



# 2023/24 Impact Report



Northamptonshire  
Community Foundation  
Giving back to our county

Each year, we award £millions in grants to community groups across the county.



From food banks and community larders to counselling services and wellbeing support,



from youth theatre groups and kids' play sessions to learn-to-read coaches for adults,



we're committed to improving the lives of all Northamptonshire residents.

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Photo credit: Joe Brown

In 2023/24...

**£2.97million**  
Grants awarded

**117,050\***  
Beneficiaries supported

**£23million+**  
Awarded since 2001

**3 in 20**  
Local residents impacted  
by our charitable giving

\*We cannot account for repeat beneficiaries.

# “Place-based charities and community groups stand **at the heart** of our successes.”

This year's accomplishments underscore the extraordinary impact of place-based charities, the commitment of volunteers, and the transformative power of philanthropy. Through our largest-ever grant distribution—£2.97 million—our foundation has empowered Northamptonshire's community groups, small charities, and individuals, meeting essential needs across both rural and urban areas. This milestone exemplifies the profound difference local giving can make when directed toward addressing unique, community-specific challenges.

Place-based charities and community groups stand at the heart of our successes. Their dedication and responsiveness to local needs drive sustainable, positive change, supported by the generosity of our donors, partners, and supporters. Together, we have invested in the work of volunteer-led groups and locally focused charities, providing critical services to those who need it most and building a stronger, more inclusive Northamptonshire.

Our Hidden Needs Report, created with the University of Northampton, has illuminated key community priorities, helping us target funding for maximum impact. Partnerships with local councils and support from the government-funded Household Support Fund have further extended our reach, providing relief to residents facing financial hardship and addressing urgent challenges within our neighbourhoods.

This year, we also celebrated the essential contributions of place-based charities and volunteers. Events at historic venues like 78 Derngate and Wicksteed Park offered spaces to recognise and celebrate the dedication of our grantees and honour the collective impact made possible through philanthropy. Initiatives like the Rose of Northamptonshire Awards and our Annual Awards have highlighted the individuals and local charities that form the backbone of our communities, reflecting the civic pride and gratitude that drive meaningful change.

As we reflect on this impactful year, we renew our commitment to cultivating a culture of generosity, championing local charities, and strengthening our community. Thank you for joining us on this inspiring journey to create healthy, safe, and thriving communities across Northamptonshire where everyone has the opportunity to belong, be supported and give back.



Rachel McGrath  
Chief Executive



Rachel Mallows  
Chair

In 2023/24...

40+

Groups & individuals celebrated at our Annual Awards event

57

Community Heroes awarded Rose of Northamptonshire Awards



1st

Funds launched dedicated to climate action & rural communities

3 in 20

Local residents positively impacted by our charitable giving



Since 2001...

£20million+

In endowment for future generations

4,000+

Charities, projects and individuals funded

£23million

Distributed across the county



# Boosting the wellbeing of adults with learning disabilities.

Higham Ferrers Gateway Club meets every week to support adults with learning disabilities.

From sports, cooking classes and art sessions, the club run a huge variety of activities for its members, all of which are designed to improve their social and physical wellbeing.

A £3,000 grant award from the Constance Travis Endowment Fund for Northamptonshire enabled Higham Ferrers Gateway Club to add some new activities to the roster, including a visit from two miniature therapy ponies, a Bat Walk at Rushden Lakes led by the Wildlife Centre, and a trip to the pantomime at The Castle Theatre in Wellingborough.

“ All our members have expanded their horizons and have enjoyed new experiences.

The majority of this would not have been available to them without membership of Higham Ferrers Gateway Club. They all have a social life that would not be possible without attending our club.

The Club's involvement in the local community enables local people to become more familiar with adults living with a learning disability and be aware of the challenges they face. ”

-Elizabeth Willmott, Higham Ferrers Gateway Club

# 28,349

People reported improved emotional, mental & physical wellbeing following projects we funded.



Renew169 Wellbeing Café



Higham Ferrers Gateway Club

# Making dance accessible to all ages and abilities.

Dancemind's Dance Elders Programme opens up contemporary dance classes to participants from all backgrounds and with all movement abilities.

The variety of dance techniques and creative exercises support participants' mental and physical wellbeing, with options for seated dance and movement adjustments so no-one is left out.

