

2023/24 REVIEW

Community Capacity Building

Our vision is for Rotherham Federation, using the Community Organising approach to strengthen communities, to enable people to create their own solutions and to build a network of community groups that will lead local life and community living. We support communities in the Rotherham Borough to grow and develop, working with them to build their sense of belonging, community pride and spirit. We work with and through grassroots community groups that are committed to bringing communities together, giving all communities a voice and creating local solutions to local issues. Rotherham Federation has been supporting local communities since 2006. We help to create communities that work and build new and existing community-led groups which:

- give everyone a voice.
- make communities happier places to live and work.
- help people to create local solutions to local issues.
- influence strategic stakeholders enabling them to better understand local needs.
- work together to create shared solutions to Borough-wide problems.

Our capacity building support aims to:

- energise and facilitate individuals and groups to be active in matters that affect their lives.

- cultivate collaborative conversations about visions and activities that help people make their community a better place through social action.
- provide support and training to individuals and TARA's/Groups to equip them with the necessary skills, tools, and knowledge to take an active role in improving their neighbourhoods.
- offer training and capacity building support for community groups on issues such as: housing planning/strategy, first aid training, food hygiene, safeguarding, equality and diversity.



- build tenants capacity to understand how groups work; chairing meetings, dealing with conflict, deliver risk assessment training, develop policies and reporting processes, promote their activities, fundraise, and apply for grants, and manage their budget and books.
- manage a bespoke quality monitoring and evaluation system for assessing community groups' development and delivering a quality award for community groups.

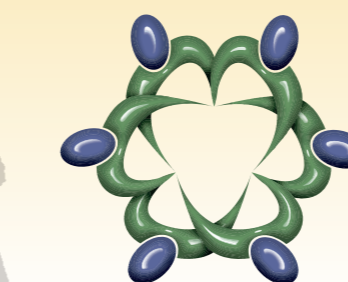


In addition, we provide a wide range of practical advice and services, including constitutional and group structure support, community accountancy, legal, insurance, various collective services, help with funding bids, marketing and communication services including advice and practical resources to produce newsletters, posters/leaflets, mentoring and support for community leaders and organisations in relation to safeguarding including DBS checks.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Rotherham Federation

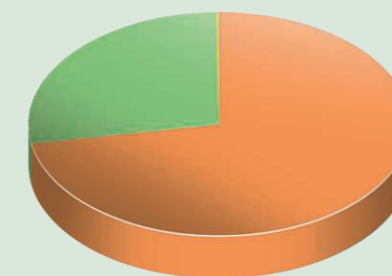


Strengthening Communities

Rotherham Federation of Communities Ltd.

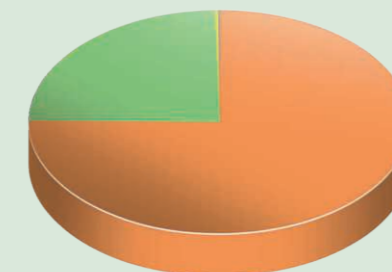
Income and expenditure for the year ending 31st January 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
INCOME and endowments from:	£	£	£	£
Grants and donations	5,000	0	575,704	580,704
Charitable activities	221,801	0	0	221,801
Investments	828	0	0	828
Other	178	0	0	178
TOTAL	227,807	0	575,704	803,511



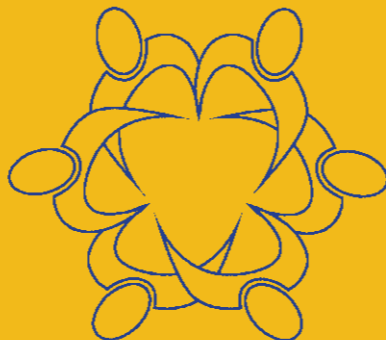
- Grants and donations 580,704
- Charitable activities 221,801
- Investments 828
- Other 178

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
EXPENDITURE on:	£	£	£	£
Raising funds	772	0	3,102	3,874
Charitable activities - direct	107,868	0	507,674	615,542
Charitable activities - support	41,920	0	153,011	194,931
Governance	300	0	1,520	1,820
TOTAL	150,860	0	665,307	816,167



- Charitable activities - direct costs 615,542
- Charitable activities - support costs 194,931
- Raising funds 3,874
- Governance 1,820

Rotherham Federation



Strengthening Communities

Contact Details

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Charity no: 1158600
Company no: 5913521



Flood Support Centre

Another example of this is the current cross sector response to the recent flooding in areas across Rotherham, and in particular Catcliffe. In partnership with other VCS services and the council teams, RotherFed have provided advice and guidance, befriending support and the distribution of winter warmer packs. These include, Neck Warmer, Hat, Gloves, Thermal Socks, Fleece Blanket, Soup Mugs and a box of soup sachets, as well as a listening ear to those tenants and residents going through real crisis situations.

