



Your impact 2023

Building thriving communities through effective philanthropy



About Oxfordshire Community Foundation

We improve lives and tackle inequality by investing in Oxfordshire's dynamic charitable sector.

Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF) is a charity that builds thriving communities through effective philanthropy, matching investment to the needs of small charities. We fund around 200 grassroots charitable organisations each year, giving around £2 million annually to tackle priority issues.

Our vision is for everyone in Oxfordshire to be living fulfilling lives in thriving communities. We believe grassroots charitable organisations supported by effective philanthropy will help Oxfordshire residents reach their full potential.

Founded in 1995, we are the bridge that connects donors with small charitable groups, who would otherwise struggle to find each other. We focus on grassroots organisations because they are best placed to support local communities, but are often least resourced.



in an independent assessment of transparency, accountability and diversity by the Foundation Practice Rating

Why local donors choose to work with us:



Introduction from our CEO and Chair

The charitable sector in Oxfordshire has risen to incredible challenges over the last few years, and proved itself yet again as the bedrock of our communities.

Oxfordshire Community Foundation was proud to support with record levels of grants in 2023, thanks to our generous donors. Thousands of people rely on charitable funds for basics like keeping fed and healthy, as well as for flourishing through education and cultural activities.

However, the Covid pandemic and enduring cost-of-living crisis have eroded charity finances. Charities have never been more necessary, but their existence has never been more precarious. Every week we read through accounts of organisations applying to us, and we see so many with only a few months

of funds to keep them going. Rising rents, higher energy contracts and increased salaries to retain valuable staff are here to stay. The latest economic forecasts make it clear that public finances will not be stepping in to save the day.

Now, more than ever, local philanthropy is needed. We are redoubling our efforts in 2024 to drive hugely increased giving in Oxfordshire, a county of so much wealth and potential. Most of the grassroots organisations we work with cannot afford fundraisers or communications experts. Our mission is to champion their work to those who want to invest in the future of our county.

We thank every donor who funds OCF to do this essential work.



Zoe Sprigings, CEO



Ian Busby, Chair

Our team

Our small staff team covers our core functions of grant-making, financial management and donor care. We are focused on providing a first-rate service with a personal touch to our donors and local charitable organisations.

Alongside the staff, our trustees are a vital part of the wider team, and we were joined by three new trustees in the last year bringing additional fundraising, legal and accountancy expertise.

We were also delighted to welcome our new President in 2023 – HM Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Marjorie Neasham Glasgow BEM

“As the Lord-Lieutenant, it has been exciting to see the many effective volunteer organisations in Oxfordshire. But a common thread is most of them need funding. I believe that is where donors can work with OCF to effectively help these groups.”



Find out more
about our team:



2022–23: our year in numbers



Our grant-making

During 2022–23 we awarded £2.3 million to charities, social enterprises and community groups through a range of grants.

These focused on tackling unaffordable essentials, addressing poor health, countering lack of opportunity and alleviating loneliness and fear. Investing in preventative measures and resilience, alongside immediate relief, has been the key focus for the year. We also made a grant transfer of £910,000 of Black Minds Matter UK funds to the newly established charity. In 2023 we published the second edition of **Oxfordshire Uncovered**. This revealed some of the surprising and concerning issues affecting the most vulnerable people in the county, and the barriers that stop them from thriving. Here are some stories of hope about the investments we make into dynamic local organisations that are directly tackling these issues.

Tackling unaffordable essentials

Too many of Oxfordshire's residents are facing a daily struggle to provide the basics for living a stable and safe life, which can lead to a spiral of instability, debt, ill-health, isolation and lack of opportunity.

A consultation with local charitable groups in spring 2023 concluded that the cost-of-living crisis had not subsided for the poorest communities. Thanks to our generous funders, we were able to open a second round of grants directly addressing this issue in the summer of 2023.

