

Crowdfund Kent

Year One Evaluation



Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Crowd Fund Kent programme at the end of year 1, including the projects backed and financial investment. However, the evaluation focuses primarily on those projects from Round 1, which have been successfully delivered and completed as it is those that have undertaken a full end of project evaluation.



Overview of the Crowdfund Kent Programme

In March 2021, Kent County Council launched “[Crowdfund Kent](#)”, a crowdfunding initiative first considered in 2019 and the progress of which was accelerated due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Crowdfund Kent is run by Kent County Council and hosted by Spacehive, a funding platform for ideas for the local community and has the highest fundraising success rate of any crowdfunding platform in the UK. It was agreed that the programme would run as a pilot for two years with project progress and outcomes evaluated throughout the process.

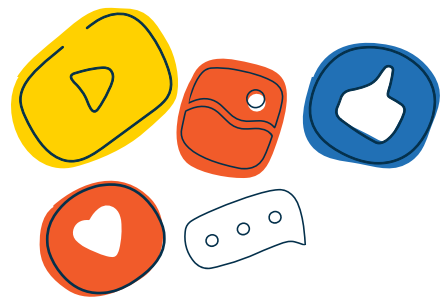
The Crowdfund Kent fund totals £500,000 and now forms part of our wider support offer to the sector as outlined in the [KCC Civil Society Strategy](#) which recognises the role of civil society in Kent and the crucial role the social sector plays in achieving strong and resilient communities across our county. It also sets out how we will support the sector through our funding of infrastructure support.

The fund aims to empower local ideas and innovation, to respond to local challenges and to bring the community together to improve their area. It aims to also build on the community resilience and outreach that was evident during 2020 and throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

As Crowdfund Kent reaches the end of its first year it has shown the community drive and innovation that exists in the County and the power of this to provide lasting and meaningful improvements to Kent residents and the local area.

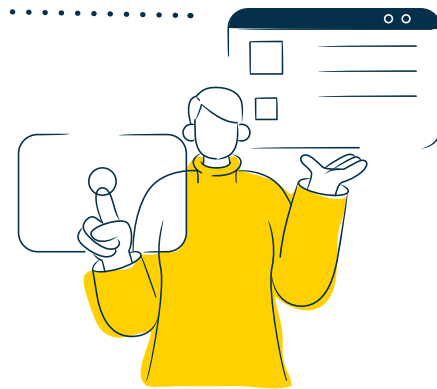
It has also attracted much attention nationally, with a number of local authorities having seen the success of the programme and looking to set up similar programmes, within their local area.

What is Crowdfunding?



Crowdfunding is a form of fundraising that uses small amounts of funding from a large number of individuals in order to finance a new project or venture; it relies on utilising the vast network of people available via social media and word-of-mouth to bring investors and project creators together.

At the beginning of each Crowdfund Kent round, Spacehive arrange a number of "Project Creator Workshops", which provide local organisations and groups the opportunity to attend a virtual presentation, hear about the funding available and get advice from Spacehive and KCC on how to run a crowdfunding campaign.



The dates for these events are promoted via KCC Social Media Accounts and shared through various professional networks in order to attract as many interested groups as possible.

As project creators create their online crowdfunding project pages and pitch to the Crowdfund Kent fund, an initial assessment is undertaken by KCC to identify any potential issues or questions that may need to be raised with the project. The projects are verified by Spacehive (checking for fund eligibility and project viability).



Once projects are verified, they are encouraged and supported by Spacehive to begin their crowdfunding campaign. Following this, KCC staff assess the progress of all projects and agree upon a pledge amount (between 35-50% of the crowdfunding total and no more than £20,000). All pledges are signed off by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services.

Projects receive their pledge from KCC onto their project page and are encouraged to use this as leverage to obtain more funds from other sources. Once a project is successful in reaching their target, all funds are transferred to the project, including the KCC pledge, and can begin their project.



