



# Impact Review 2023

Making The Difference in our community.



# Hello!

I always welcome the opportunity to sit down and look back on our achievements – and 2023 was jam-packed with ways we were **Making The Difference** as a building society.

So grab a cuppa, and get comfortable, we've got a lot to get through in this year's Impact Review.

It's been a particularly worrying time for a lot of families and individuals as the cost of living has dramatically increased. We felt the real need to support those around us who were struggling, so we launched our Cost of Living Crisis Fund in partnership with Cambridgeshire Community Foundation. The £100,000 fund was used to support local charities, to provide help with fuel and energy costs, food and household needs and even appliances and furniture. We're amazingly proud of the fund and the difference it made to those in need.

In the summer, we saw our third Rent to Home tenant move out of his property and buy his first ever home. The scheme is designed to help first time buyers onto the property ladder by returning up to 70% of their rent at

the end of their tenancy to use as a deposit. And it's wonderful to see another person reach their dream of owning a home. We also expanded the scheme in 2023 by investing in two new family properties, meaning we've seen four new tenants start their journey to home ownership. Watch out for more exciting Rent to Home updates throughout 2024.

They were my highlights from the year, but you'll see throughout our Impact Review that we've been busy **Making The Difference** in many ways. It's also exciting to look forward to 2024 and our plans to increase the reach and impact of our community initiatives to help even more people with their homes and housing needs.

So, thank you once again to our amazing team and members. None of this would be possible without your continued and valued support.

Yours,

**Carole Charter**  
Chief Commercial Officer



To find out more about Making The Difference, please visit our [website](#) or watch our [show reel](#).





# Making The Difference to help people have a home.

Having somewhere to call home should never feel like an impossible dream. That's why we're committed to our cause: **to actively find ways to help people have a home, by supporting people who couldn't buy without our help and working with groups in our community who offer services for shelter and housing.**

## We achieve our cause through a number of initiatives:

### Rent to Home

Giving back up to 70% of rental payments to fund a deposit when buying a home with The Cambridge.

[Click here to find out more](#)

### Community Partnership

Having a deeply committed collaboration with a life-changing charity that shares our focus for supporting vulnerable people in the local area.

[Click here to find out more](#)

### Community Fund

Awarding grants of up to £10,000 to charities, community groups and organisations to help with housing and shelter.

[Click here to find out more](#)

### Cost of Living Crisis Fund

Providing help to those who need it most during the cost of living crisis through a £100,000 fund to support local charities.

[Click here to find out more](#)

### Charity of the Year

Matching the funds raised for our chosen charity by our team members throughout the year.

[Click here to find out more](#)

Learn more about our community initiatives [here](#).



## Our ambitions?

Over the coming years our focus is on:

1

Creating more opportunities to increase our reach and impact by raising awareness of The Cambridge's community initiatives.

