

Grant analysis and impact review FY 20-21

The *elle*
Community
Foundation

Connecting people who care
with causes that matter

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland Our 5 Year Strategy ~ 2019-2024



In a society where everyone can prosper and live in peace; the Community Foundation encourages and supports those who want to give and empower the local community to effect change.

Over the next 5 years we aim to achieve: -

- £30m raised to support local charities
- A stronger, more sustainable, more innovative community sector
- Local communities who have been helped to find their voice and use it
- Safer, stronger, confident individuals and communities who can move forward leaving the past behind them
- A safer NI for people living on the edge

Our Grantmaking FY 20-21



Between **April 2020 and March 2021** we received
2696 grant applications (928 more than FY 19-20)
885 of these were from new applicants
(566 new applicants in FY 19-20)

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Total amount requested
£17,225,561
—————

—————
1401 grants awarded
(711 in FY 19-20)
—————



Approval Rate
60%

(46% FY19-20)

—————
Total amount awarded
£8,821,921 (FY 19-20 £4,075,979)
—————



1600
communities
supported

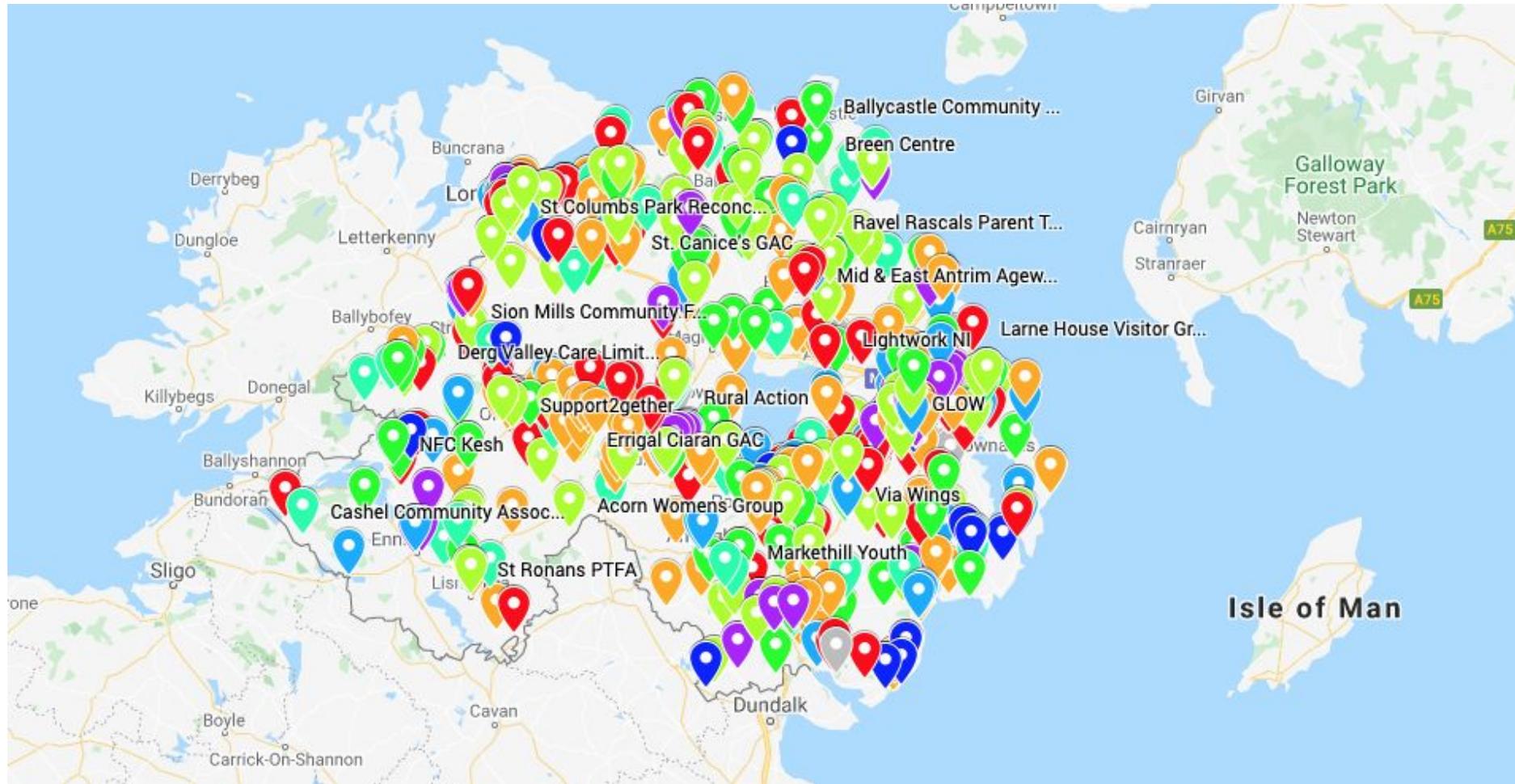
£1,489,650 of which was awarded to new applicants

