

Vibrant Communities
Brighter Futures

COMMUNITY
FIRST

Your Community First



Connecting Communities



Tackling Disadvantage



Grants & Enterprise



Inspire Ideas & Innovate



Building Bridges Programme
Legacy and Impact

Community Organising Team Delivers New Youth Projects

Splash Offers Life-Changing Support to Young Victims of Crime

£349k Grants Distributed Through Landfill Communities Fund

Community First Supports Charities and Groups to Deliver on Creative Projects

Insurance for Village Halls, Parish Councils and Playing Fields

Welcome

A Note from Our Chair of Trustees

As Chair of the Community First Board of Trustees, it is always a pleasure to reflect on the work we have carried out over the previous 12 months. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team of staff and volunteers for all their hard work in delivering our programmes and services, thanks also to my fellow trustees and the Community First Leadership Team who do so much to drive our charity, our aims and our important work forward.

We are also grateful to the many partners, donors and supporters, both locally and nationally, whose continued support is essential to our work. Your contribution will help to ensure vibrant communities and brighter futures for the people who live in Wiltshire and Swindon, for years to come.

James Moody (Chair of Trustees - Community First)



Welcome to Your Community First, our annual review and celebration publication which showcases some of the outstanding work delivered through our programmes and services over the last 12 months.

We are really proud of the work our teams have carried out this year and for the way they have delivered high-quality services for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the county.



Following the Covid-19 pandemic, VCSE sector organisations like Community First have begun to see the longer-term impact Covid-19 has had on the resilience of people and communities locally, as well as the increased pressure on household budgets, volunteer capacity and public services.

We pride ourselves on being an agile and adaptable charity with a proven track-record of working in partnership with others. During these uncertain times, we are confident that we can continue to support the people and places who need us most through our core aims of connecting communities, tackling disadvantage, encouraging enterprise and inspiring ideas/innovating.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Community First staff team, our valued trustees and volunteers, as well as our members and supporters who continue to champion the work we do here in Wiltshire and Swindon. It would not be possible to achieve all that we have achieved this year without your support.

Lynn Gibson, Chief Executive

Your Community First

We are a local charity that works to improve the lives of people in Wiltshire and Swindon. Our national award-winning programmes and services offer life-changing support to the most vulnerable people across the county. Your Community First is a new way to support vibrant communities and brighter futures for the people and places that matter most to you, and to us, because your community is our community.

Can you help us raise £30,000 for a new Youth Action Wiltshire minibus?

We provide a variety of services for people and communities locally, including our multi-award winning Youth Action Wiltshire programmes. These vital services for young people offer free day, residential and respite activities such as camping, adventure sports, crafts, cooking and conservation. Many of our activities take place in nature or at our dedicated outdoor education centres in Oxenwood and Linkenholt.

In addition to our free activity programme, we also provide free transport for day and residential activities. Without free transport, many of the young people we work with would not be able to take part in YAW activities or access help and support from our youth



workers. Our YAW minibus has transported hundreds of young people to thousands of activities and is now ready for retirement. We are currently fundraising to purchase a replacement 17-seater minibus.

This year we will be launching our fundraising campaign with the overall aim of raising £30,000 towards the cost of the new minibus. All donations are gratefully received:

www.communityfirst.org.uk/support



We are fundraising for a new minibus

Summary of Achievements

Charity & Governance

- Secured an income of over £420,000 against a target of £357,000.
- Operating a hybrid model of working with a blend of home and office working.
- Four new trustees appointed in 2021 and we aim to recruit two additional roles in 2022.
- Actively preparing for new Government programmes such as Levelling Up and the Shared Prosperity Funds.
- We have a strong presence within the new Integrated Care System (ICS) and Integrated Care Alliance (ICA).
- A new marketing and communications plan is in place with increased resource to expand awareness of our work and grow our audiences, engagement and donations.

Outdoor Education

- Working with The Blagrove Trust to manage Linkenholt Countryside Adventure Centre.
- Secured funding to appoint a new Targeted Outdoor Education Instructor.
- Working towards the redevelopment of Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre.
- Provided 188 free to access group work outdoor education sessions for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, including 6 residential projects.

Youth Action Wiltshire

- 217 newly referred young carers were supported to co-produce a plan, with 231 young carers accessing one-to-one mentoring or coaching. 408 young carers accessed face-to-face respite and support groups and 30 young carers access remote webinars
- 240 newly referred young people 'facing challenges in their lives', were enabled through Splash provision to co-produce a support plan. 339 young people accessed face to face Splash group work sessions and 144 young people accessed remote group webinars. 315 young people accessed 1:1 support.
- 54 young people, of which 18 who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and 36 who were at significant risk of becoming NEET, engaged with intensive support from Project Inspire. Alongside wide ranging 1:1 provision, 71 face to face day groups and 2 residential projects were delivered.
- £20,000+ funding raised to sustain and broaden local youth club provision.
- Promoted a variety of externally run youth forums such as Salisbury City Youth Panel, Wiltshire Youth Climate Alliance & Wiltshire & Swindon Youth Commission.
- Set-up support provided for 4 new clubs, with an additional 9 monthly term-time young carers clubs launched.
- Currently offering support for 18 clubs to re-launch face-to-face provision.
- Governance, volunteer recruitment and fundraising support offered to 9 member youth clubs.
- Funding sourced for an additional Young Carers Support Worker and an additional Splash Support Worker.

Building Bridges Programme

- 1,752 eligible participants supported to date, with over 300 participants currently engaging with support.
- Over half of participants have achieved a positive outcome through the programme. 25% have moved into employment, 29% have moved into education (including those who were NEET or at risk on joining) and 3% of participants who were economically inactive have moved into job search.
- Work is ongoing to secure continuation funding for the programme.

Community Development

- 6 new members of Wiltshire Village Halls Association, for a total of 183 halls and buildings in membership.
- Training through Get Out Get Active (GOGA) Sport England programme in partnership with Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (WASP), has taken place at four locations with 37 people attending.
- Minibus Driver Awareness Training (MiDAS) achieved income of £13,862 against a target of £10,000.
- 232 member councils supported through Wiltshire Association of Local Councils.
- Community Information Champions project is complete with 140 people trained and 100 support sessions delivered.
- Youth Consultants supporting Rural Youth and Friary Estate projects. Continued with ongoing work to secure funding for Youth Consultants.
- Connect 2 Wiltshire project is complete with 2,025 people engaged, 448 volunteers recruited, 59 community organisers trained, 206 community leaders trained and 10 social hubs created.
- Ongoing support for Link Schemes and community transport groups, with a volunteer recruitment campaign planned for the autumn.
- Completion of a short CCG funded project focussing on rural health inequalities. 209 listenings carried out with residents in B&NES and Wiltshire and 51 listenings with organisations locally.
- The Community Organising team also carried out 50 listenings to support the Building Bridges Programme.

Grants & Funding

- Grants of £349,587 awarded.
- A clean Entrust audit achieved for Landfill Communities Fund grant administration.

Community Insurance

- Developed a new database for community insurance to build capacity, growth and surplus income.
- Income of £27,418 which was reinvested back into our charitable aims.





