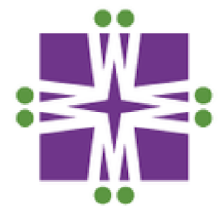




Working with Worcestershire

OUR IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

WORCESTERSHIRE
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO YOUR COMMUNITY

www.worcscf.org.uk

Who are we?

Since 2003, Worcestershire Community Foundation has been helping local charities and community groups support essential causes across Worcestershire.

We provide vital support where there is real need, working with partners to deliver timely, responsive and proactive funding programmes.

We welcome support from donors of all kinds.

This report focuses on our work across Worcestershire over the last 12 months.

During the year March 2022 to March 2023, we raised and distributed £808,000 of funding to support 164 local projects representing a diverse range of needs across the county.

We are a place-based charitable grant maker for the whole county, dedicated to helping to ensure Worcestershire is a better place to live and thrive.

We are non-partisan and passionate in supporting communities to have a better quality of life. We champion local causes and aim to raise and deliver funds which really make a difference.

We are part of a national network of 47 Community Foundations across the UK which provide crucial support to communities everywhere; our network is the fourth largest funding body in the UK.

Some of the people and projects we've supported ...

- Children & young people
- Community cohesion
- Community sports & arts
- Disability & poor health
- Domestic abuse
- Food banks
- Homelessness
- Isolation
- Mental health & wellbeing
- Minority groups
- Older people
- Poverty & fuel poverty
- Refugees
- Schools
- Veterans
- Vital supplies (including food & goods)
- Volunteer networks

What's been happening during 2022-23 ...

We have been extremely busy at WCF over the past year; after the turbulent effects of the pandemic started to die down, we mistakenly believed that things would get quieter, but how wrong we were!

Research shows that in the wake of Covid, needs on all fronts have dramatically increased, exacerbated by the 'perfect storm' of the Ukraine war, the fuel crisis and economic downturn leading to a huge cost of living challenge for many.

You can see the huge list of themes and projects we have supported - from disadvantaged young people to people simply struggling to live.

The fact is that Worcestershire's communities need our support more than ever, so we rely on our supporters, funders and donors to help us meet ongoing challenges head-on.

Our impact

Number of grants

164

Number of organisations reached

161

Total sum awarded
£808,091



Here are some of our funds:

- **The High Sheriff Fund:** supporting each High Sheriff's individual funding ambitions from young people to mental health.
- **The Arts Fund:** rolling grants for inspirational arts and culture projects.
- **The Community Fund:** a fund which will give where there is no other support.
- **The Inclusive Communities Fund:** working in partnership with the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner to support minority groups across the county.
- **The Mental Health Fund:** a focus on mental health at a time of high need.
- **Tom Jones Fund:** a fund commemorating the life of a unique young person by supporting sports and water safety provision in our community.

A snapshot of Worcestershire

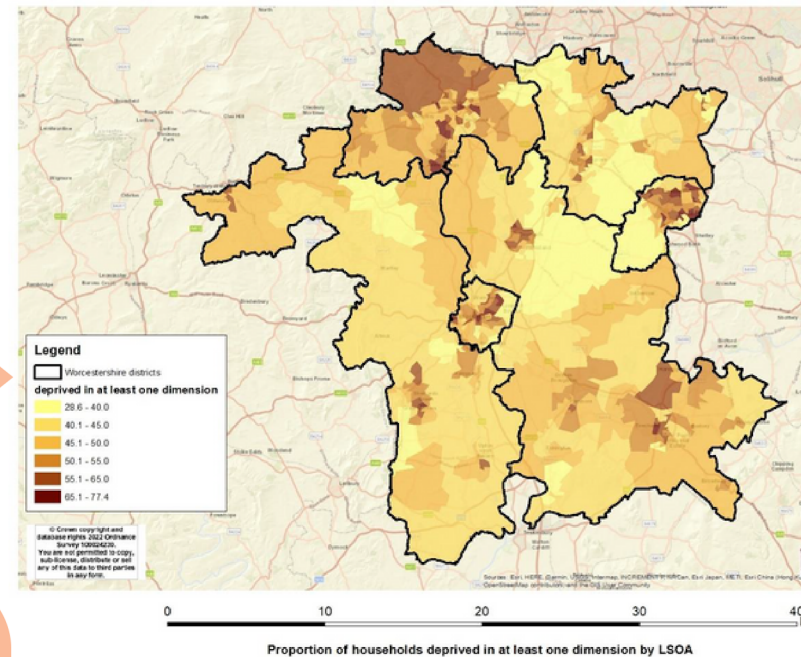
Post-Covid Worcestershire still faces growing challenges of disadvantage and social need, with major impacts on local communities of all kinds.

'The Covid-19 pandemic had a disproportionate effect on people from particular communities, different ethnicities, and those in specific jobs, such as front line care, transport and hospitality and those living in deprived areas, therefore making existing inequalities worse.'
Worcs. Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2032)

'80% of children and young people felt the pandemic had a negative impact on their emotional wellbeing.'
Healthwatch Survey 2022

The map shows proportions of households that have at least one dimension of deprivation.

