



Our Strategy 2022-27:
Towards a *fairer* and more *equal* Sussex



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Towards a fairer & more equal Sussex

We are proud and excited to share our new organisational strategy with you.

Following this tumultuous recent period of change and against a backdrop of significant social, economic and health challenges, we as a Foundation have been on quite a journey of our own. Our new vision, mission and values reflect what we have learned over the past few years and look to the future with clarity and continued hope and determination.

From the first days of lockdown in March 2020, small local charities organised in remarkable ways, changing ways of working to make sure that local people had the support they needed to cope with the pandemic. Our grant making evolved too; we worked in partnership with donors, statutory partners and businesses to ensure that our funding provided the flexibility to respond to the immediate and changing needs of our communities.

Over the past two years we have given out more than £4 million each year to over 1,000 unique charities and voluntary sector organisations. We have built lasting partnerships and now have over 100 active grant-making funds across a wide range of themes right across Sussex. We will continue with what we do today, but with strengthened intention, focus and reach and with a clear set of commitments on which we will report in 2027.

This strategy sets out these commitments. This includes delivering clearer and more intentional grant making to address poverty and disadvantage, to strengthen our local

communities and the voluntary sector, and to support local action to address issues such as equity, diversity and inclusion and climate change. We are one of the signatories to the IVAR Flexible Funder Commitments and we are committed to improving the experience of all those seeking funding from us.

We will also increase the amount and the effectiveness of local philanthropy in Sussex, offering expert local philanthropy advice that enables maximum impact from charitable giving. We will be informed by data but also by people and will engage in regular community listening activities to inform our approach. We will champion and give voice to local issues, building our leadership role and casting light on where funding and support is needed most.

We do all this from a position of strength. We continue to build our endowment to ensure we are here for the long term. We have increased our capacity as a team in our communications and marketing, our philanthropy and in how we manage the day to day operations of our organisation. We have a fantastic and committed staff and trustee team with a wealth of local knowledge and a deep passion for what we do. Our people - together with our donors and supporters - are truly our greatest asset.

When the world seems like a challenging place, there are always inspirational people to be found. Our job is to connect these people with the causes that matter most to Sussex.

We look forward to continuing our journey with you.



Keith Hollis
Chair

21st July 2022



Kevin Richmond
Chief Executive

Our Vision:

To see a *fairer* and more *equal* Sussex, where people and communities thrive for today and for the *future*.

Our Mission:

To *champion* and enable all who want to make a positive *contribution* to our local area through effective philanthropy and *community* action.

We will do this by:

Inspiring local people to give to meet local needs

Investing in local charities and community groups, and helping them to become strong and sustainable organisations

Informing & Influencing philanthropists and the wider community about local needs, now and in the longer term



Our *Commitments*

Sussex Community Foundation is a broad based local funder, supporting a wide range of charitable activities and enabling philanthropists to address the causes they care about. In this strategy we are making seven specific commitments. We will measure our progress on each and report each year on what we have achieved and what is left to do.



To focus our support clearly and openly on addressing poverty and disadvantage



To help strengthen local communities and the voluntary sector



To increase the amount and the effectiveness of local philanthropy in Sussex



To use data and local knowledge to inform our work



To promote equity, diversity and inclusion



To support local action to address climate change



To be an open and trusting grant maker

Our Values

All our work is informed by our values.

We are proud of the passionate, committed and expert team of staff and trustees we have built. Together we have agreed the values we choose to live by in everything we do. Our values make us who we are.

Our approach is *empowering*, helping others to make the difference that they want to make



We show *leadership*, acting boldly and positively for the public good



We maintain the highest standards of *integrity* in all that we do

We champion *equity*, working in accessible and inclusive ways, supporting greater fairness, and standing against prejudice, discrimination and disadvantage



We believe that people achieve the most when they work together with *shared passion* and *vision*



Our *Strategic Objectives*

How will we know if we have achieved our strategy? The following four objectives are what we aim to have achieved. In other words, what will be different by 2027 if we do what we're setting out to do today. These objectives should keep us all focused on the vision of a fairer and more equal Sussex. They are the building blocks of our strategy.

Objective 1: *Inspire*

We will *Inspire* local people to give to meet local needs in order to increase the amount and the effectiveness of local philanthropy in Sussex.

By 2027 we will have:

- Ensured that our grant programme has a sustainable impact by raising an additional £10m in new donations to our endowment and continuing to promote and grow other funding opportunities.
- Developed an enhanced philanthropy advice offering – supporting both those who have a clear idea what they want to achieve and those who need more active advice about local needs.
- Put in place a range of tools and products to enable people to be more strategic and effective in their local philanthropy.

