



community
connect
foundation

Inspiring people, realising potential





Our vision

A community working together – united in harmony, empowered, informed and making decisions that take the **WHOLE** community forward to a better quality of life, where we all thrive in education and employment and are proud of our religions and cultures.





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Our journey

The journey from Smethwick Bangladeshi Youth Forum (SBYF) to Community Connect Foundation (CCF)

Since 1996, the Community Connect Foundation (CCF), formerly known as Smethwick Bangladeshi Youth Forum (SBYF), has been working in partnership with many private and public sector organisations to improve the social and economic wellbeing of the disadvantaged communities in the North Smethwick area.

The charity has developed innovative and culturally sensitive service provisions for diverse communities and, with the help and support of managed funding from a variety of sources, it has been able to support more than 5,000 people. A substantial number of these people have gained qualifications and moved on to find employment in the UK.

As well as training opportunities, the charity also provides health education, promotes women's development and supports youth development.

CCF's continued success is thanks to its years of experience in forming partnerships with wider networks and obtaining quality assurance accreditations from initiatives such as Investors in People, Matrix and Young People's Charter, to name just a few.

Forward thinking

In recent years we have built up a client group comprising more than 50% of people who don't live in the Smethwick area, are not young and are not Bangladeshi.

Therefore, we felt that the SBYF name no longer accurately reflected our client base and may even be preventing us from reaching out to more communities.

In October 2011, we changed the organisation's name to Community Connect Foundation (CCF) to allow us to operate across the West Midlands – not just the Sandwell area – and even further afield as our services develop.

1996 - A group of young people come together to address issues affecting the community

1997 - Youth clubs are set up at Edith Sands Nursery and Brasshouse Lane Community Centre, staffed by volunteers

1997 - Capacity building programme starts with young people

1998 - Smethwick Bangladeshi Youth Forum (SBYF) is established

1998 - Funding from Arts Council is secured to produce a video on issues affecting young people in North Smethwick, which was launched at an event attended by Regional Director of Government office, Chief Executive at SMBC and other high profile officials

1998 -1999 - Harborne Parish Lands Charity provides grant for £50,000 and kick-starts the purchase of St Stephens & St Michael's Church on Cambridge Road. Funding is also secured from Advantage West Midlands, SRB 3, SRB 4 and ERDF

1999 - SBYF are winners of the BBC Asia Awards

1999 - Purchase of building is completed and work commences on refurbishment and extension of building

2000 - North Smethwick Resource Centre (NSRC) is officially opened by Hilary Armstrong MP, Minister for Communities

2000 - Service delivery starts from NSRC, including skills development programmes, youth clubs and ICT access facilities

2000 - Partnership is formed with Sandwell College to deliver community education programmes

2001 - Learndirect Centre is established

2001 - ESF and ERDF funding is secured to implement the Upskilling Communities programme

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2002 - UK Online Centre is established

2002 - Bangladeshi Health Improvement Group is formed and funding from PCT secured to address health inequalities experienced by the Bangladeshi community in Sandwell

2002 - Funding is secured from SRB 6 to deliver ICT programmes including the Microsoft Certified Professionals course

2003 - SBYF receives Matrix Quality Standard Award

2003 - E-Learning Centre is established on Rolfe Street, Smethwick

2004 - Funding is secured to build and extend the IT room at NSRC

2004 - Accredited by OCR to deliver literacy and numeracy qualifications

2004 - SBYF receives Investors in People award

2005 - Funding is secured from the Big Lottery Fund to work with Bangladeshi and Asian women

2005 - A research project into drug misuse within the Bangladeshi community in Sandwell is undertaken in partnership with University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

2005 - Community advice service is established

2005 - Accredited by City & Guilds to deliver a full range of ESOL qualifications

2005 - SBYF is awarded Young People's Gold Charter Award

2006 - Work on direct delivery of literacy, numeracy and ESOL commences

2006 - Young People's Information Point is established

2007 - The Employment Pathways project, Ethnic Minority Employment project and delivery of NVQs commences

2007 - Funding is secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop a project on the migration, settlement and experiences of the Bangladeshi community in Sandwell