Source: 2021 Census Briefing – second release
(Worcestershire County Council)



27,750 (5%) Worcestershire residents live in the top 10% of England's most deprived areas, particularly Worcester City, Redditch & Wyre Forest

Worcestershire ranks 9th in the UK for rising deprivation levels

Almost 37,500 (14%) of Worcestershire households are living in fuel poverty

To support the community post-Covid, Worcestershire Community Foundation is **listening to the sector** to hear what is needed; **growing new funds and working in strategic partnerships** to address real issues; **building key relationships** with new funders and, **planning new campaigns** to engage local donors and philanthropists and work with them on innovative initiatives.

We will continue to seek funders, supporters and donors who share our values and passionately believe in the county.

Our stories

There are so many to tell.
Here's what some groups and beneficiaries say our grants mean to them...

'It is always fabulous to work in partnership with Worcestershire Community Foundation, who fully understand the local voluntary sector, how it works and who delivers what.'

Kidderminster & District Youth Trust



My cupboards are now stocked and will hopefully last me until pay day which is 10 days' away.

You made such an anxious experience so delightful given the circumstances.

Food bank users

Over the tough winter months we haven't had to worry about keeping our heating on. We have been a safe space for clients, who have been able to come to our centre and get help with food, as well as other referrals.

The Octagon Centre

I feel more comfortable talking to youth workers and they can put us in touch with people. It's informal and laid back but you can still get good advice and support.

Youth club member

No judgment and inclusive, not many clubs would be so accommodating to all young people.

Youth club member

Our grant provided a warm space for rough sleepers and vulnerable people who either had no access to a warm space or struggle to pay bills.

Maggs Day Centre



We were able to provide hot lunches to children and young people that we would not have been able to provide.

Evesham Adventure Playground

Without the support of the Community Pantry I would be dead; there is nothing left after I pay my bills.

Batchley Support Group

(Interview by Sky News)

The greatest encouragement was the team spirit that blossomed as everyone played their part, whether big or small to make it happen!

Sky Autism Support

Our stories

Here are a few case studies where a grant has made a real impact on people's lives....

Ukrainians in Worcestershire:

A - was originally from Charkiv in Ukraine, but the war times found her in Kiev, struggling to find a job abroad to support her family. Having spent her first few days in a makeshift bunker in the metro station, she finally made her way through to her hometown - just to find that her parents had already been lost to war.

Heartbroken and lost, A was able to come to the UK to join her sister, who was already struggling to get by after working 15 years as a cleaner, with her health rapidly deteriorating. A and her sister both enjoy singing and crocheting. Shy by nature, their modest income allows them only to travel to Birmingham once a week to attend an Orthodox mass.

The sisters don't have a sponsor as they are here on a Family Member Scheme, so they survive thanks to regular food parcels from Transition Worcester as well as help from a compassionate landlord.

The Monday Night Club:

A young volunteer who became socially isolated during the pandemic lockdown was referred by a youth counselling service. Initially hesitant, he joined the football club, where his outstanding playing skills quickly earned him acceptance among existing members, including those with learning disabilities who he began mentoring.

Remarkably, the MNC are now supporting him to become a qualified FA football coach.

A transformation from social isolation to aspiring coach embodies the positive impact of our youth volunteering project 'Leading the Way'. Moreover, he has become more open to conversation and comfortably engages with the players. His progress exemplifies the power of initiatives to provide social opportunities and foster personal development. The grant has been a pivotal catalyst in empowering the Club to make a positive impact on the lives of younger people with learning disabilities.



Our stories continued ...

Worcester Community Trust:

A few of our young leaders have a Criminal Behaviour Order. Working as a group they reflected on the consequences, the perception of local residents and looked for solutions to prevent reoccurrences. Since when, they have been working with youth workers, the Chief Exec and local professionals to help build a bench, table and shelter near the Centre's entrance. They thought it could also be used by families in the daytime.

One issue brought up concerned criminal records and job prospects. One young person - who rarely interacted with the group but has since gained confidence in discussions - suggested someone come to speak to them.

We helped arrange a Building Better Opportunities Job Coach to give a group talk and one-to-one sessions. This resulted in another young person accessing support to alleviate fears a sibling's criminal record might prevent him from being a train driver and giving him advice about steps he could take to proactively prepare for this career.

Malvern Cube Projects:

J - a quiet, withdrawn young man with learning difficulties discovered he is passionate about cooking and loves to feed people. In his own words *'it makes me happy'*. **His confidence has grown hugely and he has formed friendships with other young people through the project.** During the school holidays J has been in charge of deciding on and making pudding with support from some of his new friends. He bounces into Youth Cafe each Thursday, is chatty with those he feels confident with and shares his (pretty terrible!) jokes with everyone. He has begun to open up to staff about other things going on in his life so they have been able to offer additional support/signposting to both him and his family.



THANK YOU!

To all the supporters, organisations and individuals, who help us to make a real impact in the lives of Worcestershire's communities!



Photo courtesy of Simon Fall-Taylor



Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust



MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO YOUR COMMUNITY

- Worcestershire Community Foundation
- Worcestershire Community Foundation/Lucy Wells
- @worcsgiving