- 5% homeless support
- 15% food poverty
- 16% debt and other advice
- 24% mental health
- 40% warm spaces and activities



35 groups funded

£273,137 distributed

Story of hope:

Witney Baby Bank



A grant from OCF enabled Witney Baby Bank to give essential baby items and menstrual products to low-income families, as well as supporting around 35 families for a further two years.

One family supported through the baby bank has escaped domestic abuse, and the mother is now living alone with her children. The provision of essential baby items has meant that she has been able to redirect more of her income to providing food for her family. Her older child has additional needs and requires a specialised buggy, and staff at the baby bank found a second-hand one for her from their community.



Addressing poor health



Farcycles, which received a grant of £10,666 from the Community Capacity grants round

Poor health has a disproportionate impact on many of Oxfordshire's residents. It affects people's ability to work, be independent and live a long and fruitful life.

We delivered two rounds of grants from the Community Capacity Fund, which aims to help Oxfordshire's residents to live independently and healthily for as long as possible. Investment from Oxfordshire County Council was combined with generous donations from our funders. This pooled funding enabled us to make a greater difference to more people.

49 groups funded **£451,000** distributed

Story of hope:

Oxfordshire Discovery College

Oxfordshire Discovery College is a mental health initiative for young people. A grant from OCF funded core programme delivery costs, including crucial staffing.

Through peer support, the charity has created a place to learn together about mental health through its evidence-based psycho-education programmes. These include self-harm, anxiety, building resilience and coping with change.

One participant said, "This is the first time in many many years where I have learnt to look after myself, and felt that I have been fully supported and validated in the group I have attended."



Alleviating loneliness and fear



The Branch Trust, which received a grant of £10,000 from The British Red Cross fund.

In many areas of Oxfordshire, people do not know or trust their neighbours, and live in isolation. Still others are victims of crime both inside and outside the home.

Working with the British Red Cross, we awarded grants to groups around the county to support Ukrainian refugees to settle into their new surroundings and integrate with the local community. OCF also distributed over £21,000 from the Sir George Earle Benevolent Fund, a national programme enabling local organisations to support older people and reduce loneliness or isolation.

9 groups funded **£40,000** distributed

Countering lack of opportunity



The Sunshine Centre, which received a grant of £4,448 from the Let's Create Fund to engage the community during the Platinum Jubilee

Story of hope: **Ikkaido**



Ikkaido provides educational opportunities for people with disabilities. A grant from OCF funded Ikkaido to digitise their financial literacy workshops, meaning people could access the learning from home, at the pace and manner that suited them best.

The course instils self-motivation and the desire to learn, equipping people with the skills to manage their finances independently, including guidance on debt and benefits. Participants were able to receive tailored financial advice from experienced financial managers with lived experience of the potential economic disadvantages of disability. One participant said: "I've realised that life shouldn't just be about 'making it' but about helping everyone else to succeed as well. No-one should be defined by their background or (dis)ability, just as I shouldn't be defined by mine."

Life chances are the opportunities each individual has to improve their quality of life and fulfil their potential. For those born into deprivation, low educational attainment, digital exclusion and unemployment can have a stifling effect throughout life.

In 2022–23 OCF ran the Oxfordshire arm of a national funding programme from the Arts Council, delivered by community foundations across the UK. This was part of their 2030 strategy to provide communities in every corner of the country with more opportunities to enjoy culture.



 **8 groups funded**  **£47,000 distributed**

Story of hope: **Oxford City Farm**



Oxford City Farm provides sessions focused on the outdoors and cooking nutritious food. A grant from OCF enabled them to continue two established groups for adults and young families who are socially isolated.