Building Bridges Programme Legacy & Continuation Funding



Since its launch in 2016, the Building Bridges Programme has supported 1,752 participants to overcome complex barriers and challenges, access education and move towards the world of work. The national award-winning programme is delivered by a cross-sector partnership of 85 staff across 16 partner organisations (including teams from Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council), who work together collaboratively to support people in Swindon and Wiltshire who are furthest from the labour market. This includes people who are long-term unemployed or economically inactive.

Using a key worker approach so that participants need only tell their story once, a personalised needs analysis and solution focused plan is developed for each individual, drawing support from across the whole partnership as required. Support plans can be developed in liaison with family, partners, carers and support workers if the participant wishes. Support plans are not time constrained and are adapted over time to meet the participant's needs. The success of the partnership's

collaborative approach was recognised when it was awarded joint winner in the Team of the Year category in the 2020 ERSA Employability Awards and also runner up for Community Group of the Year at the Wiltshire Life Awards 2022.

The Building Bridges programme has been highly successful both in terms of participant outcomes and cost effectiveness. The programme generated over £10M of benefit across Swindon and Wiltshire since launch and has been highly effective in reaching and supporting people where more mainstream employability support approaches have not proved successful. Despite nearly 70% of participants being economically inactive and 19% being from areas of multiple deprivation, the programme has helped over half of participants to achieve positive outcomes into education and employment.

Building Bridges uses a bespoke Cost Benefit Analysis model developed by the Pro-Bono Economics Organisation with analysts from the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. This model demonstrates that the programme has created £10.1M of economic benefits to date from a spend of circa £1.2Mp.a. and has a current return on investment of £1.57 per £1 invested (was £1.71 pre-pandemic). The analysis also highlighted that for the demographic groups supported through the programme, Building Bridges is achieving three times the success level into employment than mainstream employability support programmes.



The programme has received up to £8.4M of funding from the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund as part of the national Building Better Opportunities Programme.

Established by the European Union, the European Social Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support skills development, employment and job creation, social inclusion and local community regenerations. The current tranche of funding is due to come to an end in 2023 and the Building Bridges Programme Lead Team is currently reviewing how to evolve and fund the future delivery of the programme, so that the highly successful and cost-effective approach it has created can continue to support those furthest from the labour market towards education and employment, especially in areas of multiple deprivation.

For more information visit:
www.buildingbridgessw.org.uk



Jacob's Journey



When Jacob was referred to the Building Bridges programme, he was feeling uncertain about the future. He was nervous, struggling with anxiety, low self-confidence and motivation.

Jacob felt he lacked skills and was concerned that he was not able to succeed at or cope with a job. Whilst he had previous work experience, this was not in a field which inspired or interested him and he struggled being in large groups of people or busy places. Jacob had some plans for the future but was not sure how to move towards his goals.

Upon joining the programme Jacob had never received any careers advice and, whilst he already had a basic CV, he was given help to improve it alongside advice from the National Careers Service. Through a strength exploration activity, Jacob discovered that he had some

really strong transferable skills, including being reliable,

Jacob Said:

"I feel like I had a friend along the way to help me even when I was stubborn, and I really appreciate you for it. Thank you to my Support Worker for making a difference in my life and thank you to Building Bridges for helping shape my future in an amazing way."

punctual and keen to challenge himself. Jacob is also a good listener and someone who loves to make others laugh. Whilst Jacob was anxious about being around new people, these transferable skills could (in time) help him become a great team member.

As part of his programme journey, Jacob accessed behaviour change support from Splitz Support Service, a local domestic abuse support charity. He also expressed an interest in a positive relationships pilot project. The tools and strategies he learned from one-to-one and group activities helped Jacob improve his relationships with others.

Jacob went on to secure employment with a marketing agency on a 6-month Kickstart work placement which allowed him to work from home and receive training as part of the role. A regular income also enabled Jacob to reduce his debt. Jacob is currently exploring weekend volunteering opportunities with a local charity to help him transition back into a work environment, continue to build his confidence and give something back to the community.

Jacob's employer said:

"Jacob started our remote Digital Marketing Kickstart programme early in March and is making great progress, learning about all aspects of marketing. He has already completed online courses on 'Magnificent Marketing' and 'Marketing for Recovery' as well as learning about Net Zero and how to build online courses. He is developing employability skills with a specialist course and attending webinars from experts across the industry. It is great to how he is applying the knowledge and how his confidence has increased."



Programme Summary

1,752

Participants supported through the programme to date

57%

Of participants have achieved a positive outcome

At any one time, the programme is actively supporting 250-300 participants.



25%

have already moved into employment



29%

have already moved into education (including young people who were NEET or At Risk on joining)



3%

who were economically inactive have already moved into job search



66% have gained new skills or qualifications



27% have undertaken structured volunteering



24% have accessed debt or financial advice



13% have undertaken work experience



13% have accessed travel training

19% of participants are from areas of multiple deprivation, compared to an average of 7% for the regional population

59% of participants have disabilities or long-term health conditions

84% of participants are classed as being disadvantaged



Youth Action Wiltshire



527

Young people
accessed Splash
provision

1,210

Face to face & remote
group work places
attended by young
people accessing Splash

315

Young people
accessed a total of
886 one-to-one
support sessions

98%

Reported increased
self confidence

95%

Reported increased
happiness

96%

Improved mental
health and wellbeing



*"The Splash
worker gained my
child's trust really quickly,
through listening to them and
being nice to them. It's been great
for them to have someone to talk to
about how they feel"*

A Parent

*"I climbed all
the way to the top,
I didn't think I could do it
but I did!"*

A Young Person



217

newly referred young carers, were enabled to co-produce a support plan

231

Accessed one-to-one mentoring or coaching programmes

408

Accessed face-to-face respite and group support

We are hugely grateful to all of our partners & supporters. In 2021 to 2022, 68% of the direct expenditure of our Wiltshire Young Carers Service was derived from applications to Grant Giving Trusts & Foundations, The National Lottery & through our fundraising activities & events.

173

Young carers accessed Information, Guidance and Advice (IAG)

62

Young carers received intensive support with their education

17

Young carers attended internally funded counselling sessions

Supported by:



Carer Support Wiltshire

Wiltshire Council

"Being around people that get it, it's so comforting"

A Young Carer



"Having someone to talk to has really helped me. My Young Carers Support Worker is so supportive"

A Young Carer

£20k+

Funding raised to sustain and expand youth clubs

54

Young people who were NEET (or at risk) engaged with Project Inspire support

92%

Of young people reported increased skills through Project Inspire





Splash Offers Life-Changing Support to Young Victims of Crime



Splash is a Youth Action Wiltshire service that supports children and young people who are facing challenges in their lives including those with SEN, with a CP plan/issue, a parent in prison, young carers and children in care. The service offers fun, positive activities, one-to-one coaching and mentoring and the opportunity to spend time with other young people who have had similar life experiences. Some of the fantastic opportunities offered to young people attending Splash provision this year have included climbing, sailing, camping, pony days, kayaking and archery.