17 March 2021
Online Launch for
programme



1

12-19 April 2021
Initial assessment
of round 1 project
pitches by KCC staff



10-28 May 2021
Evaluation process for
pitches and agreeing
pledge amounts –
round 1



2

20 July 2021
Launch of round
2 – Project Creator
Workshop

1 June 2021
Pledge sign off with
Cabinet Member

2 September 2021
Round 2 Project
Creator Workshop



30 March 2021
Round 1 Project
Creator Workshop

28 April 2021
Deadline for round
1 pitches



21 January 2022
Launch of second
year of Crowdfund
Kent and round 3

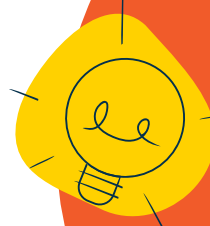
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5 November 2021
Pledge sign off with
Cabinet Member

2-5 November 2021
Evaluation process for
pitches and agreeing
pledge amounts –
round 2

7 October 2021
Initial assessment
of round 2 project
pitches by KCC staff

9 February 2021
Round 3 Project
Creator Workshop



20 April 2022
Deadline for round
3 pitches



June 2022
Pledge sign off with
Cabinet Member



23-31 May 2022
Evaluation process for
pitches and agreeing
pledge amounts –
round 3

4

July 2022
Launch of round 4



Crowdfund Kent Year One Evaluation

Timeline

A Year in Summary



44 projects started campaigns

36 of these successfully funded in year 1 

