



Community Capacity and Resilience Fund (CCRF)

Round Four
Evaluation
Report

June 2020

Summary

About

The Community Capacity and Resilience Fund (CCRF) allows small third sector organisations to access Scottish Government funding that would otherwise be out of reach.

Awards

Grants totalling £438,746 were awarded to deliver 53 projects. The average grant awarded by the Fund in this round was £8,300, and evidence shows that the Fund is reaching its intended audience - grassroots organisations with an income of £250k or less - as the average income of the organisations who were awarded CCRF during this Round was £98.6k. Furthermore, 86% of the workforce of the 52 organisations funded are volunteers.

Impact

CCRF is being used in innovative ways by organisations to tackle the impact of welfare reform and poverty that is being experienced in their own communities. In Round Four the projects and services delivered reflected the growing need to address access to benefits including Universal Credit, with 47% of CCRF projects providing support to overcome this and 30% of CCRF projects provided support to address food poverty.

Frontline Funding

Funding the frontline directly, and therefore trusting community-based organisations to develop targeted and effective solutions, is a successful means of alleviating the effects of welfare reform, poverty and social exclusion. 98% of organisations reported that the Fund was extremely helpful in meeting the needs of their communities and 79% of the organisations reported that the key partnerships formed and developed in the delivery of projects could not have happened without it.

Approach

The Fund's flexible, light-touch and supportive approach is valued by organisations as well as the space provided for peer support and sharing of learning.

Context

Launched in April 2015, the CCRF is a pilot funding scheme which assists community-based third sector organisations with an annual income of £200,000 or less to pilot innovative and creative projects, and increase their capacity to deliver their core services to mitigate the impact of welfare

reform and social inequality. Grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 were available to deliver activity over a six month period.

The ambition for the scheme was to deliver funding directly to the frontline, providing resource and capacity to organisations with unique insight into the needs of their communities. The Fund's focus on supporting grassroots organisations in their funding applications means that those who have their fingers on the local pulse and know their communities' needs have a better chance of receiving funding, rather than being out-bid by organisations with the resource to submit more competitive applications.

Since 2015 we have continually listened to feedback from organisations and reflected on our own practices and this has seen us adapt how the scheme operates. In Round 4, we called for applications from organisations for:

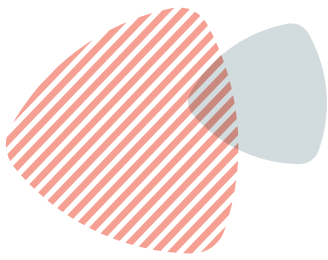
- Funding £1k - £5k to deliver new short- term pilot projects (up to 9 months)
- Funding up to £10k to deliver new 1year pilot projects
- Funding £1k -£5k to increase their capacity to deliver existing services (up to 9 months)
- Funding £1k - £5k to develop their workforce (up to 9 months)

Round 4 seen us continue to support previously funded projects to maximise their impact via continued funding and funding to scale-up activities. This approach also enables organisations to gain confidence in their delivery of a Scottish Government funded project and gather a rich source of evidence of impact to take to other funders.

Round 4 of CCRF was launched in September 2018 inviting new proposals and proposals to scale up and continue activities from existing projects. We received a total of 99 new proposals and following an assessment process we provided grants totalling £217,508 to 30 organisations throughout Scotland to deliver projects/activities from January 2019. These new projects and activities included:

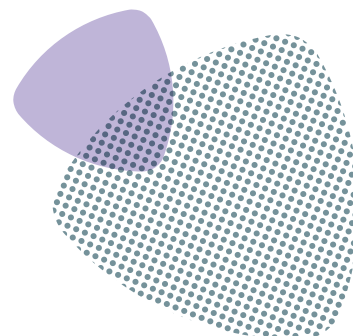
- Two short term pilot projects
- Sixteen one-year pilot projects
- Ten increased capacity activities
- Two workforce development activities

We granted further funding, totalling £221,238 to 23 organisations to scale up their projects and continue delivering for a further year.



