



The Climate Action Fund Learning Signposts #11

Climate adaptation and resilience

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Climate adaptation and resilience

Who is this for?

This learning signpost is primarily intended for people involved in Climate Action Fund projects and other projects or groups that include an element of climate adaptation and resilience. It shares some of the early learning from Climate Action Fund projects that are working in this area.

Introduction

What is adaption and resilience in a climate change context? The terms are often used interchangeably, so it is useful to set out what each of these mean. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) describes adaptation as 'the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects'1. In terms of who needs to be involved in this, the United Nations (UN) sets out that 'successful adaptation not only depends on governments but also on the active and sustained engagement of stakeholders, including local communities, national, regional, multilateral and international organisations, public and private sectors, civil society and other relevant actors, as well as an effective management of knowledge'². This highlights the importance of engaging communities and other stakeholder groups in adapting to climate change.

Resilience to climate change has been described as 'the ability to anticipate, prepare for and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbances related to climate'³. This is more about the preparedness to address the impacts of climate change.

The UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) 2023 report to Parliament on progress adapting to climate change in England assesses progress made at the end of two National Adaptation Programmes, the statutory programme required from Government to help prepare the country for climate change. Reports for Scotland, Wales and Ireland are expected later in 2023.

Of the report's findings, key messages were:

- The CCC's assessment found very limited evidence of the implementation of adaptation at the scale needed to fully prepare for climate risks facing the UK across cities, communities, infrastructure, economy and ecosystems.
- The impacts from extreme weather in the UK over the last year highlight the urgency of adapting to climate change.
- The next National Adaptation Programme must make a step change.

¹ ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/01/SYRAR5-Glossary_en.pdf

² <u>unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/the-big-picture/introduction</u>

³ <u>c2es.org/content/climate-resilience-overview/</u>



The CCC report⁴ describes well-adapted communities as 'those that are adequately prepared for climate and weather extremes and can respond to weather and climate emergencies when they do occur to minimise their impacts. Maintaining thriving communities also requires conservation of key cultural heritage under future climate change conditions.'

The report also sets out the importance of having 'thriving natural ecosystems that can prosper despite climate change...both for the intrinsic value of nature, but also for the range of benefits that nature provides (often implicitly) to people and the UK economy (e.g., pollination and improved flood mitigation). If natural ecosystems are damaged by climate change, other societal goals (including climate adaptation, nature recovery and net zero) will increasingly be jeopardised.'

Different places will need different approaches to climate adaptation and resilience, reflecting their local circumstances, but the involvement of communities at a local level in the planning and delivery of these is crucial. This learning signpost shares the learning from two very different Climate Action Fund (CAF) projects that have a focus on different aspects of climate adaptation and resilience; one of nature through a youth-led approach and the other of an isolated coastal rural community.

The CAF portfolio to date consists primarily of projects that focus on climate mitigation. In this learning output, we've captured the successes and learning from three projects that are striving to enable communities to adapt and become more resilient to climate change as part of their projects, which also include elements of climate mitigation. The focus of much of the work of these projects is in engagement and laying the foundations for climate adaptation and resilience to be developed in the long term, so some findings will be relevant to projects with a different focus. The overarching lessons are summarised overleaf.



⁴ <u>theccc.org.uk/publication/progress-in-adapting-to-climate-change-2023-report-to-parliament/#key-message</u>

Some lessons emerging from the projects we highlight in this resource are:

Do:

- Cast your net wide during the development phase of a project to engage people and get ideas/information to inform climate adaptation/ mitigation project development and design. This will help ensure there is local ownership of ideas and projects emerging. Project leads found they needed to work with different people and on different projects than they had envisaged and thought the main project would focus on reducing people's emissions but found that it needs to be about adaptation and resilience.
- Involve young people in engagement activities with other young people/communities. Their involvement can help build momentum more quickly than this just being done by the project teams.
- Build time into project design when developing a youth-led approach. It takes time to establish relationships with young people and build their confidence and knowledge to develop and implement their own ideas.
- Attend the CAF cohort events and reach out to other CAF projects in delivery or developing similar projects to yourselves. Networking with other projects in Devon, Scotland and Wales and sharing experiences helped the Ouse Valley Climate Action project develop key strands of project delivery.
- Make sure you keep your partnership board in the loop and use any tools at your disposal to support good governance, including Terms of Reference, training and visits for your Board, decision logs, RAG (red, amber, green) progress reporting etc. It's very easy to become focused on outward facing work with the local community and not give sufficient focus to those internal allies.

