

### **Background Evidence Relating to the Heart of England Community Foundation**

Heart of England Community Foundation, the largest independent grant giving charity in the West Midlands and Warwickshire, is supported through their long-term relationships with corporate patron, Peugeot Motor Company, and local businesses. The organisation has distributed more than £34m since 1995, benefitting an estimated 5.4 million local lives, supporting over 11,000 projects to date.

As an affiliated member of the UK Community Foundation (UKCF), the national network for all accredited Community Foundations across the UK Heart of England Community Foundation has supported community-based organisations since 1995, initially to support Coventry and Warwickshire. In 2013 their footprint extended across Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country. By 2021/22 they managed 48 grant programmes delivering over £3M of investment in the region addressing a range of issues including poverty and disadvantage, homelessness and housing, health and wellbeing, community support and development, mental health, counselling, and advice. During 21/22 they delivered over £885,000 through 237 projects across Birmingham.

### **Partnership arrangement with NNS**

- Successful formal partnership arrangement as the Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS) Grant Maker for Birmingham City Council since being awarded the contract for Northfield and Edgbaston in October 2019.
- The NNS Fund delivers grants to support older people within the wards of Edgbaston and Northfield. They work alongside lead facilitator organisations in Edgbaston and Northfield - Age UK Birmingham, Gateway Family Services and Northfield Community Partnership. The fund supports local community projects that improve social and physical activity, transport and mobility, benefitting underrepresented groups and delivering arts and cultural activities. £390,000 Grants budget per year.
- Heart of England has successfully organised match funding of £386,288.70 into Edgbaston & Northfield since 2019.

### **Examples of other funding managed:**

- Since January 2012 longstanding relationship with CBS managing funding as part of the CBS Charitable Foundation, involving managing their grant programmes across Coventry and Warwickshire, providing extensive experience of managing funding programmes and reach into those

communities to ensure funding has greatest reach and impact. CBS recently awarded Heart of England Community Foundation an additional £100k to support community organisations through the cost-of-living crisis.

- Since April 2017 Heart of England Community Foundation has received funding of £400k from the Wesleyan Foundation for Wesleyan Assurance, to manage and deliver their nationwide grant giving programmes, delivering their small and large programmes and donor directed activity, working with 7 sister Community Foundations for small grant delivery across the UK. Heart of England Community Foundation's proven expertise, knowledge and reach to attract small voluntary led organisations which Wesleyan want to ensure can access their grants has proven an asset to this funding partnership.
- £1M from Warwickshire County Council in 2022 to deliver a capital and revenue programme.
- Building Better Opportunities £5M, funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund. Supported Building Better Opportunities Community Matters which was a 3-year employability programme in the Black Country. Launched in 2016, the £5M project enabled Heart of England Community Foundation to work with an initial 19 local partners to deliver a range of services tackling barriers to employment. The evaluation deemed the programme to be effective with evidence showing:
  - clear relationship between the role of Community Matters in engaging workless people from vulnerable groups and locations.
  - 11% of participants gained employment (national average 10%)
  - while a further 13% moved into further education or training (national average 6%)
  - Excellent value for money, with an estimated £5.78 of social value per each £1 spent!
  - Carefully selected delivery partners with deep understanding of their communities, who were known and trusted.
  - Many delivery staff had lived experience.
  - Services provided were tailored to people's needs
  - Support was an alternative to mainstream services,
  - Based in community settings

- Partners often offered informal drop-in sessions in warm and welcoming environments.
- Many delivery partners had been operating long before the programme.
- £4million Building Better Lives – Capital programme supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

### **Diversity and equality in communities served**

Heart of England Community Foundation has experience of delivering in a range of diverse communities through management of funds including:

- LGBTQ fund in Coventry,
- BAME artists and arts organisations
- Supporting diverse communities in Aston, Birmingham.
- NNS fund for older adults and younger adults with additional needs
- Ukrainian refugees.

### **External validation**

Heart of England Community Foundation has 27 years' experience in delivering bespoke grant programmes against a donor's priorities and can target funds to a specific geography, community, or theme. Long-standing relationships with donors are testimony to the quality of their work.

### **Accreditation**

Quality Accreditation 5 of UK Community Foundations (UKCF) network quality accreditation is undertaken every 3 years. It is a lengthy, evidence-based process but provides an excellent opportunity to sound check the way they work, governance, policies, procedures, board, and future planning. They scored exemplary against their 3-year financial pipeline, strategy, and board composition in terms of age, gender, and diversity.

### **Awards**

- In August 2020 Heart of England Community Foundation were recipients of Charity Today's Community Impact Award. The Charity Today Awards are national accolades with a long history of recognising excellence throughout the sectors. The nomination came following their response to the Coronavirus pandemic, recognising commitment to the community.
- Excellence in Charity / Third Sector at the Solihull Chamber of Commerce Awards 2022.