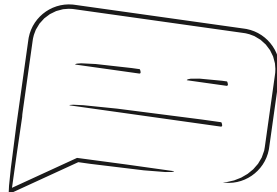
£683,535 successfully pledged so far



Projects currently fundraising

Total number of backers
3060

881 Volunteer Hours from just 10 projects



Average pledge from the community
£34.57

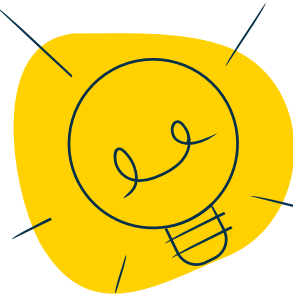
4 Projects focused on volunteer action in the county.

17 Projects for community action and people impacted by Covid



18 Projects for improving community assets in Kent

£468,024 pledged by the community



£215,511 Pledged by KCC



Confirmed partnership, unlocking an additional £30,000 funding for Kent Projects



Community Impact of Funding

Following the online launch of the programme in March 2021, Crowdfund Kent has run two separate funding rounds and is currently embarking on a third, offering the opportunity for local organisations and community groups to apply for funding and use the Spacehive platform for an accessible way to utilise crowdfunding to raise the necessary funds for their project.

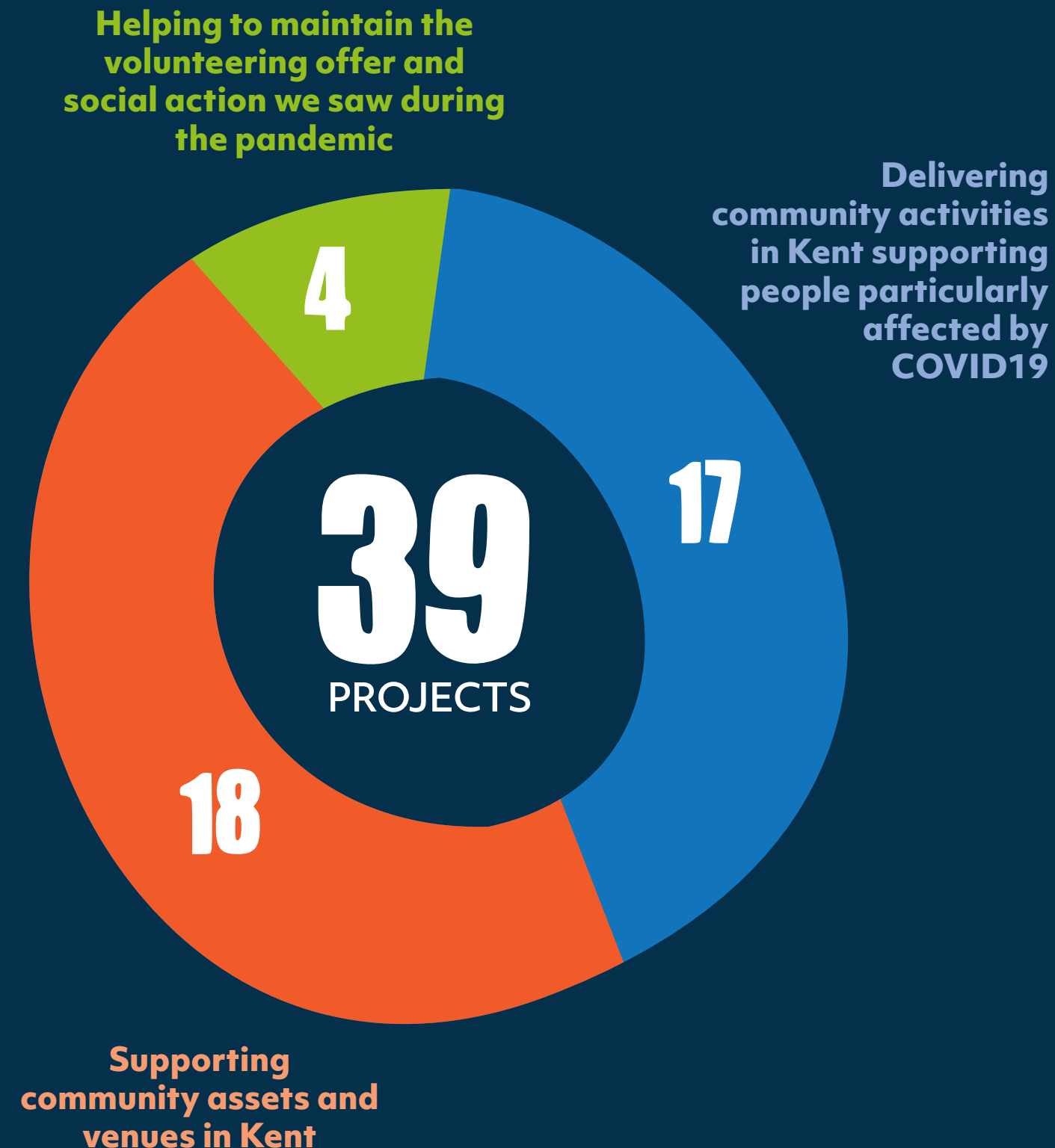
Spacehive charge a 5% fee for use of the platform only if a project successfully reaches its target; this sum is added to the crowdfunding total for the project and is paid for via pledges received on the platform at no extra cost to the project creator

