

Community Impact Fund Grants November 2022

60 projects were funded through the Community Impact Fund in October 2022, totalling £115,414.

Below are some case studies from some of the organisations awarded funding during this round.

SOLA ARTS: Creative Calm Café

The funding was put towards utilising a donated van as a mobile therapeutic space for social connection and healing after receiving feedback from beneficiaries that they felt lonely and isolated.

The van was able to provide art therapy at British Red Cross Drop-ins weekly on Fridays, including referral pathway into SOLA's key programme. The project engaged with asylum seekers housed in initial accommodation to provide relaxing activities to family and children during the school holidays. Creative activities were also put on at a hotel, housing Afghan families, providing a safe space and promoting wellbeing.

The mobile element helped to engage with individuals who might not usually be able to access support due to the cost of travel and significant social anxiety. Beneficiaries were given the opportunity to share their stories and work through trauma and grief through creative and artistic activities.

A service user named Ahmed said "When I got to the van, I felt I was a caged bird. Now I am free."

Autism in Motion CIC: AIM Warm Hub

This project involved using space in their centre in Fazakerley to become a warm hub for the families who use their services, as well as members of the local community. The warm hub was open during the daytime, with drinks and light meals served. Entertainment was provided in the form of bingo, yoga, crochet, craft and gardening clubs. Cooking on a budget courses and talking groups to reduce social isolation and improve mental wellbeing were also offered.

The community reported feeling more connected and that the sessions gave them a chance to be themselves when they struggle to maintain their own identities due to the everyday challenges of caring for their disabled children. Feedback indicated that the beneficiaries felt more confident in taking part in activities they had once enjoyed, many made new friends and mental wellbeing was improved.

The Community Impact Fund grant helped alleviate financial burdens and barriers that the participants might have faced when it came to partaking in activities.

East Liverpool Riding for the Disabled: Combating Isolation

East Liverpool RDA introduced a venture called Tea with a Pony to help combat isolation and loneliness affecting elderly people from local care homes, some with dementia. This involved them coming to the stable yard to interact with the horses/ponies and form new friendships over tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits. The funding went towards putting on Tea with a Pony for an extra day every week, reducing the waiting list.

The sessions proved very popular, and the service users benefit from the physical activity of stroking the horses, walking them and grooming them, leading to general mobility improvements. Beneficiaries often come to the sessions non-verbal and not very active but improve very quickly with light exercise, some becoming verbal and making new friends. The sessions have led to improvements in both mental and physical health.