2

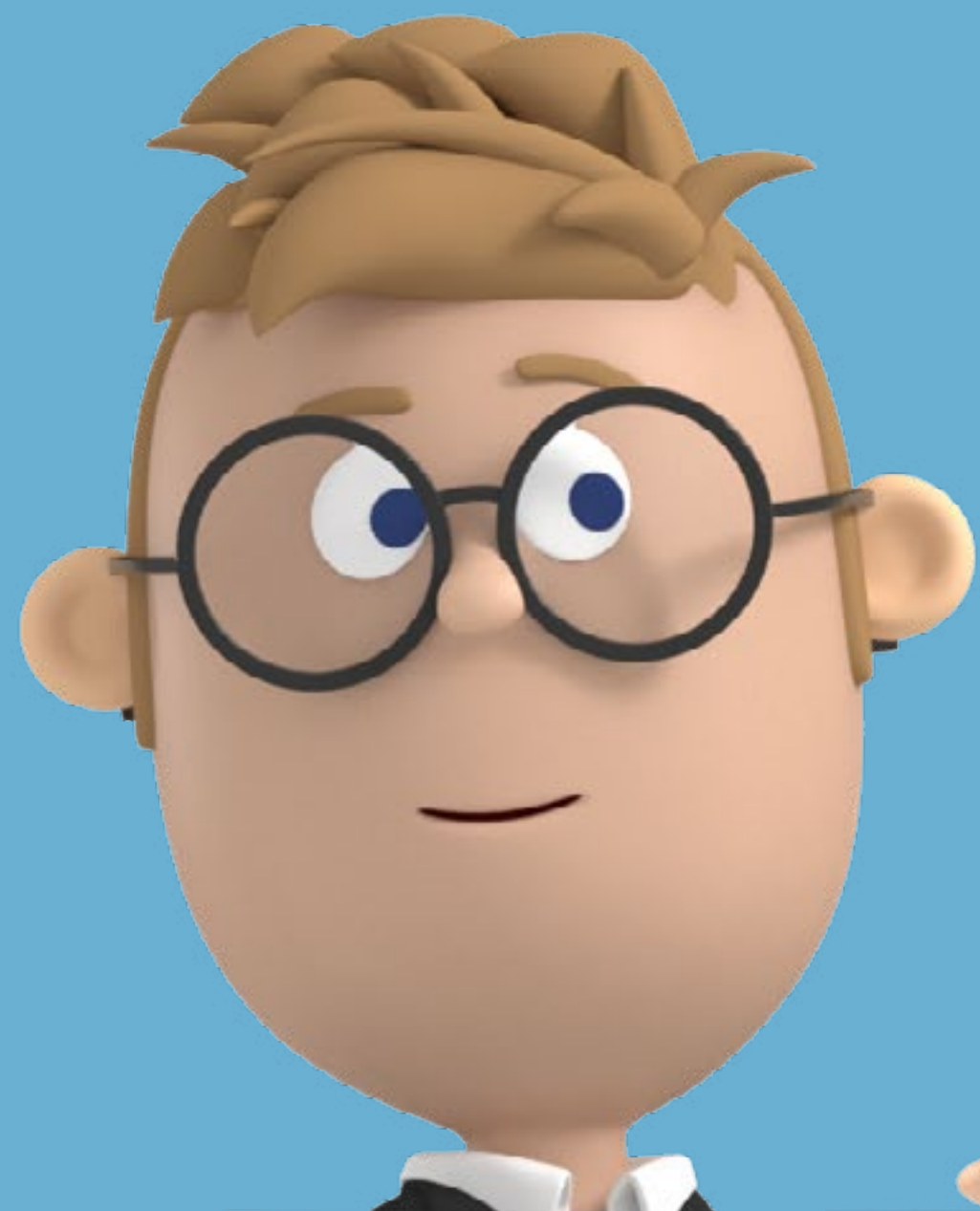
Continuing to expand our unique Rent to Home scheme, helping people who need that helping hand onto the housing ladder.

3

Growing our Community Fund to deliver larger grants to local charities and community groups and having opportunities for our members to get involved in the grant process.

4

Increasing our community partnerships to help the homeless and vulnerable with their shelter and housing needs.



**Our 2023 Highlights**





# Community Impact

## Helping local charities through our **Community Fund**.

Supporting local charities in providing housing and shelter is just one way we're Making The Difference. And in 2023 we donated nearly £40,000 to help four amazing charities in our community combat homelessness.

**Concrete Rose received a grant of £9,978 to extend their supported lodgings scheme beyond the city of Cambridge to also include both Ely and St Ives.**

The 'Room to Spare' scheme works with both individuals and families in the local community to provide semi-independent accommodation placements to vulnerable young people between the ages of 16 and 23.

The funds also supported the work of an operations lead, as well as the training costs and DBS checks for accommodation hosts and the costs associated with marketing.



**A £10,000 grant was awarded to New Meaning Foundation, to help develop the skills and confidence of people who have been homeless, and to train them to build homes for homeless people.**

Their construction workshop in Waterbeach means trainees can learn on the job while building modular micro homes that are then sold to charities to use in re-housing the homeless.