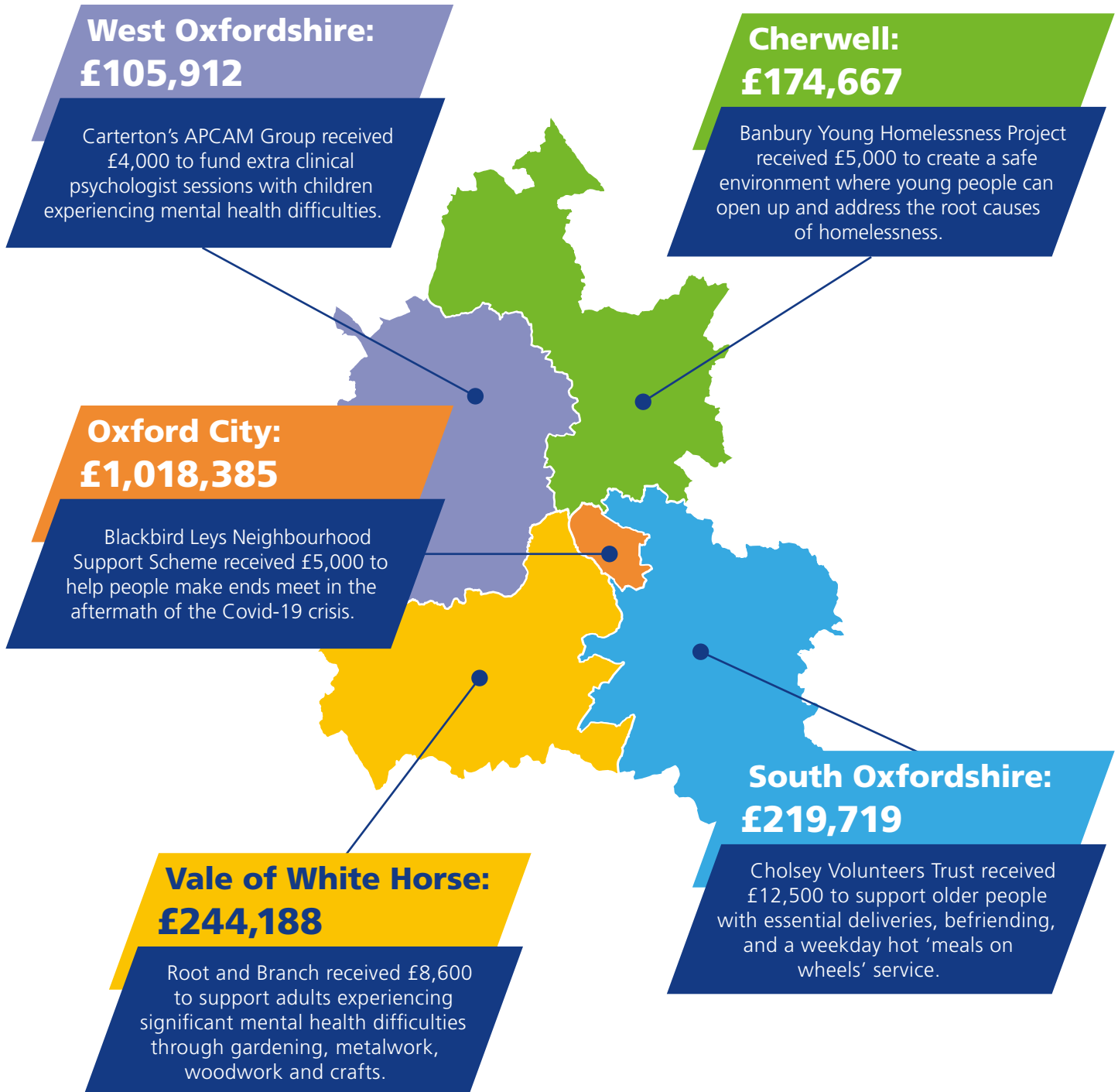
One participant in her 60s had a massive loss of confidence and independence following a stroke. When she first arrived, she was reserved and reluctant to participate in the cooking sessions. After a while she started to join in and her confidence grew. She said: "Coming to the group has helped with my mental health. My husband used to drop me off, but now I come from Blackbird Leys on my mobility scooter on my own, it's made me realise I can do it, and I went to Tesco on my own last week for the first time since my stroke. It was fine and I didn't care what people thought of me!"



