



Putting communities first: Our impact report

2016–17 to 2020–21

November 2021

The National Lottery Community Fund

Contents



**This is an
interactive
document**

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Foreword

In 1994, The National Lottery was created to raise money for good causes. Since then, over £43 billion has been raised, thanks to National Lottery players. As one of the good cause distributors, The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK.

We are proud to support thousands of projects across the country. We reflect the issues and priorities that matter to communities nationally, regionally and locally.

National Lottery funding makes a difference and touches lives, including through projects that support employment, young people, community and social infrastructure, our climate, and people facing some of life's toughest challenges.

In October 2021, we published [Our Commitment to Communities](#). We said we'll use data and impact to inform strategy and redouble efforts to measure, understand and share what works, why, and where the challenge and opportunities lie. As the Community Fund's first ever comprehensive Impact Report, this is our first step on this commitment.

It tells a powerful story of the reach, scale and contribution of the £3.4 billion we have awarded over the last five years, including dedicated coronavirus crisis funding in 2020. It demonstrates how over 72,000 charities and community organisations support people and communities across the UK to be resilient, thrive, and prosper.

In a typical year, grant holders support 5.2 million beneficiaries, recruit 4,700 full time equivalent staff members and mobilise 290,000 volunteers. Every month, around 1.8 million people enjoy the benefits of National Lottery Community Fund supported venues like parks and village halls. In the last year, we know that over half of our grant holders would have delivered significantly fewer services without the support that was made available by National Lottery and Government funding, and one in five would have had to close altogether due to the challenges brought about by COVID-19.

Foreword



Our grant holders deliver positive benefits for people and communities, improving people's mental health and wellbeing, increasing social contact, reducing loneliness, and improving confidence and self-esteem. For example, we know that 80% of the projects reaching young people help build confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing – and 65% build stronger friendships and relationships. Opportunity for young people is and remains a top priority for The National Lottery Community Fund.

The new research shows that many more people have local pride and belonging because of the services or activities our grant holders deliver. By looking for the very first time at the impact of our smallest grants, we can now show that it is this local, grassroots funding that has the largest volunteer and beneficiary reach, and is vital for the resilience of local community assets.

We are proud to share the difference our funding makes to communities across the UK, and be accountable to National Lottery players, without whom our work would not be possible.

Looking ahead, we will use these insights to shape our future direction. We will strive to make the greatest difference we can, and be here for communities to recover, rebuild and grow. In all that we do, we will be putting communities first.

David Knott

Chief Executive

The National Lottery Community Fund

Introduction

The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK – we support people and communities to be resilient, thrive and prosper. In this report we show the contribution and impact our grants make across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We focus on the difference funding makes to grant holders, people and communities and for this report, we specifically look in more detail at the following areas of work:



Street Doctors, England



This is an interactive document

Navigate using the buttons on the left.

A UK-wide funder

- **A strong UK strategy underpins and gives coherence to all our funding.**
- **The Government issues our policy directions in England and for UK-wide spending**, and devolved administrations are responsible for issuing specific policy directions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- **Our UK Board provides strategic oversight and includes the country funding committee Chairs**, allowing us to reflect and support the diversity within the UK as well as its unity. This also enables us to replicate or adapt initiatives across countries, to secure stronger impact and value for money.
- **Our work is for the benefit of everyone** and our uniquely granular, localised and partnership approach will continue to be deployed in reaching those communities and people who are most vulnerable.
- Our focus on prosperous and thriving communities aims to unite and level opportunity in the communities where support is most needed.
- **Each year up to 10% of our budget is allocated for UK-wide programmes**, including celebrating moments of national significance.
- The remaining 90% is split between the four countries of the UK determined by a budget allocation formula, based on population and adjusted by factors relating to relative deprivation and resource availability.
 - England 79.75%
 - Scotland 9.37%
 - Wales 6.29%
 - Northern Ireland 4.59%
- **We are more than just a funder and play an active role in curating, sense-making and sharing evidence, learning and insights across different thematic areas.** We also act as a convenor and catalyst, drawing together people and organisations and supporting them to collaborate and connect. You can read more about this work at: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights
- **Our role also includes close collaboration with other funders and lottery distributors** as a means of sharing knowledge and enhancing our reach, outcomes, and impact.

An overview of our funding

Across the UK we fund the things that matter to communities. In the five years from 2016–17 to 2020–21 we awarded £3.4 billion through over 72,000 grants.

Our smallest grants, of up to £10,000, enable projects to run for up to a year.

Overall, **82% of all grants** were for small amounts of up to £10,000. Their combined value was £483 million.

Larger grants, of over £10,000, support grant holders to work sustainability or more intensively, for up to five years. This includes support for organisations and partnerships working together with a shared set of goals.

Targeted or strategic funding programmes take a systemic or thematic approach to supporting innovation, transformation, and long-term change.

In England, we invested over **£500 million in five programmes** of up to 10 years' duration to support people from birth through to later life.

We also distribute non-Lottery funding on behalf of other organisations, including Government, plus money from dormant bank and building society accounts.

We work closely with others to enhance our reach, outcomes, and impact.

In 2020 we worked with a network of organisations to get almost **£54 million of National Lottery funding** into communities at risk of adverse impact from the COVID-19 pandemic.

National Lottery funding is for everyone.

We are committed to fairness and inclusion. Our vision is one of thriving communities where every person is valued and has level opportunity.

Last year we prioritised building the capacity of organisations so they would be in a stronger position to address inequalities after the pandemic.

- We awarded more grants focusing on supporting people from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds (2,788 awards, £77.3m) than at any time in the last five years.
- The value of grants focusing on supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) people (473 awards, £16.3m) was 77% more than average for the previous four years.
- The value of grants focusing on supporting disabled people (3,907 awards, £96.8m) was 38% more than average for the previous four years.

An overview of our funding

We reach **every parliamentary constituency in the UK and over 90% of all wards received funding** in the last five years.

We invest in areas of greater deprivation: over the last three years **51% (£568 million) of our total funding went to the 30% of local areas in England with the highest levels of deprivation.**

Using the Onward think tank's Social Fabric Index, the **10% of local areas with highest need received the relatively largest amount of funding (16%).**

About **42% of our funding goes to the areas identified as highest priority** for the Government's Levelling Up Fund.

The half of local areas with highest levelling up need received **63% of all funding.**

In 2020-21, the value of our funding in the highest priority Levelling Up Fund areas in England was **14% higher than average over the previous three years**, with the number of grants **60% higher.**



Ethnic Minority Deaf Club, Scotland

Five years of funding

2016–17 to 2020–21

In total
£3.4bn
72,322 grants

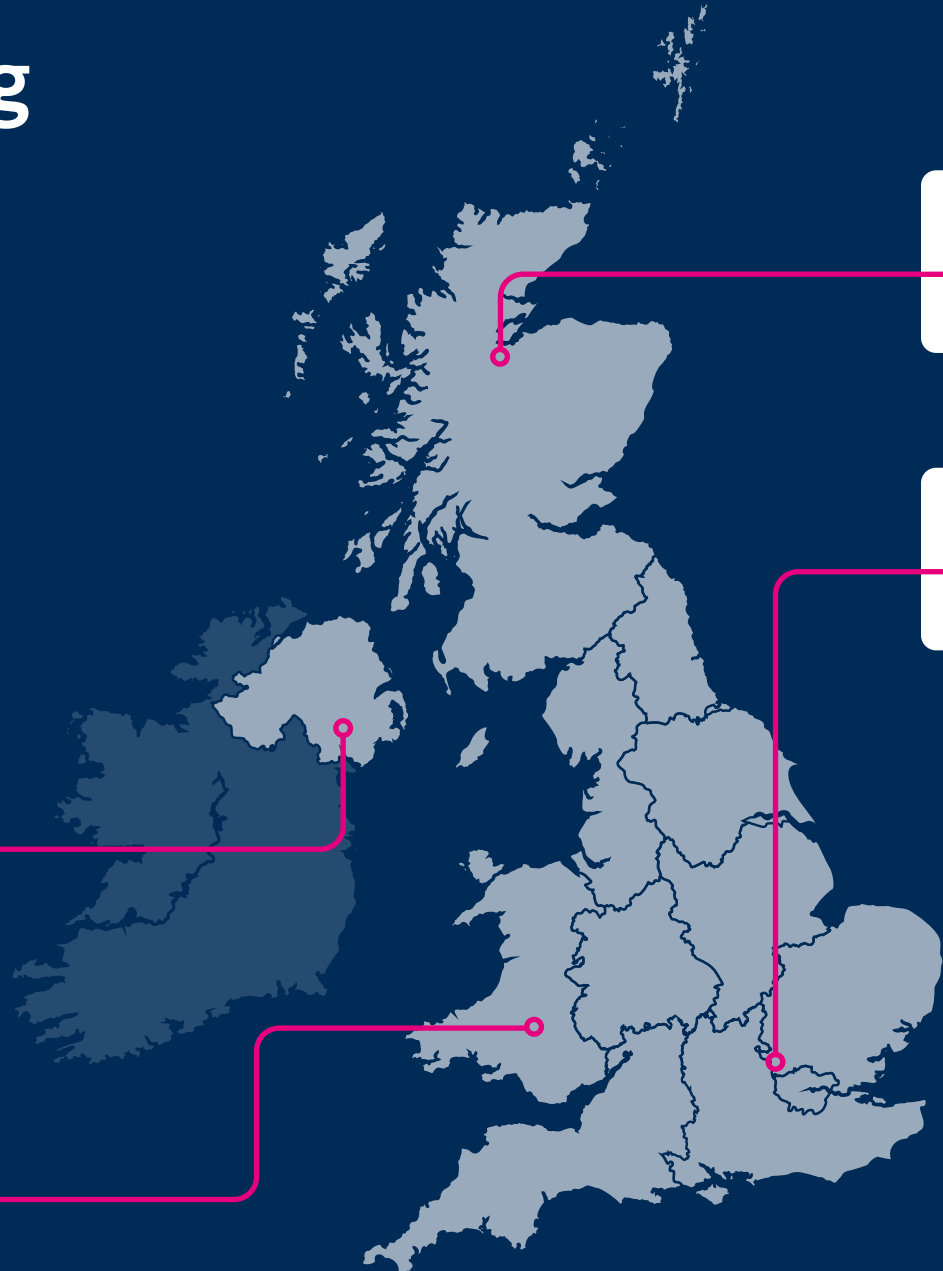
United Kingdom
£287.1m
4,670 grants

Northern Ireland
£119m
3,677 grants

Wales
£170.7m
3,990 grants

Scotland
£353.8m
8,504 grants

England
£2.5bn
51,481 grants



Impact: The difference we make

Community wellbeing is a complex combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions.

Personal wellbeing is subjective, depending on how people sum up their life, feelings and emotional state, and whether they have meaning and purpose.

Our funding can't positively affect every one of these factors, but we believe our grants do play a vital and unique role in many key areas.

We enable diverse and accessible places and spaces, a vibrant voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and thousands of events, activities and opportunities that build and strengthen local relationships and connections. Many of these aim to proactively involve local people in the things that they care about and that affect their lives and communities.

Our grants also directly support charities and community groups to deliver a huge breadth and variety of services across the UK. Most commonly they support:

- Social and community connections like befriending, clubs, and volunteering.
- Health and wellbeing activities.
- Community engagement, including community development, leadership training, and mentoring or peer support.

All this is possible because our funding directly equips charities and community groups with the resources they need in order to be sustainable and effective.

We believe we are effective in delivering funding and support where it is needed. Our long history of working in communities means we have access to an extraordinary ecosystem of partners, and because we listen and talk to our grant holders and partners, we are able to adapt to their needs and interests efficiently and effectively.

Impact: The difference we make

In April 2021, to help us understand the reach and impact of our responsive funding, we commissioned independent research from IFF Research.

More information on the methodology used and a link to the full findings can be found on [page 117](#).

Our grant holders told us that, in a typical year, our support means that:

Over 7,600 organisations
can increase their capacity or reach more beneficiaries.

Over 5,500
can be more resilient, and

3,000
can improve the quality of their work.

Annually, we enable almost

6,500
organisations to create new activities or services and

3,000
to change or adapt existing delivery models.

Every year, over

6,000 organisations

reach new beneficiaries, around 5,300 improve their local places and spaces, and 4,300 support more volunteers.

Through the activities delivered using our funding, each grant holder directly supports an average of

455 unique beneficiaries

across the lifetime of their grant.

This means around

5.2 million people*

in a 'typical' year.

Small grants make up over 80% of our awards by volume, **but only a seventh of the total value**, yet our research shows that recipients of these **small grants reach two-thirds (3.1m) of all beneficiaries**.

*5.2m is an overall average for a 'typical' year of responsive funding. Individuals may be counted more than once if they use services or assets delivered by more than one grant holder funded in the period.

Fewer than 1% of our research sample reported beneficiary numbers higher than 10,000, but some atypical awards, like The Big Lunch or our large or targeted funding programmes may have reached significantly higher numbers. We highlight some of these separately, in the relevant chapters of this report.

Impact: The difference we make for grant holders

Staff and volunteers are two of the vital ingredients that enable grant holders to work effectively and make a difference. They undertake outreach and build connections in the community, signpost and link people to support, and deliver trusted services that bring benefits for people and communities.

A quarter of all grant holders **(26%) use National Lottery funding to retain or hire staff.**

This is particularly common among organisations that offer activities requiring specialist knowledge and experience, like employment and enterprise (47%), information and advice services (45%), crisis support (44%), sector support (39%), material and welfare support (39%), and digital activities (39%).

In total, our funding directly pays for around **4,700 full time equivalent** members of staff every year.

Volunteering is commonly regarded as the heartbeat of the voluntary and community sector.

82% of the projects we fund tell us that they use volunteers in their work, with an average of **29 per grant.**

In a typical year, our grants directly fund the recruitment of **80,000 new volunteers**, enabling grant holders to collectively work with around **290,000 volunteers in total.**

Research shows that **small grant holders** – who receive just 14% of the overall value of our funding, but 82% of all grants – are responsible for mobilising **half (over 145,000) of these volunteers** in a typical year.

“Without Involve, I don’t think I would have been able to get the benefits. Filling in the forms were too stressful, and I didn’t know what to put...it was just because he didn’t steal my dignity. In my heart, there is a shame in asking for help... I was overwhelmed by the gentle way I was treated. I expected to be judged and go through the wringer.”

Rose, beneficiary of **Involve North West, the Wirral**. The service helps people with long-term sickness or disabilities.

