



# Review of the Year

April 2019





## Chair's report

April 2019



The past year has been marked by the sad and untimely death of Step Change co-founder Colin Alexander. There is a tribute to him in Section 5. Shortly before Colin's death we started to prepare for the future of Step Change within Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF), so that no-one would be irreplaceable, and our special characteristics would be protected and enhanced. Little did we know how this planning would be pre-empted.

We have had a difficult few months and are now emerging with an even stronger structure. Steven English and Lisa Mynheer, existing Project Managers (PMs), have taken on the running of the PMs; trustees of OCF are now shadowing all our main activities; OCF has taken on an increased administrative workload.

We are also incredibly grateful to Robin Buxton, who has recently retired from the Step Change panel due to other commitments. We particularly appreciate how Robin has shared his knowledge of Oxfordshire's charitable sector over the five years since Step Change began.

Of course, none of this affects our charitable impact. In 2018 we committed £225,360 to five projects, making over 30 projects since we started. This year the grants support social enterprises in order to bring in more secure incomes for key charitable activities, through venue hire, the selling of services and of specialist training. We are also supporting charities in becoming more rigorous about ensuring their work has a genuine and lasting impact, by putting measurement systems and new collaborative partnerships in place.

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**On giving money: "It can be baffling. Giving it away is easy. Giving it away well is really hard."**

*Fran Perrin, daughter of Lord Sainsbury, who plans to most of her wealth away during her lifetime.*

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We continued to attract new donors, such that we are financially secure beyond 2021. The major appeal of Step Change continues to be the targeted giving of grants for strengthening foundations, which aims to increase, in a sustainable way, the social good done by Oxfordshire charities. As philanthropists it is hard to find and support individual organisations. Step Change, with its rigorous process, Project Managers, and the support of OCF is ideally placed to do this.

### **Step Change governance and due diligence**

Step Change is a donor-advised fund within OCF. This means that it is ring fenced and independent. The donors have delegated the authority to release funds to the panel, which appoints its own members, and includes donors. We are now documenting all our processes, and reviewing how we operate. As a first step we are proposing to increase the maximum amount of grant from £50,000 to £75,000. This may lead to the annual amount granted rising. We are also considering reducing the panel meetings from five to four a year, combined with quarterly reporting by project managers concerning our grantee charities' progress.

We are most grateful to our partners, Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA), who provide us (and the charities concerned) with a thorough 'health check' concerning all expressions of interest. This due diligence process is essential in order to ensure charities have the right financial and governance systems in place. OCVA also acts as a filter to ensure expressions of interest meet the eligibility criteria for the fund.

### The Project Manager methodology

One of the hallmarks of the Step Change Fund is its unique Project Manager (PM) methodology. Like most successful ideas, it's a simple formula. It involves engaging experienced and able individuals who want to be part of a voluntary project or activity, without becoming a trustee, with hands-on involvement. Recruiting such people and deploying them to ensure that successful bids are delivered in line with agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has proved to be highly effective, and a model that has attracted interest far beyond the immediate Step Change environment. We have recently been visited by Surrey Community Foundation, who are setting up their own Step Change Fund.

Many charities that fall within the Step Change financial parameters can be somewhat naïve when it comes to preparing and presenting bids, with the possibility that an opportunity to support a really positive and important 'step change' is missed, due to lack of bid clarity. PMs can help reduce this risk. Additionally, some charities find that, once the money is allocated, the pressure to deliver the promise is reduced, with the result that the potential, predicated in the bid, is not achieved. PMs can and do significantly address this issue.

Project Managers are involved at an early stage in the bid process, and are able to add value to the Step Change panel by bringing additional information to the decision-making process. PMs are increasingly involved at panel meetings and, outside of the formal process, meet once or twice a year in a semi-social environment. There is a real 'family feel' within the Step Change organisation.

Successful bidding charities, OCF and the PMs themselves rate the Step Change model highly, and it continues to be a driver of our success by both increasing the chance of a successful bid and then ensuring it is successfully delivered.

The range and depth of Step Change's activities continue to increase; and social needs grow as central and local government support shrink. We have had the privilege of working with some inspirational leaders over the last few years, and are very well placed to channel support to the best charities.