**Baca Charity received £9,492 to extend its support in Cambridge.**

Baca helps young people seeking refuge in the UK without families, many of whom are victims of human trafficking, by offering them safe homes, and therapeutic support in every aspect of their lives.



**£10,000 was donated to The Angels Foundation to help women fleeing domestic abuse.**

The foundation prides themselves on putting the 'home' back into re-homing by supporting families across Huntingdonshire with furniture, flooring, and home comforts as well as social introductions to the community, through the 'Back to Life' support project.





# Community Impact

## How our Community Fund has made an impact a year on.

Twice a year, our Community Fund awards grants to charities and causes helping with housing and shelter needs within our community. We're proud to have supported 10 projects since the fund's launch in 2020, awarding a total of £81,634 over the years.

Back in 2022, we awarded Hope into Action with £6,800 to help with the annual running costs of three properties to support people out of homelessness. It's always nice to check in and see how the funds have made a difference.

Since the grant was awarded, the three properties have helped support eight people out of homelessness and into secured housing. With homelessness a growing problem in Cambridge, having eight additional bed spaces has helped Hope into Action to alleviate the strain on our local authorities.

The funds also covered the cost of training three new volunteers to support the tenants with their 'move on' needs. This includes helping with access to benefits, employment, and mental health services where needed.

So a year on, and we're over the moon with the outcome. Our grant funds have enabled Hope into Action to support those escaping the cycle of homelessness is exactly why our fund was set up. As a result of the support, three of the eight tenants are ready to move on and live an independent life, two have secured full-time and part-time employment, and a number have seen improvements in their mental health, as they now have access to essential services.



We're always looking for ways to involve our members when Making The Difference to our community.

So we're inviting one of our members to join our Community Fund Panel. The panel meets twice a year to decide where funds are allocated.

To register your interest, email [makingthedifference@cambridgebs.co.uk](mailto:makingthedifference@cambridgebs.co.uk)

**3** out of **8**

tenants are ready to live an independent life

**2**

tenants have secured employment

**Improved**

access to mental health services

**HOPE**<sub>into</sub>  
**ACTION**

**CAMBRIDGE**

Enabling churches to house the homeless

Maybe you know a community group or charity that's in need of our support. If so, please visit our [Community Fund page](#) to find out how they can apply for a grant.



# Community Impact

Our Community Fund isn't the only way we supported our community throughout 2023...

## Helping get Emmaus Cambridge back on track

Back in October, we donated £6,000 to Emmaus Cambridge after hearing about a devastating break in. The charity works to combat homelessness in the local community, by providing shelter, meaningful work opportunities, and support to people experiencing homelessness.

The donation helped to replace stolen tools and machinery from their workshop in Landbeach which serves as a hub for essential maintenance work on the site, as well as providing people with valuable skills in construction and property maintenance.

*"The robbery is very sad and comes at a huge cost for the charity that does so much to support people in need.*

*"We deeply appreciate the generosity of The Cambridge Building Society, and their support will go a long way in helping us recover from this setback, and to continue our mission of supporting people experiencing homelessness."* – **Donna Talbot**, Chief Executive at Emmaus Cambridge

Find out more about [Emmaus Cambridge](#) and the great work they do.



## Walking in support of two great causes

We were the headline sponsor for Bridge the Gap for the fifteenth year back in September, something we're immensely proud of. And we're even more so of the 71 team members who helped to raise over £21,000 for Arthur Rank Hospice Charity and Romsey Mill.

We were among more than 1,350 participants who walked through the streets and colleges of Cambridge starting at Parker's Piece.

We'd like to say a huge 'thank you' to our team members that made this an incredible day by volunteering, marshalling along the route, and to all those that took part in the walk itself.

## Save the date

Bridge the Gap will return on **Sunday 15th September 2024.**

To find out more [click here](#)





# Making The Difference in the fight against homelessness.

## Supporting our Charity of the Year.

Jimmy's Cambridge sees a future where nobody needs to sleep rough. So do we. And we're proud to have supported them in a number of ways throughout 2023 as our Charity of the Year.