We processed 2305 applications in comparison to 1637 in the previous FY

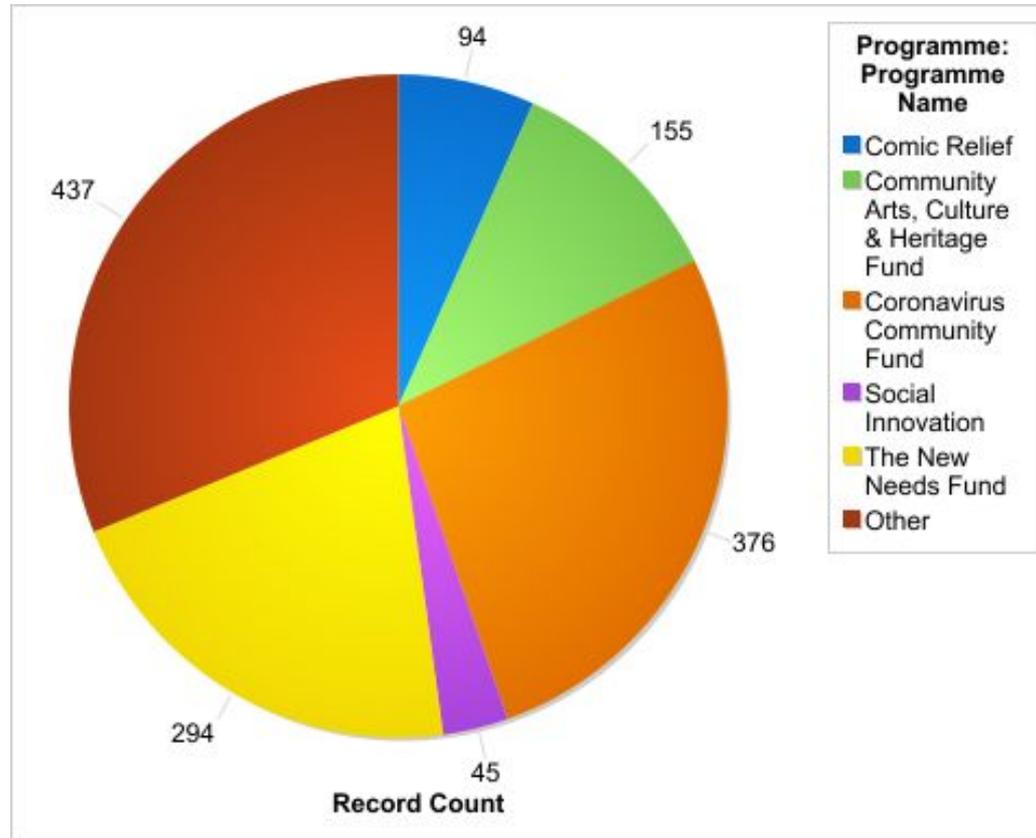
*Note: £1.7million awarded in Q1 to CAJ, PPR, PILS, Human Rights Consortium

