

September 2019

SDGs are embedded in our Values and Vision

This is the first in a series of articles on how community foundations have embraced the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this piece **Rachel McGrath, Northamptonshire Community Foundation** describes why the community foundation saw the relevance of the SDGs and the steps taken to embed them into the heart of the organisation.



‘As a community foundation we are committed to demonstrating the difference that our grant making has on local communities on behalf of our donors through impact and have been doing so since 2011. We have also felt that although we are local place-based grant makers we feel very much connected to the 1,800 community foundations across the globe and our thinking here is ‘think global, act local’ (a much disputed saying in terms of origin); it encompasses the community foundation movement.

We had a number of discussions of how we could reflect this - ‘no man is an island entire of itself’ - especially given the disconnect that a Brexit agenda risks. We act locally yet we are not isolated; we are part of a wider network internationally, rich in good practice and collectively we are a formidable force for empowering the voluntary and community sector ecosystem.

We then came across the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through research and its blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet with its 17 key SDGs.

After discussion at our impact committee and through our senior staff team we agreed to include the SDGs in our Business Plan and commit to working towards some or all of these goals through our work. We amended our business plan for 2019 - 2022 and it is embedded as the key element of our [Values and Vision](#):

‘The foundation’s vision is to create a culture of giving that strengthens and supports the local community in a global context which is why we will also measure our giving to reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals’.

Furthermore, through an understanding of local needs the foundation uses funds to make grants that support a variety of projects and activities securing the future for generations to come.

Our next stage of work and development on this is to implement a strategy to embed this in our working. We will therefore identify the goals which particular donor and programme funds have addressed in impact reporting, engage in discussions across the network on best practice in this, promote activity in PR and communications and develop a workshop to support community groups and charities to think about how their work reflects one or some of the UN SDGs. We welcome ongoing conversations with other foundations around best practice and this is very much a case of watch this space!