

# Your impact 2024

Building thriving communities through effective philanthropy



# Building thriving communities in Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Community Foundation improves lives and tackles inequality by investing in Oxfordshire's dynamic charitable sector.

We build thriving communities through effective philanthropy, matching donor 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 to reach their full potential.



"Grassroots charities continue to face enormous challenges as demand for their services increases while their operating costs rise. Our work, thanks to our generous donors, is essential in maintaining a network of support for the most vulnerable in Oxfordshire, whenever they need it."

**Ian Busby, Chair**



"We are laser focused on being a grant-maker who adds value. The team works towards this in everything they do – whether advising a donor on local needs, or supporting the smallest of groups as they apply for the first time. It is constantly rewarding to collaborate with so many people who want the best for our county."

**Zoe Sprigings, CEO**

This impact report for the year 2023-24 tells the story of how your generous giving makes this possible. We will show you the picture in Oxfordshire, how our funding is being channelled to meet these needs, and the many ways that community groups are transforming people's lives.

# Local philanthropy making lasting change

**£1.9 million**  
total funds distributed



**SMALLEST**  
grant awarded  
**£250**  
OX4 Food Crew



**BIGGEST**  
grant awarded  
**£67K**  
Oxford City Farm



From mental health support groups and good neighbour schemes to providing bikes for refugees and an advice service for people with sight loss, our funding has supported a wide range of needs.

Much of this work may appear on the surface to offer one activity, but in reality is providing a multitude of vital hidden support, such as signposting the most vulnerable to other crucial services.

Take **Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support**. A grant of £5,857 funded them to hold group sessions in East Oxford for breastfeeding mothers. Through this activity, they have built social capital by proactively helping mums from different backgrounds to connect with each other, alleviating loneliness, offering peer support for mental and physical health, and navigating the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis.

**Your role as philanthropists and funders is crucial to supporting our mission. By pooling resources, we are able to harness the power of the collective – reaching many more small and local charities than any of us would be able to on our own.**



# Investing in small but mighty organisations

We know that small grassroots charities are delivering a vital service to their communities, plugging the gaps left by reduced state funding.

Many are run by volunteers and community champions who are passionate about the area they live and work in. They understand the local issues and create safe, familiar spaces where they can reach the most vulnerable. Yet these organisations receive a much smaller proportion of the funding available, with 85% of all charitable income in England and Wales going to just 4% of registered charities. OCF's focus on the smallest local charities seeks to rectify this imbalance.



*"Being part of Tandem has changed my life. My befriender was wonderfully sensible and grounded – just what I needed at the time. Keep up the good work."*

A beneficiary at Tandem Befriending

**Tandem Befriending** is a small, Oxford-based mental health charity, with just two part-time employees. It relies on volunteers to become befrienders, providing emotional support and a listening ear to those living with mental health issues.

A grant from OCF allowed Tandem to fund the salary of a co-ordinator, and cover expenses for their social group. This facilitated the recruitment of a second co-ordinator, allowing the organisation to increase the number of befriending partnerships it can set up and support.

