



Funded by
UK Government



BCP Food & Energy Support Fund – Winter 2024/25 - Impact report

This funding programme was delivered by Dorset Community Foundation on behalf of BCP Council, with funding awarded to successful groups in November 2024, for activities to 31st March 2025. All grants were used to address the impact of the cost of living crisis and spent on projects including: food parcels, food vouchers, community meals, food skills initiatives, Winter Warm Spaces, and services supporting people out of poverty.

- Total funding of £312,200 was awarded to 46 groups
- Three groups were unable to spend a total of £7917.12 due to unforeseen circumstances, which will be carried forward into the next round of funding for 2025/26 with the approval of BCP Council. (£1500 from Dorset Community Action, £2507.15 Somerford ARC and £3909.97 The Power House)
- **£304,282.88** has directly supported **26,968 local residents** (taken into account grant funds returned)
 - 12,873 in Bournemouth
 - 4025 in Christchurch
 - 10,070 in Poole
- Projects have involved **1006 volunteers**

Summary - awards in November 2024

Grant recipient	Project area	Grant	Beneficiary households	Number of beneficiaries	Number of volunteers	Project summary
Access Dorset	BCP	7409.04	20 families 50 older people 100 disabled 30 vulnerable	200	4	Cooking on a budget sessions including eating a hot meal together, with a Crisis Support Worker to help with income maximisation and access to other financial support
AIMCommunity	West Howe, East Howe, Kinson & Creekmoor	5000	68 families 2 older people 25 disabled	95	3	Weekly Warm Space drop-in at West Howe and Creekmoor venues catering mainly to young people and their families. Hot drinks, nutritious meals, and guidance/signposting.
Ashley's Birthday Bank	BCP	8000	150 families	150	2	Food shops and items such as warm clothing and blankets. Families are referred to us by authorities such as Dorset Police, BCP Social Workers, BCP School Liaison Officers etc

BH1 - Boscombe Salvation Army	Boscombe	5000	420 older people 1680 vulnerable	2100	20	Warm space at BH1, providing nutritious and substantial meals for those attending. Provision of warm heated blankets and sleeping bags for those who are street homeless
Bournemouth Churches Housing Association	Bournemouth & Poole	7500	34 families 8 older people 22 disabled 81 vulnerable	145	22	Food vouchers, essential items and warmth items, distributed to individuals and families accessing our Domestic Abuse community team, young people services, and mental health support team
Bournemouth Community Church	Bournemouth	9000	1218 families 23 older people 656 vulnerable	1897	11	Distribution of butcher and greengrocer vouchers, and 'Time for Tea' community meals for local families
Bournemouth Foodbank	Boscombe	12,464.13	225 families 150 older people 405 vulnerable	780	35	Hot meals at the social canteen, hot meals for those picking up a food parcel, and a Christmas community dinner
Bournemouth Parks Foundation	Winton, Charminster, Moordown & Redhill	5550	185 families 93 older people 18 disabled 74 vulnerable	370	24	Weekly hot lunches for older people and those on benefits, offered at Redhill Park community café and Winton Rec community café
Christchurch Community Partnership	Christchurch	5600	72 older people 4 disabled	76	47	Lunch clubs and monthly roast meals (including Christmas meals) for elderly people
Christchurch Foodbank	Christchurch	12,464.13	1609 families 804 older people 805 vulnerable	3218	43	Food parcels and hot meal deliveries. Community supper and 'Meal in a bag' scheme with cooking equipment where needed. Winter warmth bags.
Citygate Church	Bournemouth	6500	73 families 21 older people 172 disabled 164 vulnerable	430	30	Contribution towards Community Hub and Christmas Hamper Appeal
Coastline Community Trust	Bournemouth	2000	250 families 20 older people 10 disabled 54 vulnerable	334	22	Redistributing surplus food from supermarkets and making it available for free) plus a weekly community meal in church gardens, and support for 33 ex-rough sleepers living in our Hope into Action house
Creative Kids	Boscombe	4215	74 families	74	8	20 full day activities to children aged 6 - 14 at our Holiday Arts Club, Monday - Friday in February half term - to include a healthy breakfast, hot lunch and cookery classes (with Burb's Kitchen)

Dorset Community Action	BCP	1500	-	0	0	Purchase of practical household / energy saving equipment for beneficiaries that we support via Safe and Warm project at Bournemouth Foodbank venues. GRANT RETURNED
Faithworks Wessex	BCP	12,465.14	49 families 34 older people 54 disabled 6 vulnerable	143	22	Community Money Advice at various venues in BCP.
Faithworks Wessex	BCP	5096.5	1200 families 360 older people 360 disabled 480 vulnerable	2400	40	Training and equipment to be provided to memebrrs organisations, so that they can provide cooking tuition for local people. Printing of recipe & advice booklets to reinforce learning at home.
Friends of St. Michaels PTA	BCP	3200	1500 families	1500	20	To start a Cooking Club for local families impacted by the cost of living crisis
Grounded Community	Boscombe	12,033.33	150 families 70 older people 60 disabled 20 vulnerable	300	45	150 Hampers. 100 cafe food vouchers for warm space provision. 20 soup kettles. 4 Community meals including a Christmas event for residents at vale lodge. A cooking on a budget workshop. A volunteer meal/event
HealthBus Trust	Bournemouth Town Centre	9000	126 vulnerable	126	6	Weekly hot meals for the homeless community at YMCA. Food Vouchers for patients in greater need, redeemable at Bournemouth Foodbank
Home Start Wessex	Bournemouth & Poole	7600	63 families 4 disabled	67	4	Drop in sessions for homeless families staying at Quay Foyer or Morrell House Bournemouth whilst they await permanent housing; distribution of foodbank vouchers & essentials, housing/benefits applications, support to access other food & specialist services
Hope Community Church	Winton & Moordown	6000	40 families 45 older people 10 disabled 25 vulnerable	120	40	Free meals in our cafe, Christmas food vouchers /hampers Warm space with free hot meals and drinks (plus games, laundry & shower facilities), distribution of warm clothers and heated blankets.
Hope Housing ,Training and Support Ltd	Bournemouth	8000	7 older people 11 disabled 160 vulnerable	178	4	Starter packs for new residents with a range of essential items, weekly cooking activities designed to help with managing personal budgets
Immaculate Conception and St Joseph's Church	Christchurch	975	9 families 25 older people 6 vulnerable	40	30	Winter Warm Space on Thursdays at our community café

Immanuel United Reform Church	Southbourne	7103.60	102 families 18 older people 3 disabled 5 vulnerable	118	17	To start a Cooking Club for local families impacted by the cost of living crisis
Kinson and West Howe Foodbank	Kinson & West Howe	5033.33	174 Families 18 older people 31 disabled 37 vulnerable	260	14	Food stock to help foodbank meet local demand
LOVECHURCH	Boscombe	8580	370 families 30 older people 30 disable 120 vulnerable	550	35	Kids breakfasts, Fun 'n' Food family activities in February half term, Christmas hampers and a slow cooker course
Overcomers Outreach	BCP	3000	53 families 4 older people 2 disabled 16 vulnerable	75	6	New community Hub at old Salvation Army building in Southbourne - including Winter Warm Space and food
Parish of St Nicholas and St Hubert	Corfe Mullen, Broadstone and outer areas of BCP	2750	132 families 380 elderly 120 vulnerable	632	60	Winter Warm Space with all age activities, subsidised two-course hot lunch up to twice weekly, and on Christmas Day
Poole Communities Trust	Poole	9373.33	624 families 156 older people 156 disabled 104 other	1040	17	Community Food Stores in Bourne and Turlin Moor, Warm Space at Branksome Community Centre. Recipe bags, monthly community lunch and food vouchers to cover period of closure over Christmas.
Poole Community Exchange	Poole	8033.34	2 families 96 older people 88 disabled 71 vulnerable	257	65	Low cost food and other essentials via Poole Pantry and Community Fridge, low cost community meals and social activities
Poole Foodbank	Poole	12,435.95	2643 families 1321 older people 1322 vulnerable	5286	56	Essential food supplies, fresh produce and recipe bags - helping to meet increased demand. Cooking equipment for households in need and group cooking activities
Poole Waste Not Want Not	Poole	12,033.33	989 families 500 disabled	1489	29	Stock (essential food & hygiene items), energy saving cooking equipment, blankets, Christmas meals and hampers, food vouchers for volunteers
PramaLife	BCP	5000	205 older people	205	25	Lunch clubs in Boscombe and Hamworthy, Warm space in Canford Heath with hot soup and refreshments - includes supporting a drop in for carers

Refugee Support Europe	Bournemouth	9000	829 vulnerable	829	17	Offer Welcome packs and Emergency pack for refugees and asylum seekers, including items such as warm clothing and hygiene products.
Safe and Sound Dorset	Bournemouth	7835	12 families 30 older people 30 disabled 48 Vulnerable	120	33	Distribution of energy saving cooking equipment, heated airers, electric blankets and warm fleeces for vulnerable women. Sessions with Ridgewater, Citizens Advice and Shelter. Vouchers for meals at The Well cafe. Christmas/Diwali celebrations with hot meals.
Salvation Army - Winton	Winton	5000	15 families 20 older people 2 disabled people 13 vulnerable	50	12	Warm space with soup, and low cost meals throughout the cafe to appeal to families and students in particular.
Samee	Bournemouth	7860	10 disabled	10	3	Continuation of 'Getting read for Tomorrow' programme for young disabled people, to support transition into employment
Somerford ARC Community Centre	Somerford & wider Christchurch	2507.16	-	0	0	Breakfast hub with hot food and wrap around support to address the impact of the cost of living crisis. SEND parent/carer group joins once a month GRANT RETURNED
Somerford youth & Community Centre	Christchurch	11,364.13	30 families 10 older people 10 vulnerable	50	4	To support the pantry with additional food stock and essential items. We also provide advice on money management and a warm space with hot meals.
St. Thomas Church PCC	BCP	500	30 vulnerable	30	18	Heating and Food costs to support 12 homeless individuals as part of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol run by Faithworks Wessex and St. Mungos - plus funds for bedding and other warmth items.
The Friendly Food Club	Bournemouth	9000	12 disabled 22 vulnerable	34	3	18 x cooking sessions with clients from We Are With You and Bournemouth Gateway - supporting adults in addictions recovery, and adults with learning difficulties
The Power House (Poole)	Hamworthy & Poole Town	5056	58 families 8 older people 7 disabled 58 vulnerable	131	19	Winter Warm Space at new community hub in Hamworthy £3909.97 of GRANT RETURNED

Townsend Community Association	Bournemouth	10,952.34	250 families 100 older people 100 disabled 150 vulnerable	600	25	Additional stock for Community Fridge, cooking workshops with Friendly Food Club to include cooking equipment, Tuesday morning breakfast club, distribution of container meals, Warm space
Water Lily Project	Christchurch	5007.14	20 families 4 vulnerable	24	3	Cooking on a budget sessions for vulnerable women
West Howe Community Enterprises	West Howe	4170.74	50 families 110 older people 20 disabled 25 vulnerable	205	4	Community Cook sessions offering cooking tuition and basic cooking utensils, and to trial a food offer for those in our Community Fridge que, to inspire recipe ideas using foods available
Winton & Parkstone Community Pantry (WPCP)	Parkstone & Winton	4033.34	150 families 50 older people 30 vulnerable	230	59	To support utility bills over the winter period
TOTAL		£312,200		26,968 beneficiaries	1006 volunteers	