2008 - A research project into mental health issues within the Bangladeshi community in Sandwell is undertaken in partnership with UCLan

2008 - Book entitled "From Bangladesh to Smethwick" is launched and the charity's 10th anniversary is celebrated

2009 - Funding is secured from Reaching Community to continue work with Asian women, set up provision for Asian men and delivery of a community advice service

2009 - Service delivery expands to other areas of Sandwell and Birmingham

2010 - Funding for a feasibility study to redevelop NSRC and establish strategic partnerships is secured

2010 - Accredited by British Accreditation Council (BAC) as a recognised academic institution in delivering ESOL qualifications

2010 - Accredited by Education Development Institute (EDI) to deliver English qualifications

2010 - Planning permission to rebuild NSRC is obtained

2011 - SBYF is renamed Community Connect Foundation



A tall, slightly tilted stack of approximately 15 books of various colors including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The books are stacked in a way that shows their spines and edges. The background is a solid light brown color.

Our services

Advice & Guidance

Education & Training

Education & Training

Our team is dedicated to improving your quality of life by providing a better education and support with finding employment, and helping to instil confidence and independence in everyone, irrespective of their gender or age.

The Community Connect Foundation (CCF) offers a wide range of free adult education and training facilities and our advisors can help you find the best programme and activity to suit your learning needs. Whether you're thinking of retraining, enhancing your career prospects or just want to learn a new skill, CCF can help.

With employment opportunities at an all-time low, gaining extra qualifications can vastly improve your chances of getting a job when a vacancy arises. Candidates who can demonstrate their experience and knowledge in interviews have better employment prospects.

Typical programmes and learning activities from CCF include:

English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
Functional skills: literacy, numeracy, and basic computer skills
Employability and personal development
Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS)
NVQs in various subjects
Health and wellbeing awareness
Teaching assistant
Food hygiene
First aid
Mentoring and counselling