Splash also operates a specific support service for young victims of crime to enable them to cope and recover from their experience of crime. This element of Splash is partially funded by The Office of the Wiltshire and Swindon Police & Crime Commissioner. Being a victim

of a crime can have a negative impact on educational achievement, home life, relationships

with others and the individuals mental health and wellbeing. Splash offers a holistic support service to help build confidence, overcome trauma and build positive relationships through fun, hands on activities and learning with peers.

“Children and young people disproportionately experience more crime than adults and are significantly over-represented in the most serious crime statistics. Their experience of crime can be distinct from that of adults due to their maturity levels and vulnerability and can have a substantial impact on their health and vulnerability.”

Victim Support ‘Children and Young People Affected by Crime Policy Statement



The support offered by Splash has had a life-changing impact on many young victims of crime and their families, including Ollie and Alex*

**Names and some identifying details have been changed.*

Ollie's Story

Ollie was referred to Splash by the Horizon team at Wiltshire Police after experiencing a serious assault which left him badly injured. Ollie was very traumatised after the incident and his family were worried about his mental wellbeing. Splash made contact with Ollie within days of the referral from Wiltshire Police. A Splash support worker visited Ollie and also spoke with his family to understand how best they could help him.

Ollie did not want to press charges immediately after the assault as he did not feel safe in the community and was worried about reprisals. Ollie's support worker spent one-to-one time with Ollie, helping him to open up and encouraging him to talk about his experience in a safe and supportive environment. After receiving intensive support from Splash, Ollie decided to make an official video statement to the police which took a lot of courage and showed how much his confidence had grown after engaging with Splash.

Ollie's mum said that the support offered by Splash was lifesaving for Ollie as he had been in a very dark place. He didn't want to engage with the family and spent a lot of time alone in his room. Ollie's mum said that Splash had provided 'respite from his own head', with weekly support including online quizzes, face-to-face and group activities, as well as a positive, nurturing relationship with his support worker which allowed him to just be himself, open up in his own time and make his own decisions without judgement.

Of the support received from Splash, Ollie's mum said: "Splash has genuinely been a lifeline for Ollie, and us as a family. I don't think Ollie would have made it through the trauma of the crime without Splash." Ollie has gone from strength to strength since engaging with Splash and is now closer than ever with his family members, as well as helping others in the community. Ollie has expressed an interest in working with emergency services in the future and using his lived experience of overcoming trauma to help other children and young people experiencing mental health challenges.

Alex's Story

Alex was referred to Splash after experiencing bullying and an assault outside of school. Alex's mum agreed that he could benefit from some additional support and was pleased with how quickly the Splash team made contact to offer help for Alex.

Alex's mum had a positive interaction with the police and says she was kept updated throughout the process. However, Alex was still experiencing episodes of bullying in school, as well as continuing contact with individuals involved in the previous incident. Whilst some measures were put in place to support Alex at school and limit his interaction with the bullies, Alex really thrived with additional support from Splash. A Splash support worker visited Alex at school and had regular contact with his family.

When Alex first engaged with Splash provision, Covid-19 restrictions meant that support was offered online. Whilst he was initially reluctant to take part in online activities, he quickly became a regular attendee at Splash online quizzes and his mum said he was 'absolutely buzzing' afterwards. As Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, Alex began to take part in face-to-face group activities and really thrived being around others that had similar experiences. Alex quickly began to develop a number of positive friendships at Splash and a strong relationship with support workers and other young people involved with the service. Alex's mum said he really benefited from engaging positively with other young people and positive adult role models at Splash. In turn this has helped Alex build his confidence and develop resilience to future life challenges.

For more information about Splash, please visit: www.communityfirst.org.uk/splash.





Young People Set Sail with YAW and Tall Ships Youth Trust



Ten young people embarked on a six-day sail from Plymouth to Swansea this summer, with Youth Action Wiltshire. Five young people from both our Splash and Wiltshire Young Carers services embraced this opportunity which was to be our most challenging sail to date.

The sail included a period of 22-hours of none stop sailing between Falmouth and Lundy Island, meaning the group needed to work in shifts split into three hours of working and three hours of sleeping. This was exciting, daunting, exhilarating and exhausting for all on-board. Everyone worked together to make the tricky journey as smooth and quick as possible and was just one example of the Youth Action Wiltshire crew really working together to get the job done!

Throughout the sailing experience, all the young people undertook all aspects of sailing from plotting the route, to navigating, putting the sails up and down, steering, cooking and even the cleaning.

This experience is such a character building opportunity for young people and we are extremely lucky to be able to provide such opportunities in partnership with Tall Ships Youth Trust and The Hugo Halkes Charitable Trust. Without these fantastic partners we would not be able to offer these experiences to our beneficiaries.

A full, rather humorous blog, written by our Youth Action Wiltshire crew can be found on the Tall Ships website: www.tallships.org/challenger-4-round-britain-adventure-plymouth-to-swanea.

A huge well done to everyone who took part in the sail.



Our Partnership with The Honeypot Children's Charity



Youth Action Wiltshire is pleased to announce that we have forged a new exciting partnership with The Honeypot Children's Charity, who have been providing respite breaks for thousands of young carers in the UK for over 25 years. Honeypot provide multi-year residential respite opportunities for young carers and will be providing four

residential in the coming year for our Wiltshire Young Carers Service at Honeypot House in the New Forest.

"I had the best time ever. I made friends and tried so many new things whilst I was away...it was awesome!"

Young Carer who attended Honeypot Residential

A group of 12 young carers from North Wiltshire, and 12 from West Wiltshire have already benefited

from two-night residentials

which have taken place over the summer holidays. 12 young carers from the Kennet area will be setting off in September for a two-night stay at Honeypot House, with a further 12 young carers due to

attend a residential in the New Year. These

residentials offer an opportunity for young

carers to have time away from their usual caring roles and give them an opportunity to relax and play with other children with a shared life experience

Honeypot House is set in seven acres of woodland which enables the wonderful team at Honeypot to run a huge programme of fun, engaging activities. This includes bug hunts and building dens in the forest, along with gokarting, trim trails, zip wires, trampolines, arts and crafts, games, dressing up and role play, movie nights with hot chocolate and marshmallows, swimming in the outdoor pool between April-October, trips to the seaside and local parks, cooking, baking, eating together and finishing each day with bedtime stories and super cosy beds.

The whole Youth Action Wiltshire Team are very grateful to Honeypot for reaching out to us and working in partnership to provide such valuable experiences for our young carers.





Outdoor Education

Community First purchased Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre in 2019, ensuring the delivery of outdoor education, adventure sport and historical learning days for young people locally and nationally. In 2021 we also partnered with The Blgrave Trust to manage Linkenholt Countryside Adventure Centre.

Linkenholt is an activity centre near Andover in Hampshire and can host a variety of day and residential activities such as school trips, scout, guide and youth groups, and Duke of Edinburgh activities. As well as offering a venue for our group activities through Youth Action Wiltshire programmes, both Oxenwood and Linkenholt Centres are available to hire offering a source of income for the charity which in turn supports our programme delivery.

