

Strengthening Communities

2021/22 REVIEW



Sunnyside Supplies

Covid 19

RotherFed have continued to be part of the overall community support targeting those most in need in our communities. We have been involved in the multi-agency response that worked together to react to community needs, and as part of our involvement we took a lead role in helping to shape and organise Friendship Calls to the most isolated and lonely people across the borough, culminating in the creation of a Befriending Providers Network that is Chaired by our CEO and meet monthly to improve outcomes for local people.

Our work identified people who have been socially active when their groups were meeting but had found themselves unconnected due to lockdowns and self-isolation. It was clear that there were many residents in a range of circumstances who not only needed practical help but also someone taking the time to talk to them, listen to how

East Herringthorpe Litter Pickers

they are being affected and offer a friendly and supportive voice.

Our team have been in touch with people who needed support all year, referring individuals into additional services and advising/guiding throughout the pandemic. We have been supporting TARAs/Community Groups across the borough as restrictions eased, and they got back into their activities, providing advice and support on how to stay safe and follow guidance as their meetings and events were re-instated.

Friendship Calls

Our Volunteer Co-ordinators have recruited, trained, and mentored Befriending Volunteers to make contact/calls with some of the most lonely and isolated people across Rotherham. We are contacting residents through our internal network, taking referrals through a range of sources, and on an ad hoc basis via incoming requests. Our focus is to:

- **Counteract issues of loneliness and isolation**
- **Use phones and tablets, to contact people through an audio or video call**
- **Give them a friendly face to see, voice to hear, and let them know they are not alone**

These calls also give us the chance to support people who may not have been at risk at the start of the pandemic but have become vulnerable due to length of time in home isolation, signposting/



referring to additional services as required to support their needs.

Since April 2020 we have now supported 548 Rotherham residents (242 are tenants) and over 100 active volunteers have been involved through this period.

The Better Mental Health Fund

RotherFed's work with the Befriending Providers Network continues to have good effect and has led to a funding opportunity for the Network. Rotherham were successful with a proposal to the Public Health England "Better Mental Health Fund", and through this, RMBC Public Health are contracting with RotherFed to deliver a partnership Befriending project that supports lonely and isolated residents to take the next steps to improve mental health through social engagement, training, local activities and generally taking part more in community life. Partners involved include Live Inclusive, Rotherham Ethnic Minorities Alliance (REMA), Rotherham Parent and Carers Forum (RPCF), YAWR Services, Age UK Rotherham, Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR).

Community capacity building

RotherFed has provided the communities of Rotherham with the support, guidance, and tools that they need to improve their local neighborhoods and the lives of the people living there. We have worked with individuals and community groups to develop their skills and so that they feel empowered to create their own solutions to local problems.

We have delivered a wide range of practical information and services to Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) and Community Led Organisations (CLOs) including community accountancy, legal, insurance, help with funding bids, marketing and communication services and stationery. As well as advice and practical resources to produce newsletters, posters and other materials, we have provided mentoring and support for community leaders and organisations in relation to safeguarding including DBS checks for volunteers.

We have helped individuals start up and run community groups for the benefit of the local community. This support has included creating a start-up plan, identifying local needs, budgeting, training, advice and help on the practicalities of running a group. RotherFed has also provided physical resources such as access to computers and photocopying services.

Primary School children picking up litter in Eastwood



Enabling Communities to Grow

Our Reaching Communities project "More Voices and Choices" funded by Big Lottery for 3 years ended in December. It has focused on the 4 areas of Dinnington, East Dene, East Herringthorpe and Masbrough, with our Community Project team working to give people a voice, build confidence and support them to take action/drive change in their own communities. The team has also supported formal and informal community groups to form and develop their capacity throughout the year. From environmental projects to improving social isolation, school/pupil driven projects to women feeling safer in the community, our team have been instrumental in helping groups and individuals to make a difference to their selves and their communities. We have ensured our groups and volunteer leads are well positioned to retain activities once the project ended.