Dancers can also join the performance group, to focus on dances that are shared with audiences at the end of each term.

A grant award of £4,985 from the Queen's Institute Fund allowed Dancemind to welcome 24 senior residents to the Dance Elders Programme.

“The sense of joy and accomplishment I feel is immeasurable.”

-Dancemind member

“Dance Elders is a sanctuary for movement, enhancing my mobility and flexibility.”

-Dancemind member

“The encouragement I receive is palpable, and the benefits to my body are immediate.”

-Dancemind member

# 4,660

People reported feeling less lonely after participating in foundation-funded activities.




 Dancemind

 BareFooted Arts

# Learning new skills in the great outdoors.



 Spring Charity

 The Green Patch

**Groundwork Northamptonshire** works to improve access to green spaces and encourage creativity across Northamptonshire.

The Green Patch is a community garden in Kettering that provides educational activities for children and young people, a place for keen community gardeners to grow flowers and vegetables and even a home for ducks, chickens and rabbits.

A grant award of £38,500 from the JKLM Fund helped to establish a community workshop at The Green Patch, by refurbishing a shipping container.

The workshop is a safe space for members of the public to attend carpentry workshops, building their confidence and learning new skills.

“ This funding has allowed us to transform the Green Patch to make it a much more accessible space and a richer community asset. In the process of implementation, the team has had to master new skills in project management and site management along with carpentry and tools know-how.

Any project like this energises our volunteer and community base considerably. The local residents dearly love the Green Patch as a place of magic and inspiration, and the workshop is a dramatic addition that has ever more inspired and excited everybody. In yet again improving the quality of the Green Patch offering, it only increases the value of the whole project to local residents. ”

-Kate Williams, Groundwork Northamptonshire



# Using laughter as therapy to support local artists.

**Music**

is not what I do,

**It's who I am.**



 In Music In Media

 Northamptonshire Mind

Northamptonshire Mind has been working to improve mental health and wellbeing across the county for 60 years.

The charity supported 700+ local aspiring and established actors with a series of Drama Therapy workshops and an online toolkit, funded by a grant award of £4,600 from the Queen's Institute Fund.

These resources were established to open up conversations about mental health and to improve access to mental health resources amongst those working in the Arts.

“It's brilliant and has so much detail and notes, a lot of which I think will help anyone, not just actors. I think it's great!”

-Touring actor and user of the toolkit

“I had such an amazing time. I hadn't laughed so much in a long time.

While normally I would never do anything like stand up in front of others and perform, by the end I knew I felt safe to be as silly as we wanted and not be judged, That I was a huge step out my comfort zone.

I'd recommend it, laughing lowered my anxiety enough to push myself and thoroughly enjoy myself.”

-Drama Therapy attendee

# Raising awareness of the challenges faced by young carers.

Northamptonshire Carers support unpaid carers across Northamptonshire.

Through the #iwill Fund, the charity was awarded £9,959.70 to establish a Young Carers Steering Group, so young carers could come together to co-produce a short film which is being used to raise awareness of the challenges and barriers they face.

“ One of the crucial aims that the young people involved felt the project was able to achieve, was the opportunity to provide a vehicle for young carers to have their voices heard.

It allowed them to represent other young carers and raise awareness about an under-represented group and the challenges they face.


The fact that the film has been distributed widely and gained some press coverage added to that sense of achievement and the sense of being part of a bigger cause and of a group effort. Some of these opportunities would simply not have been possible without their involvement in the project. ”

-Annie Freestone, Young Carers Service

# £67,446.75

Awarded from the #iwill fund to enable young local residents to play their part in society.



 Oxfordshire Play Association, also covering South Northamptonshire

# Giving **young people** a voice and a confidence boost.

**The Lowdown** is a mental health charity providing free and confidential support services to young people aged 11 to 25 living in Northamptonshire.

A grant award of £6,700 from the #iwill Fund meant The Lowdown could launch their Out There steering group, bringing together 8 young people to plan and organise their annual residential trip.

One young person supported by The Lowdown suffers with extreme separation anxiety and never spends time away from their mother. This young person excelled whilst away.

“ I really loved it and I feel like I've grown closer to some of my friends and I feel as if my independence has grown.