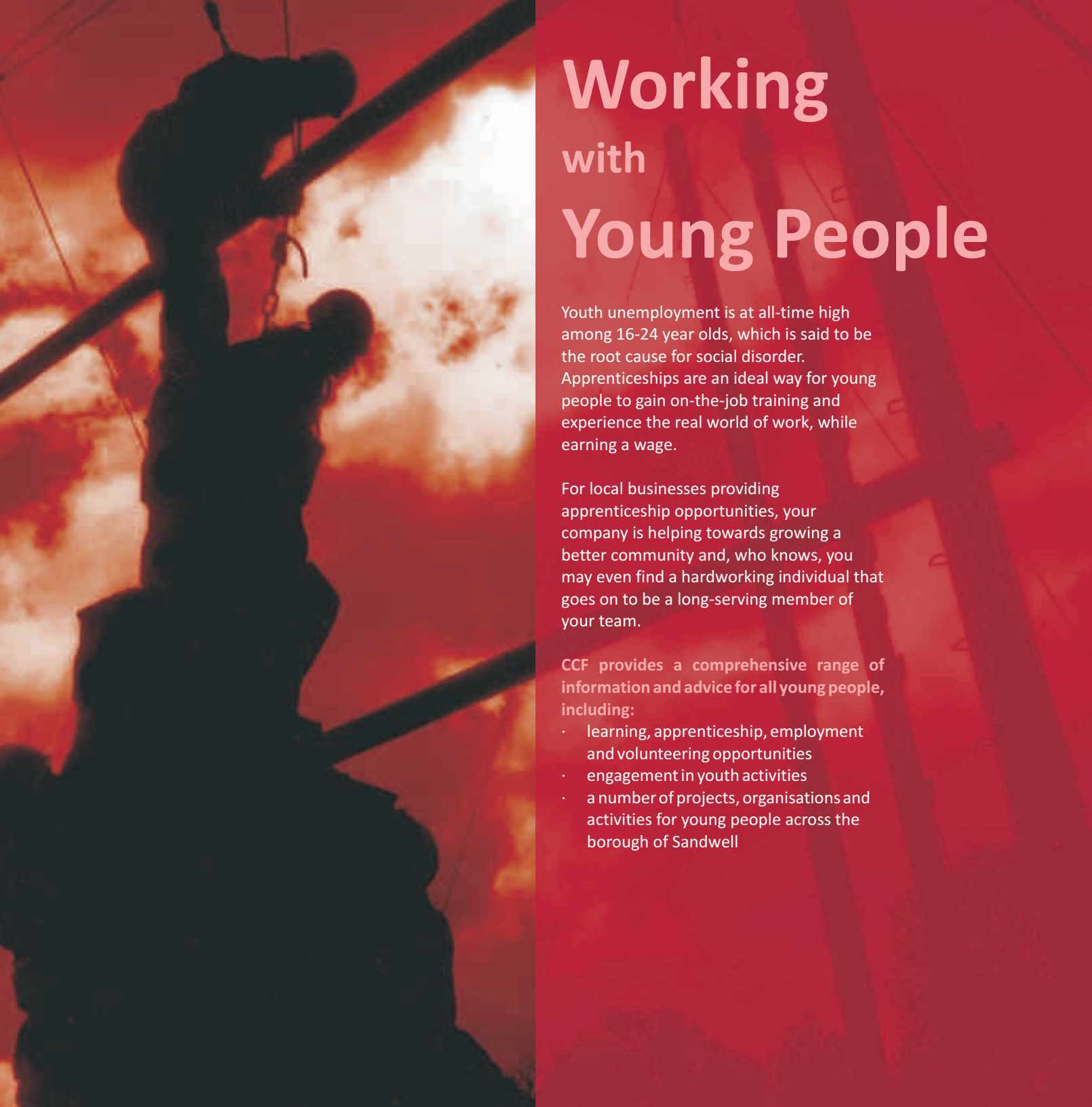
Advice & Guidance

CCF has been providing advice services to members of a diverse community for more than 10 years. Offering impartial advice that will remain 100% confidential, our advisors communicate in English as well as a wide range of Asian languages, including Bengali, Sylheti, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

CCF's Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) service can help you with:

- Welfare Rights benefits
- Council Tax
- Housing
- Employment
- Debt
- Consumer matters

We also provide an outreach service for elderly people or those with a disability, to assist them with completing application forms for Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance.



Working with Young People

Youth unemployment is at all-time high among 16-24 year olds, which is said to be the root cause for social disorder. Apprenticeships are an ideal way for young people to gain on-the-job training and experience the real world of work, while earning a wage.

For local businesses providing apprenticeship opportunities, your company is helping towards growing a better community and, who knows, you may even find a hardworking individual that goes on to be a long-serving member of your team.

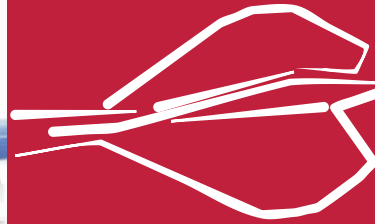
CCF provides a comprehensive range of information and advice for all young people, including:

- learning, apprenticeship, employment and volunteering opportunities
- engagement in youth activities
- a number of projects, organisations and activities for young people across the borough of Sandwell

Employment Support

CCF is dedicated to helping people who have been long-term unemployed get back into employment or access training opportunities.

Many people aren't aware of the skills they already have, so our team can help you identify your strengths and find suitable training courses or employment opportunities to fit your talents and career interests.



CCF can offer support in:

- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Offering a flexible and personalised training package that will be tailored towards individual needs
- Signposting training and employment opportunities
- One-to-one job searches
- CV preparation
- Completing job application forms
- Preparing for an interview
- Ongoing mentoring to sustain employment
- A wide range of courses to compliment and build on existing skills and qualifications
- Providing a culturally sensitive service that is aimed at Asian women and offered by women

Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteering can bring many benefits to people's lives. For some, it's a chance to gain new skills and enhance their CV to kick-start a route into employment. For others, it's the social appeal of meeting new people, getting to know their local community and feeling like they're part of a team.

Through some of our training and learning programmes, we have been able to provide voluntary placements for people in their local area.