Don't:

- **Rush things**. True engagement and involvement of young people, residents and stakeholders in adaptation and resilience activities in a community context takes time.
- Make assumptions about understanding. To many people, the term 'resilience building' is quite vague. To help understanding, it needs to be defined clearly in clear contextual terms that are appropriate to the locality and the community.
- Be afraid to say no and use expert input to help decide on priorities.

Project 1: Stand for Nature Wales

Stand for Nature Wales is a pan-Wales project which aims to inspire and empower young people to take action for nature in their communities and beyond. It is being delivered by a partnership of the six Welsh Wildlife Trusts. This builds on the previous National Lottery funded 'Our Wild Coast – Ein Glannau Gwyllt' project that formed part of the wider 'Our Bright Futures' project. They are working with regional forums of young people (aged nine to twenty-four), who are leading on climate-related wildlife projects from five contrasting communities throughout Wales: Anglesey, coastal Ceredigion, North Powys, the South Wales valleys and the neighbouring cities of Newport and Cardiff. These forums link with schools, Further Education colleges, universities, youth services, social charities, grass-roots community groups and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to deliver activities on the ground.

What the project involves

The project is focused on developing youthdirected, volunteer-delivered, local 'nature recovery networks' of green infrastructure where practical improvements to the condition and connection of habitats help support species recovery and carbon sequestration within a targeted area. This is delivered in rural, semi-urban and urban areas. Below are examples of activities delivered through the project.

 Work is targeted to deliver multiple benefits for climate change. For example, green roofs and walls provide new habitat for insects (and in turn, food for birds); reduce energy loss (and thus consumption); store carbon dioxide; make an area more attractive to live and work in; reduce noise levels; and improve local air quality.





Figure 1 - Stand for Nature Wales, planting seagrass. Source: North Wales Wildlife Trust

- Exemplar habitat restoration or creation projects are delivered that can be provably and measurably linked to carbon sequestration or climate change mitigation. This might include the transformation of agricultural grassland into wildflower meadows⁵; participating in peatland restoration activities⁶; creating a community re-wilding corridor linking schools, gardens, public open spaces and businesses; and co-designing and delivering natural flood management measures (e.g. planting trees in the uplands to 'slow the flow')⁷.
- Formal, accredited training opportunities are provided, based around new learning resources for young people in community engagement, sustainable living, conservation skills, monitoring wildlife for impacts of climate change, planning/monitoring behaviour change and campaigning.
- Young people are trained to deliver programmes of educational sessions, workshops and drop-ins for their local area's schools, youth clubs and wider

community groups, focussing on specific areas of long-term behaviour change to benefit the climate (e.g. local food production, reducing consumption and waste, and sustainable transport).

- Experienced mentors are brought in to work alongside individual young people to develop their areas of interest (e.g. sustainable energy, planning policy, wetland conservation, gardening for wildlife or lobbying their local businesses and politicians) and support their career development over the course of local projects.
- Climate change-linked creative materials are co-produced, including visual and sonic art, film and media productions and pieces of creative writing: all helping to tell participants' stories and inspire wider participation.
- Case studies and longitudinal surveys are undertaken with young people and community members engaged in the project, to capture evidence of changes in behaviours and attitudes.