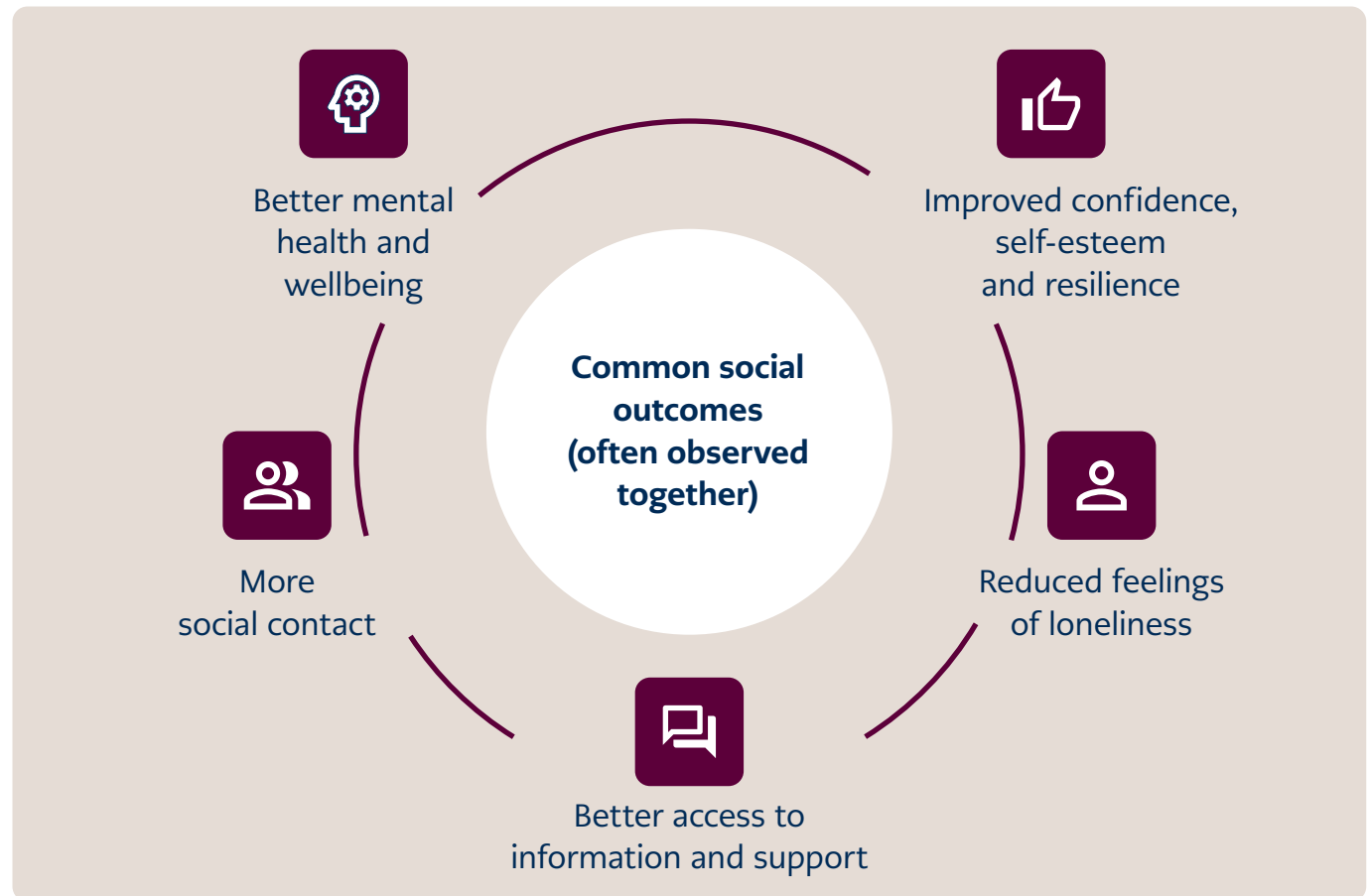
Impact: The difference grant holders make for people and communities

Social benefits

Almost every grant holder (97%) reports a wide variety of positive benefits for people.

The most reported are 'social' outcomes like improvements to **mental health and wellbeing, increased social contact, and improved confidence and self-esteem.**

It is common to observe some of these social outcomes in combination.



Impact: The difference grant holders make for people and communities

Situational benefits

Although a quarter (24%) of all grant holders offer universal support that is not targeted at any specific group of people, those that focus their work are most likely to report 'situational' benefits, like **improved employment, housing or finances** or people **being protected from violence or abuse**.

This kind of situational impact is typically seen in **combination with social benefits**, so these grants may be considered **particularly impactful**.

Each year, **30% of grant holders target their work** to people with a long-term illness or a disability, 10% to communities experiencing racial inequality, 5% to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) people, and 8% to people who are victims and survivors, including of domestic abuse and sexual violence.



When people were protected from harm

- Improved confidence and self esteem



When short term basic needs were met

- Improved mental health and wellbeing



When people's financial situation was improved

- Improved confidence, self-esteem, mental health and wellbeing
- Access to information, improving knowledge



Improving people's housing situation has multiple impacts

- Improved confidence, self-esteem, mental health and wellbeing
- Access to information, improving knowledge
- More social contact and reduced loneliness

Impact: The difference grant holders make for people and communities

Community benefits

Some community benefits are closely associated with individual benefits. This is particularly strong where grant holders say their work **helped services be more connected, gave people chances to mix with others** or **helped keep local amenities open**. We explore the impact of providing more joined up services in more detail in the [Multiple and Complex Needs chapter](#).

Most grant holders (92%) report that their funded activities contribute to **community benefits**. The most frequent of these are:

66% opportunities to mix with others who are different

60% more opportunities to engage in the community

56% more events and activities available locally



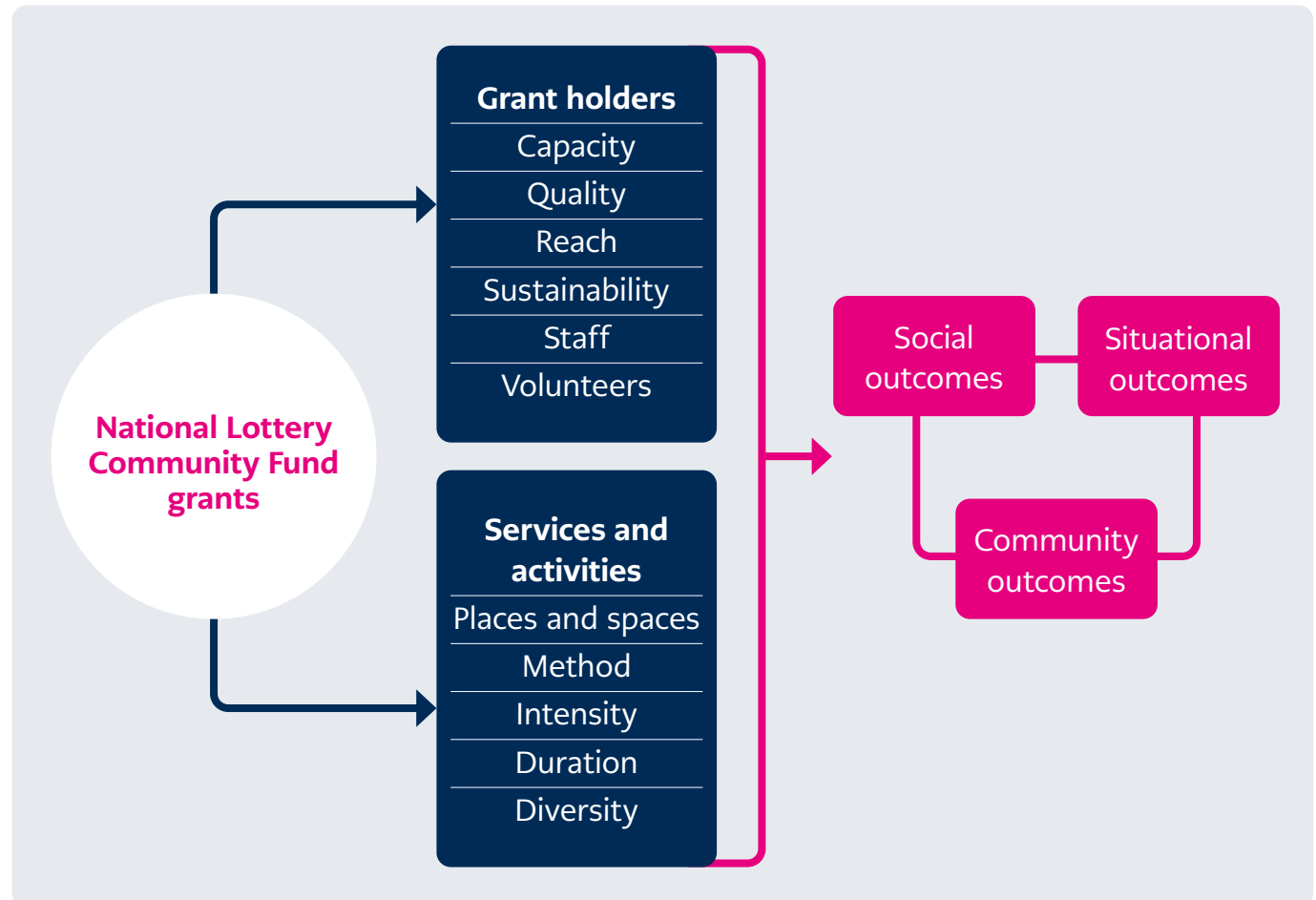
Shantona, England

Impact: The difference grant holders make for people and communities

Having accessible and welcoming places and spaces means that communities can come together to make good things happen.

Having places to go and things to do can bring meaning and purpose to people's lives, helping them feel happier and more connected. The activities that charities and community groups offer allow people to build relationships and connections, helping them understand and support one another. Networks and friendships further reinforce individual wellbeing and resilience.

Rather than claiming cause and effect, we observe that inputs, activities and outcomes are interconnected and often combine to nurture, enable, support, and reinforce each other.



Prosperous and thriving communities



Glasgow Community Food Network, Scotland

Prosperous and thriving communities

For some communities across the UK, the strength of social relationships, levels of physical infrastructure and sense of belonging is in decline.

The think tank **Onward** notes that the places with the strongest social fabric are typically located in the South of England, especially in London's rural commuter belt, and the places with fraying social fabric are typically found in the Eastern coast of England, South Wales, and the M62 corridor from Huddersfield to Grimsby.

Their work reveals a wide variation between local areas, particularly in terms of places to meet (whether community centres, pubs or village halls); levels of community engagement; and connectivity to the wider economy.

Member-led organisation **Locality** has highlighted that more than 4,000 publicly owned buildings and spaces in England are being sold every year.

Pro Bono Economics found that the British public overwhelmingly value the charity sector, with 84% of people believing charities play an important role in society today. A further 60% agree charities and community groups will play an important role in the country's COVID-19 recovery.

However, community spirit is starting to flag with fewer people now volunteering and supporting their neighbours.

Furthermore, current calculations of the value of charities may have significantly underestimated their contribution to UK society. **Pro Bono Economics** have estimated that the sector's true value could be closer to 10% of GDP than the 1% currently reported in official figures.



The Crafty Gardener, England

Our perspective

We support local places and spaces and create welcoming venues that are inclusive and accessible to everyone. Our funding enables grant holders and local people to provide and benefit from a wide range of services, events, and activities.

Our support for person-centred and strengths-based work means people have a voice and are meaningfully involved in the development, design, and delivery of what's available in their area.

This combination helps build and strengthen social capital like neighbourliness, social cohesion, relationships, and a sense of belonging.

Our approach nurtures social bonding capital, which grows when we interact with people who share our personal characteristics and who we can relate to as being similar to us. However, social bridging capital is essential too as it creates networks and relationships across and between diverse people and groups. We support this at a larger scale than any other UK community or statutory funder.

Our funding supports relationship builders and networkers, who link people to groups, volunteers, mentors and activities that bring meaning.

And grant holders enable many thousands of people to get involved in their community or support a cause close to their heart through volunteering and social action.



Digital Buddies, England

Communities: Theory of change

Problem →

Perception aspects of community in decline (e.g. belonging, neighbourliness)

Observed inequalities and deprivation – at individual and spatial/place level

Differing experiences of life satisfaction, happiness and anxiety

Individual wellbeing affected by both objective and subjective factors

Unequal access to/loss of local social and community infrastructure (e.g. community centres)

Perception of decision making that remote communities are not involved in shaping and leading their future

Indications that social fabric (e.g. density of charities and philanthropy) weaker in some places

Input →

£3.4 billion funding in the last five years:

- **£2.7 billion** of this is National Lottery funding

Over 90% of all wards in the UK have received funding in the last five years.

Wide range of funding options:

- Responsive grants
- Thematic programmes
- Third party (distributing money on behalf of others, including government)
- Endowments
- Participatory grantmaking

Collaboration with other funders to improve reach and outcomes.

Broker partnerships, relationships and connections

Approach to listening and understanding the needs, strengths and interests of local communities

Activities →

Places and spaces for activities to take place

Community development and navigators

Wellbeing and resilience activities, support and advice

Relationships and connections built and strengthened

Cross-system partnerships

Local networks and relationships

Opportunities to participate including co-production and lived experience

Volunteering and social action opportunities

Outputs →

Support for social infrastructure:

- Community assets
- The voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector capacity
- Activities and resources

Support for social capital, relations and networks:

- Volunteers
- Community leadership
- Local networks and relationships

Supporting individuals in communities

Resources going directly into communities on projects and activities that matter to them

Local economic stimulus through new businesses, jobs and amenities

Outcomes →

Community level (civic): greater sense of ownership, control and civic engagement

Community level (physical): community assets retained and in sustained use

Community level (social): increased networks of people who make things happen and give back to the community

Community level (social): increased local pride, belonging, promotion of social mixing and cohesion (bridging/bonding)

Individual level: wellbeing, confidence, resilience; increased human and social capital

Public sector: savings from community capacity to meet local needs (e.g. volunteers in and around schools and hospitals)

System level: growth in community business, resilient/growth in charities

Impact

Short to mid-term goals

Evidence and insight on effective solutions

Improved physical, social, health and wellbeing

People confident and involved in local decisions

Long-term goals

Supporting whole-place comprehensive development – social and economic outcomes

Communities are more prosperous, united, with opportunity levelled up

Economic gains in productivity, efficiency and inclusion

What we fund

We have awarded **£650 million** to support the development of community infrastructure.

10,000 community spaces have been built or improved.

We've supported **1,550 village halls and community centres** in England and Wales, an average of four per local authority.

We've helped communities across the UK acquire and maintain nearly **600 local assets**, from pubs to housing developments.

£690 million has supported **volunteering and social action**, including volunteer coordination, recruitment and retention, community organising, mutual aid and peer mentoring.

We estimate that overall, **1.9 million volunteers** from the charities we fund in England and Wales have contributed **£4 billion to the UK** economy over the past three years.

76% of these (1.45 million), directly supported projects that were funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

Over the last five years, around **£1.3 billion** has supported projects involving local **history and heritage, sport and community arts** activities.



Canolfan, Wales

A typical year in funding

In a typical year, **45% of all organisations** say their grant helps them to **improve local places and spaces** or deliver activities linked to **community assets and facilities**. This may include building works and refurbishments, equipment and adaptations for accessibility, or maintaining outdoor spaces.

Almost a quarter (23%) say their work contributes to communities having **better access to key infrastructure** like **parks, community centres, and community transport**; and 5% save amenities like shops, pubs and cafes from closure.

In addition to the **5.2 million unique beneficiaries our funding directly supports**, an average of **1.8 million people benefit from National Lottery funded venues each month**.

Our research tells us that, in a typical year:

Over 900 grant holders say they make local spaces **more accessible to people** with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

More than 1,200 say they **improve virtual or digital spaces**, like websites or online communities.

