

# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24

## Introduction

County Durham Community Foundation (the Foundation) has delivered grant funding programmes on behalf of Sherburn House Charity since 2017 to help and support people living in poverty and in crisis across the North East (the Region). These are:

- The Sherburn House Charity Relief in Need Fund (RiN Fund) which aims to reduce the hardship and distress faced by individuals and families living in poverty within the Region, by providing grants of up to £300 for the purchase of essential domestic equipment, furniture, household items and critical clothing, such as school uniforms.
- The Sherburn House Community Grants Fund (Grants Fund) providing funding to support the delivery of services at foodbanks across the Region.

From 2017, the Foundation also provided matched funding to the Sherburn House monies to further support groups and individuals. The following facts and figures show the financial contribution that the funds have made to people across the Region.

## Facts and Figures

### Total awarded 2017- 2024

From 2017 -2024, **£906,904** was awarded to groups and individuals, benefitting more than **64,400** people at the most critical and difficult time of their lives, through pandemic, and cost of living crises.

Year	£ Relief in Need Awarded	£ Foodbank Awarded	Total Relief in Need Beneficiaries	Total Foodbank Beneficiaries
2017-18	£ 80,310	£ 54,194	659	6511
2018-19	£ 80,549	£ 54,195	726	6512
2019-20	£ 87,314	£ 25,000	853	115
2020-21	£ 85,674	£ 94,000	871	16620
2021-22	£ 73,156	£ 50,500	728	15445
2022-23	£ 64,891	£ 53,700	623	10000
2023-24	64,421	£ 39,000	664	4161
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 536,315</b>	<b>£ 370,589</b>	<b>5124</b>	<b>59364</b>

The following section of the report provides a snapshot of where £64,421 of RiN Funds have been awarded in 2023-24 and the difference it makes to people living in poverty.

*“We are very thankful for this and just don’t know what we would have done without it.”*



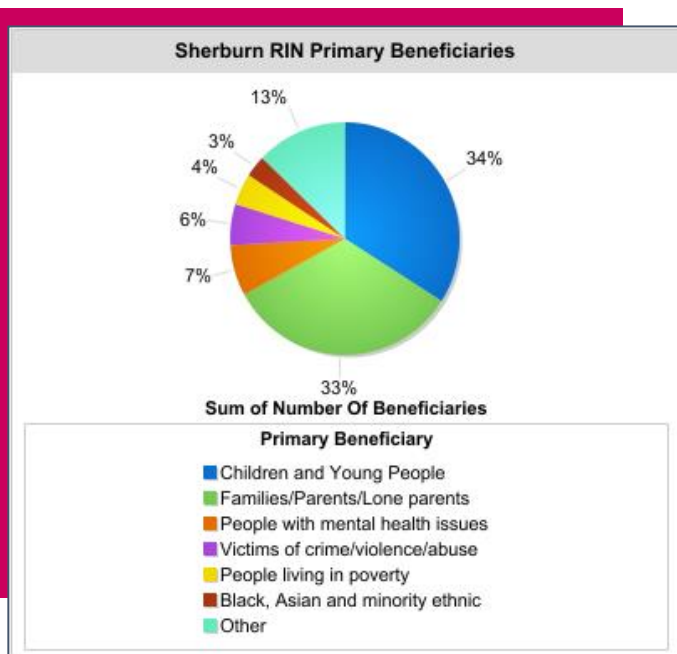
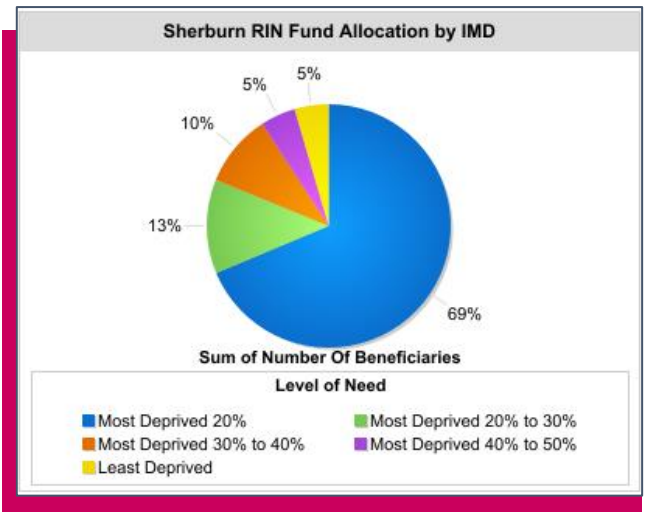
# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24

RIN applications were received from individuals supported by housing officers, social workers and support workers from across the region, stretching from the River Tweed to the River Tees. The largest proportion of funding, forty two percent (42%) of grants, was awarded to people in County Durham, with thirty three percent (33%) of funding awarded in Tyne & Wear. The remaining 23% was spread across areas from Northumberland to Tees Valley.