Thanks to Dorset Community Foundation and BCP Council

“Your support means the world to us, and is crucial in order for our charity to continue doing what we do. The funding you provide to local charities, especially small ones like ours, make the largest impact; as the money is spent where it is needed. Thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts; and on behalf of all the families you have helped us provide for” Ashley’s Birthday Bank

“I was impressed by the way the managers took interest in wanting to understand what we do and how to best support us. As a Black-led charity, we were not expecting the support we got and this has allowed us to feel part of the bigger community. It has broken down barriers and we are proud to recommend DCF to other charities and organisations as a funder that is inclusive, supportive and innovative.” Overcomers Outreach

“The grants are a brilliant support towards the work of the foodstores, especially in the current climate where food seems to have become much less of a priority for many grant making bodies. The benefits to communities where we run the stores is huge and we hear this on a weekly basis, not only with regard to accessing affordable food but also the sense of community and reduction in loneliness and isolation. Thank you!” Poole Communities Trust

“We greatly value our involvement with the BCP Food and Energy Support Fund and are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to make a real difference. The application and reporting process has been clear, supportive, and well-structured, which allowed us to focus our energy on delivery rather than administration. Communication from the team has been excellent throughout, and we’ve felt genuinely supported in our work.” Poole Foodbank

“The support and advice given by the DCF/BCP team has been literally invaluable. The WPCP is run entirely by unpaid volunteers who are not skilled in engaging with government bodies. The communications and guidance from the DCF/BCP team has enabled us to obtain this grant and use it successfully. Thank you from the WPCP team.” Winton & Parkstone Community Pantry

Access Dorset

Funded activities

We have used the funding to extend our Cooking on a Budget sessions. Beneficiaries learned to cook low cost nutritious meals and provided a community meal to others. They learnt budgeting skills, including top tips for healthy shopping on a budget. They built a folder of recipes to take home and got to try new foods. Not all beneficiaries were able to access the kitchen area so we bought a portable hot plate to enable cooking in the café. Our Crisis Support Worker provided advice and advocacy to ensure beneficiaries of our Warm Space had support to address hardship-related challenges. This included supporting beneficiaries to navigate unsuitable housing issues.

Outcomes

This project has enabled people to come together in a safe place to learn about healthy eating, develop their cooking skills, budget around their shopping, feel included and part of a community, reduce their social isolation and build their confidence. They have been able to provide meals for people coming into our Warm Space where people come in for food, advice and advocacy when they have been particularly struggling.

"Cooking makes me happy. I'm not domestic, I couldn't do it as a career, no way Jose! but you know I like cooking and I would make the brie bagette again"

"You're learning in a healthy environment... It's given me ideas for cooking and how to buy healthy food more cheaply"

Stories of change

L is the Matriarch of a family of 4 people and her son S came to the cooking on a budget group. Their accommodation was raised as an issue as L has multiple disabilities and uses a wheelchair - S is her carer. They had suffered bullying and harassment from neighbours and the property was unsafe and potentially dangerous as it had extensive mould and wasn't wheelchair adapted. The advocacy worker supported them to report the anti-social behaviour. They pushed for the family to receive more support and liaised with BCHA support worker to have the family prioritised for a move to more suitable accommodation. The family have recently been reassessed and allocated emergency banding, which should result in them being moved within a short timeframe.

M is a young woman with a learning disability who had got into an abusive relationship with another disabled man. M's friend tried to tell her that the way she was being treated wasn't acceptable but M struggled to understand that the way she was being treated wasn't her fault. The advocacy worker supported M to make an application to the police for information under Clare's Law legislation and in her subsequent meeting with the police. What she heard at the meeting made her realise her partner was abusive and she was supported by the workers to leave the relationship safely.

Sustainability

We have applied for a grant from Margaret Dobson Trust and will be looking for other possible grants. We are also exploring making a charge to beneficiaries.



AIM Community

Funded activities

The Warm Space Project has enabled the community to have a place to access free food, warmth, creative opportunities, peer relationship building, networking and signposting. Alongside this we have held mini workshops around budgeting, meal planning and emotional wellbeing. We have also been able to support more widely to the other branches of AIMCommunity where young people and SEND adults have been resourced with food and drink to meet basic needs. Families are sometimes referred to us as a follow up provision after completing parenting courses. At our venue in Creekmoor the money has been used for a 'community lunch' project within FLAiM, helping to teach our clients additional life skills in the sessions. They've been looking at food preparation and budgeting.

We have been able to recruit a new young volunteer, who will be undertaking their level 2 food hygiene certificate. This is great upskilling for them and brilliant for their CV.

We have continued our connection with local family hubs who signpost their in need families to us.

Outcomes

We can see through the regular attendance of families and young people on our doorstep in East Howe, West Howe and Kinson, that there is a huge need for connection and creativity. The provision of a safe space allows people to spend quality time together being creative and observing and/or participating in helpful habits like eating together at a table. It's intergenerational where people of all ages access and through the relaxed atmosphere, friendships and shared life experiences are naturally occurring.

The grant this time has allowed for deeper connections to be made and for us as an organisation to focus our vision and plans for community work. Beyond The WarmSpace Drop In we have been able to facilitate meeting the basic needs of the vulnerable young people and adults that we work alongside. Food and drinks at breakfast and lunch times have benefitted our young people, particularly those with poor sleep hygiene and unhealthy eating habits.

Stories of change

We have been able to provide volunteering experience for a young person we work with, from the LGBTQ community. They have had a troubled past of isolation and struggle. This young person has supported WarmSpace with roles of set up and pack down, pre and after sessions, led small activities with children and supported staff members in the kitchen. It has been wonderful to see them grow in confidence, social skills and build peer relationships with other team members too. This young person is also undertaking a Level 2 Food Hygiene certification which has paved the way for them to get a job for the first time.

A young lady who is on the verge of becoming an official volunteer at the WarmSpace, has been with us at AIMCommunity for a number of years. She has complex needs from her various medical conditions and neurodiversity. The WarmSpace has provided an extra space for her to build resilience and flourish. She has been supporting The WarmSpace through her love of crafting, adding her ideas to the planning of sessions as well as helping to lead them. This young person has identified The WarmSpace as one of the highlights of her week and I believe one of the reasons is that she is treated as one of the team members and this is a massive boost to her self esteem. It is also voluntary and therefore she is in control of her engagement.

Sustainability

We anticipate continuing this work by applying for further funding through The Dorset Community Foundation and the BCP Food and Energy Support Fund.

Ashley's birthday bank

Funded activities

Since the grant was received, we have provided beds, mattresses, toys, clothing, washing machines, toiletries, birthday and Christmas presents, and food shops. The cost of living has impacted on a lot of families, especially those already struggling with money, health issues, trauma etc. Children are going to school hungry, impacting their mental health, their learning, self esteem and bullying issues. Often the parents go without food, so the children can eat. The amount of families who have been made homeless and had to start again has also increased. Poverty also sadly results in more domestic violence and break up of families.

Outcomes

"You have made my year so much better - you're angels - I was panicking and feeling so bad - I told my children they would have to wait until after Christmas, and now they don't - thank you!" (The family didn't even have underwear for the children)

"Thank you so much - my children have been through so much, witnessing violence with my ex partner and having to move - you have made so much difference with your help"

Sustainability

We apply for different grants and fundraise through events; raffles etc. Two of us run the charity in our spare time so no expenses or running costs are required.

BH1 - Boscombe Salvation Army

Funded activities

Nutritious food has been provided for 30 + people. Heated blankets given to those moving into their own accommodation or struggling with their heating bills. Sleeping bags have been purchased for those who are street homeless.

Outcomes

This has enabled us to support vulnerable and older people struggling to eat and keep warm.

A 40 year old man who had no recourse to public funds was struggling to keep healthy having slept rough for many years. We have been able to support him with food, a sleeping bag when his was stolen, and he now has received benefits and is looking to get off the streets into accommodation.

A couple who have been street homeless and she is now pregnant, has been supported nutritional food, sleeping bags, warm clothes and they are keeping well because of the support they have received.

A young gentleman of 30 in accommodation, due to increased rent costs has been struggling with paying his electric bills. We were able to give him a heated blanket which has helped him to lower his expenses and manage his money.

Sustainability

We depend on donations from the general public and this is our only source of income.



Bournemouth Churches Housing Association

Funded activities

Purchased 157 supermarket cards (Tesco and Asda) with £40 on each one. The cards were distributed across BCHA's young people's services, mental health Floating Support Service, Domestic Abuse Outreach, Family Intervention and Domestic Abuse Outreach courses. The funding supported individuals experiencing periods of change and upheaval which can impact on them financially amidst the cost-of-living rise e.g. changeovers to benefits from work, taking on new tenancies, changeover from legacy benefits to UC. Staff are also supporting individuals with accessing benefits and grants, PIP and LCWRA applications.

Outcomes

Cards supported individuals and families to purchase food, toiletries, clothing and other items to help them stay warm during winter months. This helps to take pressure off local food banks and local small charities. One customer the mental health team supported with a food and warmth voucher was able to buy a duvet, he hadn't had one for over a year.

Stories of change

One customer had left hospital and had no possessions at all. Moving into one of our supported accommodations, the food and warmth voucher was used to get themselves a duvet, pillows, fresh bedding, a towel, flannel and other pieces he needed. He had a food bank parcel to provide him some food. The customer was over the moon and said his first night's sleep was the safest he has felt in over 5 years and the longest he has slept.

Sustainability

Staff teams continue to support individuals with income maximisation.

Bournemouth Community Church

Funded activities

We offered vouchers to Foodbank clients and Munch families, for our local greengrocers (Roebridge) and butchers (Websters), enabling a choice of fresh food to supplement the tinned food given out. Also, a weekly meal for families was offered, called Time for Tea.

Outcomes

The vouchers for the Greengrocers and Butchers are very well received. There is a real sense of community involving local shops; a feeling of 'we are all playing a part to help our community'. The funding received for Time for Tea fed at least 65 families over the funding period- enabling us to offer food as well as ongoing support to families in need each week.

"We have to have a lot of gluten free food as 2 of my children have been diagnosed coeliac- the vouchers have enabled me to buy some fresh food which was otherwise impossible due to the price of GF items. I would not have managed to feed my family well otherwise."

"I have found the meat voucher so helpful - I've been able to buy lovely mince and bulk it out to make many meals for myself and my partner - it felt like Christmas to us... thankyou so much"

Sustainability

The voucher scheme will stop. Time for Tea will continue each week as we try to get further funding to support the work.

Bournemouth Foodbank

Funded activities

We have been able to sustain our social canteen service throughout this period, ensuring everyone received a hot two course meal and drink in a warm space every Friday evening. We have seen new faces each week, and have empowered new volunteers to step up. We hosted two Christmas dinner sessions, which also included takeaways for those who needed something to reheat over the bank holidays. Every hub client attending St Georges for a food parcel has been able to sit in our cafe and have any menu item and hot drink thanks to the funding. This enabled a longer period of conversation and engagement which has in turn increased our uptake within our financial inclusion service on site as an indirect outcome.

