

**Our response to community need.
The Community Foundation for Lancashire
COVID-19 Community Support Fund review.**

May 2021





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Introduction

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and repeated lockdowns, many people in Lancashire have been seriously impacted, including losing their source of income, a reduction in earnings, the ability to see loved ones withdrawn and some having access to vital services reduced.

This report outlines the Community Foundation for Lancashire's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the launch of the **Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund**, including the coordination of corporate donors, public donations and funders such as local government. These donations have had a significant impact on addressing social issues arising from the pandemic. The report also highlights how these funds were distributed across the county and addressed specific issues, providing vital help to the local communities that have been affected.

However, the pandemic, and its effects, are not over. Although this work began in March 2020 with an emergency response, we are continuing to deal with ongoing problems that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, such as mental health concerns and digital exclusion. These ongoing issues are now being addressed in our renamed **Lancashire Red Rose Responding Fund**.

How The Community Foundation for Lancashire Responded

The **Lancashire Responding, Covid-19 Community Support Fund** combined various sources of financial support into a single Lancashire emergency fund, managed by CFL with financial support from the National Emergencies Trust (NET), DCMS, CO-OP, Lancashire Resilience Forum, a public online fundraising campaign, and support from existing Community Foundation donors. The fund established a single point of contact for donations of any size. It also provided access to funding for groups and grassroots charities to apply for help with a simple application process, in an easy and transparent manner.

The speed of response in this emergency situation has been crucial.

Therefore, CFL's application process, including administration, assessment and distribution of funds to successful applicants, was kept to a maximum of seven working days. In order to meet the urgent demand, the distribution of the raised funds occurred within days of the first national lockdown and continued at this pace right through to the end of the reporting period.

Donations raised for the **Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund** totals over:

£2,200,000

The fund has helped:

324,194

beneficiaries throughout Lancashire.
March 2020 - May 2021.

What is now required

The report outlines the period from March 2020 to February 2021, when we received emergency funding. All of this funding has now been allocated, yet the effects of the pandemic are ongoing and will be felt for many months and years to come. **We need to raise additional funding to continue helping the most vulnerable members of our communities across Lancashire, and the organisations who support them.**

WE NEED YOUR HELP



Rae Brooke
Chief Executive
Community Foundation for Lancashire

“I’ve yet to meet anyone who hasn’t personally felt a detrimental effect of the pandemic, but for many in our community, it’s been a tremendous struggle. In a matter of months, we have seen an increase in job losses, families entering poverty, people’s mental health heavily impacted and a rise in domestic abuse. These are just some of the everyday challenges.

In this unprecedented emergency situation, speed of response is crucial, and the ‘Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund’ played a significant role in helping charitable, and community groups across Lancashire continue to support those who need our help. Within days of the government implementing lockdown restrictions, working in partnership with the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF), we distributed the first emergency grants. The support of the National Emergencies Trust, LRF, alongside businesses, individual donors and the generosity of the wider public enabled us to go on to raise and distribute £2m.

It is a testament to the incredible community spirit of Lancashire. We know that the most vulnerable communities are likely to continue to face significant challenges in the coming months and years. Meeting the demand and need for more resources is a real concern and should be for all of us. We can be proud of what’s been achieved so far and look to build on that moving forward.”



Denise Park
Chief Executive
Blackburn with Darwen Council
On behalf of the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF)

“We have been working closely on behalf of the LRF, with the Community Foundation for Lancashire (CFL) – which is managing all donations received to the fund to make sure they reach the most vulnerable people affected by the coronavirus, in partnership with the National Emergencies Trust (NET).

I’m proud that despite all the difficulties faced in the public sector, funding has also come from local authorities, who form the LRF with our partners, including police, fire and health.

The amount raised so far is a wonderful milestone to get to. So many groups have come together in partnership for this fund, and it has shown that we really are stronger together.

There are so many vital groups and services all over Lancashire. I am thrilled that the ‘Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund’, has been able to help so many, raising almost £2 million in a year.

This funding has helped 324,194 beneficiaries, including many different community groups, organisations and charities – to deliver on the ground support to our communities when it has never in our lifetimes been more needed.”

What difference did the funding make?

The COVID pandemic has highlighted the importance of the work done by grassroots community groups and local charities, such as food banks, care provision, mental health and wellbeing services, and services for the most vulnerable.

The pandemic also brought greater attention to many social problems, which already existed but were exacerbated by lockdowns and isolation, such as domestic violence and digital exclusion. The speed of response in this emergency situation has been crucial.