Grants awarded by location

The 
Community
Foundation



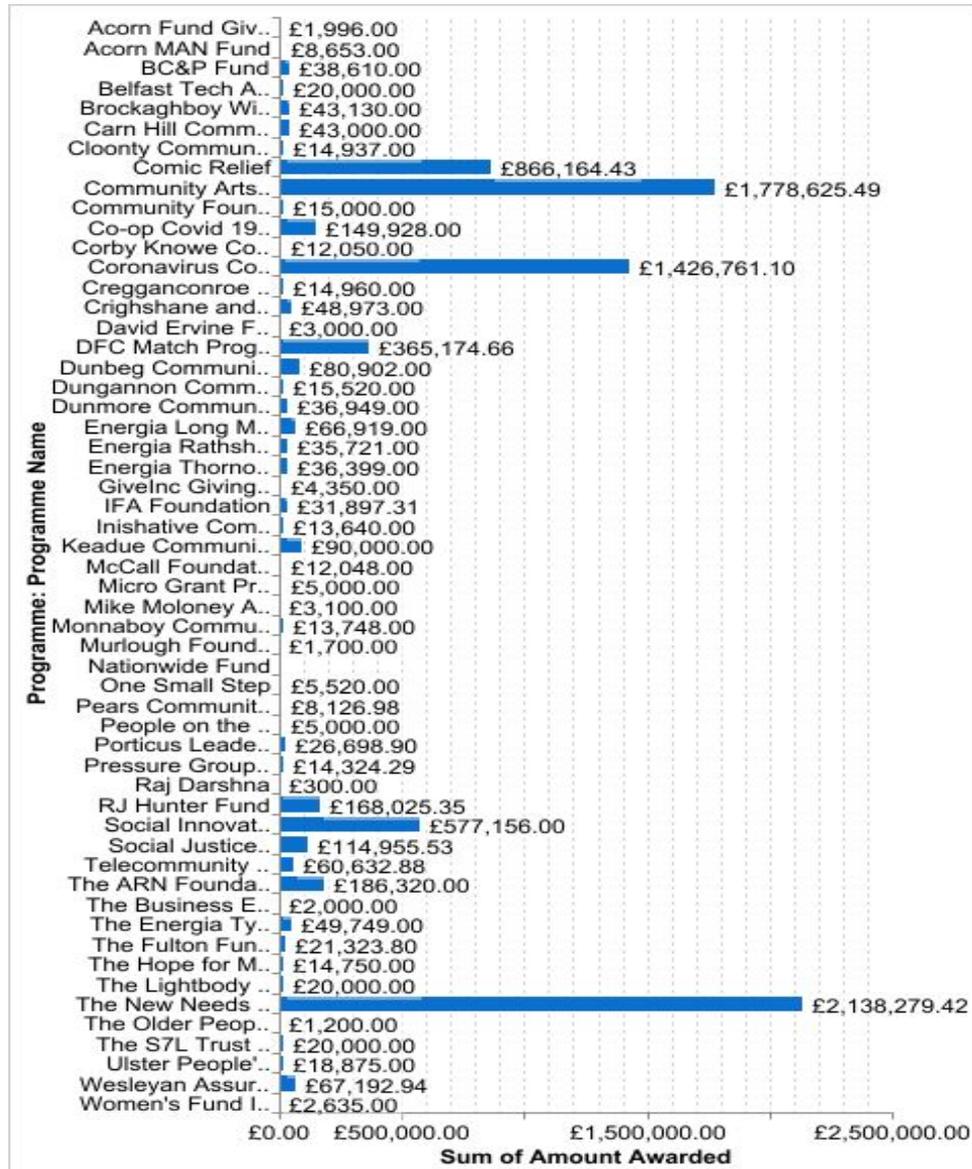
Number of awards per programme



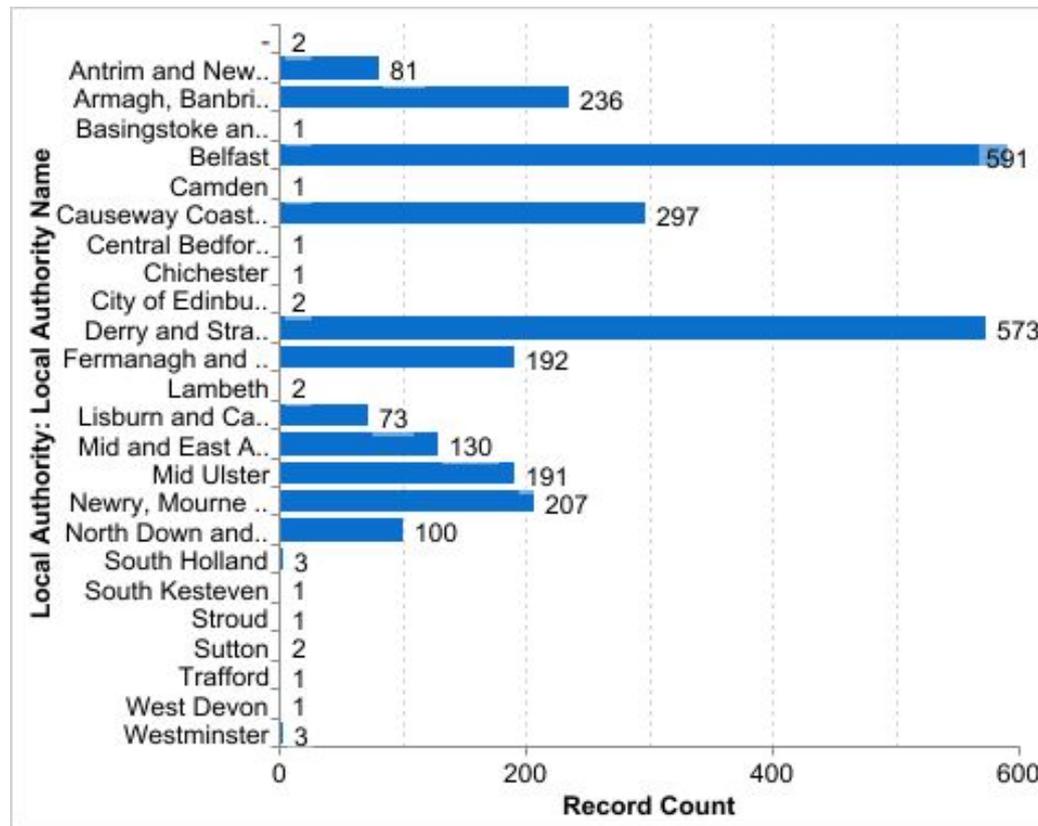
**Average
grant
£6,306**

*Other includes funds and programmes such as Wesleyan, McCall fund, DFC Match Funds, the ARN Foundation, the Community Benefit funds, Telecommunity Fund, Social Justice Fund, Social Innovation, Pressure Group Fund, Keadue, Pears Community Spaces, the Micro Grant Fund, and many others.