This report documents the information gathered via our final evaluation survey distributed to all organisations who received CCRF Round Four grant funding (47 responded) and the information collected from all application forms. The report is divided into the following sections:

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1 CCRF Facts



79%

of respondents said that they could not have developed key partnerships without the fund



96%

of respondents said that the application process was 'easy' or 'very easy'



87%

of respondents said their CCRF projects were extremely helpful in meeting the needs of their community



94%

of respondents said they either 'fully' or 'mostly' achieved what they set out to



83%

of respondents reported unexpected positive achievements



Organisations gained at least

£1.2m

in benefits for claimants



Directly assisted over

4,000

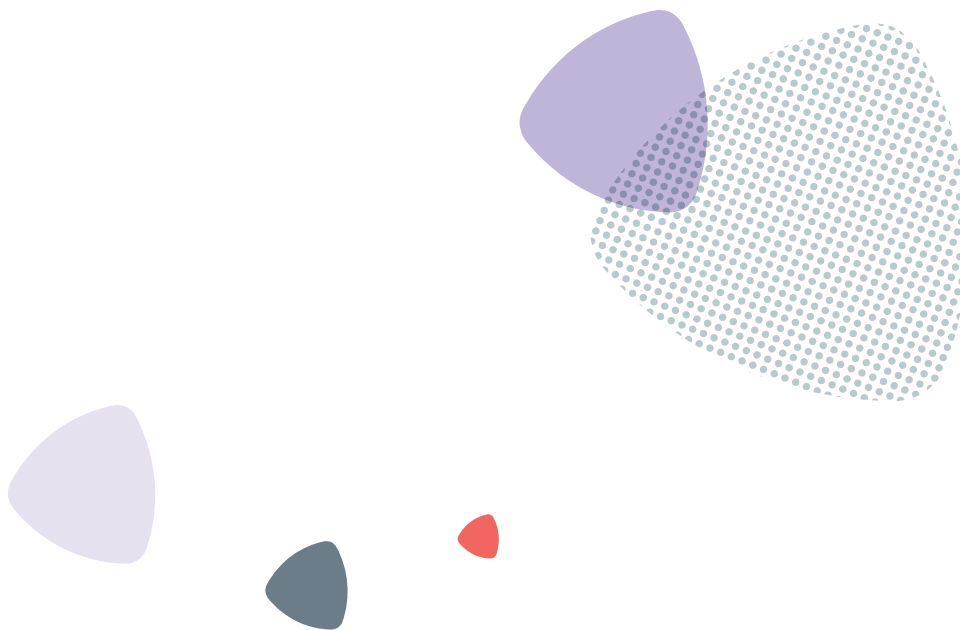
people by providing services and support

2 Engaging with organisations

Our engagement strategy recognised the need to ensure we reached those small community organisations that could benefit. We promoted the fund via SCVO's social media channels, website, bulletins, networks and Third Force News.

We received a total of 99 applications from organisations across 23 local authority areas and the value of these applications was £632,889.

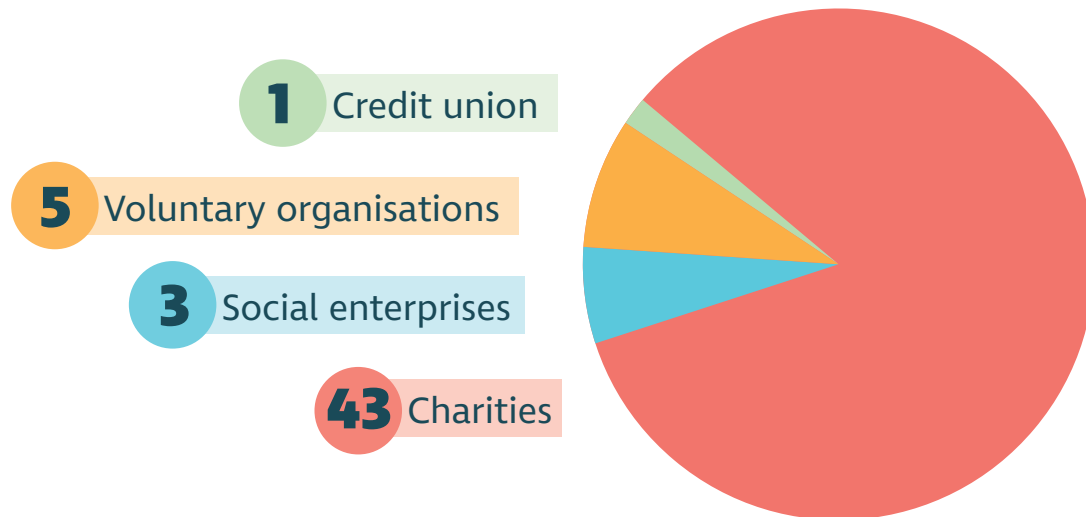
SCVO staff were available to provide support to organisations in relation to the application process and this support included talking through project ideas, identifying potential opportunities and/or constraints, connecting them to other funding/support.



