



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023



Thank you

We are incredibly grateful to our many donors and supporters whose generosity makes our work possible.

A special thank you also goes to:

- » Our board of trustees and the members of our expert panels and committees.
- » Our dedicated office staff.
- » Corporate supporters, many of which share their services pro bono.
- » All of the voluntary and community groups that are working tirelessly to make Buckinghamshire a better place to live.

heartofbucks.org

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About us

Heart of Bucks Community Foundation is a grant-making charity that connects people who care with causes that matter.

We deliver funding from individuals, businesses and public sector organisations to not-for-profit groups, families and individuals in Buckinghamshire.

Since we made our first grant in 2000, Heart of Bucks has awarded more than £13 million to more than 5,000 local charities and community groups.

Heart of Bucks continues to be a catalyst for social change, enabling and encouraging local giving and community philanthropy. Through a programme of informed and targeted funding and advice, we're helping to make our community a better place to live, work, play and do business.

The Community Foundation network

Heart of Bucks is part of a network of 47 community foundations across the UK, all striving to help people and organisations invest in their communities.

Every three years we undergo an independent quality accreditation as part of our membership.



Chair's message



I am delighted to present our Annual Review for 2022/23, which showcases another remarkable year of substantial growth in our grant-making efforts.

Our grants panel successfully distributed over £2.2 million to a diverse range of causes, with £800,000 directly benefitting individuals and making a positive difference to their lives.

The dedicated trustees and independent members who make up our panels have diligently updated our processes over the past year to ensure grants are awarded efficiently, with no unnecessary delays and without compromising our quality assurance procedures. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the panel members for their invaluable time and commitment.

While the pandemic may be over, its lasting effects continue to be felt. Many individuals are still struggling with serious illness and financial repercussions. Add to that the escalating cost of living crisis and more people are being pushed into poverty. The impact on charities cannot be underestimated, highlighting the importance of our collaborative efforts to support as many people and organisations as possible.

To gain deeper insights into the challenges faced by our county, we commissioned a series of reports titled '*Buckinghamshire: Uncovered, shining a spotlight on our county of contrast.*' These reports have proven invaluable in directing our resources towards those most in need. For more information on these reports see page 13.

None of this vital work would be achievable without the incredible generosity of our fundholders and donors. We extend our heartfelt thanks to every one of you.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my fellow trustees for their unwavering support and expertise, as well as our President, Vice President, Ambassadors, and all the dedicated volunteer members of our sub-committees and panels.

Lastly, a special appreciation goes to Henry and the team whose hard work and achievements are evident in the countless individuals assisted by Heart of Bucks.

Moir Stewart

CEO's message



I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to look back over 2022-23 and share our journey with you all. It remains a real pleasure to be part of a committed, growing, and resilient Community Foundation for what has been the most significant year since we awarded our first grant back in 2000.

We've achieved something incredible in the past year. We've distributed more grants than ever, helping 324 not-for-profit groups and more and 2,200 individuals.

During a tough financial year, our charity has been there to provide direct support to our local community. This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the help of private donors, charitable trusts, our volunteer Community Advocates, and Buckinghamshire Council.

I'd also like to give special recognition to the local groups we fund. They've done incredible work in a year that's been financially tough. These organisations work tirelessly to provide a vast range of support, advice, and enhancements across the county, often without praise or recognition. Local organisations are making a significant contribution to civic society, and we are delighted to provide the financial support to facilitate just some of this work.

As well as this being a significant year for us with the number of grants distributed, we have also worked hard to create partnerships to provide support where help is most needed. For example,

- We teamed up with a private donor on a match-funding appeal and generated over £1m of additional money for our thematic funds, focusing on important local topics like health, the environment and education.
- We introduced a new fund; The Voluntary Sector Resilience Fund, in partnership with Mulberry Trust, Rothschild Foundation, and Buckinghamshire Council. This fund is providing unrestricted grants to small local charities and community groups, to help them manage unexpected cost increases.

Working in partnership with like-minded organisations to facilitate this type of flexible, grassroots funding has been a particular highlight for us this year.

We're continuing to develop our strategy for the future. We know that Buckinghamshire is far from immune to the known challenges faced by many urban and rural communities in the UK. We also have challenges unique to our area. Our role as a Community Foundation is to connect the people who care, with local causes that matter. We're committed to evolving and improving our funding model by growing our participatory funding approach and involving people who have experience of the issues we are addressing.

I'm excited about the years to come. For those of you thinking about joining us in our efforts, I can't wait to work together to create a culture of giving that strengthens and supports Buckinghamshire communities.