We are currently



424

vulnerable & disadvantaged young people benefited from free to access outdoor education activities

48

Traded & 13 residential projects were provided for schools & youth groups.

developing a three-year operational growth plan for both centres, including a feasibility plan for the redevelopment of Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre. Architectural plans for the redevelopment will be designed in late 2022, with a fundraising and promotional campaign to support the redevelopment and wider promotion of the Oxenwood and Linkenholt facilities to schools and groups.

In the next 12 months we plan to deliver a minimum of 180 'free to access' group outdoor education sessions for disadvantaged young people and achieve the LOTC Quality Mark, including new ways to engage schools and young people in planning their outdoor education programmes. It's an exciting time for outdoor education at Community First, watch this space:

www.oxenwoodcentre.com

A person is shown from the back, aiming a bow at a target. The target is a circular archery target with concentric rings of blue, red, and yellow, mounted on a wooden frame. The background is a white tarp hanging from a wooden structure.

**We are open
for business**

Creating memories for a lifetime at Oxenwood and Linkenholt



Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre offers residential experiences and exciting adventure sport, outdoor education and bespoke historical enrichments days.

Linkenholt Countryside Adventure Centre offers camping residentials and exciting day activities. Perfect for D of E, Scouts, Guides, Youth and School Groups.



Your school or youth groups residential or day programme, will be designed to meet your young people's needs and learning objectives.

 01264 731274

 enquiries@oxenwoodcentre.com

 www.communityfirst.org.uk/oxenwood

 www.communityfirst.org.uk/linkenholt



COMMUNITY FIRST

Community Development

Community Information Champions

The Community Information Champions programme has now come to an end, reaching 851 people through the networking, training and facilitating support provided by our Community Development team.

Through the Community Information Champions project, Community First delivered Community Organising training to 140 trainees across 18 local areas. 100 support sessions were provided through online and face-to-face methods. The programme of training and networking has allowed people to connect with each other across the county to share their ideas and challenges with others.

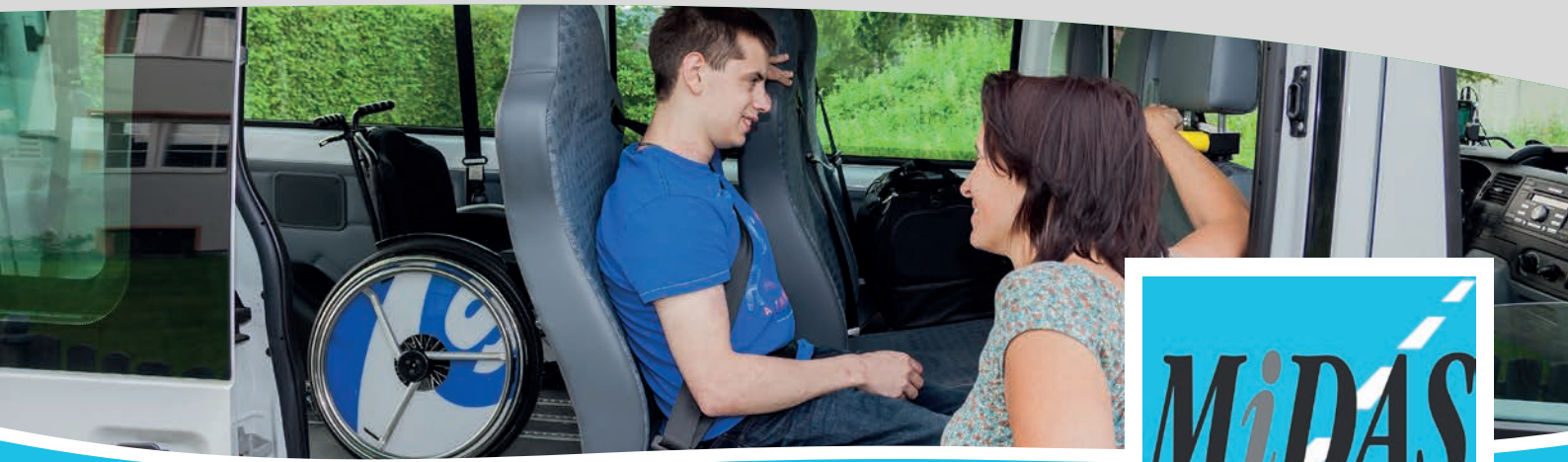
Community Organising training provides people who like to engage or work in their communities with ideas, support and techniques that can allow them to better engage or work in their communities. The project brought together volunteers and community workers and encouraged a network which will continue to work together and share and learn from each other's experiences across the whole of Wiltshire. All of the training was provided free of charge to try keep it as inclusive as possible and was offered both digitally and face-to-face

Connect 2 Wiltshire

The three-year Connect 2 Wiltshire project has also recently concluded. The project supported 2,025 people to engage in new activities and feel less isolated, identified 448 volunteers and trained 58 Community Organisers. The team also carried out 1,800 listenings and trained 200 local leaders.

As part of a door-knocking activity Community Organisers made contact with the Friends of Ludgershall group. The group was very welcoming and spent time talking to the team about what was on offer in Ludgershall and what the group meant to them. Due to Covid-19 and a reduction in committee members, the group had limited capacity to meet and requested support from the team to help get them back up and running at pre-Covid levels. The team offered support with policies and procedures, worked with the group to deliver training and create an action plan.





MiDAS
MINIBUS DRIVER
AWARENESS SCHEME

MiDAS: Minibus Driver Awareness Training

Is your group or organisation looking to train new minibus drivers?

MiDAS is a training scheme designed to enhance driving and safety standards for drivers of minibuses. MiDAS is a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers.

Community First is now taking bookings for MiDAS training with our MiDAS Training Coordinator Martin Carter. Martin is a retired Police Advanced Driver with over 35 years' experience of driving minibuses.

MiDAS Training includes a theory and practical test, along with detailed information on how to operate and manage a minibus safely. Drivers who pass both the MiDAS practical and theory tests will receive a certificate which is valid for four years.

Bookings:

01380 722475

mcarter@communityfirst.org.uk

"Very reassuring trainer. Lots of content that was thoroughly covered."

MiDAS Training Feedback

MiDAS Pricing

Standard MiDAS induction £125.00
Accessible MiDAS induction £165.00
Standard MiDAS refresher £105.00
Accessible MiDAS refresher £125.00

Weekdays Only
Minimum 3 drivers per booking



Photo Credit: Bowerhill Village Hall

Wiltshire Village Halls Association (WVHA)

Wiltshire Village Halls Association is a membership network for village halls and community buildings in Wiltshire and Swindon. The service is managed by Community First, with support from Village Halls and Community Buildings Advisor Helen Akiyama.

Over the last 12 months we have welcomed new members into the WVHA service, with a total of 185 halls and buildings in membership. We have also hosted two networking events for members, bringing hall representatives together to share knowledge and best practice. This includes the popular 'Ask the Network' service which shares requests made by committee members and trustees, with other members to offer recommendations and mutual support.

As we emerged from Covid-19 restrictions, WVHA was able to offer halls and buildings up-to-date guidance on the latest news from Government. This was a valuable service for halls. WVHA also engaged with Wiltshire Council's Climate Strategy and Net Zero Considerations webinar, with follow up information and a link to ACRE's energy service for halls and buildings.