Value of awards by programme

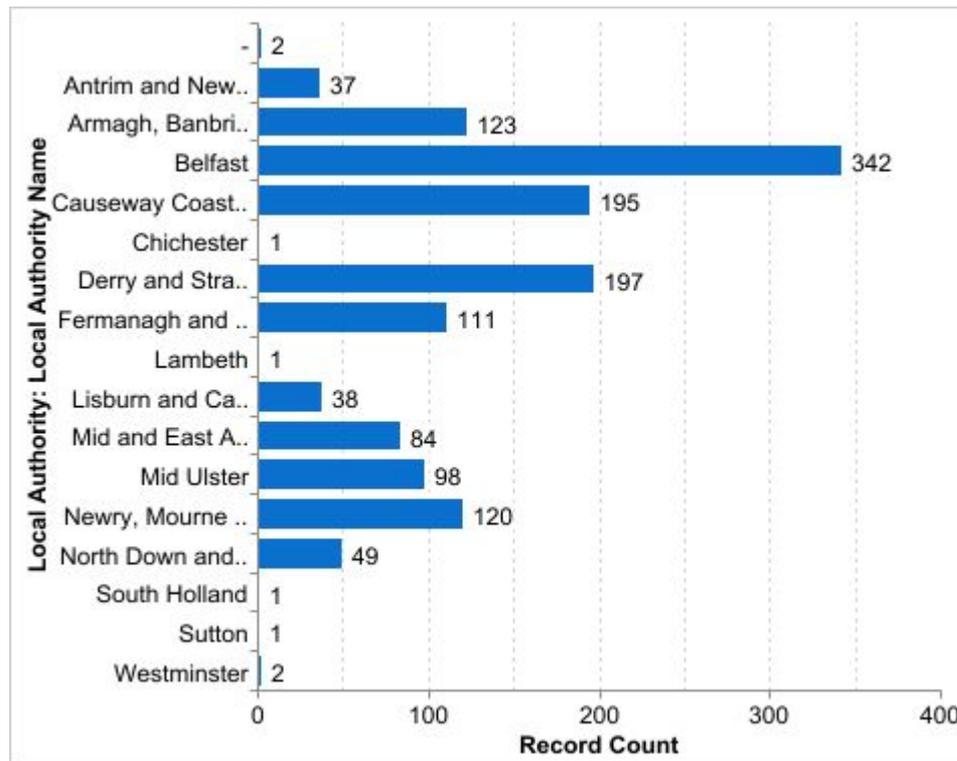


Number of applications received per Local Authority



*Note the UK mainland Councils reflect the Local Authority the applicant organisations are based in.

Approved applications per Local Authority



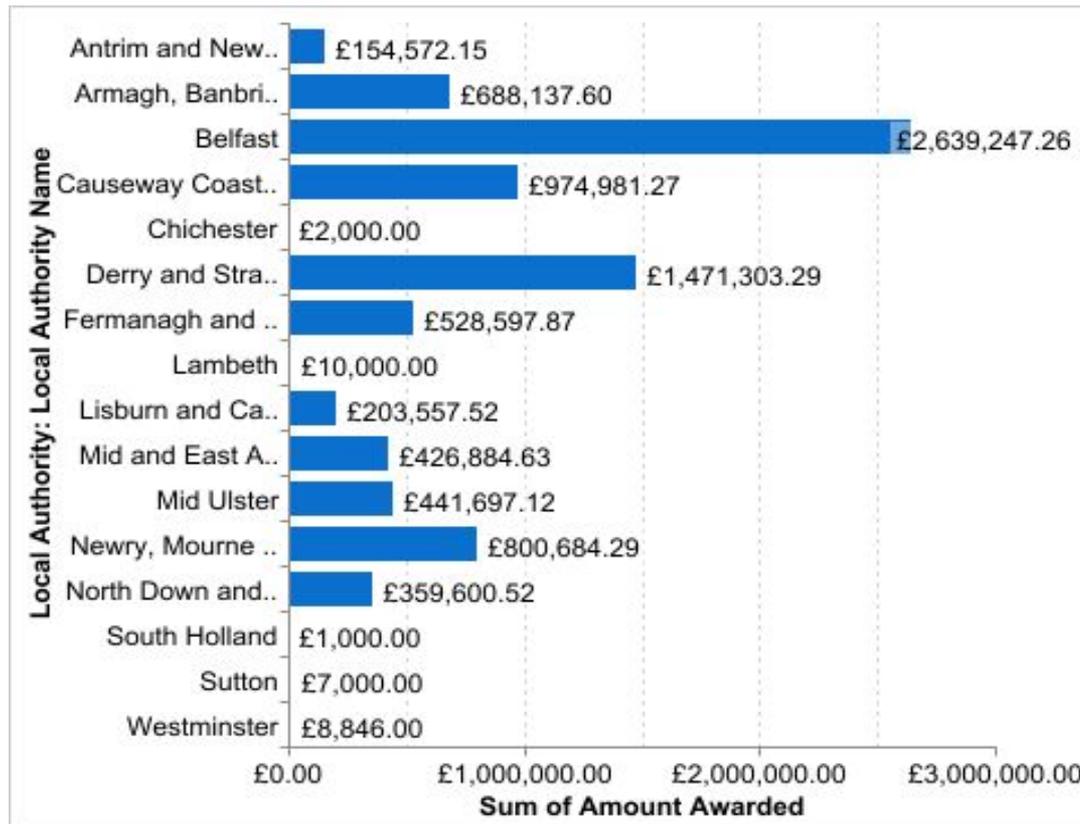
Top Council for receipt of applications: Belfast

