



# A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

Responding together to  
the Covid crisis 2020/21



# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR TO END MARCH 2021

Record grant-making  
**£5.2m+**

Record donations and income  
**£16.7m+**

Endowment Fund value  
**£56.6m+**

Grants benefitted  
**591,981**  
people

The children featured on the covers of this booklet are enjoying the safe and welcoming spaces at Bath City Farm. Thank you to Jennifer Kelly for allowing us to use these photos.

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# A COMMUNITY RESPONSE

No organisation has remained untouched by the Covid pandemic, but each one has been affected in a different way. Virtually overnight, local charities and community groups felt the full force of its impact, making already challenging conditions overwhelming. Many had been delivering vital services face to face but struggled as staff were forced to work remotely and without essential equipment. Others who had developed shops and cafes had no choice but to close the doors - losing, in an instant, their main source of income. The community and voluntary sector found itself fighting to maintain services at the very time that demand was increasing.

*“Quartet dug deep, drawing on the experience, knowledge and funding base built up over more than three decades.”*

We needed to act fast. We launched our Covid Emergency Response just before the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown; our first emergency grant was made on Day 1. In one year, we assessed and awarded grants to a value of £5.2 million, the majority addressing Covid related needs.

For Quartet, our experience of the pandemic has deepened our sense of purpose and reconfirmed our place as a charity closely connected to our local communities. It has highlighted the immense value of our Endowments and close and trusted relationships with fund holders, many of whom provided additional financial support for the response fund.

We received innumerable funding requests and it wasn't always easy to decide who and what to support. To help, we drew upon local experts with experience of working within our communities.

We are indebted to those who committed their time voluntarily to our grant decision panels.

Our Chief Executive Suzanne Rolt (left) with our Chair Sue Mountstevens



This report shares the journey Quartet has been on. It highlights organisations we have worked with, and through, to support our communities. It also looks ahead, sharing our plans to continue supporting them as they begin the long road to recovery and a more secure future.

**Suzanne Rolt, Chief Executive**

*“For Quartet, our experience of the pandemic has deepened our sense of purpose.”*

# WORKING HAND IN HAND WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

We live in a rapidly changing world, but the rate and depth of change triggered by the pandemic has been astonishing.

Early on, we could see the pandemic would strike at those already most disadvantaged, not least older people and those with disabilities. It was also clear that people already experiencing racial inequity would be disproportionately affected.

Our longstanding relationships with local organisations meant that we received first-hand accounts of the problems being faced within our communities. Many had the experience and skills to respond, but few had surpluses to fall back on or the resources to address the sheer scale of the challenge.

There was no single blanket issue, but food provision, digital poverty and mental health and wellbeing

were key issues from the outset. As time passed, we received requests for assistance to adapt services and to work online. These included help and advice for victims of domestic abuse, carers, and families facing unemployment and poverty. There were also requests from organisations to help with short-term capacity issues: many were working flat out and conscious of the need to take stock and plan for the future.

Quartet is not an organisation that operates in isolation. We understand the value of working in partnership and drawing on the expertise of others. We recognise the need to be flexible when organisations are confronting exceptional circumstances.

Twice-weekly meetings early in the pandemic allowed us to identify needs and share knowledge with

local experts and practitioners such as Black South West Network. Consulting widely, we created a proposal to support our key community hubs and services, foster local community action and help those facing the worst disadvantage. Our response and grant programmes evolved in step with successive phases of the pandemic, moving from the emergency stage into recovery and resilience.

Quartet's membership of a UK wide network of community foundations also led to it becoming a portal for national emergency funding flowing into the West of England. By aligning this with local giving, organisations needed only make a single application, rather than multiple ones. A simple approach but one much appreciated by hard pressed community groups.

**47%** of groups said their grant led to improved access to services and support

**IMPACT**

As the effects of the pandemic worsened, our fund holders responded generously, trusting us to use our knowledge to work swiftly and in a highly coordinated manner. They were joined by new donors, including individuals, companies and charitable trusts. Together, we were able to distribute a record £5.2 million across the year.