The Community Foundation for Lancashire are experts in fund management, strategic targeting of charitable funds and grant assessment. The CFL team have over 70 years of combined knowledge of the Lancashire community, and experience in the management, assessment, and distribution of charitable funds. During the pandemic, this has allowed us to respond quickly and to ensure the grant funding was distributed to those working on the front line, helping the most vulnerable affected by COVID-19.

What were the main issues?

In March 2020, the **Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund** was launched to address priorities within local communities, addressing the most urgent concerns across the community, in the following themes:

- FOOD POVERTY AND INSECURITY
- IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- SERVICE PROVISION TO THE MOST VULNERABLE
- UNEMPLOYMENT AND LOSS OF INCOME

Two further key issues were quickly identified which also needed support, as the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns continued.

- DOMESTIC ABUSE
- DIGITAL EXCLUSION

The Community Foundation for Lancashire's response to these issues demonstrates the significant impact which has been made in addressing them from March 2020 to February 2021. This impact was made possible through CFL's coordination and management of donations from local and national funders, existing donors, and public donations.



What were the priorities for the Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund?

Priority for funding was given to support local voluntary and community organisations, who were best placed to help the most vulnerable people, which the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted.

The Community Foundation's ability to be agile and respond quickly to ever-changing circumstances was vital to ensure that the funds were distributed as, when, and where, they were needed.

The following priority areas were established:

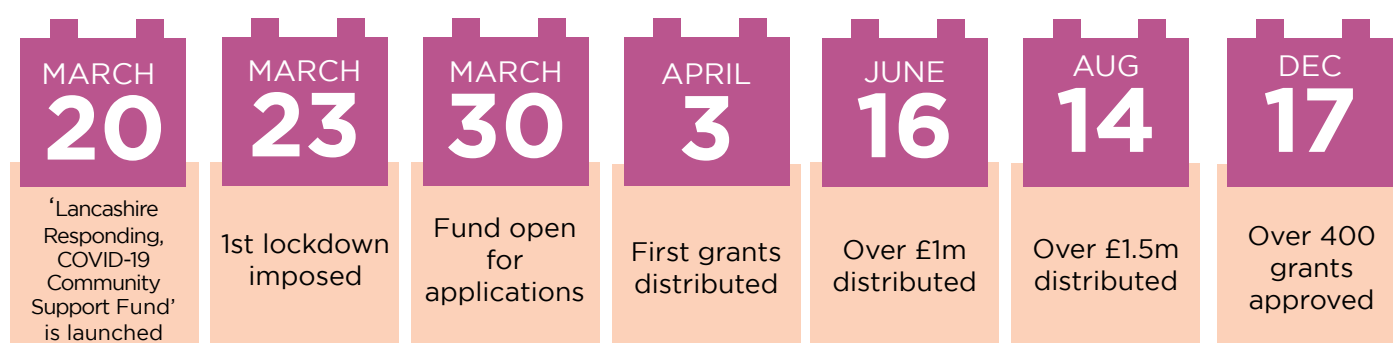
Emergency food provision including: food, care and activity packages delivered to vulnerable people

Delivery of services to support the most vulnerable

Emotional and mental health wellbeing services

Financial inclusion and support to access benefits and debt advice

Speed of response

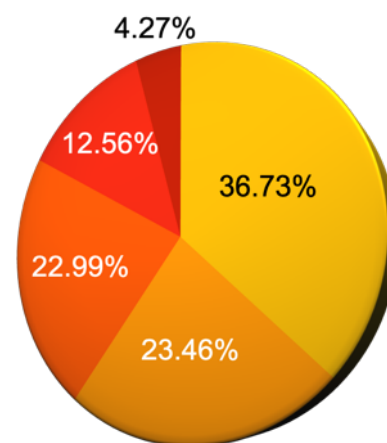


The breakdown of the funding awarded by the priority issue (Up to March 2021)

Priority Area	Value of Grants	Number of grants	% of total grants awarded
Emergency Food & Care Support Packages	£685,420	155	36.73
Mental Health Support	£446,115	99	23.46
Reduction of Social Isolation	£426,702	97	22.99
Financial Inclusion or Advice	£87,368	18	4.27
Other (includes projects relating to digital inclusion, domestic abuse and crime prevention, homelessness, physical health, PPE and organisational development grants)	£335,231	53	12.56

The percentage breakdown of the total funding awarded

- Emergency Food & Care Support Packages
- Mental Health
- Social Isolation
- Other
- Financial Inclusion or Advice



Number of beneficiaries and projects supported

The fund has helped 324,194 beneficiaries throughout Lancashire. Some community groups support more than one beneficiary type per project. Therefore projects can be listed in more than one beneficiary category.

