

BCP Thriving Communities Fund – 24/25 - Impact report

This funding programme was delivered by Dorset Community Foundation on behalf of BCP Council, with funding awarded to successful groups in March 2024 and June 24, for activities delivered from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. Grants were used to support either Social Action & Volunteering, or Capital grants for community buildings. All projects utilised grant funding by the end of March 2025. All Social Action & Volunteering projects are continuing.

Social Action grants

- Total funding of £50,000 has directly supported **4721 local residents**
 - 1430 In Bournemouth
 - 154 in Christchurch
 - 3137 in Poole
- Projects have involved **247 volunteers**, 49 of which were new volunteers as a result of the grants awarded

Capital grants to community buildings

- Total funding of £30,000 has benefitted **37,930 local residents** who use the facilities
 - 1368 In Bournemouth
 - 2850 in Christchurch
 - 33,712 in Poole
- Projects have involved **103 volunteers**

Summary - Social Action grants

Grant recipient	Project area	Grant	Social issue	Project summary	Number of beneficiaries	Number of volunteers involved	New volunteers
Bournemouth University Of The Third Age	Bournemouth	£2,500.00		The opportunity to access one classroom during the Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025 terms at Bournemouth University International College (BUIC)	120	12	4
Bournemouth Walking Football Club	BCP	£2,470.00		Volunteers run weekly social games, training and organise tournaments for men and women locally aged 35 - 85 including those with health conditions	46	11	5

Dorset Children's Foundation	BCP	£5,000.00		Accessible, inclusive wellbeing activities and play sessions for the parents and children we support	220	14	9
Dorset Disabled Canoeing Unit	BCP	£1,555.00		Recruitment and development of volunteers and facilities to improve the environment in which volunteers deliver activities	12	12	3
Faithworks Wessex	Poole	£3,381.00		Regular social activities providing lone-parent families with community, a sense of belonging, led by volunteers with lived experience	75	22	7
Inara Project	Bournemouth & Poole	£3,485.00		Core costs and towards sports sessions for our volunteers and community	39	9	1
Poole Methodists Church	Poole	£2,000.00		Funding for the volunteers, most of whom have additional needs, to have lunch and drinks during their shift, to buy t-shirts and to come together for meaningful work	2500	30	6
Poole Waste Not Want Not	Poole	£4,550.00		Social activities where families cook together and socialise; volunteers gain skills and confidence	200	16	3
Samee	Bournemouth	£4,956.00		Volunteer-led Ambassador Programme to enable 6 beneficiaries who have completed Steps Into Self-Employment programme to become positive role models	72	6	0
Somerford ARC Community Centre	Christchurch	£5,000.00		Volunteer led weekly Lunch Club	60	79	4
St Peter's Church Development Project	Bournemouth	£3,103.00		Engaging a community of volunteers in the maintenance and gardening of the historic grounds surrounding St. Peter's Church in Bournemouth	1000	20	4
The Power House (Poole)	Poole	£5,000.00		Cornerstone Patch community garden offers volunteering and social action opportunities for the Hamworthy community through growing food	250	4	2

Townsend Youth Partnership	Bournemouth	£5,000.00		Youth activities which support young people living on the Townsend Estate to take social action and provide learning opportunities supporting life skills	87	4	1
Youth Empowerment Platform	Bournemouth	£2,000.00		Hall hire for monthly meetings Performing Arts Tutorship for 3 girls (pilot) 1 hr per week per term	40	8	0
Total		£50,000			4721 beneficiaries	247 volunteers	49 new volunteers

Summary - Capital grants for community buildings

Grant recipient	Project area	Grant	Project summary	Number of beneficiaries	Number of volunteers	New volunteers
Burton & Winkton Parish Council	Burton & Winkton	£3,000.00	Fridge, Freezer, Dishwasher & free standing cooker - to introduce a volunteer run Community Café to double during winter months as a warm space hub	2000	4	3
Christchurch Baptist Church	Christchurch	£3,000.00	Refurbishment and upgrade kitchen and equipment, used by local groups	250	0	0
Hengistbury Head Outdoors	Bournemouth	£3,000.00	To replace a derelict slipway used to launch dinghies, kayaks, dragon boats, paddleboards, etc, which will then allow safe access to the water for groups	500	17	0
Immanuel Church	Southbourne	£2201.77	Commercial ovens to be used to start a cooking club for local families	118	17	0
Merley Community Association	Merley	£2,990.00	New front doors to the centre to make the facility more secure and welcoming, to create a main front entrance	1000	8	0
Poole Communities Trust	Branksome	£3,000.00	Replace /upgrade doors at the Branksome Centre to make them fire safety compliant, and install external noticeboards to increase awareness of our offer & expand numbers of residents using the centre	32,712	0	0
St Andrew's Charminster	Bournemouth	£3,000.00	Capital costs to enable further expansion and continuation of existing activities - white goods and/or oven & dishwasher	20	14	0
St. Lukes Church	Burton	£3,000.00	Replace carpet to enhance the experience of using the building for community activities	500	10	4

Strouden Park Community Association	Bournemouth	£2,816.27	Flooring which can be rolled up if required suitable for a range of dance, fitness, and well being classes for babies to elderly participants	160	0	0
The Parish of Four Saints	Winton, Moordown & Charminster	£3,000.00	Dishwasher, crockery & cutlery to support a monthly Community Breakfast, The Exchange (clothing swap), weekly Community Cafe and Little Treasures (toddler group) across two sites	100	20	2
Somerford ARC	Christchurch	£291.96	Toaster, hot place and buffet trays to support Breakfast Hub	100	3	0
West Howe Community Enterprise	West Howe, Bournemouth	£700.00	New oven to support community meals and events	470	10	0
TOTAL		£30,000		37,930 residents	103 volunteers	9 new volunteers

Thanks to Dorset Community Foundation and BCP Council

"The whole process was easy to follow and communications clear and helpful." Bournemouth University of the Third Age

"The grant application process was quite complicated in terms of providing actual amounts but that forced us to look at the numbers of people we were getting, and understand much more about the cost of pitch bookings, and how to make our sessions sustainable. We were extremely grateful that there was some flexibility and we were able to ask if some of the funds could be used for other purposes (training courses for volunteers, portable goals) - both things which became important but we had not anticipated. Doing the grant application has helped us as a new club to put regular meetings in place and think creatively about how we can develop our offering to increase opportunities." Bournemouth Walking Football Club