Overleaf is a selection of projects that our grants supported, spread across Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset. Regardless of grant size, each one was targeted in a way that really made a difference to people's lives.\*

# MAKING AN IMPACT

Number of grants

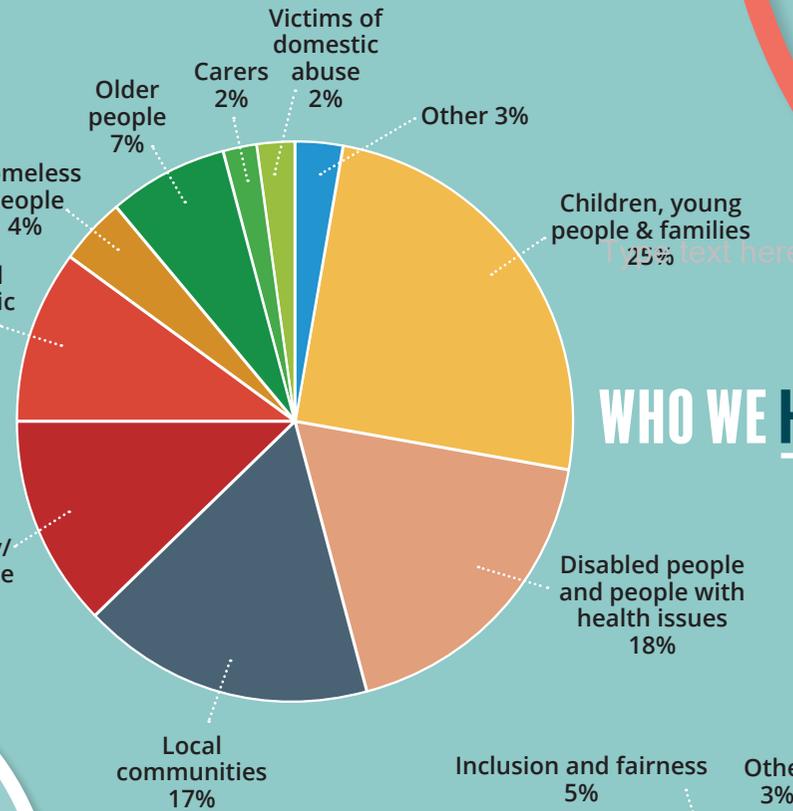
**388**

Every **£1** of grant funding from Quartet enabled community groups to unlock an extra **£1.76** from other sources

\*We analysed a sample of 113 of the 226 end of grant reports we'd received so far, looking for the direct and indirect impacts of our funding. The impact statistics shared here show you what we found.