### NIGEL HAMWAY

*Chair, Step Change Grants Panel*

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**"As philanthropists it is hard to find and support individual organisations. Step Change, with its rigorous process, Project Managers, and the support of OCF is ideally placed to do this."**

*Nigel Hamway, Step Change Chair*

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**"Step Change funded us to implement important changes in governance, mission and vision, enabling us to reach beyond our student population and into the community as a whole. The support from our Project Manager was invaluable to keep us on track and accountable."**

*Sara Fernandez, Director, Oxford Hub*

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**“Support from the Step Change Fund enabled us to work beyond our farm gates – to take co-farmers to new locations and to create progression routes for them. The support allowed us to think more ambitiously about social change.”**

*Sarah Giles, Director, FarmAbility*

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## 1. Summary of approved projects in 2018

### Grants awarded in the past 12 months

Charity and project	Grant	Annual income	KPIs
<p><b>Ark T Centre</b></p> <p>This project is about protecting the future resilience of Ark T, a charity that uses the arts to empower vulnerable people, such as young women at risk of sexual exploitation. It will do so by diversifying the charity's income, in particular from hires of a new community meeting venue in Cowley.</p>	£50,000	£216,967	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2020, at least 30k raised through the NewRiver regeneration project in Templars Square, for Ark T's community cohesion programme</li> <li>New CRM database installed to manage venue bookings; new media images of both spaces online and updated</li> <li>Updated mailing list for all previous and existing venue hirers across the sites</li> </ol>
<p><b>Cogges Heritage Trust</b></p> <p>The 'Everyone's Cogges' project will move Cogges Manor Farm in Witney from a purely income-generating visitor attraction to being focused as much on supporting the societal and welfare needs of the local community. Its future continues to be sustainable, but with more charitable objectives.</p>	£49,360	£338,759	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer numbers increase from 60 to 250 and will be sustained; at least 5% of volunteers class themselves as disabled; people with mental health issues form at least 10% of volunteers</li> <li>45 new opportunities to volunteer, equating to a £24,000 contribution</li> <li>Three volunteers receive disability training and instruct an additional 50 others</li> <li>A social impact evaluation toolkit is purchased and an evaluation strategy implemented</li> <li>Work with four other new partners to establish wider volunteer recruitment pool; at least one active partner relationship for each target audience; partnership accounts for 50% of volunteer training and support</li> </ol>
<p><b>Oxford Parent Infant Project (OXPIP)</b></p> <p>OxPIP plan to turn their parent-infant mental health and wellbeing training into a social enterprise, making the most of clinical commissioning opportunities to offer paid training to customers in the statutory, private and charity sectors. The income will create stability for their charitable work with families.</p>	£50,000	£334,077	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff capacity and succession planning – new staff in place</li> <li>Programme development</li> <li>Marketing, data, communications and sales</li> </ol>
<p><b>Oxfordshire Youth (Grant II)</b></p> <p>This project will strengthen impact, firstly through better targeting of the services provided to members, achieved by implementing a new CRM system; and secondly in evidencing the impact the work has on young people, by developing impact measurement tools.</p>	£25,000	£322,530	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful implementation of the CRM system, improving the efficiency of the organisation</li> <li>Improved targeting of services and better tailoring of services offered to members</li> <li>Strong evidence of the impact of the organisation's work with young people</li> </ol>
<p><b>RAW Workshop (Grant II)</b></p> <p>RAW's grant will support the set-up costs for them to deliver gardening and landscaping services, training and employing people with mental health difficulties in the enterprise. The project will bring in the proven therapeutic benefits of gardening in improving vulnerable people's mental health.</p>	£51,000	£407,938	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social impact hours: number of people engaging in both the main service and the gardens projects to grow quarter on quarter</li> <li>Financial: income yr 1: £70-£80k; yr 2: £95k; yr 3: £110k</li> <li>New customer acquisition (1 new corporate customer per year) and growth in impact</li> </ol>
<b>Total granted</b>	<b>£225,360</b>		

## 2. Other active projects

The following projects were funded in previous years, and Step Change Project Managers are still actively working with the charities to ensure KPIs are met.