Outcomes

During a very difficult time across our community, we have been able to ensure an equality of service to all in need. We experience over 90% single adults at social canteen, which we know helps to eradicate loneliness and create connection which is now a luxury so many cannot afford.

"I love coming here. Very friendly staff. Feels a safe place to come and chat, improving my social agoraphobia."

Story of change

A client came in the foodbank in need of a food parcel for himself and his family. They had to move to Bournemouth from Indonesia due to loss of job. The client was made to feel valued and listened to and I provided them with a family sized parcel. A few minutes after he left he returned with his wife and three young boys who were so happy; they came to hug and thank the staff for the food as they had also received lunch and hot drinks in our Cafe.

Sustainability

We are engaging with corporate partners to deliver social canteen takeovers to help ensure the longevity of the project.



Bournemouth Parks Foundation

Funded activities

The Parks Foundation again led a partnership with the Salvation Army (Winton), LIFEhouse at Bournemouth Community Church (Moordown), and The Hope Hub (Winton). We (The Parks Foundation) created 370 food vouchers worth £15 each and our partners distributed them to those who are struggling financially, are over 65 years, and/or are in receipt of universal credit. We also included our two cafes as voucher distributors as a way to ensure we got to the right people and used all the vouchers. The vouchers could be spent on a Friday at two of the Parks Foundation's community cafes – Redhill Park and Winton Recreation Ground. Both cafes were also open six days per week (seven days per week from mid-March onwards) offering food and drinks, a warm space in which people could dwell, and a range of free activities for those who wanted to get involved.

Outcomes

Our aim was to provide a meal or edible treats, within a warm and welcoming environment, to those in our community who are finding it the toughest due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Hope Hub have a growing number of people in the 65+ age group whose pensions are impacted; they tend to be reluctant about accepting help so liked the ability to choose their own food and drink. Our four organisations posted about the project on social media to widen the awareness of this project, and continue to have ongoing conversations about future joint initiatives.

Story of change

We had a lady come into the café. She often comes in. She is really struggling and finds us supportive. In the past, we've given her free food to take home if it's near its use-by date. She came in asking for crisps, and I mentioned she could have a voucher. She said she had received one but had lost it and didn't think she could ask for another. I reassured her that she was more than welcome and she became upset. I reassured her that everything was okay, but she was embarrassed about using it. We spoke at length about her circumstances. It was clear she didn't feel comfortable eating a meal in the café, so I packaged up a jacket potato, toppings, salad and other items for her to take home. She hugged me and couldn't believe it.

Sustainability

The free-food voucher was only possible thanks to this grant. Although we can't continue it unless we obtain future grant money, our five community cafes and our charity's work in local parks continues.

Christchurch Community Partnership

Funded activities

We extended the transport to the Thursday Lunch Club by employing an additional driver and a paid buddy, which enabled us to reach 2 other underserved areas, and were able to make up the shortfall in funding on the catering side. We have also continued the Sunday Roasts through the winter including the Christmas Day Community Lunch.

Outcomes

As well as providing a nutritious meal once a week, and often one to take home, it has enabled these older people to get out of their houses, which some of them have been completely unable to do without transport and sometimes assistance. Attending lunch club has also enabled them form new friendships and to link up with other services that they wouldn't otherwise be aware of e.g. seated exercise group, Coffee Connections and trips. Our beneficiaries and their families tell us it has had a life changing effect and enormously improved their quality of life.



Story of change

A engaged with our Coffee Connections, lunch club and our weekly trips and regularly told us what a huge difference we had made to her life. She was even mentioned in the media (including /ITV news) as part of our Vintage Album Covers project. This has been particularly poignant for us all as she is now under palliative care, having been diagnosed with bladder cancer back in January and is now deteriorating fast. However, she continued engaging in trips and the lunch club until only a month ago as she wasn't prepared to let it beat her. A says she and her friends in the sheltered housing complex have lived their best lives over the past couple of years, which has been an encouragement to all of our staff and volunteers.

Sustainability

We are continuing to apply for grant funding to cover our staff costs, with some success, and the lunch club and Sunday Roast projects are becoming self sustaining as word spreads and attendance increases for both.



Christchurch Foodbank

Funded activities

We were able to cook and serve 1162 meals at community supper evening and 117 delivered hot meals. The grant also enabled us to give fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy products with our foodbank parcels. We provided soup kettle and slow cookers to those identified as needing an easier, more cost effective cooking option. Flasks were purchased for street sleepers and sofa surfers. We also purchased extra food for the Christmas weeks and high demand

Outcomes

This grant makes a huge difference to our community and those struggling. For the Foodbank it means we can serve the needs of all those who come to us and it takes a huge worry off our shoulders knowing we can provide for those who are in crisis in our community.

Stories of change

C and G had been referred to us by social services for a hot meal twice a week. When we went to the home to introduce ourselves we noticed they needed a bit more practical support. Our van guys cleared out lots of rubbish and did a tip run, the Furniture bank provided them with two arm chairs and some warm blankets and lap trays. The last time we saw them was with their Christmas Trays and goodie bags. Sadly G passed away on Jan 4th and on visiting C with her meals she said *"I can never thank you enough for making our last few months together so comfortable, we really enjoyed sitting together in our chairs eating our lunches you gave us, I'm so grateful"*

"We would never have survived as a family without the help and support of the foodbank, the team are so kind and always gave me hope that we would get through this, this was the hardest time of my life but I always felt they were there for me, giving us food, a slow cooker, fresh ingredients and furniture, making our home look new and homely gave me the kick up the bum I needed, I'm back at work, kids are doing well and we are back settled as a family. I can never thank you enough for caring for me even when I didn't"

Sustainability

We will continue to apply for funding and grants as we have always done.

Citygate Church

Funded activities

The grant supported our community hub - a 4 times weekly drop-in offering a warm space and support for BCP residents impacted by the cost of living, struggling financially or experiencing food insecurity. We provide emergency food provision in partnership with Bournemouth Foodbank, ongoing support to certain clients with our casework team, and host a network of onsite partners to provide the best possible service.

Outcomes

- 998 emergency food vouchers were fulfilled providing three days of food for a total of 1,562 people
- 155 instances of restoration recorded (casework appointments, people receiving significant assistance)
- 885 appointments were facilitated with onsite partners; Citizens Advice, CMA, DCA, ICN, Migrant Hub,
- Bournemouth Water, Access Wellbeing and Teen Challenge Dorset



Story of change

"I first came to Citygate Community Hub in November 2023. After losing my job, I became ill with depression. I had no money, no food and nobody to turn to. It was an amazing first impression. I could tell you're a 'can do' group of people - the word 'can't' just doesn't come into the equation. During my visits I have had some wonderful conversations with the food bank team, who treated me like a friend in need from the start. My caseworker connected me with all the advisors I needed for my separate problems and told me about the Digital Skills Hub. I have since completed a five-week basic digital skills course to help me manage my life.

Bournemouth Water provided valuable guidance and practical water-saving gadgets. Citizens Advice helped me to apply for Universal Credit and the Household Support Fund. Faithworks CMA advocated for me with BCP Council, and my utility providers and bank. I was also given a six-month SIM card so I could make and receive calls, and I even had my old fridge-freezer swapped for a new one at no cost by LEAP, who were so professional. All this has enabled me to 'bow out' of needing a food bank, fill my cupboards and fridge-freezer, budget and have the dignity of shopping in a supermarket.

Citygate Community Hub has been life-changing. The first thing I experienced was that the team treated me like an individual, not a number. I had no one who noticed me and no money for even the basics - things like toothpaste or a haircut. I stopped caring about myself. But now, I get up in the morning, I'm organised, I'm methodical, I've got focus. I shave every day, I see friends twice a week, and I'm even planning a trip to France. Having the right support gave me back my dignity - I finally feel like me again."



Sustainability

Our onsite café (Arch Coffee House) give 10% of takings to the Hub and we have enlisted a fundraising consultancy firm to help us apply for more grants.

Coastline Community Trust

Funded activities

Through the grant we supported 8+ collections of surplus food from local supermarkets per week and made the food available for individuals and families in deprived areas (schools and community spaces in Boscombe West) to collect for free, in order to supplement their food shop and help alleviate the cost of living. We also bought a freezer to help store and distribute frozen food to people in need. Over 135 collections and distributions were made from December to March. Hot community meals were hosted in Churchill Gardens, once a week from December to March, for people struggling with food poverty, loneliness and isolation, poor health, and addiction and abuse. Hot meals and weekly food boxes including fresh fruit & vegs and meat were provided to 3 men in our Hope into Action house for ex rough sleepers, and to 2 women facing extremely challenging circumstances.

Outcomes

The BH14 Food Project has made a profound impact on individuals and families in Boscombe West, alleviating food insecurity by providing free, surplus food. People at community meals enjoyed a positive, supporting and uplifting social environment, and could be signposted to further support. These meals became moments of hope, as seen in stories like Shane's 60th birthday celebration—where a man once homeless shared his journey to sobriety, inspiring others in their own battles. Ex-rough sleepers and individuals in crisis were offered consistent, dignified access to fresh meals. The grant has been instrumental in scaling our efforts and reinforcing the power of food as a tool for community transformation.

Story of change

"I live in support accommodation (our Hope into Action house) and I'm on universal credit with very low income, I really struggle to make ends meet and some weeks I'm left without money and food. The food banks only give you a certain amount over a certain time frame which is really hard for people like me, then the friendship support team got involved with the house here and I'm able to eat properly and get at least 1 decent meal a day now. This has helped me massively with not just eating but mentally as I don't feel as stressed about trying to find food. It's been a god send if I'm being honest."

Sustainability

The projects will continue but be adapted and, in some cases, reduced due to this funding coming to an end. We will be applying for other grants in order to scale these projects back up in the near future.

Creative Kids

Funded activities

This funding ensured there was no gap in provision for children in need who are living in poverty during the February Half term where there is an absence of HAF funding. The grant enabled 12 children per day to attend February Holiday Arts Club for free from 8 am - 6 pm between 17th - 21st February 2025. This included a hot lunch. Children took part in two daily workshops that included Clay, Still Life Drawing, Drama, Green Screen, Podcasting, and Ukrainian Folk Arts. We were fully booked; 30 children per day. Remaining members paid with tax free childcare vouchers, student finance childcare, Universal Credit or from own income.



Outcomes

Children who attend have grown in confidence as artists, developed leadership and team working skills, they understand more about healthy eating and nutrition, and have made new friends. Parents were able to have some much needed respite from caring responsibilities, which can be challenging when they have children with SEND or have two or more children to care for. It is always wonderfully heart warming to see children queuing up for hot healthy lunches, especially in the Winter months when it's so very needed and the positive feedback they give to our Chef Wayne from Burb's Kitchen.

Story of change

We had an Iranian [Farsi Speaking] parent and two children attend Creative Kids at Christmas but quickly recognised the whole family did not speak any English, so communicating was a huge barrier and a safety concern. We managed to organise a translator to attend a few sessions to support the siblings over February half term. The children flourished in the setting with 1:1 support and will continue to be supported this coming Easter.

Sustainability

We have been awarded HAF funding for Easter, Summer and Christmas. We have new funding from The Foyle Foundation to offer funded activities in May Half Term. We are writing bids this Spring for funding for 2026 and beyond as the future of HAF funding is uncertain.