Categories of primary and second beneficiaries	Number of projects supported
People living in poverty	256
People with mental health issues	254
Families and parents	230
Older people	214
Children and young people	196
Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME)	172



Where did the money go?

Since the fund launched in March 2020 the following amount has been distributed

£1,977,166

March 2020 - Feb 2021

Split by local authority

Funding has been awarded to projects in each local authority and unitary authority area.

The breakdown below reflects the number of applications received and awarded.

CFL promoted the fund throughout Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen, working hard to ensure a fair, diverse and equitable spread of projects and funding across the county.



AREA	AMOUNT AWARDED	% OF TOTAL FUNDS	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	% OF TOTAL PROJECTS	NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	% OF TOTAL BENEFICIARIES
Blackburn with Darwen	£267,817	13.5%	54	12.8%	59,743	18.4%
Blackpool	£182,498	9.2%	41	9.7%	35,756	11%
Burnley	£198,410	10%	41	9.7%	24,846	7.6%
Chorley	£100,560	5.1%	27	6.4%	9,797	3%
Fylde	£69,900	3.5%	15	3.6%	3,800	1.2%
Hyndburn	£125,124	6.3%	29	6.9%	8,429	2.6%
Lancaster	£105,122	5.3%	26	6.1%	8,749	2.7%
Pendle	£134,361	6.8%	23	5.6%	13,845	4.3%
Preston	£317,366	16.1%	67	15.9%	51,056	15.7%
Ribble Valley	£46,053	2.4%	12	2.9%	18,113	5.9%
Rossendale	£95,619	4.9%	25	5.9%	21,467	6.6%
South Ribble	£98,692	5%	25	5.9%	8,558	2.6%
West Lancashire	£118,648	6%	22	5.3%	54,775	16.8%
Wyre	£44,596	2.3%	12	2.9%	4,881	1.5%
Lancashire Wide	£72,400	3.5%	2	0.4%	379	0.1%

Observations

During the pandemic, we have seen:

A significant impact on people's mental health & wellbeing

What was the national picture? More than two-thirds of adults in the UK (69%) reported feeling somewhat or very worried about the effect COVID-19 is having on their life, and the Institute of Fiscal Studies found that mental health has worsened substantially by 8.1% on average. (The Health Foundation, June 2020). More than half of adults and over two thirds of young people said that their mental health has become worse during the period of lockdown restrictions. (Mind, March 2021.)

How did this translate locally? Through project applications and funding, CFL have seen a significant increase in the need for mental health and emotional wellbeing services. During the crisis, there has been an increase in a range of issues affecting local communities' mental health including grief, isolation and anxiety.

An increase in the need for services and newly established pop-up groups

What was the national picture? During the crisis, delivery of services has been dramatically disrupted and affected by the lockdown. This has impacted on the most vulnerable acutely. Throughout the pandemic people have relied on charitable services to cope with unprecedented changes in their lives. 43% of charities reported an increase in demand for their services but a 48% decline in voluntary income (Institute of Fundraising, March 2020). To address the sudden increase in demand for services volunteers responded quickly by organising themselves into support groups to help those in need in their local communities. There are now over 2,000 groups listed on the Mutual Aid website which have been established during the pandemic (Public Health England, June 2020).

How did this translate locally? CFL have received an increase in funding applications from newly established groups plus existing ones that needed to quickly find new ways of delivering their existing services. This has demonstrated tremendous community spirit, with many new groups being set up quickly to provide care networks, PPE, and helping to access food, medicines, and activities that supported their physical and mental wellbeing. This has been at a time with decreasing numbers of volunteers (due to people isolating) and decreasing charitable income. The groups have shown tremendous ingenuity, empathy, and resilience, but will require further funding to continue as the effects of COVID-19 continue to be felt.

An increase in domestic abuse

What was the national picture? The National Domestic Abuse helpline has seen a 25% increase in calls and online requests for help since the lockdown (BBC News, April 2020) Refuge says it recorded an average of 13,162 calls and messages to its National Domestic Abuse helpline every month between April 2020 and February 2021. (BBC News, March 2021)

How did this translate locally? Detective Chief Inspector Mike Gladwin of Lancashire Constabulary's Public Protection Unit said: "During the period since March 23, we have experienced an increase in domestic abuse incidents by approximately 20 percent compared with the same period in the previous year." This is reflected in the increase of project funding distributed by CFL over the 12-month funding period.

An increase in job losses and unemployment

What was the national picture? In April, the number of unemployment claims increased by the highest monthly rise on record to nearly 2.1 million. (Telegraph, June 2020) From November - January the unemployment rate was 5% the highest figure for five years. (BBC News, March 2021).