"We have really appreciated the funding. Having worked hard to get the club back up and running post covid, it was good to be able to expand our membership and pool of volunteers. The attendance has been really good and we had a great response to the request for feedback showing how much the sessions were valued." Dorset Disabled Canoeing Unit

"We are really grateful for the funding we have received, it was wonderful being able to order things for our volunteers as well as our service users. Even just providing them with mileage really made a difference in volunteer engagement. (Grants Manager) was really great at handling all of the questions we had before and throughout the funding period." Inara Project

"We are grateful for the support BCP Council and DCF have given Wesley's over the years. Help with applications from DCF has been excellent and very welcome. We have almost always received some support when we have applied." Poole Methodist Church

"We're incredibly grateful to you for the wonderful, friendly approach. The continued support means so much to us - not just financially, but through the encouragement and care you show. (Grants Manager) is always approachable and helpful, going above and beyond and DCF happily promotes and sharing our stories on social media. It truly feels like a partnership, and we're so thankful for the support." Poole Waste Not Want Not

"I hope you appreciate how transformational your grants has been. The fantastic hedge trimmers and strimmer and accessories has meant so much more can be done by our workers and feeding and refreshing our volunteers means folk have come and stayed who could not afford to buy even a coffee. Thank you." St Peter's Church Development Project

"We are very appreciative of the grant we received, without which we would not have been able to do this work. Making our application, receiving the grant, and filling in the end of grant form has been straight forward and not too onerous. Thank you very much." Christchurch Baptist Church

"The help with filling out the application form was absolutely invaluable from Ellie Maguire, the Grants Manager. We have never applied for a grant before and the telephone consultation with her was extremely helpful. All questions were answered very quickly by email." St Luke's Church

"Thank you for this generous grant. As a result of receiving this funding it has not only enhanced the current activities we have on offer, we are positive new classes will be keen to hire our facilities therefore giving the local community more choices and the centre further opportunity to flourish." Strouden Park Community Association

"This grant has made a huge difference to us as a community both from providing welcome and hospitality but also environmentally. We no longer use paper plates and cups nor disposable cutlery. We're also able to serve our community better. We're so very grateful." The Parish for Four Saints

Bournemouth University Of The Third Age

Funded activities

Provided access to one classroom five days per week to existing and new members to attend group learning activities at Bournemouth University International College, run by volunteer members during Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025.

Outcomes

It has made older people feel more part of the local community. The new groups have created the opportunity for members to mix with new people, create new friendships, make people feel more sociable and happier. It has also provided people the opportunity to learn new skills in order to improve mental health issues. The venue facilitated cross generational interaction in the on-site cafe where members had coffee after meeting with their groups. The members have enjoyed meeting in attractive, new and modern buildings and found the staff extremely helpful and pleasant. Our recent survey shows 84% of respondents feel an increased sense of belonging in the local community. 77% feel less lonely 74% experienced improved health or wellbeing. 35% volunteered with us.

Story of change

Last year I was diagnosed with ME and have had to cut down on physical activities that I used to do (walking, swimming and cycling). I have found this quite hard as I have always been physically active. Joining Bournemouth u3a has made me feel more positive by giving me the opportunity to try new activities that I would not normally have done and meeting new people too. It's been great!

Sustainability

An issue with heating not always working during the winter led to being offered another room which stayed warmer in the winter, and an additional term being negotiated for the Summer Term at greatly reduced rates. We are negotiating a new contract for the three terms commencing Autumn 2025 onwards.

Bournemouth Walking Football Club

Funded activities

Friday evening sessions of Walking Football for women at Littledown Leisure Centre on the 3G pitches, which are safe to play on for older people. Sessions have enabled a mix of ages, abilities, levels of experience, from many different backgrounds, to join together in an hour and a half of exercise each week. Women who have never played get their first chance to play in a game. Others who played when younger are sharing their experience. Our ethos is about encouraging participation for fitness, fun and friendship.

During this period, women took over coaching, which were previously run by men in the club. We wanted to enable women volunteers to coach as they understood the challenges for women 40+ e.g. menopause, less collagen making injury more likely. The sessions are now led by women who are themselves experiencing limitations due to age or disability.



A lot of the women wanted the opportunity to take part in competitive leagues (Hampshire / Dorset). This meant that some Friday evenings were becoming too intense to make them fully inclusive, so from June 2024 - March 2025 we have held 10 extra sessions on Sundays to cater for this. About 75% of the members have now played in competitive leagues. There are many Walking Football Tournaments nationally, but most of these stipulate they are for Over 40s. We talked to other clubs and found a need for a tournament for older women. Our volunteer Karen T (just turned 70) has organised three Over 55s Tournaments this year. These were attended by other local Teams, playing in a 'Pickup' Tournament.

A big challenge is the impact of having players of very different ages, fitness levels and experience playing alongside each other. We have a 79 yr old who regularly plays alongside those in their 40s and 50s, and the decades make a difference in terms of balance and frailty. Volunteers recognised that some people were not walking, but running, and this was leading to contact and injuries. Two of our players have attended the Walking Football Refereeing Course being held by the FA, and 'how to walk not run' a talking point has led to more understanding and we have been able to continue to welcome new players who have lower levels of fitness, health conditions, or injuries.

The new portable Goals enabled us to hold matches on smaller-size pitches which is safer, and we often play with conditions such as 'strictly no tackling' and allowing new players more time on the ball.



Outcomes

The feedback we have had is overwhelmingly positive - we are making a difference to our members' physical and mental health. As a Walking Football 'family' we support each other through life events such as health issues, children leaving home, work issues, retirement, or bereavements. Players have commented that it is the 'only time they have for themselves' outside of busy family commitments or caring. We encourage lift-sharing which helps us get to know each other socially. We have an active Whatsapp Community of groups where people chat during the week outside of training sessions. We take care to check in with players who have injuries and cannot attend, and we always invite people to come and watch if they can't play. We had our first Women's Summer Social and have organised other in-person social events such as watching England Lionesses and the Women's FA Cup Final on TV. We made two trips to the Vitality Stadium to watch AFC Bournemouth Women play.

"I joined a few months after having my daughter, after recovering from a C-Section. It has allowed me to become fitter, stronger and improved my BMI. Since doing walking football, I feel physically healthier"

"I love team sports, had played football into my late 30s but stopped and felt I could no longer play. I kept getting injured and felt I was too old. Walking football works for me as it is more controlled but still just as much, if not more, fun, because we all help each other."

"It gives me a reason to exercise because I enjoy it so much! Wanting to improve my game spurs me on to keep fit and try to live a more health lifestyle."