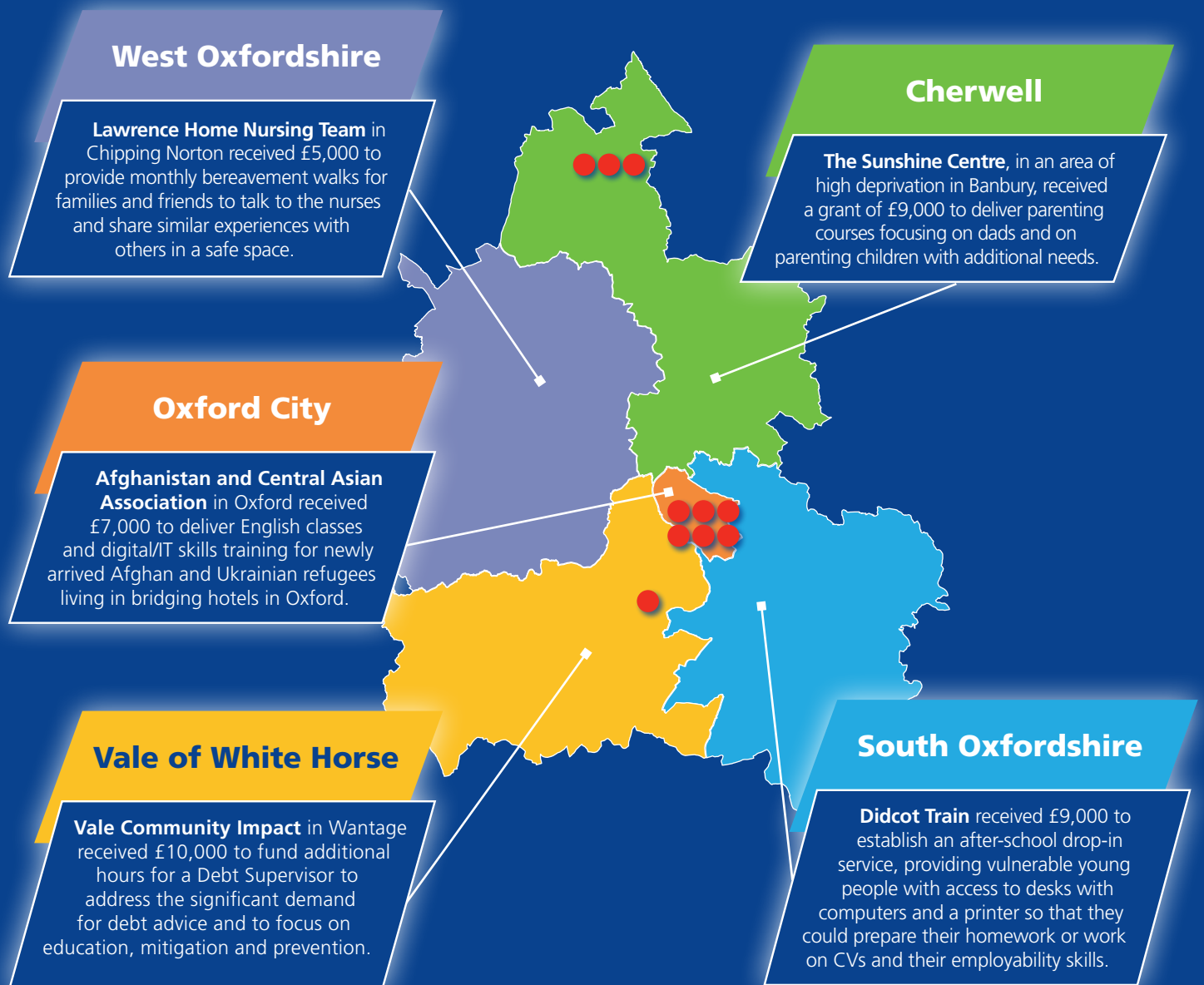


Our latest research report from November 2023, Oxfordshire Uncovered, revealed the barriers that stop people in Oxfordshire from thriving. These include: **unaffordable essentials; poor health; loneliness and fear; and lack of opportunity**. We use these to analyse our grant-making, and will continue to do so, delivering targeted investments into dynamic local organisations that are directly tackling these issues.

# Supporting all of Oxfordshire

Beneath the visible affluence of the county, there are parts of Oxfordshire where our fellow citizens do not enjoy the same advantages and privileges.

The mix of rural villages, market towns and the populous neighbourhoods of Oxford brings unique challenges in each of these areas. Our funding reaches those most in need, wherever they are.



## 10 most deprived areas in the county

Index of Multiple Deprivation - most deprived 10% of small areas in England

# Tackling unaffordable essentials

Food insecurity, keeping warm and having stable housing continue to be a huge challenge for some of Oxfordshire residents. Food banks and community larders have become the norm for many people.

Our Cost of Living Fund launched a second round of funding in 2023. Building on the first round of funding in September 2022, this round focused on continued support to help community organisations tackle the cost of living and build more resilience. These grants were funded by OCF and a further £100,000 from Oxfordshire County Council, as well as a pool of other generous local trusts, businesses, Oxford colleges and members of the public.

Going forward, we are continuing to support this theme through our Living Essentials Fund.



- 41% Enrichment activities
- 24% Mental health
- 16% Food and supplies
- 14% Advice
- 5% Homeless support

*"The food parcels were a blessing, but the cooking tips and recipes made a real difference, making me feel more confident and ensuring my children are healthier and happier."*