Bottom Council for receipt of applications: Lisburn and Castlereagh

Top Council for successful applications: Mid and East Antrim

Bottom Council for successful applications: Antrim and Newtownabbey

Funding awarded per Local Authority



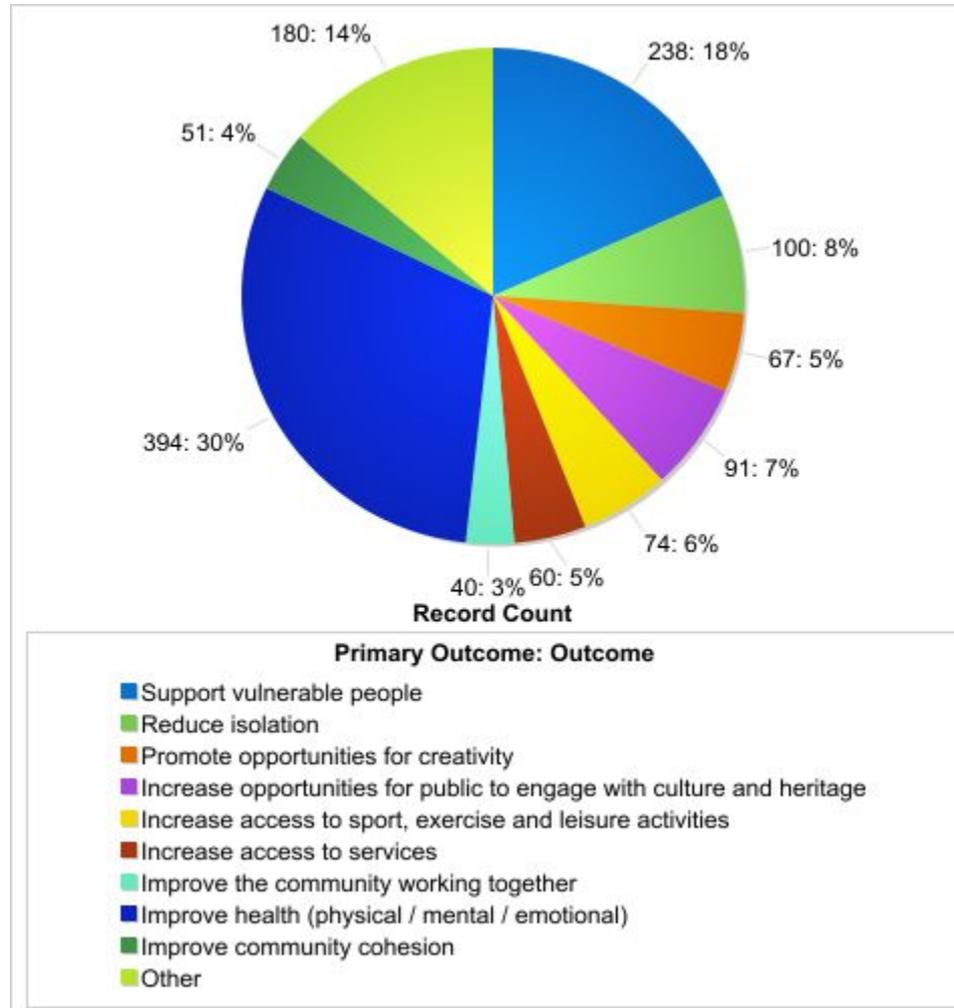
Our Impact FY 20-21



**We managed 54 grant
programmes, including 3
new covid response
funds**

**We supported 1,510,409
beneficiaries!**

Outcome indicators



Outcomes

- 1,095,011 people improved their physical, mental and emotional health
- 173,861 increased their opportunities to engage with the arts, culture and heritage
- 102,4675 vulnerable people were supported
- 72,849 people felt less isolated
- 14,050 improved their feelings of community cohesion and connectedness
- 9,188 were involved in improving the community working together
- 7,819 increased their access to services
- 7,461 promoted their opportunities for creativity
- 7,052 participated in organisational capacity building
- 6,511 increased their access to sport, exercise and leisure activities
- 4,430 enjoyed improved community facilities
- 3,653 increased their access to volunteering
- 2,148 participated in additional education, training, accreditation and employment opportunities
- 1,079 participated in lifelong learning
- 698 participated in developing safer communities
- 800 people felt they had access to an improved quality of local environment and public space
- 492 improved their economic well-being
- 244 reduced substance misuse and addictions
- 227 increased their qualifications
- 205 improved their employability

The Community Foundation

£2,392,949 was awarded towards improving people's physical and mental well being

£1,119,184 was awarded to support vulnerable people

£997,949 was awarded to increase the opportunities for the public to engage with arts, culture, and heritage

£625,159 was awarded to promote opportunities for creativity

£548,496 was awarded to help reduce isolation

£417,653 was awarded to improve the opportunities for community to work better together

£351,733 was awarded to increase people's access to services

The Community Foundation

£346,497 was awarded to encourage more community cohesion

£249,526 was awarded to increase beneficiary participation in education, training, accreditation and employment

£248,572 was awarded to provide more opportunity for people to engage in sport, exercise and leisure activities

£183,186 was awarded to improve community facilities

£149,854 was awarded to increase participation in lifelong learning

£140,321 was awarded to improve the quality of the environment and local public space

£119,366 was awarded to strengthen organisations through capacity building

Our Team



We are lucky to have a fantastic team of staff who are passionate about making a difference to local people in Northern Ireland.

We regularly see examples of our staff 'living' our values of Generous, Thriving and Together.

Generous -We encourage generosity in everything we do; we look out for each other; we deal with everyone with compassion, empathy and understanding. We are flexible in how we work with staff, donors and grantees.

Thriving - We see the potential within both our staff and the communities we work in and are committed to help both reach their full potential.

Together - We will only make the change we want to see together. We value participation, working with others and bringing people together.