183

Members of
Wiltshire Village
Halls Association

6

New members of
WVHA in 2021-
2022

"On behalf of the village hall committee, I would like to thank you for the help you have given us to find new committee members, but especially the work you did on trying to find us a new treasurer. Whilst that was not successful, I have had a few more people besides those you told us about speaking to me about helping with the hall, which is great as it means we now have a list of people we can call on for help when we have events."

Rushall & Charlton
Village Hall



Get Out Get Active

Community First is working in partnership with Wiltshire and Swindon Sport (WASP), Wiltshire Council, Age UK Wiltshire and Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living to deliver the GOGA (Get Out Get Active) programme. GOGA is about more than being active, it strengthens community spirit, increases confidence and improves mental health.

Over the last 12 months, Community Organising training has taken place in four Wiltshire locations with a total of 37 people attending. The first Get Out Get Active Open Day was held at Five Rivers Health & Wellbeing Centre. The aim of the day was to promote GOGA, inviting people to come along to learn more about the programme and have a go at some of the sessions on offer, including walking football, pickleball, tai chi and seated exercises.

The seventh GOGA annual conference was also held in Manchester, bringing together local and national GOGA

partners to celebrate the programme. The event hosted panel discussions with local partners and activity leaders, which focused on how GOGA has reached a diverse audience and helped people be active together.

The Community Organising approach used by Community First was commended and the collaboration between local partners Community First, WASP, Wiltshire Council, Age UK Wiltshire and Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living, was recognised.





Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC)

There were 232 local councils in membership of WALC over the last 12 months, this represents a majority of councils in Wiltshire and Swindon. WALC membership permits each council to access advice and guidance, both nationally and locally, as well as access to discounted training sessions for Councillors and Officers.

In addition to supporting member councils through WALC, Community First also appointed Deborah Bourne as the new Local Council Advisor for WALC in 2022. Deborah has experience in the Local Council sector and is a qualified clerk, with a CertHE qualification.

WALC Offers Support to Devizes Town Council

Devizes Town Council is a member of Wiltshire Association of Local Councils. The Council approached WALC following resident complaints about a significant increase in the urban gull population locally. In previous years the Council obtained a license from Natural England which allowed them manage the gull population in the town. However, due to a legal challenge against Natural England in 2019 no further licenses had been issued, resulting in an explosion in the gull population. The Council worked with WALC to establish the size of



the gull problem both locally and nationally, so action could be taken.

WALC and Devizes Town Council were able to establish that this was a national problem and prepared a report with evidence from other county areas, which was presented as a motion to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). The motion proposed a legislative change to the The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and a request for support from NALC to influence a change in policy.

NALC agreed to research the issue further, with a potential view to liaising with the Coastal Communities National Network and beginning the process of lobbying government.

What began in Devizes as a local concern with little hope of a resolution, has grown into a national debate which may be instrumental in a change of law. WALC will continue to offer support to Devizes Town Council as the proposed legislative change is discussed and will offer any additional advice and guidance as needed.



Community-Led Housing

By Louise Newman (Homes of Our Own)

The Homes of Our Own Team have seen several changes over the last year but continue to work hard to bring forward community led housing in Wiltshire and Swindon. We sadly said goodbye to Rebecca Lockwood Norris, but we also saw Louise Newman return from maternity leave in early 2022. Following a review in 2021, Homes of Our Own have welcomed 6 Project Officers who are committed to providing advice, information and support to local community led housing groups.

Since the restrictions on face-to-face meetings have been lifted, the team have been excited to be able to get back out and about to meet with our communities to discuss their housing aspirations. Alongside this we have also welcomed the opportunity to attend meetings online, where possible, saving travelling time but still being able to provide the same high-quality service.

We have enjoyed attending the Wiltshire Community Land Trust and Pewsey CLT AGMs and supporting existing community land trusts. We have also met with upcoming community led housing groups, providing information about the services we can offer and developing an understanding of the complexities and wishes of our communities in relation to housing. Below is a snapshot of some of the successes of the groups that we have been involved with.

In July 2022, we held a successful workshop with Colerne Community Land Trust. We used the Wayshaper tool

to look at the decisions that had already been made by the CLT and focused on what they needed to decide on going forward. It raised lots of questions and was successful in providing food for thought for the future!

Seend Community Land and Asset Trust, after receiving planning permission for their scheme in 2021, have now started on site. The development will see 10 Affordable Homes, built to Passivhaus standard, be available for rent and to purchase as Shared Ownership, with priority given to people with a local connection to Seend. The homes are due to be completed in July 2023 and due to the quality of Passivhaus homes, energy costs are expected to be substantially less than average, which is more important than ever for residents.

Pewsey Community Land Trust are continuing to progress their plans to develop the former Police Station on the High Street and after receiving planning permission in April 2022, Cricklade Development Foundation and volunteers from the local community have started work on turning their former police station into community space and two flats which will be available to rent upon completion.

Finally, feedback has been received from a pre-application submitted by Broadchalke Community Land Trust for their proposed development of six affordable homes for people with a local connection to the parish. In partnership with White Horse Housing Association, the CLT are planning on submitting a full planning application in September 2022.



Link Scheme Volunteers Travel 750k Miles in Support of Local Communities

There are 42 Link Schemes in Wiltshire and Swindon, with a combined total of over 1,500 volunteer drivers, coordinators and committee members. Link Schemes offer door-to-door transport and Good Neighbour services for local people who have limited access to public or private transport. Without the service offered by Link Schemes, many residents would not be able to access medical treatment, collect prescriptions, visit local shops or attend social events that reduce social isolation.

Covid-19 continued to have a significant impact on the operational capacity of local Link Schemes in 2021. Public health measures to contain the spread of the virus led to a reduction in volunteer numbers overall, against a back-drop of increased demand for transport locally e.g. for vaccine/booster appointments. Despite this, Link volunteers travelled over 750,000 miles in the last 12 months which represented a 79% increase from 2020. Link Volunteers also completed over 23,000 tasks including prescription collection, food shopping and befriending. Community First is very proud of the way Link Schemes have supported the most vulnerable in our communities, despite significant operational challenges.

Community First offers support and guidance to Link Schemes and local Community Minibus Groups. As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting and championing these vital transport services, we will be launching a volunteer recruitment campaign to boost volunteer numbers and increase capacity.