Faithworks Wessex

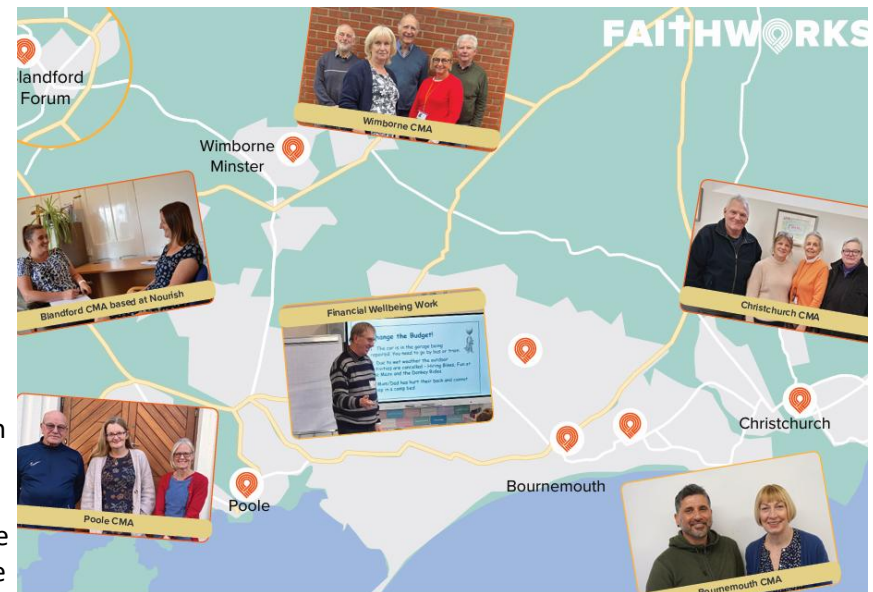
Funded activities

There is a drastic shortage of face-to-face free debt advice in BCP: national provision is a 3 visit formula - we are committed to working with a client as long as they want and to help them regain resilience and learn budgeting approaches to stop future crisis. We have 3 debt advisers who work across BCP. The grant paid for 4 months of:

- 20hrs/wk of Debt advisor time for clients at Bournemouth
- 11 hrs/wk of senior debt advisor time for clients across BCP
- 11 hrs/wk of expert debt lead time who is our Debt Relief Order expert

Outcomes

Most of the beneficiaries of Community Money Advice (CMA) are people who have been using one of our food bank/life centers. We know that simply providing food is unlikely to resolve things for the 40% of people who will need to use a food bank for more than one or two visits. Feedback demonstrates that finding an appropriate debt solution is life changing - it increases confidence, self esteem, energy, a sense of agency, it can improve mental health and we have even seen children able to move back in with parents.



Stories of change

B lost her school job through ill health and experienced a breakdown due to the stress of supporting her autistic child. A Family Support Worker talked with her and she wanted face-to-face Debt Advice as she had tried remote support unsuccessfully. B was referred to Faithworks CMA where she says she found the team were non-judgemental and from the start felt a weight slowly coming off her shoulders.

Last winter B couldn't afford to adequately heat her home, which meant her children felt extremely cold. A year on and B has sufficient heating, hot water and money saved ready for the next heating bill. She is also sleeping better, does not feel as stressed and feels in control of her finances thanks to the CMA team's support with addressing the debt.

"You have transformed my whole life... I'm sleeping better, I don't feel as stressed, I feel in control of at least one thing in my life. I cannot thank you enough."

We were recently contacted by a National Support charity who had helped an ex-serviceman (C) with his benefit entitlement. C had fallen on hard times dealing with PTSD and more recently with a cancer diagnosis that had left him unable to speak. Whilst he had his own home, it was heavily mortgaged, and he was struggling to maintain payments. The National Support charity were unable to support him with a debt solution. We reviewed his situation, and pulled together a budget, by making savings to many of his monthly costs and renegotiating a repayment of mortgage arrears that were affordable. This left a priority debt of £2000+ that couldn't be serviced. We contacted C's ex regiment, and with the help of his budget, showed C's circumstances were sustainable: they offered to cover the remaining outstanding priority debt.

Sustainability

We have one more year of funding from Garfield Weston, and are now in the process of seeking grant funding. Meanwhile, we are working with Citizens Advice BCP to develop a Financial Resilience map to demonstrate the need and impact of Debt Advice - we hope to discuss this with ICB etc.

Faithworks Wessex on behalf of the Access to Food Forum

Funded activities

We have updated and printed 2500 Start Cooking Recipe Books, developed by Access to Food Partners over 2023-24. We have distributed 2400 of these recipe books across BCP, through Access to Food Partners. Through research with Bournemouth University we identified that the most impactful way to build skills and confidence through these recipe books, was to accompany them through 'cooking together' opportunities, so this fund also allowed us to run a 'Community Cooking Leader' day training with the Friendly Food Club in February 2025, which 16 participants from 10 organisations took part in. We also were able to fund a Hireable Community Cooking Kit - where Access to Food Partners can hire (for free) all the kit needed to run cooking together opportunities in their setting.

Outcomes

This has been a great opportunity to provide more resources for Partners to build skills and confidence in cooking in their communities. We have seen the impact of the recipe book and cooking together opportunities through the great feedback shared by partners. People are feeding back: - greater confidence in cooking at home - making healthier food choices (cooking fresh, rather than ultra processed food and eating more fruit and veg.) - saving money on food and energy bills (through using the recommended shopping list and other types of cooking equipment) - improving mental health, and connection to the community.

Stories of change

"I use the book with my grandchildren, aged 8 and 10 to encourage them to cook for themselves. They love it! I think the simple recipes are clear to work with and the ingredients are easily available. Chopping onions has been the only help they have needed, although they have now tackled this too. We have made Spaghetti Bolognese, Chilli con Carne, and homemade burgers – we have adapted the meat using veggie mince... a great success. The fact they have made it themselves has made them more adventurous with their food too, they can't wait to make the next dinner, and by themselves... a great book to use"

"We have found the books to be very informative and helpful. We have had several times where we are with patients who have no confidence in cooking or what produce to buy, and the book has helped them to feel structured and confident. One patient felt relief that the book was helping her to feel she could purchase the right foods to make decent tasty meals, with simplicity, for the family. This has been such an invaluable tool to help our patients eat better and to understand cooking can be simple and doesn't have to be scary."

Sustainability

If there are future requests for this recipe book we will investigate grant funding, or organisational sponsorship for reprints.

Friends of St Michael's PTA

Funded activities

We are offered a warm after school space for families on Wednesday evenings. Play games, enjoy sharing a midweek meal with us, listening to a story or take the time to chat with your family, friends and teachers. We spent the money on food costs, kitchen equipment & hobs.

Outcomes

The grant has made cooking for large numbers of people a lot easier for volunteers. It has enabled us to widen the scope to include more families each week who benefit from socialising on large tables together, chatting (often in different languages) & having company 1 night a week. We have a mix of single parents, families, Grandparents all mingling & enjoying the evening.

"Kind staff, play area for children and nice atmosphere "

"We enjoy the time with families and kids. Kids love to play in mid week meals and love the food and services. "

"The communal atmosphere & chance to meet/mingle with other families."

"We enjoyed to meet the new families and volunteers. My kids enjoyed to meet and play with other kids. They enjoyed meals as well especially dessert."

Sustainability

We have set up a Go Fund Me page & also have the support of our school PTA. As a last resort we will ask for a minimal donation from attendees.

Grounded Community

Funded activities

A) salaries for our Feed our Community Project Team and for the Operational Team. B) marketing costs; social media campaign, leaflets, posters & signage to prompt and communicate to beneficiaries and community partners. C) food vouchers for Bournemouth Foodbank & Joy Café to help them reach people that would not normally be able to afford to access those café's. D) food costs for community meals at our projects, including Vale Lodge where we are supporting the vulnerable and elderly. We conducted various workshops on how to use produce, including 'cooking on a budget' and slow cooker energy efficient cooking. We conducted a meal event for volunteers, issued monthly food hampers and made urgent repairs to our van which collects from 60+ supermarkets p/week.

Outcomes

The grant allowed us to engage both existing and new benefactrices, working with community partners to signpost a greater number of people to services that they would not otherwise have accessed or been able to afforded. We reduced isolation and created warm spaces in the lonely winter months. We brought together people of different ethnic groups to share in food and culture, improving connection and acceptance. We improved the skills of our community, providing basic but vital skills connecting people to food.

Story of change

I have loved all my interactions with Grounded Community. The workshops have been informative, empowering and engaging. The Secret Garden is just such a beautiful, well-thought out space which I have enjoyed bringing my family to. I have also been very inspired and generously welcomed as an ad hoc volunteer with the Grounded Gatherers. It's a bleak period in global history but Grounded Community stands out as a beacon of hope and as a replicable example of how a community can become more resilient and sustainable around local food. Thank you so much for all your work. The project fills my heart with hope & possibility.

Sustainability

Staff salaries are part funded through National Lottery. A pantry beneficiary survey showed we could introduce a trial paid membership scheme - launching this summer. We made application to FareShare to be included in food deliveries which will be more time efficient and increase food volume and quality food. We will be selling produce made from grown, foraged and surplus food through our Onlineshop and at the pantry and Secret Garden.



Healthbus Trust

Funded activities

The grant enabled HealthBus to provide 459 hot, nutritious meals for 126 vulnerable adults facing homelessness. These sit-down lunches provided at the YMCA were well-attended and deeply valued by our patients. The meals offered a warm, safe, and welcoming space to eat together, socialise, and access wraparound support from HealthBus staff and partner organisations. Due to the overwhelming popularity and positive feedback, we expanded the hot meal provision beyond our original plan. Many patients expressed a strong preference for communal dining over food vouchers, highlighting the emotional and psychological benefits of eating together. As a result, we reduced the volume of food vouchers distributed and reinvested in extending the sit-down lunch.

Outcomes

The project has had a profound effect on mental wellbeing, reducing isolation and anxiety, and building trust with our healthcare team. The meals offered not just food but also dignity, routine, and a renewed sense of belonging. Many of our patients shared how the meals improved their physical health - helping manage chronic conditions such as diabetes and digestive issues - while also reducing feelings of isolation, anxiety, and hopelessness. People were also more likely to attend health appointments, access mental health and housing support, and begin building steps toward recovery. The communal aspect of the meals fostered relationships, strengthened trust, and restored a sense of community among people who are often disconnected and marginalised.

Stories of change

Jade, in her twenties, came to us after fleeing domestic abuse. She was living in temporary accommodation and struggling with an acute eating disorder that left her extremely vulnerable, both physically and emotionally. The Thursday meal provided a gentle, non-clinical way for her to engage with the HealthBus team. Over a number of visits she felt safe enough to share her story and accepted support from our clinical nurse and GP. Jade is now receiving regular medical care and therapy, and is working towards recovery.

Frank is in his early forties and has lived on the streets for several years. He struggles with multiple complex health conditions linked to long-term alcohol and substance misuse. When he first attended one of our Thursday community meals, Frank was withdrawn and hesitant to engage. Over time, the warm, welcoming environment - combined with access to a hot, nutritious meal - helped him open up. He began to connect with others, make friends, and feel a sense of belonging. These simple, shared moments helped reduce his anxiety and low mood, and stabilise his daily routine. This gave him the mental clarity and strength to begin making healthier, more informed decisions. Today, Frank is working with our mental health nurse and social prescriber and has started a detox programme.