Supporting our whole county

From the populous neighbourhoods of Oxford to market towns and rural villages, our funding reaches those most in need, wherever they are.

Grants from OCF fund the smallest charities and community groups that are embedded at grassroots level, providing support and services directly to those in need.



A small proportion of our grants made through named funds are awarded to charitable groups outside of Oxfordshire.

Grants from our named funds

We made a total of 74 grants from the named funds we hold on behalf of donors, to the tune of £1.4 million, enabling our fundholders to carry out their philanthropic ambitions. From hospice care to youth football, to heart health or supporting people with learning disabilities, we can advise fundholders on local charities that meet their passions.

The Step Change Fund supported nine organisations with funding to make fundamental changes in their organisation that will pave the way for growth. Examples include extending a charity's reach to cover all of Oxfordshire; or installing a more efficient IT system to save on running costs.

The Didcot Powerhouse Fund supported 18 charitable organisations in the Didcot area, with local businesses stepping forward to support their surrounding communities. A wide variety of projects have been funded, such as catch-up support in local primary schools, and preventative wellbeing and mental-health initiatives.



Oxford Wood Recycling, who received a Step Change grant of £42k to improve their workspace and help people into employment

Helping the smallest charities thrive

Seed funding, thanks to grants from OCF, has enabled a number of tiny start-up charities to flourish and become well established, making a difference to thousands of people's lives in Oxfordshire. **Children Heard and Seen** are one such example, where their therapeutic programme supporting children and families with a parent in prison is now being rolled out for professionals across the country.

"Oxfordshire Community Foundation was our seed funding and absolutely key to our development as an organisation. I feel indebted to OCF for believing in the model and supporting us – particularly in the early days."

Sarah Burrows, CEO, Children Heard and Seen

Another story of success is **Parasol Project**. Established in 1991, their purpose is empowering disabled and disadvantaged children and young people. OCF funded a range of pilot projects which resulted in them securing National Lottery funding of £216k to roll out the programme in 2023.



Philanthropic investment through OCF

During 2023 we continued to build our income through a variety of sources, bringing together funders around grant-making priorities to deliver greater collective impact.

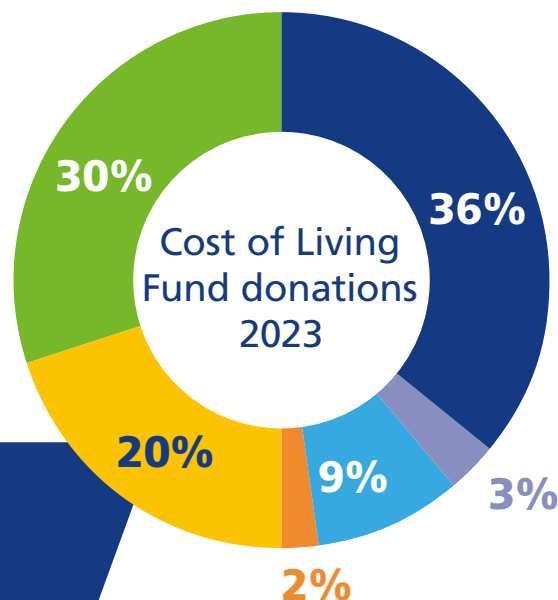
Named funds

During 2023, 32% of our grants were made from our 23 different named funds. A named fund (or donor-advised fund) is a ringfenced charitable fund held and managed on a donor's behalf by OCF. Our fundholders range from businesses implementing great CSR, to family funds making grants in memory of a loved one. For example:

- The Taylor Family Fund supported mental health charity One-Eighty to develop their partnership with Abbey Woods Academy School in Berinsfield, which supports children to talk about their worries and how to stay mentally healthy.
- The Beard Foundation fund matched an employee's fundraising for Sobell House Hospice, giving an additional £4,000 towards specialist palliative care to those facing life-threatening illness, death and bereavement in Oxfordshire.