"Playing football again has made me a lot happier. You step on the pitch and forget about all of life's problems while you are there. New friends have been very supportive when I needed that help and friendship"

"Walking football has positively impacted my mental health by reducing stress and providing a sense of community. It has also boosted my confidence and given me a sense of purpose."

"Being part of this club has brought so much joy back and I feel better and happier overall. I have made so many friends because of the regular session. I can't explain how much it means to me"

Story of change

"I found Bournemouth Walking FC through my GP Surgery, and this opportunity to participate in football has dramatically changed my life. I played competitive football from the age of 18 through to my late 20s when I had an accident that left me unable to walk for 3 years. I suffered severe depression during this time. Having worked hard to rebuild my life, I then became extremely ill in 2016 and was diagnosed with complex congenital issues affecting my internal organs. Delays in treatment caused a recurrence of depression and they also discovered a tumor in my hip, for which I am still awaiting treatment.

I was extremely nervous when I attended my first session, but was pleasantly surprised that I had not lost my 'touch'. I certainly paid a price for my exertions but the positive feelings I had more than made up for this. As the weeks turned into months I was beginning to feel a variety of benefits, including less debilitating depressive episodes, a growth in self-confidence, an improvement in my awkward walking gait, reduction in chronic lower back muscular spasms due to my gait, and a general improvement to overall fitness. The opportunity to participate in the FA's EE Playmaker coaching course came up so I decided to have a go! This ignited a keener interest in giving back and trying to help my less experienced team-mates. I started leading warmups and I found fellow players were approaching me for snippets of advice. I have since completed FA's Introduction to Coaching Football Course, various Safeguarding and First Aid Courses and am about to embark on the FA's UEFA C License. I am gaining confidence as a coach and am able to contribute more, allowing the workload to be distributed. I still pay a price in terms of pain every time I participate, but being part of this club has taught me a lot in terms of pain management, it has alleviated muscular spasms and symptoms of depression. I have grown in confidence and found my voice and found a wonderful family of like-minded and very supportive friends"

Sustainability

In the last month the Women's Section has become financially independent from the men's section. Having the Grant Funding has enabled us to purchase good quality equipment which should last us for several years. We now need to ensure that we can generate enough revenue from each training session to be able to pay for pitch bookings going forwards. Based on this, we have recently raised our Friday regular session prices from £4 a session to £5.50. We have not looked for funding yet this year, but have recognised that an immediate priority is to purchase a portable defibrillator for the women's section. (Littledown no longer provide a wall-mounted Defibrillator because of vandalism.) The charity 'Life is Life Foundation' offers these to WFA affiliated clubs for £800 + delivery.

Dorset Children's Foundation

Funded activities

The grant has enabled a new parent/carer volunteers us to start a new group called Adventure Buddies. This is for our Profound & Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) children from age 1- 13 years. To date this group has participated in: Bowling, Ice Skating, 'Allow me to be Me' sensory activities, Bubble shows and specialist Yoga. Plus parent/carer well being sessions are run by volunteer parent/carers. Activities have included: Yoga Tai chi, meditation sessions, journaling, mindfulness and crafts. We have also been able to expand our Advocacy outreach service in the BCP area, setting up advice groups in cafe's and Community Centres, and restart Paddy's Purpose, a disability education session for local children's groups such as brownies and scouts. We have put on relaxed performances at our cinema in our new hub in Bournemouth, which has proved very popular. The sewing group run by parent/carer volunteers has gone from strength to strength. We have able to purchase 2 new machines, materials and sewing sundry items. To date the group has been taught how to make bibs, cosy toes for the larger wheelchair users and adapted clothing for a variety of physical needs. We have been able to offer regular sessions with a music therapist and expert talks have been provided by Sex with a Difference, Occupational Therapists, Speech and language therapists, Sleep therapists.



Outcomes

Our 220 participants consist of Parents, carers, foster carers, children with disabilities and their siblings. We believe 100% had an increase in their wellbeing due to the activities. This includes lack of isolation and a feeling of belonging. These results were monitored by a variety of methods including informal questions at the end of every session feedback freely given, observations of child behavior during sessions, regular focus group of attendees, feedback on Whatsapp groups. People repeatedly attended sessions. We have also had an increase in enquiries from Health Care Professionals who have families in their care who would benefit from these services.

Story of change

Trish was very isolated and full time carer to her granddaughter Esmi who has profound learning difficulties and is a full time wheelchair user. Trish has regularly attended our wellbeing sessions and through gaining increased confidence and a network of support, felt enabled to voluntarily set up a new group which she has named Adventure Buddies. This group is specifically for our younger PMLD children and their siblings. Her aim was for the group to have social meetups, have fun, feel comfortable and make new friends. Trish said *"I really feel I have a purpose now. The group has connected both children and adults and the fun activities we have been able to take part in has brought joy to so many."*



Sustainability

We have a variety of funding streams, including sales from our 3 charity shops, donations, legacies, ongoing fundraising, public support, charity corporate partnerships and grants from a variety of sources.

Dorset Disabled Canoeing Unit

Funded activities

We held beginners session in the harbor for members in sea kayaks together with volunteers. This was followed by a short harbor trip and a longer trip in Poole harbor to build on skills. These sessions gave our paddlers and volunteers an opportunity to paddle in different kayaks and in a new environment. 4 sessions in Broadstone swimming pool in kayaks over the winter to build confidence and maintain skills, including wet exits and rescues also helped new members to keep in touch and get to know volunteers over the winter period. We also held a rescue practice session for the volunteers in the river where we usually paddle to help keep rescue skills up to date. A First Aid course was is essential for leaders to maintain their qualifications and for other volunteers.

Outcomes

All sessions were welcomed and very well attended. It has enabled us to increase levels of participation and volunteering. It has encouraged all new members who attended our taster session to continue paddling with the club, which improved their physical fitness, their confidence, mental wellbeing and social inclusion. Paddling in different craft and a new environment expanded individual's skills and horizons. Pool sessions enabled members to maintain fitness and keep in touch over the winter.

"Due to knee replacements I need help to continue during the winter, especially being able to get in and out of the canoe. It is very good for my mental health as is the social side, as there are other autistic people and the people running the session are very easy to talk to"

The training sessions for volunteers helped us to maintain our volunteer pool as well as introduce two new regular volunteers for the forthcoming season. Volunteers all said that they had benefitted from the training.