Henry Allmand

End of year figures

For year end 31st March 2023

£4,970,793

Income this year

£9,533,695

Long-term investments

£2,345,509

Total awarded in grants

£800,704

Awarded in grants to
individuals and families

£4,768

Average grant awarded to
community groups

£913

Average grant awarded to
individuals and families

2,256

Number of
individuals supported

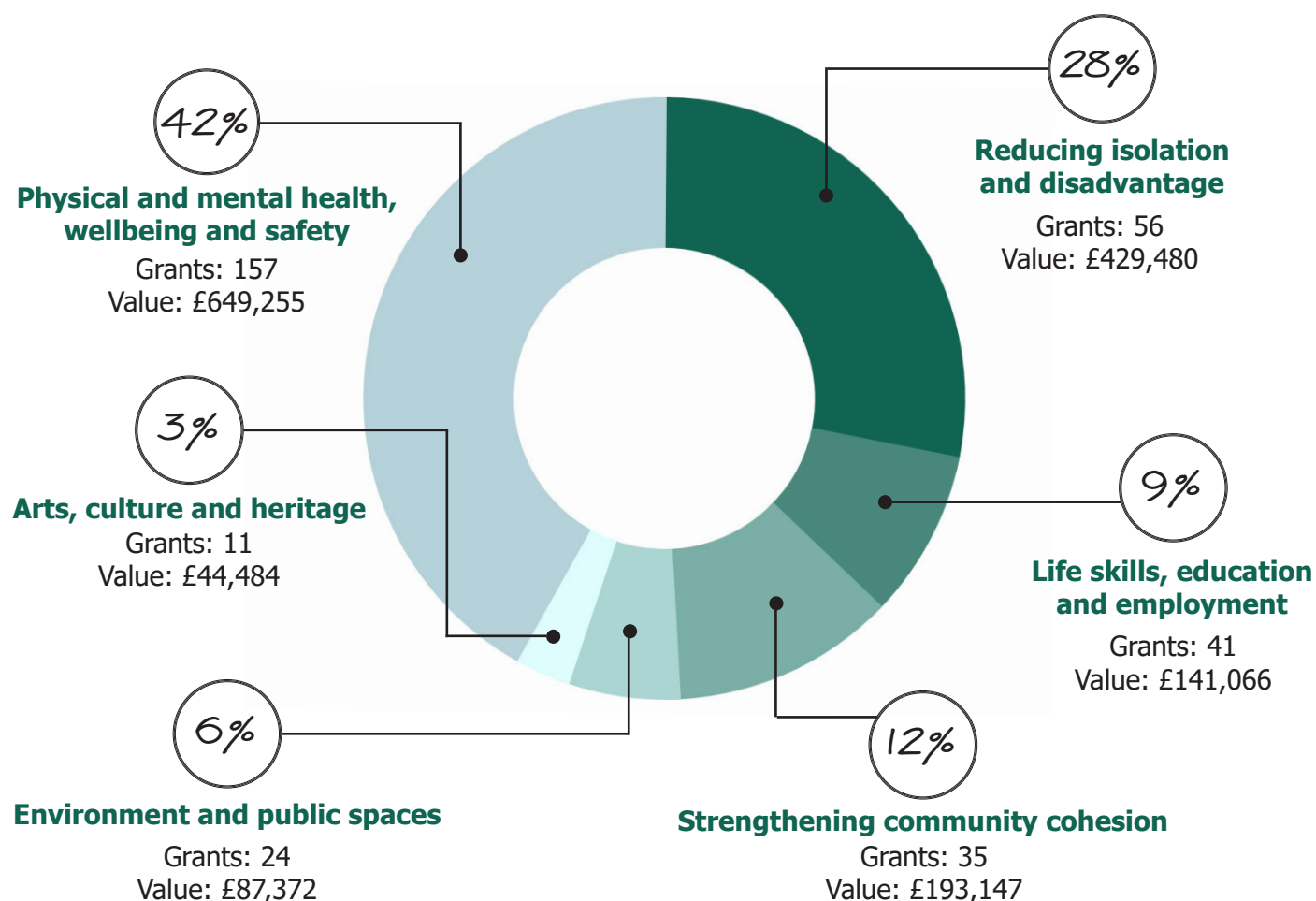
1,201

Total number of
grants awarded

324

Organisations
supported

Grants awarded to groups by impact category



Achievements

Over
£2.3m

awarded in grant
funding during
2022/2023

Over
£13.5m

awarded since our
foundation was
established in **2000**

Other highlights for the year

In partnership with Buckinghamshire Council, we **raised more than £44k for Ukrainian refugees** arriving in our county.

Thanks to the generosity of a private donor, we were able to **match-fund donations to generate a total of £1m of new donations** for local thematic funds.

We helped **Veolia Water Technologies to launch a new charitable fund** to support local water related activities, volunteering, and educational opportunities.

We worked with **Stoke Park Hotel and Country Club to launch and manage their charitable fund**. The fund awards grants of up to £5k to groups and projects focusing on benefitting young people in Southern Buckinghamshire.

After a small local charity sadly had to cease operations, Heart of Bucks worked with the board of trustees to **set up the Wyke Fund** to invest money derived from selling a capital asset to benefit the local community and leave a lasting legacy.

In response to the Cost of Living crisis we **launched the Crisis Appeal which has raised nearly £200k** for individuals and families struggling with essentials such as food, rent, energy bills etc.

In partnership with The Mulberry Trust, Buckinghamshire Council and Rothschild Foundation, Heart of Bucks **set up the Voluntary Sector Resilience Fund**. Designed to assist charities and community groups to help with unmanageable costs created as a result of inflation and the cost of living crisis.

Working with Anson Charitable Trust, Rothschild Foundation and The Tony & Sheelagh Williams Charitable Foundation, Heart of Bucks **launched the Buckinghamshire Capacity Fund** to help tackle local poverty and financial insecurity. This collective fund offered a single grant of £160k.

Heart of Bucks secured funding from the National Lottery to employ a full-time Policy and Insight Manager for three years to **research the challenges** facing communities in Buckinghamshire - see page 13 for more on insights gained so far.