3 Organisational profiles

This information relates to the 52 unique organisations who received CCRF Round Four funding and was gathered from applications: to note one organisation was funded for 2 different projects.

Organisation Type



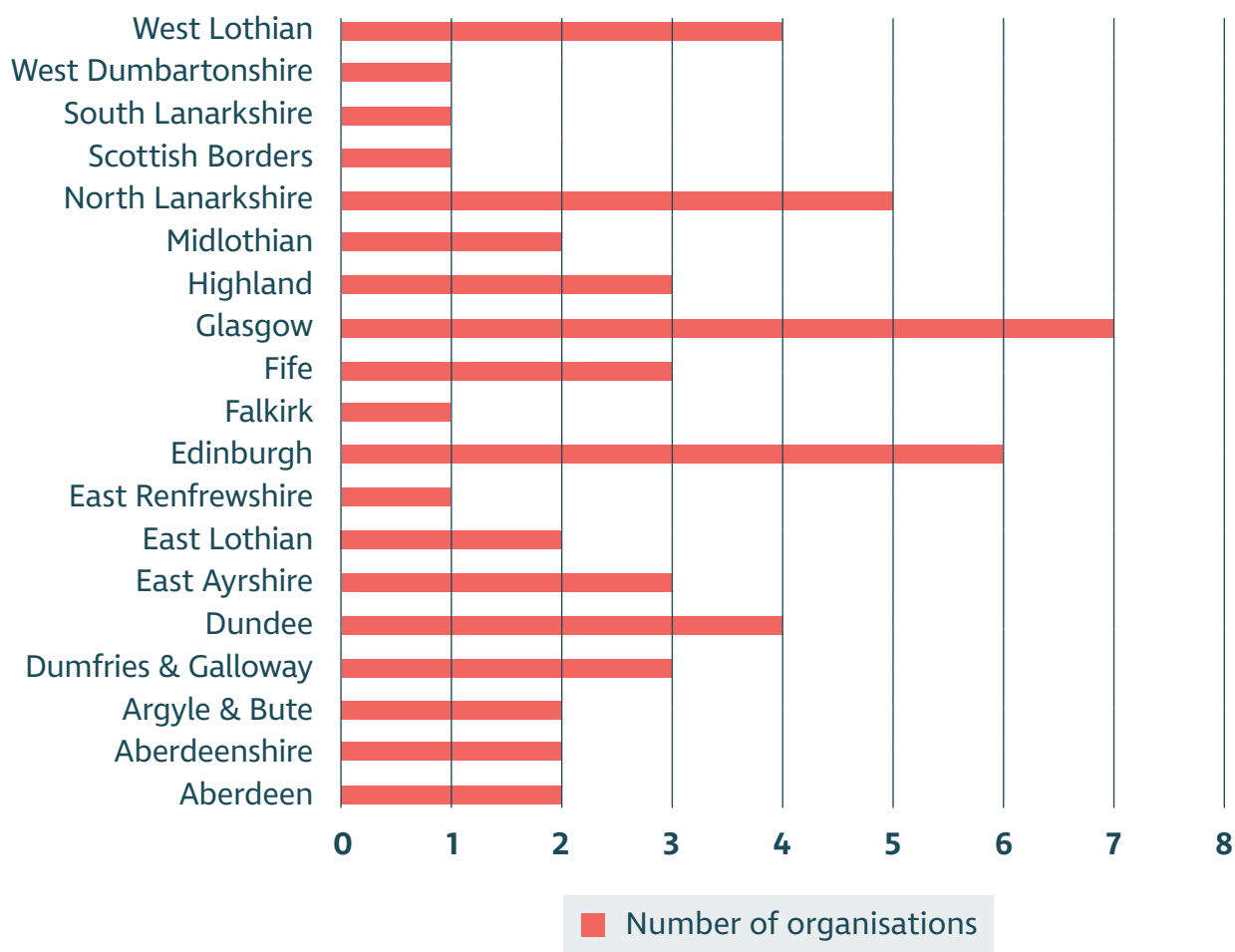
Income and staffing

The average income of the organisations which were awarded CCRF Round Four funding was £98.6k, which shows clear evidence that the Fund is reaching its intended audience of small grassroots organisations.

The staffing levels among these organisations varied, but on average the services delivered by them are done so by 5 paid staff members, supported by an amazing band of volunteers – 1,776 across these 52 organisations.

Local Authority areas

Funding was granted to organisations in 19 local authority areas shown in the table below:



4 Types of projects

The projects and activities funded in Round Four yet again demonstrates the diversity and innovation that exists within the sector and the benefits of directly delivering funding to frontline organisations to provide support to individuals, families and communities.

The average award during Round Four was £8.3k, and perhaps not surprisingly, just under half (47%) of the projects funded were focussed on providing support and services around Universal Credit including adding additional days to existing services to meet increased demand; the introduction of specialist digital support staff; increased outreach services in rural areas and training of staff and volunteers. This was closely followed by projects focussed on food provision (30%) including the development of food bank services to include information and support services, cooking sessions, planting and growing fruit & vegetables, food budgeting, nutrition, up-skilling volunteers and meal provision to children.

We also supported projects/activities involving support to those with disabilities, money management, volunteer development, employability, peer support, befriending and projects supporting social integration and isolation.

Some of the funded projects were directed at specific groups, including Syrian refugees, black and ethnic minority groups, veterans, lone parents, those providing vital kinship care, those aged over 60 years, those with mental health issues, those with additional support needs, school pupils, and pre- school children.

The impact of the Fund will continue to be felt through materials produced, skills developed, equipment purchased and partnerships harnessed as a result of the projects and activities that took place.