Charity and project	Amount granted	Date funded	KPIs	Progress to date
<p><b>One-Eighty (Grant II)</b> This project is to set up a traineeship programme to increase One Eighty's pool of psychologists supporting children.</p>	£48,850	2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four trainees recruited to the pilot traineeship programme</li> <li>Two graduates of the programme subsequently join as full-time staff members</li> <li>After the pilot at least four trainees join the programme each year</li> </ol>	Two trainees started at the beginning of January, and the next two will be recruited in March 2019. A particularly successful programme has been Make Me Smile, which explains mental health in an easy and understandable way for primary school children, helping them to see how mental health problems might be affecting those around them.
<p><b>Orchestra of St John's</b> This project will deliver six different outreach programmes amongst disadvantaged communities.</p>	£48,600	2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not less than three of the six projects to be still running successfully after 12 months of their launch</li> <li>1,100 participants to have benefited from their engagement with the projects</li> <li>New revenue to produce £25,000 in year 2 and £40,000 in year 3</li> </ol>	From October 2018 to January 2019, there have been workshops at Oxford Spires Academy and Campsfield Immigration Centre; a panel discussion at Somerville College; and various concerts that are the culmination of OSJ's three-month community engagement project with the Oxford Spires Academy. OSJ is also engaging with the young musicians of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music to cultivate musical and personal skills and develop mutual understanding across cultures.
<p><b>Transition by Design</b> This project makes space for sustainability, creativity and community in the UK's least affordable city by making better use of 'meanwhile spaces'.</p>	£49,250	2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 organisations provided with affordable, secure making and workspace over three years</li> <li>£150k revenue generated from tenancies over three years</li> <li>15 vulnerable adults provided training opportunities</li> <li>Change in narrative around empty buildings in the city, social enterprise and link to extreme housing need</li> </ol>	The first reinvigorated building in Aristotle Lane is at capacity, with 16 tenants and six hot-deskers. A second building has been opened in conjunction with the charity Aspire, on a one-year lease from Oxford University, related to housing and homelessness, with advice, support, and training courses offered. TbD would like to apply for a further grant of around £25,000 (subject to the usual Step Change criteria) to help with the employment of a Business Development Manager and internal staff training.

A Full Grants Summary listing all historic projects is available at [www.oxfordshire.org/step-change](http://www.oxfordshire.org/step-change).