"The first aid course was very informative and a great mix of theory and practical work. I'm now better equipped with knowledge and skills and feel more confident should there be a situation where first aid is needed. I also enjoyed the opportunity to meet with other DDCU volunteers and this too will help working together in a situation"

Story of change

I started canoeing with the DDCU in 1994 when it first started up. At the time I suffered with back problems and the loss of use of my right leg. To be able to move under my own steam was exhilarating. My 2 boys and husband were allowed to join in and for the first time in their life I was able to take part in a physical activity with them instead of being an onlooker. I could not have done that without the assistance of the coaches and volunteers. I became the clubs first treasurer. As time progressed the arthritis and tendinitis set in. By this time my sons had left home but thanks to the volunteers I was able to transfer to a double Canoe and continue with the club. Being on the water, the friendships I have made have meant so much to me. The exercise is great for my mental wellbeing. I am eternally grateful to all those who have volunteered over the years. In 2024/2025 I was able to take part in both the pool session and the Harbor paddle, both of which I enjoyed. I have never been to Brownsea island in a kayak before so it was a real highlight. The helpers stopped when I needed to rest up and let my pain subside. It was wonderful to feel that I achieved something. Being on the water feeds my inner self and gives me that good feel factor. So a big thank you to all the volunteers and to those that provide necessary funds to allow the club to exist."

Sustainability

The club will continue its regular paddling sessions and relies entirely upon voluntary donations to do this. We will need to raise funds if we wish to build upon the harbor sessions and have pool sessions next year for which there is great demand. We have secured funding for a new container. With the membership increasing we will also need to raise funds for some new kayaks which provide better stability for our members.

Faithworks Wessex

Funded activities

The grant supported the regular connecting activities that are the backbone of our support for single parent families.

- weekly coffee time for parents to meet, have space to talk about their challenges, link in and build trust with SMILE link workers and Safe Families
- fortnightly community meal called Regenerate especially for lone parents with homework and craft
- weekly meet up at YMCA leisure centre in Broadstone, who give very cheap membership to SMILE families; trying new options for physical wellbeing

Outcomes

Our Jan 25 survey asked what the main issues were for SMILE families – the top 4 included “parenting on your own”, “cost of living”, “never getting a break” and “isolation and loneliness”. 60% of parents said that SMILE helped with at least 2 of their top 3 issues (and over 80% said at least 1 of top 3 issues). In April 2024, 36 people were coming to our regular activities – now there are now over 50 coming regularly.

There are many shared stories of meeting new people, making strong friendships, and enjoying especially the weekly coffee mornings and school holiday activities.



Story of change

After A's partner passed away and he lost his tenancy, we provided food, paid for storage, and helped him secure council housing. At a coffee morning, the SMILE community came celebrated his birthday, making a cake and card for his toddler to give him. Through our partnership with Safe Families, volunteers were able to have his son overnight allowing him a rare night out to catch up with friends. They have such a good friendship that they will continue to see each other beyond the volunteer period. He has completed a Barista training course and is eager to gain further experience at a café.

"All the staff from smile have been amazing since the first email I sent asking to join. Rachael listened and started helping me with yellow bags of food when I lost my job. She made me feel not alone and we chatted lots. I attended coffee mornings and met the team who have been a blessing. They listen, have empathy and try to help in so many ways with wellbeing, finances and challenges that come ones way. Christmas was amazing for my son & I with all the events smile hosted, and to share it with others who are fighting life battles and to have fun was overwhelming as I always struggle mentally at Christmas. Smile has enabled me to see that I'm not alone and I'm looking forward to this new year with them and joining in with more family events."

Sustainability

We have Lottery funding for 2 years to pay 75% of our staff team. We had a recent grant to pay for our extra link worker. We are looking for grants for activities.

Inara Project

Funded activities

We have run Self Defence and Yoga sessions for girls and women aged 16-30 from ethnically diverse backgrounds - every Saturday from 19th October -7th December 2024. Sessions were 3 hours at Rossmore Leisure Centre and included a health information talk before the class, led by qualified instructors. Our 19 participants gained practical self defence techniques to help them feel empowered in navigating their daily life. The Yoga sessions highlighted the importance of balance, mindfulness and resilience, helping them to manage stress and build inner strength. We also ran weekly netball sessions in February and April, with a break in March for Ramadan. These activities built a sense of community through sports.

Unfortunately, we were unable to find new volunteers - we tried to advertise to schools and universities in the area but were met with no response, after multiple attempts. It was also difficult finding a time that worked with the target demographic due to work/study commitments. For netball, finding a venue that would allow for longer sessions was hard. In future, we may launch a sport that does not require a court/technical equipment that we need to hire.

Outcomes

More than half of our service users had expressed concern with safety, which our Self Defence session directly impacts.

"In this day and age there's increased danger especially towards hijabs, I want to learn how to protect myself even Though I'm not the strongest I want to have some basic self defence skills"

In our end of feedback survey for Self Defence, our service users expressed gratitude for the sessions.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn in an all-female environment. More of this would be great. It was really fun And loved meeting new like minded people, everyone was amazing and the coach is lovely :)"

Story of change

"I have loved taking part in the Inaralympics self-defence lessons. I have been waiting to learn self-defense for a long time but being a Muslim hijabi woman, it has been not easy to find something that is female-only. The fact that the Inara Project have offered the opportunity to take part in these sessions with no cost is a real gift. Every session has been such great fun - recapping each move that we've learnt is beneficial so that we don't forget anything and the gradual progress with our amazing instructor Vickie has helped with my confidence. Our lovely yoga instructor Caroline has also been exceptional with her yoga sessions which are the best way to relax after hard and energetic self-defense lessons. Both instructors and the Inara volunteers have been incredibly understanding, making sure everyone is comfortable and promoting a safe environment. I am sad that it will end shortly but cannot wait for the next Inaralympic event!"

Sustainability

We are planning on continuing our sports sessions. We have received £1000 from the SNG's EDI Microgrant and £200 from Trusted Voices. We are also in the process of planning sports in the summer, which may have a lower budget as we have less funding available. It would be good to have an extra £1000 to top up for volunteer travel, instructor and venue costs.



Poole Methodists Church

Funded activities

The funding contributed towards the purchase of branded sweatshirts and lunches for young volunteers with additional needs who work in Wesley's Community Cafe. These have contributed to the well-being and sense of self-worth that we seek for our volunteers.