5 Fund impact on individuals and families

It is estimated that 17% of Scotland's population, or 900,000 people each year, were living in relative poverty before housing costs in period 2015-18.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2015-18/pages/3/>

This is an increase of 1% on the previous reporting period 2014-2017.

By directly funding third sector organisations to deliver services that help many vulnerable people across Scotland get access to a wide range of support, information and advice the Fund has had an impact on addressing issues that are preventing people from fully participating in communities and achieving their potential. This evaluation has focused on quality of services rather than quantitative research. However, based upon projects which provided figures in their responses, we know that funded projects have gained at least £1.2m in benefits for claimants and directly assisted 4,431 people.

Through the CCRF, people have been supported and empowered to:

- develop new skills via training courses, workshops and volunteering opportunities
- obtain knowledge, awareness and information via community engagement events, audience specific booklets and drop-in services
- increase their resilience and prevent crisis
- engage with their community
- produce recipe booklets, and money management resources
- access financial support

The inclusiveness of the funded projects seen projects and activities having an impact not only individuals, but in the case of Minority Communities Addiction Support Services (MCASS) whole families. MCASS, through their family support and mediation service helped fifteen families to better self-manage and take control of their lives. The Golden Generation (formerly Senior Citizens Glasgow) provided a much need home visit service to support our older generation to access their benefit entitlements and in doing so provided much welcomed social contact for individuals.

Frontline organisation such as these have the knowledge and understanding of the needs within their communities and through this can respond positively to provide support when and where it is needed most.

Fund impact on communities

The CCRF has shown that one of the most effective ways to tackle the pressures of poverty, welfare reform and social inclusion is through facilitating community involvement in the provision of services to more vulnerable members. Of the funded organisations that responded, 87% said the Fund was extremely useful in helping them to meet the needs of their communities.