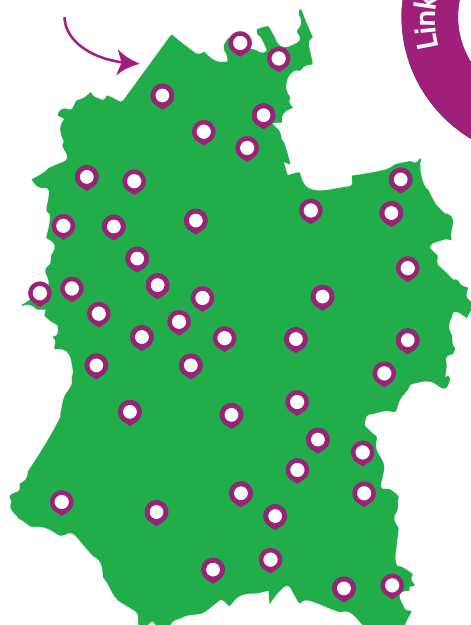
According to census data collected in 2021, the population size in Wiltshire has increased by 8.4%, a higher increase than the overall average increase for England (6.6%). Wiltshire also recorded a higher population increase when compared to the average increase for the South West (7.8%). Overall, in Wiltshire the percentage of people aged 65 and over has increased by 30.5% since the 2011 census.

As Wiltshire's population continues to expand (and age) Community First anticipates the need for volunteer transport will further increase. We will continue to engage in proactive measures to recruit new volunteers and support Link Schemes to return to stabilised service levels following Covid-19. For more information contact:

linkproject@communityfirst.org.uk

Link Scheme Audit 2021

Link Scheme map of Wiltshire



The total number of local Link Schemes is unchanged from 2020

1,567

Number of volunteers involved in Link Schemes in Wiltshire and Swindon



37

Average volunteers per Link Scheme

% change in Link Volunteers from 2020

+9%

750,402

Miles travelled by volunteers in 2021

23,136

Everyday tasks completed in 2021

20,327

Health related journeys in 2021

In 2021 Link volunteers offered:



81,004 hours

Economic value based on hourly rate*



£1,010,929

Average added economic value per volunteer in 2021



£645.13

The economic value of Link Schemes is calculated based on ONS South West Average hourly pay O gross (3) - for all jobs at £12.48 per hour



Community Organising Team Delivers New Youth Projects



The Friary Youth Voice Project

Community First was approached by Salisbury City Council to deliver a youth voice project for young people who live in The Friary, a housing estate in Salisbury. The project was funded by Salisbury City Council and Wiltshire Community Foundation. The aim of the project is to develop positive relationships with young people aged 10+ years and gain a better understanding of the needs and ambitions of young people living on the Friary Estate.

As part of the project, Community Organisers delivered a skills-based youth voice training programme, co-produced an action plan and worked with young people to identify longer-term goals for youth provision on the estate. Through the engagement activity, the team also worked with the Salisbury Youth Provision Forum to respond to the needs and ambitions of young people living in The Friary and will continue to work with the forum to support the provision of youth activities.

Outreach work began in the community and Community

Organisers met with young people and their families in their homes to discuss the project and future opportunities for young people. As part of six-week engagement programme, young people were taken on a trip to a trampoline park. The team continued to engage with and listen to young people and their families, a weekly session was held along with a selection of positive activities. The weekly session is ongoing and has since been renamed 'The Hangout Club' by young people in attendance and is supported by Salisbury City Communities Team and Community First.

Ten young people agreed to be part of the Youth Voice Group and attended Introduction to Community Organising training. The Youth Voice team will also be attending a Young Leaders residential in late 2022 to develop their skills further and support their learning journey.

**SALISBURY
CITY COUNCIL**





Rural Youth Project

In addition to The Friary project, our Community Organising team and Youth Action Wiltshire team have delivered a rural youth project funded by Pewsey, Southern Wiltshire, Amesbury, Tidworth and Warminster Area Boards (through Wiltshire Council). The project was developed to offer young people access to positive activities, with a particular focus on challenges and barriers faced by rural communities.

Over the last 12 months, Community Organisers and Youth Workers have been actively seeking out and engaging with young people, families and stakeholders to identify the barriers to accessing positive activities for young people and their caregivers.

The first phase of the project began with door-knocking. This gave young people the opportunity to have their say about activities on offer locally. The team reached a total of 674 people across 50 Wiltshire locations, with 376 young people listened to. Listeners were also carried out in 5 local schools or youth clubs and 6 organisations. In addition to the engagement activity, the team referred 30 young people to support services including Splash,

the Building Bridges programme and other providers.

As part of the second phase of the project, the team listened to an additional 534 people (including 254 young people). This additional listening activity also included engagement with local police teams and youth provider Yellow Brick Road. This also enabled the team to offer support to Yellow Brick Road. Community Organisers delivered 8 pop-up youth events across five Area Board areas, with 264 young people in attendance. The team also worked with Pewsey Council to collect over 100 surveys with feedback from young people on a proposed wheeled sports area.

Through the project, a total of 26 volunteers were recruited and trained to support future pop-up events, clubs and cafés. Several volunteers have now completed DBS checks, safeguarding training and first aid training all supported through the Youth Action Wiltshire clubs programme.

Wiltshire Council





£349k distributed through Landfill Communities Fund grants



Community First manages and administrates the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) in Wiltshire and Swindon. The LCF offers capital funding for local community, heritage and environmental projects in specific areas where local landfill operators sites or depots are located. Funding for the LCF is received from Hills Waste Solutions Ltd and Crapper & Sons Landfill Ltd.

Harnham Parish Hall

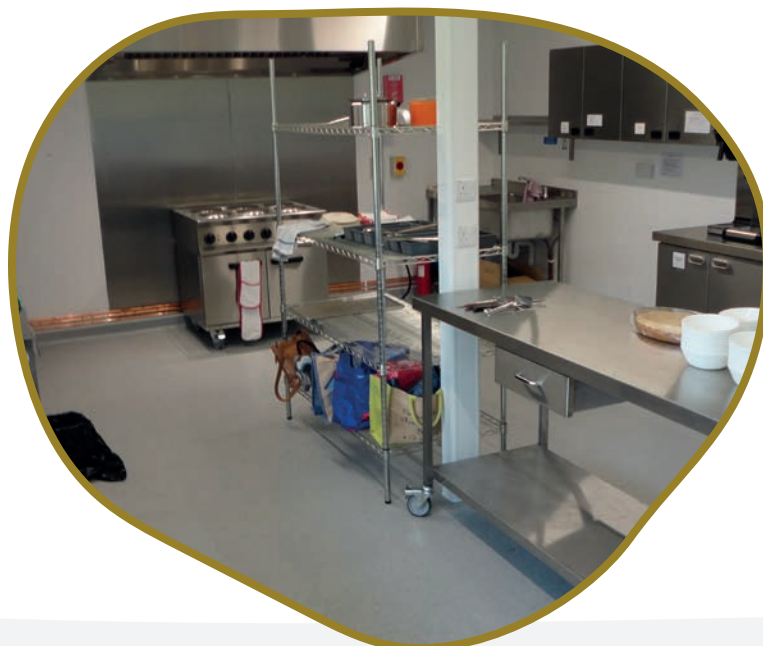
Harnham Parish Hall received £10,000 funding from the Landfill Communities Fund. The funds were used to create new catering grade kitchen, replace night storage heaters with underfloor heating powered by two air source heat pumps and introduce a three-phase electricity supply to ensure adequate power for the new facilities.

room to allow better access to the new kitchen facilities, making the hall a more attractive facility for a range of activities and bookings.

"Harnham Parish is hugely grateful to The Hills Group Ltd and Community First for helping to make these important improvements possible."