How did this translate locally? In Lancashire the figure was even higher. 'The trend is reflected in benefits claimant counts of up to a massive 12.7 per cent'. (Lancashire Post, October 2020). This has been reflected across numerous theme areas in applications to CFL from food poverty and care packages.

An increase in families entering poverty

What was the national picture? Early in the crisis, the Independent Food Aid Network, (IFAN) which has around 350 food banks, saw a 175% increase in requests for emergency parcels, by May 2020 (Independent, June 2020). This has continued. IFAN members show an 88% increase in 2021, from the previous year, and the Trussell Trust reports a 47% increase across its network. (Human Rights Watch, February 2021)

How did this translate locally? Emergency food provision for people facing food poverty and food insecurity has intensified during the crisis. Almost 37% of all the projects funded by the Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund have been for emergency food provision provided by local groups within communities.

The disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on BAME communities

What was the national picture? Public Health England's report (2020) found that COVID-19 does not affect all population groups equally and shows that there is an association between belonging to some ethnic groups and the likelihood of testing positive and dying with COVID-19. "The highest age standardised diagnosis rates of COVID-19 per 100,000 population were in people of Black ethnic groups (486 in females and 649 in males) and the lowest were in people of White ethnic groups (220 in females and 224 in males). An analysis of survival among confirmed COVID-19 cases showed that, after accounting for the effect of sex, age, deprivation and region, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death when compared to people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10 and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British".

How did this translate locally? CFL have seen a significant rise and impact in funding projects for Black, Asian and Minoritised groups for whom COVID-19 was particularly effecting. Alongside positive testing and mortality were interlinked social issues which drastically impacted upon communities such as language barriers, access to information and increases in mental health concerns particularly anxiety and isolation.

An increase in Digital Exclusion

What was the national picture? UK Consumer Digital Index from Lloyds Bank shows that 11.9m people (22% of the population) do not have the digital skills needed for everyday life in the UK. By 2030 it is predicted that 4.5m people (8% of the population) will remain digitally disengaged and people with a disability are 35% less likely to have essential digital skills for life. (NHS Digital, March 2020). A University of Cambridge study (March 2021) found that Covid will “make the impacts of digital exclusion worse for the millions of people affected, and the poorest will be hit the hardest”.

How did this translate locally? The pandemic has revealed the extent of inequality regarding digital and online capabilities for many families across the county. This has had a particular impact on Education, Home-working and Social isolation. CFL have seen a significant rise in funding for projects requiring digital accessibility across the county. Issues range from access to equipment and better internet connectivity, particularly for young people having to study from home and older people who are socially isolated.

An increase in families facing financial difficulties

What was the national picture? The Office for National Statistics report (January 2021) shows the increase of financial difficulties facing families. “By December 2020, nearly 9 million people had to borrow more money because of the coronavirus pandemic; the proportion borrowing £1,000 or more also increased from 35% to 45% since June 2020. Throughout the pandemic, employed parents were almost twice as likely to report a reduction in income than the general employed population. Self-employed people were more likely to report reduced working hours and reduced income, even if they had received support from the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).”

How did this translate locally? The economic uncertainty, hardship, and rising unemployment has created increased pressure on those facing financial difficulties in Lancashire. Funding projects for debt advice, money guidance and supports for accessing benefits reflects the national trend.



What did the community say about the support provided?

“Our clients are facing many issues as they rely on familiarity and structure of their daily life. They cannot communicate and interact with their friends, they will find it hard to understand what is happening, and why they cannot attend our centre... These are very uncertain times, and they are not functioning very well at home. They attend and rely on the service that we deliver as we provide a structure in their life. **Now they are socially isolated, and some of their family members are not coping very well because of their challenging behaviours and the disabilities that they have.** The Community Foundation for Lancashire have supported us – they believe in what we do.”

Tracy Robinson, Motiv-8 Lancs, (support for adults with learning difficulties), Accrington

“**Three-quarters of our clients are out of work and on benefits, whilst a third have considered taking their own lives...** The Lancashire COVID-19 funding we received has been really timely, enabling us to purchase the appropriate equipment to help us continue to provide vital services remotely... so that [people] can access our support, and we can help relieve some of the pressure they are under.”

Jane Morris, CAP, (debt advice) Rossendale

“The grants provided by the Community Foundation for Lancashire to One Voice Blackburn have been absolutely **vital in enabling us to support isolated and disenfranchised communities** in Blackburn with Darwen.”

