



# Working with Worcestershire

OUR IMPACT REPORT 2020-21

WORCESTERSHIRE  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO YOUR COMMUNITY

[www.worcscf.org.uk](http://www.worcscf.org.uk)

# Contents

- 3 Foreword from our Chair of Trustees
- 4 A snapshot of Worcestershire
- 6 Our impact
- 7 Our grantmaking
- 8 Sustainable funding
- 9 Our vision
- 10 Our stories
- 15 Your feedback

## Who are we?

Since 2003, Worcestershire Community Foundation has been helping local charities and community groups support essential causes across Worcestershire where there is real need, working with funders to deliver timely, responsive and proactive funding programmes.

During the unprecedented Covid Pandemic period of 2020/21, we have raised and distributed **over £1 million** of Covid-related funding to **support 300+ local projects** representing an incredibly diverse range of causes across the county.

We are a place-based charitable conduit for the whole county, dedicated to helping ensure that Worcestershire is a better place to be. We are passionate in supporting communities to not just survive but thrive. We champion local causes and aim to raise and deliver funds which are flexible and meaningful; our funds support areas ranging from the arts and older people to mental health. We are part of a national network of 47 'sister' Community Foundations stretching the length and breadth of the UK which

provide crucial support to communities everywhere; **our network is the fourth largest funding body in the UK.**

This Report is focusing on our work across Worcestershire over the last 18 months (March 2020 - August 2021) during the greatest crisis we have seen in this country in 70 years. Covid has brought huge challenges to our doorstep; we want to show how we have worked with local communities to face this crisis, the impact of this shared effort, and the invaluable learning we have gained to take us into a more resilient future.

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“Worcestershire Community Foundation has done great work for many years, but I have been particularly impressed with your response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Those grants across the county are very welcome, and on behalf of all my constituents may I take this opportunity to thank you and your colleagues for all your work these past few months.”

Nigel Huddleston MP &  
Minister for Civil Society

# Foreword from our Chair of Trustees

As Worcestershire Community Foundation approaches its 18th birthday, it has become part of the fabric of Worcestershire, raising funds and allocating resources to a diverse range of voluntary and charitable organisations across the County. **This has only been made possible through the generous donations of our supporters – whether public funders or private philanthropists – who trust in our ability to enable change and deliver support where it is needed.**

WCF has never aligned itself to one particular cause or challenge; our mission has always been to support an eclectic range of programmes. However, as we reflect upon recent progress we believe that building a stronger identity will support our aim of attracting greater funding.

As we evolve, our new approach is to identify themes where WCF can really make a difference. In late 2019 we established the Mental Health Fund to help address the growing prevalence of mental health issues, particularly amongst the young. We then directed resources to three leading community groups specialising in supporting young people facing pre-critical mental health challenges.

In early 2020 we were faced with our biggest challenge to date when the pandemic created the most severe national peacetime emergency. From the outset, it was clear that the voluntary sector would play a significant part in the national response with considerable funding directed through the Community Foundation network.

**Within two weeks of the first lockdown in March 2020, working with our partners at Community First, the WCF Board established a COVID Response Group to channel funds from a range of national**

**sources. We transformed our processes, fast tracked applications and distributed funds often within days. This efficiency ensured that the support reached those that needed it most, when they needed it, all without compromising the essential due diligence needed to safeguard the distribution of public funds.**

While we were able to support tried and tested organisations – many of whom pivoted their operations to adapt to the new reality – we were also able to assist many new ones, often hastily launched to help their communities. The collective response of so many initiatives whether large, small, old or new, was truly inspiring and WCF played a critical role in their success.

WCF was also the catalyst for a number of innovative programmes by bringing together a broad local cross-section of charities and voluntary organisations to secure a consensus about emerging priorities. This resulted in allocation of critical seed funding and leveraging other resources to build momentum and sustainability; our role during COVID demonstrated WCF's unique position within Worcestershire and has helped chart our future direction.

Together, our Board and small but dedicated staff team are looking forward to a challenging but exciting future, forging new relationships, enhancing our capacity and helping even more of those needing support. I hope you find this report stimulating, informative and that it brings to life our role and impact throughout Worcestershire.

**David Shaw**



# A snapshot of Worcestershire

It is important to highlight the extent of deprivation which exists across this beautiful county.