Figure 2 - Stand for Nature Wales, tree planting. Source: Radnorshire Wildlife Trust

⁵Grasslands can make a contribution to the climate crisis, see: <u>wildlifetrusts.org/natural-</u><u>solutions-climate-change/grassland-solutions</u>

⁶ The peatland in the Pumlumon project areas covers around 3,732 ha of deep peat and was estimated as having the potential to net reduce annual emissions by 16,167 tCO2e. To date, the project has worked with 13 different landowners to block 4km of artificial drainage ditch (or grips) across over 1,000 ha. This has safeguarded 3,680,000 cubic metres of peat and resulted in the sequestration of 1,026 tCO2e. See: <u>montwt.co.uk/projects/pumlumon-project</u>

⁷ Managed beaver reintroduction, see: <u>wtwales.org/welsh-beaver-project</u>

Activities so far

- Climate and conservation traineeship; the North Wales team have delivered a very successful 'climate and conservation traineeship' for twenty three young people (aged 16-24) on Anglesey for the past two years. The two-week summer course includes AQA accredited modules on understanding the climate crisis, the principles of community organising and how human communities can work with nature to adapt to the pressures of climate change.
- Ocean Rescue Champions; the North Wales team also established the 'Ocean Rescue Champions' programme in April 2022, and have just seen the conclusion of the first cohort's activities. These young people have spent a year volunteering and training as marine 'champions' - delivering activities and events which focus on the importance of 'blue carbon' in communities across Anglesey. Through this programme the young people have been linked with Project Seagrass, a project aiming to restore seagrass meadows to sites around the Welsh coast - and just last week they helped to plant 50,000 seeds at one location. These sites will be used for community activities and events in the coming years to highlight the importance of these habitats for wildlife, as carbon stores and also as providers of food security and livelihood support for our communities in the future.
- **Climate Camp;** the Gwent team ran a week-long climate camp for young people in October 2021 which resulted in the creation of a rainwater garden at a community centre in Newport.

The rainwater run-off helps plants that can tolerate waterlogging' to thrive and the garden is used by the centre as a learning space to demonstrate how excess rainwater can be diverted from waste water systems.

- Climate themed workshops; the Powys team have run a series of workshops with teenage groups for the past two summers on climate-themed nature topics such as peat restoration, soil health, and the climate value of woodlands, heathlands and grasslands. Through group activities they cover concepts of habitat connectivity, natural solutions, and resilience to climate change and have seen increased understanding of and engagement with these issues over time.
- Linking the biodiversity crisis with the themes of climate adaptation and resilience; the project partners have managed to consistently find ways to deliver activities, training and events which link the biodiversity crisis with the themes of climate adaptation and resilience. These have included;
 - Field trips to beaver re-introduction sites across the UK to learn about how they can act as eco-system engineers and provide benefits for both people and wildlife.
 - Undertaking surveys of peat-free compost availability in garden centres across Wales, talking to local people and businesses about the importance of peatlands in climate regulation.

- Stalls at fetes, shows and festivals (both local and national scale – e.g. Eisteddfod⁸) where our youth forums highlight the interconnectivity of the two crises, what they can do locally to help or be involved in the project and asking community members, businesses and organisations to commit to climate action pledges
- The production of a <u>national youth</u> <u>manifesto</u> (produced collaboratively by our youth forums across Wales) which highlights the interconnectedness of the twin crises and lays out a series of asks for the Welsh Government.

⁸ eisteddfod.wales/business/background

Learning so far

Time

The biggest challenge is the amount of time it takes to deliver elements of the project when the project is trying to be youth-led. It takes time to establish relationships with young people and build them to a point where they feel sufficiently confident and knowledgeable to develop and implement their own ideas. However, the project team have found that the events and activities that are truly youth-led and where the messaging and communication is delivered by the youth forums, are more effective at engaging with local communities than if the project team were leading on them as staff of the Wildlife Trusts. It is certainly a more effective channel for engaging with the wider community, but it does take time.

Youth mentors

It was recognised that it would take time for the regional youth forums to build, so factored in a 'development year' for all the partner Trusts – from Oct '20 to Oct '21. The idea being that the North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT) as lead partner would be able to use that year to support the partner Trusts using the NWWT established youth forum as a template on which partners could base theirs. This worked to a degree, but it would have been more effective if we could have had a selection of individuals from existing forums available as mentors who could travel with the project team to the other regions and help to support and encourage prospective new youth participants. This would have provided a bit more momentum going into Y2 of the project and helped achieve some of these things sooner.