\*\* £2,574,327 forms part of our total annual giving of £5.2m in 2020/21

Covid-related funding **£2,574,327\*\***

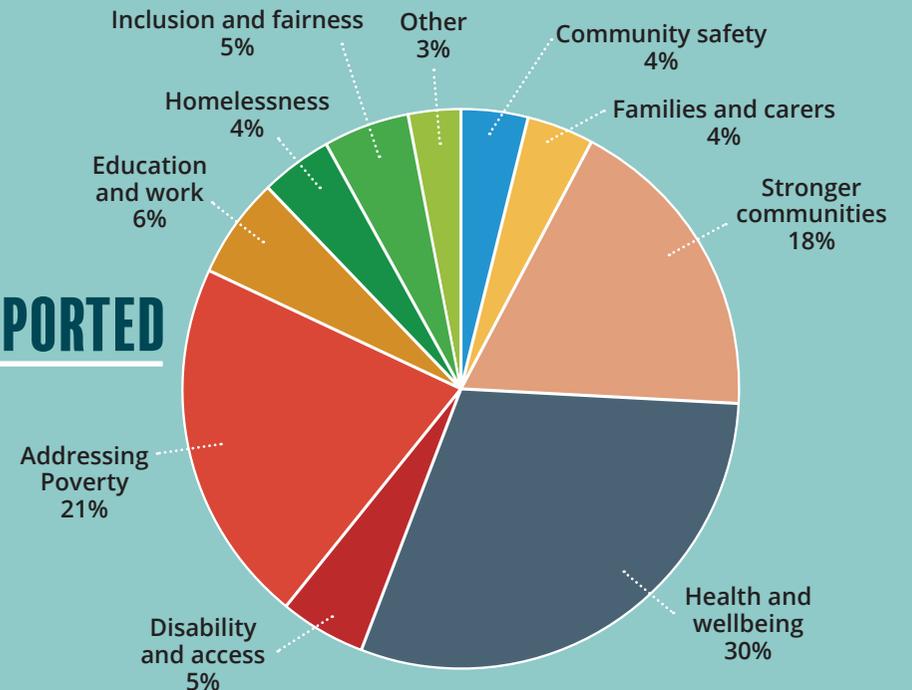


## WHO WE HELPED

**58%** of groups said their grant led to improvements in mental health and wellbeing

IMPACT

## WHAT WE SUPPORTED



# OUR GRANTS TARGETING URGENT NEEDS

## Feeding Bristol

Feeding Bristol has played a crucial role coordinating food provision in Bristol throughout the pandemic. Working closely with partners, they've ensured that people across the city have had access to essential supplies when they needed them. A grant of £52,367 allowed them to continue their coordinated response to the immediate crisis and to lay foundations for longer-term support for families in need.

The grant supported a host of projects:

- Families in food poverty were given food parcels, cooked meals and essentials through a range of community projects across the city
- Bristol National Food Service and The Children's Kitchen used a share of the grant to develop growing spaces, enabling greater education and engagement in food growing in the communities they support
- Learning Partnership West, St Paul's Adventure Playground and Oasis Academy at Long Cross developed their community kitchen spaces to help provide longer-term, sustainable support for their respective communities.

Grant amount

**£52,367**

*Food provision  
& essential items*

*This investment in community growing and kitchens will increase access to food and food education in areas of the city where these have been lacking, providing a positive legacy from the crisis response.*



## CVS South Gloucestershire

The pandemic has seen an inspirational rise in people volunteering to support their own communities. Informal groups, as well as local charities, quickly got much-needed support to people who were shielding or isolating

Grant amount  
**£16,848**  
*Stronger communities*

and to those struggling to put food on the table. A grant of £16,848 enabled CVS South Gloucestershire to offer these groups support and training, to pay volunteer expenses and to help them link in with others. This has provided safe, timely and joined-up help to people across South Gloucestershire that has continued beyond the first lockdown. One of the groups supported was Mama's, who said:

“We have received all the items that CVS ordered for us from the Quartet grant and we are so beyond chuffed & thankful! It's wonderful we are all working together to do so much good in the community.”

## The Strawberry Line Cafe

The Strawberry Line Cafe runs a much-loved cafe and cycle hire service at Yatton railway station. One of the cafe's main aims is to provide paid jobs, training and work experience for adults with learning disabilities. The group lost income during the first lockdown, but a grant of £5,000 covered the cost of their overheads while the cafe was closed.

## Alabaré Christian Care and Support

Alabaré offers 33 beds across North Somerset for homeless adults. As residents live near each other in shared homes, additional equipment like kettles and toasters, and practical measures were needed to keep residents safe and supported in the event of an outbreak. A grant of £5,000 has enabled their living spaces to be more self-contained, and therefore safer, and given residents greater access to online support.



Grant amount  
**£5,000**  
*Disability & access*

“Coronavirus has made us scared. We are grateful for not being forgotten.”

Grant amount  
**£5,000**  
*Homelessness*

## Bath Mind and Citizens Advice

Covid has presented people with huge challenges. Uncertainty, unemployment and new benefits claims systems have put a strain on society, on people's mental health and wellbeing. A grant of £10,000 supported staff at Bath Mind and Citizens Advice Bath & North East Somerset to work more closely together during the pandemic.

Funding has helped by:

- Alleviating acute stress and financial anxiety
- Supporting local people through complicated systems, to get the money they are entitled to
- Empowering people to become more resourceful and resilient during exceptionally worrying times and
- Helping people who had nowhere else to turn.