And it really was amazing.

I did have some anxiety, but the leaders helped me feel as comfortable as possible and I got through it! Thank you very much Out There for these amazing opportunities and I can't wait for next year's residential! ”

-Young attendee

“ It was an absolute joy to watch them bloom and see them enjoy themselves. ”

-The Lowdown support worker





Outside in Theatre



Thomas' Fund



Networking event hosted at Archways Real Estate



The Lab



Family Support Link



Albanian Cultural Association



Workplace Wellbeing Award win

# Helping to **keep** our vulnerable residents **warm**.

The McCarthy-Dixon Foundation is working to alleviate hunger across the county, from its base in central Northampton.

From the Warm this Winter Fund, the foundation received a grant award of £2,000 to provide blankets, portable heaters and one-off payments for energy bills to their most vulnerable service users.

“By providing support to older individuals struggling with the rising cost of living, the grant has helped alleviate the burden of high energy prices during the colder months.

# 284

People reported that they have an increased ability to heat their home and stay warm.

The purchase of home-heating devices such as heated blankets, portable heaters, blankets, and hot water bottles has ensured that beneficiaries have the means to stay warm and comfortable in their homes.

Many of our clients were trapped in a distressing cycle of choosing between adequately heating their homes and meeting other essential needs. With the grant's assistance, we were able to provide them with much-needed relief.

The provision of portable heaters, in particular, has been invaluable. Our clients, who previously could not afford such devices, expressed immense gratitude for the newfound ability to move these heaters around their homes with them as they go, meaning they never had to be cold. ”

-Teresa McCarthy-Dixon, McCarthy-Dixon Foundation



The McCarthy-Dixon Foundation

Impact Now

# Helping those in need into employment that works for them.

**United African Association (UAA)** was established to advise, support, advocate for, and represent organisations and individuals within the African community.

The charity was chosen by our Friends of the Foundation panel to receive a grant of £5,000, to fund vital welfare support and vouchers to their service users.

In March 2024, a domestic abuse survivor was referred to UAA by an existing service user and volunteer. Her feedback after receiving a voucher:

“ I was just thinking of you because we haven't had so much food in this house like now, I even could buy a toaster from Asda as the previous one broke down.

I want to thank you again for your help. I would like to help somehow. God bless. ”

After taking up a volunteer role in the UAA office, completing admin tasks and bookkeeping while being supported by an IT Tutor, this volunteer now works part time and is saving for driving lessons.


Through this experience, UAA's new employee has realised that she likes accounting and is looking to pursue that as a career. She has started an online course in accounting and is continuing to gain further experience by assisting the charity with their bookkeeping.

# 1,017

People supported to achieve independent living.



 United African Association

 Restore Northampton Growbaby project

# Carry a basketball, not a blade.



Adrenaline Alley



Northampton Basketball Club

**Northampton Basketball Club** use sport to divert young people away from gangs and serious youth violence.

As part of their *Carry a basketball, not a blade* campaign, professional basketball player Andre Arissol visited 16 local schools to deliver informative assemblies and basketball sessions.

The assemblies formed part of the campaign's early intervention and prevention work, teaching students about the risks and consequences of carrying and using a knife and how violence and knife crime impacts a community.

To fund the *Carry a basketball, not a blade* campaign, Northampton Basketball Club were awarded a grant of £6,000 from the High Sheriff's Initiative Fund and Proceeds of Crime Fund.

Through staff evaluation forms completed anonymously after the assemblies, teachers reported that their students had more awareness, understanding and knowledge about the severity of knife crime; students understood how to report knife crime and anti-social behaviour and how to keep safe, and students felt more informed and empowered to make positive choices around their behaviour.

# 979

People supported as victims of anti-social behaviour or crime.

# 127

People reported they feel safer in their communities.



# Providing food aid to those in need.

## THE SHACK FOOD PROJECT

THESHACK



 The Shack Food Project

Throughout 2023 and 2024, we supported West Northamptonshire Council with the distribution of more than £1.2 million in Household Support Funds (HSF).

This funding supported thousands of local families to survive the cost of living crisis, and enabled more than 10,070 vouchers to be given to those in need.