**Post-Covid, Worcestershire faces growing challenges of disadvantage and social need, much of it 'hidden.' The impact of the Pandemic has substantially exacerbated needs through increased social isolation, worsening health issues – including mental health – and growing poverty.**

The 2020 IMD\* (Index of Multiple Deprivation) study shows that 18 local neighbourhoods reflecting 28,000 Worcestershire residents are ranked as some of the most deprived in England.

**This means almost 5% – or one in 20 people – in Worcestershire live within the top 10% of deprivation.**

This map shows the percentage of Worcestershire's population who fall into the top 30% of deprived communities in England.

**Redditch** and the **Wyre Forest** experience some of the greatest deprivation, whilst in **Worcester City** 11.6% – or more than one in 10 people – live in the top 10%.

Urban communities are most likely to experience deprivation, however rural deprivation is also endemic, especially in the **Evesham** and **Wyre Forest** areas.

Many people currently live in fuel poverty, with this figure set to soar during Winter 2021 with the current energy crisis, and mental health/wellbeing challenges across society are rising swiftly.

Since Covid-19 first became news early in 2020, the Pandemic has brought about rapid and difficult changes for our communities. Many people have experienced the impacts of poverty – many for the first time – and isolation, and are continuing to suffer a hugely decreased quality of life.



<b>Redditch</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Wyre Forest &amp; Kidderminster</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Worcester City</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Malvern Hills</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Bromsgrove</b>	<b>7.6%</b>

Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2020

\* The key factors informing the IMD are barriers to employment, housing and services, health deprivation and disability, levels of income and education, crime levels and the living environment.

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) is a significant player in Civil Society; **a recent study demonstrates that Worcestershire's VCS represents a £270 million (2.1%) contribution to the local economy.** There are around 1,579 local charities with a total income of over £214 million, employing 8,200 staff and 24,000 volunteers.

**Research shows that demand for VCS services increased by 78% during the pandemic and 62% of organisations expect it to continue or even increase.** Despite additional funding that has been available



during the crisis, many community groups are fearful of the future and whether they will have the capacity to address what may lie ahead.

On the positive side, this has been a huge learning opportunity to build on our experiences and create a better society going forward. The VCS is a key engine for social good. Locally we have seen the sector rising rapidly and sensitively to the challenge and proving its value more than ever at a time of hugely increased need. The new sense of community values developed in the face of a shared crisis has led to a genuine sense of positive 'change' and different ways of tackling issues collaboratively; the momentum of this sea-change needs crucial support to continue.

Having supported over 300 innovative and responsive projects over this period with over £1 million of funding, Worcestershire Community Foundation is working to develop sustainable ways to support Worcestershire's VCS network to deliver vital services into the future.



We are **listening to the sector** to hear what they need; we are **growing new funds** to address real issues; we are **building key relationships with new funders**; we are **planning new campaigns** to engage local donors and philanthropists and work with them on innovative initiatives.

We will continue to seek funders, supporters and donors who share our values and passionately believe in the County and its ability to weather this unprecedented storm and build on the 'positives' that have emerged from it longer-term.

# Our impact

Total number of grants  
(across 3 programmes)