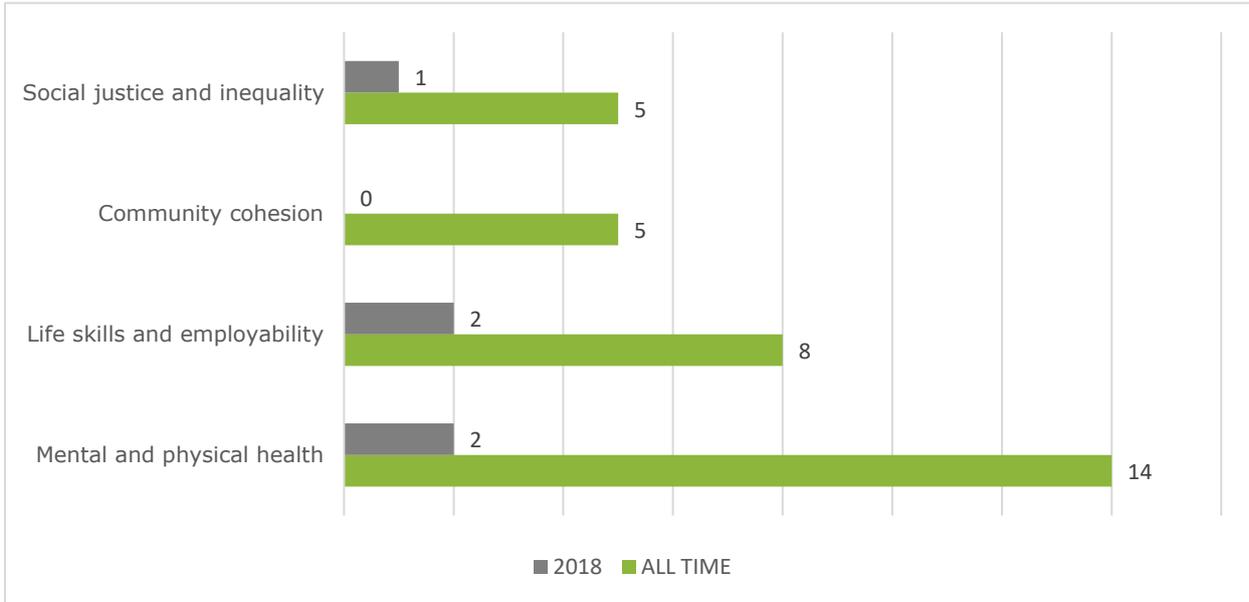


“Whilst the numbers are encouraging, the most important thing is that these figures represent regular meaningful human contact for people who would otherwise be suffering the acute pain of loneliness.”

*Sheila Furlong, Chief Executive, Archway Foundation*

The chart that follows describes the successful bidders and their projects since May 2014.

**Analysis of successful applicants**



### 3. Financial summary as at 2018

At 31st December 2018 we had £1.35m available for future grants. Our aim has been to seek multi-year pledges from donors, and as a result of their generous support, we now have commitments which will fund grant giving at the current level beyond 2021. This enables us to plan securely and to look at whether and how we might increase our work. Step Change has become the 'flagship' fund of OCF, and we are in active discussions with its trustees about our plans within its overall strategy.

Since inception		Funds out	Funds in	Balance
<b>Funds received from donors, including Gift Aid</b>			<b>£1,838,582</b>	
Less contribution to OCF		£87,244		
Net available for grants				£1,751,338
<b>Grants</b>				
Projects completed/outside 2-yr monitoring period	£258,850			
Projects completed/within 2-yr monitoring period	£411,012			
Current projects – grants given to date	£123,830			
TOTAL GRANTS GIVEN TO 31/12/18		£793,692		
<b>Cash balance as at 31/12/18</b>				<b>£957,646</b>
Future commitments on current projects		£248,220		
Cash available at 31/12/18 for new projects				£709,426
Future pledges of donations (net of contribution to OCF)			£648,850	
<b>Forecast total cash available for future projects</b>				<b>£1,358,276</b>

**“Step Change has enabled SOFEA to build a social enterprise that, by building the skills of young people, provides low cost groceries to families. As one recipient simply says, ‘This means I can feed my kids’.”**

*Richard Kennell, CEO, South Oxfordshire Food and Education Alliance (SOFEA)*



## 4. The future

When the Step Change Fund was launched in 2014, the founders agreed that rather than creating a new charity with the sole purpose of administering the fund, it would be placed within Oxfordshire Community Foundation, as a restricted fund. All donations to the Step Change Fund could only be used for charitable grants approved by the Step Change panel, but the fund would be presented in OCF's annual report and accounts, and OCF would be responsible for all financial reporting and legal compliance requirements. OCF would claim Gift Aid on eligible contributions.

OCF also publicises the availability of these grants to local charities, and undertakes some of the administration needed for their review and assessment. Responsibility for all other aspects of running the fund – for example fundraising to secure regular donations, management of the Project Managers, and all reporting – would also be undertaken by Step Change panel members.

As time has passed, it has become clear that some of these activities, previously carried out by the founders, would need to pass to others, and that many could be met by the trustees or staff of OCF, who were already doing similar work for other funds and had the necessary experience. It is important to stress, however, that going forward all decision-making and approval of grants to be awarded will remain the sole responsibility of the Step Change panel.

OCF has a very great incentive to ensure the continuing success of Step Change, as the fund is an important source of charitable funding for local Oxfordshire charities, and is an innovative and highly successful model from which OCF takes inspiration for some of its other activities. In 2018–19, Step Change grant-making represented 21% of OCF's overall charitable activity, making a significant contribution to its overall impact. OCF's Chief Executive Jayne Woodley comments: "At OCF we can see that Step Change is providing exactly what the charitable sector needs: larger investments and strategic financial and skills-based support. We therefore hope to see the Step Change Fund's contribution continue to grow as one of OCF's flagship programmes – and indeed as a model that other community foundations across the UK wish to replicate."