Link

Project 2: Resilient Bude

The Resilient Bude programme was developed by Bude Climate Partnership, a group of local environmental organisations working together to develop positive community led climate change responses throughout the wider Bude area. Situated in north Cornwall on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, Bude is exposed to some of the more extreme impacts of climate change and needs urgent protection. The programme comprises six projects, designed to help residents and businesses in the Bude Community Network Area prepare for and protect themselves and their surroundings against the vast uncertainties that lie ahead because of climate change. The projects will also help residents, businesses and visitors contribute towards reducing the community's energy use, thereby mitigating the community's contributions to the climate crisis. Extensive research, consultation and pilot projects were undertaken during the development phase of the programme, which has informed the development of these projects.



What the project involves

The main phase of the programme is in its early stage of delivery. There are six projects in total. The first three are the larger projects:

Sustainable tourism project

This is the largest of the six projects and builds on the findings of the tourism report produced during from the development phase. Building climate resilience in a tourism destination involves implementing strategies and measures to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The project focuses on how tourism businesses can work with the community and visitors to build resilience, including sharing case studies, best practice and by developing their own approaches.

Shoreline engagement project

The focus of this project is on adaptation (and some elements of resilience) to rising sea levels as a result of climate change. Mainly this is through a Citizens' Jury, led by engagement specialists Shared Future. The aim is to ensure that the community takes ownership of the process of adaptation. This will link with existing work such as Cornwall Council's 'Making Space for Sand' project⁹.



Figure 3 - Resilient Bude, Holding back the tide event.Source: Mark James/Bude Climate Partnership

A power mapping exercise is being undertaken to inform the recruitment of an Oversight Panel of local and regional stakeholders. The panel provides governance and oversight for the Citizens' Jury with different stakeholder groups/ interests from across the area represented, e.g. businesses, town and county councils, community groups, health etc. The panel will advise on contributors and expert witnesses to the jury and will oversee juror selection. The project will write to all households (around 8,000) in the area inviting participation in the Citizens' Jury.

Energy efficiency project

The project team are partnering with Community Energy Plus (CEP), a charity based further down in Cornwall, to pay for one of CEP's workers to focus three days per week on the Bude area. Residents will receive free advice and support on retrofitting energy-saving measures and gaining access to grants for energy efficiency improvements.

The three smaller projects are:

- A library of things.
- A community growing project.
- A storytelling project; this will create digital stories in which community members share memories and thoughts about their relationship with the local town, environment and coastline. These are accompanied by toolkits that provide supporting information on different aspects of climate change and adaptation. They build on the <u>nine digital</u> stories created in the development phase, but this time with more of a focus on young people aged 16–35 years.



Figure 4 - Resilient Bude, Holding back the tide event. Source: Mark James/Bude Climate Partnership

Learning so far

The development phase is crucial

The development phase was a crucial element in informing the projects in the main phase of the project. There is an African saying, "If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk with friends". In the development phase, the Resilient Bude project needed to "walk fast and alone" and consequently had a very focused, streamlined approach to its work. Thanks to a long development phase, it discovered the route to its destination and now needs to "walk far and with friends". Consequently, it has expanded the partnership, taking in many new local organisations.

Widen community engagement

Casting your net wide during the development phase of a project to engage many people and take in a wide range of ideas helps to ensure local ownership of ideas and projects emerging. A key finding of the development stage was that the project team needed to work with different people and on different projects than they had envisaged at the outset. Originally, they thought the main project would focus on reducing emissions, but they found it needed to be about adaptation and resilience.

Encourage new and different people to get involved

In a small community, it is difficult to find a critical mass of people to contribute. Often it is the same faces. Expectations can be low when "life has always been tough here" with few facilities and limited funding, but new recruits will be found in unexpected places. An example of this was a participant in the event to mark the COP26 Global Day of Action, who is a stalwart pillar of the community involved in numerous local 'establishment' organisations. It turned out they had a long and distinguished career in science before retirement and had been very concerned about climate change for decades. Had they not turned up at the event, they would not have been recruited to the Bude Climate Partnership, of which they are now the Chair. It is hoped that engagement work, such as the Citizens' Jury and Storytelling project will help further with this.

If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk with friends.