Women's Development

The women's development programme is designed to provide women with the skills and knowledge to help them boost their confidence and build independence, whether it's in the home or the workplace.

As well as providing health advice and family-orientated activities, the programme comprises first-stage accredited courses to create a stepping stone to employment.

Many of our female members feel isolated, but the women's development project helps them to make new friends and spend some much-needed time away from their home environment.

CCF's women's development programme includes:

- ESOL classes
- Workshops – Asian dress making, henna, sewing and jewellery making
- Short courses – first aid, food and hygiene, health and beauty, and sewing skills
- Accredited courses – teaching assistant, counselling, and childcare
- Health activities – fitness classes, swimming lessons, and awareness sessions
- Counselling services





Health & Wellbeing

Our team works in partnership with health professionals to offer you advice and support to improve your wellbeing.

Since 2002, CCF has been the lead agency in managing the Bangladeshi Health Improvement Group (BHIG), which has become a strategic body in addressing the health inequalities experienced by the Bangladeshi community in Sandwell.

The BHIG aims to ensure that the Bangladeshi community has access to high quality healthcare facilities and information; works in partnership with other community organisations with similar aspirations; and works with mainstream agencies and policy makers as an advocate on behalf of the community.

CCF aims to promote wellbeing with information and support on:

- Health activities
- Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)
- Mental health
- Cancer
- Quitting smoking
- Diabetes
- Sexual health

CCF also works closely with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and health professionals to deliver health workshops to various communities within the six towns in the borough of Sandwell.



Consultancy Service

Our experienced advisors can design a bespoke support package to meet your organisation's strategic and operational development needs.

Strategic Review

Need advice but don't have the funds to pay for it? CCF offers all prospective clients and their projects a free consultation meeting, providing high quality advice with no obligation. We can help you develop a vision for the future of your organisation and outline SMART short-to-long term objectives that you can work towards.

Organisational Development & Capacity Building

CCF's advisors can help you to start to plan for the next phase and build a cohesive strategy to develop your business.

We can help your organisation reach its potential by improving, developing and streamlining your practices to achieve a particular goal. Together, we can achieve results by compiling a clear structured process through business needs assessment, action planning, implementation and reviewing.

Fundraising Strategy

In order to practically implement your business plan, it's crucial to gain a better understanding of the market opportunities around you.

Our advisors can help you to develop a realistic fundraising strategy. But, before any organisation can successfully raise funds, it needs to have a clear idea of what the money will be used for and what steps need to be taken to secure the relevant funding.

Feasibility & Research

Our advisors can undertake feasibility and research studies on behalf of your organisation should you wish to seek to develop a new service; establish a new trading venture; increase sustainability; or even expand your business.

Bid Writing

We are 100% committed to winning business for our clients and with our professional bid writing service we can help you prepare high quality funding applications. Our team has experience of working on a wide range of public sector tenders that include charitable trusts, national funding bodies, and mainstream government agencies.