Zaffer Khan, One Voice, Blackburn

“The speed with which the grant was given was a huge help and has enabled us to cover some extra costs, as well as funding some ‘keep-in-touch’ activities. We are very grateful because our fundraising has been badly hit in recent months. **Day Therapy is so important to our patients who face the challenge of terminal illness but want to get the most out of life.** The COVID-19 crisis has interrupted this in a way we could never have anticipated, and staying in touch over recent weeks has proved vital.”

Shirley Morgan, Trinity Hospice, Blackpool

“Thanks to the Community Foundation for Lancashire and the National Emergencies Trust, we have been able to buy new computer equipment and software, providing a platform to create a new multimedia recovery guide. An engaging way to help people with their recovery, this is a new and ground-breaking resource, and only possible if we are supported by funds such as the Lancashire COVID-19 Community Support Fund.”

Ian Edmondson, Tribal Project Drug & Alcohol support, Preston

Emergency Food Provision - types of projects funded:

Emergency food provision for people facing food poverty and food insecurity has intensified during the crisis.

With rising unemployment, job insecurity, and particularly, the numbers of people unsure where their next meal would come from has significantly increased during the crisis. Almost 37% of all the projects funded by the Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund have been for emergency food provision provided by local groups within communities.

Project funding: Continuing the delivery of the group's food-bank programme.

Inspiring Grace in Pendle usually supports those who are experiencing hardship and financial difficulty.

Their support now has been extended to include vulnerable people over 65, those who are self-isolating, those from BAME backgrounds, and people who need support with the purchase of food. There is also a demand for items related to hygiene and personal safety that have been hard to get hold of. Food delivery has a positive effect on mental health. Tahir Anwar, of Inspiring Grace stated: "We supported an elderly couple who have been particularly hit by the virus. **They did not have anyone in the area who could help them with their weekly shopping with their nearest relative living several hundreds of miles away.** They also did not want to go outside as they were in the at-risk category. They contacted us for support, and we realised very quickly the situation they had found themselves in. We provided weekly support of food parcels and as well as many fresh items and other support they needed to help them overcome the worst part of the crisis in the months of March, April and May in particular".



Project funding: Supporting the costs of making up food bags and the weekly delivery to vulnerable people.

St Thomas Garstang STG Church Foodbank donation point in Wyre has existed for a number of years.

Demand increased significantly whilst the donated supply of provisions has decreased as a result of the closure of the Church building during lockdowns. There are a number of one-parent families and families that have lost income as a result of job losses.

Rev John Griffiths, of St Thomas Garstang STG Church Foodbank, said: "This funding has allowed us to purchase specialist dietary needs for individuals, along with food and other essential supplies for a newly born baby whose family has been hit by the current situation. **We are supporting more and more families, who find themselves suddenly without income as the crisis begins to bite deeper into our community,** we are so grateful for your support in helping us to help those in real need."



In addition to people struggling with food poverty, many people during the crisis have needed to shield and isolate, unable to leave their own homes, without care networks and as a result were not able to access food, medicines, and activities that supported their physical and mental wellbeing.

Project funding: Providing sessions for vulnerable young people and providing a free meal to young people identified by the council as at risk.

Preston North End Community and Education Trust created 'Helping Hamper' packages and delivered to 300 of the most at risk participants, who access their services, and those within the Preston community identified as most at risk.

Preston North End Community and Education Trust said: "We support our community, helping raise and lift spirits through the power of the badge, sport and the help from our local schools to inspire resilience and reinforce the 'stay at home' message. Secondly, we have a network of people who we know need support and a community that will engage with its local football club's charity to ask for support for themselves or others. At this unprecedented time, we want to support those who have been affected by COVID-19.

We know that some people are unable to leave their homes due to this crisis, but we want to show the Preston community that they are not alone.

We are here to support those who access our programmes, but also continue to take requests from vulnerable members of the community to provide additional support to them as well."



Project funding: Enabling the delivery of activity packages & essential food packs to the homes of hundreds of disadvantaged children and young people.

The Boathouse Youth in Blackpool received a grant to enable them to deliver activity packages and essential food packs to the homes of hundreds of disadvantaged children and young people.

The group have reported that many young people in Blackpool live in homes of extremely poor quality. Many parents are sufferers of drug and alcohol addictions; the effects of which manifest themselves through behaviours such as anger, frustration and ultimately domestic violence. Additionally, many of their families do not have internet access or use of a mobile phone.

"We have been able to react to the crisis facing families during the COVID-19 Emergency with a view to reducing the negative impact on mental health, financial pressures and tackle boredom."