When the community-based charity first opened their doors in 1995, they were the first all-year-round night shelter in the area. And over the years they've grown to be one of the most prominent organisations within our community, providing support and housing to people who are rough sleeping in Cambridge.

Their ethos is to place people at the heart of the support they provide, valuing and respecting everyone who needs their services. The team works with each person to provide options, tools and skills to support them on their journey by developing a tailored pathway to independence.



## Jimmy's Cambridge impact in 2022

(statistics from Jimmy's Cambridge 2022 Impact Report)

**250**

people were given tailored and individual support by Jimmy's

**100**

people who were sleeping rough in Cambridge were provided with shelter

**58**

people were supported into independent accommodation





*“Thank you so much to The Cambridge Building Society and all involved in this partnership. We really couldn’t do the work we do without you!”*

**Barry Griffiths**  
Community Engagement Officer at Jimmy’s

*“We’ve been very fortunate to be supported by The Cambridge Building Society this year. Having the backing from such an iconic Cambridge business means so much to us and to the work we do helping people out of homelessness.*

*Knowing we share common interests of investing in and supporting communities in Cambridge is incredibly important as we can be confident the impact of this partnership will be even further reaching than the fundraising alone.*

*“The fundraising and financial generosity of their team, members and business cannot go unmentioned too! With fundraising and matched funds raising in the region of £11,000. As we head into the colder months this money will help us to house even more people in our newly extended East Road emergency accommodation. Helping to provide them not only with a roof over their heads, food on the table but also the one-to-one support they need to help them back on their feet”.*

To find out more about Jimmy’s Cambridge [click here](#)



### Raising vital funds through member votes

We love when our members feel involved in their building society. And one way we like to give members the opportunity to have their say, and raise funds for a local charity is through our AGM. For every vote our members made, we made a donation to Jimmy’s. Every postal vote resulted in 25p and online votes saw 30p donated to the charity.

Barry Griffiths and Cat Strawbridge, from Jimmy’s Cambridge, received the cheque for £1,150 from our Chairman, John Spence, and CEO, Peter Burrows.



### Food donation to help those in need

By donating £2 on behalf of each team member who completed the Best Employers Eastern Region’s Culture and Engagement Survey, we were thrilled to raise £348 for Jimmy’s Cambridge and used the money to provide food for those in need.

Jimmy’s needed long life produce and provided a wish list that included cereal, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, lentils, beans and pulses, tinned goods, tea and coffee, biscuits, UHT milk, and fruit juice.





# Rent to Home

Often the hardest part of trying to get onto the housing ladder is saving up a deposit, especially while paying rent bills.

That's where Rent to Home comes in. Providing a helping hand to first time buyers by returning up to 70% of rental payments to tenants to use as a deposit on a mortgage for their first home with us.

## Expanding Rent to Home and support to first time buyers

To expand this unique initiative and help even more people on their journey to home ownership, we invested in two family-sized houses to rent to successful applicants. The two modern family homes in Northstowe and Longstanton bring our portfolio up to five properties, with further additions planned for the future.

Our Longstanton property is a modern, three-story townhouse. With four bedrooms including a master en-suite, a kitchen with appliances included, both a family bathroom and downstairs toilet and a spacious living-dining room, the house is perfect for a family.

The Northstowe home was constructed in 2018 and has a B-rated energy performance certificate. This property features an open kitchen-diner with integrated appliances, two double bedrooms including a master en-suite, ground-floor cloakroom and a utility room.



*"Our Rent to Home scheme has been a phenomenal success and delivered exactly what we intended, which was to help a first-time buyer get a foot on the housing ladder, so it made sense to expand it further to help even more people have a home."*

*"These two new properties are larger and aimed at families, who can afford to pay rent or a mortgage, but wouldn't be able to save at the same time for a deposit for their own home."*

**Carole Charter** Chief Commercial Officer





# Rent to Home

## “It’s like winning the lottery”

With new properties come new tenants. And we couldn’t wait to welcome them into our Northstowe and Longstanton properties. So in May, we started the search for our next lucky applicants.