Harnham Parish Hall

The new facilities are now fully in use and the feedback from hall users has been very positive. The grant was also used to renovate a meeting



Laverstock Floodplain Meadows



Laverstock Floodplain Meadows received £10,000 in funding from the Landfill Communities Fund to expand access to the meadows, create seating for wildlife viewing and quiet reflection and provide a new community notice board with information about activities and volunteering opportunities.

Laverstock Floodplain Meadows was also able to enhance the main entrance to the water meadows with an aggregate path made of local materials and install new access gates between field compartments.

The overall aim of the project was to restore habitat diversity along the 53 acres of Laverstock Water Meadows and the River Bourne in Laverstock. In addition to funding improvements to access and community



facilities, the project involved laying wildflower rich hay from meadows in the Avon catchment and seeding areas of grassland with formulated native seed. Funding from the LCF also enabled Laverstock Wildflower Meadows to reinstate livestock grazing of the meadows. New fencing was installed to replace temporary electric fencing and created zoned, managed access for visitors to enjoy the wildlife, peace and natural beauty of the water meadows.

LCF Funding (2021-2022)



Total projects funded: 23

Total funding: £172,137



Recycling and Landfill Centre

Total projects funded: 12

Total funding: £177,450





Bold Supports Charities and Groups to Deliver on Creative Projects

Bold.

Our in-house creative service Bold has delivered a number of new creative design projects over the last 12 months and we are currently taking new bookings for website design, logo/brand design, infographics, report design and typesetting.

Bold was created by the sector, for the sector. We recognise that a flexible, affordable approach to creative design and development is highly desirable for charities, voluntary groups and third sector organisations.

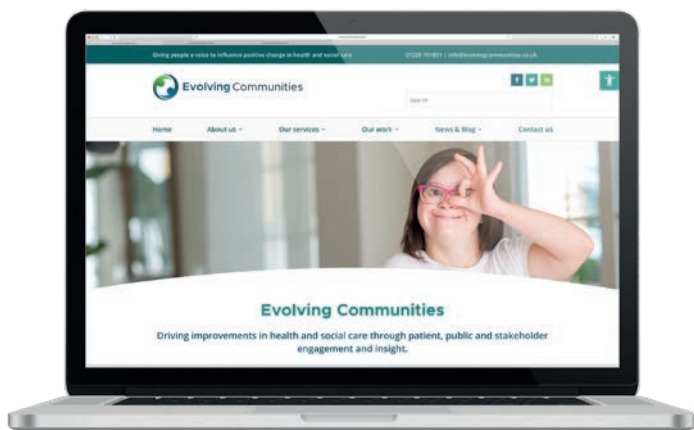
We offer graphic design, brand design and website development for a flat, hourly rate with no hidden charges and we can work at a pace which is comfortable for your organisation. What's more, as a not-for-profit service, all of the funds generated through the service are reinvested back into our programmes and services which means your new website, logo, brand design or other creative design project can have a real and lasting impact for communities in Wiltshire and Swindon.

We recently worked with Chippenham Link Transport to launch a new website for the service.



The new website features information about the Chippenham Link Transport service, as well as a volunteer portal with documents for Link volunteers.

www.chippenhamlink.org.uk



We worked with Evolving Communities on a website redevelopment project which aimed to highlight the delivery of local Healthwatch services, community engagement partnerships and consultancy, through a portfolio of project work. The redesigned website amalgamated several separately hosted volunteer portals into one portal for all Healthwatch volunteers across four local Healthwatch services in England.

www.evolvingcommunities.co.uk

We are always delighted to welcome new clients into the Bold service and this year we have worked with Action Hampshire to design new logos and brand outlines for HIVCA and Hampshire CVS Network.

In Autumn 2022 we were commissioned by national charity NAVCA to design an infographic to promote a new report about the state of the voluntary sector which was co-produced by NAVCA and Sheffield Hallam University.

If you are interested in starting a new design project this year, we would be delighted to help. We can create a unique proposal for you and we are happy to work with all budgets. Please get in touch to discuss your project:

bold@communityfirst.org.uk



Digital Consultation & Surveys

In addition to creative design, we also offer digital outreach and engagement with survey design, launch and monitoring service for charities, groups and organisations who want to take the hassle out of online surveys and digital consultation. We can design, host and monitor your online survey, with unlimited questions and question types. The survey can be branded with your logo and colour scheme and fully white-labelled with no co-branding.

We can also help with survey analysis and report writing, with a variety of options including a summary of results and a password protected dataset, to a full analysis report, including a thematic analysis of open-ended responses.

If you are planning an online engagement project or feedback survey and would like to discuss how we can help, please get in touch by calling 01380 722475 or email bold@communityfirst.org.uk.



Community First offers specialist insurance for local councils, village halls, community buildings and playing fields



Competitive • Specialised • Tailored

Get a free quote today

Are you involved in managing a village hall, community building or playing field facilities? Are you a representative of a Local Council looking for specialist insurance? Community First offers comprehensive community insurance policies through trusted provider Zurich.

**COMMUNITY
FIRST**



Trusted Provider

Our scheme is underwritten by Zurich Municipal, a leading provider.



No Unnecessary Extras

Pay only for the cover you want.



Best Value

We offer a specialist policy with great prices and no hidden costs.



Charitable Causes

Community Insurance is a trading arm of charity Community First. Profits are reinvested into local communities.



Expert Team

Our insurance team are friendly, dedicated experts. They make it their priority to offer the best policies available.



Comprehensive Protection

We offer comprehensive protection, contact us with your requirements.

"Savernake Parish Council covers a small community in Wiltshire, with limited resources and responsibility for a limited amount of facilities. Community First are able to offer advice, carry out a bespoke service and design a policy to fit our requirements at a very competitive rate"

Savernake Parish Council

**Getting a FREE
no-obligation and competitive
quote couldn't be easier:**

Call: 01380 732809

Email: communityinsurance@communityfirst.org.uk

www.communityfirst.org.uk/insurance

Support Our Work

Community First works to improve the lives of people and communities in Wiltshire and Swindon. We work on the ground, at the grassroots and deliver programmes and services that make a real and lasting change in the lives of the most vulnerable people in the county. In 2023 and beyond, we want to go further than ever to deliver vital support and services to those who need us most.

Can you help us by supporting our work?



EasyFundraising

Did you know you can raise money for Community First every time you shop online? EasyFundraising is a free way to raise money to support our work and it's really easy to get started:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/community-first



AmazonSmile

If you shop on Amazon, you can also raise free funds for Community First every time you buy and at no extra cost to you. Find out more by searching 'Amazon Smile' or visiting: www.smile.amazon.co.uk and select Community First (Devizes, EW)



Your Donation

You can support our work by making a regular or one-off donation to Community First. It's quick, secure and easy. You can also Gift-Aid your donation, so the charity receives an extra 25p for every £1 you donate.



Your Membership

Join Community First as an Associate Member and become part of a network of people and organisations who are committed to championing the vibrant and diverse communities in Wiltshire and Swindon.