**308**

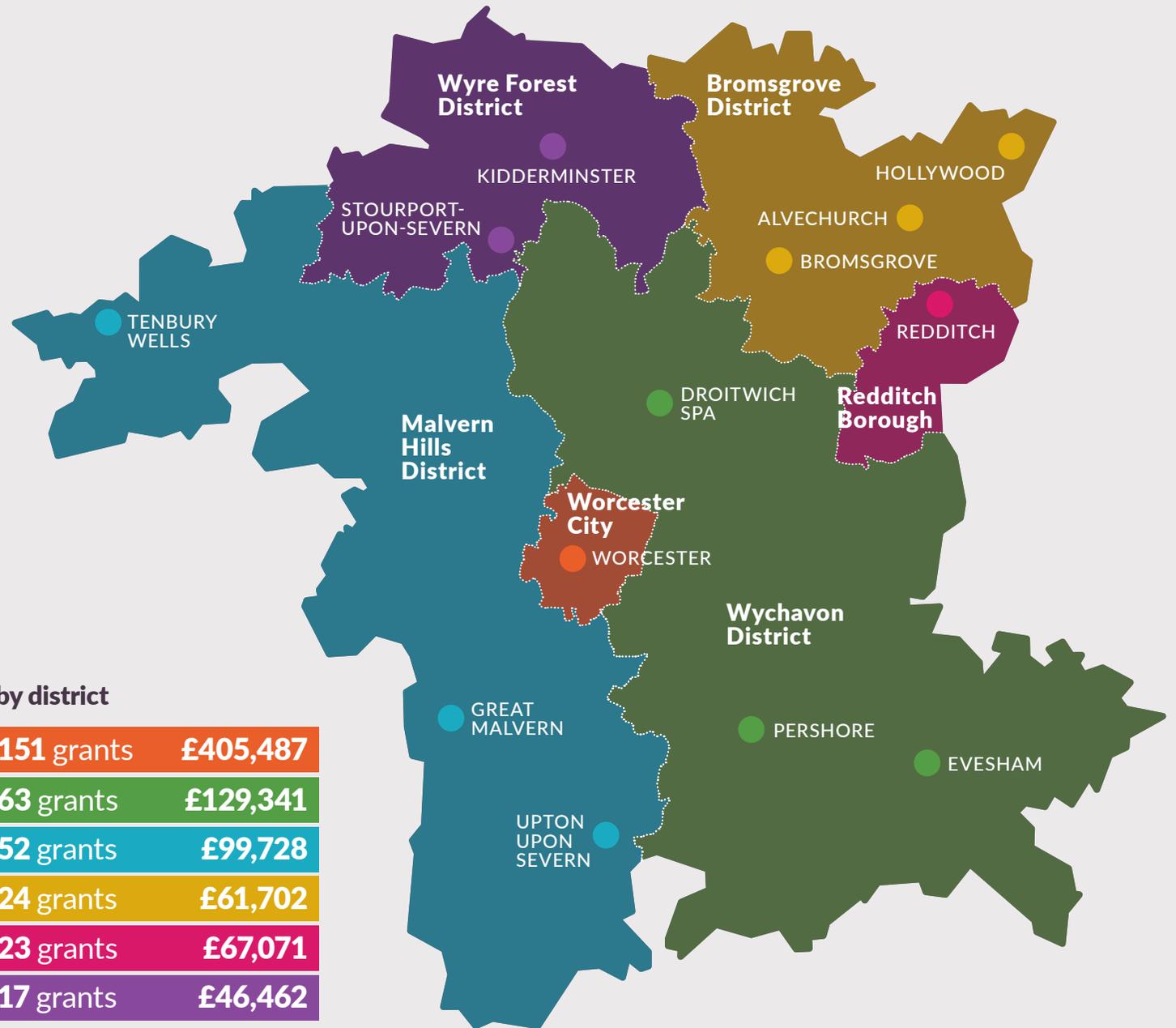
Total number of  
organisations reached

**374**

Total sum awarded  
**£1,017,528**

Number of grants and amounts awarded by district

<b>Worcester City</b>	<b>151 grants</b>	<b>£405,487</b>
<b>Wychavon</b>	<b>63 grants</b>	<b>£129,341</b>
<b>Malvern Hills</b>	<b>52 grants</b>	<b>£99,728</b>
<b>Bromsgrove</b>	<b>24 grants</b>	<b>£61,702</b>
<b>Redditch</b>	<b>23 grants</b>	<b>£67,071</b>
<b>Wyre Forest &amp; Kidderminster</b>	<b>17 grants</b>	<b>£46,462</b>



# Our grantmaking



## NATIONAL EMERGENCIES TRUST

### Covid Response Fund

Funding awarded: **£476,484**  
 Organisations funded: **129**  
 Projects funded: **164**

## DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT (DCMS)

### Covid Response Fund

Funding awarded: **£222,949**  
 Organisations funded: **34**  
 Projects funded: **37**

## CO-OP

### Covid Response Fund (food-related projects)

Funding awarded: **£12,000**  
 Organisations/projects funded: **4**

## WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WINTER GRANTS

### Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged households impacted by Covid

Funding awarded: **£239,447**  
 Organisations funded: **98**  
 Projects funded: **103**

## MADE BY SPORT

### Supporting grassroots sports and activity groups to help young people impacted by Covid

Funding awarded: **£31,710**  
 Organisations/projects funded: **16**



## MAJOR GRANTS

### Larger-scale infrastructure grants were awarded to support longer-term projects addressing key issues within Worcestershire

Herefordshire & Worcestershire Recovery College offering mental health/wellbeing solutions: **£50,000**  
 Digital Solutions addressing isolation: **£50,000**  
 BAME young people: **£10,000**

