

Rye Fund

Impact Report

April 2025





Rye Fund

Impact Report

The Rye Fund was established at Sussex Community Foundation in 2008 to give grants to charities and community groups in and around the market town. This fund is all about making a difference by supporting local social, cultural and educational services along with the wellbeing and sustainability of Rye.

Over the years your fund has awarded 152 grants totalling £112,127. This report outlines the outcomes and impact of the grants distributed in 2023, highlighting the meaningful work undertaken in our communities.

Details about the grants awarded in 2024 will be included in the next report as the projects are still ongoing, and we'll receive feedback from groups later in the year.

We are incredibly grateful for your support as it makes all the difference in our ability to help those in need. With your help we have achieved amazing results.

Thank you for helping Sussex thrive.

Reaching Potential report

Educational inequalities & disadvantaged groups

The Reaching Potential report explores some of the challenges being faced by individuals, families and communities in Sussex.

Educational inequalities & disadvantaged groups

- Pupils in educationally disadvantaged groups experience lower pupil attainment in Sussex than those experiencing similar disadvantage elsewhere in England
- The gap in performance between those in vulnerable groups and their peers is greater in Sussex than across England as a whole
- Pupils in Sussex are more likely to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and more likely to be identified as Children in need than the regional or national average
- Children from disadvantaged groups in Sussex are more likely to experience poor educational outcomes than their peers elsewhere in England
- Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with SEN are less likely to meet expected standards in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 in Sussex than across the South East region and England as a whole

40.3%

girls eligible for Free School Meals in Sussex that meet expected standards in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 (compared with 57.10% of pupils as a whole).

**Read the full
Reaching Potential
report here**

Rye Flower and Veg Show - £1,000



What activities were funded by the grant?

Rye Flower and Veg Show plan, fundraise and organise an annual horticultural show which takes place in the town, open to everyone to enter and for viewing. The group aim to inspire residents to grow and use local produce.

The difference your grant has made

The best attended show in 20 years, there were nearly 300 entries on display and around 250 visitors. This was due to the new prominent banner in Rye, the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Rye and the noisy announcements by the town crier! The group also decorated the exterior of the show hall with balloons announcing their 20th Anniversary which encouraged many visitors. Entry was free but people generously donated after viewing the show and spent nearly five times as much on teas/coffees and cakes as usual.

250

beneficiaries



Our show is an annual celebration of all things homegrown and home-made. Entries from individuals across the community increase each year as our profile grows. This year, we were pleased to welcome entries from new allotment holders, gardeners and local children. The show has inspired more enthusiasm for growing and eating your own vegetables.

The photography and cookery section was exceptionally well supported spreading the involvement beyond garden owners. The new class for Heirloom/Heritage vegetables was also of interest.

Local businesses were very supportive and we found new sponsors for several classes. A local marine company supported the Rye's Water photography class and helped on the day by judging dozens of entries.

One personal story of change, is that a new resident to Rye was encouraged to enter the show for the first time. He had significant success with his entries, made a number of new friends and is keen to get involved next year.



Hands of Hope - £1,200

What activities were funded by the grant?

Hands of Hope are restoring and developing a neglected walled kitchen garden and 22-acres of designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the East Sussex border at Hope Farm Community Garden. They deliver life-improving programmes that tackle rural isolation, loneliness, and food poverty for communities throughout Rother and Hastings.



The difference your grant has made

Your grant went towards running costs of their social lunch club for older people at Peasmarsh Memorial Hall, including providing transport. Through the club, Hands of Hope have reduced loneliness and improved wellbeing for older people in the area, many who are bereaved or single with health and mobility issues. The club provides a valuable opportunity to meet others, socialise and make new friends whilst having a healthy nutritious lunch.

They have also improved community cohesion and intergenerational engagement, through collaborating with local primary schools and inviting them for organised activities.

95

beneficiaries



Real lives

Brenda, Audrey and Kath (aged 82, 85 and 81 respectively) are all widowed and living alone. They had been attending Northiam Lunch Club which was suspended during the pandemic and then struggled to restart. Although eventually running again, member numbers were very low and the club had lost its sense of community.