The range of projects on the Crowdfund Kent platform have varied from improvements to community resources, volunteer led initiatives in local areas to large scale events celebrating the rich history and diversity seen in the County.

So far Crowdfund Kent has led to just some of the following successful outcomes for the county:

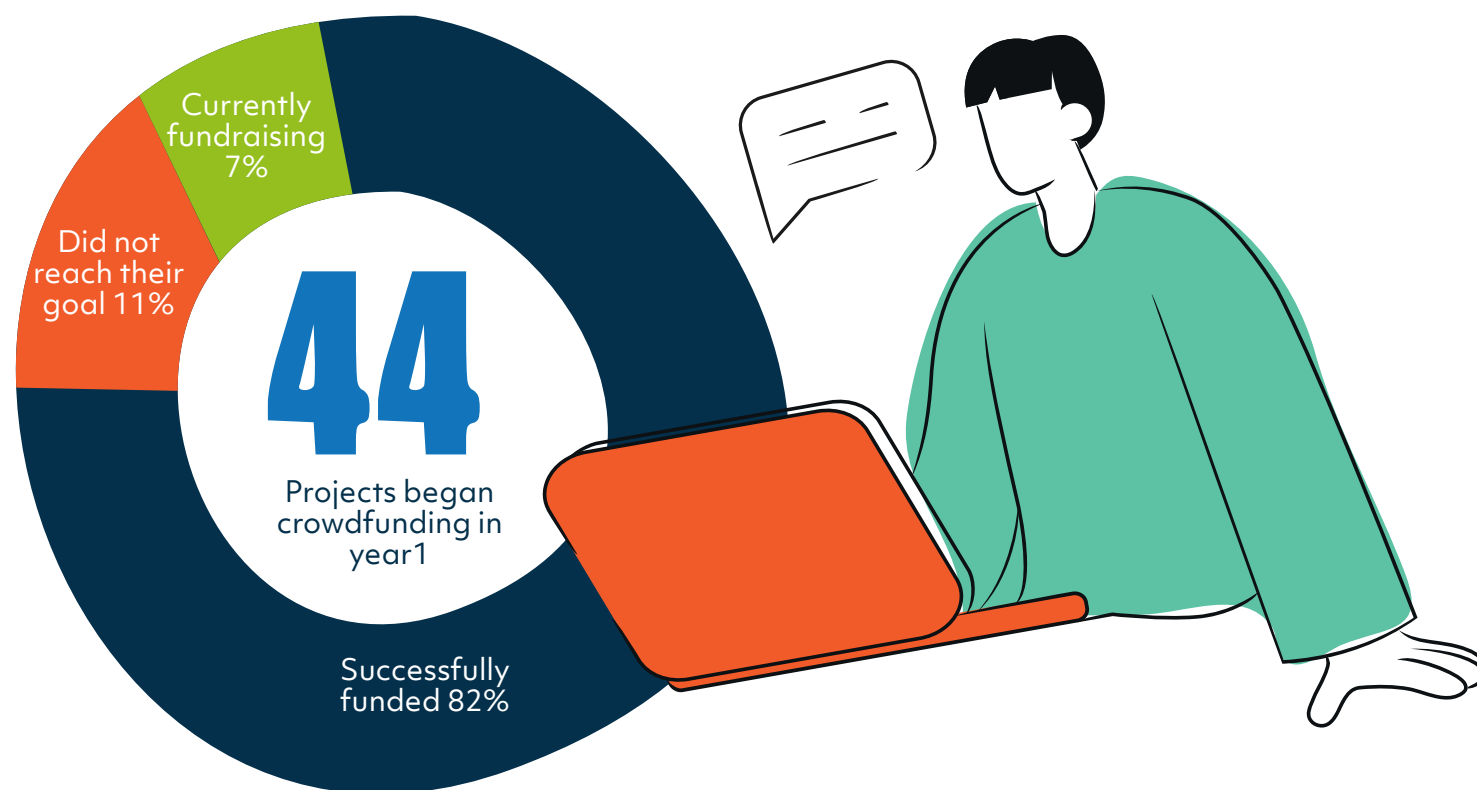
- Additional resources for local clubs and community groups to help children and young people reconnect with their community and friends following the social isolation caused by the pandemic.
- Improving our green spaces into areas to be enjoyed by the whole community and lead to improved health and wellbeing.
- Providing access to advice, support, equipment, and nutritious meals for those most affected by Covid and helping them to recover from the financial impact the pandemic caused on jobs and livelihoods.
- Providing much needed support and resources to Kent's residents and particularly those who have been disproportionately impacted by Covid such as survivors of domestic abuse and people living with disabilities.

Number of Projects by Objectives



Many projects on the platform have been successful in reaching their crowdfunding goal and this has been supported not only by pledges from Kent County Council but by the overwhelming support from the local communities that will see the benefit and impact from the projects themselves. The programme demonstrates the impact of a 'crowd' when communities come together and fund projects that they themselves have identified as needed in their local area if given the infrastructure and support to enable it to happen. However, KCC's pledge does act as leverage, and we have seen how it can galvanise local support.

The Diagram below shows current project completion from year one as of 10/02/2022.