MAXwell Centre

MAXwell Centre in Dundee set up their “Every1’s Garden –Tend & Share” project. This project has provided members of the local community with alternatives to foodbank parcels. People in the community have increased their knowledge about what can be harvested from the garden, foraged from outdoors, know how produce can be prepared and stored for later and have reported improvements in their diet. Many of the participants in the project faced difficulties such as poor mental health, mobility and communication issues and they reported that attending the workshops gave them something to look forward to and provided peer support out-with the workshops.

Men's Sheds

Because of the remote rural location of Aultbea and the lack of surplus facilities to use, the idea to build a Men’s Shed was conceived. With funding from CCRF Aultbea Men’s Shed was built and fitted out by August 2019. Since then the shed became known within the local community who helped by donating tools and materials. Requests came in from the community for help and the Shed has carried out odd jobs for residents and local churches and made specialised nets for the local fisheries trust. The Shed also helped raise money for the refurbishment of a local church by recycling old pews that could then be sold on thereby allowing the church to also become a community centre, helping a remote community to come together. The Shed is now part of the community and a place for both men and women to come together and participate as much or as little as they wish. The Shed came joint runner up out of 150 entrants in the Scottish Men’s Shed Association “Shed of the year 2019” competition.

Impact on organisations

Partnerships are a crucial element in making organisations more robust in the face of the significant challenges that welfare reform and budget cuts present, and the CCRF recognises this with its collaborative working focus.

The wide variety of partnerships formed by CCRF projects included community organisations, schools, churches, local businesses, housing associations, councils, NHS boards, DWP, jobcentres, colleges, and a range of third sector services. In some cases, these were new partnerships which have increased the impact of funded projects and opened the door to greater collaborative working in the future. Of the funded organisations who responded, 79% said that they could not have developed key partnerships without the fund.

“ Bute Advice Centre

Bute Advice Centre reported that CCRF had enabled a member of staff to meet with partner organisations to promote the project and develop links in the area with Community Learning, Carers Groups, Older Voices Forum and others. This strengthened Bute Advice and made them feel less insular. Bute Advice said

It can be so easy due to pressures of work to lose sight of the benefits of networking when you have back to back client sessions. This funding allowed us the time needed to make valuable progress at an individual's pace and to reach out to partner organisations.

“ Edinburgh Food Project

Edinburgh Food Project, with support from CCRF, transformed Foodbank centres into Support Hubs within which other agencies are present alongside the foodbank allowing clients to easily access further support to help them tackle the root causes of poverty. They said

this year the project has built partnerships we couldn't even have imagined such as Real Jobs providing drop-in service at 3 Foodbanks four times per week...we no longer have partnerships, but relationships with these agencies. The agencies are directly supporting our clients, but they are also supporting Edinburgh Food Project.

6 Lessons learned

1. We listened to feedback from organisations in relation to the funding period and for Round 4 we continued to support short term and longer-term projects and scale up previously funded projects. Furthermore, we supported some projects to consolidate the success they had with their pilots by extending their funding for up to 1 year.
2. Organisations have provided feedback that indicates the support from SCVO in the application process and the access provided to evaluation workshops and a Learning & Sharing has been appreciated:

“ Community Asset Project

The application process was the most easiest and simplest to use application that we have ever used. Pretty straightforward, with less of the unnecessary questions as with other funders.

“ Fostering Compassion

It was also great to have the induction meeting to get clarity on moving forward and in particular, advice and support on evaluation.

“ Centipede

The regular network meetings have been invaluable in meeting up with other CCRF funded projects to share ideas and approaches.

“ Edinburgh Food Project

Of all the funders we have engaged with SCVO CCRF are by far the most supportive, considerate and caring. SCVO CCRF care about the project and the impact it will have on people not just the red tape and stats.

3. Fund recipients reported that the increased capacity provided by the CCRF allows for more resource intensive services such as one-to-one support, peer training of vulnerable people and increased opening hours leading to successful outcomes. The funding also enabled focused support and creative approaches to take place as well as carrying out research which provides a source of information to local people.