## LOCAL FUNDS

### WCF ran two local fundraising campaigns to support Covid Response

Total raised: **£118,000**  
 Match raised (DCMS): **£75,000**  
 Total: **£193,000**

## AREAS OF NEED

Some of the key areas supported:

**Mental health/wellbeing**

**Older people**

**Disability & poor health**

**Homelessness**

**Volunteer networks**

**Vital supplies including food & goods**

**Foodbanks**

**Domestic abuse**

**Digital**

**Poverty**

**Isolation**

# Sustainable funding

In addition to distributing multiple smaller grants, WCF has also been providing infrastructure funding for a selection of innovative projects with the potential to make greater impacts longer-term, thereby fulfilling our ambition to be a sustainable funder.

## Hub for mental health & wellbeing

Following £50,000 of funding, a **Wellbeing & Recovery College** virtual hub has been set up through a partnership of the VCS, NHS, local authority and local training providers. This initiative represents a great example of agencies combining skills to improve health and wellbeing for Worcestershire people. The College provides a wide range of specialist services for local people facing mental health/wellbeing challenges, and is also an invaluable resource for families, carers and people wanting more information on mental health & wellbeing solutions.

[hwellbeingandrecoverycollege.org.uk](http://hwellbeingandrecoverycollege.org.uk)

## Digital support for isolated people

From the start of lockdown a major concern was the impact of isolation of those living alone. What would happen to older or disabled people for whom the technology barrier was just too great, leaving them with no contact with the outside world?

Supported by a £50,000 grant, the Worcestershire VCS Digital Group created a project in partnership with **Amica 24** telecare system and technology provider **My Home Helper**.

The result is a simple user-friendly 'tablet' needing no technical skill, which sits in a prominent place in the user's home, linking in to Amica 24 & offering proactive communication with family members or carers. This has proven to be an opportunity to provide a partnership-based immediate solution for isolated people whilst creating an innovative tool for the VCS.

[www.myhomehelper.co.uk/home/about.aspx](http://www.myhomehelper.co.uk/home/about.aspx)

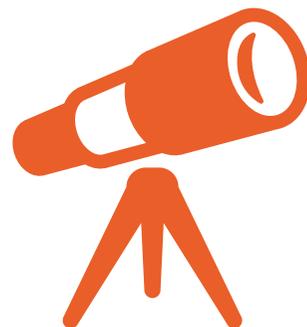
## New youth group

A local initiative to address longstanding issues with youth crime in Worcester city centre has resulted in the setting up of a new community organisation which has become a sustainable hub. The **Perryfields Community Group**, based at the Horizon Community Centre has united key community leaders in providing opportunities for disadvantaged young people as well as making the area safer for local residents.

WCF kickstarted this initiative with a £10,000 seed contribution to develop a new football pitch and communal facilities at the centre to encourage wider use. In response, a multi-agency task force including local young people, the Police, City Council and Worcester Community Trust, has led to a coordinated push to resolve issues around ASB and drugs in the area.



# Our vision



## Our future now looks very different from how it appeared pre-pandemic...

As we transition towards the next phase of the pandemic, WCF has reflected on what lessons have been learned and how we can take our organisation forward in the best ways to benefit our local communities.

While the last 18 months have encompassed the greatest loss, disruption and unparalleled hardship seen in our lifetime, it has helped WCF identify how we can play a stronger part in caring for people in our communities. We have been able to bring together disparate groups and organisations and acted as 'honest broker' to create a consensus on the biggest challenges facing Worcestershire. In doing so we have helped make the voluntary sector greater than the sum of its parts.

In this report we include case studies of three sustainable landmark projects where WCF's influence and funding were pivotal. This ability to become an enabling force within the county is one we will develop in the coming months and years. We also aim to use our heightened profile and achievements to develop our

profile, develop partnerships and attract new funding support.

The challenges our communities face are many and can appear daunting. However, there is a sense of renewed optimism that this Community Foundation has an even bigger part to play in the life of the communities and people we serve. We are dedicated to improving the lives of those in need, enriching the life of the county and helping to sustain the voluntary sector which increasingly provides unique support to so many in Worcestershire.