A beneficiary at SYRCOX



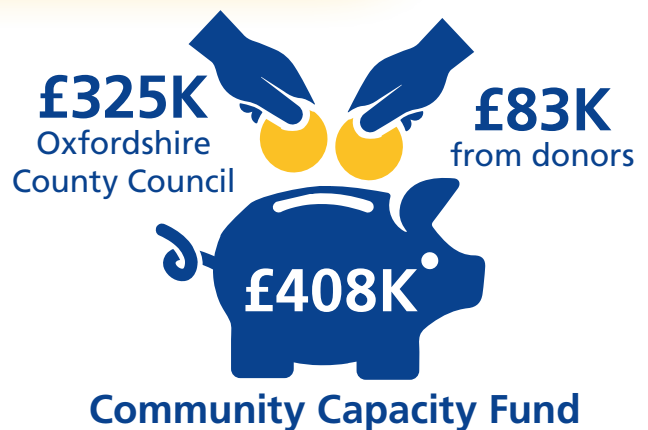
A grant of £10,000 enabled **Syrian Community in Oxfordshire (SYRCOX)** to deliver weekly emergency food parcels and recipe cards. Families learn to cook affordable, healthy and nutritious meals, breaking the cycle of poor diet and reliance on expensive ready meals.



**Didcot Community Partnership** received a grant of £9,000 to increase their opening hours to support more children, young people and families. They launched the 'Grub Hub', which focused on providing food and activities to low-income families in the summer holiday.

# Alleviating loneliness and fear

Key to tackling loneliness and isolation is funding that bolsters independence and resilience. Charities are supporting people with a wide variety of activities such as befriending, staying active, community meals, digital access and mental health support.



A second round of Community Capacity funding was made possible thanks to £325,000 from Oxfordshire County Council. Working in partnership with them, grants were made to help support people to live well in their community for as long as possible and address preventable conditions. This investment was combined with generous donations from our other funders, enabling us to reach more people.

*"Thank you for this funding opportunity. Your team is always extremely helpful, understanding and professional in any dealings we have with you."*

Katharine Barber, Home-Start Oxford

*"OCF has the skills and connections to identify where the funding is most needed, as well as being able to tap into a resource from generous local donors, resulting in further funding."*

Councillor Tim Bearder, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Blackbird Leys based charity **Daybreak** provides activities for people with dementia. They received £10,000 to buy specialist equipment, provide nutritious meals and further develop their staff training. Jan, who is 71, has dementia and had previously suffered with loneliness and isolation. That all changed when she started attending Daybreak. Her daughter Mary said "Mum now goes four times a week and has a great time singing, bowling and dancing! Mum can hold almost a full conversation now, whereas before coming she could barely put two words together."



## Addressing poor health



The Oxfordshire population is growing and ageing, and cancer is the leading cause of death in the county. Prevalence of depression is above the national average.

Grants from OCF enabled charitable organisations to reach people using bespoke approaches to tackle poor health head on. We are working with local clinical commissioning groups and Public Health bodies to distribute funding that improves specific health inequalities, in particular cancer outcomes and mental health.

**Oxfordshire Chinese Community and Advice Centre (OCCAC)** received a grant of £25,000 supporting the Chinese community to gain equal access to health services. They delivered programmes to promote cancer awareness and practical support for people diagnosed with cancer. These included bilingual advice surgeries, online health talks/workshops, and cancer patient support groups.



## Countering lack of opportunity

In our county, 35% of primary school children do not reach the standard of reading and writing, which affects their life chances and employment prospects in the future.

Several of our named funds are focused on building achievement and aspiration to transform educational outcomes. For example, the Taylor Family Fund has been supporting an ongoing partnership between charity **One-Eighty** and Abbey Woods Academy. The partnership has played a small part in the school achieving a Good result in their Ofsted review, and has been so successful that it is now being rolled out across other schools to tackle the ever increasing education and mental health needs in young people. The school has also been involved in **The Story Museum's** Spellbound Schools project, which inspires a love of reading, funded by the Maggie Evans Fund with OCF.





# Empowering effective philanthropy

OCF's team provides a bespoke service to donors of all sizes, with a range of giving options that help individuals and organisations give their money away well.

## Collective giving

The **Step Change Fund** supported charitable organisations with £453,000 in funding to pave the way for growth through greater capacity and more efficient processes. Project managers support the groups through stewardship and support for the duration of the project. **Dementia Active** received a grant of £66,842 to create a dedicated dementia centre in Banbury. This has allowed them to support more people in a better suited environment with a host of different offerings, from music groups and drop-in sessions as well as support for carers.

The **Didcot Powerhouse Fund** is held by OCF and gave £112,000 in grants to 21 charities and community groups in 2024 thanks to donations from local companies and people. **My Life My Choice** supports people with learning disabilities to have choice and control over their lives, and received a grant of £5,000 to establish a self-advocacy group for Didcot residents with learning disabilities.