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Successes so far

- The debate has changed. At the start of the project, the Bude Climate Partnership was careful about discussing climate change and the need for climate adaptation and resilience, over concerns about scaremongering. However, the COP26 Global Day of Action¹⁰ presented an opportunity for the group, so they organised a 'Holding back the tide' event on the beach and lots of local people got involved and *"bought into it"*. Through the work of the group, people in the area are talking about sea-level rise. They want something done about it and are looking for leadership. In effect, the engagement work in the development phase of the project was a "soft *launch*" of the work of the main project and means locally *"the debate has changed"*.
- **People really care.** The programme is in its early days, but their staff recruitment has generated a lot of interest with more than 50 applications for one of the roles, which shows that *"people really care"* about the issues. It also demonstrates that the engagement work undertaken during the development phase was successful.
- Digital stories. The nine digital stories that were created during the development project were really successful in engaging a wide range of individuals on the issues of climate change adaptation and resilience. Telling the stories of individuals, particularly of local, respected members of the community, was very powerful.

Link

To find out more see: budeclimate.org/



¹⁰ The Global Day of Action took place during COP26, mobilising groups and individuals across the world calling for global leaders to take action on the climate crisis.

Project 3: Ouse Valley Climate Action (OVCA)

Led by the South Downs National Park Trust, the Ouse Valley Climate Action (OVCA) aims to bring the community together to inspire positive action to mitigate the effects of climate change in the lower Ouse Valley and Havens.

What the project involves

OVCA's work focuses on three key concerns for the Ouse Valley's adaptation/resilience to the impact of climate change:

- Nature Recovery, Resilience & Connectivity. This includes:
 - natural solutions to sequester carbon and 'make space for water' in the Ouse catchment;
 - reducing flood risk and improving drought resilience;
 - connecting habitats and improving water quality;
 - supporting food growing, improving and creating community greenspace/ gardens for wildlife to develop community climate resilience and improve wellbeing and education;
 - practical action, supporting the development of new community groups and events to help people feel more connected to the River Ouse and their local landscape, understand and value its role in our lives and take action to improve its health and resilience.



Figure 5 - OVCA, the OCVA core team at a stakeholder event. Source: Sam Moore, Visual Air

- Knowledge, Wellbeing & Skills. This includes:
 - supporting residents to develop their understanding of climate change and sustainable living through information, practical action and training such as cascade <u>Carbon Literacy</u> training for adults and children;
 - facilitating behaviour change by improving people's capacity, capability and motivation to take action at personal/household/community level;
 - using conversation and practical action to help people – particularly young people – manage eco-anxiety;
 - building capacity and resilience of community groups and our developing Climate Hubs through networking/ movement building/bespoke training and support.





Figure 6 - OCVA, sustainability entrepreneur speaking at a stakeholder event. Source: Sam Moore, Visual Air

- Sustainable Energy & Active Travel, including:
 - developing new local <u>Community</u> <u>Energy Groups</u>, focusing on the Havens (coastal towns) and the riverside villages;
 - technical support to establish a pipeline of community-owned renewable energy projects, building local energy resilience and reducing carbon emissions in the long-term;
 - household energy efficiency advice/ resources through 'Climate & Energy Champions', embedded in their community: providing surgeries and activities at community centres, foodbanks, events and one to one advice. Each champion focuses on a different area of energy use – e.g., home energy/retrofitting, water, transport;
 - encouraging take-up of active travel options – walking and cycling.

There is also a work strand focused on legacy to develop new, locally rooted funding streams for community resilience action and planning for future activities from the start of the project.

The aim is to both facilitate a broad range of activities across the project area and, crucially, to associate that work with a (generally hyper local) community group or initiative. The team is also working with those community groups and initiatives to build their resilience through training and other support and supporting the groups to network with others in their local area working on similar or complementary projects.

At the end of the three-year project the aim is to leave a legacy of more capable/resilient and better networked community groups, well-known within their communities. For example, OVCA is helping to develop new community gardens that should provide food, volunteering and education/wellbeing activities into the long term.

Learning so far

Local engagement

Engaging local groups and other key stakeholders has been an important part of the OVCA approach.

Use existing resources

The Centre for Alternative Technology's <u>Zero Carbon Britain</u> online course and the associated ZCB report were very helpful early on in simply explaining a path to Net Zero and enabled networking with other like-minded projects around the country. Also the ZCB resource hub and recordings of talks and online events from CAT.