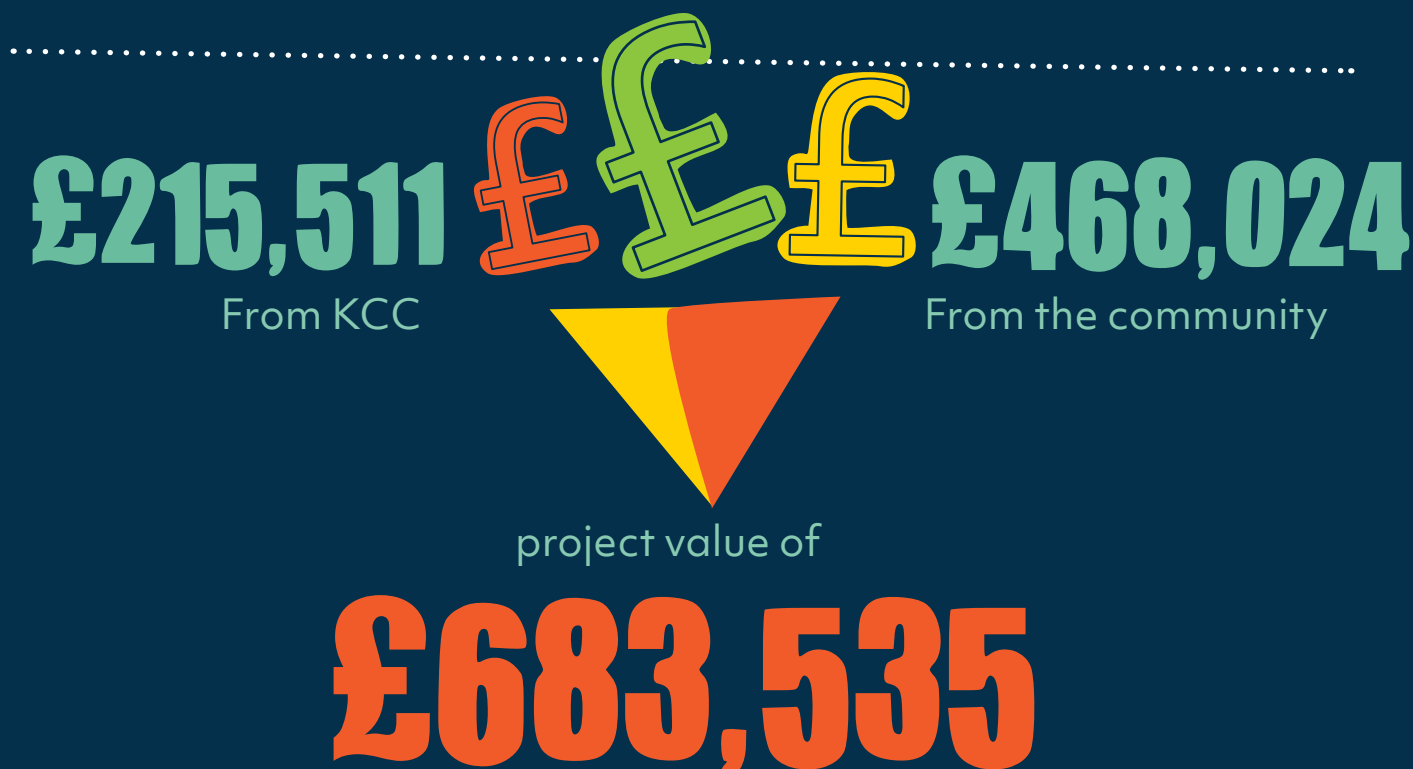
Although Crowdfund Kent is still collecting final evaluation reports from campaigns who have completed their projects, the response so far has shown the positive impact the programme has had on Kent and local residents.

The programme demonstrates the impact of a crowd' when communities come together and fund projects

Financial Impact

Crowdfund Kent aims to help groups and organisations to use the promised pledge funding from KCC to create a greater return in support and pledges from the local community.

Campaigns across both rounds saw an overwhelming support from the community, from residents, local businesses, Charity funding organisations and from District and Parish Councils. To date, there have been 3060 backers across both funding rounds, demonstrating the support there has been in the programme.



For every £1 investment from KCC



Feedback from Project Creators

As part of our impact monitoring, once each project had received their funding, they are encouraged to submit a response to our interim monitoring survey. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the crowdfunding process and determine whether any areas of the programme needed to improve for future rounds.

Feedback suggested that platform users would find it beneficial to count pledges received outside of the platform, and

to allow gift aid to be collected during the sign-up process. This feedback was provided to Spacehive and changes to the system in a recent update have now allowed for the collection of gift aid. KCC will continue to work with Spacehive to ensure that issues raised are addressed for future rounds, where possible to allow for projects to crowdfund on the platform in a simpler and more effective way.



"It has been a great experience, we found the platform easy to navigate and promote to our networks."

"
Relieved that the target was met and appreciative of Spacehive support
"

"We might have run a crowdfunder elsewhere, but I very much doubt we would have been able to raise the amount we needed without Crowdfund Kent"

"
Overall a very positive experience for the first go. Well done and congrats on getting it up and running. It made things easier for me.
"

"I reached my funding goal because of CFK - impossible to say if I would have reached it without the funding but it shortened my funding cycle."

"Very positive in fundraising and in raising awareness & interest in the project"



Partnerships and Other Funders

Year two of the programme has introduced the exciting development of partnerships with Kent District Councils; with Folkestone and Hythe being the first to contribute their own funding to the platform. Folkestone and Hythe District Council have a £30K fund as part of Crowdfund Kent (using one of our available licenses). This will create additional funding, alongside KCC to projects in that district.

Conversations are also taking place with representatives from other District Council's to open up this opportunity to other areas of the county to help increase the positive impact the programme has had. We now meet regularly with District Council officers to discuss this programme.

We are also continuing to explore additional sources of funding for Kent projects and are currently in conversation with the National Lottery Community Fund for match funding future rounds.