## Personal giving

The **HS Sally Scott Fund** was established in 2023 to support the High Sheriff in her personal mission to raise money for initiatives that tackle crime and its causes. During her Shrieval Year she raised £45,000 into the fund from her personal contacts, and OCF has helped her discover five different grantees, including **Flag DV**, which delivers free legal advice and support for survivors of domestic abuse, and **Nai's House**, which works on suicide prevention amongst young people.



## Corporate giving

OCF's **Collective Business Fund** recently welcomed medical communication company Oxford Pharmagenesis, along with continued support from Wise Investment. The fund is currently focused on providing the basics for living a stable and safe life. Charities funded include **The Gatehouse**, a small charity in Oxford that supports people who are homeless or vulnerably housed.

Another example is a grant to **Windrush Bike Project** through a **corporate named fund** with Meech, which funded bike mechanic training for people struggling with their mental health. One participant shared: "It offered me the first opportunity in over ten years to feel like I was moving forward – physically and mentally – in the world alongside others with similar struggles."



# Championing better grant-making



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

The way we deliver funding is just as important to us as how much we give. We aim to be the kindest and most helpful funder in the county.

We fund core costs – such as office space, salaries and bills – which charitable groups can struggle to find the money for. We know that giving groups unrestricted grants gives them the flexibility to deliver their mission in the most efficient way possible.

*“At OCF, we are dedicated to truly listening to grassroots communities and addressing their needs in our grant-making. We hear from groups how valuable our grant application feedback is, enabling them to strengthen their future applications to us and other funders.”*

Claire Hughes, Head of Grants and Inclusion, Oxfordshire Community Foundation



*“It’s incredibly refreshing to encounter your charity-friendly, trust-based approach.”*

Ben Drabble, CEO at Didcot TRAIN

This year has seen our Grants Team make huge strides towards a more straightforward funding process: being clearer about funding criteria; simplifying forms; opening for in-person and virtual drop-ins; and giving feedback to those who are not successful. This is something we will be continuously improving with a goal of ensuring equal access to all our applicants.

*“I have found OCF excellent to work with, your funding process is well thought out, easy to navigate and supportive throughout the process, much easier than others.”*

Steph Jankovic, Cutteslowe Community Centre



# Our supporters

We wouldn't be able to do our work without your help. Collectively we are transforming people's lives throughout Oxfordshire – thank you.

## Fundholders and Patrons

B4 Raise Fund  
Beard Charitable Foundation  
The Bob and Alison Michael Memorial Fund  
Brethertons Community Fund  
Rev Charlotte Bannister-Parker  
David and Claudia Harding Foundation  
The Daymark Fund  
Didcot Powerhouse Fund  
Sir Dominic Cadbury  
Fund for Sankalpa  
The Harriet Ryley Foundation  
Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee Legacy Fund for East Oxford  
High Sheriff of Oxfordshire's Charitable Fund  
HS James Macnamara Fund  
HS Sally Scott Fund  
Jane Wates Patron Fund  
Komorun Nessa Fund  
Lord-Lieutenant Marjorie Glasgow BEM  
The Maggie Evans Fund  
Meech Centenary Trust  
Midcounties Co-operative Community Fund  
Ocean Empower Fund  
Ponsonby Family Fund  
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

## Collective Business Fund

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

## Statutory funders

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

## Trusts and foundations

Barnsbury Charitable Trust  
The Beeching Trust  
Blyth Charitable Trust  
Champniss Charitable Trust  
Duke of Marlborough's Charitable Trust  
HDH Wills Charitable Trust  
Helianthus Charitable Trust  
Ian Mactaggart Trust  
John Laing Charitable Trust  
Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust  
Macfarlane Family Foundation  
Sovereign Network Group (SNG)  
Ormonde Foundation  
P F Charitable Trust  
Quartet Community Foundation  
UK Community Foundations

## Members of our Friends programme (32)

*Some of our donors and funders choose to remain anonymous, and we are grateful to them too.*



# 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:

### Personal giving

Tailor your local philanthropy to your personal interests or those of your family

- Set up a named fund
- Leave a legacy in your will
- Become a Patron or Friend
- Transfer shares or property

### Collective giving

Give with people who share your philanthropic interests and make a bigger difference together

- Donate to our Living Essentials Fund
- Join our Thriving in Nature Fund

### Corporate giving

Support your organisation's CSR objectives or local grant-making strategy

- Join the Collective Business Fund
- Set up a named fund
- Consider our grant-making services

To join our giving community, visit [www.oxfordshire.org/giving](http://www.oxfordshire.org/giving).



ocf@oxfordshire.org  
01865 798666  
www.oxfordshire.org  
3 Woodin's Way, Oxford, OX1 1HD

