Supporting our community is vitally important to everyone at The Cambridge. We exist to help people have a home, and as such we invest significant time and resources in supporting people who couldn't get a home without help. An important part of that is working with groups in our local community who offer services for shelter and housing.**”



Cambridgeshire Community Foundation has been crucial in the success of our fund. We needed a partner who shared our community values and brought expertise in running all aspects of the fund, including liaison with community groups.

– Peter Burrows, CEO at The Cambridge Building Society



Wintercomfort's Winter Women

Women experiencing homelessness are less visible on the streets than men, making them harder to reach. Whilst Wintercomfort has been known for delivering outstanding services for men, some women didn't access the charity's services due to feeling intimidated by male service users. Wintercomfort sought to address this imbalance by setting up a women-only service, Winter Women. It enables vulnerable women to come forward to ask for help, safe in the knowledge that it will not put them at further risk of violence and exploitation. As the service expanded, Wintercomfort required funding to employ an additional Women's Project Worker to meet demand. The Cambridge Building Society's Community Fund was able to help by offering a grant towards this cost.



A grant from The Cambridge Building Society's Community Fund helped **The Angels Foundation UK** to source furniture, flooring, and other support for families who have been rehomed due to domestic abuse. Staff from The Cambridge have enjoyed engaging with the charity's work, including joining one of their 'walk and talk' sessions.

A £100,000 response to the cost of living crisis

In 2022, we partnered with The Cambridge to respond to the urgent need to help local families have access to food, heating, and other essentials.

We distributed £100,000 via local charities that already worked with families and individuals who needed support the most.

“**This fund has been a tremendous help in allowing us to meet unprecedented, record demand.**”

– Cambridge Aid

3,252

direct beneficiaries
(and many more indirect)

The Outlook Fund

Supporting children in care

Alex Reid was the driving force behind the launch of our Outlook Fund, which awards grants to projects supporting young people who face difficulties and disadvantages, with a focus on looked-after children.



Alex was a member of Cambridgeshire County Council, who represented the Newnham ward from 2003 to 2009. He was one of a group of councillors who were the legal guardians of looked-after children in the county. A point was frequently made that, while the county council provides a good level of care for looked-after children, the life outcomes of these children are often not as good as their peers.

Children's early experiences have long-term effects on their emotional and physical health, social development, education, and future employment. Children in care fare less well in school than their peers. Care leavers are also more likely to not be in education, employment, or training.

Although most looked-after children grow up in very caring homes, Alex believes that their lives are disrupted to such a degree that it has long-term effects on their life outcomes. A child entering care aged two, and remaining in the care system until they are 18, could pass through as many as eight foster homes. Sometimes there is a possibility that a child will be reunited with their natural parents, but they may be returned to their family only to be removed again if that is not a success, which adds to the disruption.

Alex, an architect, venture capitalist and former Royal Navy helicopter pilot, stepped down as a councillor in 2009 and began looking for "something to get stuck into".

He decided to address "the distressing life outcomes" of children in care by establishing a charitable fund to provide opportunities for them, over and above what is already provided by the county council. Looked-after children receive accommodation, food, and the support of foster families, but the allowance received by foster families has a limit. It can be difficult to afford additional activities, such as days out.

According to Alex, the Foundation was crucial to the setting up of the fund.

“ I have known others who spent years setting up charitable organisations, given the sheer logistics of doing so. You need to do all the admin to set it up, recruit trustees and then manage it going forward. ”

Instead, the Foundation offers a ready-made system for receiving and investing donations, as well as administering grant applications. The Outlook Fund would not have happened without the Foundation's infrastructure, which helped to reduce the number of decisions I had to make. I was able to just get on with raising the money. ”

As a starting point, Alex set out to secure donations from friends, successful local entrepreneurs, and corporates, some of whom were introduced to Alex by the Foundation. Alex's own contribution to the Outlook Fund came from the sale of an antique clock, which raised £20,000. In total, more than 20 individuals and corporates contributed, resulting in more than £360,000 raised, including Gift Aid and government match funding that was available at the time. Alex then approached the county council who agreed to commit £15,000 a year for ten years.

The Outlook Fund is endowed, meaning that the initial donations were invested. Even with the fund's returns being regularly distributed as grants, the initial endowment of over £300,000 has now grown to be valued at over £600,000. This promises a sustainable source of funding for looked-after children for many years to come.

The projects supported by the Outlook Fund create new opportunities for children in care, giving them the chance to go to special events, such as concerts, football matches, or the theatre – activities that Alex believes can inspire and influence the children's life choices.

“ The grants offered by the Outlook Fund are small amounts in the grand scheme of things. Taking children on days out, paying for sports clubs or art classes – many of us take these for granted. By ensuring that looked-after children also access these opportunities, we can open their eyes to interests that they otherwise might not have considered pursuing. ”

► **Grafham Water Centre** received a grant for their Year 9 Transitions Project for looked-after children. It involved team days out, a residential experience and follow up events. Activities included climbing, sailing and kayaking.



Over
7,000

looked-after children supported to date

► **KICK** received a grant to host a residential experience for siblings who were not living together. This offered an opportunity to enjoy time together without the restrictions that are often present when involving parents.



The Outlook Fund also supports young people and their families facing difficulties to prevent possible descent into crisis.