Sustainability

We will continue to explore funding opportunities to relaunch this initiative later in the year, from local businesses, charitable trusts, and grant-making bodies. In the meantime, we will continue collaborating with community partners to explore cost-effective ways of maintaining access to food support.



Home Start Wessex

Funded activities

Weekly groups for families staying in Quay Foyer (Poole) & Morrell House (Bournemouth). Our Rapid Response worker and trained volunteers supported the families with accessing grants/benefits, housing, accessing food and other essentials, managing debt/finances and skills to shop and cook on a budget. Emotional support was also provided to reduce stress and build resilience. Children were provided with fun/developmental activities to do whilst parents received support. Parents received donations of nappies and formula.

Outcomes

Helped to reduce stress/anxiety/pressure and the impact of the cost-of-living pressures on parenting. Resilience, self-esteem and confidence has been boosted. Parent and child mental health and physical wellbeing is improved. Parents developed money management skills and skills to plan/budget, healthy meals.

Story of change

"I'm a single mum who lived at the Quay Foyer. Every Thursday I used to go to the Home-Start group and I found it so helpful. Lucy was amazing she helped me in more ways than one. Helping me get a stair gate as well as filling out paperwork for DLA for my sons medical needs. I loved all the drawing and painting. My son absolutely loved it. I wouldn't of been able to do half the things I did in that group without having Lucy's help and support. I really am going to miss that group as I had a bond with the worker and my son looked forward to it every week as well. Thank you so much for all that you have done for us."

Sustainability

We have an income generation plan which includes diversifying our income. We fundraise through grants, corporate partnerships, online campaigns and events.

Hope Community Church

Funded activities

The grant enabled us to provide free hot meals and drinks as well as a welcoming warm safe space in our café to the most vulnerable in society. We also provided free hot meals for children and a parent in school holidays. Our coat bank was widely used, which had been kept going with donations of second hand items.

Outcomes

The Hope Hub is seen as a welcoming place of safety within our local community where freshly cooked food and drinks can be bought at a very low price (or free). Our warm space provision over the winter helps clients in many ways ranging from the use of laundry and shower facilities to just being able to stay as long as they want in the warm. There is always someone to chat to and activities to do so we can encourage people to stay and relax. This helps us to get to know every client and their individual needs so we can help them to address any issues, either through in house or external referrals. Our volunteers include people with mental and physical health challenges, non English speakers, ex offenders, over 65s & asylum seekers.

"if it wasn't for the hub, I wouldn't see anyone, let alone talk to anyone during the day"

"everyone is so friendly and supportive, it's part of my weekly routine"



Stories of change

"R and B are rough sleepers. Over the winter months they would visit the Hub for hot food and warmth and a supply of food for the times we were not open. They made good use of our laundry and shower facilities and accessed free warm clothing and coats from our coat bank. They felt safe and accepted in our community, not "judged" and would stay all day, after cafe opening hours. Through 1:1 support and referrals both are now in accommodation.

E is a single father struggling on benefits unable to work due to children with additional needs. Having accessed the Hub for food & activities we got to know them & to help them in many ways including addressing mould in the home, accessing white goods and heating support and a makeover of a sick child's bedroom. He now has someone to call on for an extra hand or advice and has improved his mental health and hope for the future.

Sustainability

Our biggest challenge is gaining the funds for paying our part time cafe manager. However she has generously offered to stay on a voluntary basis. We will be unable to offer free meals other than food on our Pay It Forward (PIF) board but we continue to apply for funding. We may have to reduce our opening hours.

Hope Housing, Training & Support

Funded activities

Our cook has been teaching residents unprocessed simple affordable food, how to batch make and how to preserve food both in the fridge and freezer. We started with some residents just coming in at the end and getting free food. They started to come in earlier and watched what participants were doing, then moved on to becoming a participant and wouldn't miss a lesson. The welcome packs are an emotional gift to new arrivals at Hope. They are very grateful for a large towel and toiletries and finally have a shower in the safety of a secure supported home. They are able to obtain food from our community fridge and the cookery classes and to prepare meals with peers.

Outcomes

Residents mental health has improved by feeling welcomed, gaining immediate help on benefits, cost savings and having help with food poverty. Residents have gained access to essential advice on welfare entitlements, energy savings, housing benefits, employment, and more. 105 residents have increased their benefit entitlement and reduced debt by write-off or reduced payment plans. This is taking pressure off other organisations such as Citizens advice who are inundated.

Story of change

We had a resident last year who was very concerned how he was going to manage on his benefits. Debts were coming out in monthly direct debits reducing his benefit to an amount too low to cover food and service charge payments. After talking to support workers we managed to apply for PIP and extra benefit payments as well as reducing some monthly payment deductions and writing off some after explaining his situation. This has mean't this person can work on his recovery back into independent living. They are now able to learn new skills so that this person should not slip into the same situation again.

Sustainability

We will be making bids to fund this project further.



Immaculate Conception and St Joseph's Church

Funded activities

Becky's Café remains at the heart of our community, ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds receive a warm, non-judgmental welcome along with some hot soup, sandwiches and cake, all made by willing volunteers. It is funded through voluntary donations and local grants. A new development in the last six months has been social prescribers using the café as a meeting point with their clients. Their hope is that the clients will keep coming back and that the Café forms part of their recovery.

Outcomes

The number of people coming along has increased over the past four months. We now have a ping pong table that is popular with all ages. Everyone feels welcome and new friendship groups are thriving. Volunteers sit with those on their own and small groups, encouraging and chatting with them while they enjoy good nourishing food. Special days are celebrated; as well as our Christmas party, we have had Welsh cakes for St David's Day, Haggis on Burns "Night" and recently a special cake for an 80th birthday. We have strengthened our links with CCP and Christchurch Support Kabin, encouraging lonely, elderly and disadvantaged people to receive support in a variety of ways.

"Thanks for always making us very welcome."

"Thank you all for your kindness and home-made soup and cakes. It is very much appreciated."

Story of change

Our town's Big Issue seller, M, knows that he will receive some nourishing food and also be treated with respect and warmth. This is not what he receives from everyone on the street. He has had serious health issues, but has to continue to get to work otherwise his money will run out. Psychologically, it is very hard for him to cope with, but the Cafe is a 'little oasis' for him.

Sustainability

We will continue to accept donations from our volunteers and people attached to the parish. We will also be seeking further grants to support our work.



Immanuel United Reform Church

Funded activities

We successfully launched the Children's Cooking Club, a free initiative designed to help children (ages 6-10) and their parents/carers learn practical cooking skills, improve food budgeting, and promote healthy eating habits. Sessions run fortnightly on Tuesdays after school, where families cook a nutritious, budget-friendly meal together. Each child receives a personalised recipe book to build their collection of meals, and the Access to Food Partnership Recipe Book. The project helps reduce food waste, using surplus ingredients from Immanuel Church's Community Fridge and local food networks.

Outcomes

Families have gained valuable life skills, strengthened community connections, and increased confidence in the kitchen. The project has equipped children and parents with essential cooking skills, helping them gain confidence in preparing



nutritious, budget-friendly meals. Many families have adopted healthier eating habits, reduced food waste, and now feel more empowered to cook at home. The sessions have also provided a safe, welcoming space where children can learn, socialise, and build independence. Families who were previously isolated have found friendship and support through the group. The sessions have been extremely popular; we have a waiting list with priority for those who are disadvantaged.

Stories of change

One mother and her child aged 9, joined the cooking sessions after struggling with meal planning and budgeting. She often relied on processed foods because she lacked confidence in cooking from scratch. Through the project, she and her daughter learned practical skills like meal preparation, safe food handling, and how to cook healthy meals using affordable ingredients. After a few sessions, she excitedly told us that her children had started helping in the kitchen at home, eager to recreate recipes from their personalised recipe book. She mentioned that she now shops differently, making the most of surplus food from the Community Fridge, reducing waste and costs. The project has empowered this family to cook together, eat healthier, and feel more confident in managing their food budget.

"I came along with my daughter and grandson on Tuesday this week for the first of your cookery classes. We were immediately impressed with the set up in the kitchen, it was like walking into a children's 'Masterchef' class! Attention to detail was very impressive especially the special gloves you sourced to prevent the children cutting themselves! I think it's a wonderful idea and one which will teach the children life skills and hopefully inspire them to want to learn to cook now and in the future. Congratulations & well done to you and your amazing team of volunteer helpers."

Sustainability

The Children's Cooking Club is a permanent initiative that will continue beyond the life of this grant.

Kinson & West Howe Foodbank

Funded activities

The grant was spent on buying food and hygiene products to stock our emergency food parcels.

Outcomes

This grant has enabled us to purchase items that we would not have been able to provide otherwise. We are noticing a reduction in donations from the public so grants like these enable us to continue our service. One family had no food or presents for Christmas.

Story of change

A single person over the age of 65 was struggling to make ends meet. We have provided them with food and they have spent some time with our financial inclusion advisor and we have been able to change their current financial situation.

Sustainability

Donations from the public and grants.



Lovechurch

Funded activities

- Sourced, packed & distributed 120 Christmas hampers to vulnerable women and others struggling with the cost of living
- Weekly provision of take-away nutritious breakfasts to primary school children in Boscombe - 3537 breakfast portions
- Slow Cooker Course run with Friendly Food Club - 3 weekly sessions and free slow cooker given to 17 participants
- Budget cooking with Airfryers with Friendly Food Club - 3 weekly sessions and free air fryer given to 15 participants
- Fun 'n' Food Feb half term - 25 families invited for lunch, childrens cooking activities and collected a bag of food.

Outcomes

Weekly Kids Breakfasts and Fun'n'Food provide practical support to families in food insecurity. Many local children wouldn't otherwise get breakfast and therefore struggle to engage in class, with obvious long-term effects on their academic potential. Schools anecdotally report improved behaviour and engagement on Thursdays. Christmas is a difficult time for many in our community – and we are privileged to be able to support them with food hampers at this time.



Through partnering with the Friendly Food club both at Fun'n'Food and in the Cookery Courses we aim to not only provide essential food supplies, but also teach families skills to create meals on a budget. Both Cookery Courses were very popular and over-subscribed. Participants said that they were more confident in cooking. These events also build much needed community, and provide somewhere for children to go during the holidays.

Story of change

One of the mums who attended the cookers course told us that before the course she didn't cook at all. When asked how her cooking had changed since the course said: *"It has helped me make more affordable meals. Given me more confidence with cooking. My kids actually eat the meals (even with veg!!)"*

Sustainability

The majority will be through grant funding. A smaller proportion is derived from individual donations

Overcomers Outreach

Funded activities

There were 3 meetings in a week, 2 adults sessions and 1 youth session. We provided a warm space, a place of safety to socialise and we provided snacks. We supported a few people with getting electricity in the homes. We signposted people to other organisations and are working with other charities to enhance the use of the community hub. We have a clothes bank and a diverse food bank for people from all regions, we get donations from local shops and businesses.