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## Key focus for 2022 onwards



- **Mental health & wellbeing**  
Our Mental Health Fund with a refreshed strategic direction will be focused on
- **Equality, diversity, inclusion**  
We will consider equality, diversity and inclusion in all our discussions and decision making to ensure we are accessible to and serve all Worcestershire communities with equity
- **Environmental**  
We will strive to ensure our funds, investments and ways of working are as environmentally friendly as possible and will seek opportunities to support environmental initiatives and causes
- **Sustainability**  
We wish to develop our longer-term sustainability through growing our endowment and building a wider range of funds, as well as diversifying our donors
- **Emergency response**  
Drawing on our recent experiences, we will develop key partnerships to enable us to support a timely and effective response to emergencies where we have the necessary capability and capacity.

# Our stories

## Worcester Warriors Diabetes Project

Thanks to £4,000 of Covid Response funding from WCF, the Worcester Warriors RFC have been able to deliver their Diabetes project, providing a fantastic opportunity for young people with Diabetes type 1 and their siblings to get together and have fun outdoors whilst also gaining new skills and making friends. Children diagnosed with illness are often less able to take part in physical activities with their peer groups, thereby losing confidence and the benefits of exercise at the same time.

Alongside the physical and social benefits delivered to the young participants, this programme offers a vital opportunity for parents & carers to get together and chat about their experiences with each other whilst the children are enjoying themselves. The sharing of issues and building of relationships with a peer group network is incredibly helpful to carers.



**Normally during an average year this project engages approximately 24 young people across the county diagnosed with diabetes but during the pandemic this doubled to 48.** As caseloads increased the organisation has been hugely grateful that they have received vital funding from the Covid Response grant programme administered by WCF.

“ **It has been great to be able to all meet again at the Diabetes Rugby which was greatly missed during lockdown.** ”



## Malvern Hills Foodbank



A grant of £4,500 from WCF Covid funding was distributed to vulnerable local families to help with costs including utilities, food and basic needs.

One single mum and three small children found themselves with no money to buy new school uniforms along with unexpected costs arising from a water leak.

**The grant provided the family with a supermarket voucher for food and paid their gas/electricity bill. This made a huge difference to the family, allowing the children a good start to a new term at school and giving much-needed relief to people who were on the edge of crisis.**

The funding from WCF allowed us to reach families like this who would have had no other recourse to access funding.



## Outside

Outside Youth Centre offers a Youth club and activities in Bengeworth, Evesham, including work with Eastern European young people. The Club provides a safe and welcoming space for around 100 11-19 year-olds every week, offering open access sessions alongside targeted youth work.

The funding from WCF enabled Outside Youth Centre to redesign their service provision and continue supporting the young people and families in the local community.



**Money from the grant was used to supply families of young people financially affected by coronavirus with vouchers or goods such as food, basic essentials, sanitary products, stationery and phone credit amongst other vital things.**

“ We understand that local young people have needed our support more than ever during the Pandemic when they were not able to come to the Centre in person. ”

Carly Elwell, Chair



## Sevenside Volunteers

Two local volunteers in the village Kempsey near Worcester set up an incredible community response to the Pandemic which has led to positive longer-term effects.



As soon as government restrictions began, they recognised the potential problems this would have for older and vulnerable people in the community and acted swiftly by appealing for volunteers. A wave of support followed for many isolated people, with information leaflets delivered to every home. **A foodbank was set up with donations, prescriptions were collected and delivered, food shops carried out and home-cooked meals taken to those who needed them.**

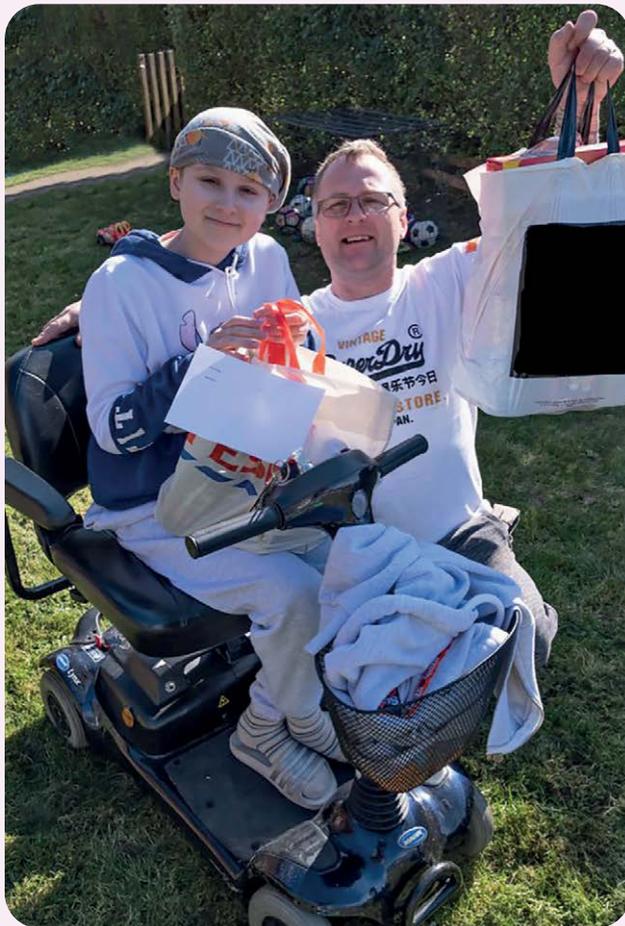
Regular phone calls were made to every person identified as vulnerable; the most fantastic thing was that beyond all the practical help given, the village has become a family. People who are alone have made new connections, people have felt cared for by their village and volunteers have become part of a permanent team.

