

**South Yorkshire Funding Advice
Bureau
Sheffield Impact Report**

2022/23



SYFAB

SYFAB, South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau, is a small, passionate team within South Yorkshire's Community Foundation which gives funding advice and support to community groups in South Yorkshire, helping them deliver support for deprived communities. Our aim is to increase fundraising knowledge, skills and confidence to allow groups to develop and fund services to vulnerable communities in the city. We aim to prioritise groups facing particular barriers to their fundraising.

This year SYFAB received a £40,116 grant from Sheffield Council. The grant was exclusively to support groups in Sheffield, supporting them on diversifying their income and sustainability. We are working in partnership with Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) who are offering support on group development, impact measurement, and volunteering. We work closely together sharing information and running joint outreach events to offer groups a seamless support service.

We continue to offer face-to-face meetings with groups, alongside conducting them over Zoom/Teams or via the telephone. Our Funding Development Worker will have initial contact with the group to determine which form of meeting would be most useful – taking into consideration things like how new the group are; whether they are from/representing a minoritized community; mobility/transport difficulties; communication barriers.

We find that groups really welcome our offer of exploring criteria before an application is begun, along with a review of a draft prior to submission of the form. Groups are often volunteer led & run, leaving little time to write bids or perhaps have the in-house skills to feel confident in tackling them. By using SYFAB as a sounding board they can be assured that the potential application is going to be accepted as eligible, and have a better chance of success with the critical friend role. We also offer web based resources and training.

All the following figures are for groups who work in Sheffield, benefitting Sheffield residents. SYFAB offers services in other parts of South Yorkshire, but these are funded independently.

Key points of our work in this year are:



375 groups accessed our online services or direct support



Over 90% of supported groups we surveyed reported increased fundraising skills



Groups we supported reported £135,975 in grants from 6 different funders

Who we worked with

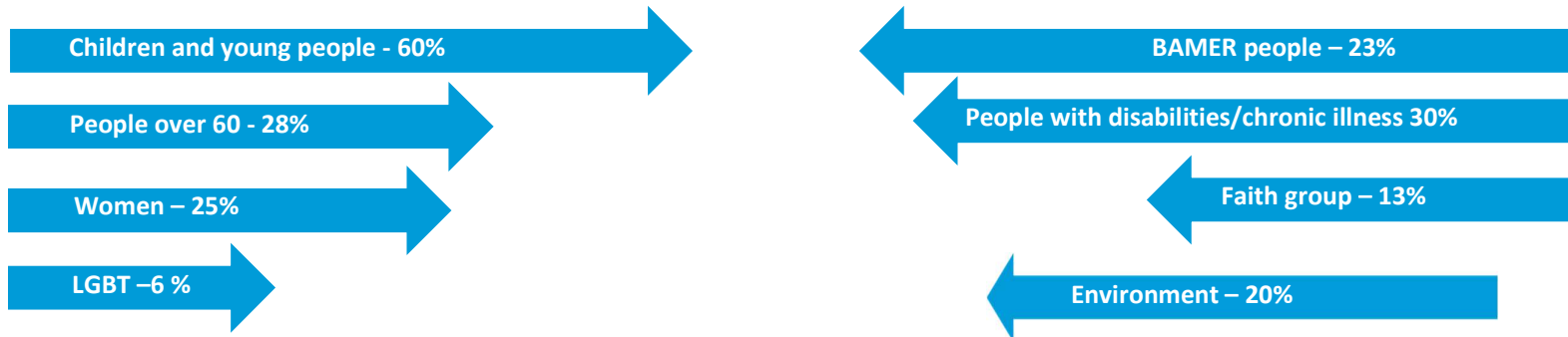


2247 people in Sheffield received our weekly Funding News ebulletin, with details of new funds, upcoming deadlines, or events. 122 joined the mailing list in the year. Of all groups registered, 77% had an income below £50,000, and for 54% it was below £10,000



375 different groups used a specific SYFAB service or activity in the year - receiving advice, attending training or using the website. 63% of these were entirely volunteer run. We asked them which communities they supported, and their responses (often more than one)

were:



Groups that registered with us were predominantly from the more deprived areas of the City:

Postcode of Group	% of new sign ups
S1	4
S2	12
S3	7
S4,5,6	17
S8	4
S9	2

We can now identify which groups are user led. Of the groups that joined the mailing list, 66 identified as user led, a key issue for disadvantaged communities learning to attract resources. 27% of groups said they were BAMER led, , 18% disability led, smaller numbers led by young people, women and LGBTQ+ . 30% were led by generally disadvantaged communities.

