

Once Upon a Time...

“It is desired to establish a charitable trust for the benefit of the community in the Royal County of Berkshire.

The Trustees have subscribed or caused to be subscribed the sum of £500 to be held by them upon the trusts hereinafter declared”

From the humble beginnings of the Berkshire Community Trust, 25 years ago, has arisen the energetic and effective grant making Berkshire Community Foundation, which last year made grants totalling over £560,000 to community groups and projects in the Royal County of Berkshire and currently manages endowed funds to the value of over £5.6 million. That original £500 was obviously well managed and invested!

The founding trustees, led by the then Vice Lord Lieutenant Major John Ronald Henderson MBE, signed the original trust deed on 11th November 1985, one of the first community foundations to be incorporated in England. Since then, the vision of those founding trustees has blossomed into an organisation with a mission to inspire local giving to change lives, and a purpose to promote and support local giving for social good, benefit or change in Berkshire.



**BERKSHIRE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

**25th
Anniversary**

Registered Charity No: 294220



Sir Philip Wroughton KCVO DL (left)
with Harry Henderson DL

Harry Henderson DL, son of Major John Henderson, CVO, MBE, JP, Founder Trustee

“I believe in Berkshire. We all put our own families and homes first but in so doing we want to ensure the community in which we live is one that we can be proud of. That means one we can identify with - it means a caring community - it means a community that is confident of its strengths and aware of its weaknesses. My father when he started the Berkshire Community Trust in 1985 recognized and understood all of this. Of course in this mix there are those that need help - to provide the required sort of help we need to do a number of things - firstly to identify the problems - secondly raise the funds to deal with those problems and thirdly, administer the process. The Berkshire Community Foundation is of course the organization that brings all this together and it does so, on our behalf.”

Sir Philip Wroughton KCVO DL

“The Berkshire Community Foundation is a partnership involving the corporate sector, local authorities, the voluntary

sector and all the people of Berkshire. During my 13 years as Lord Lieutenant - spanning half of the Foundation’s 25-year life - I witnessed what a difference its grants made to the lives of so many people in Berkshire.

The Foundation has received more and more requests for help every year - too many to accommodate - and yet recipients show a measure of gratitude out of all proportion to the amount received. The grants continue to make a huge and rewarding impact on the communities that need help the most.

‘Local Giving for Local Need’ really says it all - it is our Community Foundation and will continue to be a lasting - and increasingly important - asset for the County.”

Joe McKenna, Executive Director of BCF

1993-1998. Joe now lives and works in Galway with his wife Sarah and four children.

“During the 1990’s, the Foundation faced the challenge of defining its role and securing sufficient funds to deliver a meaningful grants programme. Without a history of established grant-giving, this was difficult, but the commitment of the trustees paid off with the securing of the first major donor



fund from Panasonic. Other major commitments were to follow and the growing national network of community foundations provided useful support and ideas from other parts of the country. A first-ever comprehensive Community Needs Survey, conducted and published in 1995, helped identify where funding was most needed and established the Foundation as an innovator in the county.

The grants ceremonies are my fondest memory as this is where the fruits of the work are articulated and celebrated. 2-TEN FM, the local radio station added a lot to the promotion of a sense of community involvement.

The names and methodologies change as the years pass. It's great to see that the principles remain unchanged. Indeed, this stability and permanence is a defining aspect of Berkshire Community Foundation. Diligence is always needed, as great projects, indeed great communities, aren't formed overnight.

My best wishes to all involved in the Foundation today and a warm greeting to the early pioneers, wherever they are."

Brigadier Robin Draper CVO, OBE, CEO Berkshire Community Foundation 1998-2008

"The ten years up to 2008 saw BCF rapidly expanding its grant making, drawing on two editions of its Community Needs Survey, whilst gradually building its endowment to provide a long term grant making capacity. Grants increased from a

total of £140,000 up to 1998 to £4.95million by 2008. This was achieved by attracting EU, UK government and other funds. The concurrent development of the endowment centred around fundraising challenges, and a series of high profile events. The latter included 3 dinners kindly hosted by Prince Philip at Frogmore House - a royal seal of approval for the Foundation's work in the Royal County of Berkshire.



The continuing support for local groups, would not have been possible without a myriad of corporate and individual supporters, enthusiastic trustees and staff, the dedication of whom underwrites the success of Berkshire Community Foundation."





**Jane Wates OBE,
Vice President
of Berkshire Community Foundation**

“Since I first became a trustee in 1991, my enthusiasm for BCF has never waned, as is the case it seems for everyone else who gets to know BCF, either as a patron, trustee, as a member of staff or as a recipient. Particularly, of course, the recipients, who not only receive a grant but also sound advice on all aspects of developing the work of their organisation.”

Richard Benyon MP

“The original plans for the Foundation were driven by the needs of those living in Berkshire and how those needs could be alleviated. At the time, there was an influx of large commercial ventures into the Thames Valley. Encouraging them to become involved with donating support to the communities in which they were situated, and in which their employees were living, was an important part of the concept of the Foundation. Twenty five years on, history has proven that not only was the concept behind the Foundation an inspired idea, but it was a workable one and Berkshire Community Foundation has enjoyed fantastic success. As a former trustee of BCF, I am very proud that my family was involved from the start in establishing and developing such a fundamental part of charitable operations within the county. I look forward to a long continuing association.”

Andrew Middleton, Chief Executive

“The next 25 years look just as exciting and will bring new challenges for BCF with greater online giving and changing



expectations of our supporters. The coming year will bring considerable funding difficulties for our local Community and Voluntary Groups. BCF will be working hard to ensure the vitality and sustainability of our voluntary sector in Berkshire with some new ideas and by building on the strong foundations that have been built over the last 25 years by the many trustees and supporters.”