## Areas of poverty

More than two thirds (69%) of the funding was awarded to people living in the 20% most deprived areas of the country. In total, 539 beneficiaries (82%) were located in the 30% most deprived areas of the country. The geographical data reveals that the Fund met its aim to provide relief to people facing significant hardship and living in poverty.

This is not to discount the hardship faced by individuals living in the least deprived areas, as poverty exists in pockets across the region, particularly those who are living in isolation.

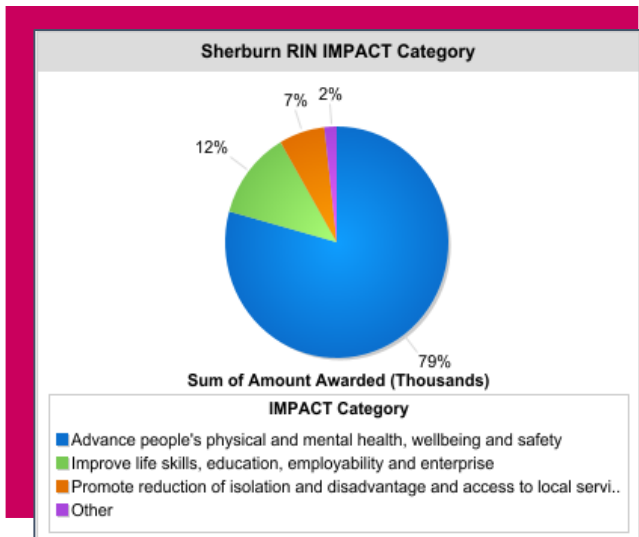


## Who received help?

In 2023-024, the Fund largely supported lone parents and children. The statistics along with stories of change (see case studies) show that hardship and poverty have a detrimental impact on children and young people, and that the support provided by a grant has far reaching benefits for the whole family.

Additionally, the Fund provided vital support for people with mental health issues and victims of violence and abuse; difficulties which are worsened by - and occasionally the cause of - poverty.

# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24



## The impact

A notable proportion of the grants were awarded to 'advance people's physical and mental health, wellbeing and safety', demonstrating the importance of the Fund in immediately improving people's circumstances and daily lived conditions.

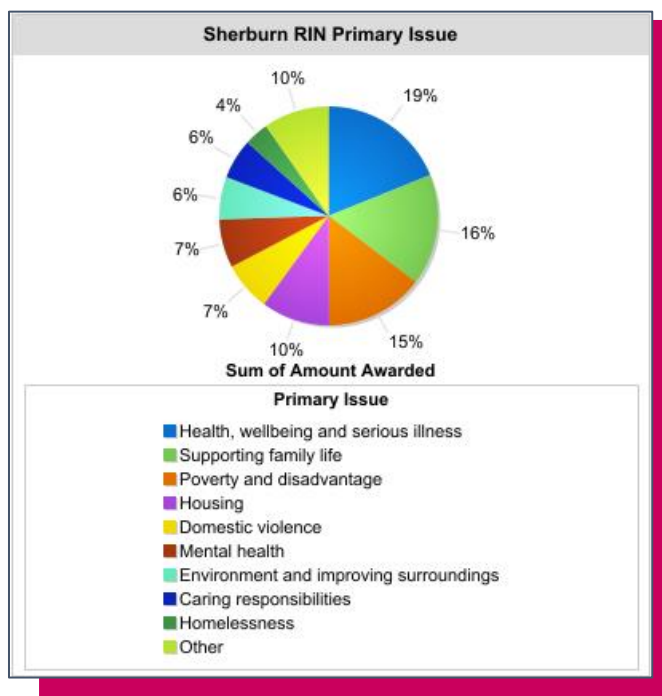
Examples of this type of support include contributions towards carpets for the safety of children, mattresses and bedding for those with mobility issues, and kitchen appliances which allow beneficiaries to store and cook healthy meals. The Fund also helped individuals access further educational and employment opportunities, for example through the funding of uniform, clothing, or even a bed frame to ensure a good night's sleep and promote school attendance.

## The main issue

The main issue highlighted in applications to the Fund was to support improved health and well-being, and support family life. These, along with poverty and disadvantage, are the three foremost issues addressed by the Fund - and consistent with the objectives of the Fund to urgently address issues affecting daily lives.