What we did

Targeting disadvantaged groups



We always prioritised groups who found it difficult to fundraise. The pandemic and cost of living crisis have made the differences in society even starker, so we have worked hard to target groups who need our help more than ever.

To expand our offer, we have developed our programme of Funding Surgeries from last year – which take the format of the Funding Development worker being placed out in a community setting for the day, alongside a member of staff from Voluntary Action Sheffield

(VAS), who offer the group organisational support on the day. Groups book a 45-minute appointment to discuss their funding and/or organisational support needs.

Between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023, a total of 8 surgeries were held across the city in the following areas: Arbourthorne; Burngreave; Darnall; Gleadless; Lowedges; Richmond; Stocksbridge and one in the city centre hosted at the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's (SYMCA) offices. The city centre surgery had a slightly enhanced offer - in attendance for the day was the worker from VAS whose remit is to support minoritized communities, along with the head of the Volunteer Centre.

The number of group's attending these surgeries totalled 55.

If the sessions are fully booked, the groups are offered a separate meeting outside of the surgery at a time to suit them, with either SYFAB or VAS, or both if required.

Partnership working:

The joint work with VAS has continued via the Funding Surgeries. However, outside of those sessions we regularly work together around a group's needs – passing them over to each other for specific support as necessary. We find that group's really welcome this service as it offers them a seamless way through the information that can be quite daunting if they are new to the sector.

SYFAB were also invited by SCC and VAS to help scope out the mechanism of an in-depth support process for particularly marginalised groups/communities - a new initiative courtesy of some Shared Prosperity funding; in particular the development of a diagnostic tool to help inform the selection of groups to be offered the support. This involvement has been beneficial for SYFAB as being acknowledged as an integral part of the infrastructure picture in the city – by SCC departments who are not necessarily familiar with the services we provide. That work is ongoing and has not begun in real earnest as yet.

Training



200 group members attended the training over the year. **16 training courses** were run online, **9 of the courses** were discounted for Sheffield groups (**half day sessions at £20 instead of £40, full day at £40 instead of £80**). The discounted courses covered topics exploring different funding sources such as support from businesses, social media, individual donations, supporter engagement and putting together a funding strategy. The discounted courses aimed to encourage more local groups to access the training where cost may have been a barrier.

The programme offers a range of fundraising themes; covering beginner, intermediate to master class, with **progression opportunities** so learners can build upon their fundraising skills. We developed a new session *Media Awareness in Fundraising* in partnership with Andy Kershaw, a former BBC Broadcast journalist and presenter. Andy is now our part-time training co-ordinator.

We continue to use the Zoom platform to deliver training, offering either webinars to give out information, or workshops with group activities mirroring our face-to-face sessions. We have found Zoom has made our sessions more accessible for some with health conditions, disabilities, transport or interpersonal issues. One person last year had ME and would never attend face to face sessions. She was nervous about Zoom but was re-assured that we would take her needs into account, and found it a very positive experience, hence our decision to continue training on Zoom, with face to face available for individual support.

This is what people said about the training:

“Understood more clearly how to apply for funds and what’s available”

“Lots of time, re explaining fab, nothing too much trouble”

“Very accessible and excellent advice”

“FEELING MORE CONFIDENT!!”

Website activity



The website www.syfab.org.uk is free to access for local groups. There were **41 downloads** of resources from the website, and **943 funding searches** done on our database of possible funders. The depleted funding scene towards the end of the pandemic meant keeping up to date with what was available was crucial for groups struggling to help their communities recover. **388 Funding News** posts were issued

Quality of service



On our online survey, everyone said that the worker they had contact with was **easy to contact**, able to **help** them, and **clear about the support** on offer.

What difference did we make?

1. We improved groups’ fundraising ability

We surveyed a selection of groups we had supported during the year. Of 48 responses:

94% Are better at selecting the right funders

96% Are better at identifying need

90% Are better at structuring applications

We asked groups on our 'Making a Good Application' course
"are you now more likely to submit a funding bid?"

88% said Yes!



Some feedback from groups we advised on what was helpful for them:

✓ I'd just like to say a big thank you from all of us at KickBack Recovery for the amazing work you do at SYFAB. Last week, we were awarded £3000 from the Hedley Foundation which we only knew about due to the collation of current grants available you provide.