Evaluation of Delivered Projects

10 of the campaigns from round 1 have successfully delivered their projects and the following shows some of the key highlights and identified impact from their delivery reports:



Mama to Mama – Thanet's 1st Baby Bank

Mama to Mama was set up by two Margate Mums in response to a clear need in the community which was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Many women are living in poverty, fleeing domestic abuse, or leaving the care system, and are struggling to afford the essentials they need for themselves and their new babies.

Mama to Mama takes preloved baby clothes and essentials and edits them into beautiful collections for gifting to vulnerable expectant mamas in Thanet. Spreading hope while reducing landfill waste.

As a result of this project and receiving funding from KCC, Mama to Mama have now expanded with new premises and the sustainability to continue to support their local community.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

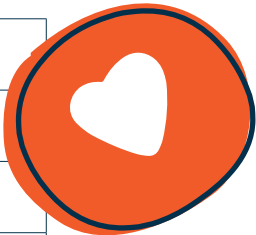
Overview of Impact

When asked what kind of impact receiving this box has on the mum, our social care and maternity services contacts respond:

- relieving financial strains - 74%
- boosting mum's mental wellbeing - 78%
- boosting mum's self-worth - 65%
- boosting mum's confidence about how and what to provide for their new baby - 78%

Another piece of feedback that the project received is that the mums feel valued by the wider community and are pleased to know that people care.

16 Volunteers involved over 25 days	2000 items of clothing reused
2 part time jobs created	60 Vulnerable mums supported
20 M2 of community space improved	10 wellbeing classes provided
500kg of material recycled	100 new users of the facility
224 Backers	£20,956 raised



Hythe Green Wood

The Hythe Green Preservation Society wanted to create a new public space by planting trees to be used by the community and local wildlife.

Once grown the wood will serve to both screen a factory and reduce the noise it makes, bringing into use a neglected part of the Green, will offer an enhanced environment for wildlife, attracting a wider range of birds, owls and bats and offer the community a space to meet and exercise.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

We set out to plant at least 35 semi-mature native trees. At the close of the project, we have planted 100 trees. In addition to our purchased trees, we were supported by people keen to help in ways other than financial. The project took hold of public imagination, and we received a great deal of enthusiastic help and contributions. It also brought a variety of people together and started conversations about future uses of the Wood, the Green and also the linked Woodland Walk which has been further opened and seeded with 80,000 bluebell seeds and snowdrops.

We have worked with local groups, such as Dementia Aware, and have developed partnerships to make the space available and convenient for them to hold open-air weekly meetings, also creating a Memory Walk to aid their social interaction.

We have worked with the local school to plant whips among the trees as underplanting. The children will continue to visit the wood as part both of lessons and as leisure activities with family members. The project has further stimulated interest in a nearby multi-use sports area which is being repainted and improved.

Hythe Green Preservation Society has leveraged the project's success to a partnership with the local council and created an action group of councillors to take forward future enhancements.

16 Volunteers involved over 25 days	2000 items of clothing reused
2 part time jobs created	60 Vulnerable mums supported
20 M2 of community space improved	10 wellbeing classes provided
500kg of material recycled	100 new users of the facility
97 Backers	£15,750 raised

Plastic on our Beaches and in our Seas

The Folkestone Performing Arts Centre wanted to create a site-specific play, researched, devised, rehearsed, and performed by 10 local secondary school students promoting wellbeing and a sense of community togetherness.

Their aim was to create a piece of theatre that raises awareness of & action change towards the environmental impact that plastic has on the beaches & seas of Folkestone whilst creating a community event for all ages.

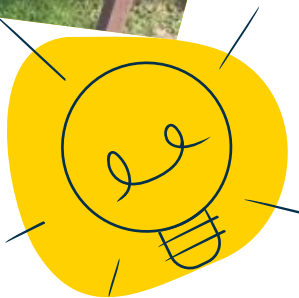
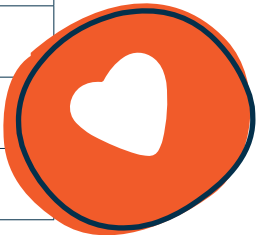
[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

This project had an impact on the arts, culture, and heritage in Folkestone by utilizing its community of artists and beautiful [and under-used] natural spaces.