Some of the OVCA team have trained as <u>Carbon Literacy</u> trainers and this training is starting to cascade to the wider team and community through partner Community Energy South. Carbon Literacy training is a good start point for the projects.

Piloting new ideas

OCVA is working with <u>OnePlanet</u>, using OVCA as part of a 3-month pilot, with additional funding from <u>InnovateUK</u>, to trial drawing multiple stakeholders' climate action plans together into one online accessible 'ecosystem', reducing silo-working with a view to accelerating progress towards NetZero across the wider South Downs National Park.



Successes so far

- The newly recruited partner team ran a stakeholder event, bringing OVCA community groups together with partners and other stakeholders, including town councils and Newhaven's regeneration manager. A short overview of the event can be seen <u>here</u>. The team also appeared on local radio station Seahaven FM, with a reach of 40,000 listeners.
- **Ten partners and over 50 community groups/initiatives are directly engaged** in delivering work under, or associated with, the project and the reach and engagement of the project is growing all the time.
- The OCVA team has enabled the Sussex Community Development Association's dormant Active Travel Hub to open as their office and event launch point, offering community bike repair sessions, learn to ride and guided ride events and supporting Seaford groups to organise a bike festival.
- OVCA strongly reflects what is important to our community and as a result it has strong community buy-in. The project is the culmination of over three years' work, building the project up from grassroots ideas, particularly working closely with residents in Seaford, Newhaven and Peacehaven (the Havens), where around 80% of the Project Team's work is targeted and where a significant proportion of the community faces economic disadvantage.
- The Energy Team, working with partners OVESCO and Community Energy South, have established the Energy Room at Lewes Climate Hub in Lewes High Street. This offers surgeries and events on household energy efficiency and includes displays such as the Climate Hub's 'Warm Box' display of insulation resources for retrofitting homes. The Energy Champions are also working in foodbanks and at cost-of-living crisis events, providing bespoke advice on energy saving/cost reduction to vulnerable residents.

Links

To find out more see: <u>southdownstrust.org.uk/ouse-valley-cares</u>

For more information about the Centre for Alternative Technologies Net Zero Carbon Britain course, see: <u>cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/research-</u> <u>reports/zero-carbon-britain-rising-to-the-climate-</u> <u>emergency/</u>

For more information about the Carbon Literacy Project, see: <u>carbonliteracy.com/</u>



Other resources

- The National Lottery Community Fund produced an Insight document on the Natural Environment, which includes elements of climate adaptation: <u>tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/</u><u>key-initiatives/natural-environment</u>
- **Bristol Green Capital** produced a resource on resilience for their Climate Action Programme for businesses: <u>bristolgreencapital.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/</u> <u>Resilience-guide-final-24-Jan-2023.pdf</u>
- **Communities prepared** was a project primarily funded by The National Lottery Community Fund that aims 'to empower communities across England to be better placed to prepare for, respond to, and recover from flooding and other emergencies.' <u>communitiesprepared.org.uk</u>

Acknowledgements:

We are grateful to the following for their help in compiling this resource.

- Chris Baker, Stand for Nature Wales
- Robert Uhlig, Bude Climate Partnership
- Emma Allen, Ouse Valley Climate Action





About the Climate Action Fund

The Climate Action Fund is a ten-year £100 million fund supporting communities across the UK to take action on climate change.

About The National Lottery Community Fund

We are the largest non-statutory community funder in the UK – community is at the heart of our purpose, vision and name. We support activities that create resilient communities that are more inclusive and environmentally sustainable and that will strengthen society and improve lives across the UK. We're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to work closely with government to distribute vital grants and funding from key Government programmes and initiatives. As well as responding to what communities tell us is important to them, our funding is focused on four key missions, supporting communities to:

- 1. Come together
- 2. Be environmentally sustainable
- 3. Help children and young people thrive
- 4. Enable people to live healthier lives.

Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, we distribute around £500 million a year through 10,000+ grants and plan to invest over £4 billion of funding into communities by 2030. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

National Lottery players raise over £30 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, £47 billion has been raised and more than 670,000 individual grants have been made across the UK – the equivalent of around 240 National Lottery grants in every UK postcode district.

www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk



