ABOUT US

Connecting communities for a better Oxfordshire
Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF) works to improve lives by addressing social and economic disadvantage.

We tackle the most pressing social problems locally: homelessness, educational inequality, and loneliness and isolation.

Our work is all about collaboration and consensus-building. We make the best ideas happen – solutions to the problems, not sticking plasters. This leads to sustained and meaningful improvements to people’s lives.
Despite its wealth and success, our beautiful county hides a number of simply shocking and upsetting social problems here on our doorsteps. As part of our work, we uncover these issues and understand what causes them. We then bring together charities, philanthropists, businesses and the public sector to research, design and fund long-term solutions.
WHY WE CARE: 
THE URGENT NEED IN OXFORDSHIRE

In Oxfordshire we see the worst as well as the best of Britain:

- Almost **500 people a year** sleep rough in Oxford alone, with many more hidden homeless across the city and county.
- Disadvantaged children in Oxfordshire are nearly two years behind their peers at school by age 16, with 17% of adults in the county having no qualifications at all.
- Local pockets of deprivation and isolation destroy mental and physical health, with a **15-year gap** in life expectancy for men between our most and least deprived areas.

Sources: Oxford City Council Housing and Homeless Strategy, Appendix A; Education Policy Institute and Census; Oxfordshire Insight (Oxfordshire County Council). For more in-depth information about the needs, please see our research report Oxfordshire Uncovered.
“Our beautiful county hides a number of simply shocking and distressing social problems.”
WHO WE ARE

OCF is an independent charity that has been working in Oxfordshire since 1995.

We are part of the UK network of 46 quality-accredited community foundations, and one of over 1,800 similar foundations around the world. As a group, the UK community foundation network is the fourth largest giver of charitable funds in the UK.

We work through existing charities and networks, providing financial support and facilitating partnerships to give disadvantaged members of our communities a chance to improve their lives.

Thrive Leys is a mentoring programme for disenchanted youngsters on Oxford’s most deprived estates, which has been given over £72,000 in grants by OCF.
WHAT WE DO

We work to improve the lives of Oxfordshire’s most disadvantaged people, tackling our county’s most pressing social problems, including homelessness, educational inequality and loneliness.

We realise it can be confusing to know how to invest philanthropically. What are the biggest issues? Which projects will have the most impact?

Because we understand Oxfordshire’s social needs and are connected to those addressing them, we can partner with you to give intelligently to proven solutions that tackle the root causes of these issues.

Tracy is a service user at The Gatehouse, a key partner in Oxfordshire Homeless Movement, a collaborative project convened by OCF. The movement is helping ensure that people with lived experience have their voices heard in decision-making around homelessness.
We are uniquely placed to take the lead in improving the lives of everyone in Oxfordshire. As an apolitical and impartial community foundation, with a huge network of supporters and delivery partners across charities, businesses and the statutory sector, we are a trusted influencer and partner for driving social change.

Age UK Oxfordshire is helping OCF understand how to make Banbury a better place to grow old. This includes carrying out surveys and focus groups with older people to understand their needs and implement practical solutions to improve their lives – such as better access to exercise.
OCF distributes around £1 million in grants every year to charities across Oxfordshire that are working at the grassroots level to tackle the most pressing problems faced by its citizens, including emergency response to crises such as COVID-19. This incorporates funds awarded at OCF’s discretion and according to our strategic priorities, as well as grants made through donor-advised funds and national funders.
Strategic programmes

We take an increasingly proactive role through our strategic programmes, which facilitate strong cooperation between organisations wanting to improve communities, regardless of their sector. This creates unique partnerships between the charity, private and public sector that enable more progress to be made, more effectively.

In creating these initiatives, we use our strong, independent voice to drive social change through a rigorous process of:

1. Researchers the key issues
2. Analysing the steps needed for significant change
3. Designing a partnership programme
4. Funding the solution
5. Delivering the activities, and

We learn, and we adjust the approach – scaling up (or back) as necessary.
HOW CAN YOU HELP

Our donors support our vision that everyone deserves a **place to call home**, every child should have an **opportunity to thrive** and everyone should feel a **sense of belonging** to the community where they live.

They give back to their community to help make this a reality. Their vital support makes a huge difference. We know how important it is that this impact and lasting sustainable change can be seen in their community.

At OCF we help you maximise the impact of your philanthropy by harnessing the power of collective funds, expertise and passion, working with our partners for a better Oxfordshire.

**Join our Friends**
Share in OCF’s successes by contributing discretionary funds of £250 a year, which will be used where they are most needed.

**Support a strategic programme**
Enable innovative solutions to homelessness, educational inequality and loneliness by supporting our partnership work.

**Become a Patron**
Invest in OCF’s long-term stability by committing to a substantial discretionary gift for three years or more.
GET IN TOUCH

Arrange a meeting
Our Chief Executive and team of dedicated trustees would love to meet philanthropic individuals or businesses who want to make a difference.

Ask us anything
We can provide research data, evidence our impact, answer questions about our programmes, or connect you with others in our extensive networks.

Find us online
Browse written and video case studies, information about our collaborative projects, plus all our latest insight, news, views and events on our website.

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