✓ "Good to know that help is available for the specific support we need eg a run-through funding applications and help transitioning to CIO status."

✓ "I thought it was excellent that you travel out to different neighbourhoods to meet people on their home turf, and that you provide individual sessions. The timing was perfect – plenty of time, but not too long. I thought the leaflets handed out were very appropriate, well written and extremely helpful. Couldn't be happier!"

✓ "I found the surgery extremely helpful and reassuring, with enough information to help me to move forward, without being overwhelmed with facts. Both advisors were excellent : experienced and encouraging. This is a great initiative and I hope it continues."

2. Disadvantaged groups in Sheffield benefitted from extra services

Increased confidence, skills and knowledge leads to more and better funding bids. This leads to more money coming into the city from external funders, and therefore more services for Sheffield people, particularly those from disadvantaged communities.

Below are a couple of case studies of a service being delivered thanks to our support.

Attercliffe Badminton Club

A member of this Club contacted Karen Walke to explore how they might obtain funding for their court fees at EIS stadium in Attercliffe

They are an informal group of 14-18 Pakistani men, all of them are over 45 years of age, and have been meeting weekly for approximately 20 years - to play badminton. They have been self-funded during this time, they pay court fees. Over the past couple of years, they have struggled to pay the costs of court hire as most of their members have found the effects of the Cost-of-Living crisis has impacted on what they can afford to do.

As this group are not Constituted, or formalised in any way, it is very difficult to obtain funding for them. Karen recommended they speak with Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) about developing and Constitution and some support around how to run committee meetings; take minutes etc. A member of the group spoke with VAS and took the information back to the wider membership – who felt that it was a step they didn't want to take at this time, and wondered if monies could be granted and simply paid over to EIS for the court hire.

Behind the scenes, VAS made contact with EIS to explore if there were any reductions they could make to the court hire costs – which they were able to do and also found a small amount of money to pay for the next year's costs. This outcome will ensure the group can meet for the next year, whilst exploring formalising and coming back to SYFAB for help with funding applications.

Stand as One CIO

SYFAB were contacted by this group to explore potential funding opportunities. Karen Walke met with the group at their base in SADACCA in September of 2022.

They began in September 2021 and constituted themselves as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). They are volunteer led and have no paid staff. They work with refugees and asylum seekers from a wide variety of countries including Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Nigeria – the Trustees are from these communities. The group help their beneficiaries to access and understand services such as navigating the asylum system; signposting to organisations to assist with immigration and legal issues; provide IT literacy workshops; help with CV writing and employment applications; assisting with housing and council tax applications along with universal and child credit forms.

During the first meeting, Karen did a health check on the group and recommended that they contact Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) to have their Governance document and policies checked over, but also explore developing a GDPR policy as they had access to the personal information of the people they were supporting. The group subsequently met with VAS and were supported in developing various policies including EDI, Safeguarding; Health & Safety and committee roles.

Karen recommended that the group apply to The National Lottery – 'Awards for All', and South Yorkshire Community Foundation's 'Small Grants'. Over the period of a couple of months the group met with Karen and went through drafts of the bids. The group have been successful in securing £10,000 from 'Awards for All' for office rent, a projector, volunteer expenses and from 'Small Grants' they received £1,000 for 3 laptops and a printer.

They have also contacted Karen about applying for SYCF's 'Cost of Living Fund' and were encouraged to attend the webinar that was set up to explain the process. They currently have an application in to that funding stream and await the outcome. This bid is to help operate a safe space for their beneficiaries to enable them to drop in and have refreshments and socialise, whilst getting support/information to help with managing their money, reducing utility bill costs etc. This support will be provided by volunteers who speak a variety of community languages.

Conclusion

This has been another difficult year, and particularly hard for communities already disadvantaged now facing the cost of living crisis. We have continued to develop how we work and develop what we do to meet the new demands.

- We provided key and current information to groups struggling to meet the needs of their communities in a funding scene with many sources depleted by emergency funding, and many new groups with no experience of funding coming on the scene
- We developed a programme of funding surgeries based in disadvantaged areas where groups could get individual support
- We have a strong relationship now with the Development team at VAS, and are running a series of joint outreach events with them to offer a seamless infrastructure service.
- We developed our online training programme, which opens up opportunities for people not usually able to attend face to face sessions due to mobility, mental health issues, work pressures or geography

The SYFAB Team:

Peter Foyle
Karen Walke
Andy Kershaw

7th June 2023