About 360 projects say they **enable community transport**, helping to connect people to places.



Towell Building Trust,
Northern Ireland

“It was lovely to see her face light up and for her to see everybody... it put her in a really good place. I just knew she was excited and looking forward to it, it was priceless, instead of just sitting in her room day in, day out.”

A resident's family member, Towell House

A typical year in funding

But it's not just having spaces that supports communities to thrive; it's also about **how they are used**. Each year most of our funding supports the costs of delivering services, activities and events so that people have access to things to do as well as places to go.

These activities are hugely diverse, from **community sport and arts with a focus on creating connections and enabling wellbeing** to helping people gain **practical skills and learning** like IT, literacy and numeracy.

Grants also **celebrate our culture, traditions, history and heritage**. And of course, charities provide valuable **support to people in need or facing tough times**, offering information, advice, care, or a listening ear when it's most needed.

Our funding also contributes to generating **social capital, community spirit, pride, and social mixing**.

“We have given over 60 people practical on-site training, how to clear, rewild and maintain the land and habitat as well as drywalling and horticulture lessons. Apart from adding to their CVs, and even just turning up on time each day, there's the impact on mental health and wellbeing... from being able to invest in your community and say ‘we did this’.”

Ryan, volunteer,
Inverclyde Development Trust



The North Ayrshire
Beekeepers' Association, Scotland

16% of grant holders say their work means people **feel more ownership and control over local decisions**.

Our large investments

Over the last 15 years we have made significant investments to enable communities to shape and run community venues, businesses, and infrastructure, in ways that work for them.

We also support large scale initiatives that get young people and adults volunteering in their community.

We have particularly supported people to take ownership and control of community assets in Scotland and Wales.

Place Based Social Action (PBSA) (2017–2024) England



£4.5m with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) for partnerships to deliver a shared plan to address local people's priorities. By May 2021, **almost 700 volunteers had been engaged.**

#iwill (2016 onwards) England



£54m jointly with DCMS and 30 other funders to make social action the norm for young people. By June 2021, **almost 501,000 10 to 20-year-olds** had taken part.

Create Your Space (2016–2024) Wales



£8.8m with the Welsh Government to enable communities to **lead the transformation** of their local natural environment.

Our Bright Future (2016–2021) UK



A £33m partnership, led by The Wildlife Trusts, to help **11 to 24-year-olds gain skills and experience** to deliver changes to their local environment and contribute to a greener economy.

Our large investments

Scottish Land Fund (2000–2020) Scotland



£48.7m on behalf of Scottish Government, delivering in partnership with Highlands & Islands Enterprise, to help communities purchase land and buildings. Between 2012 and 2016, almost **84,000 acres were put into community ownership.**

Community Assets and Growing Community Assets (2006–2020) Scotland



£106.9m in capital and revenue funding to give **communities control and ownership** of local assets.

Community Asset Transfer (2010–2018) Wales



£20m to take control of **community infrastructure** to meet residents' needs.

Rethinking Parks (2014–2015) UK



A joint £1m programme with The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Nesta to **test new business models to pay for public parks.**

Parks for People (2006–2013) UK (we funded projects in England)



£60m to a £254m programme with The National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the regeneration of **135 public parks and cemeteries** of national, regional, or local heritage value across the UK.

Energy Efficient Venues (2010–2012) Northern Ireland



£6.9m for communities to make **efficiency improvements to local venues**, making them more sustainable, welcoming, and affordable to run.

Our large investments

We have also established or funded five large trusts, investing over £434 million.

Building Communities Trust (2016–2026) Wales



£16.5m for the Invest Local programme, helping 13 communities **improve their local areas, by restoring existing community spaces and creating new ones.**

Spirit of 2012 (2012–2026) UK



£40m to secure a **lasting social and community legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.** Projects funded by the trust have enabled **almost 25,000 volunteers and over 2.7 million participants.**

Local Trust (2012–2022) England



£214m for the **Big Local** programme in **150 communities** that had been overlooked for resources in the past, the **largest ever investment outside of government funding in place-based, resident-led change.**

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (2013–2018) Northern Ireland



£15m to run the **Space and Place** programme, a capital grants project to develop under-used and difficult spaces, and create activities to promote and improve health and wellbeing. It created **30 new community spaces and engaged 9,800 people.**

Power to Change (2015–2025) England



£150 million to **support community businesses** in England. By 2020, **over £70m of additional finance** had been leveraged into the sector.

Impact: Improving local assets for the community

We've enabled thousands of people to take ownership and control of the assets in their community. These range from grants to refurbish and improve village halls and community hubs, to large programmes that support the transfer of ownership of land and assets to the community.

Over five years, almost 10,000 grants (£565 million) have paid for **building work and renovations** and £86 million has **increased accessibility**.

Giving local people **ownership and control** brings a range of **social and wellbeing benefits**.

Space and Place Northern Ireland

This programme engaged almost 10,000 people, with **83% reporting improved wellbeing**.

- Nearly 3,000 felt **less vulnerable and isolated**.
- Over 750 people **increased their use of community green spaces**.
- Almost 200 people **led project development and collaboration** with other agencies.
- Thousands of residents reported **improvements to diversity and social cohesion** and more than 1,300 people said their **fear of crime and anti-social behaviour reduced**.

Spirit of 2012

An evaluation of **Spirit of 2012** showed that the share of people who scored highly on life satisfaction **increased from 70% at the start of the involvement to 80% at the end**, while the share of those who have felt anxious **reduced from 50% to 44%**.

Parks for People

More than half of the **Parks for People** investment went to the **20% most deprived areas in the UK**. It **increased volunteering by 91%** and helped parks **increase the annual number of visitors by 3.7 million**.

Impact: Volunteering and social action

Over the last five years, 67% of the volunteer support organisations listed by The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) have received grants from us.

Volunteers are a vital thread running through most of our funding. Three of our largest investments – #iwill Fund, Our Bright Future and Spirit of 2012 – have given 662,000 people an opportunity to make a difference in their community.

Our Bright Future

More than **120,000 young people** have volunteered with **Our Bright Future**. **78% said this had affected the direction of their career** and others used their volunteering to strengthen their university application. **Three-quarters said they would volunteer again.**

Big Local

Each year, more than **1,600 local people** are directly involved in the governance of **Big Local**, building **skills and confidence to spend £1.1 million** in their area. **Up to a third have never been involved in community volunteering before.**



The Crafty Gardener, England

Impact: Volunteering and social action

Our Place

In Scotland, **Our Place** boosted **engagement in local decision-making** and created buzz in communities. People felt more **ambitious about the future** and made their communities **better places to live**.

Place Based Social Action

Over **1,300 volunteers** have **contributed to local improvements** through ten **Place Based Social Action** partnerships. These range from improving local transport, to creating a dementia friendly borough in Colchester.

Growing Community Assets England

Growing Community Assets England increased **volunteering in the community by 63%**.



Connect Community Trust, Scotland

Impact: Celebration, pride and belonging

Inclusive community initiatives that celebrate local strengths can provide a first step or reason for people to connect with their neighbours and foster a sense of belonging.

In a typical year

42% of grant holders

tell us that **people have more local pride and belonging** because of the services or activities we fund them to deliver.

The Big Lunch

Since it launched, The Big Lunch has received around **£22 million of National Lottery funding**. Almost £8 million currently supports this joint initiative with the Eden Project.

The annual UK-wide event has helped **create more than 38 million connections, with 73% of participants saying they feel prouder of where they live** and that they have **a stronger sense of belonging** to their community.

- 92% of lunch organisers said their event **made the community stronger**.
- 80% of people said **their neighbourhood would be friendlier**.
- 77% of participants felt **more confident to get involved** in community activities.

In 2020, 91% of attendees said The Big Lunch was **just what people needed during COVID-19**:

- 84% said it **made them feel less lonely**.
- 86% said it **helped to bring people from different ethnic backgrounds together**.

The Mayor's Community Weekend

Our partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority brings people together and celebrates diversity. Small awards of up to £500 pay for events over a summer weekend, celebrating the best of the region. In 2019, **54% of groups had not received our funding before**, but this money acted as a catalyst, with **96% planning to arrange additional events** and **72% more likely to apply to us for funding** in the future.

Impact: Community connectors and navigators

Link workers, community connectors and navigators play an essential role in signposting and supporting people to use services. Outreach work is a particularly important part of supporting people experiencing the most complex needs, because services are often designed in silos that can be difficult to access.

“My navigator is always checking I’m alright, he knows I hate the mornings and that I like that call to check I’m alright at nine o’clock, well, I don’t always like it but sometimes I’ve needed it, he’ll keep on at me when he knows I need it and will leave me with a bit of space when I need time to think.”

Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead,
Expert by Experience

Fulfilling Lives

Birmingham Changing Futures Together estimate that their Lead Worker Peer Mentor Service **creates benefits equivalent to £3.22 million for clients and the wider public**, compared with a cost of £2.91 million (both in present value as of September 2014).

£1 > £1.11

£1.11 of social value created for every £1 spent.

Ageing Better

For the Time to Shine project in Leeds, link workers are now seen as “equal partners” by other parts of the health and social care system. Joint working, for example through integrated neighbourhood team meetings, has helped build relationships and referrals. This has been important for link workers’ own job satisfaction, meaning that they are working with the system and not against it.

“The most important part of my role is the meeting and greeting, the welcoming people, making them realise that they don’t have anything to fear and that they’re coming into a friendly environment.”

Cheranne, a volunteer with the Valley Steps scheme in Wales

Impact: Economic stimulus and community business

Investing in local assets and services creates opportunities for local people to find work, gain new skills and launch businesses and services that neighbourhoods need to prosper and thrive.



The Bike Project, England

Around 80% of users of the **Growing Community Assets Scotland** programme consider it made a “big difference” to the community. This included **local economic stimulus through creating or safeguarding 337 full-time and 301 part-time jobs, 143 businesses accommodated and 15 new businesses started.**

The **Scottish Land Fund** helped **40% of projects develop fresh income streams, with 31% reporting positive impact on new business.**

Power to Change has supported almost 1,300 community businesses, helping grow the market in England to around 11,300. This includes **tripling the number of community-owned pubs to 95, building 889 community-owned homes** and investing **£40 million in community energy.**

- The programme has helped community businesses raise **£19 million to maintain community ownership of local assets.**
- It also **creates opportunities for local residents**, including those who may otherwise face unemployment, either due to a lack of local opportunities or due to support needs.
- An average of **72% of full-time employees, 84% of regular volunteers and 81% of trustees/directors** in community businesses are from the local area they support.

Young people



Intercultural Youth Scotland

Young people

Before the pandemic, many young people faced challenges relating to their mental health, employment, and access to activities and opportunities. Young people have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, particularly those who were already disadvantaged.

Young people have seen a significant impact on their education, leaving many anxious about their long-term career prospects. The economic consequences of lockdown have also hit young workers hard. Research by the **London School of Economics** found more than one in 10 people aged 16–25 lost their job and just under six in 10 saw their earnings fall.

Helping young people overcome mental health challenges is a key factor in helping them reach their potential and build their resilience. A survey carried out by **YoungMinds** found 83% of young people with a history of mental health needs felt the pandemic had made their mental health worse.



Out of the Blue, Scotland

NHS research suggests one in six may now have a mental health problem, up from one in nine in 2017.

Gaps exist in access and quality of opportunity, exacerbated by the fragility in youth sector provision. Research by the charity **UK Youth** found almost two-thirds of small youth organisations are at risk of closure.

Volunteering and social action opportunities connect young people to solving key social challenges across society, but are not always available or embedded locally.

Our perspective

We focus on helping young people reach their potential, contributing to making the UK one of the best places in the world to grow up.

We help level up opportunity and build life chances, keeping young people safe and supported to live healthy, fulfilling lives, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.

Our funding gives young people places to go and access to enriching experiences in sport, arts, culture and the environment.

Grants also empower young people to use their voice – highlighting the issues that matter to them and shaping the places they live and the services and activities they use.

We put young people at the heart of our decision-making and governance. Our Young People in the Lead (YPiL) groups bring together young adults from projects we've funded; they help shape our work and are valuable ambassadors for their communities and youth organisations.

Note: This report covers our funding for work with young people aged 11–24. Grant holder reported data may also include work with younger age groups and therefore is grouped as 'children and young people'.



Young People in the Lead

We are the leading non-statutory funder of opportunities for young people.

In the last five years, over **two-thirds** of our young people awards were **via small grants of up to £10,000**.

Young people: Theory of change



Where we fund

2016–2021

We fund where it matters, aiming to support those young people most in need. Our funding is focused on areas that are the most deprived and where opportunity and prospects are low.

- In England alone, over the last three years, our funding for young people in all of the Government's levelling up priority areas (1–3) amounts to £535 million; £235 million was invested in the areas deemed most in need of investment through the Levelling Up Fund.
- Using the similar Onward think tank measure of levelling up need (the Social Fabric Index) the 30% of local areas with highest need have received over £492 million (41%) over the last five years.

United Kingdom

£54m

453 grants

Northern Ireland

£65.3m

752 grants

Wales

£31.2m

477 grants

Scotland

£99.5m

1,876 grants

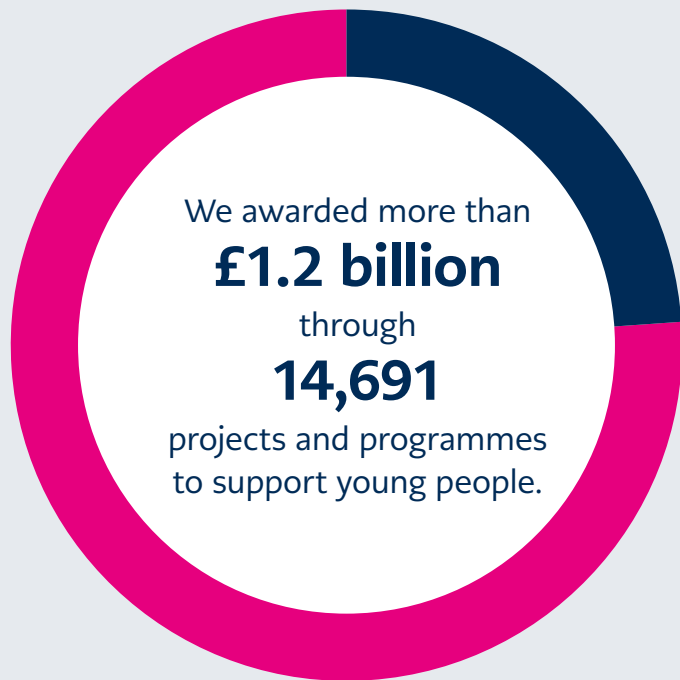
England

£952.7m

11,133 grants

What we fund

From 2016–17 to 2020–21



38%

of grant holders

say they target their
 activities at children and
 young people each year.

Since 2011

a range of dedicated
 funding programmes have
 reached at least

1.4m

young people.

In a typical year,
 over

1,650

of grant holders

tell us that they specifically
 work with young people at
 risk (in care, involved in
 serious violence or not in
 education, employment, or
 training (NEET)).

What we fund

Our funding helps youth workers, mentors and key workers support young people's wellbeing, helping them to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

Grants mean charities and community groups can give young people things to do and places to go, and support them to make connections, find their passion, and develop and grow as they become more independent.