The project also sought out the naturally beautiful beachfront of Folkestone which suffers from users not properly throwing away or bringing home their rubbish after a day out on the beach. The message of the play was ‘Take your rubbish home from the beach so it doesn’t get into the water & onto the beach.’ The aims of the project were to create work in Folkestone by the local community with a strong environmental message.

14 volunteers involved	2000 kwh of energy saved
1 heritage site improved	3 new part time jobs created
30 hours of volunteering opportunities	26 artworks created
50kg of material recycled	200M2 of green space improved
2 festivals created	12 community events created
32 Backers	£8,140 raised



Lympne Accessible All Weather 400m Track

Lympne Playing Field and Village Hall wanted to create a public space for the village, to socialise and exercise.

The track provides a safe place for children to ride bikes and play, enables wheelchair users to use the park, and people of all ages to walk and run. 4 laps of the track will mean people have competed their daily mile, and the track will also link the play areas and areas of planting. Benches spaced along the path will provide opportunities for people to meet and talk, and for people with reduced mobility to rest.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

Various volunteering groups have been formed to plant trees, carry out a tree watering program, maintain and repair existing play equipment, install benches, setting out of track, turf cutting and labour-intensive task of shifting over 800m of turfs! Further plans are underway to form community wildlife conservation and gardening groups, plus get a group of youths to lead on designing and laying out our new bike pump track.

100% of backers thought the project brought people together and made the area more attractive.

1000 m2 of habitat conserved	15000m2 of new green space created
4 exhibitions created	2 new sports facilities created
50 days of volunteering opportunities	3 new community groups started
2000 plants planted	945m2 of play facilities created
250,000 KG of material recycled	11 new items of equipment
64 Backers	£26,356 raised

Tenterden Folk Festival 2021

Tenterden Folk Festival wanted funding to run an inclusive four-day festival of folk song, music, dance, and crafts to bring the community together again, with the event being managed and run exclusively by volunteers from the local area.

As part of the festival, they offered free community events to ensure that everyone gets a chance to start mixing with the community again, not matter their financial situation.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

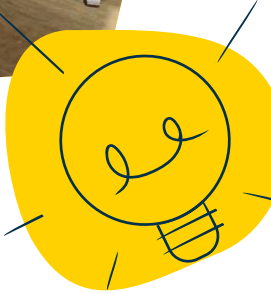
Overview of Impact

The event benefited the local community as every hotel and B&B in Tenterden was fully booked. The campsite was very busy. Cafes, public houses, bars and food outlets did tremendous trade. We had around 40 volunteers over the weekend. Of those and increased number were local and for some were newcomers to Tenterden and it was their first experience of Tenterden Folk Festival.

Singing and dancing are known to be good for both physical and mental health and after all the lockdowns people were excited to be back out singing and dancing.

100% of backers felt the project added more character to the area, helped the local economy and brought people together.

1 festival created	250 hours of volunteering opportunities
£6000 revenue generated	10 classes provided
50 volunteers involved	2 exhibitions created
26 Backers	£37,153 raised



Gateway to Our Past

Cybersaur Arts wanted to develop 4 virtual spaces that will transport the viewer into a world of unseen Folkestone history; working with schools and local artists to transform the area.

The project wanted to encourage people to leave their homes and participate with arts and culture in their community following the isolation caused by the pandemic.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

Gateway to Our Past (GTOP) was delivered by four artists in four primary schools to 180 pupils. Artists used a variety of different art forms including dance, visual art, digital art, animation, and music. Where applicable sustainable or recyclable materials were used, e.g. in sculpture making. Also, the plaques are made using sustainable materials.

Children explored a range of arts techniques and the work they created in workshops was used to produce a 360° video which is accessed by a QR code in the four sites that inspired the project. Schools valued the opportunity for students to engage with local culture and heritage.

20 Classes provided	24 Artworks created
4 Heritage Sites Improved	4 Community Events created
£10,000 Revenue generated	4 Exhibitions created
81 Backers	£26,655

Easy Access for All Donkey Stables

Aspens Charities aimed to fund the relocation of their donkeys to a new all-purpose stable and enclosure, ensuing that the people they support have easy access to them and the opportunity to help care for them.

The Cornford Lane site provides care and support to a number of adults with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs, who in caring for the donkeys, can build trust, confidence and resilience and allows for the development of a better understanding of non-verbal communication.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

The donkeys have now been moved to their new stable and paddocks and are enjoying getting to know their new surroundings. Everyone onsite is now able to visit them and for those who we support who were unable to get to them before can now enjoy visiting to say hello.