From January 2022 we turned our attention to the new "Heart of the Community" project. Heart of the Community is a 3-year, community-led, place-based project delivered in 6 communities in Rotherham, encouraging residents to work on their own and together make their neighbourhoods somewhere to be proud of. Our work will develop the skills and capacity of local people to

Canklow Dino's

support vulnerable neighbours and build community pride. With our support, our target communities will:

- **Increase the little acts of kindness that turn neighbourhoods into communities**
- **Enable people to help each other recover from the pandemic**
- **Restart local life after the pandemic**
- **Help communities to become more connected, confident, and resilient**

Thurcroft Big Local

As with many other projects, the pandemic had an impact on the community activities in Thurcroft, however as soon as was possible, the partnership and the people of Thurcroft got back into community life and have been a great example of how a community can support each other through such a difficult period.

Ongoing activities such as litter picks, the community allotment, the youth club activities, and the luncheon club have all been part of the return community life, as have the seasonal events and trips such as Firework Night, Christmas party, and visits to Bakewell, Gulliver's Kingdom and Cleethorpes.

As the project moves into what will probably be the final couple of years, a key focus now will be legacy and sustainability. The group, with RotherFed's support, will work hard over the next two years to ensure that as many elements as possible for community support are in place before the grant term ends. Youth work, community events and usage of the Hub are emerging as what are most important to the people of Thurcroft going forward.



Social Supermarket – at the Minster

Money Management

In January 2021 we began the delivery of our Lottery Fund partnership project with Citizens Advice Rotherham called Making Our Money Go Further. This is a community led money management support programme helping local people to form groups and gain knowledge and understanding on how to improve money management. Included within the project is one to one debt, benefit, and generalist advice for those who need additional help.

Our aim is to change the way communities think & talk about managing money, with community led solutions to the issues that matter most to local people. It's about supporting local people to make real change happen. Our team listen to what the community says, identify people's money-related worries and support, enable, and empower them to collectively develop practical solutions to help make ends meet.

Throughout this project we help people reduce expenditure, increase income, and renegotiate outgoings. Activities have included group training, skills swaps, cost effective ideas to eat well, supporting food bank outlets, referrals to support organisations, job clubs, anti-loan shark campaigns, community gardening and support to access other services.

Home Energy Support

Starting in June 2021, Energy Know How is a 2-year project supporting Rotherham residents to reduce energy usage and utility costs in their homes. Our team of Energy Advisers deliver group and individual training, advice and support on energy awareness and efficiency through face-to-face sessions in community venues, and via email, zoom, phone calls to support people remotely.

There is no cost for this service and our team improve knowledge and awareness of home energy efficiency and help people to switch providers, access energy saving measures and debt and benefits advice. Local people become Volunteer's and get involved to deliver energy-saving activities in their communities. In addition, the project also supports other local community service providers to be more energy aware.

Energy Know How advise and guide energy consumers who need support to reduce their fuel bills. We aim to:

- **Reduce physical health problems made worse by high fuel costs by enabling people to be warmer at home and releasing income for other household essentials**
- **Reduce the anxiety/stress/worry experienced by people who are struggling with high fuel bills**

Tpas Awards



- **Establish community-led groups to empower local people to reduce future energy consumption**

Working in Partnership with RMBC

The partnership with RMBC continues to develop at real pace and we have worked closely through the last year to ensure we responded to the needs of our communities throughout the pandemic's challenges and changes. An example of this is additional funding from RMBC to extend the Friendship Calls project into 2022. Also, this project was nominated for the Tpas Awards in the Richard Crossley Excellence in Community Action category, which we won. This was a great recognition for our staff and volunteers who have made such a difference to so many people over the last 2 years.



Neighbourhood Centres

We worked with RMBC to look at how we can grow the interest and usage of Neighbourhood Centres culminating in the recruitment of a full time Activities Co-Ordinator in November 2021. Their role is to organise and create a varied activities programme in Neighbourhood Centres across Rotherham, from group events to seasonal activities, all of which will support tenants and resident's needs. The Co-ordinator will take responsibility for the overall development and delivery of social activities in Neighbourhood Centres, mentor volunteers within groups to take on responsibility for arranging activities thus driving centre usage, support existing groups to enhance/increase their activities, and through improved marketing and promotion raise awareness of centre activities and their benefits.