Over the past year, we have continued to focus on these values and embed them in our culture. We expect a lot from our staff, so we look after them as well as we can, by offering good terms and conditions of employment, encouraging professional development and supporting staff to look after their health and wellbeing. We are very proud of the way our team has worked together, particularly during the Coronavirus Crisis, to connect people who care to causes that matter and support the most disadvantaged communities in Northern Ireland.

Encouraging generosity

- Our promotion of philanthropy in NI continued. We secured and launched 13 new funds from philanthropic funding during the period which in total will provide investment of over £8m of new income to the voluntary sector. In addition over £3m additional donated income was invested in our endowment and £25m of statutory funding will support carers, mental health and cancer issues over the next three years.
- Three new trust transfers completed.
- Our giving network selected and awarded the first Philanthropist of the Year in NI and continues to encourage, share and learn about best practice giving.
- Through our Covid response, we worked in partnership with other funders (gov, trusts, individuals, families and corporates) to ensure funding is reaching those most in need.
- We launched a series of stakeholders engagements including over 60 new opportunities, podcasts, SIB's and surveys, and have embarked on a campaign to encourage a Citizens' Assembly.
- Our philanthropy capacity building programme is very popular, with over 210 people attending a series of seminars and 35 groups offered a mentor.

People on the edges

- New Voices Programme funded by Garfield Weston: 11 groups completed first round of support. Capacity building across number of areas including governance, strategic planning, financial planning and fundraising: Mentee and mentor feedback very positive with additional comments on running a second phase.
- Comic Relief Community Support Programme invested in organisations and communities addressing issues and/or pathways to greater inclusion and equity including racism, refugees/asylum seekers, gender based domestic violence and LGBTQIA+ community
- Irish Traveller discussions progressed with potential to support first traveller led group in Northern Ireland and skills/confidence development with focus on girls
- Brief developed for 18 month Programme of work to be undertaken by the Foundation to address internal structural racism and inequity - work to commence quarter 1 2021/2022

Building sustainable communities

- Building on first two years of Comic Relief Programme secured an additional two years that will contribute to short medium term work of organisations focussing on children/young people, mental health, gender justice and people on the edges.
- Participated via zoom in the three day Peace Con2020 Conference learning from international experience on issues including racism, peacebuilding, the trauma of Covid and building organisation values in tough times.
- Worked with groups through the Comic Relief Community Support Programme to bring forward applications which facilitated Foundation investment in work that enhanced equity, inclusion, voice and influence.
- Contributor to and participated in Major Conference “Beyond Words - Growing our Anti-Racism Practice” - assists with development of Foundation’s internal 18th month programme in this area
- 5 Communities completed initial scoping of potential Community Endowment Building Programme

