

Charities

The aim of the Community Fund, formerly the National Lottery Charities Board, is to help meet the needs of those at most disadvantage in society, and to improve the quality of life in the community. The Community Fund supports projects that help people play a full part in economic, social and community activities. In particular it supports projects that prevent or reduce further disadvantage.

- By September 2001 the Community Fund had awarded more than 45,000 grants worth a total of more than £2 billion.
- £56 million in small grants has been awarded to 19,000 small community groups.
- Over £525 million has funded charities helping disabled people, nearly £75 million has supported groups dealing with disadvantaged children and over £155 million has gone to projects increasing the quality of life of the elderly.
- The Community Fund is the biggest single funder of community buildings: £100 million over the last three years.
- It is also the largest single funder of the rural voluntary sector: £216 million over the last three years, accounting for 25% of its grant-making budget.

Nevertheless, the figures do not tell the whole story. It is the outcomes in human terms of their projects that have, of course, made the impact.

**COMMUNITY
FUND**
LOTTERY FUNDED



Case Study

Lynemouth Community Trust

Lynemouth Community Trust received £76,696 over two years. Lynemouth is a pit village in Northumberland. The closure of the colliery accelerated the village's decline, epitomised by the shutting down of the Lynemouth Inn. The Trust bought the pub and transformed it into a community centre offering a range of activities. The building has been reinstated at the centre of the community.

Human impact of Community Fund grants

It is people, rather than capital projects, who are directly helped by 85% of the money given out by the Community Fund. But the buildings funded by the Community Fund will also make life easier for people, such as new village halls so that isolated rural communities can have a better social life, or paying for disabled access to an existing community centre.

Many of those funded are among the most vulnerable people in our society: 45% of Community Fund money has gone to people on low incomes and 69% of grants to people who are in some way disadvantaged by poverty, whether as a result of long-term illness, ageing, unemployment or lack of skills. The Community Fund supports projects that seek to minimise or prevent the effects of poverty. For example, considerable funding has supported children, carers and homeless people, who are often trapped in poverty because of the circumstances of their lives. The remaining 31% of Community Fund grants meets the other aspect of their mission: to build up the quality of life in the community. These grants will, for example, pay for an afternoon tea club for older people or pre-school care that allows mothers to find work to support their families.

The Community Fund supports groups who find it difficult to attract funding from other sources. These include those with multiple disability and rare illnesses. They also include beneficiaries who may belong to unpopular sections of the community, such as children excluded from school for difficult and anti-social behaviour or refugees and asylum seekers.

Because of its remit to help those at disadvantage, the Community Fund has supported people beyond their proportion of the population. For example, black and minority ethnic (BME) people currently form 6.5% of the United Kingdom population; the Community Fund has spent 10% of its money on

BME groups. One in five of the population is currently disabled; 45% of the Community Fund's grants under its main grants programmes have helped disabled people, amounting to £240 million over three years.

Helping people to make a difference

People who want to improve their communities can get Lottery money from the joint distributor Awards for All scheme. Many community groups have been established in order to get an Awards for All grant for a small project; 45% of Community Fund grants have gone to groups with an income of less than £5,000 per year. Having found this to be successful, they have grown and come back for larger amounts of money to fund more imaginative schemes to improve their communities, especially those members at greatest disadvantage. The Community Fund has always been committed to reaching those parts of society that other funders do not reach.

Community Fund as a force for developing the voluntary sector

The Community Fund aims to bring about sustainable improvements to communities. One of the ways it has traditionally done this is to build the capacity of the voluntary sector, through making grants to start-up organisations, by improving training and skills in the sector and by funding information and advice services.

Because advocacy and advice groups by their nature have to be independent from political funding, this is an area where the Community Fund has a particularly valuable role; 20% of funding has gone to improving advice and counselling services. Since 1998 the Community Fund has made grants totalling £61 million on voluntary sector development.



Case Study

Emmaus in Glasgow, Scotland

Emmaus in Glasgow, Scotland received a grant of £12,000 over one year. This is a small charity which has set up a self-supporting recycling business run by a community of 20 homeless people. They are carrying out a feasibility study to decide where to set up this exciting community business venture. By working collectively for themselves and helping others in need, homeless people will have the opportunity to move forward. As one person in Glasgow said: "You find other abilities you have inside yourself. You can help others to realise something."