We support projects that encourage young people to be more active in their communities – like taking part in volunteering activities or being a representative for their peers on the issues that matter to them.

Grant holders also help young people develop skills to keep them active at home and in the community, as well as giving them the knowledge and abilities that set them up to succeed in the world of work.

**Be heard and
make a difference**

**4,865 volunteering
projects worth
£672m**

Prevention

**£209m through
796 grants**

supporting young people at the earliest opportunity, before problems intensify, or to prevent them from happening in the first place.

**Physical and mental
health and wellbeing**

**£568m through
4,231 grants**

supporting young people's mental wellbeing and building their resilience.

Life and work skills

**2,499 projects worth
£474m**

helping young people to find a job or set up their own business;

8,047 projects

providing formal education and training, and

3,413 projects

offering life skills.

Who our funding supports

Many projects offer targeted support to help young people stay safe and navigate the move towards adulthood. This can include coping with challenges like drug or alcohol use, developing new skills to manage relationships and behaviour, and dedicated support for those most at risk from harm, for example from gangs or sexual exploitation.

Projects involving young people experiencing disadvantage

£478m

2,842 grants

Projects involving young people with a disability

£126m

2,128 grants

Projects involving young people from a minority ethnic background

£91m

1,798 grants

Young people affected by addiction

£208m

897 grants

Preventing abuse and supporting survivors

£138m

657 grants

Projects involving youth homelessness

£104m

564 grants

Projects involving offending or reoffending

£53m

234 grants

Projects involving LGBT+ young people

£27m

310 grants

A typical year in funding

With almost 40% of grant holders focusing their work on children and young people each year, they are the most commonly targeted group of people across our responsive funding.

These projects lead to many positive changes:

80%

of grant holders that target young people who aren't at risk, with their grant

say their work helped participants improve their confidence, self-esteem, and wellbeing. **Almost two-thirds (65%)** told us that they help young people to build stronger friendships and relationships.

Standard grant holders – who receive awards of more than £10,000 for up to five years – are more likely to work with 'at risk' groups of young people (20%) than small grant holders (13%).

43%

offer young people places to go and things to do

with **almost a third** helping young people have a voice or give something back to their community through **volunteering or social action.**

Almost one in five help young people gain skills for work, and

13%

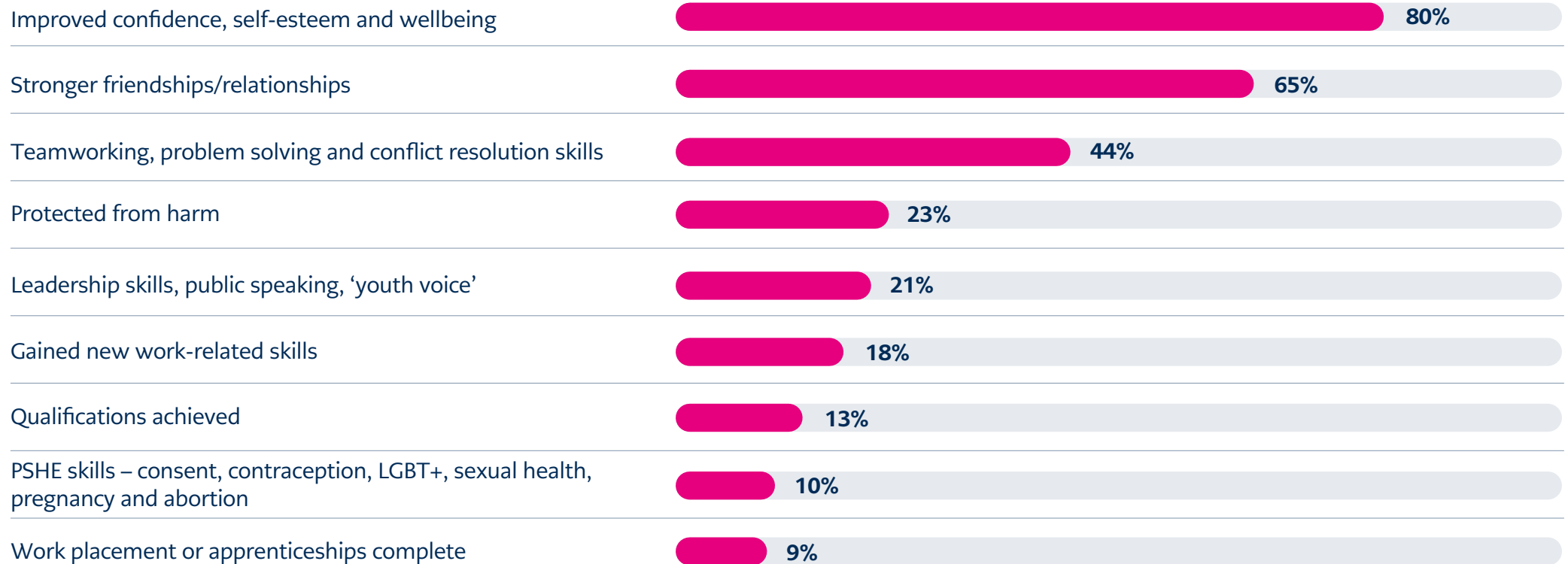
support their beneficiaries to gain new academic or vocational qualifications.



“Many young people who have left care during the pandemic have found themselves living alone, so social isolation is a big issue. Our grant from the Fund will allow us to directly support young people, providing much needed advocacy, coaching and community support networks in their local areas.”

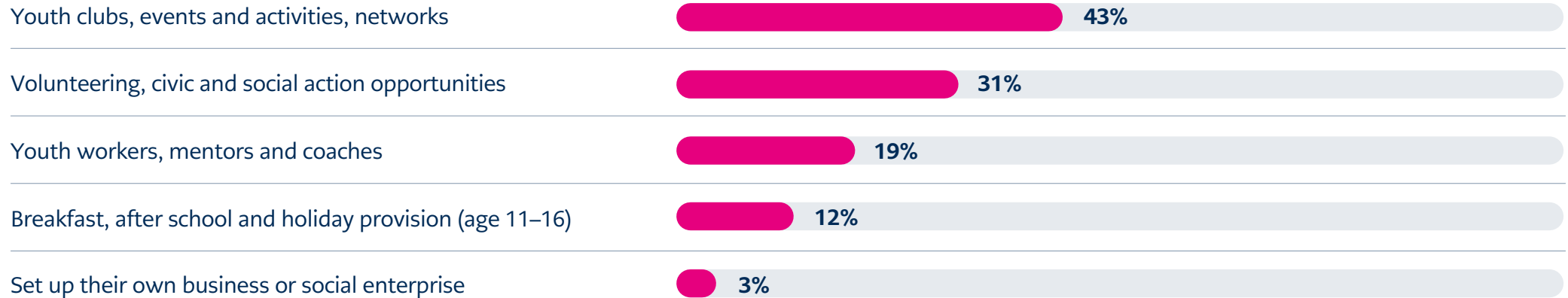
Caoimhe, Area Manager at Voice of Young People in Care, Northern Ireland

The impact of targeted activities and support for young people



Base: Grant holders who targeted young people with support and activities using their grant (1,992)

The community benefits of targeted work with young people



Base: Grant holders who targeted young people with support and activities using their grant (1,992)

Targeted young people's programmes

Since 2011 we have supported at least 1.4 million young people through a range of targeted programmes, with a focus on key areas of development, including employment, social action and protection from harm.

HeadStart (2016–2022) England



By March 2021, almost **202,000** young people had access to universal mental health support; over **37,400** attended additional (targeted) support.

Women and Girls (2016–2021) England



Over **7,600** young women facing violence, abuse and exploitation supported during the first two years.

Our Bright Future (2016–2021) UK



Over 120,000 young people have gained skills and experience and improved their wellbeing through environmental action.

Engage to Change (2016–2022) Wales



Supported approximately **780** young people who have a learning difficulty or disability, and/or autism towards employment.

The Youth Investment Fund (2017–2020) England



Around **90** grants to improve youth provision in six target areas reached **56,800** young people by August 2020.

Talent Match (2013–2018) England



25,885 young people were supported towards work, which has increased to **27,190** through three Talent Match Sustainability projects in Liverpool, the Black Country and Humber.

#iwill Fund (2016–present) England



By March 2021, the Fund had created over **6,200** youth social action opportunities and by June 2021, almost **501,000** young people had taken part.

Targeted young people's programmes

Building Better Opportunities (BBO) (2016–2022) England



Around a quarter of participants (**29,700**) are young people.

Empowering Young People (2015–2021) Northern Ireland



By November 2020, 85 projects had supported **41,000** young people to cope with challenges in their lives.

Realising Ambition (2012–2018) UK



25 services that supported over **163,000** children and young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

Youth in Focus (2011–2018) England



Funded work with young carers, young people leaving care and 15 projects **supported over 2,000 young people leaving custody.**

Bright New Futures (2011–2015) Wales



Supported around **2,100** young parents and **750** disabled young people to build emotional resilience and manage key life transitions.

Life Changes Trust (2013–2023) Scotland



116 projects have supported **12,000** young people with care experience to date.

Young Start (2012–present) Scotland



Over 920 grants helping 8 to 24-year-olds **become more confident and realise their potential.**

Impact: Wellbeing and resilience

Our funding supports young people to reach their potential, boost their wellbeing, confidence and resilience, and overcome mental health challenges.

HeadStart is a

£67.4m
programme

to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

Four of the six HeadStart partnerships are piloting new approaches set out in the Government's 2017 Green Paper on Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health.

- Almost **202,000** young people have had access to support, including safe spaces and resilience-building.
- **37,400** young people have attended at least one additional support session, such as peer mentoring or talking therapies.
- Around **247,000** professionals and volunteers who work with young people have been trained on mental health, resilience and/or trauma-informed practice.
- **430** schools have taken part.

Blackpool HeadStart

Blackpool HeadStart offers walk and talk counselling, where counsellors work with young people while doing an activity of their choice. **78% of young people** reported a **decrease in negative emotions**, with an average decrease of **34%**.

Back on Track

The Back on Track panel trial in Blackpool supported 14 care experienced young people to stay in mainstream school. This saved up to **£8,000 in costs related to permanent exclusion**, and **£15,000 a year** for a place at a pupil referral unit.

HeadStart Newham

HeadStart Newham's school-based group intervention, BounceBack, produced a statistically significant **eight percentage point reduction** in emotional symptoms, compared to a control group.

Those who participated in eight or more sessions achieved a **23 percentage point reduction** in emotional symptoms.

Impact: Skills for work

Over the last five years, 2,499 projects worth £473.8 million have helped young people find work or set up their own business. A major focus of this funding is equipping participants with the skills needed to find post-education employment and help those furthest from the labour market.

Talent Match (2013–2018) was a **five-year** programme

that helped young people facing significant and multiple barriers to finding work.

In 2017 sustainability funding was awarded to Talent Match Liverpool, Black Country, and Humber to continue the model for a further three years.

- Over **27,000** young people (aged 18–24) have been supported to date.
- **Over half of all participants (55%) were classified in the two categories furthest away from the labour market** at the start of their time on the programme. This reduced to 35% after six months or more.
- Almost **12,000** (46%) secured some form of job, including nearly 4,500 (17%) who secured sustained employment or self-employment.
- **81%** of participants that received in-work support held onto their job for at least six months, compared to 75% for those unable or unwilling to receive in-work support.

£1 >
£3.08

At least £3.08 of public value was generated for every £1 spent on programme delivery.

Up to 28%

of young people would not have gained a job without participating in Talent Match.

Impact: Youth sector

The Youth Investment Fund (YiF) is a joint

£40m

programme with DCMS

that aims to expand delivery of open access youth provision in six regions of England.

Grants were awarded to around 90 youth organisations.

To August 2020, almost **57,000 young people attended YiF projects. 80% were based in the five most deprived deciles (IMD) of England, with the majority (51%) in the two most deprived deciles.**

After three months YiF provision had a **statistically significant positive impact** in a range of areas*:

- Young people saying they **felt confident to be the leader of a team** increased from 43% to 66%.
- The ability to **handle conflict** with friends went up from 46% to 61%.
- Those reporting **being happy with their life** rose from 68% to 76%.
- The number of young people scoring highly for psychological distress or risk of depression **fell from 27% to 11%**.

Young people with medium to low social and emotional learning skills at baseline made greater gains.

myPlace

myPlace awarded capital funding for new and improved youth centres in England. In 2013, 53 centres worked with an estimated **15,000 to 26,000 young people** every week, of whom

81%

had not been to another youth club/group or community centre before.

* Self-reported outcomes were measured for 181 participants and were compared to findings from a control group (n=632).

Impact: Volunteering and social action

Our funding has supported thousands of young people into volunteering and social action. Evidence suggests this can help wellbeing and improve confidence and life satisfaction as well as making a difference to the community.

We have funded **4,865 volunteering** projects for young people, worth over **£672 million**.

#iwill Fund

The **#iwill Fund** is an England-wide investment with DCMS, aiming to make social action the norm for young people aged 10–20.

By June 2021, almost

501,000 young people had taken action.

- Volunteering is the most common activity (48%), followed by tutoring, coaching or mentoring (22%), helping to improve the local area (15%), and campaigning (8%).
- #iwill has supported more opportunities in the most deprived tenth of postcodes than in any other decile (21%).
- **An estimated £1.2 million in match funding has been sourced** by #iwill projects, c. £750,000 in cash and c. £500,000 in-kind.

Team London (funded by #iwill)

- **71% of participants** in the Team London Young Ambassadors school volunteering programme showed improvements in their wellbeing.
- 26% said their **levels of trust had increased**, and 52% reported **improvements in their thoughts and feelings**.

EmpowHER (funded by #iwill)

Young women and girls who took part in EmpowHER reported **statistically significant improvements** in happiness, feeling worthwhile and life satisfaction. They also recognised their ability to make a positive difference where they live, and to be leaders of change.

Our Bright Future

By March 2021, young participants had transformed **3,000 unloved community spaces** and **created 306 new ones**.

Employment and employability



Northern Soul Kitchen, England

Employment and employability

Before COVID-19, the UK saw record levels of employment, but the labour market and economy also faced known challenges.

These included skills gaps, inequalities and systemic issues for groups like younger and older (over 50) workers, people from minority ethnic groups, lone parents, and those with health needs or caring responsibilities. Some left behind areas faced a concentration of challenges.

Many of the same people and places experienced the largest employment shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Resolution Foundation found that 18–24-year olds, the lowest paid, those in insecure jobs, and those working in leisure and hospitality were most likely to lose their jobs, be furloughed or lose hours and pay.

In May 2021 the **Office for National Statistics** reported that the headline number of job vacancies remained below pre-pandemic levels, however by September 2021 they had recovered to pre-COVID levels and exceeded 1 million, for the first time since records began.

There are high public costs associated with being out of work. **Public Health England** and **UCL Institute of Health Equity** found that a young person who spends time not in education, employment or training (NEET) when aged 16–18 will cost on average **£56,000** over the course of their life in public finance costs (welfare, lost tax revenue) or **£104,000** in opportunity costs (lost income to the economy and individual).