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**"The IT upgrade and training has enabled the company to operate more efficiently and effectively, increase its skills and workforce, and focus time and energy on artistic endeavours and good governance."**

*Nicole Thompson, Artistic Director, Anjali*

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## 5. Farewell to Colin Alexander

We were very sad that Colin Alexander, co-founder of the Step Change Fund, passed away in 2018.

Colin will be remembered as a good-hearted, proactive member of Oxfordshire's community, and a superb administrator who brought his professional experience as a businessman and company director to OCF for the benefit of others.

After graduating from Oxford Colin joined ICI and then worked for three other public companies in senior financial posts, before founding his own business in 1976. This he built up over the next 20 years, before selling it and joining London East TEC as Head of the Small Business Unit for ten years.

Since 1998 Colin was involved with the economic development of Oxfordshire, initially as Director of Business Link Heart of England, and since April 2001 as Oxford Innovation's Director of Consultancy and Projects. He was also a member of the Princes Trust Thames Valley Board.

On retiring as a trustee of OCF in 2015, Colin used much of this business development experience to come up with the idea for the Step Change Fund (then Future-Building Fund), alongside Marion Stevenson.

As we know, critical to the success of this grant-making programme is the inclusion of volunteer project managers, many of whom are Colin's own personal business contacts, who help charity leaders plan and implement their infrastructure projects over a series of milestones. The system of support and reporting back on key performance indicators comes straight from the model employed by Colin during his work at Business Link.

Colin died after a short illness on 24th September 2018, surrounded by his close family. OCF's staff and trustees have sent their condolences to his wife Judy and their children and grandchildren.

Marion Stevenson comments: "Colin worked with me from 2013 to set up the Step Change Fund. As part of the panel, he then acted as administrator for panel meetings and as coordinator of the team of project managers, linking them with successful organisations and monitoring the outcomes. Colin's attention to detail, his financial skills and his understanding of the levers that were relevant to the business and voluntary sectors were outstanding. Above all, Colin was someone who could be relied on. He consulted on what needed to happen, committed to his part in the work and he always delivered. It was a real joy to work with him."



## APPENDIX 1 Panel member biographies

**Nigel Hamway (Chair)** is a former trustee of OCF, who worked in industry, banking and fund management after qualifying as a chartered accountant. He has extensive experience of development and venture capital investing. Nigel is former chair of Family Links and trustee of Blackbird Academy Trust, currently chairs Oxford Lieder and the Christ Church Cathedral Music Trust and is a trustee of the Progress Foundation. He is also chairman of the Conygar Investment Company plc.

**Laura Chapman** is a trustee of OCF and Chair of the community foundation's Grants Panel. She was Chief Executive of the Freemasons' Grand Charity for 16 years. During that time, she oversaw a grant-making programme with an annual expenditure of approximately £5m. In her earlier career, she headed up BT's award-winning Community Affairs Programme, responsible for the evaluation and selection of economic development, social welfare and cultural projects. Laura has worked as a freelance consultant for Business in the Community and CSR activities, and in the evaluation of public policy initiatives primarily in urban regeneration and community development.

**Marion Stevenson** originally qualified as a probation officer. She practised for seven years in criminal work and as a divorce court welfare officer, before becoming a family mediator (divorce mediator) in 1989. She was Director of Oxfordshire Family Mediation between 2003 and 2011 and a mediation trainer for National Family Mediation from 2006 to 2014. She founded Oxford Community Mediation in 1995 and Charity Mentors Oxfordshire in 2012, chairing its board of trustees until 2018. She co-founded the Step Change Fund with Colin Alexander, with support from Robin Buxton.

**Tony Stratton** joined Thame-based CPM in 1975, became CEO in 1990, Group Chairman in 2003 and is now Chairman Emeritus. He remains a director of three companies in the marketing communications sector. In 2004 he joined the board of Oxford Inspires, becoming Chair in 2006 and led the merger with Visit Oxford, creating Experience Oxfordshire. He continues to be involved in a number of initiatives within the county. A Liveryman in the Worshipful Company of Marketors, a member of the Marketing Group of Great Britain and a Fellow of the RSA, he is also a Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire and was High Sheriff of Oxfordshire 2014–15. He was the founding chair of Reciprocate, OCF's responsible business group.