The grants awarded have tackled various other difficulties faced by beneficiaries, such as deterioration of home and living conditions, mental health illness, and support for victims of domestic violence.

In all, the Relief in Need Fund had an extensive effect on recipients who are facing wide-ranging problems caused by poverty.



# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24

---

*“I am less anxious  
and feel much  
happier in myself”*

## Poverty and Disadvantage

PF and her family moved to the region after living in London and had been involved with children’s services due to concerns around housing, living conditions and mental health issues. Unfortunately, after moving the family were taken advantage of by someone that they hired to complete necessary work on the house, losing £4000. They were left with an incomplete home renovation, and faulty electrics and boiler. PF was referred to the fund for beds for her youngest children, who had no comfortable place to sleep.

The eldest daughter, aged 17, described the impact that the grant had on the entire family, expressing that her sisters can now have a good night's sleep before the school day. She also explained the effect that the grant had on her mother, who has returned to work since receiving the funding. The grant has also had a health impact on her sister: *“Prior to receiving the bunkbeds my little sisters were sleeping on an airbed on the floor so she would often become very poorly, since the bunk beds she has been feeling a lot better and hasn’t had a chest infection since and is able to go to school regularly again”*. For PA and her family, the Relief in Need Fund has improved their health and access to education and work. To sum up, *“We are very thankful for this and don’t know what we would do without it.”*

## Case Studies

### Health, Wellbeing and Serious Illness

P is a recovering alcoholic and had been struggling with incontinence issues following an operation on his bladder. Whilst awaiting an appointment with the bladder clinic, P was referred to the Fund for mattress protectors, clothing, and catheter bags, to improve his comfort and living standards. The bags were eventually provided by the NHS, but P was able to buy loose-fitting clothing compatible with his catheter, and a mattress protector to replace spoilt bedding. The grant not only helped P in a practical manner but also, in his words: *“boosted my confidence and improved my mood and self-esteem”*. Consequently, P is returning to normal life and healthy habits: *“I feel more confident to go out and about socialising. I am also engaging in gentle exercise, which has improved my mood.”*

### Refugees / Asylum / Immigration

S and his family were claiming asylum in the UK, awaiting a decision from the Home Office. One of his sons was diagnosed with autism and another has epilepsy, which caused significant budgetary issues for the family. Having received only Home Office Section 95 support for three years, which consists of £45 per person per week, they could not afford urgent essential items such as pots, pans and school uniforms and so were referred to the Fund.

Because of the urgent nature of the requests, S was awarded funding for pans and kitchen utensils, school uniforms for the children, and a children’s duvet set. In final monitoring for the grant, the Foundation received a letter from S expressing the impact and his gratitude: *“For struggling families with financial constraints just like ours, having these items means we can cook meals at home...which is healthier and more cost-effective for us”*. He stated that the kitchen items *“contributed to my overall well-being, financial stability, and self-sufficiency”*. Regarding the uniforms, S described the grant as *“incredible support for us and our children”* and that they *“bring real happiness to my children’s faces.”*

# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24

---

*“I am very grateful. This help is the start of reaching out to mental health support networks to hopefully be able to cope in the future.”*

## **Poverty and Disadvantage**

J had recently separated from her partner and moved to a new property with her two children. She was feeling *“as though life is falling apart”* and was struggling with debt that her partner had accrued in her name, resulting in a threat of eviction. At the time of application, J was undergoing medical tests for severe health issues and her son was sleeping on a 15-year-old mattress with protruding springs.

J received funding for a new mattress for her son and it had an immediate impact on his comfort. It is reported that his school attendance significantly increased, and prosecution for non-attendance has been cancelled due to this. Furthermore, the funding impacted J’s mental health, relieving the worry and stress caused by her son’s discomfort and allowing her to focus on other things. According to the referrer, J *“is now concentrating on getting her finances in order with the help of Citizens Advice Bureau”*. The grant has alleviated a serious difficulty faced by the family, and empowered J to tackle her financial hardship.

## **Case Studies**

### **Environment and Improving Surroundings**

M suffers from various mental and physical health issues, including PTSD, anxiety, depression and arthritis. She has suicidal thoughts and was receiving support from a crisis team. M was referred to the Fund to purchase a fridge-freezer as hers was broken, causing increased spending on food which she was struggling to fund. After receiving the grant, M’s daughter and her newborn baby were able to move in as there was now a place to store milk. Additionally, M has reported being able to manage her money better by buying weekly shops instead of daily. Her referrer described her as *“very grateful for the help she has received and feels more confident about her future”*. After feeling down about her broken fridge, M now feels like *“a weight has been lifted from her”*.