The Learning and Work Institute and **The Prince's Trust** forecast that by 2022 the economic cost of youth unemployment in terms of lost national output will be **£6.9 billion**; the cost to the Treasury from lower tax revenues and higher benefits spend will be an extra **£2.9 billion**, and over the next seven years young people themselves will miss out on **£14.4 billion** through lost earnings and lower employment prospects.

Our perspective

We see employment as a hallmark of individual and family wellbeing and resilience.

For communities across the UK to thrive and prosper they need access to good jobs and opportunities.

People need the skills and chances that enhance their earning power and offer a means to get on and flourish.

Getting people into, or closer to, work can reduce public spending, improve health, social welfare and wellbeing outcomes, and deliver whole-place benefits.

We aim to spread growth and level up opportunity across the UK, breaking paths of household poverty and contributing to long-term national prosperity.

Our grant holders ensure that people are better equipped to find and keep a job, with new vocational and life skills to help them to succeed. The positive effect on people's confidence and wellbeing helps them make the most of training, volunteering, and employment opportunities, as well as increasing life satisfaction.

Grant holders also work directly with employers, helping them to see the untapped potential in people who may not have worked before. This helps create and sustain employment and diversify local economies.



Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Company

Employment: Theory of change



Where we fund

2016–2021

£420 million (40%) of our employability funding in England and Wales has been concentrated in the two most deprived deciles (IMD). £291 million (28%) went to the most deprived decile, more than double that to the second most deprived (£130 million, 12%).

United Kingdom

£31.2m

48 grants

Northern Ireland

£47.8m

226 grants

Wales

£25.6m

148 grants

Scotland

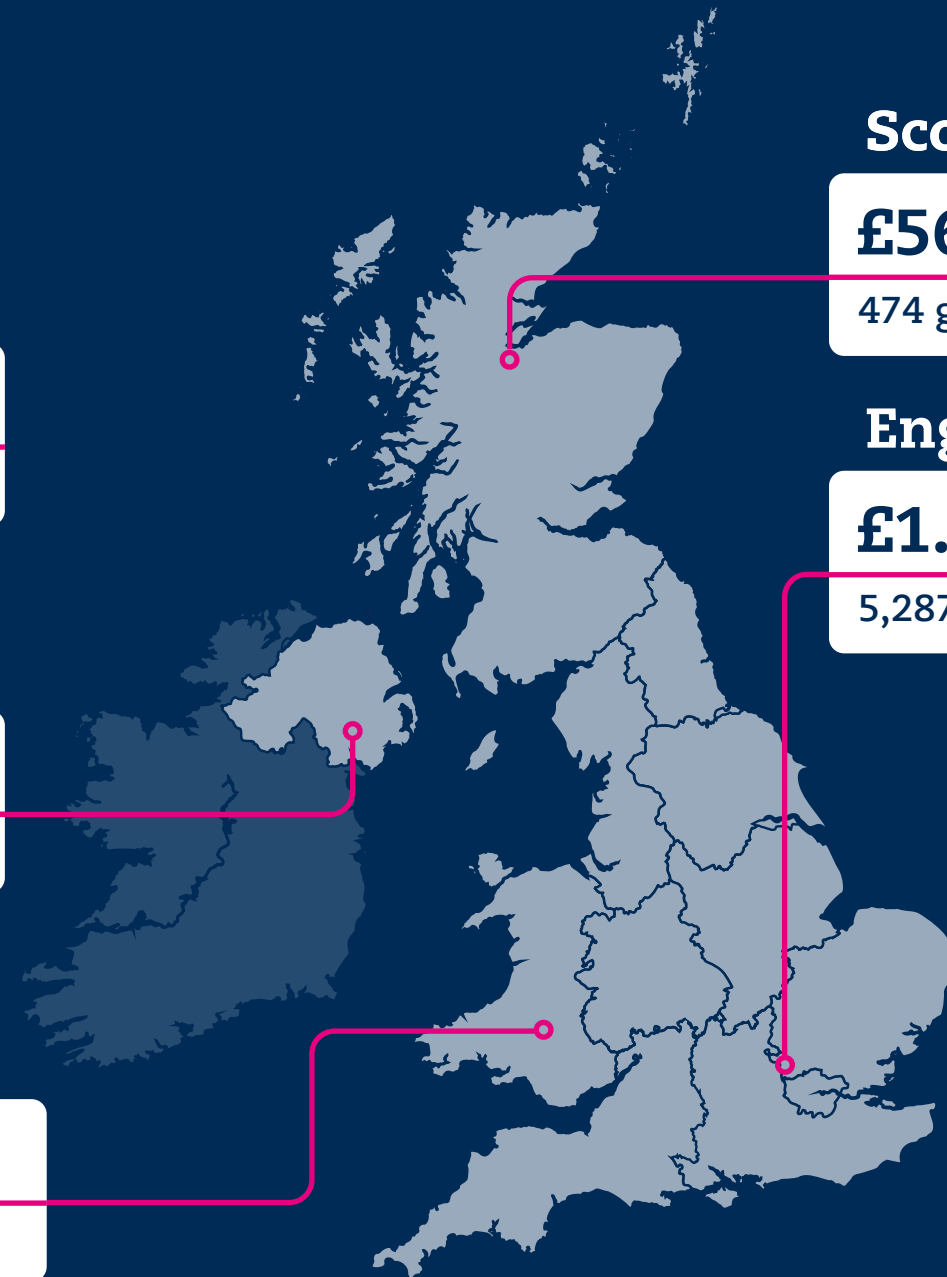
£56.8m

474 grants

England

£1.1bn

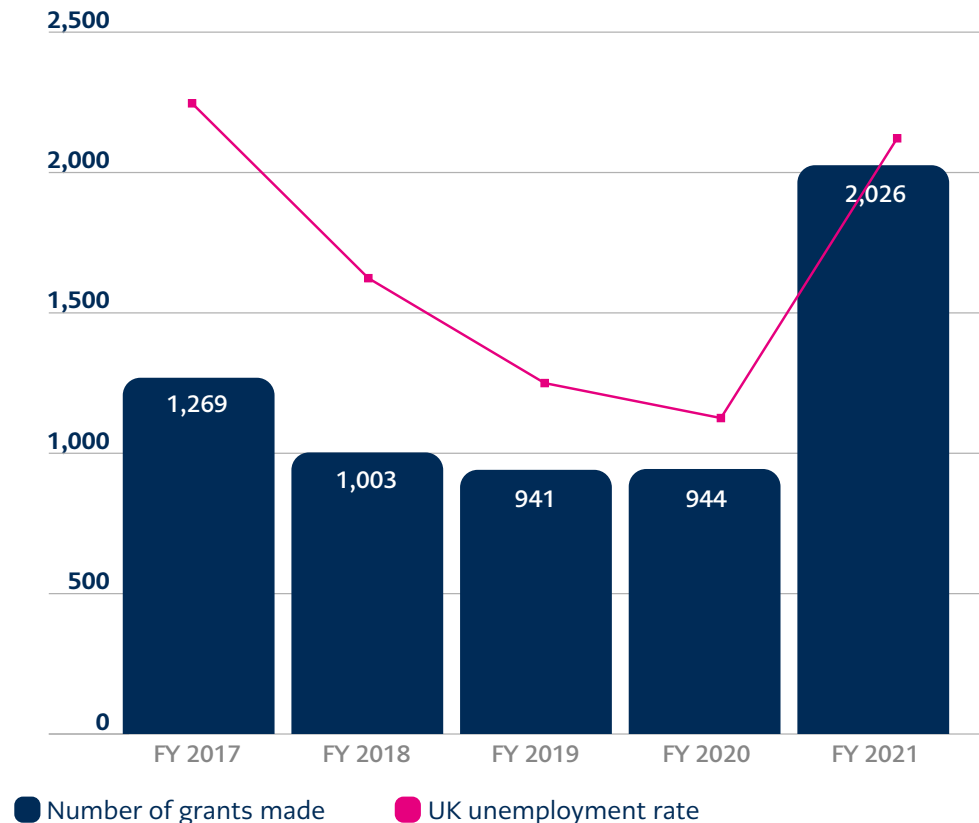
5,287 grants



Where we fund

Across the UK, grants relating to employment skills broadly match the trend of unemployment rates, according to Office for National Statistics (ONS) data.

Awards vs unemployment rate



“The Southwick Employability Project is based in one of the most deprived wards nationally for youth unemployment. It supports people from the local area to find work, offering classes, one-to-one support, CV-writing and interview skills.

Our grant funded two support workers and during the following year, 44 people attended classes face-to-face or remotely. 58 hours of classroom training and 26 hours of personal support were provided.

25 people found employment as a result, some in the local area, while others moved to other cities and countries to take up new employment.”

Southwick Employability Project, England,
awarded £9,900 in December 2018

“The interview preparation session was second to none, it took the nerves straight out of me before I went in.”

Adam, Southwick Employability Project

What we fund

From 2016–17 to 2020–21



A quarter of this (27%) was delivered on behalf of other organisations, including Government.

Since 2009

we've funded eight large employability programmes, worth

£755m

These have brought **181,000** people furthest from the labour force closer to employment.

Each year

18%

of all grant holders

say they help people improve their employment situation, even if they aren't specifically delivering work-related activities or services.

Building Better Opportunities (BBO)

is our largest investment, improving the employment chances of over

127,000

people since 2016

13%

of projects offer targeted activities to help people

closer to work. These can include vocational and life skills as well as practical help to write a CV or prepare for a job interview.

Who our funding supports

Much of our funding supports work involving specific groups of people who may face challenges to finding work – like lone parents, carers or people aged over 50.

Across all funding, the largest cohorts* have been:

Young people

£358m

1,940 grants

Disabled people

£238m

1,041 grants

Carers

£115m

438 grants

Over-50s

£45m

114 grants

Lone parents

£24m

103 grants

*Projects involving multiple cohorts may be counted in more than one category.

We offer funding for a range of needs

Many of the projects we fund make a distinct contribution through their personalised and tailored approach. By starting with what matters most to the people they work with, grant holders aim to have a sustainable and long-lasting impact, that values the distance people travel as well as the number of people who get a job.

This can mean providing support to find secure housing, access benefits or find affordable childcare, alongside conventional work-related help, like CV-writing skills or support to buy clothing or pay travel costs for a job interview.

Our grants do this by enabling charities to offer support through different routes:

Information and advice

**£467m through
1,701 projects**

offering information, advice or awareness raising activities.

Health and wellbeing

**£940m through
4,570 grants**

Support to find work

**£432m through
2,634 grants**

offering specific support to find work like CV writing, interview skills or work experience.

Literacy skills

**£344m through
3,107 projects**

offering language and literacy skills, including English as a second language.

A typical year in funding

In a typical year, 18% of all grant holders tell us their work helps improve the employment situation of their beneficiaries, even if they aren't specialist providers of employment support.

A significant proportion (13%) say they offer services or activities with an explicit focus on employment and enterprise.

16% of all funded projects tell us that they specifically target their work at people who are unemployed.

54%

of organisations that offer employment support achieve positive benefits for their beneficiaries by offering support for six months or more, rather than one-off or short-term interventions. **30% work with people for a year or more.**

Our flexible and responsive approach to funding helps charities achieve positive results for their beneficiaries. Of those that improve people's employment situation, 64% said participants began looking for a job and 59% said they helped people improve their job-hunting skills.

42%

said they help the people they work with to find, and keep, a job for more than six months.

Almost one in five support budding entrepreneurs in the community to set up their own business or social enterprise, putting money back into the local economy.

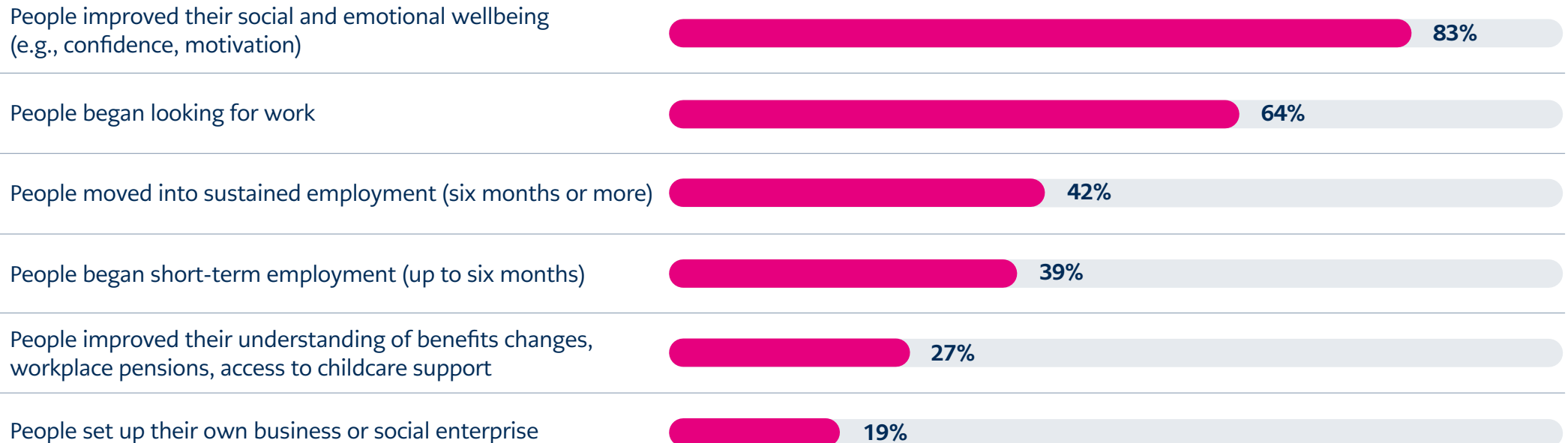
Improving people's employment situation is strongly associated with other positive outcomes too – like increased confidence, self-esteem and resilience, and better mental health and wellbeing.