**Martin Wilkinson** is a qualified accountant (CIMA) who spent his career in a number of business organisations in the UK and Canada. He held senior financial positions in three multinational businesses, particularly an Oxford-based academic publisher where he was Financial Director for 15 years. He has held a number of non-business positions in educational institutions (primary, secondary and Oxford Brookes University governorships) and local charities. The latter category includes Chair of Oxfordshire Family Mediation, and Treasurer of Earth Trust and St Luke's Hospital, amongst others. He joined the Step Change panel in early 2016.

## APPENDIX 2 Project manager biographies

**Chris Allen** is a Chartered Accountant who was employed in financial positions by several international companies, both in the UK and overseas. More recently he worked for the government-funded local Business Link, providing help and support to small businesses in Oxfordshire. He is currently a Prince's Trust mentor and lives in Abingdon.

**Andrew Colleran** has spent his career in IT, working throughout Europe with a variety of organisations, in retail, information services, academia and security, to help them use technology to their advantage. He is now helping several local charities in the same way. Andrew lives in Oxford.

**Steven English** has over 35 years global experience in the chemical industry, and has worked at very senior levels in multinational companies, based in Germany, Switzerland and the USA. He has a strong business development background and more recently has started his own consultancy helping start-up companies fulfil their potential. Steven lives in Oxford.

**Gian Gopal**, after a distinguished career as an experimental particle physicist at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, founded the Oxford Hindu Temple and Community Centre Project with view to setting up a Hindu Temple in Oxfordshire. Gian lives in Abingdon.

**Gwilym Hughes'** career has spanned the Royal Air Force, the Diplomatic Service and academia. He is interested in how public policy affects international relations and is the director of the Oxford Intelligence Group. He now works primarily in asset management and is a Fellow and the Head of the Endowment Office at Nuffield College Oxford. He also advises the college on charity law, corporate governance and the role of trustees. Gwilym lives in near Chipping Norton.

**Lisa Mynheer** worked in leukaemia research before becoming a founding director of a biotechnology start-up. She then set up and managed the UK's first fully equipped micro-incubator for new diagnostic technologies, helping entrepreneurs turn their innovations into businesses. Lisa has a PGCE in coaching and facilitation and is now focused on using these skills to support the change in culture required for the effective implementation of innovation management processes. She lives in Horton cum Studley.

**Graham Shaw** has worked for over 20 years as both an executive and non-executive director of commercial companies in diverse industry sectors. He is a trustee of two local charities and was previously Chief Executive of an Oxford-based charity for five years. Graham is Managing Director of two local technology companies and holds non-executive positions with a London-based private equity investment group. He lives in Dorchester-on-Thames.

**Andrew Silver** joined his family's restaurant company over 40 years ago, and for the past 35 years has been running it. The business primarily consists of operating Quick Service restaurants, and it was one of the first multi-franchisee operators in the UK. Today the company operates a number of Burger King restaurants, as well as running a busy seaside restaurant business on the South Coast. Andrew was born in Oxford, and enjoys living in this great city.

**Lene De Wesselow's** background is financial services. She was one the founder partners of J. Rothschild Assurance, which later became St James's Place Partners. At St James's Place she built up her practice, which she sold in 2002. She then did voluntary work for The Prince's Trust in Berkshire for five years, managing the local team of mentors. Lene lives in Henley.

**Philip Wootton** worked for a large British multi-national for 35 years in senior management positions, then spent 14 years with Business Link, public-sector organisation helping small enterprises thrive. When government funding was withdrawn in 2011 he continued to work for the operating company developing and marketing EU grants to businesses. Philip has been involved with several charities in Oxfordshire and lives in Oxford.





This report is dedicated to the memory of

## **Colin Alexander**

**Step Change co-founder, 1937–2018**

The Step Change Fund is a charitable fund held and managed by Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Registered Charity number 1151621.

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[www.oxfordshire.org/step-change](http://www.oxfordshire.org/step-change)