Thriving after the conflict

- Many of the communities & organisations we support have continued to provide vital support to communities as we work our way through the pandemic
- Our leadership programme continues to go from strength to strength with the participants delivering their Leadership In Action projects and completing their accredited training. Participants for year two have also been recruited and we are looking forward to getting to know this new group- hopefully face to face!
- 2021 as we had outlined last year has and will continue to be a difficult one for Northern Ireland
- The Social Justice Fund, the Maurice Healy Social Justice Fund and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Fund will all continue to play an important role in supporting communities to work through the issues which 2021 presents, to thrive after the conflict and to ensure that we relentlessly pursue a future where everyone belongs

Innovation & voice

- **Civic innovation Programme:** 7 projects, using creative approaches to involving the public in decision-making, shared a fund of £500,000, following a 12 month process of co-design, testing and collaboration. Projects include a digital citizens' panel for Newry Mourne & Down District, community responses to climate change in Holywood, Garvagh and Derry, participatory budgeting and community visioning across a community interface and support rural communities exploring the future of school provision in their areas.
- **Techies in Residence:** the fifth cycle of the programme launched in July 2020; 7 projects were selected, matched with expert techies and built their prototypes from January to March 2021. Projects include an app to support Arabic speaking refugees and asylum seekers in solving housing maintenance issues; a virtual reality game to support school students engage with STEM and tech careers; and a virtual walkthrough of St Columb's Park in Derry.
- **Community Voice advocacy:** in collaboration with Involve, NICVA and Community Places, the Foundation has engaged with Ministers politicians and government officials to make the case for public participation in COVID Recovery via citizens' assembly and participatory budgeting.

Case Studies FY 20-21

Encouraging generosity



- £9,793.66 awarded to Parenting NI to be used towards an extended free telephone support line, monthly, issue-based, online seminars & social media support for families in County Antrim. Funded through the Mc Call Social Care Fund (DFC Match Fund).
- £9,201 awarded to Hands That Talk to towards a programme of health & wellbeing activities / courses for deaf people. Funded through the Wesleyan Fund.
- £15,000 awarded to Crisis Cafe CIC towards a twice weekly friendship cafe in Newry providing mental health support for children and young people. Funded through the New Needs Fund.
- £12,004.85 awarded to Diverse Youth NI towards online tutoring for children in North Belfast, primarily from BAME communities as they transition back to school and prepare for exams Funded through the New Needs Fund.

Building Sustainable Communities



- Support given through Pears Community Spaces Programme enabled **Pomeroy Resource Centre** to continue with series of classes and activities promoting peacebuilding in the area. Participants are now comfortable in using different spaces in the village which is important given that the local Council with support from SEUPB is developing a series of spaces that are “shared out” and will do little to build reconciliation within this area. Group has also availed of support through the New Voices Programme.
- With additional investment from the Foundation **MYMY** has been able to expand both breadth and depth of its work. Example of difference our support has been click on the following link:
<https://youtu.be/vfRdTvb282c>
- **New Lodge Duncairn Community Health Partnership** have been supported to address child and family food poverty in the area. Community based initiatives included nutritional food boxes with food from local suppliers and Fakeaway Fridays to encourage home cooking rather than resorting to unhealthy takeaway meals

Innovation and Voice



- £85,860 to **St Columb's Park House** in partnership with Tullyally Residents association and Currynierin Community Association to co-create a resident led community plan that attracts investment and partnership and meets the needs of local community; and to begin to implement key strategic priorities of the plan through collective methods, such as participatory budgeting, lobbying and campaigning.
- £81,467 to **Hollywood Transition Town** in partnership with Hollywood Shared Town and Derry City & Strabane District Council to implement a participatory process that builds local democratic capacity and helps communities to establish themselves as sustainable food places, initiating local carbon-saving food projects and influencing local food policy
- £67,065 to **Conradh na Gaeilge** in partnership with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and Glór na MónaTo re-engage active language communities in understanding, designing and accessing language rights promised in the New Decade New Approach agreement.