“It's just gotten so difficult and I have to make some decisions about whether I pay the bills or buy food. Some days are harder than others and I feel so awful. I never thought this would happen to me. This will help me so much. Thank you.”

-Voucher recipient

“Care Leavers are a very vulnerable group that have little to no family support and are faced with daily struggles with trying to just "live". Having this grant has enabled us to provide some help to ease the constant stress of wondering how and when the next meal is going to be bought.”

-Right Resolution CIC

# 74,481

households supported due to a grant award to the Food Aid Alliance Network.

# £1,208,485

distributed in total to organisations across Northamptonshire



Rose  
of Northamptonshire



57

Unsung Heroes  
awarded Rose of  
Northamptonshire  
Awards.

# Hidden Needs

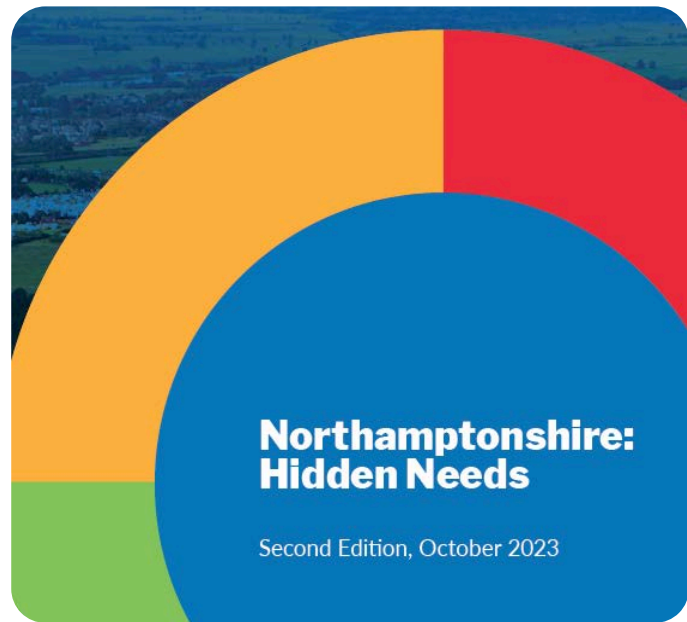
Report launched in partnership with the University  
of Northampton, to raise awareness of our county's  
most urgent needs.



Warm this Winter

£19,000

Raised through our Warm this Winter appeal, to  
tackle fuel poverty and to keep older and vulnerable  
Northamptonshire residents fed, warm and well.



Northamptonshire:  
Hidden Needs

Second Edition, October 2023

£137,000

Raised to support communities across rural  
Northamptonshire through our Shining a Spotlight on Rural  
Community Needs appeal.



SHINING A SPOTLIGHT  
ON RURAL COMMUNITY NEEDS

# How can you *help*?

Whether you want to give during your lifetime or to leave a legacy, we can ensure that your generosity has the broadest possible impact across your local community.

## *Become a Friend of the Foundation*

Donate monthly or annually and become a Friend of the Foundation. We pool all of our Friends' donations together and our Friends decide how and where to direct these funds.



Read our Good to Give Guide

## *Join our Corporate Giving Network*

The Corporate Giving Network enables Northamptonshire-based businesses and entrepreneurs to give back to their community, through place-based philanthropy. Members of the Corporate Giving Network form a giving circle of like-minded businesses whose donations will be combined to create funding for local groups providing life-changing services to those in need.

## *Consider leaving a legacy*

By making Northamptonshire Community Foundation a beneficiary of your Will or part of your estate plan, you are making a valuable contribution to a better future for our communities. We can work with you or your Professional Advisor, to ensure that your wishes are met and that your generosity will last for generations to come.

## *Set up a named fund*

Setting up a fund is an excellent option if you have a strong interest in supporting a particular cause and/or would like to be more actively engaged in your charitable giving. Whether you are an individual, family, business, or charitable trust, we will work with you to set up a fund that best suits your charitable goals.

## *Support an appeal*

Our fundraising appeals tackle the most urgent and priority needs in Northamptonshire. Making a direct donation to any of our current appeals means supporting our county's most vulnerable residents.

## *Hold a fundraising event or charity day*

We will support you every step of the way, as you raise essential funds for your local community foundation.

# Contact

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Community Foundation**

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**Northamptonshire  
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Giving back to our county