The impact this project has had on the village will last far beyond the social restrictions themselves.



## The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust

During the Pandemic, The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust had to act swiftly in response to being contacted by a number of families that were affected by childhood cancer across Worcestershire.



With families with vulnerable children with cancer in strict isolation for a minimum of 12 weeks, they struggled to get essential items including cleaning products which were absolutely vital due to the increased risk of infection.

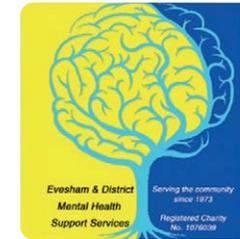
**With support from the Covid Response Fund, The Trust was able to deliver over 100 packs of essential items during lockdown, including special gifts and foods alongside other more practical goods.**

The feedback from families reached proved that the packages were very much needed and have helped the families at the hardest of times:

“ Thank you once again for your incredible support... We really appreciate the boxes you bring... You guys have become a lifeline. ”

“ The charity is doing an amazing job helping so many of our children. Thank you just doesn't seem enough for everything that you are doing. ”

## Evesham and District Helpline Support Centre



WCF granted the Evesham & District Helpline Support Centre £2,500 in May 2020 to assist with the costs of running a

Covid Telephone Helpline operating 7 days a week 12 hours a day. This helpline ran for one year, only ceasing at the end of May 2021. It has been of huge benefit to the community and has supported many vulnerable individuals. **There have been thousands of calls, some of which have been of a distressing nature. Many who have accessed it have said it has been their lifeline and without it they don't know how they would have coped.**

EDHSC were selected to receive a COVID Heroes Award from Evesham Town Council for services to the community with the helpline, nominated by a person who had been regularly using the service.



## Like U



As a charity focused on working with migrants across Worcestershire, Like-U's work always comes with a unique twist – anxieties, cultural and language barriers – requiring a very flexible approach. This organisation especially appreciates funders with a problem-solving attitude.

Like U was given funding to initially support 30 families struck by the Pandemic, they started a list of beneficiaries, and ended up helping 80 families. They were then put in a position requiring an entrepreneurial approach; instead of buying new white goods they collected used toasters, kettles, microwaves which were upgraded and distributed to local communities.



Head of Like-U, Tomasz Jarecki, commented:

“WCF's flexibility and supportive, understanding approach has made all the difference to us. For example, half our beneficiaries are orthodox Christians, celebrating Christmas in January. WCF were happy for us to delay the food parcels for their Christmas feasts.

We are not only grateful for their continuous support, but also for their empathy and compassion. Knowing we have them in our corner makes our work so much easier.”

## Worcester Community Trust



Worcester Community Trust were supported by Worcestershire Community Foundation with Winter Grant funding between February - March 2021.

We delivered a partnership project with Onside Advocacy which enabled us to provide targeted support to families in need by delivering weekly food parcels and freshly cooked meals for five weeks during the third lockdown. Families were identified through WCT projects and we set up three collection points in our Community Centres. We also supported a number of families with food vouchers for their local supermarket in order to buy essentials, as well as being able to provide white goods including a cooker and washing machine to a small number of families who were in financial difficulty and unable to purchase these items themselves.