Feedback

"Thank you for all your time, consideration and support throughout this process. Heart of Bucks has been so integral to The Theatre Shed over the years. The personable approach you have in supporting charitable organisations as individuals through each process is very meaningful and stands out from many other funders."

- The Theatre Shed

"This grant gave me hope in a time of darkness.."

- Crisis grant recipient

"We were surprised (and pleased) about the level of flexibility offered when we set up our Community Fund through Heart of Bucks. Considering the due diligence and weight of administration HoB undertake, we were pleased with the scope we had to offer suggestions and make things work best for us. Our enthusiasm to work with HoB continues to grow. They communicate effectively but not too much and are very approachable."

- Wyke (Community Fund Holder)

"We really appreciate your support for our volunteer costs. Without this we would not be able to provide much-needed services to survivors of sexual violence in Buckinghamshire. I appreciated the simplicity of the feedback form, along with the opportunity to share both quantitative and qualitative information about our work over the past year."

- Aylesbury Vale & Milton Keynes Sexual Assault & Abuse Support Service

"We were thrilled to launch our Stoke Park in the Community Fund in partnership with Heart of Bucks. Our primary objective was to support and collaborate with local charitable organisations, to work on specific projects that support, engage and have positive impact with the community which help enrich the lives of young people through education, sport, culture and the arts. By working alongside the brilliant team at Heart of Bucks we have been able to provide this support."

- Stoke Park (Community Fund Holder)

"On behalf of the whole team at Unseen, I would like to say a huge thank you to Heart of Bucks for your valued support of our work. The grant process was really straight forward and we were supported to achieve our outcomes."

- Unseen

Crisis funding

Heart of Bucks continues to manage several crisis funds which award grants to individuals and families in need. In 2022/23 we saw a substantial increase in applications for these grants and gave out more than £800,000. With no signs of the financial situation changing any time soon, we're sure the need for support will only continue to grow as some people in Buckinghamshire struggle with basic living costs.

The crisis funds are open to individuals and families living or working in Buckinghamshire. They provide help with basic costs such as rent, utility bills, food, homewares, clothes etc. Heart of Bucks partners with and trains 'Community Advocates' across a variety of agencies and organisations to help identify those most in need. The advocates refer an individual to us and then their application is assessed by our crisis team. This ensures all money we give away is genuinely reaching the most vulnerable people in our county.

This year we have helped more than twice the number of individuals and families compared to last year and saw the average donation to an individual rise by more than £150. This highlights just how big an impact price increases for energy, rent and food, amongst other things, are having for some.

In addition to our local crisis funds we also continue to support refugees arriving in Buckinghamshire from Ukraine and Afghanistan, providing a much needed helping hand to allow them to start a new life here.

We are grateful to Buckinghamshire Council and our Community Advocates for their partnership on these projects.



*Kim Starkey
Community Advocate*

"I started working for One Can Trust as a part time administrator in April 2021. At that time, One Can were a food bank supporting vulnerable people during the pandemic. We started to call clients to gain feedback about their food parcels and very quickly realised that clients needed further help. I now manage the Community Support Team, with a wonderful team of volunteers, we call all our clients to see how we can help them further.

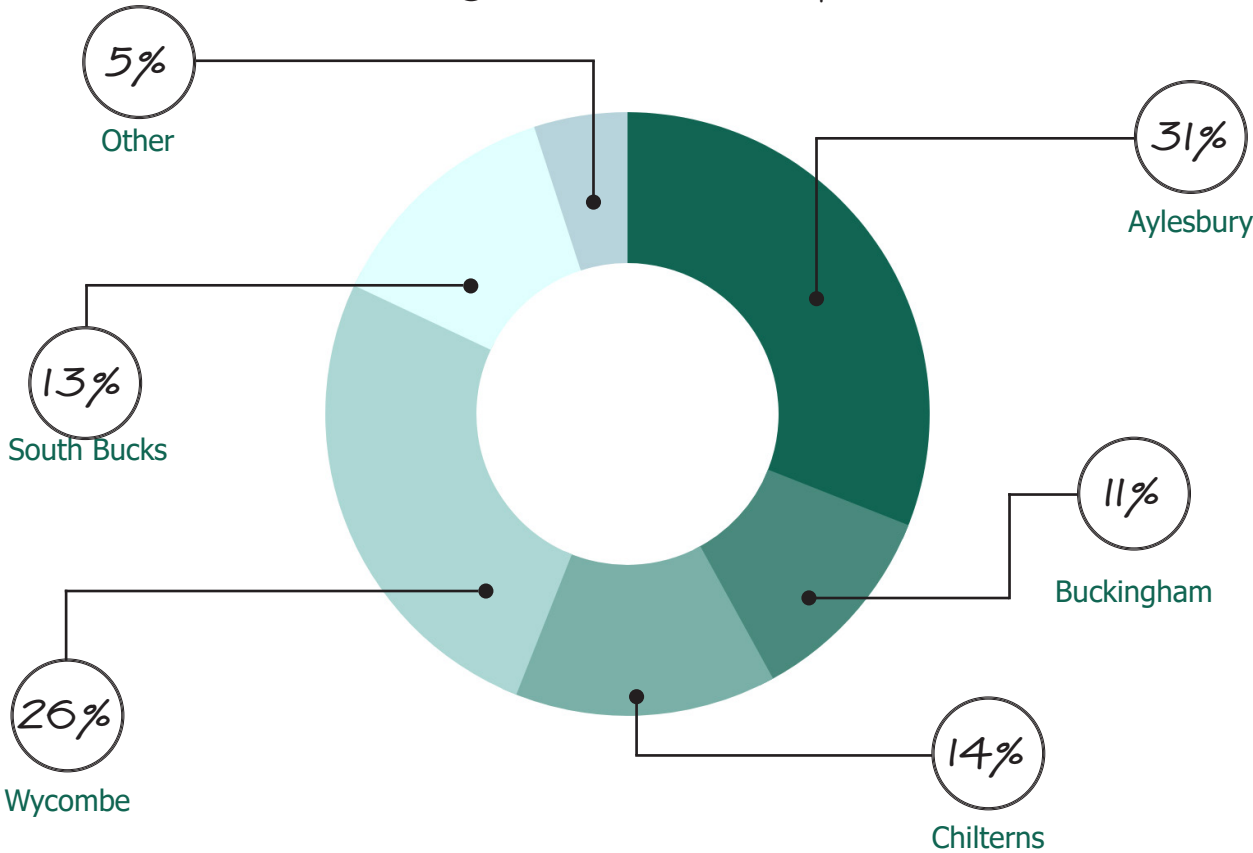
I was contacted by Heart of Bucks to see if I wanted to become a Community Advocate. It was a very simple process and the training and support I received was excellent.

