



## Summary 2012/13

The 2012/13 Surviving Winter Programme was our most successful so far. We raised more funds from more donors and, in turn, helped more people. We also broadened the scope of the programme to help those whose homes had been flooded during the October and November floods thanks to a generous grant from Somerset County Council.

### **Funds raised for grant-making:**

Donations: £79,678

Warm Homes/Healthy People Programme: £40,000

SCC Emergency Flood Relief Programme: £48,750

We were also able to draw in additional support from other funds already under our management. In addition, two of our partner organisations added their own funds to the grants we made to them to provide support to the most vulnerable people in Somerset.

### **Impact**

#### **Older People in Fuel Poverty**

We continue to provide essential support to older people unable to afford to heat their home and maintain an adequate quality of life through 11 'frontline' partner organisations operating throughout Somerset. They not only provide financial assistance but essential advice and information as well which adds considerable value to the funds we raise.

Total number of grants to individuals: 362

Value of individual grants: £54,130

Average grant: £149.53

## **Supporting vulnerable people in the community**

Thanks to the Warm Homes/Healthy People Programme, donations and other funds under our management we were able to fund local organisations providing essential transport, hot meals and other support to a wider range of vulnerable people who are most at risk during the cold weather. The groups were also required to attend specialist training on cold weather support (delivered by VISTA) and distribute cold weather packs (organised by the Community Council for Somerset).

Total number of grants to organisations: 31

Value of grants to organisations: £48,655

Average grant: £1,569

## **Emergency Flood Relief Grants**

The October and November 2012 floods brought additional hardship and misery upon hundreds of households across Somerset, and with a grant from Somerset County Council and some direct donations to the Foundation we were able to provide immediate emergency relief grants to help people through the recovery process. 92% of grants were awarded within 3 days by Foundation.

Total number of grants to households flooded: 238

Value of grants: £59,500

Average grant: £250

## **Feedback**

Over the next two pages we share some of the feedback we received from our Surviving Winter partners and people who received Emergency Flood Relief Grants.

## **Surviving Winter Grants to individuals**

*Mrs F, 61, received a grant that she has saved to pay the electricity bill. She is diabetic, has other health problems and lives on her own. She found this winter 'hard going' as her flat is very damp and cold.*

*Mrs M and her husband have to find £30 a week up front to put in their meter and when they don't have the money they have to cut back on other things.*

*Mr B has restricted mobility and is in receipt Disability Living Allowance. He has other health issues and was finding it difficult with rising fuel bill costs to heat his home.*

*Ms A was finding it hard to justify putting the heating on and was prioritising other bills before heating her home.*

*Mr T was finding hard to pay for his heating bill and suffers from arthritis.*

*Mrs P lives in a house with a damp problem and suffers with COPD. She was having difficulty paying her heating bills.*

*Mrs D had suffered a recent fall and was having to take taxis twice weekly to her local surgery. Her injury has been aggravated by the cold weather, which has meant increased heating of the home resulting in higher fuel bills.*

*Mr K was struggling with heating costs and suffers with severe arthritis. In his application he says the funds will help him by warm bedding and some thermal clothes.*

*Miss L lives in a rented 18<sup>th</sup> century stone built cottage in a rural village in which she has lived all her life. She is 89 and housebound from a recent fall. She gets one visit a week from social services to do her shopping. She has no relatives. Her only income is the state pension with pension credit. We were able to give her a Surviving Winter grant and we are helping her apply for additional energy efficiency grants.*

*Mr and Mrs G were using only two heaters (as little as possible due to the high electric bills) and a woodburner, and the living room temperature on the day I visited was only 12 °C. Due to old age and ill health the couple were finding it very difficult to cope with the physical demands of running the woodburner. The Surviving Winter grant helped them afford to pay for the electricity to run the heaters through the coldest period of winter.*

## **Surviving Winter Grants to Organisations**

*Two of our ladies have a particularly poor appetite. They have enjoyed their soup and then gone on to eat more of their lunch.*

*We had two families with young children who, although housed, had not had hot meals for several days due to cancellation of Benefits. They had no heating or electricity to cook or money to buy food.*

*We met two families through CAP (Christians Against Poverty) who were in severe debt and had no means to buy food or cook. We provided several hot meals until the crisis was averted.*

*We have also given out 20 emergency food parcels. One client wrote "thank you so much for the two food parcels you have donated to my family.....this has restored my faith in mankind".*

*We had initially directed our project towards older people only. The workshop encouraged us to look at the life of young mums at home with babies and toddlers and nowhere to go in the winter months.*

*The car scheme allows people to get out and visit friends and relatives, shops, and day centres.*

*Our lunch club has served an average of 56 people per week ....We have been able to increase the number of people receiving counseling at our wellbeing centre.*

*We could not have been able to cover the transport costs without the help of this grant.*

*This project has enabled us to home visit more clients which is essential as many parts of West Somerset are remote, isolated and services are hard to access.*

*It has enabled vulnerable elderly people in the Mendip area to attend hospital and health appointments thus improving their health, lifestyle and general well-being.*

## **Flood Relief Grants**

*“Mr H has had open heart surgery in May 2012 and is registered visually impaired so life is not easy even without flood in the house.”*

*“My two dogs and I are homeless and carless; also I cannot get myself to work.”*

*“It caused severe distress for both me and my wife...as I am in my eighties. We were unable to move or lift anything and felt helpless.”*

*“We are pensioners and are terrified of it happening again as we get older.”*

*“The timing could not have been worse as my partner has just learnt he is being made redundant.”*

*“I was shocked and traumatised at the volume of water and feeling powerless....I feel quite overwhelmed....I suffer from chronic fatigue syndrome.”*

*“We have two children with special needs – Asperger’s and complex learning difficulties – who need continuity and routine. This has made them severely disrupted and has upset them terribly.”*

*“We felt very helpless and have been feeling sad and confused and displaced ever since.”*

*“I am unable to sleep due to my depression which I am now taking medicine for.”*

*“Mrs X is an elderly lady (95) living alone...the pain in her chest and back have been diagnosed as a fractured rib, a direct result of the mopping up.”*

*“Mr Y is suffering from depression having problems sleeping and hurt his back moving furniture... Mrs Y is also suffering anxiety and symptoms of stress.”*

*“My 3yr old son has asthma which is brought on worse by damp. We had to take him to the Acorn Ward at Musgrove Hospital as he was struggling to breathe.”*