**In total we were able to support 213 people across 47 families.**

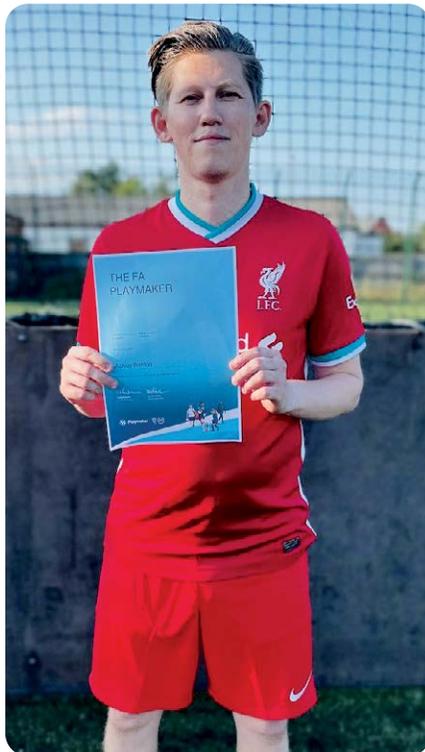


## The Monday Night Club FC

The Monday Night Club has provided activities for adults with learning disabilities/autism in Worcestershire for 10 years. There are currently 78 active members, with 48 also members of the MNC Football Club. Since receiving the Made By Sport grant from WCF, the organisation has been able to prepare for the coming season in earnest, with new kits and training.

Two teams were entered in a friendly, five-a-side tournament organised by the Three Counties League. Both teams made the final, with the MNC FC winning the trophy! This meant so much to the players and brought them together as a team.

**During September the MNC enabled three players to take the FA foundation course in coaching, FA Playmaker, with all three successfully gaining their qualification as a coach. They have supported Ashley, who is disabled and long-term unemployed, to join an 'Employability Through Football' course organised by the County FA. He has gained such confidence he is now coaching the MNC beginners' group regularly.**



## Welland Junior FC



Welland Junior FC, a 'Community Charter Standard Club', were extremely pleased to have been successful in receiving a Made By Sport grant. The demands on local clubs to remain viable during a pandemic have been immense, coupled with the need to get running again and cater for more children in need of safe, structured outdoor sport.



The grant allowed football to return and form new teams such as the brand new u11 Colts. This squad was formed over the summer months with local players looking to be part of a team. With the help of Upton Rugby Club and Upton Town Council, the Club also managed to create two new mini-soccer pitches on Upton Sports Fields and increase their pitch capacity for future teams to enjoy, starting this season with u9 and and u10 boys and u10 girls mini-soccer teams.

**Together with new playing kit, footballs and equipment, the grant has been utilised to the full, making a massive difference to literally hundreds of youngsters.**



# Your feedback

“ I cannot fault the response from WCF; the reactivity of wanting to help organisations in such a quick turnaround has meant the world to us, and arguably we wouldn't have been able to open and kept everyone safe as much as we have without your help. Not only have you enabled us to respond to the pandemic so quickly, but you have been key in restoring normality to our students in such a short period of time. ”

Wildgoose Rural Training

“ Thank you so much to Worcestershire Community Foundation for their grant to Caring Hands in the Vale - it really helped us through a very difficult period during lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Your support has made a massive difference to us, was a great encouragement to our volunteers and has supported many people in need in our local community. ”

Caring Hands in the Vale



“ We're very grateful for your support and used the grant to pay for extra youth worker hours to provide one-to-one support for young people who were experiencing particular issues during lockdown. Some of these were new to our service and have since joined our regular sessions. As a result of our lockdown provision, we are now going into a local secondary school to support their students with mentoring. ”

Malvern Cube Projects

“ Funding from WCF was an essential part of the resource package that enabled us to launch and develop the Live Chat facility on our website. This was particularly important during a time of lockdown restrictions when it was more difficult for those living with domestic abuse to make audible contact with agencies for information and advice. ”

West Mercia Women's Aid

“ The grant has been a huge success for us here at Lindridge Parish Hall. Before, we were a small collective of rural children meeting in the parish hall with no resources at all. The grant enabled us to be fully established and purchase our own equipment and we now have regular sports activities taking place and young people between the age of 10-16yrs have been able to benefit from them. ”

Lindridge Parish Hall

“ We are so grateful for the support that we have received from the Foundation. The funding has made and continues to make a huge difference to the homeless community. We were able to respond quickly to the calls from government to 'Get Everyone In' during lockdown. There is no doubt that this helped reduce the spread of COVID-19 amongst the homeless community. ”

St. Paul's Hostel

With grateful thanks to all our supporters, trusts, corporates and individuals who make our work possible.



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