We now make applications to the Crisis and Winter Warmth funds for our most vulnerable clients. These grants make such a difference to people who have very little, and are living in crisis. I love when I can tell someone that their grant has been successful. It gives people hope that their situation can change."

Feedback from a grant recipient:

*"I didn't know how I was going to manage my bills and rent.
You came into my life and sorted this out for me.
My anxiety went down and I am able to concentrate
on my college work, thank you."*

Crisis grants awarded by area



The largest proportion of our crisis funding went to:



**Energy and water
(41%)**



**Housing costs
(21%)**



**Food
(18%)**

Partnerships

We are pleased to work on projects throughout the year with a number of organisations that have helped us achieve our charitable objectives in Buckinghamshire. Collaborative working is an important part of our approach to support the community and we are grateful to our partners who have helped us in the last 12 months, including:



Community Investors

Heart of Bucks is supported by a number of corporate and business partners; our Community Investors. These valued, responsible and caring companies work closely with us, whether it be by making donations to our appeals or core costs, fundraising for our organisation, establishing funding programmes, sponsoring research or events, or promoting our work to the community. In 2022/23 we welcomed seven new community investors.



Buckinghamshire Uncovered



Shining a spotlight on our county of contrast

Buckinghamshire Uncovered is a report series designed to lift the lid on some of the challenges faced in our county, that are far too often masked by reliance on statistical averages of pockets of extreme wealth. By delving into data and statistics, as well as personal anecdotes and stories, we aim to paint a comprehensive picture of the county today. This will continue to uncover local level insights and showcase differing needs across Buckinghamshire. We aim to shed light across all areas of interest such as health and wellbeing, arts and culture, isolation, disadvantage, poverty and more. Join us as we uncover the complexities and realities of life within Buckinghamshire and these disparities compared to the wider UK.

Reports published so far: **Our Ageing Population; The Cost of Living Crisis**

Did you know?



33% of children living in Booker, Cressex and Castlefield live in absolute low income families. (Buckinghamshire average: 11% England average: 15.2%).



Nearly 3% of all 16-64 year olds in Buckinghamshire claim unemployment benefits. This can be as low as 1.2% in more affluent areas and as high as 8% in more disadvantaged areas (England average: 4%).



There is a 257% greater rate of offending in Wycombe compared to Haddenham and Waddesdon.



Between 2019 and 2021 there was a 163% increase in food parcel distribution.



Physical & mental health, wellbeing & safety

Horatio's Garden Stoke Mandeville

Project: Arts programme and horticultural therapy sessions

Grant: £5,000

With a grant from Heart of Bucks, Horatio's Garden have been able to provide an arts programme and horticultural therapy sessions as a refuge for patients, friends, family and staff away from the ward and the hospital environment.



The horticultural therapy sessions are run by head gardener Amy. They involve sowing seeds including herbs, chillies and flowers, and potting them up at a later stage, as well as simply discussing the plants.

The arts programme, which has proven to be extremely popular, includes activities such as photography, printing, willow weaving, ceramics and water colour painting. Sessions are also held on evenings and weekends when patients have no treatment and very little to occupy themselves.

These sessions often involve live music and are very well attended as everyone can listen to the performances even if they are too ill to actually get into the garden. The arts sessions are run by visiting artists, with the grant covering their fees.

The impact of the garden on both the mental and physical health of patients is significant. It gives them an opportunity to come to terms with the trauma of their injury and how it will affect their lives. The garden also allows visits from family and friends to take place in an enjoyable and natural setting, away from the restrictions of the hospital ward. Feedback from the arts programme is very positive with participants reporting that the activities help them to forget about the pain they are suffering.

"Horatio's Garden is like an oasis, it's the thing that makes my stay here at Stoke Mandeville Hospital bearable."