In August the ballot opened again, and we were delighted to announce four new tenants. Paul Barnes, James Hope, Sophie Rhead and Jamie Bladen were randomly selected. The draw was carried out by Carole Charter, our Chief Commercial Officer, and the balls were drawn from our ballot box which is an exact replica of the one we used back in 1850 when helping local people have a home.

Our new tenants will rent our properties for up to three years and at the end of their tenancy will receive 70% of their rent back to use as a deposit on their own properties, as well as a mortgage from The Cambridge.

Northstowe tenants,  
Sophie and Jamie will  
receive up to

# £32,760

to use as a deposit



Longstanton tenants,  
Paul and James will  
receive up to

# £36,540

to use as a deposit

*“We applied online, it was very straightforward, and I was surprised at how easy it was. You never think you’ll be the lucky one that gets selected, it’s like winning the lottery in many ways.”*



# Making The Difference when Will couldn't afford to buy.

Like a lot of people, Will was struggling to save enough for a deposit on his first home. But then he discovered Rent to Home.

Will applied for Rent to Home after viewing our Cottenham property back in 2020, and once he heard how the scheme worked, he thought it was a no-brainer. After being successful in our ballot, he moved into the property on his birthday no less!

*"Rent to Home is a game changer for first time buyers. The thing about renting is there's always this thought looming over you that your money is being wasted away. Each month a big chunk of your pay cheque just sort of goes into the ether. But with Rent to Home, you don't need to worry about that at all. You can take your time, while knowing that you're saving that money to eventually buy a home."* – William Vandeppeer

Fast-forward three years, and Will has moved out of our Cottenham property to purchase his first home in Soham. He received £18,195 (70%) of his rent back to use for his deposit when he took out a mortgage with The Cambridge.

With Will moving out of our Cottenham property, we've seen another first time buyer make their way onto the property ladder. And another successful Rent to Home journey is complete.

For the latest updates on Rent to Home, visit our [website](#) or email [makingthedifference@cambridgebs.co.uk](mailto:makingthedifference@cambridgebs.co.uk) to register your interest and be one of the first to hear about our next property.



***"Rent to Home has given me a concrete way of getting on to the property ladder. Rather than just procrastinating for years in a rental, I've got a plan."***

**William Vandeppeer**



# The power of community hours



Every year, we give each team member a day to devote to a charitable cause.

Whether that's fundraising for our Charity of the Year, supporting our Community Partnership with YMCA Trinity Group, or helping a local cause of their own choice.

Our Charity of the Year sees any fundraising activity by our team, up to £5,000, matched by us as an additional donation. So in 2023, Jimmy's Cambridge received a total of £11,011 once our team's amazing fundraising efforts were matched.

Find out more from our team members around the business on how they put their volunteering days to good use. Thank you to you all!

In May, our Customer Insight Coordinator, Maria Glover volunteered at YMCA Trinity Group to support their residents' cooking group.

Maria Glover said: "The session I attended was led by one of the residents and I was inspired by their creativity, how they shared their skills with each other and how they all worked together. Spending the afternoon at YMCA Trinity Group, offering my support and encouragement, was very rewarding."

In April, our Cyber Security Analyst, Andrew Colbran ran the London Marathon for Jimmy's Cambridge. He raised an incredible £815 for them and completed the annual run in 4 hours, 28 minutes, and 29 seconds.

Andy said, "I'm very proud of taking part in the London Marathon. I exceeded my fundraising target of £750 and set a new personal best by completing it in under 4 and half hours. It's been a privilege to give back to our local community and converge my life milestones by taking part in the London Marathon."



In September, our Intermediary Team hosted a charity golf day to raise an enormous £2,305 for both our Charity of the Year, Jimmy's Cambridge, and Prostate Cancer UK.