Outcomes

A supported and successful volunteer programme has meant that we have a body of volunteers with additional needs who grow in confidence and experience. Their presence and the things they do (including serving at table, welcoming customers, helping to prepare food and drinks) give Wesley's a unique atmosphere and a discernible ethos that has a positive impact on the community around us. There are increasing numbers of people living with disability, poverty, homelessness or the impact of isolation, who visit the cafe frequently (some daily!). They see us as a place where volunteers with additional needs are valued and supported. This helps to underline that this is a place where all are welcome, where no-one is judged and where individuals are valued for who they are, not what they can do. Wesley's is a special place with a very special group of volunteers.

Story of change

Alan (not his real name) has Down's Syndrome. He has been a volunteer at Wesley's for 10 years, where he is a well-liked and important member of the team. Along with four others, he was thrilled to be awarded a gold star to mark his tenth anniversary. We were all very pleased to learn recently that he has secured paid employment in catering with AFC Bournemouth. He still comes back to Wesley's to see his friends and because, as he tells us, he loves the place. When he came in recently and was asked what he liked about Wesley's and what he thought might have helped him to get this job, he said he had been given the opportunity, over a number of years to learn and develop skills, especially in the kitchen - he had learned to work as part of a team and had grown in confidence through doing so -he had enjoyed working with other people and had made many friends.

Sustainability

Wesley's needs to pay its way, so running costs and income need to be carefully monitored. We will continue to seek funding from individuals, grant-making bodies and public funders so that we can continue to work with our volunteers to support and serve them, as well as our community.

Poole Waste Not Want Not

Funded activities

The grant enabled us to make a significant impact on the community by supporting 660 households through 11,131 visits. Our crisis support initiatives provided immediate relief to those in urgent need. We distributed crisis parcels and offered free meals, addressing the most pressing challenges faced by vulnerable individuals and families. The social supermarket made essential items affordable, helping reduce financial strain. During the winter we distributed energy-saving devices, blankets, and seasonal hampers, festive packages. These efforts not only addressed immediate physical needs but also offered comfort and warmth to families facing difficult circumstances. Our holistic approach encompassed various programmes designed to support well-being and community connection. During the summer, we hosted engaging activities for children, focusing on healthy eating and creativity. We supplied school uniforms and collaborated with partners to offer clothing specifically for women.



Our Wellbeing Wednesdays brought the community together, sharing a sense of belonging and reducing isolation. We hosted 14 'Fun with Food' events, distributing 1,291 free meals alongside hundreds of bags of fresh fruits and vegetables. These events encouraged community members to cook together, learn new skills, and share healthy recipes. Many took home smoothie and soup makers to continue practicing their new skills. On several occasions, we had more children wanting to take part than we had initially planned for. We involved young volunteers from the learning disabilities group to help entertain and support the children while they waited their turn. This empowered our young volunteers - giving them a real sense of purpose, pride, and inclusion. To create more space and keep a smooth flow, we took some of the children to help in the shop pricing stock - freeing up room in the coffee shop where the cooking demos were taking place.

Outcomes

Fun with Food helped tackle generational habits by encouraging healthy choices, involving children in meal prep, and sharing recipes that families could recreate at home. As a result, 95% of our members have reported exploring healthier eating habits and trying new foods for the first time. 100% of participants saying they felt better emotionally because of being part of our programmes. Ukrainian families have enthusiastically taken part in cooking sessions.

Our dedicated volunteers played a vital role, shared their skills and enthusiasm while strengthening community ties. In 2024 alone, our volunteers gave • 5,614 hours in the shop • 817 hours as drivers • 920 hours supporting Events. Four joined our volunteer team, including two who were referred by the Job Centre. These individuals gained vital experience and confidence, with 2 successfully moving into employment. Altogether, 48 volunteers gained confidence and a sense of purpose, with 100% reporting increased self-worth and wellbeing. 65% earned safeguarding qualifications. Our three young men with learning disabilities achieved Level 1 in Food Safety, while 12 volunteers achieved Level 2. These opportunities helped people build skills in a real work environment.

Families stretched their budgets further thanks to free fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, and frozen food. Many tried new and nutritious ingredients they previously couldn't afford, helping improve diets and long-term eating habits.

"The joy on the little girl's face said it all! Excited to take home her own soup maker 😊 and share fresh soup with the family after a fun-filled event."

Story of change

Referred by Poole Job Centre, Martin initially applied for a paid role but was unsuccessful. Instead, he accepted a volunteer position, where he demonstrated dedication and passion over several months. When a paid position opened, Martin successfully secured it, showcasing the benefits of practical experience. We are thrilled to offer Martin this role. He is a hard worker, has a great sense of humor is an asset to our growing charity.

Sustainability

We have secured Neighbourly Pret A Manger funding for Fun with Food workshops. We are proactive in seeking additional funding opportunities to maintain and expand our programmes. We've formed a partnership with Pirates of Poole, and during events such as Harry Paye Day, we'll be out with our donation buckets.



Samee

Funded activities

We fully trained 6 SAMEE Ambassadors who were all beneficiaries of the charity. We encouraged them in pairs to deliver 12 x 1-hour presentations at Winchelsea School, Lynwood School, Millie's College, Grange School, Corfe Hills, Glenmoor School & Marsham Court Hotel. Each presentation was delivered by two Ambassadors for one hour where they talked about their journey with SAMEE and how they developed their self-employment. The talks impacted a total of 72 neurodivergent young people who all attended for the entire hourly sessions, and we received requests from 13 attendees who were inspired to sign up to our half day Taster Workshops.



Outcomes

The feedback from each presentation was really positive with many of the neurodivergent audience members requesting further information.

"I attended a presentation today and there were two people speaking who were both autistic like me, and they were both business owners, and it made me think whether I could be self-employed as well"

"What a wonderful experience for our students to witness. I know that several have been given some really good food for thought as self-employment was never an outcome that we covered at our school"

"I never thought I was able to stand up and talk in front of an audience let alone answer their questions, but I have now visited two schools and talked about my photography business and how SAMEE charity helps people and I feel even more confident than ever"

The six Ambassadors increased their social skills and confidence which can be evidenced by their Outcome Star readings increasing by an average of 27% each. All were actively involved in the group training sessions and delivered all presentations in pairs, so none of them felt socially isolated.