Outcomes

The adults in our community are isolated from each other due to work and family commitments. The project has allowed beneficiaries to improve their wellbeing and mental health. It has allowed people to utilize a space to keep warm, socialize and have something to eat. It has saved the people money from having to pay for energy cost at home. One family did not have enough funds to pay for electricity and we helped out and gave them a heater to use. One family of 6 did not have winter clothes and we were able to donate some. families are telling us that they don't know that they can access the type of services and things we offer. The homeless find it has a place of refuge and somewhere they can have someone listen to them and share their hopes.

Our organisation is able to grow and attract more people to support us in our aims and objectives. We have a few assets like Heaters that we bought and don't have to buy next time. We are involving our youths in activities that are directly led by them and organised by them but still coordinated by an adult. The project has given us more visibility as an organisation and it can only get better going forwards. The grant has allowed us to do more for our community and reach out to more people on a weekly basis.

Story of change

We supported B (homeless with addiction/alcoholism) and a few others during the winter to provide a safe and warm place to meet, socialise and have some food to eat. B passed away 2 weeks ago in Asda car park where he usually sleeps overnight. This is also an indication that this service is needed everyday and not just 3 days a week for a few hours that we are offering. Food packages and snacks that were provided have had a positive impact on people like B and others who use the service.

Sustainability

We are looking at accessing more grants and personal donations. We are working with EDC (Ethnically Diverse Communities) Project at CAN to build our capacity to support more people. We have a premises to use for future activities and gives us a location that people can know us about. We also aim to reach out to other organisations, business and local residents to get them involve in the direction they want going forward.

Parish of St Nicholas and St Hubert

Funded activities

The funding has enabled us to support a variety of activities and events by providing a warm space and refreshments at a reduced rate. These clubs are aimed at helping to address social isolation including that of carers and food poverty in all ages. Refreshments are provided at each session and we hold a weekly lunch open to all ages. First meal free for all and additional vouchers available via foodbank. Amount charged per week subsidised by warm initiative Coffee shop - open every Saturday and available to all ages. Vouchers available via our foodbank and charges subsidised by warm initiative. Drop in warm space weekly - jigsaws, chat and hot drink. Christmas craft event for all ages including refreshments. Christmas day meal - all ages invited, with transport for those on their own.

Outcomes

The grant has enabled us to continue to run these projects and engage with other agencies such as social prescribers to widen the group of people we are supporting on a regular basis. The projects have all reduced social isolation in a wide range of age groups, ensured people are able to access a warm space and refreshments at an affordable cost, and provided an opportunity for people to be signposted to additional support e.g. Leonardo Trust, Foodbank.

Story of change

A couple referred to our community lunch by the foodbank were socially isolated due to mobility issues as well as struggling to cover their food bill. Coming to the community lunch enabled them to have a guaranteed 2 course hot meal and hot drink one day a week. They were also able to make friends with and this has helped to address their social isolation. *"we look forward to Thursdays each week and make a day out of it. The food is always good and we get a warm welcome when we arrive and it is great to see friends. It is lovely to have something to look forward to each week."*

Sustainability

We will fund some of the work through the Church's finances and apply for alternative grants to support this work

Poole Communities Trust

Funded activities

Recipe bags have been really well received. On 2 of the 4 months we were able to tie up the recipe for our community lunch so that people could try what they were going to cook. Many people were really emotional to receive their Christmas £10 voucher as they recognised that this would have such a positive impact for them and their family. Each week in the stores we have 4 items that rotate over a 4 week period, (coffee, cooking oil, tinned meat products and hot chocolate). These are all more expensive items that people struggle to afford and this grant enabled us to buy these goods. Funds were also spent on high demand stock items such as cereals, jam, marmalade, tinned soup.



Outcomes

The 2 community foodstores have become a really important part of the week for an average of 120 customers each week. About a third stay on in the café / warm space. This does vary depending on time off the year (e.g. school holidays) and which speakers we have along (e.g. energy advice, social prescriber, wellbeing adviser). The foodstore gives people a good reason to come out and the café spaces are a great way to meet up with others. Many people tell us it is the only time in the week they get to have a chat and reduce their loneliness. They learn about what else is happening that they may want to get involved with.

Stories of change

We have 2 sisters who come along to the store and café each week, they refer to the café as their youth club and say regularly it is the only time in the week they can 'get away from all the rest of the nonsense in their lives'. One of the sisters is awaiting an operation which she is very anxious about and it is great to hear them having a good laugh which clearly releases a lot of stress. They are always very keen to try new items in the store.

A customer is on a very strict diet and finds some of the items she would like to buy very expensive, in store she can often find things (e.g. lentils, low fat salad dressing) that she would not buy just for herself as the rest of the family don't eat them.

Sustainability

We will continue to apply for grants. We also use various platforms that give us access to free or reduced cost food. We have several individuals who give monthly donations of either food or cash and we will try to grow this area. We hope to explore helping smaller food outlets reduce food waste by giving to us.

Poole Community Exchange

Funded activities

- Low-cost food and other essentials e.g. sanitary products and toiletries through Poole Pantry
- Free food through our Community fridge (3 days a week)
- Low-cost Community lunches (3 days a week)
- After-school meals as part of the Regenerate project (twice a month)
- Food bank parcels as a satellite for Poole Food Bank
- Help and advice through Citizens Advice Bureau, Ridgewater Energy and Dorset Police
- Low cost and subsidised leisure activities for physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing
- Food for hostels, domestic violence refuge, and Moor Community Food
- Volunteering opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Outcomes

The grant has contributed to 13% of our costs. We recently asked our community what difference we are making. They said:

"Since coming here I have made many friends which has made my life so much improved since losing my husband. It's a place I look forward to coming to and feel a place of belonging."

"I like to come here to talk to people, it has made me happy because the people don't judge"

"We need this as we are on very low money per month, this service is vital to us, I am on the vulnerable persons list"

"I come here for lunches and have also shopped in the pantry. I have struggled with food and this was helped with a crisis pack of food. I now come & contribute a token fee towards lunch as part of my routine. I had addictions all my life"

"Meet people, share skills with others, make new friends. All helps my mental health & gives me a reason to live. It literally changed my life for the better & made me happy."

Story of change

"I was going through bad and lonely times, I was dealing with a threatened life and I was introduced to URFC and I've been here ever since - about six months - I was welcomed with open arms by the community here and ever since have found a structure to my life which I was in need of. I volunteer two days a week and when money is short I use the food bank which is very helpful - A hot meal is very important and I really enjoy it."

Sustainability

Donations from our community and supporters. Grant applications. Direct fundraising.

Poole Foodbank

Funded activities

Throughout the grant period fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, dairy and bread were purchased. Family recipe bags were also provided. Specialist fresh (non-processed) food parcels were created for 11 of our guests who struggle with diabetes. For families struggling with energy bills we were able to offer cheaper alternatives to using a standard oven through the provision of air-fryers, microwaves and slow cookers. We ran two sessions teaching families how to cook Christmas meals on a budget and classes ran January to March showing families how to batch cook with cheaper kitchen equipment. Two weekly community meals have become established. "Stay-For-Lunch" runs every Tuesday lunchtime and "Men-That-Lunch" runs every Friday lunchtime. More than 400 hot meals have been served across these two groups and attendees are invited to join the team in prepping each meal. Many new connections have been created to the point where attendees are actively supporting one another in their communities.

Outcomes

Funding enabled us to provide direct support to over 5000 individuals and families struggling with the rising cost of living, particularly around food insecurity and energy affordability. The interventions not only met immediate basic needs but also helped reduce stress and anxiety among beneficiaries, improving overall wellbeing and stability during a challenging winter period. For the wider community, community groups strengthened social connections, reduced isolation, and fostered a greater sense of support and resilience. We worked in partnership with local groups and volunteers, amplifying the impact of the grant.

At an organisational level, the funding allowed us to increase the frequency, flexibility and scale of services in response to emerging needs. It enhanced our reputation as a trusted provider of support, helped attract new volunteers and partners and positioned us well for future funding and collaboration.

Stories of change

Sarah, a single mother of two young children, was struggling to make ends meet after losing her part-time job. With rising energy bills and food prices, she found herself skipping meals to ensure her children were fed. Sarah also has severe diabetes, and her condition had become unstable due to poor diet and stress. Through our support, Sarah received regular food parcels focused on fresh, non-processed ingredients. This enabled her to bring her blood sugar levels under control, which was vital in allowing her to undergo a life-saving surgery she had previously been too unwell to receive. She received an air-fryer and slow cooker and accessed the Tuesday community meals, where she and her children enjoyed hot meals and a safe, friendly space. She has just found new part-time work and says *"You gave me new hope, I was close to giving up. I don't know how me and the boys would've managed without you."*

David, an elderly man living alone, was referred to us by a concerned neighbour. He had been living in a cold, dark home because he couldn't afford to turn on the heating. Too proud to ask for help. Our team provided energy efficient cooking equipment, blankets, and invited him to our weekly community meal on Friday's. Our debt advisors helped to negotiate more favourable terms to manage his energy arrears. David now attends every Friday and has formed a small circle of friends he meets with regularly. For him, it's more than just the food - it's companionship and renewed purpose. He said, *"It's more than just warmth and food - it's feeling seen, feeling like I matter and that I've got new friends that listen and help."*

Sustainability

We anticipate funding our ongoing work through a combination of grant applications, trusts, and foundations, alongside community fundraising efforts and individual donations. We continue to develop partnerships with local businesses for sponsorship and in-kind support.

Poole Waste Not Want Not

Funded activities

We supported over 200 households in eating well and staying on top of their energy bills. Ten families received air fryers and multi-cookers. Members came together for a joyful three-course festive lunch. We packed 148 hampers filled with enough food to last through our well-earned break. Volunteers wrapped over 400 gifts for our adults, and 500 toys for the children. The grant kept our shelves full of daily essentials, ensuring our members had the choice they deserve at prices they could afford. To show our appreciation, we gifted our volunteers vouchers to support them while we were closed, recognising their dedication and countless hours of service.

Outcomes

The grant made a huge difference to our members through the difficult winter months when energy bills rocket and household budgets were stretched thin. We supported families facing long-term health issues by distributing 35 snuggle blankets - 15 donated by Ridgewater Energy and the rest funded by the grant. Households received energy-saving cooking devices, reducing the heartbreaking reality of people eating cold food or going to bed early just to keep warm. Our hampers eased stress and anxiety for parents who feared Christmas was cancelled for their children. Smiles lit up faces as we handed out hampers filled with fresh meats vegetables and gifts. We hosted food activities and restaurant style three-course meals for Christmas and Valentine's, and both young and old enjoyed cooking events, empowering volunteers and teaching members to eat better. We reduced reliance on food banks by offering 6 households menu planning on a budget, showing that cooking fresh saved them £40 compared to buying ready meals or unhealthy snacks.



Story of change

One family came to us in crisis, fearing Santa wouldn't arrive this year. With rent arrears and no heating due to sudden ill health, they were issued a food crisis voucher and reached out for support. During a one-on-one chat, the mother broke down in tears, overwhelmed by their situation. We invited her children to enjoy coloring and drinks in the coffee shop, giving her a safe space to talk. She explained her husband, the main earner, had collapsed at work and was awaiting test results. Surviving on her part-time wage, she felt ashamed to ask for help, having never needed support before. Weeks later, the family became regular members of our shop, buying items they never thought they could afford. *"You are so much more than a shop; you listened when no one else did"* she told us. The surprise on her husband's face when she brought home a hamper and gifts for their children was overwhelming. Their daughter, Millie, wrote, *"Thank you for asking Santa to help my mummy and daddy. I thought he would forget us, but he came!"*

Sustainability

We will strengthen community partnerships. We will seek grants from local councils, charitable foundations, and corporate sponsors. Fun events, community donations, and membership contributions will also play a vital role. Additionally, we aim to develop new initiatives, such as workshops and community events.