Duncan Turner, Business Development Manager said: "It was a fantastic day and the weather gave us perfect golfing conditions. Barry Griffiths, Community Engagement Officer from Jimmy's Cambridge joined us on the day to provide our golfers with an insight into homelessness, and I was able to inform the male golfers of the importance of getting checked and not ignoring symptoms of prostate cancer.

"Thank you to all the golfers, the Intermediary Team who helped set it up, our hosts at the Cambridge Country Club and all our sponsors who kindly donated time and money to help raise such a fantastic sum of money".





## Christy Rattle, our Business Development Manager, took on the National Three Peaks in July.

The challenge saw her climbing the UK's highest peaks – Ben Nevis in Scotland, Scafell Pike in England, and Snowdon in Wales. Christy raised an incredible £655 for the Peterborough charity Personalised Eating Disorder Support.

Christy said: *“Over half a million people are directly affected by eating disorders in the UK and PEDS help sufferers and those who have been discharged from hospital, to build a life to get well for which is not controlled by their illness. This includes equipping carers and families with the tools to be able to support their loved ones.*

*“Trekking three peaks in three days was certainly a challenge and very wet but all good fun.*

*“Thank you to everyone who has supported me and the team with their donations, and I hope many more families can benefit from the services of such an amazing charity.”*



Throughout the year, our Customer Engagement Adviser, Jacqueline Kendrick, raised an incredible £700 by selling handmade greetings cards for our Charity of the Year, Jimmy's Cambridge.

The greetings cards are sold in our Cherry Hinton store and designed and produced in Jackie's spare time.

Jackie said: *“I started making cards for all occasions as a hobby during lockdown. When it came to asking myself the question, what can I do to make a difference for our Charity of the Year? This was the obvious choice. It's a great way to use my skills to raise money for those in need”.*

Thank you to all our members who have purchased a handmade card.





# Community Partnership with YMCA Trinity Group

## 2023 marked our final year of a three-year partnership with YMCA Trinity Group.

This partnership has seen our team members supporting their Access to Employment programme, helping young people into work, education and training which are vital to develop their skills for independent living.

Last year, we donated a further £8,000 to YMCA Trinity Group to bring our total over the three years to £24,000. This donation has funded a specialist Access to Employment Officer at YMCA Trinity Group based at Queen Anne House in central Cambridge. The dedicated officer meets with young people weekly, providing support in writing CVs, conducting mock interviews, completing application forms, and helping them to establish their interests and passion. All of this guides residents towards finding suitable work, education, or training.

## With our donation, YMCA Trinity Group have seen:

28

young people  
employed either on a  
full- or part-time basis

41

young people  
in formal  
education

5

people  
taking part  
in training

Throughout the partnership, our team members have also volunteered their time by providing learning and development opportunities to promote a paperless office and holding well-being, resilience and self-care workshops. We've also supported young people with CV feedback, mock interviews, and careers advice.

We've taken opportunities to be more hands-on in our partnership too, by creating a welcoming outdoor space with garden furniture for young people to use for informal meetings, as well as fun activities and a place to grow plants and vegetables. It doesn't end there. Team members have also supported YMCA's Trinity Group Queen House resident projects, such as cooking and art workshops and weekly football sessions on Parker's Piece. It's fair to say the team continued their dedication to supporting our partnership in 2023.

*"We've really valued our long-term partnership with The Cambridge Building Society. Not only have they supported us with a very generous donation, but they've shared best business practices and wisdom with us as well. It's been a true partnership approach that we have enjoyed and benefited from. The positive impacts we have created in our community together will continue for years to come".*

**Jonathan Martin**, Chief Executive, YMCA Trinity Group

Find out more about **YMCA Trinity Group** and the services they provide [here](#).



# The Cambridge Building Society Cost of Living Crisis Fund

Going into 2023, many families and individuals were concerned about the rising cost of living. With daily essentials from energy bills to groceries increasing in price, many were in a difficult position.

In response, we launched our £100,000 Cost of Living Crisis Fund to help support children, families and vulnerable people. Providing local people with access to food, heating, and household essentials during the winter months, the fund helped over 4,000 people.