“Home-Start is the only help I’ve had”

◀ **Home-Start** supports vulnerable families to prevent crises which could lead to children being taken into care. Trained volunteers meet with families and provide bespoke practical, compassionate and emotional support which is non-judgemental, confidential and free. The volunteers aim to empower each supported family and enable them to become independent of Home-Start’s help.

The Outlook Fund demonstrates how one motivated and passionate individual can encourage others to commit funds to a good cause, as well as channelling local and national government money to create a substantial endowed fund.

After many years of supporting the Outlook Fund’s grants award panel and engaging with supported projects, Alex recently decided it was time to step down from his role in the fund. However, his dedication remains truly inspiring, as he continues to advocate for greater support for looked-after children.

In the future, Alex hopes to see more collaboration between organisations in our community to support children in care. The activities, events, and other opportunities that they could benefit from are already there. We just need to increase our efforts to connect these opportunities with looked-after children and ensure that their cost does not pose a barrier to participation.

£382,022
awarded to date through
114 grants

Arm Community Fund

Fostering comprehensive community support

Since 2011, the Arm Community Fund has been supporting projects related to community development and engagement; children, young people and families; and adults facing life crisis. To date, Arm has awarded grants to Centre 33, Camtrust, and The Blue Smile Project, among many other local organisations.

Over
120 grants
awarded



Rowan received funding towards their forest school and creative workshops for adults with learning disabilities. Activities range from music and drama to wood work. They encourage creativity and are an opportunity to make friends, reducing loneliness and social isolation.

“Rowan is the happiest place”

The Kings Hedges Family Support Project

received funding to support their weekly drop-in sessions for families. They offer an opportunity for local families to meet and make friends. The sessions also introduce new parents to the support and resources available for them in the community. Family Workers are on hand to advise and support on issues that the families may be facing in their lives.



Art, craft and play opportunities are provided for children. They are carefully planned to ensure that the resources needed are inexpensive and easily available, so that families are able to replicate the activities at home.

“Support, friendship, and good activities”

Help us make a difference

It can be challenging to decide how to achieve the greatest impact with your philanthropy and charitable gifts. We have the experience, research, and knowledge to help you support the causes you care about. We help to maximise your impact, by understanding your interests, advising on local needs, and guiding you through the options available.

Without funders like you helping us to pay the salaries of our staff, we could not do the work we do. In the long term, our hope is to be financially sustainable via the delivery of training, but, until then, thank you for your continued support. It is no exaggeration to say that you have helped save lives.

- Safe Soulmates

Set up a fund as an individual, family or business

A fund is a simple, cost-effective alternative to a charitable trust. With a one-off or regular donation towards your fund, you can award grants to local charitable and community projects. You decide the fund aims and eligibility criteria. We take care of all the admin, including initial set up, ongoing management and due diligence.

We secure and assess relevant applications from local charitable and community organisations that achieve positive change where it is needed most in Cambridgeshire.

With us taking care of the admin, you can get involved in the more meaningful aspects of giving. You, your family, or business team have the flexibility to be as involved as you wish in deciding your fund's grant awards. You can also engage with supported projects through project visits and volunteering.

Our team monitors the effective delivery of funded projects and reports on their impact, giving you a clear understanding of the difference made by your fund.

Unlike traditional trusts and foundations, your fund will remain flexible into the future. Should you feel that its aims need to be adjusted over time to support evolving community needs, we will support you in doing so.

My fund has been hugely cathartic; out of our sadness, it gave us the opportunity to help causes that my late husband would have been thrilled to support. The Foundation enabled us to give in a meaningful way and showed us projects that we didn't know about before. It's easy to give, but harder to make a real difference; the Foundation makes this possible.

- Catherine Stewart, John Stewart Memorial Fund

Business funds

Businesses often want to support local communities, where staff and customers are based. However, knowing how to find and fund effective local projects can require a lot of time and effort.

Setting up a fund with us makes giving to local causes easy and effective.

Your team can become actively involved in your charitable giving, from forming the panel that awards your grants, to visiting funded projects and volunteering.

As a business, the ability to communicate your goals and achievements, both internally and externally, can be important. We help to demonstrate the impact of your support, with regular updates on how your giving has made a difference. We can provide project photos, case studies and statistics.

At Cheffins, we want to support and nurture the communities where we live and work. We believe in the power of local people and projects to drive positive change, so our Cheffins Grassroots Endowed Fund is our way of investing in a stronger, thriving community.

- Philip Woolner, Director & Managing Partner at Cheffins

Leave a legacy

As well as looking after your loved ones, your will can benefit the charitable causes you care about. By leaving a legacy to us, you can either make an immediate gift or set up a fund that supports your chosen causes in perpetuity. We can work with your family and/or professional advisers to award grants from your fund for as long as they wish to be involved.

Let us manage your public sector funding programme

We are a trusted partner for grant programmes, working with both local and national public sector partners. Our experience, research, and knowledge of the local community ensure that programmes reach intended beneficiaries. We deliver programmes efficiently and cost-effectively through well-established systems and processes. We process applications and take care of the associated administrative tasks and due diligence. This leaves you to choose the projects you wish to support. You will receive reports demonstrating the programme's impact, offering valuable insights to shape your future work.

Transfer an existing charitable trust

Tap into the Foundation's grant-making and community expertise. Transfer existing trust assets to us to ensure that your trust efficiently and cost-effectively supports your intended beneficiaries.

Make a donation

Visit cambscf.org.uk/donate

With thanks to:

 **RATHBONES**

CHEFFINS



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