Laurance Hancock-BHY CEO



Mental Health and Wellbeing - types of projects funded:

Mental health and emotional wellbeing have been significantly impacted during the crisis, with an increase in a range of issues including grief, isolation and anxiety.

Project funding: Supporting families through a full course of therapeutic life coaching using the online service delivery.

The Foundation for Ribble Valley Families (FRVF)

FRVF support families with a course of online life coaching. One of the charity's key aims is to reduce the emotional unrest caused by rural isolation. They noted the increased reports of domestic abuse during the lockdown, as well as reports of likely increases in substance abuse by vulnerable people who may be unable to find solace during these challenging times save for turning to drugs and alcohol.

Stephen Blackburn, Founder of the FRVF, said: "This funding has been vital in helping us to provide support to deal with the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of local people. The crisis has really challenged and affected the way we normally deliver our services, but with the Lancashire COVID support funding, **we have been able to adapt and offer new online solutions to help people's emotional and mental wellbeing.**"

Project funding: Extending online support to reduce anxiety in the community, regarding face-to-face contact.

One Voice Blackburn

Zaffer Khan, of One Voice Blackburn, said: "There has been a rise in the number of those seeking mental health support and that has led to an increase in children, young people and adults using our services during the pandemic. The mental health needs in the communities we serve have been varied but generally we support those experiencing anxiety, general stress and isolation. People are actively seeking to fill a void by not being able to go to school or work, or see family and friends, which is where we have been available to provide virtual support sessions.

We've also seen an increase in anxiety from those in our communities of South Asian heritage, with the virus being of a higher risk to their health."

"Thanks to the generosity of the Lancashire COVID-19 Community Support Fund and National Emergencies Trust, our family are able to communicate in our own language with our friends and family. This supports my mental health and wellbeing and has kept my confidence high. My children have a chance to reconnect with our language, culture and traditions during such difficult times."

Komal, a beneficiary of Shrigandha Lancs, promoting Kannadiga culture (Preston)



Delivery of services supporting the most vulnerable - types of projects funded:

During the crisis, delivery of services have been disrupted and affected by the lockdown. This has impacted on the most vulnerable acutely.

Arooj is an independent charity based in Nelson, providing support to the socially disadvantaged and excluded, in particular, Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Muslim communities, to help them overcome barriers they face in their daily lives. Arooj received COVID-19 funding for operational costs to support disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and families in the community. In many recent reports, it has been highlighted that BAME communities, excluded and vulnerable people are more likely to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. This has led to an increase in anxiety, emotional and mental health-related issues amongst these communities.

Arooj has had to deal with an increase in the number of calls for assistance, support and information received from individuals or families. The BAME communities in Lancashire reside in some of the most deprived wards with many suffering from underlying health issues, which are already well documented.

An increase in domestic abuse, unfortunately, individuals or families do not talk about it due to negative consequences; shame, stigma and perceived pressure from extended family and community could lead to a possible breakdown in a relationship.

Family members don't know who to turn to if one of their family members is showing signs of increased stress or anxiety. Parents, wives, children have been unable to visit their loved ones in prison. Some of the elderly have no one visiting them or ringing them, they need help from just talking, taking them shopping or accompanying them on a walk, etc. Many of our clients are not equipped to navigate the system, with some too afraid to access it.

Mohammad Hanif, of Arooj, said: "The lives of people in our community have been knocked out of kilter. **People are scared about catching the virus, have worries about business, employment and their families and are often not sure what to do**".



The effects of this pandemic are going to be felt not just now but over the coming months and even years.

"The Lancashire COVID-19 Fund has supported us in being able to provide a helping service for those that need it, whether that's being a confidential listening ear over the phone, providing advice and guidance, a socially-distanced visit to someone's home to deliver shopping or taking people out for a walk to get out of the house."

Project funding: Providing support for vulnerable BAME communities that are struggling due to effects of the pandemic.

Project funding: Delivery of a range of therapeutic art and craft sessions for vulnerable people that are struggling due to isolation.

Motiv8-Lancs CIC in Hyndburn provides a wide range of structured, meaningful educational learning activities for adults with a learning or physical disability, for people with mental health needs or for people who are socially isolated.

For their clients who were stuck at home, they provided weekly craft kits to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Clients cannot read or write therefore rely on visual resources to keep them stimulated while feeling a sense of achievement and participating in familiar activities gave them comfort of what they normally do at Motiv8 but in their own home. These activities will make such a big difference in their lives.