Tenant Scrutiny:

Tenant scrutiny gives tenants the power to hold their landlord to account for their decisions, performance and conduct. It involves empowered tenants working together to research issues and make recommendations for change based on the evidence they find. These reports are available publicly for anyone who wishes to read them.

RMBC has responded positively to all previous reports including the two we have completed in 2023/24 - Communication with Tenants and "Void Properties". We are now working on the next review which is "The Lettable Standard", and we hope to have a report of recommendations ready for RMBC by the Spring of 2024. This review is

ward housing hub suggestions. Currently we have over 70 groups like this that we support across the borough.

Alongside group support/development, we recruit, coach and develop Tenant Representatives to get involved in more formal meetings such as Tenant Security, Housing Involvement Panel, and other planned and ad-hoc meetings and forums that occur/emerge. Tenant Representatives contribute with their own and their communities' views and opinions.

closely linked with the RMBC Housing White Paper action plan and aims to support compliance.

Under-represented Tenant Groups

As part of our contract with Rotherham Council we promote tenant involvement through a range of engagement activities to support tenants to get more involved in shaping and influencing council housing services, enabling them to make a positive difference to their communities.

Change of Approach - We recognised that we needed to engage more with tenants and community groups from diverse communities and backgrounds, and in January 2023 we made a step change in our approach. Essentially we directed our team to have a lighter touch with existing TARA's and Community Groups and focus more on engaging with tenants and groups from "under-represented" cohorts.

New Federation Member Groups 2023/24

2023/24 has been an extremely progressive year for Community Led groups and TARA'S becoming Federation members. There have been 11 groups that have applied successfully since January 2023 and there are two more applications that are pending currently.

The "New" member groups are:

- The Black Hut
- Friends of Trinity Croft C of E
- Woodsetts TARA
- Dale Farm Residents Group
- Rotherham Pride
- Wickersley, Bramley, Listerdale and Flanderwell Neighbourhood Watch



Deaf Futures

Enabling Communities to Grow – Heart of the Community Project

Heart of the Community has reached the end of its second year. This is a 3-year, community-led, place-based project funded by the National Lottery and delivered in six communities: Rotherham-Meadowbank, Masbrough, Canklow, Wharnciffe, Dalton, and Thrybergh. We are engaging with and encouraging residents to work together to make their neighbourhoods somewhere to be proud of, and with our support 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.



We have used a range of methods to get people involved including:

- supporting groups to be actively involved in taking responsibility for their neighbourhoods, giving local people as sense of control and possibility.
- piggy-backing our engagement promotion activities on to trusted local groups. This includes our members, but also organisations like local groups, libraries, and schools.

- collaborating with council teams and co-hosting/spreading engagement message at local celebrations, fetes, fairs, and fun days which everyone can attend, and pop-up events tailored to specific demographics.
- working in partnership with local services who attract engagement because they bring different/wanted elements which can improve local lives, and using their voices to make links between these services and the group members,
- working directly with local groups, supporting communities to value their work and helping them attract new members.
- organise campaign activities/meetings that bring many different local people together around an issue of local concern.

As we move into the final year, our focus will be to prepare our groups and leaders to have the skills and capacity to continue to support their communities in future years.



Thurcroft Big Local

This amazing 12 year project ended in January 2024. Over this time we have seen a New Community Hub being built, a range of community events taking place every year, such as a Summer Gala, Fireworks, and Christmas trips, and the general spirit and wider community involvement goes from strength to strength year on year.

The core themes in the final Big Local plan which are Community Pride, Children and Young People and Making Big Local Happen, remain the same core themes as in our original plan in 2012/2013. We had however for the final plan included two additional focuses/activities. Within "Community Pride" we have replaced "Response to Covid" with "Responding to Community Needs" in light of the cost-of-living crisis, and within "Making Big Local Happen" we have replaced "Community Grants"



with "Community Together" to broaden out our reach within the community.

We believe that this project has demonstrated what can be achieved with the right level of investment over a sustained period of time, with many things in the community contributing to take place for local people for the longer term, such as lunch clubs, youth support and environmental projects. RotherFed would like to recognise and thank the volunteers and groups that have made this possible over the last 12 years.

Cost of Living Crisis Money Management

We have now completed the three years delivery of our Lottery Fund partnership project with Citizens Advice Rotherham called Making Our Money Go Further. Throughout this project we have helped people reduce expenditure, increase income, and re-negotiate outgoings. At the end of year three we have now supported over 2400 people at community sessions, 800 of which have received support from Citizens Advice. Those involved have passed on their knowledge to a further 1400 people and over 3000 who were previously unaware, now know where to go for help.



We are delighted that we are able to continue this much needed project for a further two years until December 2025, and focus our support in six different areas in Rotherham - Dalton, East Herringthorpe, Greasbrough, Thurcroft, Flanderwell/Sunnyside and East Dene. Our approach will remain the same and we aim to change the way communities think and talk about managing money, with community led solutions to the issues that matter most to local people.