“ Lothians Veteran’s Centre

CCRF funding enabled them to extend their housing and employability help service to include evening provision.

“We found the evening meetings put us in contact with a lot of veterans who had slipped through the net and were not engaging with either veterans’ or mainstream services or the wider veteran’s community. There were more people in this category than we expected. Through providing this extended service, Lothian Veteran’s Centre staff have been able to connect previously unengaged individuals into a wide network of support services.”

“ Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network

“I have found this fund to be accessible and helpful to us. The work we did with this fund has helped us try new things that we possibly wouldn’t have been funded to do by others and has helped us shape our services and future plans. The work we did with this fund has shaped our future funding plans and ideas and provided evidence of the need as well as practical ideas for development.

4. By using qualitative rather than quantitative reporting, small community-based organisations were able to provide information on the difference their projects have made to individuals and communities with organisations providing quotes/testimonies from people who have benefitted. Our Learning & Sharing event held midway through the Round 4 delivery period provided grant recipients with the opportunity to come together to share their success to date and challenges faced.



About Youth

“We particularly enjoyed participating in the learning and sharing events hosted by SCVO supporting the CCRF.

It was great to be able to discuss our project with other organisations supported by the fund and to develop new professional partnerships and connections as a result”

5. SCVO took on board feedback from previous rounds regarding our use of on-line surveys to gather information for the evaluation reports, therefore we used a Microsoft word template to gather information for this report. From SCVO’s point of view, this seemed to capture richer qualitative information from organisations.



7 Success stories



Bravehound

Bravehound aim to support a smooth transition back into civilian life, bringing communities together and helping ex-service personnel and their families adjust to living with the visible and invisible wounds of war. They applied to CCRF to deliver a new pilot project 'Finding Your Way' to provide dedicated support to Military veterans with mental health conditions such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder who were being seriously impacted by welfare changes. The funding enabled Bravehound to provide individual sessions with veterans and their families and deliver workshops to help remove the stigma associated with asking for help so that veterans would ask for assistance earlier, and most importantly, that they would be able to provide timely and effective assistance. An example of the impact this project has had is below.

One veteran who we had been concerned about over a number of months, but who assured us that everything was “fine” finally asked if he might see a welfare advisor for an individual advice session. (He watched other veterans come and go, entering the small 'quiet room' where individual advice was given in private, going in looking stressed and coming out looking decidedly happier over a number of weeks)

The next week he arrived, with tears streaming down his face, with 6 carrier bags of unopened bills and mail, he said “This is what you call ‘Bags -for- life, my life. It’s all in here!’”

Over several sessions our advisor assisted this veteran in sorting through all the correspondence. Making payment arrangements for utility bills, shredding all the rubbish, and making a neat file of correspondence that needed to be kept. Not only was she able to sort out what appeared to be an overwhelming avalanche of paperwork and debt, but the veteran had transformed in his posture, and outlook on life.

He was recently assessed for PIP, and his award has been slashed. Instead of panicking and putting his head in the sand, he immediately contacted us, and is now waiting for a mandatory reconsideration. He is calm and able to cope, and we hope that that his appeal will be successful.

What we do know is that he, and other veterans are not afraid or ashamed to ask for help, and that they are more aware of what help is available. This veteran has also engaged in more of our activities and projects and is less isolated than before he engaged with the 'Finding Your Way' project.