People on the edges

- Supported **South Belfast Roundtable** with two awards from the Comic Relief Community Support Programme investing in the development of NI Refugee Voices Forum (£20,000) and supporting the 63 asylum seeking family homes with school age children enabling them to access the internet for both education and for links to wider services and social networks (£15,250)
- An investment of £17,216 to **Building Communities Resource Centre** supported their extensive work on anti-racism practice including two Speaking Truth To Power courses, OCN Level 2 Accredited 'Community Without Hate' course and Beyond Words - Growing Your Anti-Racism Practice 2 day conference
- Invested £20,000 towards the development of **Men's Alliance NI** providing support, advocacy and capacity building services for men and families who have been the victims of domestic abuse/violence. The group also participated in the New Voices Programme

Thriving after the conflict



- £5,000 awarded to **Community Restorative Justice Newry/Armagh** funded through the Social Justice Fund towards the running costs of community training programme within the community sector comprising a number of community groups, schools and organisations, including one ex prisoner group, Newry Felons.
- £4,950 awarded to **Community Dialogue**, funded through the Social Justice Fund, towards the running costs of 30 consensus building dialogues in targeted areas of Northern Ireland which will involves the following groups:
 - Women's groups
 - Community groups
 - Residents groups
 - Ethnic minority groups
 - Members of the LGBT community



**Vital Issues and
Thinking**

- We continue to process more applications, particularly as a result of our covid focused funds, than we have done in previous years. Our new systems and processes have really been invaluable in terms of supporting the administration of these funds, and ensuring that we can deal with the high volume of applications. We will continue to adapt and use different, and more efficient ways of working, to enable us to deliver on this increasing demand, and to build on the profile we have gained in recent months as a flexible funder.
- Our map shows that we have a wide geographical reach and spread of funding throughout the whole of Northern Ireland. There remains some Local Authority areas such as Antrim and Newtownabbey where we should continue to consider how we can have a better reach. A proactive approach to work with the Support Networks in those areas, and all areas would be useful. Our new Chat to the Funder events should be promoted through these networks, and we should consider targeted approaches in geographically underrepresented areas if appropriate. Some of our new funds such as the Gills Fund may also help in encouraging applications in these areas.
- We continued to make more strategic awards through our Comic Relief programme, focused on emerging areas of need as a result of the pandemic. This approach will continue in our new Comic Relief Empowering Change Programme.

Vital Issues and Thinking

The DFC Arts fund was a tremendous success, spending just under £2 million in just over 5 weeks. Our systems and processes can accommodate working at such pace, which has contributed significantly to us being able to offer to make grants quickly to those most in need, and manage funds on behalf of others. This has been further validated through us securing an additional £24.4 million of DoH funding.

- We have further developed our commitment to making grants in a way that reflects the realities facing VCSE organisations, now, and for the foreseeable future. We now sit on the IVAR Steering Group aimed at encouraging other funders to adopt the same approach. The focus will be on flexibility and a more open and trusting approach to our grant making. To date we have developed a number of new funds, including Comic Relief Empowering Change Programme, where we will offer core and unrestricted funding to organisations.
- Many of the funds that we have allocated have come from Government, with tight deadlines for spend. Our focus over the last few months has been to support grantees with this spend, particularly as restrictions continued, and as groups found it difficult to deliver projects as anticipated.
- Our New Needs funding was particularly successful, with the priorities pitched at the right level, to enable community organisations to adapt and work in different ways, and to continue to support those most in need at this time. The fund was well subscribed, awarding £2 million, at pace, to enable groups to reopen community facilities safely.



**Vital Issues and
Thinking**

- Covid19 has undoubtedly shone a spotlight on deep and long standing inequalities and poverty within our society, and on the fragility of many support services. It is also evident that whilst the initial 'emergency phase' may have passed, a number of other crises are coming to the fore:
 - A lot of the organisations who provided emergency support and who continue to deliver vital community services are facing a funding crisis and may not be available to help in future. We want to ensure that our funding is open to providing funding in areas where there are gaps and specific needs.
 - The end of the furlough scheme and other government support initiatives may see a significant rise in unemployment, with associated issues around poverty, health and wellbeing. Young people in particular may struggle to find employment. There is an opportunity to support skills development, and to provide new and innovative ways of working.
 - Food fuel and digital poverty are very real and increasingly concerning issues, even amongst the employed. We will continue to think about how best our funding can address this need.



**Vital Issues and
Vital Thinking**

- The impact on people's mental health is only gradually becoming evident as lockdown lifts, and educational inequalities have been exacerbated. We are delighted that we will soon open a new fund supporting people with poor mental health.
- The impact on the most marginalised and at-risk within our society is a growing concern, and whilst we have a resilient voluntary sector, it will need further longer support for sustainability. For this reason we are encouraging some of our donors and fund holders to think about longer term, and more strategic financial support, which may include support for core costs, with minimal restrictions.
- The commitment and generosity of those people on the ground, who have helped deliver the emergency and renewal support, has been really quite significant. Many of those people have only become involved in voluntary activity for the first time. There is a real opportunity to build on this community activism, and support those people to continue to engage in community activity. To enable this we have progressed with development of a Network of grantees which will help us build better relations, learn and share best practice, measure our impact and inform our future strategic direction.



Orla Black
Grants Director

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