Story of change

A didn't feel comfortable talking with anyone that he didn't know. He couldn't hold eye contact and often interrupted people to say something because he didn't want to forget what he wanted to say. A had not learned the social skills needed to converse with people until he started to develop the skills needed through role play with his SAMEE mentor, pretending to be a potential customer for his business. Over the 12 months of the programme, A's social skills progressed to being confident enough to stand in front of his fellow project participants and talk about his business. When we offered A the opportunity to become a SAMEE Ambassador, his first reaction was fear but when A realised that 5 other participants including his new friend C had signed up, this was the motivation needed. A felt that his confidence was growing with public speaking because everyone at the training was in the same boat as him, and they all encouraged each other to face their fears and try. At the first event, A admitted he was really nervous but all the school groups were quite small, mirroring the number of people during the training sessions. The most significant benefit of the Ambassador experience for A is how his enhanced social skills have had a positive impact on new customers. A is becoming really confident at selling his gardening service, which is transformational. *"I would encourage anyone to become a SAMEE Ambassador - even though it's scary at first, the training is fun and I enjoy being part of a group adventure"*



Sustainability

We will be sourcing future grant opportunities in order to offer the opportunity to train up a new cohort of six SAMEE Ambassadors.

Somerford ARC Community Centre

Funded activities

Weekly lunch club - 2 courses cooked on premises, menu varies week to week. We are now at capacity - 6 double tables x 10 per table. We aim to serve nutritious food including for those with dietary needs. Food price increases have been challenging but we have overcome this with the help of these funds, enabling us to continue to serve a varied menu. With feedback from our users we have been able to cater Food that they enjoy

Outcomes

The grant has enabled us to cater for more people. We could not afford to supply meals at the low price of £4 without this funding and we are fully aware that most could not afford a higher price. The majority of those attending rely on the lunch club not only for the meal – it's the company as many of them live alone

Sustainability: We will have to go out for further funding and are currently working to this end

St Peter's Church Development Project

Funded activities

An open day run by Dorset Wildlife Trust on 1st March 2025 helped show all visitors and attendees the benefits of the planting in the grounds to the local wildlife. The difference the money you gave has made means that we have attracted some younger folk with challenging mental health conditions and other health concerns as it has means we can now provide refreshments and some snacks which we simply could not afford to do before. Also produce flyers which have meant new recruits. It enabled us to buy lots of bedding plants which are now all in the grounds. Our gardening group continues to meet every Tuesday morning. Equipment bought has enabled a huge amount of groundwork to take place with a powerful trimmer and hedge cutters and litter pickers and new loppers-all of which are needed for this big area. We litter pick three times a week. Refreshments have been transformational for those working so hard.



Outcomes

We are stopped all the time whilst working on Tuesdays to be congratulated on the beautiful and safe environment that the grounds now present. Our volunteers range from age 11 to 90. Some of the older ones are widowed and younger ones have mental health issues and find this group has benefitted their wellbeing. Some work is back breaking so having some youngsters join is brilliant.

Story of change

Alex started coming to us 6 months ago. He is on PIP payments and in his early 30's but very autistic and does not communicate well and cannot get no job easily. He chats to the volunteers so it has improved his communication skills. He is entrusted with big projects e.g. trimming massively overgrown hedges along our north boundary. He comes to get the refreshments and feels useful and appreciated. It has made such a difference to him and he now comes to volunteer in our church/community cafe too.



Sustainability

We have remained coming every Tuesday for four years. We have not secured funding so will have to start relying on volunteers to pay for teas/coffees etc

The Power House (Poole)

Funded activities

We have engaged a total of 215 volunteers, contributing a total of 700 volunteer hours since June 2024. A wildflower meadow and bug mansion were created to support local biodiversity. 100 wild fruit trees were planted. The Cornerstone Patch area was landscaped to improve access, including the building of 3 trellises. New Apothecary Patch created to offer additional growing space and provide the opportunity for future educational workshops. Completion of a shelter to provide storage & protection for equipment. Constructed compost bins to promote sustainable waste management and soil enrichment. Installed an irrigation system to increase water efficiency and promote self-sustainability.

We have also delivered 33 Lunch Clubs, 32 after school community sessions to support children and families, 29 Saturday Socials, 14 Horticultural therapy sessions, hosted 2 meals for 48 people using produce grown at the garden, and facilitated additional volunteering opportunities with Beaver Troops, Muddy Boots Nursery, Liverpool Victoria, GoodGym, Poole's Men's Shed. These groups have supported several Power House projects.

Outcomes

The funding provided has made a significant difference to people in the community, particularly in terms of health, well-being, and connection with others. 87.5% of participants reported that taking part in the community garden had a significant positive impact on their overall health and well-being. 73% of attendees noted a reduction in stress levels. 65% reported improved connection with nature, enhanced knowledge, and the acquisition of new skills. Over half mentioned a boost in mental well-being, confidence, and self-esteem.

"It made me feel connected with the Hamworthy community and expanded my knowledge about wildlife, fauna, and flora. I connect with people better."

"I feel taken away from all my problems, and I can socialise with my friends more."

"It helped me to access the space, particularly when I was having a tough time at school."

"Whenever I'm not feeling the best or am sad, when I go to the garden, I feel less stressed and more happy."

"I get to bring cool foods home and share with my family and be proud of my gardening skills."

Cornerstone Patch has brought younger and older members of the community together, with a mix of ethnicities too. Residents who have lived here for years, or who are new to the area. The improvements to accessibility and the shelter have improved volunteers' experience at the Patch. Both of Hamworthy's care homes are keen to have access to Cornerstone Patch this growing season, so we are determined to have Phase 2 installation of our accessibility improvements completed for their engagement this year.



Story of change

An individual first attended the community garden through a GoodGym evening session. She expressed interest in getting more involved, seeking outdoor space for herself and her family, as they live in a flat. She was initially hesitant to engage due to high social anxiety and lack of confidence. Despite reservations, she began to attend volunteering events and, over time, grew more comfortable and confident. She participated in the Big Feast, bringing along her whole family to enjoy the event together. Her commitment to the garden deepened as she became a key holder, gaining access to the space beyond scheduled sessions. She has shared that the community garden has had a significant positive impact on her life. It has benefited her physical health, reduced stress levels, and fostered a strong sense of community and belonging. She has learned new skills and enhanced her connection with nature. Inspired by her experiences, she now works on projects at home with her family.

Sustainability

National Lottery Reaching Communities and Talbot Village Trust are supporting the Gardening Lead role for two years. Cornerstone Academy has approved a five year Service Level Agreement to use this space. We are now progressing our previous conversations with Grounded Community to hold regular meetings through 2025 to progress creating a formal partnership. Volunteers' feedback highlighted a need for additional equipment, particularly protective footwear.

Townsend Youth Partnership

Funded activities

Two Youth sessions a week for young people in the Townsend area. This included opportunities to get involved with cooking, football and other sports, art and crafts and the provision of a safe space for the young people. We have also set up a Youth Forum for young people to have a voice and discuss issues that affect them with staff & trustees.