Set up in partnership with Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the fund was distributed to those in need through local charities, Citizens Advice Rural Cambs, Cambridge Aid, Cambridge City Foodbank and West Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau.

Here's a summary of how our Cost of Living Crisis Fund has supported our local communities:

**13%**

supported individuals  
with their food and  
household needs

**10%**

was used to fund the  
purchase of beds,  
cots, and mattresses

**11%**

provided households  
with washing  
machines, cookers,  
fridges, and freezers

**£47,000**

helped with  
unmanageable  
fuel and energy costs

**Over 4,000 people helped**



*"We couldn't sit by and watch people in our local communities affected by the cost-of-living crisis worry about feeding themselves and heating their homes.*

*"This Fund has helped local charities support more people than we ever expected, at a time when they really need it with food, fuel and items to keep warm at home, such as bedding, white goods, curtains and carpets."*

**Peter Burrows** Chief Executive





# Making The Difference when people need us most

Cambridge Aid and Newmarket Open Door were two of the local charities involved in processing applications from our **Cost of Living Crisis Fund**.

Cambridge Aid provides financial support to people in desperate need of help within Cambridge and its surrounding villages, and Newmarket Open Door provides supported housing and new opportunities for homeless and vulnerable young people in the Newmarket and Mildenhall area.

*"The grants we provide offer comfort to individuals and families in need of support with essentials, and help people to maintain dignity.*

*"The Fund set up by The Cambridge Building Society has been a tremendous help in allowing us to meet unprecedented, record demand."*

**Paul Ray** Hon. Treasurer at Cambridge Aid

*"We gratefully received a grant of £5,000 and we were able to offer e-vouchers to 70 people facing financial hardship to make sure they had heating, utilities, and food in their homes.*

*"We also invested in our foodbank supplies which enabled us to support a further 1,000 people with their weekly groceries.*

*"Growing demand for our services means we are now on the lookout for a larger property to keep up with the impact that the cost-of-living crisis continues to have on people."*

**Matthew Tee**  
Charity Director at Newmarket Open Door

## Here's how Cambridge Aid used the fund to support those in need:

A local mother and her three children were supplied with new beds, bedding and other furniture from the fund. The family were rehoused after their previous home developed damp and mould, resulting in health issues. With their beds, bedding and other furniture damaged, she was unable to afford to replace them without the help of our grant.

After fleeing an abusive relationship and having to repay debts her abuser incurred, a single mother couldn't afford to run her car, making it very difficult to get to the local food bank or shops. The parent of four received £175 to help her to feed and dress her children.

After finding employment, a local man in his 50s had been working hard to clear his financial commitments and couldn't afford to purchase a bed, resulting in him sleeping on the floor. With our grant he received £150 to purchase a bed and bedding to ensure he has a safe and comfortable place to rest.



# Making The Difference in our community

2023 Summary

£12,508



for our **Charity of the Year**

Included in this were our AGM donations, funds donated for food supplies, as well as matching funds raised by our team members throughout the year.



£35,500



invested in our **Rent to Home** initiative

This included the return of rental payments to tenants to use as deposits to buy their first homes.

Total donations and investments

£106,157

£39,470



for our **Community Fund**

Grants were awarded through The Cambridge Building Society Community Fund to Baca, Concrete Rose, New Meaning Foundation and The Angels Foundation.



£4,394



for our **Community Partnership** with YMCA Trinity Group

This includes supporting their Access to Employment Programme which supports young people in their journey to employment.



£14,285



in **Donations** to charities and charitable groups

This included Bridge The Gap supporting Romsey Mill and Arthur Rank, Emmaus, Cambridge Women's Aid, Shelter and many more.



## Other activity

### Cost of Living Crisis Fund

These funds were donated in 2022, but distributed during 2023 to help those most in need during the Cost of Living Crisis.

Cost of Living Crisis Fund distribution

£100,000

### Rent to Home

This purchase of two properties is to invest in the future of the scheme and help us support more first time buyers in the future.

Property purchase

£685,000