Creating Enterprise, Wales

The impact of improving people's employment situation

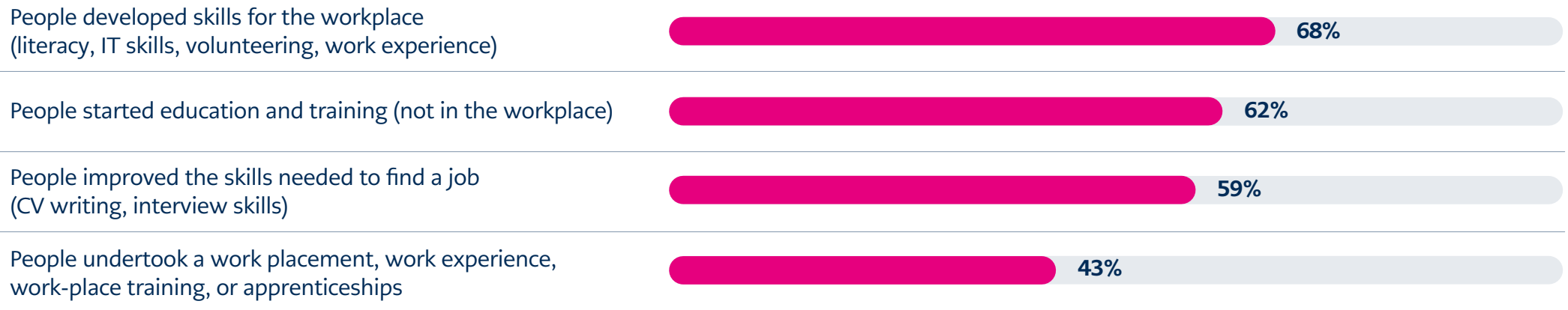
Impact on individuals



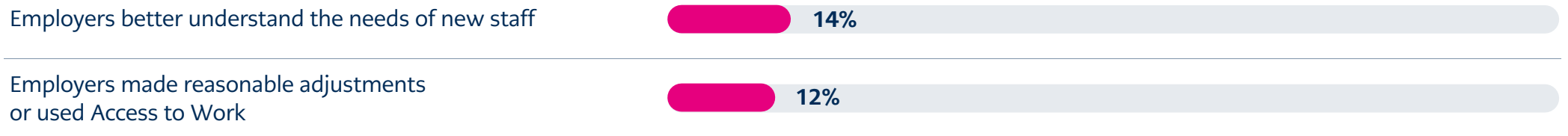
Base: Grant holders who said that funding improved peoples' employment situation (905)

Impact for those with improved employment situations

Impact on skills



Impact on employers



Base: Grant holders who said that funding improved peoples' employment situation (905)

Targeted employment programmes

We've funded eight large programmes with a focus on people facing barriers to work. These programmes have helped thousands of people to get a foot on the job ladder, and have supported many others to resolve urgent issues that are barriers to work, like poor mental health or homelessness.

Building Better Opportunities (BBO) (2016–2022) England



Our largest strategic investment, improving the employment chances of over

127,000 people

in England since 2016.

49% of participants have a disability.

23% are people from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

Talent Match (2013–2018, plus sustainability funding to 2023 for three areas) England



Supporting over

27,000 young people

Participants tended to be more disadvantaged and further from the labour market than the wider population for people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in England.

Commissioning Better Outcomes (CBO) and Life Chances Fund (LCF) (2013–2023) and (2016–2024) England



Brings together Government and National Lottery funding to facilitate social investment in England.


Over

4,700 people

with learning disabilities, mental health problems, or who are substance users have taken part in programmes to support their employment outcomes.

Employability programmes

Getting Ahead and Engage to Change (2010–2015) and (2016–2021) Wales



Supported

1,700 young people

aged 16–25.

Participants were not in employment, education or training (NEET), in care or known to youth offending services, or had a learning difficulty or disability, and/or autism.

Life Skills (2010–2015) Wales



Supported almost

5,300 people

They were primarily aimed at care leavers, carers, economically inactive families, and people aged over 50.

Making it Work (2013–2017) Scotland




Supported more than

3,100 lone parents

in five local authority areas.

Most were unemployed or economically inactive, and living in rented accommodation.

25% had an illness or disability that affected their ability to work.



Our Bright Future (2016–2021) UK



Supported

over 120,000 young people

across the UK to lead future environmental change.

Impact: Qualifications, skills for work and work experience

Many projects help people gain new qualifications, both vocational and academic, or offer a chance to build soft skills like reliability, openness, motivation and resilience through work placements and training. These opportunities help people overcome the experience hurdle – the challenge of not being able to find a job without having work experience, and not being able to gain experience without having a job.

Building Better Opportunities

Almost

9,800

participants took up education or training opportunities.

Life Skills

42%

gained new qualifications.

6%

went on to study or train.

Our Bright Future

More than

750

young people participated in internships, work experience, work placements or apprenticeships.

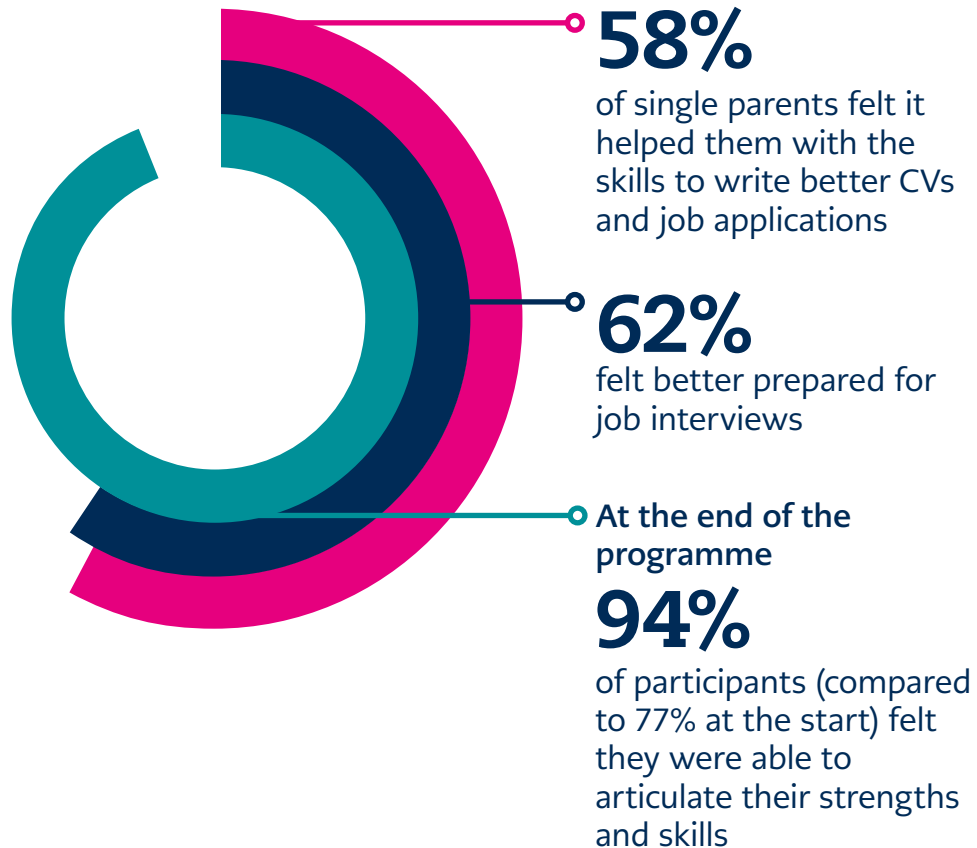
Almost

4,000

achieved environmental awards including National Vocational Qualifications, John Muir, Duke of Edinburgh and academic qualifications.

Impact: Qualifications, skills for work and work experience

Making it Work



Getting Ahead/Engage to Change

46%

achieved an Agored Cymru (OCN) Accredited Award, or Essential Skills Wales qualification.

“I am more confident in starting a new placement. My confidence wasn’t good when I first started, but now I am a new man.”

Engage to Change participant

Impact: Supporting people into work

The route from unemployment to a job can be complicated. While some people may just need some encouragement, others will benefit from a dedicated, trusted person, who will be with them throughout their journey. This is what charities and community groups do so well, achieving positive results for people who have faced barriers to finding or sustaining work.

Building Better Opportunities (BBO)

More than

26,000

positive employment results recorded of which

35%

were people moving into employment

11%

were looking for work

14%

of all participants were in employment or self-employment on exiting the programme.

Life Skills



of participants moved into employment (more than doubling the original goal). They were particularly successful with people aged over 50.

Getting Ahead

16%

of young people who were looked after or known to the youth offending service completed a 26-week paid work placement, and of these

55%

progressed into work with their placement host or a new employer.

Making It Work

935

lone parents supported into work, of which

83%

full-time (>16 hours)

17%

part-time (<16 hours)

Impact: Entrepreneurship and community businesses

Our funding doesn't just support people into jobs; we also help nurture entrepreneurs, start-ups and community businesses that put jobs, amenities and money back into the community, including through 60,000 funded Community Interest Companies (CICs) and Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs).

Our Bright Future

400

young people supported by Our Bright Future
started 214 projects
 – 50 businesses and
 164 social enterprises

Student Eats

50+

universities and colleges involved.

67

social enterprises.

53

went on to trade.

£145,000

worth of sustainable food sold.

58

food growing sites created or improved.

Spaces 4 Change

Spaces 4 Change (SFC) awarded £300,000 to 85 young social entrepreneurs (16–24) to turn unloved and abandoned local spaces into useful facilities for the community.



50% of these awards went to young entrepreneurs from BAME backgrounds.



39% to the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

Power to Change

In 2015 we endowed Power to Change with

£150m

to support the growth of community business in England. This has supported around

1,300

businesses, facilitated the investment of

£40m

in community energy, and tripled the number of community owned pubs to

95

Impact: Wellbeing and resilience

Several of our employment programmes have achieved positive impact on people's wellbeing. Others have helped people improve their financial or housing situation. Consequently, these outcomes mean people are better placed to succeed and become more active members of the community – for some, a more important outcome than finding work.

Talent Match

Talent Match participants started out with generally worse wellbeing than the general population. The programme helped young people **more than double their wellbeing scores**, from 9% to 24%.

Making it Work

51% of lone parents who participated in **Making it Work** improved their **household income** after six months (41% after 12 months).

Tackling Multiple Disadvantage

Tackling Multiple Disadvantage worked with homeless people in London and found that having secure housing helps sustain employment. **48% of people** were in the same job after six months, but this rose to **68% of people that had also secured housing**.

Building Better Opportunities

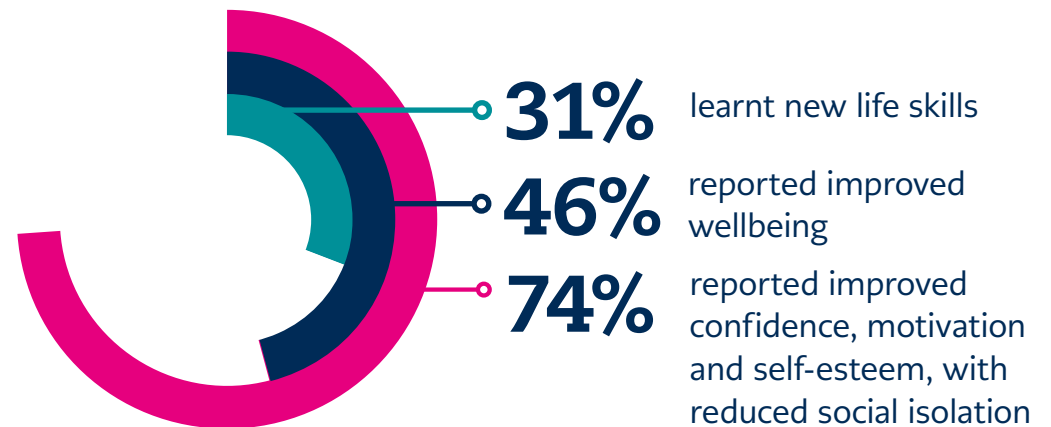
3% improved their housing situation.

12% became more involved in their community.

21% improved their financial situation

by finding work, through hands-on support to access benefits, manage debt or improve their money management skills.

BBO wellbeing outcomes



Impact: Economic and social value

Our largest employment programmes have achieved outcomes that compare well against initiatives with similar target groups.

- **The employment rate achieved by Making it Work (30%)** was comparable to that of similar employment initiatives in Scotland (15–40%).
- Talent Match research suggests that **58% of respondents had entered employment in the previous 12-month period**, compared to 42% of matched Labour Force Survey respondents.

They've also delivered high return on investment.

- Building Better Opportunities project, Make Trax, found the value to the Government and wider economy was **£2.43 for every £1 invested**. This rose to **£6.43 in social value** for every £1 invested in another BBO project, Include-IT.
- In Scotland, the economic value of the employment outcomes for participants in the Making it Work programme was calculated at **£11.5 million**, with wellbeing outcomes providing an additional **£3 million in social value**.



Head Injury Support Group, Northern Ireland

Multiple and complex needs



Fulfilling Lives conference, England

Multiple and complex needs

Multiple and complex needs have been defined as a combination of mental ill health, homelessness, drug and alcohol issues, or a history of offending. Men and women may experience these disadvantages differently, with men more likely to live with three or more needs concurrently, and women more likely to experience disadvantage throughout their lives.

In England, it's estimated that about 336,000 adults have current experience of three or four of these needs, roughly equally split between women and men.

However, mental ill health and experience of violence and abuse are more central to women's experiences. Over half of adult women have experience of at least one of homelessness, substance use, poor mental health or violence and abuse in adulthood, compared to a minority of men.

In Scotland, estimates suggest 21,000 people experience homelessness, substance dependency and offending, with 876,000 experiencing at least one at some point in their adult life.

People with complex needs often experienced a range of issues in childhood – ranging from trauma, abuse and neglect, to poverty, family breakdown and disrupted education.

Having multiple needs increases the risk of someone falling between services, having their treatment disrupted or being excluded from treatment because of their behaviour.

The exact costs to society and individuals are hard to calculate because needs and use of services varies widely. Average UK public expenditure per adult is £4,600, with estimated costs of £16,000 a year for a rough sleeper, and £21,180 a year for an average client with three forms of disadvantage.

Overall, it is estimated that the cumulative annual cost of providing services to people with multiple and complex needs, in England alone, is between £1.1 and £2.1 billion.

Our perspective

We believe that everyone across the UK should enjoy a good quality of life and be able to fulfil their potential, but we recognise that many may fall through the cracks at times of crisis or when services aren't joined up.

We know it is possible to engage with and support those with the most complex and long-term needs. Through programmes like Fulfilling Lives, we are committed to long-term investment and creating lasting social change.

Evidence from this flagship programme shows those with the most complex needs make the most progress when they receive person-centred support that is tailored to their individual circumstances.

This type of support appears to be effective in addressing immediate challenges and helping to reduce risky behaviours. Specialist help with substance use and talking therapies is also linked to early improvements in wellbeing.



Fulfilling Lives conference, England

Multiple and complex needs: Theory of change



What we fund

From 2016–17 to 2020–21



Of these, 555 (£123 million) supported participants with at least three needs.

Mental health issues

£1.2bn

14,915 grants

Homeless people

£271m

2,054 grants

Drugs, alcohol and other substances

£383m

2,153 grants

Offenders, re-offenders and ex-offenders

£100m

608 grants

A typical year in funding

In a typical year many grant holders work with people who have experienced some of life's most complex and difficult challenges.

8%

of projects we fund

say they specifically target their activities and support to **victims and survivors, including of domestic abuse and rape.**

5%

tell us they work directly with homeless people or support people involved with the **criminal justice system**, as prisoners, offenders or ex-offenders.

Our grants over £10,000 enable organisations to undertake work with more acute or complex social issues over multiple years. These grant holders are three times more likely than those who receive small grants (under £10,000) to tell us they target their support to homeless people and around twice as likely to say they target victims and survivors of violence and abuse, or unemployed people.

Across all funding in a typical year,

16%

of projects

say they target their support to people experiencing multiple and complex needs, with standard grant holders around twice as likely to say they do so as small grant holders.

Organisations working with people facing multiple disadvantages help make a real difference to people's lives.

91%

report improvements in participants' mental health and

68%

say they help improve beneficiaries' physical health and wellbeing.