PramaLife

Funded activities

Two lunch clubs per month in both Boscombe and Hamworthy. Boscombe was prepared once per month by a community food charity and once per month by volunteers. We distributed information, signposting and support, provided interventions to escalate issues to the appropriate authorities, and provided a welcoming environment to create new friendships and reduce loneliness. We worked at Beacon Church in Canford Heath; every Friday they accommodate a Warm Space and the funding enabled them to purchase slow cookers to produce a soup lunch. This has also accommodated a Carer Drop in run by PramaLife. Continuing our partnership with Bournemouth Community Church, we provide the volunteer support and referrals to a Weekly Monday Lunch Club.

Outcomes

We keep people informed about anything that may benefit them, including other services, clubs & activities e.g. those run by PramaLife. We refer people to CAB to access financial benefits, to Diverse Abilities to get assistance in applying for PIP/Attendance Allowance/Carers Allowance/Universal Credit. We Refer carers to Leonardo Trust for counselling, benefits checks, grants & respite. We refer to Ridgewater Energy for energy advice and information as well as grants for Boiler replacement and insulation measures from LEAP.

Story of change

We have been delivering Dementia & Nutrition sessions as part of a research project with Bournemouth University. One of the ladies attending the Lunch Club is a carer for her husband who has dementia. She received a booklet at one of the sessions and felt that since using the tips from the booklet her husband has been eating and drinking more. She said the booklet is 'really helpful' and 'has made a difference'. She also said the booklet helped her to make the connection that the reason for her husband's taste changing could be linked to dementia.

Sustainability

We will continue to apply for grant funding. We are asking people for a donation towards the cost of meals/refreshments.



Refugee Support Europe

Funded activities

We supported people seeking asylum through the Market at our Bournemouth Dignity Centre, where members can choose the essential items they need in a calm environment that offers a sense of agency. The majority of the funding was used to provide Welcome Packs and Emergency Packs, including essential hygiene and clothing items for new arrivals and members facing street homelessness. In response to an emerging and urgent need, we allocated £400 of the funding to provide food support for our 'Coffee Corner,' which is designed to nurture a welcoming space, and answer the increasing needs of our members facing street homelessness. This included breakfast items such as cereal, fruit, nuts, toast and butter, as well as hot drinks and biscuits.



Outcomes

207 individuals benefited from the items purchased, while a portion of the remaining funds was spent to stock the market, which will support a further 204 individuals. The allocation funding towards food meant that an additional 419 people benefited from homelessness support in the Centre. The addition of breakfast support for those facing homelessness provided nourishment, safety and solidarity at an extremely difficult time. The project has also helped reduce isolation and hardship by meeting new arrivals with compassion and practical help.

Stories of change

When S arrived in the UK from Ethiopia fleeing political persecution, he had already survived a harrowing journey. After a couple of weeks, he found the Dignity Centre in Bournemouth.

"Everything I needed: food, clothes, help finding legal support – I found it all here. This is where I finally feel safe. The Dignity Centre is the cornerstone for refugees here in Bournemouth. It creates an environment that encourages resilience, especially for refugees."



H has been moving for most of his life. Originally from Afghanistan, he left 15 years ago, searching for a future that didn't revolve around war and survival. Three years ago, he arrived in the UK, hoping for stability – but the reality was far from what he expected. For months, Hamid had no home, no safety.

"People don't understand how unsafe the streets are. You don't sleep. I struggled with that. I still do" he says. When Hamid found the Dignity Centre, something changed. "It does start to make you feel human again, being here. We are a problem in this country, something that needs to be managed. But here, at the Centre, we are seen as people. We can leave the hotel and go somewhere where we're not treated as an issue, where people understand the complexity of the situation."

Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of our work, we rely on a diverse mix of funding streams, including grants from trusts and foundations, individual donations, fundraising events, corporate sponsorship, volunteer-led initiatives and regular donors.

Safe and Sound Dorset

Funded activities

We held celebrations in December for those in our community who often can not afford to eat cooked meals nor heat their homes adequately; with elderly people, physically and mentally disabled and those with mental and physical health issues, most on low incomes amongst the most affected groups who participated. We have been able to offer appliances which are low cost and efficient; air fryers, heat pads, electric blankets and heated airers (7p an hour to heat), warm fleeces and other piece of equipment that will help people to lower their bills and enable them to function better in their homes. We have Ridgewater, the CAB and Shelter come in to sessions to give talks on energy savings following up with appointments to help with maintenance and energy saving devices. We also gave out monthly vouchers to purchase meals in The Well, which takes the financial barrier away to being included in a normal cafe setting.

Outcomes

The grant has made a huge difference to us as a community. Our monthly meal voucher scheme for approximately 100 women is very popular as it enables women to come into our community cafe and order off the menu. Our experienced cafe staff are purposefully picked for their life experience and skills with working within a disadvantaged community. Our celebrations benefit about 100 -160 people in the community by building community with collective festive eating, companionship, camaraderie involving a team of volunteers cooking together, collaboratively producing multicultural meals that all can enjoy. On Thursdays our housing group has been able to have a sit down meal included for those who are homeless, sofa surfing, in temporary or supported housing, isolated or at risk, needing maintenance help. This has become a connecting point for those difficult to engage within BCP area. We have had approximately 40 referrals in the last 3 month period which can be life changing for some.

"To have dry, clean clothes in winter due to a heated airer, is not only a gift of warmth or health, it is an invisible gift of dignity."

"The electric blanket has saved me from putting the central heating on for less time so saving on fuel bill and it also helps with my legs by keeping warm."

Stories of change

One woman who has had spinal surgery has struggled in her own flat. Our services have been able to provide her with maintenance through Shelter, appropriate appliances to help her health and well being (electric blanket/ heat pad, heated airer, air fryer) She has benefitted from being part of a community which supports her on a daily and weekly basis, connecting up housing issues with personal challenges to allow her to cope better.

"Safe and Sound Dorset is distinctive, in that they not only have their finger on the pulse to what the group needs, they discreetly and imperceptibly, confidentially journey with each person for where they are at and without unsolicited advice or pressure. Their intuitive, non-judgemental support is their greatest asset. One has to feel safe before one will open up. One has to feel that their response is genuine engagement and that they are rock solid, stable and really want to invest in your holistic wellbeing."

Sustainability

We will be applying to other funders for help with appliances, housing and sessions, from April 25 onwards.



Salvation Army - Winton

Funded activities

The funding allowed us to offer free and low cost meals to the families in our local community. After adjusting our café hours to incorporate operating alongside our youth work we have seen an increase in footfall of the younger generation and they have attended with their families too. We have been able to make our weekly offer permanent throughout the winter and the reduction in our prices has allowed many people to eat a home cooked warm meal in a safe place with other people who they can form friendships with. Many of these have attended with their families and eaten together.

Outcomes

The grant has allowed us to offer a food element alongside our work with the young people in our community. All other youth groups have closed and we have seen an increase in the footfall to our group. Many of the young people have not eaten when they come and were having sweets to fill them up. The grant has allowed us to offer home cooked hot meals.



Stories of change

"Coming into the Salvation Army feels like coming into a community. The staff are so friendly and welcoming. I bring my children in to enjoy a healthy affordable meal and they absolutely love it. A great big thank you to all who make the Salvation Army what it is. Jessie, my daughter age 11 says 'it's so nice, I like the new design. The food is so yummy and have made a few friends here and activities are great. I always look forward to coming in'."

"Great to come here and have a filling and different meal for myself and my daughter. It is at a cost I can afford. The company is so very welcome. Also, my daughter has anxiety, as such she meets people and opens up a little. Staff are fantastic and very helpful. So very grateful for all the help I can get."

Sustainability

Ongoing funding support and donations

Samee

Funded activities

The grant enabled 10 disabled young adults age 18 - 25 to develop their life, social and employability skills over a period of 13 weeks (3 days a week); a total output of 156 hours of group activities and 1:1 personalised support. They prepare together a total of 390 healthy lunches.

Outcomes

The young people were not in education, employment or training. The programme was a huge success with 8 of the 10 participants moving directly into positive outcomes. 6 have joined the 1-year SAMEE supported self-employment internship, and the other 2 have joined the Crumbs projects and Bournemouth & Poole College Steps programme. The 2 participants who did not move into a positive outcome are continuing to be supported by SAMEE until they have made a balanced decision on what career option they would like to pursue that can fit around their additional needs. The project developed the social skills of each young person, and by the end of the 13 weeks, all 10 agreed that they felt more confident in engaging with members of the community.



Stories of change

Participant M's social skills before joining our project were poor as they spoke very quietly and often could not be heard easily. Over the 13 weeks M engaged in some speech and language therapy (SLT) support, and by the end of the 13 weeks was conversing more freely and was keen to continue engaging with the SLT sessions by joining the SAMEE self-employment supported internship. M is a sustainable materials artist and over the 13 weeks set up website and started developing his brand.

L always wanted to be a dog groomer but did not have the confidence to pursue the career due to their additional needs. L has multiple challenges of neurodiversity and emotional/behavioural issues which resulted in poor school attendance and left secondary level education without level 2 in English and Maths. L was very much at risk of becoming socially isolated which would have potentially led to poor mental health, but fortunately she heard about the SAMEE project. L has thrived completing level 2 in dog grooming over the 13 week project and is moving on to level 3.



Sustainability

The positive work will continue beyond the end of the project for 6 participants who have joined our 1-year supported internship. The SAMEE team are constantly searching for suitable grant opportunities and will submit several applications throughout the year.

Somerford Youth & Community Centre

Funded activities

The purchase of food and essential hygiene items to give out in the Pantry

Outcomes

People who are experiencing food poverty are able to get some emergency food to help them.

Story of change

One family where the parent has mental health issues was supported by us as we were able to assist them with providing food and helping them pick it. One young person who attends the center and who cares for his parent at home was able to take food home for the family.

Sustainability

Continue to find grant and funding opportunities and apply for these funds. Recently, with the exception of DCF and Valentine Trust - all our funding applications have been unsuccessful.



St. Thomas Church

Funded activities

We provided beds for homeless rough sleepers over three sessions when SWEP was activated by BCP/St. Mungo's. Guests arrived in the evening to a warm hall and received a warm drink and snack, such as toast, on arrival, and washing facilities were available. Some made use of our limited laundry facilities. In the morning, breakfast of hot drinks, cereal and toast was available, and the guests were provided with a hot drink to start the day on departure. Volunteers were on hand to serve drinks and food, and engage in conversation and offer support. Lockers were provided for a safe place for guests to store their items during the day.



Outcomes

Guests were given a place of shelter, comfort and safety during severe weather. This in itself is possibly life-saving. Beyond that, they were given a welcome, acceptance and dignity, which is often missing in their existence as homeless. They received a warm drink and food and a place to wash their clothes and to dry their wet clothes. They were also provided with board games etc. to engage with others and pass the time enjoyably. For our organisation, it gave greater insight into the predicament of rough-sleeping.