Outcomes

87 young people have attended and this has reduced social isolation and enabled them to meet friends and spend time together. Young people are grateful for what is on offer and say that they feel more part of the community because of this. They can also access our counselling service. Currently 5 young people are engaged with the Youth Forum, and they talk to peers to feed into this forum. Young people have said that speaking with trusted adult youth workers has increased their aspirations for the future and inspired them to find things which are positive for them to do. We have regular young volunteers helping out with the sessions, demonstrating positive role modelling to the younger people.

Story of change

Due to complex behavioral issues stemming from a turbulent family life, 'C' often finds mainstream school and other settings to be triggering. Due to anger issues, 'C' is currently close to permanent exclusion. To support 'C' practically speaking, we provide activities including a chat over some cooking or a friendly game of basketball.

"The youth club raised my expectations for myself by asking my opinion and engaging with me in a positive way. If it wasn't for them, I don't think I'd still be in school – and if I and if I wasn't in school, I'd be up to all sorts!"

Sustainability

We will continue to run two sessions per week of youth work, but will need to find new ways to fund core costs - from other grant funders primarily.



Youth Empowerment Platform

Funded activities

Face to face meetings and team building activities

Outcomes

The young people were exposed to information and activities that a majority of them would not be able to access due to financial constraints on their parents. The face to face meetings provided the learning about different career pathways which some of the young people had not heard from their mainstream schools. The team building activities helped the young people to form relationships and a stronger community of minority backgrounds.



Youth empowerment leaders and parents are very grateful to the funding that has enabled new opportunities for the young people, and has improved their knowledge through information shared by guest speakers on subjects such as career pathways and how to deal with racism in a positive way.

Story of change

A mother of a young person with learning needs testified that she found the activities very helpful for her son who is not socially confident to go out. He felt empowered through the face to face meetings and team building activities and he has developed his social skills and now likes to be involved in majority of the activities posted on the young people's platform.



Sustainability

Not yet secured funding but we are able to continue with face to face meetings as a local pastor has offered us their church hall.

Burton & Winkton Parish Council

Funded activities

Replacement of non working and energy inefficient white goods - all very old and past use life Supply of induction cooker pots and pans for use with new induction cooker Replacement kitchen unit and drawer fronts in hygienic easy to clean gloss finish Supply of easy to clean high gloss kick boards

Outcomes

The community centre now has a fully functioning and useable kitchen. Volunteers and hirers alike are able to use the facility including kitchen area which is available seven days a week.

Sustainability

Volunteer run community coffee mornings are now possible. Private birthday parties and celebrations are thrilled to be able to prepare and cook food.



Christchurch Baptist Church

Funded activities

Completely removed old kitchen units, appliances, wall tiles, and central pillar in serving hatch. Re-designed layout of kitchen to create better and safer use of the kitchen and more worktop space; Installed user-friendly units & appliances; re-tiled and decorated walls, re-built serving hatch.

As a result, we now have a kitchen that is fit for multi-purpose use by the Church and the community.

Outcomes

The refurbishment of the kitchen has made a huge difference to all users of our Centre. Users have commented on the more practical layout, the extra cupboard space, the ease of using drawers rather than cupboards for heavy items, the gas hob works much better, the dishwasher is much quicker to heat and to clean dishes, the serving hatch is better for serving food and drinks. Users have said that the kitchen seems bigger now, and is a much better space to work in.

We are now able to provide meals for housebound and isolated people on a weekly basis, and a Christmas Day meal for 60 people in the Christchurch area. We are also more able to provide hot food for our church-run groups such as 'Living With Loss'.



Story of change

Mr and Mrs B are both in their mid-nineties. For the past 7 years Mr B has been his wife's full time carer as she progressed with dementia. They have no family living in the area. We began to provide weekly meals for them, and it was clear that the strain of caring for his wife was beginning to show on Mr B. Our weekly visits became as important to him as the meal. He began to open up to those delivering the meals, and they have been able to offer him verbal support and encouragement. Recently, Mrs B went into residential care, and we continue to deliver a weekly lunch to Mr B, which he always looks forward to. Mr B misses his wife, and looks forward to contact with our volunteers as much as the meal.

Sustainability

The new kitchen will continue to be used for many years, providing food and refreshments for the elderly, lonely, poor, isolated, disabled, and disadvantaged in Christchurch. All of the groups are run by volunteers, and the weekly and Christmas Day meals are also provided by volunteers, so no further funding is needed.

Hengistbury Head Outdoors

Funded activities

It was agreed through Dorset Community Foundation that the grant could go towards the cost of new showers and changing rooms. We have used the grant to purchase the shower and sanitaryware that will be used in the conversion. Invitations to tender have been drawn up and will be sent to interested builders. It is anticipated that the conversion will be completed during May 2025.

Outcomes

Once the showers and changing rooms are in use, it will improve the health and safety of those participating in activities at the Centre. If they have fallen into the Harbor whilst taking part in their activity, they will be able to clean themselves and help remove the risks of contamination and disease through contact with the effluence and phosphates that are increasingly present in Christchurch Harbor.

Sustainability

We have secured a grant of £618,920 from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government Community Ownership Fund. This is subject to (1) us achieving match funding of £154,730, of which nearly £100k has already been raised (we have pledges in place for the remainder) and (2) Tenders being drawn up in line with DHCLG guidelines and contractors approved. These funds cover the whole project of which the shower conversion is a part.

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 from our 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.

Merley Community Association

Funded activities

We replaced the main entrance of the centre with a new secure and wheelchair friendly door and entry key pad. We spent more to get a secure lock and other benefits and the total spend came in at 3714.90.

Outcomes

It has made entry and exit from the centre much easier and the whole centre has a much more professional feel. We are able to secure the door and allow all centre users to arrive and leave through the correct entrance.

Story of change

Dance school owner Leanne uses multiple rooms in the centre for her classes. She is now able to allow access to her students through the main door instead of the Kitchen and fire doors. It also means the building is more secure for her classes as people enter and exit from just one door.

Sustainability

We would like to replace all the external doors at the Community Centre to improve access and security.



Poole Communities Trust

Funded activities

We were able to commission professional works from an electrician and carpenter to provide the essential safety changes needed that were highlighted by a 2024 Fire Risk Assessment. This included fitting intumescent strips to all internal fire doors which was significant job but creates safer compartmentalisation of the building in the event of a fire to aid escape and protect other areas of the building. Emergency lighting and signage has been added to ensure each area of the centre has maximum safety and all areas can be utilised during hours of darkness. In terms of information signage, we wanted to respond to the need to better highlight the community centre itself and have new signage to the rear of the building. Large new noticeboards now enable us to display far better information to the community about the offer at the centre.