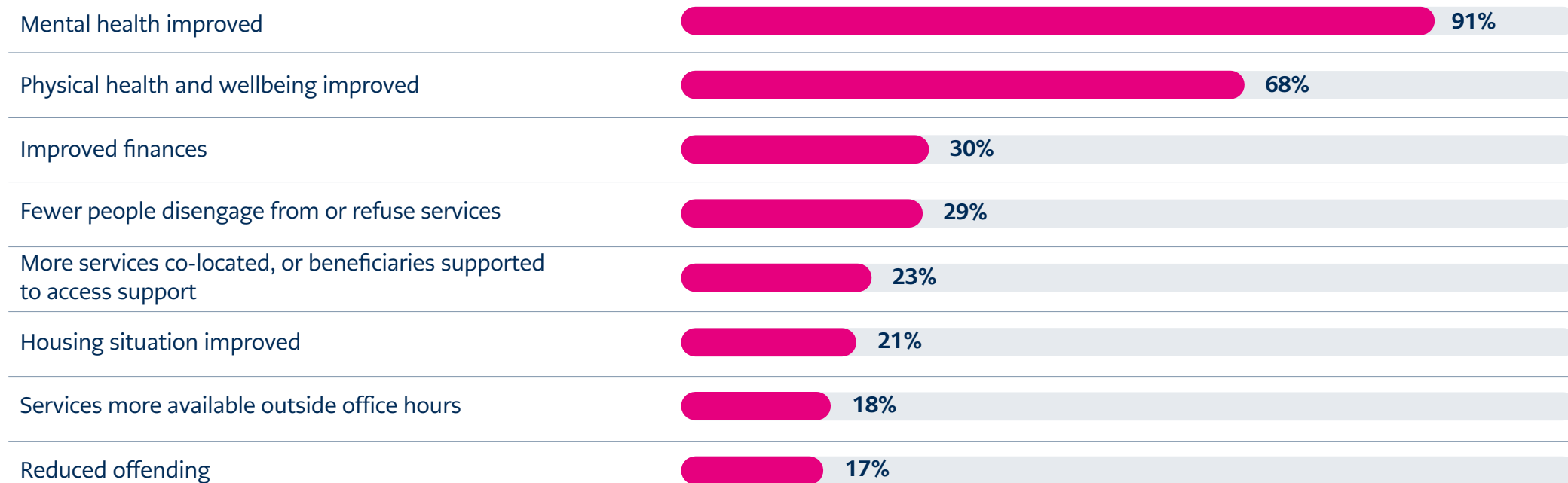
30%

say that their support helps people improve their finances and

17%

report reduced rates of offending through their work.

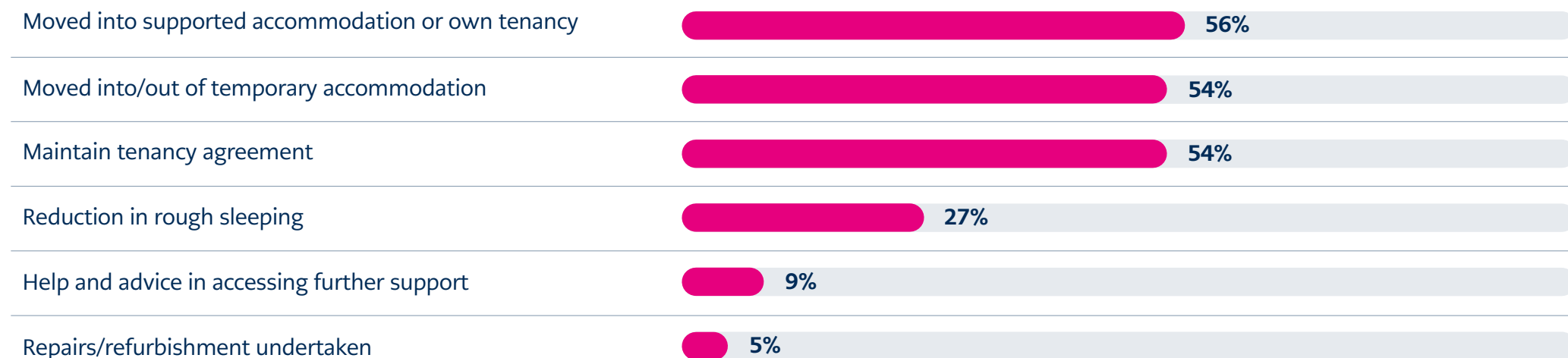
The impact of targeted support for people with complex needs



Base: Grant holders who targeted those with complex needs with support and activities using the grant (824)

The impact of improving people's housing situation

Insecure housing is damaging to people's mental health and moving into stable, secure housing is a top priority for many. 8% of all projects tell us that they help beneficiaries improve their housing situation; this increases to 21% of grantees that specifically support people with multiple and complex needs.



Base: Grant holders who said that funding improved housing situation (402)

Our large investments in supporting complex needs

Fulfilling Lives (2014–2022) England



This programme is a **£112 million investment over eight years** supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage. To March 2021, almost **4,100 people** have engaged with the programme.

90% were substance users

87% had mental health problems

77% had a history of offending

66% were homeless

46% had four needs

41% had three needs

Improving Futures (2011–2017) UK



This programme was an initial **£26 million investment** – that later increased to £31 million. It aimed to improve life chances for children (particularly those aged 5–10 years) in families with multiple and complex needs.

Nearly

9,300 families

were supported for an average of seven months.

Tackling Multiple Disadvantage (part of Building Better Opportunities) (2012–2022) England



This £1.3 million project was delivered by a partnership of homelessness and mental health organisations and aimed to support people experiencing homelessness with multiple and complex needs into training or employment.

100% All participants (448) had current or recent experience of homelessness.

32% Just under a third were rough sleeping.

Our large investments in supporting complex needs

Reaching Out: Supporting Families (2014–2019) Northern Ireland



This **£25 million programme** supported families that were facing challenges like separation and absence, poverty, substance abuse, disability, social isolation, homelessness and physical and/or emotional abuse.

The Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) (2016–2021) England



This **£44.7 million investment** supports projects that work to empower women and girls who are in need or at risk of issues including domestic abuse, sexual violence, exploitation or trafficking.

Changing Futures (2021–2024) England



This year we have invested almost **£18 million** into the UK Government's **Changing Futures programme** which will help more adults facing multiple issues including homelessness, substance use and domestic abuse.

The funding builds on the evaluation of the Fulfilling Lives programme and marks a major new way of working – one that could significantly alter the landscape of services designed for (and the lives of) many adults across England.

Impact: Accessible and joined up services

Many funded projects that target people with multiple and complex needs use their grant to make their services more accessible. One in five (18%) offer services outside conventional office hours, and almost a quarter (23%) say they increase and improve access by being better joined up or co-located with other services.

Almost a third of grant holders targeting people with multiple and complex needs report fewer people disengage from or refuse their services (29%), and though we can't directly link this to how their services are delivered, across our wider funding we see clear associations with improved outcomes.

Community benefits

Organisations that report helping local services be more connected and easier to access, are more likely than average to also report helping people have more access to information and support (75%) and be better supported to access the health and social care services they need (52%).

Situational benefits

They are also more likely to report improvements in situational benefits like meeting people's basic needs (35%) and improving their financial (30%), employment (29%) or housing situation (17%).

Social benefits

These situational benefits, in turn, are heavily associated with social benefits. For example, where a grant has contributed towards improving people's housing situation, grant holders also say that:


- People's mental health and wellbeing improved (93%).
- People had access to information and support to improve their knowledge and skills about their situation (92%).
- People's confidence, self-esteem, and resilience improved (92%).
- People had more social contact (85%), and
- People felt less lonely (85%).




Impact: Better individual outcomes

Long-term and personalised services that make it easier for people to access the support they need seem better equipped to engage those with the most complex needs and support them to achieve positive outcomes.

After a year with **Fulfilling Lives**:

 People improved their self-reliance and independence and were engaging better with services.

 The number of people who were homeless and rough sleeping reduced and people were less likely to use crisis services and to be involved in the criminal justice system.

-8%

The proportion of people who were arrested at least once **dropped from 28% to 20%**.

-3%

In the first three months, 27% of people attended A&E at least once. After a year, this **decreased to 24%**.

By March 2021, of 3,034 closed cases:

41%

had left Fulfilling Lives for positive reasons:

27%

no longer needed support, and

14%

moved to another service outside of the programme.

Roughly a third of people (**27%**) did disengage – but this represents a lower drop-out rate than for some other projects working with people with less complex needs.

Impact: Social and public value

Financial benefits come through reduced use of public services and the associated costs to society. While project costs may be higher than conventional services, outcomes can be substantially better.

Fulfilling Lives

On joining **Fulfilling Lives**, participants are using, on average, over £28,000 in public services per person, per year; almost £115 million in total.

Staying with the programme for at least a year reduces this by over £750 per person, per year.

Two years with the programme leads to a much higher net reduction of almost 10% – at least £2,680 per beneficiary per year.

Overall, there is a **£3 million net reduction in public service spend** each year. This is largely as a result of reductions in evictions, the use of temporary accommodation, hospital care and interactions with the criminal justice system.

Tackling Multiple Disadvantage

Tackling Multiple Disadvantage achieved a 27% employment outcome rate for homeless people with complex needs.

This is **substantially higher** than other comparable European Social Fund (ESF) funded projects between 2007 and 2014 (average 17%) or the Department for Work and Pensions' Work Programme rate of 4% for homeless people.

At £3,007 per participant and £10,953 per job outcome, it was more expensive than targeted ESF programmes in London (£1,708 per participant, £9,892 per job outcome); however **it achieved a 10% higher employment outcome rate for this vulnerable group of people.**

Improving Futures

A cost benefit analysis of **Improving Futures** suggested a benefit of 53p in every £1 spent.



Involve North West, England

Impact: Children and families

Tailored support can help reach families most in need, and brings a range of positive benefits which can be sustained over time.

Improving Futures

This programme achieved the following outcomes for families:

39% reduction in problems with discipline and boundary setting.

40% reduction in persistent disruptive behaviour.

33% reduction in domestic abuse.

Two years after support began, **nine out of 10 family outcomes** had been sustained or improved.

Reaching Out: Supporting Families

This enabled 22 projects across Northern Ireland to support families that were marginalised or in crisis, and 25 to support their mental and physical wellbeing and economic and/or educational empowerment.

Family First supported mums who've experienced domestic abuse. As a result of support **38 children were removed from the Child Protection Register, and 28 were prevented from going onto the register at all.**

Here & Now Family Service supported parents with learning difficulties or autism. 30% had a child registered on the Child Protection Register, but through their support **10 children were de-registered.**

Right 4 U supported 69 children and young people with autism.

Northside Family Support Programme supported 50 families.

Routes to Resilience engaged over 200 families including migrants, those involved in the justice system, and those at risk.

Fathering Families helped over 250 dads tackle life events and traumas.

Impact: A fulfilled life

A fulfilled life is about addressing basic needs like food, clothes and shelter while also ensuring that people can build positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, plus opportunities to develop their skills and fully participate in their community.

Fulfilling Lives

Support increased beneficiaries' participation in positive social, cultural and wellbeing activities, including giving something back through volunteering.

Participation in sports and fitness activities **increases from just 4% of beneficiaries during the first three months on the programme to 16% two years later.**

Taking part in arts and cultural activities **increases from 7% to 20%** over the same time period.

There has also been an encouraging increase in the number of people on the Fulfilling Lives programme who volunteer. **This increases after a year from 2% to 9%.**

There has also been success in addressing literacy problems of beneficiaries. 31% report problems with literacy at the start of the programme; **this drops to 26% after a year.**

Improving Futures

This project helped participants increase their participation in sport and leisure activities **(68% increase)**; stay in regular and active contact with friends/ community members **(58% increase)**; and increase and actively maintain their family **(53% increase).**

Net zero



Datblygi Egni Gwledig, Wales

A renewed focus

There is a renewed focus and urgency around reaching net zero by 2050 – driven in large part by increased public understanding of, and engagement with, the issue.

It is vital to actively involve citizens and communities in the changes that are needed. Large-scale societal transformations are needed in the next 30 years, and more urgently in the next 10 years, in what we eat, how we travel, how we heat our homes, how we work, and how and what we consume.

The **Climate Change Committee** points out that “More than half of the emissions cuts needed [to get to net zero by 2050] rely on people and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions – decisions that are made at a local and individual level.”

Community organisations are uniquely placed to ensure that potential solutions are showcased and that messaging is delivered in the most appropriate way at a local level. Community-led climate action therefore can and does lead, motivate and inspire behaviour change across the wider population.



Climate Action Fund launch event, England

Our approach

The Fund's Environment Strategy, with a renewed focus on tackling climate change, consists of three parts:

Rapidly reducing our own emissions

We achieved the PlanetMark accreditation in April 2021, and **reduced our footprint by over 15% each year from 2018 to 2020**. Since 2018 we have fully offset our carbon emissions, including with community projects we already fund, making us a carbon neutral organisation.

Leading the sector that we work in to make a difference

We're working with applicants and grant holders to manage and improve their environmental impact; training our staff to be carbon literate; hosting events; and providing guidance on capital spend and procurement.

The Climate Action Fund

This is our most ambitious environment-focused programme to date; a **£100 million commitment over 10 years**, dedicated to supporting communities to take the lead on impactful climate change action. Beyond the funding itself, the Climate Action Fund aims to support the building of a wider movement of change, where communities all across the UK are inspired to take climate action.

What we fund

The National Lottery Act 1993 identified the environment as one of the four good causes to benefit from the sale of lottery tickets and we have been a significant funder of environmental projects ever since.

Across our funding we have regard for sustainability and look to improve the environment today and for future generations, all while reducing our own and our grant holders' impact on the environment.

Our grant holder support ranges from large-scale programmes with an explicit focus on sustainability and building resilience to climate change, to a multitude of small, grassroots projects.

Since 2016, we have awarded **£397 million through more than 6,000 grants** which involve environmental action including food, waste and consumption, energy, transport, and the natural environment.

In a typical year, **16% of all grant holders tell us they offer environmental activities**, including conservation, food growing, energy generation or reuse and recycling.

Our research shows that these grants are **more likely than average to contribute to community benefits like increased local pride and belonging**.



Climate Action Fund launch, England

Large environmental programmes

Climate Action Fund (2020–2030) UK

£100m commitment over 10 years.

The first round awarded **£19.5 million to 23 place-based partnerships** in 2020. Round two **focuses on waste and consumption** – a key identified gap in philanthropic funding. In September 2021, we launched a **£2.5 million small grants programme** for community-led climate action, **Together for Our Planet**. It is aligned with the UK Government's public engagement campaign in the run up to COP26.

Renew Wales (2012–2022) Wales

£2.6m via the Sustainable Steps Programme from dormant bank and building society accounts has helped **over 550 groups** with advice, training, peer mentoring and technical support on topics as varied as energy, gardening, waste, enterprise, biodiversity, and awareness-raising.

Our Bright Future (2016–2021) UK

31 projects supporting young people (11–24) into environmental careers.

Climate Top-Ups/ Climate Action Boost (2020–2021) Wales and (2021) Northern Ireland

£818,000 in Wales and £219,000 in Northern Ireland to help existing grant holders reduce their carbon footprint.

Communities Living Sustainably (2012–2017) England

£12m supported 12 communities to reduce their carbon footprint, involving 60,000 people and saving more than 500,000 tonnes of carbon.