### **Health, Wellbeing and Serious Illness**

S struggles with PTSD after serving in the army for six years, which heavily impacted his ability to work. He has lost jobs due to his mental health issues and was affected by low mood and, consequently, low income. After his washing machine broke, he could not afford to replace or repair it and resorted to washing clothes by hand and wearing unwashed items. This further impacted his self-value and self-care, and he was referred to the Fund for a new washing machine.

It has been reported that after purchasing a new machine, S’s ability to wear clean clothing has lifted his mood and increased his self-worth. For S, being awarded the grant has shown that people care making him *“feel like life is worth living”*. Although his long-term employment is still affected by the PTSD, the grant has given him some immediate relief: *“The gesture of good will has made me feel worthwhile and having clean fresh clothing has lifted my mood”*. It has also given him the confidence to reach out for further support in the future, as he knows that others are willing to help.

# Sherburn Relief in Need Fund 2023-24

## Appendix

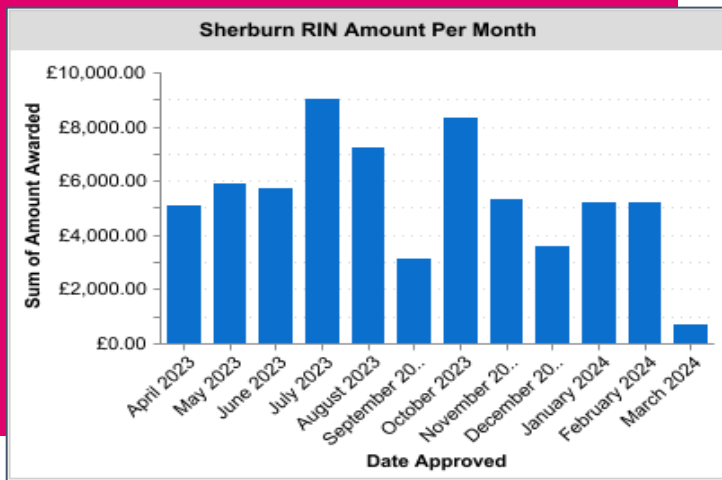


Figure 1: Amount Awarded per Month 23/24

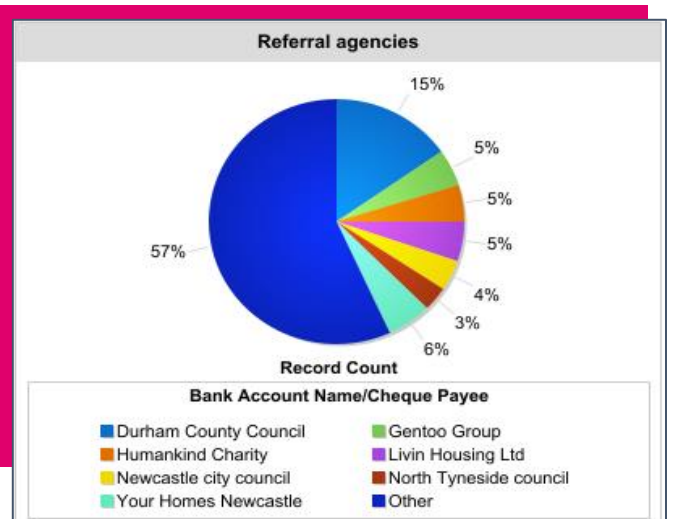


Figure 2: Percentage of Grants Awarded by Referral Agency

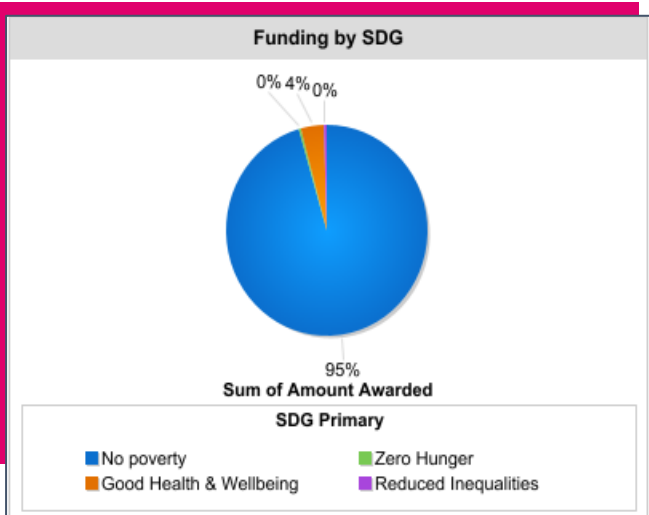


Figure 3: Amount Awarded by Sustainable Development Goal