The three ladies were instead invited to attend Peasmarsh Lunch Club but living in Northiam and Beckley, they were unable to get there. Initially our Hands of Hope trustees stepped in and helped transport Brenda, Audrey and Kath to the club. Now our volunteer minibuss driver, Trevor, picks them up. The three ladies always sit together, offering each other friendship and support. They all live with health conditions but support each other and other members of the club. They all say how important the club is in their lives and are advocates for increasing the club to bi-monthly sessions – ideally they would like it weekly!



Rye and District Community Transport

- £2,000

What activities were funded by the grant?

Rye and District Community Transport (RDCT) provides transport for the community in and around Rye, filling gaps in public transport provision, eg 326 Rye Town bus service, Dial-a-Ride for those with mobility difficulties, home to school transport, and transport to local day centres/clubs/groups.

Your grant went towards fuel costs to run their 326 service.

The difference your grant has made

The 326 Rye Town bus service enables older people to maintain their independence and reduce isolation by providing access to shops including the pharmacy and post office, bank, medical/dental services, cafés, library, community hub, as well as meeting up with friends.

“It is heartening to hear passengers making arrangements with each other, giving help and support or sharing reminiscences. Frequently passengers make the comment that they don't know what they would do without 'their little white bus'.”



Real lives

The following message was written by a member of staff:

One of our regular passengers has experienced a prolonged period of ill-health which has necessitated them being on oxygen at all times. We still take them into Rye and home again, usually three times a week, so that they can continue to be involved in the activities they have been part of for many years. As a small bus, we can provide that bit of additional help they need getting on and off, including stopping close to where they are going. This means they still feel a part of the community and can get out the house and socialise.

5

volunteers



Community Compost Solutions CIC

- £2,000

What activities were funded by the grant?

Community Compost Solutions educates and promotes the installation of appropriate micro-scale composting in small businesses, community organisations, schools and residences in East Sussex. They collect organic waste and turn it into earthly treasure. They are developing a local grassroots model of a sustainable practise that can be easily replicated.

Your grant went towards setting up an online presence.

The difference your grant has made

Community Compost Solutions services have grown to include maintenance of over thirty pallet sized compost bins at six locations in Rye. They diverted over forty tons of organic material from the waste stream and have served as a demonstration model showing how local community compost initiatives can contribute to alleviating the effects of climate change.





Real lives

A member of staff wrote:

For the last five months I've had the pleasure of the assistance of J, a young man, aged 23, who is learning disabled. Previously, J has struggled to find employment that is appropriate for him.

At Community Compost Solutions J is not only consistent and reliable but he does a considerable share of the physical tasks and also helps with marketing and promotion of our services. J joins me twice a week on our collection service visiting 16 businesses in and around Rye, where he has established a personal connection with many of the staff we meet. J is always asking if he can do more and regularly sings songs at top volume as we drive around town! I can see he is thriving and both his mother and social worker agree.

280

beneficiaries

40

over 40 tons of organic material
diverted from the waste stream

Rye Fund

All grants from the Fund in 2023

Date	Organisation	Grant amount
21/11/2023	Rye Community Garden	£1,000
21/11/2023	Rye Flower and Veg Show	£1,000
21/11/2023	Rye and District Community Transport	£2,000
21/11/2023	Rye and District Street Pastors Initiative	£1,000
21/11/2023	Rye Castle Museum	£500
21/11/2023	Rye Cricket Club	£1,066
21/11/2023	Rye Wurlitzer Academy	£800
21/11/2023	Winchelsea New Hall	£1,000
20/11/2023	Community Compost Solutions CIC	£500
20/11/2023	Hands of Hope	£1,200



Sussex Community Foundation brings *inspirational* people together to create the change Sussex needs. We make and *strengthen connections* between philanthropists, businesses, charity founders and community leaders. We make *vital grants* through over 100 dedicated *funds*. And we share knowledge, inspiration and stories too – to help grow the power of community, and create a Sussex where people and *communities thrive*.

Thank you.



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