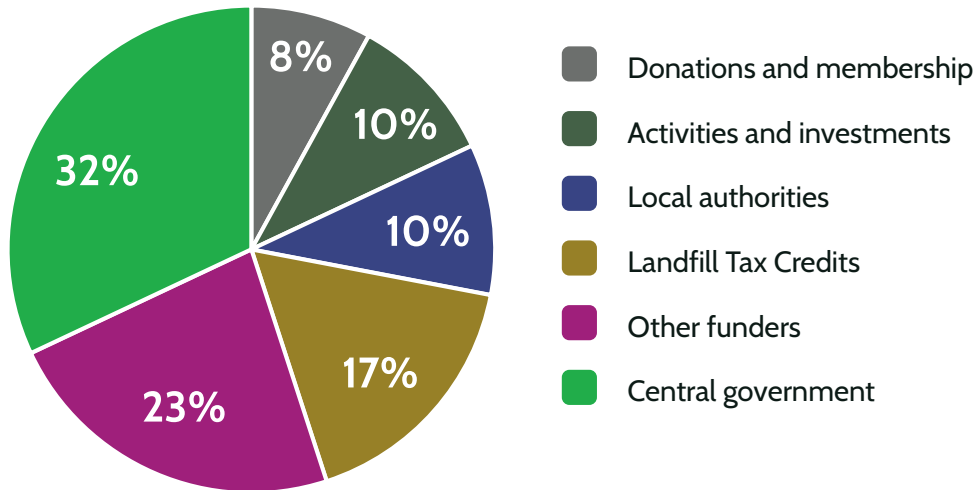
Your Legacy

Leaving a gift to Community First in your will, can make our local communities better places to live and work. Your legacy will also support some of the most vulnerable people in Wiltshire and Swindon, for years to come.

www.communityfirst.org.uk/support

Financial Statement

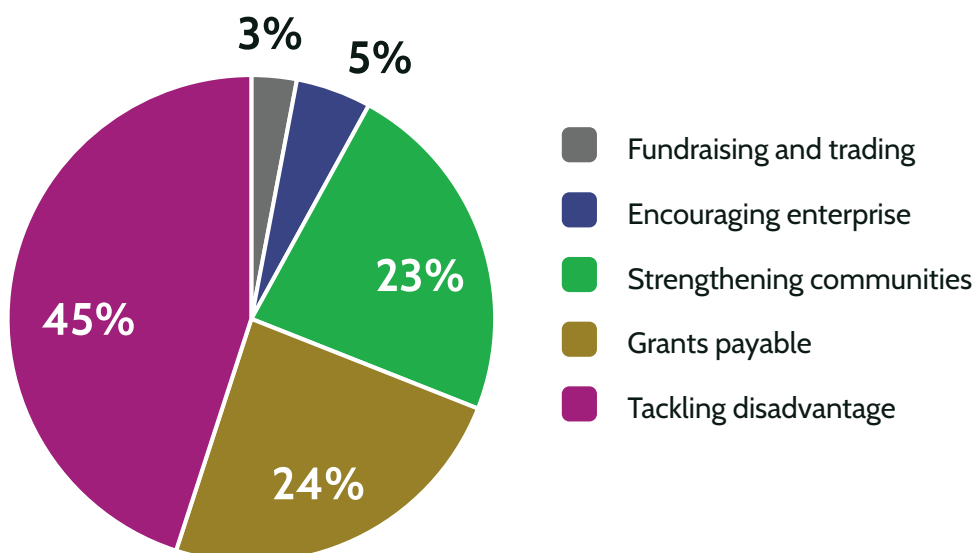
Incoming resources: £2,137,356



The financial report uses information taken from the full Community First financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2022, prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Financial Reporting for Smaller Entities" 2015 and applicable accounting standards which received an unqualified audit.

The finance report may not contain sufficient information to enable a full understanding of the financial affairs of Community First. For further information the full Report and Financial Statements and the Independent Auditors report can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

Resources expended: £1,997,058



The full report and Financial Statements were approved by members of the Board of Trustees on 2nd August 2022 and will be submitted to the Charity Commission and the Registrar of Companies.

Funder Acknowledgment

Financial support and other contributions for the year ended 31 March 2022

The work of Community first has been made possible with financial support and contributions from the following groups and organisations:

Accommodation Welfare Committee
ACRE
Amy Kent Rugs
Arnold Clarke Community Fund
BA ASA Limited SW
BDP Imports
The Beaufort Bazaar
The Beaufort Christmas Fair
The Beaufort Horse Show
Bingham Kindergarten
The Blagrove Trust
Blount & Maslin
Bradenstoke Solar Park Community Benefit Fund
Brewster Maude Charitable Trust
Carers Support Wiltshire
Chaloners Masonic Lodge – Melksham
Clark & Maslin
Corsham Line Dancers
Crapper & Sons Landfill Ltd
Crudwell Village Hall
DEFRA – Department of The Environment
DCMS - The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
Easy Fundraising
Edington Parish Council
ES Shops Limited
Five Lanes Primary School
Friends of Youth Action Wiltshire
The George Veterinary Group
Greensquare Accord
The Happy Days Childrens Charity
Henry C Hoare Charitable Trust
Henry Smith Charity
The Hills Group Ltd

Hugo Halkes Charitable Trust
The Inchcape Foundation
The Jack Lane Charitable Trust
The James Weir Foundation
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust
Julius Silman Charitable Trust
Kickstart
JH King Charity
Kite Packaging
The Lions Club of Bradford on Avon
The Lions Club of Devizes
Maison Let
The Malthouse Nursery
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Melksham Town Council
The National Benevolent Fund
The National Garden Scheme
The National Lottery Community Fund
NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group
OJM Advisory Limited
Onslow Boyd Venture
Oxford Travel College
The Plunkett Foundation
Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire & Swindon
Ray Harris Charitable Trust
Salisbury City Community Lottery
The Seend Singers
EAP Sells 2007 Trust
The Sobell Foundation
Somerford and District Show
Stampede Sports
St James Place Charitable Foundation
St James Trust

SVO (Calne) Limited
Tristenagh Trust
Trowbridge Town Trust
TW Partners International
The Underwood Trust
VCS Emergency Partnership
Venn Group Recruitment
The Verdon-Smith Family Charitable Trust
Walker Logistics Limited
Wallgate Limited
WASP – Wiltshire & Swindon Sport
West Wiltshire Crematorium
Wilkins Builders Limited
Wiltshire Association of Local Councils
Wiltshire Children's Breakaway
Wiltshire Community Foundation
Wiltshire Council
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
Youth Action Wiltshire Committee

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the following partners:

Barnardo's
Relate
Wessex Community Action
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

The Charity has also benefited from the generous support of many individuals whose donations and gifts have enabled services to be maintained and expanded and an endowment fund to be established to provide income in future years.



President:

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Mrs Sarah Rose Troughton CStJ

Community First

Unit C2
Beacon Business Centre
Hopton Park
Devizes
SN10 2EY

T: 01380 722 475

W: www.communityfirst.org.uk

E: enquiries@communityfirst.org.uk

Twitter: @CommFirstWilts

Facebook: @CommunityFirstWiltshire