Collective funds

Collective giving allows multiple donors to contribute to shared funds that have a particular theme or geography, making a bigger impact by pooling their donations together. For example, in 2023, the Cost of Living Fund received donations from all parts of Oxfordshire society to alleviate the effects of the crisis:



- ♥ Trusts
- ♥ Businesses
- ♥ Individuals
- ♥ National funds
- ♥ OCF endowment dividends and unrestricted funds
- ♥ Oxfordshire County Council

Grant-making on behalf of statutory bodies

We continued to work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to provide a mixture of crisis support and preventative interventions via our Cost of Living Fund and Community Capacity grants. We also delivered grants from the pandemic Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and the Community Buildings Energy Support Scheme.

“OCF has been a key partner in delivering efficient, effective and independent rounds of community funding. Their evidence-based approach and broad reach into the community sector has helped us deliver support across Oxfordshire’s communities in a way that is transparent as well as fast.”

Robin Rogers, Programme Director (Partnerships and Delivery) Oxfordshire County Council

“I am delighted that via our fund with OCF we can join together with other donors to support causes we are all passionate about. It means we can do more good by working as a collective.”

Tracy Norris-Evans, RWK Goodman

We wouldn't be able to do our work without the help of our fundholders, donors and supporters... thank you!

Fundholders and Patrons

Beard Charitable Foundation
The Beeching Trust
Brethertons Community Fund
David and Claudia Harding Foundation
The Daymark Fund
Didcot Powerhouse Fund
Fund for Sankalpa
The Harriet Ryley Foundation
Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee Legacy Fund for East Oxford
High Sheriff of Oxfordshire's Charitable Fund
Sally Scott, High Sheriff of Oxfordshire 2023-24
Jane Wates Patron Fund
Komorun Nessa Fund
The Maggie Evans Fund
Meech Centenary Trust
Midcounties Co-operative Community Fund
Our Common Good
Ponsonby Family Fund
Relate Oxfordshire Trust
RWK Goodman Community Fund
Saunders Family Fund

The Scott Fund
Snyder Moon Family Fund
Step Change Fund
The Taylor Family Fund
The Tim Stockdale Foundation

Statutory funders

Oxfordshire County Council
Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board
Public Health Oxfordshire

Collective Business Fund members

Allen Associates
B4 Business
Mills and Reeve
Olamalu
Oxford Pharmagenesis
Prodrive Motorsport
RWK Goodman
Wise Funds

Members of our Friends programme (30)



Asylum Welcome received several grants in the year to support their work with asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants to find safety and to thrive in Oxfordshire

Help us to continue our work in Oxfordshire

By donating to Oxfordshire Community Foundation, you will make a huge difference to the county's network of grassroots charities, where every pound has a transformative impact.

Here's what you can do to help:

Your own fund

When you make a substantial donation or leave a gift in your will, we can tailor your local giving to your particular interests. A bespoke named fund is an effective alternative to creating a charitable trust, benefiting from OCF's knowledge of local needs and the organisations tackling them.



Regular or one-off gifts

If you want us to direct your funds to the most pressing local causes of the moment, you can make an unrestricted donation online or by standing order. We will collect Gift Aid where relevant, and let you know what we have achieved with your help.



Collective giving

Give with people who share your philanthropic interests and make a bigger difference together. By supporting one of our collective funds, you can direct your giving towards a particular geography or issue.



Corporate giving

Support your organisation's CSR or charitable funding objectives. Whether you represent a local business, a trust or foundation, or a statutory body, we can offer robust, dynamic ways to get your funding into the community.



To join our giving community, visit www.oxfordshire.org/giving.



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