Power to Change (2015–25) England

£12.7m plus £2.5m in business support since 2018 to community business projects focused on climate and nature. **£2m** has been allocated to 2022–2027, primarily to **support the community energy sector. A £40m partnership with Big Society Capital** will support the **transfer of solar farms into community ownership.**

Impact: Co-benefits of environmental action

Community action for the environment can deliver both environmental impact and important co-benefits: improving health and wellbeing, strengthening community pride and supporting training and jobs.

Communities Living Sustainably

Improved wellbeing may be the greatest legacy of this programme which measured progress against eight indicators of sustainability. Wellbeing had the lowest starting score, but by the end of the programme, **it increased by 30 points from the baseline reading.**

- More than **6,000 people received training or went on to paid or voluntary roles** in the environment sector.
- Almost **10,000 got help to make more environmentally friendly choices** at home or work.

Manor House PACT volunteers had free training in exchange for volunteer time credits. This created new skills in green construction, practical conservation, permaculture and forest gardening. **70 volunteers went on to find paid work** using their new skills.

Climate Action Boost

We are testing how funding can support existing projects to reduce their carbon footprint.

In Wales, we provided up to

£15,000

plus mentoring support to 65 projects to plan for the future.

All have improved their awareness and are taking climate action or contributing to living in a more sustainable way. The most popular actions have been making energy saving adaptations to buildings and introducing local growing projects. Other projects include electric car/bike hire and ways to reduce consumption, including repair cafes.

Impact: Co-benefits of environmental action

Our Bright Future

By the mid-point of the programme in 2019, the initial target for participation was exceeded by 43%. Sustained engagement of over three months was recorded for 11% of participants.

- More than 26,000 young people had **increased their environmental skills and knowledge**.
- **1,520 community spaces had been improved** or created and **411 tonnes of waste had been diverted** from landfill.
- The proportion of young people that agreed or strongly agreed they **felt confident in themselves** doubled to 80% after being part of the programme.

The Green Leaders programme was an Our Bright Future project working in six areas of the north of England. 976 young people made a positive impact on the environment:

218,852m²

of land improved

1,190 tonnes

of CO₂ saved

39,100 litres

of water saved

12,645kg

of waste diverted from landfill

Participants increased their confidence to:

Have a go at new things from

62% to 86%

Work in a team from

60% to 86%

Meet new people from

52% to 80%

Members of the local community overwhelmingly saw Green Leaders as having a positive impact on **how they viewed young people** (87%); their awareness of the **local impact of climate change** (81%); and **personal willingness to get involved** with local groups (78%).

Looking forward: Our future approach

Our unique position is to take a community-facing approach to funding climate action and behaviour change. We recognise that community organisations can help reach those currently furthest from the conversation, ensuring that climate action is not simply the realm of a small number of interested parties.

Inspiration and education

We funded **WWF** to roll out screenings of the David Attenborough film “A Life on Our Planet” in five inner-city areas across the UK. The goal was to **engage new audiences with climate action** and support them with funding for pilot projects inspired by the film. We believe that **actively involving young people in the journey towards net zero is key** as they are the ones who will be most affected by climate change.

Demonstrating co-benefits of action

We also want to demonstrate that, through taking climate action, **significant co-benefits can be achieved** – including health and wellbeing, the creation of green jobs, and support for the levelling up agenda. We supported Ashden to produce a toolkit for local authorities on **how to engage citizens with climate change** through reference to co-benefits.

New framework

We acknowledge that this more systemic approach makes it hard to directly measure impact on a consistent project-by-project basis. To tackle this, we have started to **develop a framework for carbon measurement across our funded projects**.

Coronavirus crisis funding



Flourish, Wales

Responding to the crisis

Communities across the UK entering lockdown in March 2020 signalled the start of an unprecedented period for the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

Long-term, strategic funding requirements made way for crisis funding to meet people's immediate needs such as housing, food provision, employment and, for organisations themselves, financial survival.

In all parts of the country, we moved swiftly to respond to the emergency and address these needs. We **mobilised National Lottery funding, distributed funding on behalf of national and devolved governments, and worked with networks of organisations that were well placed to reach communities most at risk** of adverse impact from the pandemic.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic became our central focus, we were also aware that the many other areas we fund, such as the climate emergency, health and wellbeing and community togetherness, continued to need support during this time.

Alongside our crisis funding, **we continued to fund business as usual, keeping our grant holders' vital work going**, to avoid parallel crises emerging during a difficult time.



Flourish, Wales

The National Lottery: Coronavirus crisis funding

This chapter focuses specifically on our dedicated coronavirus crisis funding, as defined by each of our funding portfolios.

This money was **just part of the total amount of funding we distributed***, as we honoured existing commitments whilst supporting communities across the UK to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Northern Ireland

£16m

892 awards

National Lottery crisis funding: £7m

COVID-19 Charities Fund, on behalf of the Department for Communities: £9m

We awarded almost **£386 million** of dedicated crisis funding via almost **19,000 awards** (£180 million was National Lottery funding and **£206 million** was on behalf of Government in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland).

United Kingdom

£1m

72 awards

National Lottery crisis funding: £1m

Scotland

£21m

1,648 awards

National Lottery crisis funding: £11m

Supporting Communities Fund, on behalf of the Scottish Government: £3m

Communities Recovery Fund, on behalf of the Scottish Government: £7m

Wales

£9m

462 awards

England

£338m

15,463 awards

National Lottery crisis funding, including external delegated agreements: £151m

Coronavirus Community Support Fund, on behalf of DCMS: £187m

*For full details of all funding distributed in the financial year 2020-21, please see our Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21.

The impact of our crisis funding: England

This analysis explores the reach and impact of our COVID-19 crisis funding, a period when grant holders' ways of working and goals changed significantly. As a result, our crisis funding may appear to have been more impactful than our business-as-usual funding. This is because many organisations switched their focus and way of working to **deliver high volume, immediate support to those most affected by the pandemic.**

Our total crisis investment in England from April to November 2020 was £338 million: £187 million* on behalf of DCMS, via the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF) and £151 million of National Lottery funding.

This crisis funding in England aimed to **increase support to vulnerable people affected by the pandemic, and to reduce temporary closures of essential charities and social enterprises.** To achieve this, grants were intended to help organisations: increase **the breadth, availability or intensity of their services; adapt or remove**

barriers to access to reach more people; and **remain financially viable** to maintain or offer new activities.

The data is based on surveys of Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF) and National Lottery grant holders, providing high-quality, representative evidence that allows us to apply the results to all participants in these programmes with confidence. Unless otherwise mentioned, figures are across both programmes, or for the CCSF alone and extrapolated reliably to apply to both programmes. The actual impact of the funding may be greater than stated, as 10% of National Lottery crisis funding was not included in the evaluation ([methodology detail here](#)).

- An independent evaluation found that the CCSF **was an effective route to distributing emergency response funding** and that the CCSF funding **represents a return on investment of between £1.38 and £1.86 in value for every £1 spent.**

- Without this funding, **half (56%) of grant holders would have delivered significantly fewer services** and nearly **one in five (17%) would have had to close or stop providing services altogether.**
- The funding **reached the organisations it was intended to**, with nearly one in two grant holders (45%) being new to the Fund, all regions in England covered, and most of the funding going to small or medium organisations working with people and communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Additionally, **more than eight in 10 grant holders (84%) worked with beneficiaries who were new to their service.**

*£200m was allocated to the CCSF and £187m was distributed after administration and evaluation costs had been deducted.

The impact of our crisis funding: England

Funding outcomes

- Overall, this funding reached **in excess of 10.9 million beneficiaries through the two programmes.**
- The funding **had the intended impact**, with four in five grant holders (82%) using their grant to adapt their delivery models, three in five (59%) using it to deliver new activities and one in two (55%) using it to continue delivering existing activities.
- Seven in 10 grant holders (70%) supported more than one beneficiary group, with the most common being **people with mental health conditions** (40%), people with **long-standing illnesses or disabilities** (39%), and **children and young people** (39%).
- Beneficiaries of nearly all grant holders (95%) experienced **more than one positive outcome due to the funding**, such as **improved mental health, reduced loneliness, or better skills, and four in five (81%) experienced four or more positive outcomes.**

- Half of the activities funded (52%) helped to **reduce or prevent the need for public services** by beneficiaries, and just under half (49%) **supplemented the use of public services, reducing the impact of the pandemic on critical frontline providers and government departments.**

Staff and volunteers

- More than half of grant holders (58%) used their grant to adapt their staff resourcing, including increasing staff hours and recruiting new staff. **This facilitated the hiring of 6,750 new staff members and the addition of 180,600 staff hours.**
- In addition, one in five grant holders (19%) used their grant **to bring back or prevent staff going on furlough, with almost 10,000 staff members being kept active or brought back to work as a result.**

- Eight in 10 grant holders (81%) **worked with volunteers** as part of their grant, with two in five (39%) **using their grant to recruit new volunteers** and three in five (50%) **increasing volunteer hours.**
- Overall, **the funding mobilised 351,200 volunteers, including 99,200 that were new to the grant holder's organisation.** Those who were new to volunteering were more likely to be **younger, in work or from a minority ethnic background.**
- The **majority of volunteers (84%) felt they were making a difference** and **nine in 10 (92%) said they were certain or very likely to volunteer in future**, leaving a **positive legacy of community work** beyond the funding period.

Findings from the independent evaluations of our crisis funding in England can be found in full at: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights.

The impact of our crisis funding: Scotland

Between March and November 2020 we awarded around £11 million of National Lottery crisis funding, through **900 awards and over 300 uplifts** to existing grants to help Scottish charities and community groups deal with the impact of lockdown.

Alongside these awards, we delivered the **Supporting Communities Fund** and the **Communities Recovery Fund** on behalf of the Scottish Government. **In total, we distributed over £10 million through these two programmes, supporting 436 organisations across Scotland.**

- Through the Supporting Communities Fund we made **51 grants totalling £3 million to anchor organisations partnered with local groups**. These local partnerships distributed funding to local community and mutual aid groups, meeting emergency needs on the front line of the pandemic.
- Through the Communities Recovery Fund we made 385 grants totalling **£7 million to help rebuild key local services** such as mental health groups, sports clubs and food banks.



Inverclyde Shed, Scotland

The impact of our crisis funding: Wales

Lockdown posed unprecedented challenges for the voluntary and community sector in Wales. From March to September 2020, we awarded over £9 million in National Lottery crisis funding, including over £2 million in grant uplifts.

We worked alongside Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Moondance Foundation and Community Foundation Wales to ensure a joined-up response to the pandemic, running eight funding programmes between the four organisations.

The goal was to ensure that as many voluntary organisations as possible could access funds to: **maintain or expand their existing services; meet new needs within their communities** driven by the pandemic; and **prevent them from having to close or stop delivering services.**

- One in four applicants (24%) across the eight funds had not applied to the participating funders before.
- The most funded categories were **health, wellbeing, social care** and **community**.
- Areas identified as having the greatest need, including **mental health, support for minority ethnic communities, housing** and **employment, received more funding** than their pre-pandemic levels.
- The majority of organisations benefitting from the funding (61%) had **fewer than 10 members of staff**.



Penparcau Community Forum, Wales

The impact of our crisis funding: Northern Ireland



Lagmore Youth Project, Northern Ireland

From March to September 2020, we awarded over £7 million in National Lottery crisis funding in Northern Ireland, through 266 awards and 125 uplifts for existing grant holders.

We also distributed just under £9 million through the **COVID-19 Charities Fund** on behalf of the **Department for Communities**, helping 501 charities deal with financial difficulties caused by the pandemic through grants of up to £75,000.

- Grant holders from the programme fed back that the funding helped **solve their cashflow problems**, gave them space to **continue delivering or change their services**, **saved jobs**, allowed them to **target new funding streams**, and **kept them from having to close down**.

The impact of our crisis funding: UK-wide

Between March and December 2020, our UK portfolio awarded over £1 million in emergency uplifts to existing grant holders. This helped them to meet increased demand, reorganise their delivery models and cover financial losses incurred during lockdown.

In addition to this crisis funding, we developed and delivered the **Emerging Futures Fund**. A share of more than £2 million was awarded to a diverse and varied range of over 50 organisations and partnerships across the UK. This enabled them to process what they had been through during the pandemic, listen and tell their stories and begin work **to imagine what might be possible in the new normal**.



Little Edi Foundation, England

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Methodology

Data in this report is drawn from a range of sources including our grant management database, internal monitoring data and reports, plus evaluation and learning reports from many of our large thematic funding programmes. Many of these can be read in full at tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights.

Coronavirus crisis funding

In July 2020, with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), we commissioned independent evaluator, Ipsos MORI to evaluate the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF) and our own National Lottery COVID-19 Fund. Both evaluations cover England only.

This was quantitative research with 10,278 representative grant holders and 13,200 volunteers, and qualitative research with 266 representative grant holders. 72 staff, 25 partner organisations, 28 volunteers and 49 beneficiaries were also interviewed for 30 sampled case studies.

The National Lottery Community Fund provided a total of £151.3 million of funding. The scope of the evaluation of this funding was those grants awarded between 1 April and 30 November 2020 with an end date no later than 31 July 2021 (to align with the CCSF). A total of £139 million National Lottery emergency funding was therefore in scope for the NL COVID evaluation.

The quantitative findings presented in this report represent extrapolated figures, which are possible due to high response rates (75%) and representative sampling. Researchers report 95% confidence in the extrapolated figures.

The CCSF evaluation had four strands looking at process, impact, value for money and learning.

The evaluation findings can be seen in full at:

- CCSF: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights/covid-19-resources/responding-to-covid-19/ccsf-granholder-evaluation
- National Lottery emergency funding: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights/covid-19-resources/responding-to-covid-19/national-lottery-emergency-funding-impact-report

Methodology

Typical responsive funding

In April 2021, to help us understand the reach and impact of our 'typical' responsive funding, we commissioned research from independent social and market research agency, IFF Research.

This 'pre-crisis' research focused on organisations with grants ending between January 2019 and June 2020 and covers all five funding portfolios (UK-wide, England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland).

It covered our simple (up to £10,000) and standard (over £10,000) funding products, including partnerships. A small number of programmes were excluded (for example, funding distributed on behalf of third parties and international grants).

5,246 representative grant holders completed a quantitative survey between 4 May and 1 June 2021, and 14 case studies were created from interviews with grant holders, volunteers, beneficiaries, and delivery partners.

To ensure the research was representative and robust, survey data was weighted based on the profile of awards made each year during the five financial years 2016 to 2020 to create a 'typical year'. Weighted survey results were grossed up to the full population of grant recipients in a typical year (taken from the same five-year average), a total of 12,398 grant holders. Researchers report 95% confidence in the extrapolated figures.

The full findings can be found at:
tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights/differences-we-make/findings-from-research-with-grant-holders



The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK – we support people and communities to prosper and thrive.

At the heart of our work is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. We listen, collaborate and fund so that we can support great ideas that make good things happen.

Get in touch

To find out more about our funding and research:

Visit our website: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

Email: knowledge@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

Call our advice line: 0345 4 10 20 30

Text Relay: 18001 plus 0345 4 10 20 30

Read our Insight reports: tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights

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