Quote from beneficiary



Memory Partners

Project: Teach a little Tai Chi instructor training

Grant: £1,929

Funding was used for a training workshop for volunteers to earn certification to become Tai Chi instructors, specifically of Shibashi Tai Chi. Shibashi is a sequence of 18 gentle exercises that are simpler than Tai Chi and can be done seated. Memory Partners use this method for supporting those who have arthritis or are in dementia care, enhancing relationships, offering gentle physical exercise and benefitting mental wellbeing.

Six volunteers received their certification and went on to set up a Tai Chi café in Totteridge Community Centre. Each week they welcome people with coffee, cake and chat before settling into a Shibashi Tai Chi session.



Feedback:

"Memory Partners is flourishing thanks to a grant from Heart of Bucks. We argue that everyone is affected by dementia: it is just that many are not aware of how dementia is experienced, and this leads to fear and stigma. By bringing people together in the Tai Chi café we seek to challenge these effects. We create a sociable, friendly atmosphere in which everyone can succeed."

One Can Trust

Project: Winter Support

Grant: £7,500



A grant from Heart of Bucks enabled One Can Trust to maintain a healthy level of stock across all food items, to respond to the continued rise in referrals they experience during the winter periods. They had also seen a significant drop in public food donations due to the ongoing cost of living crisis.

The food bank service ensured that each household referred received an appropriate weekly parcel of food, both fresh and tinned, to sustain it for the week. Households are typically referred for an initial four-week period, with the possibility to extend beyond that following discussion with the referring partner. The average household now receives support for approximately 8-10 weeks. Households were therefore largely relieved of the need to make food purchases during the period of support, enabling them to avoid the dilemma of whether to 'eat or heat' during the winter period.

An average of 847 people per week, 50% of whom were children, used the foodbank during the winter period. This was the highest level of demand the group had seen since they began in 2011.

"It has made a huge difference to me. I was embarrassed to have to ask for help but I was desperate. There was ample food and the driver was lovely!"

Quote from beneficiary

"We never imagined needing a helping hand. One Can Trust have been amazing to me and my family at a time when everything else was against us. Thank you for everything and I hope I will be able to return my help and support when I can."

Quote from beneficiary



Reducing isolation & disadvantage

Re-engage (formerly Contact the Elderly)

Project: Development of social activities and networks for older people living alone in Buckinghamshire

Grant: £5,000



Re-engage used funding towards volunteer and staff costs, specifically, a support and development officer, to enable them to create a 'knowledge library'. The library is used by volunteers as a one stop shop for advice and to access training to ensure they have all they need to get the most out of their volunteering.

Volunteers also received Re-engage Matters, a monthly e-newsletter to keep them connected and feeling valued.

Older people in Buckinghamshire received hard copies of 'Time Together', a magazine produced by the group which also includes an invitation for them to provide feedback used to shape services.

During the funded period, Re-engage supported 152 older people living in Buckinghamshire through their social groups and call companions with the support of 364 volunteers. Their social groups, most commonly tea parties hosted in the homes of local volunteers, have brought vital intergenerational companionship to lonely older people.

Case study:

K, a volunteer call companion, has spent nearly six years as a tea party host. K has always enjoyed looking after others, volunteering as member of the PTA when her daughter was at school and often cared for older relatives, including her mother, who had dementia and her stepmother, following a stroke.

One person currently benefitting from K's caring nature is her call companion R, a widower who is in his early 80s. Like many older people, R is in pain a lot of the time. As K explains, having a call companion gives him welcome regular contact with the outside world.

"When you're lonely and isolated you don't have anything else to focus on, so these weekly calls give you something to look forward to and a safe place to talk about what you are going through. But most importantly, they provide a much-needed break, simply by giving you other things to talk about."

Phoning R each week has been a joy for K and they have developed a strong friendship.

Restore Hope

Project: Outdoor learning and wellbeing project

Grant: £4,958

With this grant, Restore Hope successfully ran its Outdoor and Wellbeing Programme, positively impacting the lives of children and staff at Chalfont Valley School by giving them access to a large 20-acre field site that they may otherwise not experience.

The Programme covered a vast array of different outdoor activities which all benefited the children's teamwork skills, confidence and their knowledge and understanding of nature. Some of the activities that took place were flower and tree planting, fires and fire safety, bug hotel making and the importance of habitats, farm animal care and feeding, and how to manage fears and worries.

Case study:

One child in year five was very sad and unfocused at the start of the year. He only wanted to play football and did not want to take part in any other activity, meaning he became very disruptive. However by end of the year, after many sessions of him slowly becoming more involved and engaged and building trust with the team, he became a more positive and happier child. He has learnt about team work and his confidence has grown. He no longer requests to play football and can take part in activities with a smile on his face.



Feedback:

"We are very grateful for this grant which has helped us to carry on with our work with children and schools."

Wycombe Talking Newspaper (WTN)

Project: Provision of equipment for new listeners

Grant: £1,992

WTN used funding to purchase new USB sticks and USB players to replace previously used equipment which had become broken or faulty. This enabled the group to continue to supply quality equipment to support those who are visually impaired or impacted by life changing illnesses that impair their ability to read. The group records weekly, therefore the pace at which the equipment can become faulty is particularly fast. As such, this funding was vital to keep their service operational and equipped.