Tenants and Residents Events

In September 2021 we ran our first RotherFed community and tenant engagement event in 18 months. The Coffee and Cake event at Springwell Gardens was a big success with many new tenants coming along as well as some of the Ward Councillors from across Rotherham. This was an informal session however we had our team there who were able to promote all our services, some of which have come online in the last few months. It was great too to see in person some of our tenant reps and volunteers, some of which we had not met in person before due to the restrictions. We have continued to deliver these informal tenant engagement meetings and events through the Winter and into Spring including Coffee Mornings, Buffet Lunches and Pizza Evenings.



Tenant Scrutiny:

Tenant scrutiny gives tenants the power to hold their landlord to account for their decisions, performance and conduct and involves empowered tenants working together to research issues and make recommendations for change based on the evidence they find. All these reports are available publicly for anyone who wishes to read them. Rotherham Council has responded positively to all previous reports including the two we have completed in 2021/22 - Aids and Adaptations, and Customer Satisfaction for Repairs and Maintenance. We are now working on the next review which is "Tenant Communications" and we hope to have a report of recommendations ready for RMBC by the Spring of 2022. This review is closely linked with the RMBC Housing White Paper action plan.

● New Federation Member Groups 2020/21

- Maltby Foodbank
- Sunnyside Supplies
- Clifton Garden Society
- Catcliffe Cone

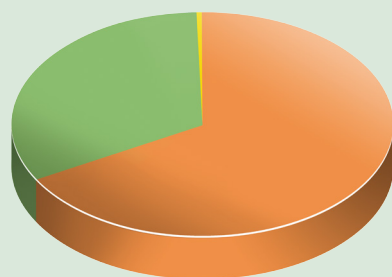


Swinton Mobile Farm Visit

Rotherham Federation of Communities Ltd.

Income and expenditure for the year ending
31st January 2022

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022
INCOME and endowments from:	£	£	£	£
Grants and donations	31,787	0	515,109	546,896
Charitable activities	251,945	0	0	251,945
Other trading activities	0	0	0	0
Investments	140	0	0	140
Other				0
TOTAL	283,872	0	515,109	798,981

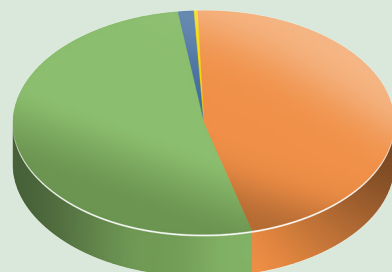


Grants and donations
546,896

Charitable activities
251,945

Investments
140

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022
EXPENDITURE on:	£	£	£	£
Raising funds	435	0	5,056	5,491
Charitable activities - direct	62,147	0	247,818	309,965
Charitable activities - support	135,813	0	212,035	347,848
Governance	480	0	0	480
TOTAL	198,875	0	464,909	663,783



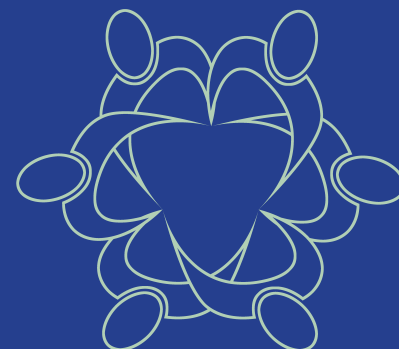
Charitable activities - Direct costs
309,965

Charitable activities - Support Costs
347,848

Raising Funds
5,491

Governance
480

Rotherham Federation



Strengthening Communities

Contact Details

Rotherham Federation of Communities
Springwell Gardens Community Centre
Eastwood View
Rotherham
S65 1NH

Tel: 01709 368515

email: info@rotherfed.org

www.rotherfed.org.uk

<https://twitter.com/rotherfed>

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/rother.fed>

Charity no: 1158600

Company no: 5913521