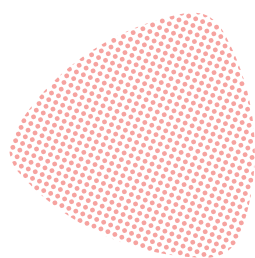
“ Kate's Kitchen

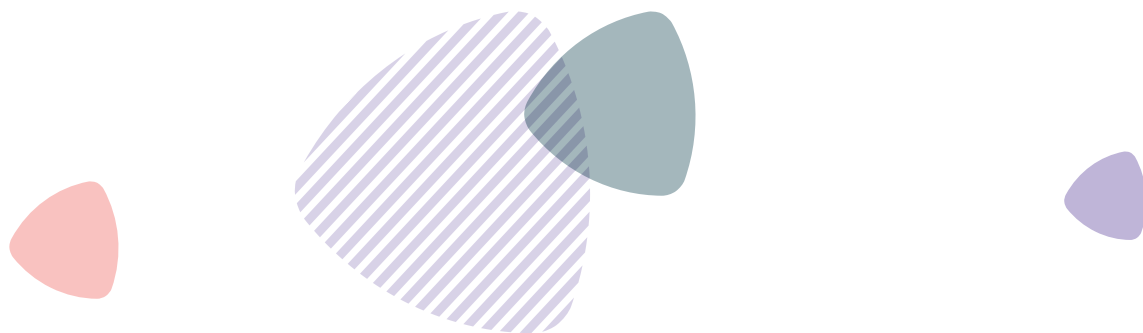
Kate's Kitchen based in Annan, Dumfries & Galloway supports people living in poverty by means of providing a hot meal, foodbank and social activities four days per week. It also supports individuals with issues relating to benefits, housing and debt. The roll out of Universal Credit seen an increase in demand from individuals looking for support to access benefits. With funding from CCRF Kate's Kitchen started their **Positive Transitions** project which aimed to:

- Support 50 individuals to access their benefit entitlements
- Deliver 12 digital universal credit awareness sessions

In doing so improvements in confidence and self-esteem and reductions in feelings of isolation and hopelessness were expected.

Positive Transitions proved a great success and helped 72 individuals access their benefits, delivered 12 awareness sessions and had a positive effect on confidence levels. An example of this is an individual who was referred to the project from the local job centre. He was not computer literate and wanted to learn how to maintain his journal and access Universal Credit online. He attended weekly, working with the support worker to increase his digital skills and whilst there he stayed for a hot meal and got to know some of the other people who attended. Staff could see his confidence growing week by week and when his benefits came through he was delighted and approached project staff about carrying out some volunteering with the project. He completed his induction training and shadowing an existing volunteer and volunteers days per week and according to staff he is a godsend in the kitchen! He told staff “I'm so pleased I was referred here, I love it”.





8 SCVO recommendations

1. Any future Community Capacity & Resilience funding should continue to focus on grassroots organisations
2. Consideration should be given to extending the funding period to more than 1 year and increasing the level of grants
3. Continued accessible support and guidance from SCVO to allow small organisations to compete for funds and deliver projects and services that make a difference to lives of people in their communities.
4. SCVOs grant management of CCRF should be considered as a template for other funding streams targeted at smaller organisations.

At the time of compiling this report the sector is operating in challenging times due to COVID 19 where they are responding to the need to change their service delivery methods to comply with social distancing measures, responding to increased needs and new needs within their community and doing so with often a reduced workforce as staff are furloughed. Any future investment from Scottish Government via this fund should consider addressing emerging needs as a result of COVID 19 and build on lessons learned from the approaches taken by colleagues throughout the sector who have been involved in managing grants in response to COVID 19.

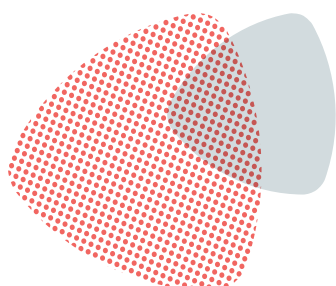


Conclusion

The Community Capacity & Resilience Fund has shown that a flexible, supportive and light-touch approach to grant management is an effective way of enabling grassroots and community based organisations to create projects and activities that meet the needs of their communities and make significant differences to individual lives.

By providing evaluation training, on-going guidance and information these organisations are supported to develop and grow in confidence as they manage Scottish Government funding. This enables them to gather strong qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact which can be used to help them attract and secure further funding.

SCVO will continue to manage any future Community Capacity & Resilience funds in a flexible and supportive manner to enable organisations with unique insight into the needs of their communities to increase their capacity to deliver relevant services to meet increasing needs and emerging needs within the communities they serve to mitigate the impact of welfare reform, poverty and social inequalities.





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