Case study:

During the Christmas period, the group received a note inside one of their returned packages, explaining that the listener had been unable to visit his loved ones due to disabilities and had spent two weeks alone without any visitors. The note went on to express gratitude to the group as the recordings of the local newspaper and Christmas magazine had kept him going and hearing the voices felt reassuring, becoming his 'friends', mitigating his loneliness.





Improving life skills, education & employability

Youth Concern

Project: The Next Step: Tackling homelessness, boosting confidence and improving employability

Grant: £4,784

Funding supported the delivery of The Next Step project, in particular a series of fitness sessions and the Job Club, aimed at tackling homelessness in young people.

The fitness sessions equipped the young people with the skills to talk more openly and broadly about their own health issues, and to access and engage with community based fitness groups, such as boxing clubs, gyms and work out groups. They were also encouraged to part take in Youth Concern's own healthy eating programme. These sessions include lots of discussion around health and wellbeing, as well as both physical and mental fitness. The Job Club delivers 1:1 sessions to help the young residents identify their education, training and employment goals, and how to reach them.

These programmes enable The Next Step Project to offer young homeless people not just a place to stay, but the tools to avoid future homelessness and fulfil their full potential.



"It's been a year since I was living at The Next Step but I just wanted to let you know that I'm working full-time, I've got a flat and I no longer have any drinking issues and this all started with staying at The Next Step Project.

Thought it was about time I sent something to say how much I appreciate all the help from all the incredible staff. Really helped me more than I could ever say.

I'm working in a care home as an activities co-ordinator and I spend my day reading, playing dominoes/darts/card games, going for walks, and having chats over coffee with the residents. Couldn't be happier in this job. I'm starting a part-time course in counselling at the local college in December and my flat is lovely. Just wanted to send something saying thanks for all the help last year, you completely turned my life around."

Quote from beneficiary

Buckingham Primary School PTA

Project: Forest School and Outdoor Spaces

Grant: £5,000



Funding was used to develop and dramatically improve the Forest School project and outdoor spaces in the school grounds, for the benefit of both pupils and the wider community.

The Forest School project began as just a small, wooded area limited to usage by reception age children. Funding has seen full involvement from the children in the school in designing the various areas of the outdoor spaces, and how they will be used, including a pond area and allotments.

The school now has a forest school trained and qualified member of staff, enabling them to extend usage of the Forest Schools project and outdoor spaces to seven year groups as opposed to the one year group (reception) previously. They have also introduced an after-school gardening club and opened up the areas to use by the wider school community.

The Forest School project educates the next generation to be more environmentally aware and well educated about their personal impact and what they can do to make a difference.



Young Enterprise

Project: Launch Pad Programme

Grant: £4,750

A high percentage of young people are not in education or employment, and many leave school without the skills they need to succeed in the real world. Young Enterprise work directly with young people, teachers, parents, businesses and influencers to help build a successful and sustainable future for all young people and society at large.

The Launch Pad programme was delivered over two days to two different year groups at the Chiltern Hills Academy. The school had identified a number of barriers to learning for their students; these include low self-esteem, lack of aspiration, limited or no positive role model, and lack of parental support.

During the programme, the students worked alongside business volunteers who supported them to discover more about themselves and explore key skills which are valued in the workplace. Through a series of hands on, fun activities the students worked in teams on the early stages of launching a fledgling business, balancing a budget as well as creating a brand identity and marketing strategy. Students learnt about their personal strengths, teamwork and about different roles that contribute to running a business. They used enterprising skills to solve a business challenge, learnt how to showcase skills to employers and gained a broader understanding of the world of work through engagement with business volunteers. In addition, they developed an understanding of creating budgets (financial mathematics in a real life context), how to use information to plan and present to audiences, and gained self-awareness.

Following the programme, the students set up and ran their own student company, making all the decisions about the business, from the company name and product, to managing the company finances. Students promoted and sold to the public through pop up shops and online.



Strengthening community cohesion

Aylesbury Youth Action (AYA)

Project: Youth Centre Community Mural

Grant: £3,000



With funding from Heart of Bucks, AYA ran free weekly art sessions throughout 2022 for children and young people. These sessions allowed the young people to completely engross themselves in their own creativity and experiment with their ideas and thoughts in a non-judgemental, creative space.

During the first sessions, the young people learnt about some of the most important art eras and movements, such as impressionism, expressionism, art nouveau, art deco and abstract expressionism. Inspired by these movements they began creating their own artwork.

Midway through the sessions, they attended a day trip to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford where they immersed themselves in more art eras, as well as different art forms, such as tapestry, porcelain, and music.

Using the new skills they had learnt, the young people worked with local artist Ellie Kirkup to create a large mural work, spanning 1m by 1m, to display at the AYA headquarters. They used archived materials from AYA's collection of photos, leaflets, and stories to inspire and create a map of the Aylesbury area focused on the local community and the impact of the work AYA have done over the last 50 years.

As well as the creation of the new mural, the goal for the young people involved was to improve their mental health and wellbeing, allowing them to socialise and learn new skills together in a safe space. Many participants also expressed an interest in continuing to explore art and creativity on their own.

Case Study

L has been involved in five different AYA projects over the last 18 months and invited a friend to join this project as he knew he was interested in art. L developed a keen interest and appreciation of the different art styles covered in the sessions. He thoroughly involved himself in contributing to the mural and enjoyed experimenting with different media and techniques.

Community Youth Ventures CIC

Project: The Great Plate Community Cook

Grant: £5,240

The Great Plate Community Cook saw the group bring together children and young people, including those with special educational needs, to share their favourite recipes and traditional dishes with one another. The young people were invited to take part in various tasks in the kitchen environment and encouraged to learn from and try different cultural dishes shared by the other young people.

With this project, the young people were able to learn new cooking skills, try new foods, expand their palates, and have an opportunity to socialise and work as a team.



Case Study

M started the Great Plate course in a hoodie, not wanting to completely engage. Teachers said that she wouldn't try different food and would probably need alternative options, as normally she sticks with simple colours and textures. However, by session five she was chatty, more confident, and jokey and came back for seconds of the lentil bolognese after giving it a try. She also vocalized that she would miss the weekly sessions and had really liked us coming in to cook.

Buckinghamshire Disability Services (BuDS)

Project: Building stronger communities

Grant: £3,500

BuDS is a charity and community of disabled people in Buckinghamshire. They work together to support each other whilst producing projects that deliver change for all disabled people.

Grant funding was used to support the enquiries service and a new, vitally needed advocacy service. This supports disabled people with advice, information, and guidance they cannot obtain from other sources.

The group were also able to offer free vocational training from Advice UK to their volunteers funded through this grant.

With these projects, BuDS are removing barriers and finding the answers to the issues facing disabled people in Buckinghamshire.

Feedback from volunteer who attended training:

"Having the opportunity to volunteer for BuDS, and complete a fully funded Learning to Advise course has been invaluable. I've been able to support and represent a great organisation and develop my personal and professional skills and knowledge. I would recommend volunteering with BuDS for anyone who has an interest in supporting and promoting the rights of disabled people."

"I really appreciate you setting up the call which was so very helpful. You imparted a host of ideas for me which I am now working on.
Sincere thanks"

Quote from beneficiary



The arts, culture & heritage

Theatre Shed

Project: Winter Community Enrichment

Grant: £5,000

Theatre Shed members and volunteers are of mixed abilities, disabilities, with various additional needs and backgrounds. This funding was used to create opportunities for their members to develop and nurture new creative skills, meet professional artists, and create original work that could be demonstrated to the wider community. The aim was to build confidence in their members and encourage them to try something new. Through this project participants have learnt about each other, learnt new ways of communicating and collaborating, breaking down social barriers that would usually hinder inter-ability cohesion and reciprocal connection.



During the funded period, members and volunteers worked on a number of artforms, performed in different venues and had specialists come to run workshops with them. These artforms included acting, singing, drama, piano, magic, stand-up comedy, dance, song writing, scriptwriting, puppetry, filmmaking, animation and musical theatre.

Funds went directly towards the staff costs for these workshops, as well as additional materials and equipment needed.

Case study:

Having some previous experience in compèring part of a show, L wanted to take on this role again. Being able to work with specialist Philip Simon made a big difference to the work that L was able to produce. Philip worked with L on creating and editing jokes that fitted in with each act introduction or sign off. Working steadily with an industry professional gave L a noticeable boost in confidence and the skills to take on the compèring of a full cabaret style show by themselves.

Following the work with Philip Simon, L confidently made all of their entrances and exits independently, spoke with more volume and engaged with the audience almost all of the time. L expressed a great sense of achievement and a wish to compère a full show again!



Project: Commonwealth Queen Crown**Grant: £9,350**

In celebration of H.M. Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, SV2G held a series of 24 workshops for children, young people, families, and the elderly in High Wycombe. Participants were encouraged to explore a fusion of art, music and history to gain an understanding of the heritage of the Monarch and links to the Commonwealth Caribbean countries.

The structure of the crown was split into sections to be decorated by different members of the community. The completed crown was unveiled during the High Wycombe Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The crown was then taken on tour and displayed at tea parties, in the Eden Shopping centre and at the Bucks Arts Week festival, accompanied by steelpan performances.

This project brought together a range of residents from a wide selection of backgrounds and cultures, allowing them to interact and engage together in arts and heritage activities. Participants gained practical as well as educational experiences. It also allowed SV2G to develop new audiences and improve and educate the community.

*National Paralympic Heritage Trust (NPHT)***Project: Digital Explorations****Grant: £5,000**

Digital Explorations was a large-scale project run by NPHT which saw the group engage with young people from disabled communities to research objects from the Paralympic collections and archives.

Through a series of professional training sessions and historical research, the group recruited individuals to build skills in digital 3D object scanning, photogrammetry and editing to record the objects and their stories. A selection of these 3D objects are now showcased in the NPHT 3D Virtual Museum online.

Thanks to the training and work experience they received, many participants have gone on to take paid roles with the group, sharing their new skills with students in Special Educational Needs and Disability, Schools.

*Case study:*

A came to NPHT aged 23 with no work experience, but liked history and IT. He quickly took to the scanning work and took up an opportunity to be a community curator for the Discover Bucks Museum. He really impressed the team there and managed to move from a challenging home situation and get his own home, obtained GCSEs in English and Maths, and got accepted at a college.

At the start of his work with NPHT, he was scared to travel and talk to new people, but consequently has been to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to demonstrate 3D scanning to a youth community group, and helped young people at Pebble Brooke SEND school scan sporting objects of importance to them.



The environment & public spaces

Old Hanging Wood CIC

Project: Explore The Woods skills sessions

Grant: £2,000



Thanks to this grant, Old Hanging Wood has been able to launch a successful series of skills sessions. Participants of all ages are invited to learn and engage in various woodland activities, environmental walks and tree planting.

These sessions have included Children's Bushcraft, and Hedgelaying (taught by Donato Cinicolo – 12 times champion hedgelaying of Hertfordshire). Many of these sessions are free to attend. Participants have left the sessions not only with new skills, but also new friendships and an appreciation for the ancient woodland.

With these activities, Old Hanging Wood have improved access to the woodland for all Buckinghamshire residents, allowing them to explore the nature that surrounds them. This has a positive effect on physical, mental and social wellbeing, reducing isolation and disadvantage, and improving mental health.

The group have also opened up more possibilities for exercise and wellbeing through access to open woodland space.

Case study:

A local mum signed herself and her daughter up for a bushcraft session. Her daughter was getting bullied at school and that, coupled with the impacts from Covid, put her in an unhealthy place. The parents decided to remove her from school and home-school. Unbeknown to them, the daughter started showing signs of depression because of social isolation. They started searching activities in the local area and were keen for it to be something different to the mainstream options. After coming to the first bushcraft session, both mum, daughter and dad attended 80% of the remaining sessions, with the daughter making a new friend who was also home-schooled and now they meet up regularly.



Chesham Grammar School

Project: Biodiversity and Waste Reduction

Grant: £1,532

Funding made it possible for students to launch the school Eco Club to oversee the biodiversity and waste reduction project, having an immediate impact on the school community and environment. The students have planted more than 60 trees and shrubs around the school site, built new raised wooden planters with flowers and plants, placed bat boxes, and set up recycling bins in key areas around the school.

Thanks to the grant and the work it enabled, the school has now won the Eco-School Green Flag Award.



"This project has deeply impacted some of our students who have experienced challenges around being in the classroom. These students have found that being outdoors and gardening has had a huge impact on their enjoyment of school and therefore has vastly benefitted their learning and wellbeing, making them more likely to attend school. The opportunity to plant and work in the pond and garden area has given them confidence and also a feeling of personal pride in their environment."

Quote from school



Buckingham Canal Society

Project: Build stronger communities

Grant: £500



With this grant, the Buckingham Canal Society have been able to cover costs of insurance and the maintenance and replacement of the tools and equipment required for them to restore the 220 year old canal. During the funded period, this included the installation of sheet piling alongside the tow-path to create a stable bank and to prevent water leakage.

The canal runs from Buckingham to the Grand Union at Cosgrove and the restoration is producing an accessible blue/green corridor along an existing right of way. The work is helping the environment and also helping wellbeing and mindfulness through access to nature.

Support us



Set up your own fund

A great way for you to get directly involved in supporting your community, without the cost and administration of setting up your own charitable trust.

- » Endowment: Funds will be invested securely, with the annual income being distributed in grants.
- » Immediate Impact: An annual donation is awarded as grants within that year, providing immediate support.
- » Hybrid: A combination of endowment and immediate impact, enabling you to grow a fund over time but also make an impact right away.



Donate to an ongoing fund

We manage a number of existing funds that are impact theme or issue specific, as well as crisis funds which support individuals in real need. We welcome donations to these funds to help expand their reach across the county.

From time to time we also offer match-funding opportunities, which will help to make your donation go further. Please get in touch to find out about our current match-funding offers.



Support for your charitable trust

Whether you want to transfer a charitable trust or commission us to provide grant-making services, Heart of Bucks offers a range of services specifically tailored to meet the needs of charitable trusts and is well placed to be able to offer a comprehensive and tailor-made grant-making process.

The Charity Commission acknowledges that community foundations have a reputation for the effective management of charitable funds in order to maximise their impact at local level.



Wills and legacies

A great way to leave a positive mark on the community long after you are gone, is by leaving a gift in your will. Heart of Bucks offers an ideal way to leave a legacy easily and tax-efficiently. If you prefer, we would be happy to work with your financial advisor to find the best solution for you.

As an accredited community foundation, legacies made to Heart of Bucks qualify as a charitable donation and are exempt from inheritance tax. This could help reduce the total amount of tax paid on your estate.



We're a charity too!

Donating directly to Heart of Bucks makes a huge difference to our work within the local community.

Your support will enable us to help hundreds of voluntary groups and charities by delivering grants that address specific challenges.

"Supporting the local community is important to us, and there is no better custodian to do that than Heart of Bucks, who know Buckinghamshire inside and out and will use their expertise and experience to transform the lives of those living in our county."

- Ruth and Henry Amar



Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you! If you'd like to learn more about supporting the Buckinghamshire community, please get in touch.

giving@heartofbucks.org

01296 330134

You can also visit heartofbucks.org to read our impact stories, subscribe to our quarterly newsletter and more.



“It is important to all of us at Saffery that we support charities in our local community.

We're very pleased to be able to sponsor the Heart of Bucks annual report and support its programme of informed and targeted funding.”

Sheryl Davis, partner

www.saffery.com



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Our values

we listen respectfully

we fund inclusively

we advise professionally

we support locally

we lead collaboratively



Connecting people who care with local causes that matter

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