Tracy Robinson, Managing Director said:

“Our clients are facing many issues as they rely on familiarity and structure of their daily life, they cannot communicate and interact with their friends, they will find it hard to understand what is happening and why they cannot attend our centre. Now they are socially isolated, and some of their family members are not coping very well because of their challenging behaviours and disabilities that they have.”



Project funding: Providing telephone contact with patients, and producing weekly activity packs dropped off at homes of vulnerable people.

Trinity Hospice in Blackpool adapted their service with a grant to provide telephone contact with patients and produce weekly activity packs delivered to their homes.

Trinity Hospice said: “During the Covid crisis, our terminally ill day therapy patients have become increasingly isolated. Classed as a high risk they have been shielding at home and unable to attend our weekly sessions. **It has had a devastating effect on some: they live alone, their palliative treatments have been cancelled - some say they have felt like giving up.**

We don't know when it will be safe enough to re-open Day Therapy, but our staff have been maintaining telephone contact with all our patients. Communications and Grants Manager Shirley Morgan said: “The speed with which the grant was given was a huge help and has enabled us to cover some extra costs, as well as fund some keep-in-touch activities. We are very grateful because our fundraising has been badly hit”.

“Day Therapy is so important to our patients who face the challenge of terminal illness but want to get the most out of life.

The Covid-19 crisis has interrupted this in a way we could never have anticipated and staying in touch over recent weeks has proved vital”.

Digital Inclusion, tackling the lack of internet access - types of projects funded:

The pandemic has revealed the extent of inequality regarding digital and online capabilities for many families across the county. This has had a particular impact on Education, Home-working and Social isolation.

Project funding: Delivery of online support sessions for vulnerable families.

Youth Action in Blackburn.

Amar Abbas, CEO of Youth Action, said: "Having access to tablets and laptops and the ability to be able to get online during this pandemic has become vital – in particular, for economically deprived families, households with several children without enough devices to support learning and also those who have been made redundant. Youth Action has been able **to help tackle digital exclusion by delivering laptops and tablets for those in need.** We've also provided weekly online interactive sessions, including cookery classes, wellbeing workshops, to keep parents and children connected and stimulated. The Community Foundation for Lancashire has been a huge source of support in helping us deliver these programmes."

Project funding: Large scale strategic digital inclusion grant to provide digital devices and internet to vulnerable adults over 60 across all districts of Lancashire.

SELNET - Countywide project.

Liz Tapner, CEO of Selnet, said: "With this grant funding we have changed lives, reduced isolation and loneliness and enabled those in a generation where there has been a reluctance to use technology.

The project has initiated new learning, improved general wellbeing, and opened new horizons for the many residents in Lancashire who have benefited.

We rolled out and publicised the project as 'Digital Freedom 50+ Lancashire' promoting the offer through all media channels. Using our network, we very quickly compiled a list of 'distribution' partners. Partners who were working directly with residents in crisis and really struggling. The partners were able to identify those residents whose loneliness and isolation was becoming so much worse due to the pandemic. The response was epic! We brought together forty-five organisations able to support individuals to apply for a device with connectivity to help combat digital isolation.

Support did not end once the device had been given. Partners went on to set up the clients' devices with useful applications and clear instructions. They provided training on how to make the most of the applications (access services, cost savings, communications, social media etc), and gave advice and help with sourcing connections and data packages appropriate for older people. The results have been amazing! Successful delivery has brought about positive change for many of the individuals we have supported. Worries around financial matters were supported with online provision and in turn health and wellbeing has begun to improve."



Financial Inclusion, support to access benefits and debt advice - types of projects funded:

The economic uncertainty, hardship, and rising unemployment has created increased pressure on those facing financial difficulties.

Project funding: Creating a dedicated helpline providing expert money, debt, and benefits advice and advocacy to people experiencing financial distress or hardship due to the impact of Covid-19.

Project funding: For vital equipment to continue the debt advice service.

Preston-based **Lancashire Community Finance** is a not-for-profit community finance organisation.

Those in poverty and with insecure/volatile incomes often experience multi-layered money, debt, and housing concerns. Using their knowledge of local and national policy, LCF provide practical remedies to those suffering from financial exclusion. Manager Elaine Rimmer said: “The COVID-19 Community Support Fund has helped us to operate a dedicated helpline; telephone, email and Zoom providing expert money, debt, and benefits advice and advocacy to people experiencing financial distress or hardship due to the impact of COVID-19 remotely from home. We provided support to people who would never have contacted an organisation such as Lancashire Community Finance in the past. **The current pandemic has hit large numbers of our community who felt they had nowhere to turn.**”

CAP Rossendale is a counselling charity providing a free, home-based debt service.

With the pandemic putting significant financial pressure on local households across Rossendale, it has had to re-design its services to telephone-based consultations and remote befriending. It is also supporting clients with emergency food, fuel and mobile phone top-ups.

Manager Jane Morris said:

“Three-quarters of our clients are out of work and on benefits, whilst a third have considered taking their own lives. We are talking about people who have experienced significant life events or trauma, such as a relationship breakdown, mental ill-health or bereavement that has led them to fall into financial difficulties. They are on incredibly tight budgets, often with a lack of basic needs and the pandemic has added to those barriers they were already facing.

The Lancashire COVID-19 funding we received has been really timely, enabling us to purchase the appropriate equipment to help us continue to provide vital services remotely such as video conferencing and the purchase of mobile data so that they can access our support, and we can help relieve some of that pressure they are under and continue to work with creditors, to build a budget and enable people to become debt-free.

The pandemic has created many challenges, but we have been able to remain open and available to support those most in need.”



Examples of press and social media coverage demonstrating the impact of COVID-19 funding

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Business

Lancashire Covid-19 Community Support Fund seeks to raise £1m

A Lancashire emergency fund has been created to support those in most need across the county during the Covid-19 pandemic.

By Gayle Rounsvell
Thursday 15th April 2020, 10:24 am
Updated Thursday 16th April 2020, 10:25 am



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1. Lancashire estate makes top 10% of restaurants worldwide
2. Up to 300 new homes in pipeline for Lancaster district
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The fund will award grants to support community organisations providing vital services such as foodbanks, delivery of fresh food parcels to vulnerable people, and telephone and online services offering financial and other support.

The Community Foundation for Lancashire (CFL) – which is managing all donations received to the fund, ensuring they reach the most vulnerable

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Community Foundation doubles fundraising target

BY TIM ALDRED
Jun 10 2020

Lancashire responding
Together, supporting the most vulnerable
Lancashire COVID-19 Community Support Fund

On achieving its goal of £1m in donations, the Community Foundation for Lancashire is now hoping to raise £2m in aid of individuals and families affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Lancashire COVID-19 Community Support Fund hit its seven-figure target within two months of its launch, including £907,830 from the

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News
29th June

£1.3m raised for people in need in Lancashire

By Robert Kelly | @robertkelly83
News Reporter



Denise Park, CEO of Blackburn with Darwen Council

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Commented

IMO @imocharity · 21h

We have been out again today delivering #foodparcels to local residents of @blackburndarwen. Thanks to our #dedicated volunteers for giving up their valuable time. Thanks to @Lancsfoundation & @NatEmergTrust for financially funding the parcels. #LancsCOVIDFund #StayAtHome 🏠





Who we are

The Community Foundation for Lancashire (CFL) provide advice and professional support to individuals, families, and businesses looking to maximise the impact their charitable giving has at a local level. We help individuals and organisations give to causes that matter to them by managing funds. The managed funds address areas where there is the greatest need and how it will have the greatest impact, especially in local communities.

As a registered charity (1068887), established in 2007, The Community Foundation for Lancashire has distributed over **£16 million** to community groups, organisations, and projects across the county. CFL has a team of experienced and expert staff who offer a bespoke service to each of our donors, spending time understanding their charitable aims and then offering advice to direct their giving.

Our due diligence support and grant assessment services make charitable giving tax-efficient, robust and easy. Reputational management and demonstrating the impact of philanthropic funds is at the core of what we do.

We specialise in supporting small, grassroots charities, and community organisations who deliver critical and specialist support to the most vulnerable in our communities. Often these groups are less publicly well-known and therefore traditionally less well-funded even though they provide an invaluable service.

The Community Foundation for Lancashire is part of a network of 46 Community Foundations in the UK and over 1,800 worldwide, which are creating social change and improving people's quality of life. Each Community Foundation is a charity in its own right, responding to a specific geography.

We are the Community Foundation for Lancashire

CALL TO ACTION – WE NEED YOUR HELP

As of February 2021, The Community Foundation for Lancashire has reached the point where all pledged emergency funding has been received and distributed whilst the pandemic and its effects continue to be felt throughout our communities. How to meet the demand for more resource is a concern and should be for any key stakeholder in the community including public sector organisations, businesses, and any individual in a position to offer resources and support.

The purpose of this document is to give not just a snapshot of our response to the pandemic but a call to action to continue support for the medium to long term.

Key Contacts

If you would like to find out how you can get involved, contact:

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Owen Phillips Development Manager – 07595 921 601 | owen.phillips@cflm.email

Lancashire Responding, COVID-19 Community Support Fund