The costs for the signage was greater than the budget but we were kindly donated a legacy donation of £468.41 from a member of the community that we were able to allocate against the costs to complete the project.



Outcomes

The fire safety aspects are essential to ensure the building is fit for purpose and can be fully utilised. The information signage/noticeboards help increase our visibility to the community and support footfall to enable the building to continue as a community setting.

We are delighted to have secured a new regular hirer EDAS who now use the Studio space in the centre all year round for bespoke drug and alcohol support to adults in the community. This area of the building has a separate access that has benefitted from the new emergency lighting and improved signage for safety and for information purposes.

Story of change

Helen (name changed for anonymity) is a mum of two who is a close resident to the Branksome Centre. Helen has experienced severe post natal depression that resulted in hospitalisation and subsequent severe anxiety. Helen attended Branksome Toddlers, the weekly session that takes place at the centre. Helen's confidence increased and she took on regular volunteering. During the life span of this grant funding Helen has now been directly employed into two roles with Poole Communities Trust; this is Helen's first steps back into employment since having her children.



St Andrew's Charminster

Funded activities

Replacement of the hot water heater and boiler.

Outcomes

We are able to supply hot water to our kitchen facilities, allowing us to operate safely as a functioning cafe for our community here in Charminster. The replacement of our broken fridge and oven has allowed us to serve coffee and other refreshments in our cafe, as well as being able to host a one-off cafe where we served soup which was well attended. The shelving purchased has allowed us to organise the kitchen store, ensuring that we can provide clean and hygienic services to those visiting our cafe.

The grant has been incredibly valuable to the improvement of the facilities which has in turn helped us to have a more impactful space for our community at Common Ground Cafe and St. Andrews Centre. With improved kitchen facilities we have been able to provide more options for external hire. This has helped put our centre on the map, and more people hearing about it. Following on from that, more individuals from the area have heard about Common Ground cafe and so more community is slowly building; relationships are forming at a positive and sustainable pace.

Story of change

Having the improved kitchen facility has helped us provide a better experience for our Barista Academy Course. With improved storage space we are able to have a tidy space and so the course has been streamlined for a better experience for attendees. We have had a few graduates that have gone on to do a further enhancement course at Bournemouth and Poole College as well as a couple volunteering with us at Common Ground Cafe.

St. Lukes Church

Funded activities

New Flooring to entrance and main hall

Outcomes

From one the volunteer helpers:

"The grant provided has contributed greatly to the hall being 'transformed' into a more inviting space for the community of Burton and beyond to use - welcoming, safe and warm. Likewise the durable flooring will also benefit everyone using this facility - it will be easier to clean. The previous flooring in the hall and toilets was becoming a hazard. The new flooring has therefore minimised potential risks of tripping. The new toilet facilities too are appropriate for people who are older or have a disability."



Story of change

"I am in my late 80s and since the passing of Roy, my husband, coming to the hall has helped to take away that lonely feeling. The hall is so much more welcoming. It's cosy and feels more like home. It has an inviting atmosphere. I don't want to go to church but I don't mind being involved in community events. I have got to talk to people I've never met before. It's ideal for people like me living on their own."

Strouden Park Community Association

Funded activities

Replacement flooring.

Outcomes

It has made a huge difference as the flooring we had was really dirty, even after a good clean. In replacing the flooring the people who frequent the centre are now having a more positive experience. This applies especially to those who attend Pilates, Tai Chi, Ballet and Mother and toddler group, who can now sit on the floor knowing it is fit for purpose. It has also helped to bring more people into the centre. The benefits are for those from babies to those in their 80s.

Story of change

Rebecca Godber, Dance Teacher, uses the space six days a week. It has had a huge impact on her ability to maintain cleanliness for herself and for her younger dancers. She no longer has to purchase her dance shoes so frequently. There is no longer the need to continually escort the children to the toilets to wash their hand and feet. Furthermore the children's dance uniform was also really dirty after each session, which is no longer the case, and Rebecca doesn't have to account for the situation to the frustrated parents.

Sustainability

The Trustees of Strouden Park Community Association are in one accord with appreciation and thanks for this generous grant, which will continue, for many years, to ensure all forms of physical activity can be performed in a healthy, clean environment.

The Parish of Four Saints

Funded activities

New dishwasher.

Outcomes

We were able to switch from using paper cups, plates and disposable cutlery at our community events. We have been able to put on more afternoon teas that help serve the older person and, in particular, the lonely. We've been able to increase capacity at our community breakfast and community Tea & Chat; moving from two sessions a month to weekly. With the new equipment it has made serving food and drink easier. One recently bereaved person said that being with people at tea and chat had helped them through the loneliness of losing a loved one. We have also introduced a gathering on a Sunday afternoon monthly aimed mainly at children and families as well as the provision of a seasonal, simple, bread and soup lunch in March/April. The purchase of the dishwasher has enabled volunteers to focus more on conversations with those attending community events.

We are currently in discussions with Bournemouth Foodbank to operate a Hub at St. Luke's. Our aim is to be able to offer a simple lunch to those using the foodbank. This will draw a new team of volunteers. Whilst we are still working on encouraging those from the homeless/rough sleeping community to come for a free breakfast and hot drink. The grant is a springboard to greater community engagement.

Story of change

"We love community breakfast as a family! My children love meeting up with their friends, giving me time to socialise with new friends. Where else could a boy of 9 eat good, healthy cereal, while his sister tucks into a (locally sourced) sausage sandwich! The atmosphere is warm and welcoming, with room for everyone of all ages. With the solitary souls welcomed and chatted to. All in all, its lovely opportunity for the whole community to get together and enjoy a lovely home cooked breakfast and chat. It has changed our weekends for the better."

Sustainability

We have not yet gone to grant making bodies or started an internal campaign but hope to do so within the next three months.

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 now displays bottled water, healthy snacks including pre-made sandwiches, tubs of fruit and any 'specials' that are on offer.

In terms of the Community fridge offer and soup in the queue, 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.



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 not only has an educational impact but helps to reduce isolation, increase confidence, and offers peer support. The family cooking sessions are a great way of young people being introduced to healthy food that parents are struggling to include. The young people are more inclined to 'go with it in a social environment'. 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 with her children - it is encouraging to see families 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.