To do this we will:

- Involve all in the organisation, including trustees, staff, ambassadors and volunteers, in helping to inspire people to give to local communities and in providing our service to donors.
- Provide consistent and inspiring donor services and communications to all who give to the Foundation, helping them to learn about the local community and demonstrate the impact of their giving.
- Embed relationships at the heart of our work and commit to offering a professional and personalised service.
- Develop a Philanthropy Advice Framework to enable our donors to be more strategic and effective in their giving and offer a deeper learning experience in their philanthropy journey.
- Develop plans to broaden and diversify our donor base, inspire and engage with younger donors and in particular to realise the opportunity in the expected transfer of wealth from 'baby boomers' to the next generation.
- Encourage more people and companies to give through offering a wider range of donor services – including grouped funds focused around our grant making themes.
- Increase the value of unrestricted and discretionary giving.
- Continually explore opportunities for match funding and other incentives to leverage giving.

Objective 2: *Invest*

Our approach is to *Invest* in local charities and community groups helping them to become strong and sustainable organisations.

By 2027 we will have:

- Intentionally focused more of our grant making in line with our commitments.
- Demonstrated a more strategic approach across our grant making, addressing both immediate need and supporting the solutions to long term problems, and worked with our donors to do the same.
- Continued to grow our grant making in line with the growth of our endowment fund.

To do this we will:

- Continue to offer responsive and broad-based grant making to support expert local, grassroots organisations across Sussex, and to help them through funding of both core and project costs.
- Continue to run grant programmes through our national membership organisation, UKCF, and statutory and non-statutory partners.
- Develop our Grants Strategy to support our commitments and funding priorities, in line with four new themed funds: "Fairness and Equality", "Local Action on Climate change", "Health & Wellbeing" and "Skills Education and Employment".
- Develop a programme of larger and longer term grants to support groups where we can make a significant difference.
- Partner with other funders and stakeholders to share information and to develop our grant making in line with good funding practice identified by the Association of Charitable Foundations.
- Ensure we are meeting our 'flexible funder' commitments to be more open and trusting in how we fund and our funding process.

Our *Strategic Objectives*

Objective 3: *Inform & Influence*

We will *Inform & Influence* philanthropists and the wider community about local needs, and how to meet the big issues facing people in Sussex, now and in the future.

By 2027 we will have:

- Become known as the leading authority in philanthropy in Sussex and a trusted source of information on the needs of communities across Sussex.
- Developed deeper, long-term engagement with the local community and our donors.
- Used data and knowledge to maximise the positive impact of our grant making and to inspire a step change in smart local philanthropy.

To do this we will:

- Review our brand and core messages to ensure they support our key objectives and help us to be better known among key audiences.
- Develop an effective marketing strategy which underpins our income generation through supporting relationships with our donors and prospects.
- Demonstrate our role as a strategic facilitator between donors and grantees and a central source of knowledge about Sussex through a regular programme of communications, reports, events and digital networks.
- Build upon the existing baseline of data about Sussex (based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation government figures, Census 2021 and ONS Population estimates) and plan a cycle of future research and dissemination which raises awareness of local community needs and demonstrates the impact of local philanthropy.
- Establish a regular community listening exercise to inform our grant making, our donors and our publications, about the needs of local communities.
- Use our platform to share insights and the challenges from the communities we work with and use our voice to highlight the need for ongoing support with prospective donors and their intermediaries.
- Maximise our reach and influence through working more closely and actively with our committed network of ambassadors and advocates across Sussex.

Objective 4: *A stronger organisation*

We will manage and develop our organisation in line with our values, principles and commitments, most importantly ensuring that we can address the needs of the community today and for the future.

By 2027 we will have:

- Embedded equality, diversity and inclusion across our organisation and our work.
- Developed a programme of activity to maximise the impact we can have to address climate change and support those affected by it locally.
- Built a more resilient, efficient and sustainable organisation.

To do this we will:

- Further develop our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion, drawing on the Association of Charitable Foundations' Stronger Foundations DEI framework.
- Work to ensure that our staff, trustees, donors, ambassadors and grant recipients are reflective of the diversity of the community in Sussex.
- In line with our signature of the Funder Commitment on Climate Change, we will continue to take action to increase awareness of climate change locally and to maximise the positive change we can make or leverage across our grant programmes, operations, investments and with our wider community.
- Review our information systems and processes to deliver continuous improvement in management information and donor reporting.
- Invest in information technology to meet the needs of our growing organisation.
- Invest in our people - including trustees, ambassadors and paid staff - to ensure that our team has the capacity, support, skills and resilience for the future.
- Actively review our investment policy - and that of our fund managers - to ensure that our investments support our values and commitments.

Inspirational people *create* the change Sussex needs.
People willing to give their money, time, expertise and passion to
help their *communities* thrive. Thank you for being part of that
absolutely vital group, and being part of our journey to
a *fairer* and more *equal* Sussex.



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