

Why Community Foundations?

Encouraging local philanthropy

The main reason that community foundations exist is to encourage and support local philanthropy that is a rewarding experience for the donor. Giving through a community foundation is simple, straightforward and offers individual and corporate donors the immensely satisfying experience of making a lasting difference in their local community.

What's different about giving through a community foundation?

Giving comes alive

Many donors are not satisfied with writing cheques from a distance, they want to learn about their community and get involved with organisations that are meeting local needs. People giving through a community foundation can be as involved in the process as they want to be:

- ◆ Some donors meet with potential recipients on 'seeing is believing' tours and annual celebration events, such as those organised by Quartet Community Foundation.
- ◆ Some donors learn more about giving by attending events such as the 'Focus on Philanthropy' lunches hosted by Leeds Community Foundation.
- ◆ Some donors receive profiles describing potential projects, such as those researched and written by staff at Scottish Community Foundation.
- ◆ All donors can count on professional standards from community foundation staff who adhere to accredited 'donor care plans' which ensure, for example, weekly eBulletins, regular meetings and continuous feedback on how money is being spent and what it has achieved.

Giving is hassle-free

Donors can concentrate on the important and enjoyable experience of giving, without the administrative burden attached to setting up a family trust or private foundation. A fund can be established with a simple agreement in just one meeting. Community foundations take care of all legal and tax requirements, as well as grant administration such as writing cheques, tracking recipients and keeping records. Experienced investment managers ensure that donations are professionally managed in pooled funds for maximum efficiency.

Expert advice ensures effective giving

Community foundations are the vital link between local donors and local needs, connecting people with causes and enabling donors to achieve far more than they ever could by themselves. Because community foundations are independent and 'cause neutral', their expert advice and extensive local knowledge can help donors to make a lasting impact in the areas they care most about.

Typical donor services offered by community foundations



CASE STUDY

Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland

This community foundation offered all its major donors a meeting with a Board member to review their fund. Almost half said they were perfectly happy with their funds and felt no need to attend a meeting. The rest were overwhelmingly happy with the contact and level of service received. Fund managers have addressed all the minor issues that were raised and the whole process of 'quality checking' has been considered a useful learning experience by staff and donors alike.

Suitable for both new and experienced philanthropists

Community foundations provide extensive support for people who are just starting to give as well as exciting opportunities for more experienced philanthropists. Levels and methods of giving are tailored to suit each individual giver:

- ◆ Donors with sufficient resources may choose to establish a fund named after themselves or a loved one, which can support a range of causes over time.
- ◆ Some donors will pool their contributions with other donors into a 'themed fund' to support a favourite cause, such as children or the environment.
- ◆ Other donors decide to become a member of their local community foundation for an annual fee.

Donors are part of a powerful yet personal network

In 2005–06, the community foundations made grants totalling around £70 million and helped to build up endowments to support future needs, worth £144 million. A further £28 million is held in pledges and legacy promises.

The scale of the collective impact of all donors giving through community foundations is therefore impressive, yet each individual donor receives a personalised service tailored to their own needs and interests.

Community foundations are the ideal partner for local corporate philanthropy

Many companies choose to hand over the running of their charitable activities to a local community foundation, enabling staff to focus on raising funds and enjoy giving it away without having to deal with the paperwork.

'In Good Company', the corporate membership scheme run by Community Foundation for Merseyside, offers the services of a dedicated corporate social responsibility manager. Members have gained an array of benefits including positive public relations, extensive press coverage and networking opportunities.



Community
Foundation
Network

Registered company no. 2651777;
registered charity no. 1004630
www.communityfoundations.org.uk

Acclaim for our encouragement of local philanthropy

"'In Good Company' is a great opportunity for us to put something back into the community. We're delighted to support and initiate such a wide range of projects that benefit those living and working in the sub-region."

Member of a community foundation corporate membership scheme

"I have found people I can trust; people who really understand what I want to achieve. Not only do they research the projects I am keen to support but they also suggest projects that they know might interest me. It is a close partnership which I value greatly."

Individual donor giving through a named fund

CASE STUDY

Matthew Bowcock

"After selling my business in 2000, my wife and I set up a charitable foundation. Our initial giving was not particularly satisfying, not through want of good causes to support, but because it was passive, reactive giving. Then we set up a fund at a community foundation, which opened my eyes to a number of things.

First, a range of different projects were brought to us and I began to understand a lot more about my local community. For instance, we've funded a project at our local sailing club which sent instructors on a training course to coach them how to teach disabled kids. We've also funded the purchase of computers in the local community centre. These are wonderful projects which were right on our doorstep that I wasn't even aware of.

I've also come to meet some extraordinary people in the community, people with enormous tenacity and commitment to the cause. One of the key strengths of community foundations is connecting the 'do-ers' with the donors. They are able to open the eyes of donors to opportunities where they can have an effect and trigger their involvement in projects and they can also help to make the distribution of wealth through philanthropy be effective, just and directed to where the need is."