The donkeys have a new area to graze, contributing positively to the biodiversity of the area as they eat the coarser more dominant species' that outcompete with the herbs and fine grasses.

All contractors used were local which helped to contribute to the local economy and ensuring easier access to the donkeys means those previously unable to due to mobility issues can now benefit from caring for the animals.

80 hours of volunteering opportunities	2 new items of equipment provided
10 days of volunteering opportunities	100 people involved in project delivery.
36 Backers	£17,742 raised



Sustainable Public Art for Sunken Garden

Margate NOW & the Sunken Garden Society joined forces to commission innovative, functional, and sustainable public artworks for the Sunken Garden, a unique biodiverse outdoor space in Westbrook.

The project was dedicated to nurturing creativity and nature, providing a unique opportunity for the garden to be better equipped, to integrate art into its ecosystem and create new forms of interaction with visitors and users of the Garden.

The Sunken Garden relies on volunteers and by installing the artwork they have been able to generate more visitors and more volunteering opportunities for the local community.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

The project has left a legacy of four projects in the Sunken Garden at Westbrook with many of the digital works still accessible online. Many events were held at a local dilapidated hotel of historical importance, helping to revitalise the space and utilise its main areas.

Members of the community, with different abilities and backgrounds were involved in the project and the work of the Sunken Garden helped to promote volunteers to join on task days to benefit the local community.

Children explored a range of arts techniques and the work they created in workshops was used to produce a 360° video which is accessed by a QR code in the four sites that inspired the project. Schools valued the opportunity for students to engage with local culture and heritage.

1 Festival Created	100 Plants Planted
30 Days of Volunteering Opportunities	7000M2 of new green space created
1 Community space saved	20 Volunteers involved
2 Heritage sites improved	15 artworks created
100KG of material recycled	2 Jobs Created
45 Backers	£29,380 raised





Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival

The Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival (15th-17th Oct 2021) presented a programme of free high-quality puppetry for everyone who lives in Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding areas.

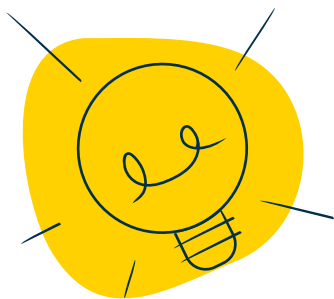
The event ran throughout the town centre with free events taking place over three main sites, creating a “town trail” for the community to follow and enjoy.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

- The project delivered everything it set out to do, providing 42 performances across 10 venues in Tunbridge Wells, free for the community to attend.
- The project promoted the use of outside spaces, ran workshops with charity mental health resources and has created network with local schools for future engagement.
- 100% of backers think the project helped the local economy, brought people together and made the local area more fun and attractive.

50 Volunteers Involved	6 Classes Provided
1 Festival Created	£8000 revenue generated
1 Exhibition created	10m2 of green space improved
42 Artworks created	3 new part time jobs created
33 Backers	£7,938 raised



Dance for Young People in Hythe

InStep Dance Company wanted to help young people recover following the pandemic by running two projects to encourage them to get together, dance and have fun. The funds raised also allowed for bursaries to be awarded to children and young people who would not have been able to afford to attend.

The young people had the opportunity to learn new skills, make friends, get fit and healthy and celebrated the end of their successful project by holding a performance for friends and family.

[Full Delivery Report Here](#)

Overview of Impact

Our project delivered dance workshops for children and young people, providing bursary opportunities for anyone who could not afford to attend and a new paid dance commission for local artists helping to regenerate the arts and culture scene in Hythe.

We finished with a fabulous show on 27th February 2022 at Peter Catmull Theatre, Brockhill Performing Arts College - it was the first time in over 2 years that we were able to perform! 125 audience members turned up to watch the dancers perform. 23 dancers cast members of the companies represented students from 10 schools, (primary and secondary) and post 18 settings.

We are so proud of the community we develop at Instep and the working processes which encourage bridge building between ages and students from different educational settings. It feels particularly important at this time to keep that going as young people find their way back into mixing and finding their pathway through education and beyond.

2 Exhibitions Created	15 Days of Volunteering Opportunities
15 Classes Provided	2 Artworks Created
29 People involved in project delivery	23 New Users of Sports facilities
22 Backers	£3,291 raised