Home Energy Support

More Energy Know How is a two-year project funded through the Energy Redress Scheme through until June 2025, supporting Rotherham residents to reduce energy usage and utility costs in their homes. This is the continuation of our Energy Know How project that started in 2012. 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 and phone calls to support people remotely.

Local people become Volunteers 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. Our areas of focus are: Dalton, Thrybergh, East Herringthorpe, Greasbrough, Thurcroft, Flanderwell & Sunnyside, East Dene, Wath, Catcliffe & Brinsworth and Treeton.

Our Energy Team have trained and advised over 1800 local people who need support to reduce their fuel bills, and in doing so helped people to reduce their bills by over £120,000. Our main focus is 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 and worry experienced by people who are struggling with high fuel bills.
- establish community-led groups to empower local people to reduce future energy consumption.



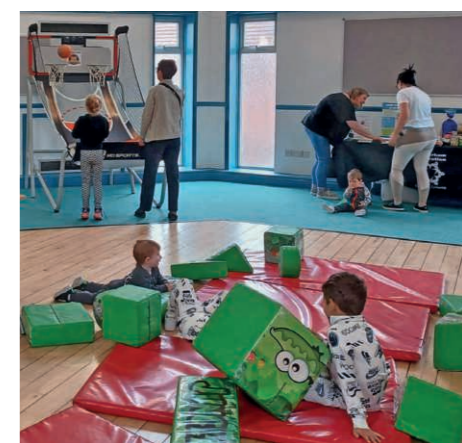
Open Arms

Through our Open Arms project that started in February 2023 we have delivered cost of living drop-in sessions, and engaged with local people to make better use of community assets. Through the deployment of the front-line team, we have delivered Information, Advice and Guidance 'one stop shops' in each of the ten most deprived areas in Rotherham, with sessions taking place once per fortnight in each centre. Support delivered will have a strong focus on financial and social inclusion, including (but not limited to) Citizen Advice Bureau services, and Laser Credit Union.



We have resourced the 10 community delivery venues with IT equipment and Wi-Fi connections. This has ensured access to support is available online from our teams but also from the Community Leaders who we have recruited and developed throughout the project. Our focus areas are Dalton, Canklow, East Herringthorpe, East Dene, Ferham, Masbrough, Munsbrough, Maltby, Dinnington, Wath Upon Dearne.

Open Arms has supported over 1200 people in the period between March 2023 and January 2024, and we are targeting a further 1700 by the end of March 2025. We are seeing more use of the centres now and our programme of planned community open day events to help raise awareness has been a



success. Themed events have included Budget Brunch Bonanza, All the Fun of The Fair, Oh We Do Like to Be Beside the Seaside, and Picnic Pleasures, and more – all with the aim to get more local people involved in the project and more aware of the cost-of-living support that is available to them locally.

Money Skills for Life

In September, we were successful with our application to RMBC for the delivery of "Money Skills for Life" community engagement programme, until March 2025. These sessions will take place at community venues and support people who have low level maths skills.



Our approach will be to use money management as a means to show learners how much they do know/understand about maths, and ultimately support them to become involved in taking on additional maths learning opportunities and qualifications. Over the two-year period we will support 500 local people through the delivery of taster sessions and full day training sessions delivered on outreach at community venues in the most deprived areas of Rotherham.

We would like to thank our teams working on these great cost of living projects, for their energy and commitment in doing all they can to save local people money, also to support them through some incredibly difficult times. They have made such a difference to so many people, and supported everyone in a non-judgemental and compassionate manner.

Working in Partnership with RMBC

Ward Based Working

The partnership with RMBC continues to develop at a real pace and we have worked closely through the last year to ensure we responded to the needs of our communities.

We are fully integrated into the councils "Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy" and ward-based working ambitions. We recognise and value the very clear links between the vision – "Every neighbourhood in Rotherham to be a thriving neighbourhood, where people are able to work together to achieve a good quality of life", strategy focus - "Putting Communities at The Heart of Everything We Do" and our own asset-based "Strengthening Communities"

organisational strategy. Both support the council and residents to working together to improve the quality of life in communities.

We have now aligned our frontline Community Engagement team to the Borough's North, Central, and South areas, covering all Wards in each area. This approach forms part of the delivery of our current Tenant Federation contract. Our delivery team:

- work directly with council neighbourhood co-ordinators and elected members in each Ward.
- work in partnership with other local services on Ward basis including schools, police, NHS, and local and borough wide VCSE provision.

Strategically, our CEO has built strong working relations with the Head of Neighbourhoods to develop the above approach. RotherFed have had the opportunity to inform ward plans through contributing feedback and local intelligence on ward-by-ward basis, adding tenants and groups views into consideration. This bedrock of effective working relationships helps our teams on the ground to:

- have a clear understanding of all partners' roles and remits.
- opens up channels of communication between teams.
- shares local knowledge and best practice.
- facilitates agreements on actions that will support the aims of the Ward plans.
- avoids duplication of efforts through improved communication.