*The groups have since secured further funding from a national funder that will enable this successful partnership to continue.*

Grant amount  
**£10,000**  
*Health & wellbeing*

**IMPACT**

**42%** of groups said their grant led to reduced social isolation

“Quartet Community Foundation has an even more critical role to play in the post-pandemic world. Charities are going to encounter increasing challenges and it is likely that one of the fastest growing areas of income will be via an increasing number of philanthropists. Quartet's ability to target funding where it is most needed, will be a vital incentive in engaging with philanthropists and increasing their donors. Thank you for all your support - it really is a lifeline.” Bath Mind

## Sea Mills Community Initiatives

It's been difficult for people shielding to feel safe outdoors in public spaces. So Sea Mills Community Initiatives wanted to offer their community garden as a safe, secluded spot for precious hours of exercise and access to nature.

Grant amount  
**£1,473**  
*Inclusion & fairness*

A grant of £1,473 enabled them to set aside a day a week for bookable garden sessions. Young families came, including some with specific health needs, and felt they could let the children play without worrying who they might bump into. Older people came who had barely left their homes during lockdown.

## Bath City Farm

Making changes so that groups can provide Covid-safe services has been a key feature of the funding applications we've seen this year. A grant of £8,975 has helped Bath City Farm to create a sheltered outdoor space to hold learning and therapeutic sessions for disadvantaged young people affected by lockdown. Young people themselves were involved in designing and in building the space, which will be dedicated for youthwork sessions in future.

## Black South West Network

Black South West Network (BSWN) supports and advocates for communities experiencing racial inequity through research, influence and tailored support for organisations led by members of those communities. Two grants of £15,000 gave BSWN the capacity to support organisations serving and led by Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities to access Covid-related funding, including Quartet's funding programmes. This has helped tackle the disproportionate impacts of Covid on these communities and sustained crucial community organisations during the crisis.

Grant amount  
**£30,000**  
*Stronger communities*



Grant amount  
**£8,975**  
*Education & work*



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We have shared accounts of how Quartet has directed support to a wide range of local charities and voluntary groups over the past year. Together, they illustrate just how strong, adaptable and resilient our communities have been in the face of immense challenge and uncertainty.

Sadly we all know that the pandemic has not gone away. In many cases it has not only magnified existing problems but created new ones, including mental health challenges for children and young people. Some of these may well be affected by future crises, including the climate emergency.

A return to normality is still a long way off for many, underlined by the fact that our grant-making in the first quarter of 2021/22 has already exceeded the equivalent period last year. And still the applications arrive.

Up until now, Quartet's response to the pandemic has been swift and dynamic, but the recovery will require sustained work over many years. Our fund holders, donors and supporters are committed to addressing the needs of the communities closest to their hearts.

In turn we are always here, ready to ensure their giving makes the biggest impact and delivers on their philanthropic aims. The reality though is that still more is needed.

**IMPACT**

**46%** of groups said their grant ensured their services could continue

**IMPACT**

**45%** of groups said their grant increased their capacity

## IMPACT

**49%** of groups reported that funding had a positive impact beyond the grant period

## IMPACT

**39%** of groups said their grant increased collaboration between organisations

## This next year will be a crucial one

Our work is far from over. We have a Recovery Programme that is already underway: a coordinated, longer-term plan of action to ensure everyone in the West of England has a fair chance of a good life. We now need your support in order to deliver this.

## Please join us in

### • Essential services & project funding

Helping organisations respond to the immediate needs and aspirations of the people they work with.

### • Sustaining organisations

Enabling organisations to deliver their work in the best possible ways. Prompted by the pandemic, many have adopted highly effective adaptations which now provide them with an alternative way of working long-term.

### • Strategic support

Supporting organisations to work together: addressing common needs and collaborating in order to add value and avoid duplication and competition.

*If you are inspired, and moved to act, by what you have read and would like to discuss how you can support this work, our Chief Executive Suzanne Rolt or our Philanthropy Director Ronnie Brown would love to hear from you. You may want to discuss setting up a new fund with Quartet, add to an existing fund or make a donation. If your particular interest is in Bath and North East Somerset, contact Claire Wynne Hughes or Angela Emms.*

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# HELP THE NEXT GENERATION SEE A POSITIVE **FUTURE**

It's been a year like no other for all of us. Whatever challenge lies ahead, a gift in your Will to Quartet Community Foundation will ensure you continue supporting the local causes you care about, for many years to come.

Thank you for all your support.