Story of change

Through no fault of his own, one young man had been on the streets for only a week. During his time staying with us, he was able to find accommodation with the help of Faithworks/St. Mungo's/BCP etc. He had nothing to take into this accommodation, so an appeal went out among Church members, and he was provided with gifts of a microwave, other kitchen equipment, bedding and other utensils and household items. He was determined to make a new start and had been volunteering while awaiting the move into his accommodation. Once in, he was devoted to making a new life for himself and expressed his gratitude of the Church community in giving him the start and support he needed.

Sustainability

The work will only continue when SWEP is activated by BCP council/St. Mungo's. At this point we will seek further funding and congregation donations.

The Friendly Food Club

Funded activities

We delivered 12 sessions with We are With You and 6 sessions with Bournemouth Gateway. We supported clients with cooking guidance and support, recipes, food and energy efficient cooking appliances. The team at Bournemouth Gateway had a conversation with their clients and the agreement was that funding for appliances would be diverted towards support the Club's kitchen equipment that would enable them to run more cooking activities in the group. This was mostly because the clients lived in supported accommodation or had the cooking done for them. This way they felt that it would encourage the groups to cook more and reach more of the clients attending the club.



Outcomes

Bournemouth Gateway sessions were full of laughter, trying new foods and having a go at new skills. There were lots of comments from carers/support workers that the individual had 'not done that before' or 'I'm really surprised they did that'. Clients told us: *"I wasn't going to eat it, then I tasted it and it was tasty!" "I enjoyed everything and learned a lot actually."* The opportunity to leave behind cooking equipment was a real lasting benefit to the group who look forward to running their own cooking sessions.

We Are With You clients enjoyed the cooking sessions and the vast majority tried something new, learned new cooking skills, feel more confident about cooking from scratch and feel motivated to make changes to their diets. Participants discovered how easy it is to cook from scratch and incorporate more vegetables into their diets to have better overall nutrition. Some even said they found cooking therapeutic. Cooking together also helped to increase their general self-confidence.



Stories of change

Tom struggles to have a free flowing conversation, yet can read and follow instructions, he tried new foods and has since shopped, cooked and eaten pasta at home too. We could see the change in him as he connected with the different tastes and textures of foods he had not tried before.

"I'm really enjoying the sessions. I'm two and half years sober and after years of not taking care of myself I am enjoying cooking and shopping for healthy food. I am buying fruit, having never bought it before. I'm also taking all the recipes home and trying things like tofu. I'm a member of WAWY running club, and this together with the healthier cooking is making me feel so much better in myself."

"When I was drinking, I was living on toast and noodles. These classes are great and are inspiring me to get cooking. The other day I cooked up a load of vegetables and made a nice meal for my housemates. I'm learning how to cook well and I'm also boosting my confidence and taking that away with me."



Sustainability

Bournemouth Gateway - the group are seeking funding to support this activity. We are With You - the group themselves have offered to fund more sessions as they have seen such a dramatic improvement in those that engaged.

The Power House (Poole)

Funded activities

Warm Hub Sessions: 7th December Christmas Fayre. Tuesday Open House 10.30-5pm including Thrive Arts & Crafts Drop-In and Muddy Boots Nursery Story Time. Thursdays Open House 12-2pm and then 5pm. 2 Saturday Open House sessions 10.30am-1pm

Other Activities: 8th December Private Birthday Soirée Booking. Two INSTAR Print Workshops. CoCreate Sessions. Creative Wellbeing Sessions (participants stayed after the sessions and enjoyed homemade soup and drinks). Hamworthy Youth Ideas (formerly Youth Forum). CAP Money Course.



Outcomes

The grant enabled our Community Team to be open to the community and hold a programme of activity. Without it, we would not have been able to stay open for our first winter. Connections between neighbours have been made with friendships formed to carry on beyond this project. As well as a warm office to work from, TPH Hub volunteer base grew from 7 to 19. We facilitated our first collaborative work with Poole Communities Trust to hold Youth Ideas and plan for the summer holidays.



Stories of change

Teresa valued being connecting as she struggled as a single mum of a teenage son. She came to our Creative Wellbeing Sessions. After 5 sessions she told us of the huge impact on her wellbeing the sessions had had. Teresa had become agoraphobic. For the first three weeks she battled the day before and on the day to attend. By week 4 she had no battle, and by week 5 could not wait to come, staying for the whole afternoon, enjoying soup and playing games with her friend.

“The warm hub has been vital to me as I am new to the area after fleeing domestic abuse. I have been at the warm hub and have increased my social circle, reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation which has improved my mental health immensely. I have made two female friends my first social connections in Poole. I enjoy the home-made soup and the opportunity to chat and meet friendly and like-minded people. The staff and volunteers make everyone feel welcome. The atmosphere is very relaxed and there is plenty of resources to either do some arts and crafts or play a board game. There is a great selection of leaflets and information at the centre regarding other community resources and groups to access.”



Sustainability

Hub operational costs are part funded April 2025 to 2026 by a Valentine Trust grant. We are in conversation with National Lottery Grant Manager to see if we can repurpose an underspend on last year to cover either a portion to minimise our need to apply for grants. We need support with electricity bills.

Townsend Community Association

Funded activities

We have been able to provide the weekly hot breakfasts, to buy a weekly food shop to supplement the food collected via the Fridge project, to host family cooking workshops, demos and adult workshops, to buy cooking equipment for some local residents, to buy storage containers, to provide volunteer training, to offer a trip out to our older residents needing support.

Outcomes

The grants has enabled us to create a foundation and a go-to place for residents to find support and signposting. From the success of the Fridge project we now work with an increased number of partners to host drop-in sessions within the Centre (Citizens Advice, CAN, We Are With You, Police, NHS Health Checks, Church leaders). Residents have a centre that can not only practically support them but also offer advice and provide a place to socialise which often leads to more community involvement.

Stories of change

N became homeless after a family breakdown and found the process to get housing and support a challenging one as well as missing seeing his children each day. We were there each morning providing support and a focus to keep going, ticking a job of his to-do-list. As well as the emotional support we could offer the use of a computer, telephone and food support. N is no longer homeless and has moved into temporary accommodation.

B was dependent on drugs and was asked to leave his family home. B came to us at the Centre, said he no longer wanted to take drugs, we talked about what we could offer if he came back in a few weeks and was still drug free. B returned and started volunteering at the Centre several mornings a week giving him a purpose to get out of bed. B has made friends and often goes for coffee or a trip to the gym which he has recently joined. B's Mum has said he can return to the family home after 6 months being drug free. I'm pleased to say B is on the right road to this happening.

Sustainability

We do not have the funds to provide the same level of support we have with this grant funding but we will still continue to run the Fridge Project.

Water Lily Project

Funded activities

Three cooking on a budget courses for women identified as struggling financially and/or escaping abusive relationships. Each course was facilitated by a trained Support Worker who led the women to cook a different dish each week. This was a cook-along course where each participant was provided with all the tools necessary to cook, including pots, pans, knives, food and they were able to take home their cooking at the end of the session. Each week covered a different theme from batch cooking to air frying, slow cooking to "fake away" cooking. Each course was attended by 8 women.

Outcomes

The project has increased their confidence in the kitchen, helping them to learn how to make nutritious meals, cost effectively. The activity also helped them to build new friendships. Some said that they could make the food they had go further, and their children loved some of the dishes. We hope that this could reduce some of the reliance on the local Foodbank.

Story of change

CD is a mother of two who recently fled an abusive relationship. She attended the Cooking on a Budget course to learn new skills. She was relying on Foodbank and wanted to learn how to make the food go further and make food that her children would love. Through the sessions she learnt many new things which helped her to develop her cooking from scratch skills. She is now confident to that she can provide nutritious, tasty meals for her children and particularly enjoyed the benefits of learning to batch cook. At the end of the course she said *"The meals we made were delicious, and I never knew cooking from scratch could be this easy and affordable. Thank you!"*

Sustainability

We would like to continue and hopefully will be able to find a way to find this. At the moment this is on hold but definitely will return at somepoint.



West Howe Community Enterprises

Funded activities

WHCE successfully purchased the additional equipment to increase from 6 to 12 participants each session. The counter top display fridge was also purchased and now displays bottled water, healthy snacks including pre-made sandwiches, tubs of fruit and any 'specials' that are on offer at any given time. In terms of the Community fridge offer and soup in the ques, we had to adapt as our Fridge coordinator left the charity in February and we were also 2 other staff members down. We did however manage to hand out some equipment to the community who were in need of basic items. Such as frying pan, utensils, and store cupboard essentials. Recipe cards have been printed for each community cooking session. In terms of the community cooking sessions, these have been successful for both the community and our community cook as she returned to work after a bereavement, she has regained her confidence and it is encouraging to see her now enjoying , planning, preparing and running the sessions with the help of a couple of trusted volunteers.

Outcomes

The grant has enabled members of the community to gain skills by learning how to cook meals that may be on a budget but are also tasty and healthy. Cooking together and sharing a meal together not only has an educational impact but can also help to reduce isolation and increase confidence. Sharing conversations over a meal can offer peer support. The family cooking sessions are a great way of young people being introduced to healthy food that parents are struggling to include and because it is introduced in a social way, the young people are more inclined to 'go with it'. Also by offering the recipe cards we can hand out multiple recipes that the community can use, when they feel ready to do so.

Stories of change

We have had one parent say her son will only now eat fresh peas since he came to one of our sessions. It is great to know that children are seeing where the food comes from and then enjoying eating it. This parent is now a regular visitor to the centre with her children and it is encouraging to see young parents and children enjoying the facilities and groups that are on offer in The Henry Brown.

A young person sat and ate a plate of salad, asked for more and said how 'delicious' it was!. The display fridge has helped with this, by showcasing healthier options the children are more likely to chose this. This particular young person was given the option of helping himself from a salad bowl, it was his choice and it was lovely to hear his mum praising him for asking for the salad bowl, using a spoon, not his fingers and eating everything on his plate!

Sustainability

We may look for more funding to increase our offer and might look at working with the school or more 'after-school' sessions. We are also thinking about working with the Family Hub to work with the older young people.



Winton & Parkstone Community Pantry (WPCP)

Funded activities

The funding was used to pay for power and gas £2087.45; Cleaning £600; bin collections £130 and to reduce our other general expenses which totaled £4544.50 for the 4 months.

Outcomes

The Winton and Parkstone Community Pantry provides free food in 4 x 1 hour sessions every week. We know from feedback that we help many to survive week to week. Without the grant we would have been limited in the way the organisation functioned and would have had to make appeals to our members beyond what is already given. One of our volunteers describes the work he does twice a week meeting and greeting our clients at Parkstone as his own happy hour. It gives him the motivation that the charity is actually doing some good.

Story of change

A lady who regularly visits the WPCP at Parkstone revealed that the service had literally saved her life a few weeks earlier. She is not a dramatist. This was told in confidence to a couple of the team leaders. It is not just the food, it is the social group that is so valuable.

Sustainability

We rely on church members from the Christadelphian community; third party donations and grants; food donations from local supermarkets etc. We do occasional collections at the local supermarkets with their permission. This is now our 3rd year running this service.