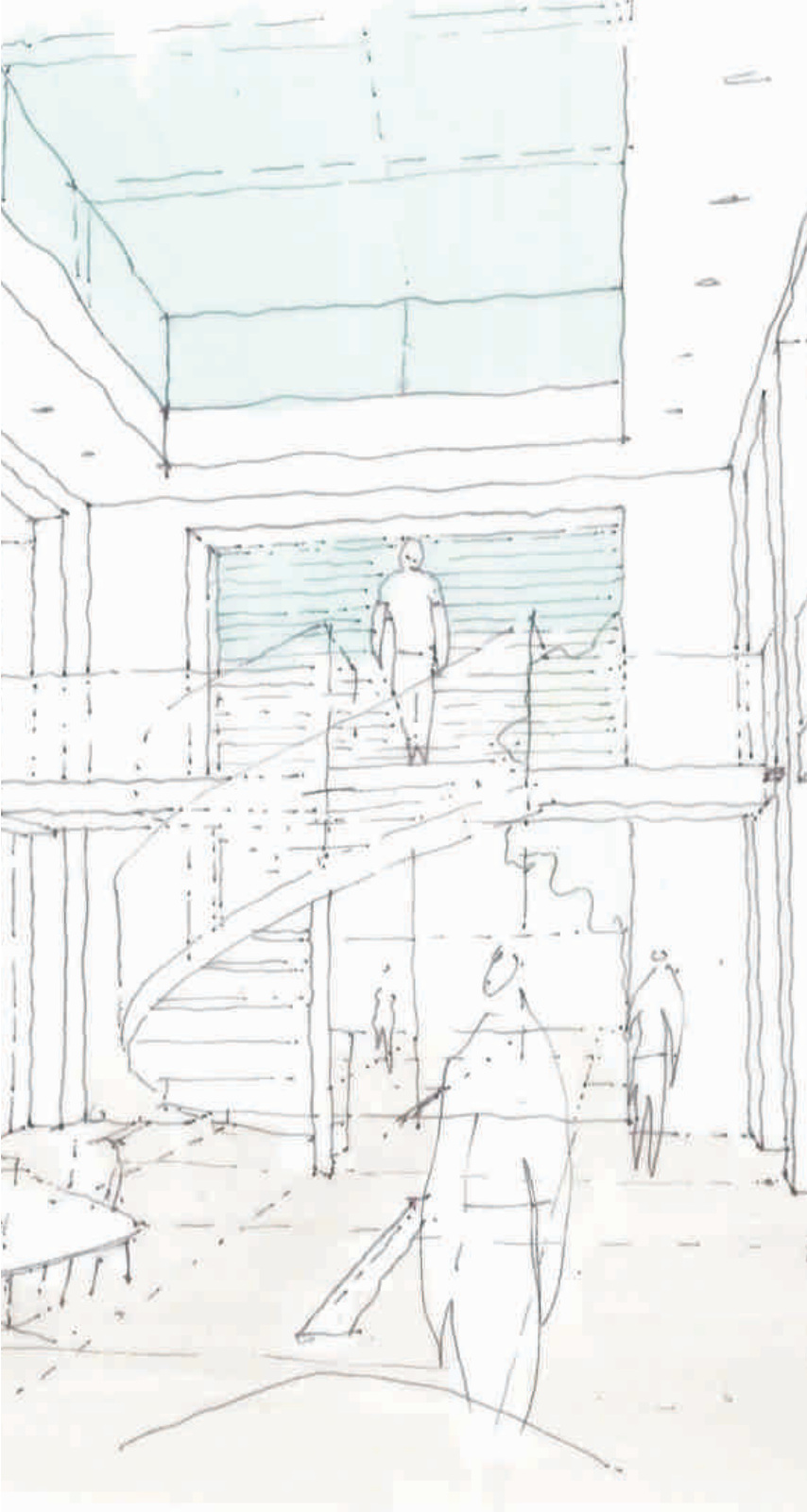
Monitoring & Evaluation

We provide hands-on support to develop practical monitoring and evaluation frameworks that will produce expected project outcomes.

Payroll

We offer an efficient and accurate outsourced payroll processing service for charities and companies of all sizes. Our dedicated team has the experience and knowledge to provide a fully comprehensive payroll service that adheres to all current legislation. We pride ourselves on offering our clients a flexible service that can be tailored to their specific needs.





The next chapter

The future vision for CCF

The creation of CCF is an exciting development in the history of our organisation. It demonstrates our determination to reach out into all sections of our communities to provide essential training opportunities, health advice and youth development support to those that need it most.

At the centre of our strategy to grow the organisation are plans to refurbish the North Smethwick Resource Centre, which has been our home for more than 11 years. The £2 million scheme will provide a sound base from which we can continue to deliver our services to the residents of Sandwell as well as reaching out to the rest of the West Midlands, particularly Birmingham.

The success of CCF's future plans relies on the charity's strong partnerships with statutory providers and community-based organisations, which have been developed over the past decade.

In order to ensure long-term sustainability, the organisation has diversified its service portfolio. The introduction of a consultancy service, which has a proven track record of managing and delivering contracts of different sizes, means that the charity can now share its experience and knowledge with other projects and initiatives.



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