

Request for Sustainability Funding

Introduction

Conceptualised at the grassroots, Bristol Parks Forum joined forces with Bristol City Council and Bath & North East Somerset Council in a successful bid for funding from the [Nesta Rethinking Parks programme](#) to develop this project in early 2018. The 'Rethinking Parks' programme is funded by National Lottery Community Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Nesta, supporting innovative solutions to sustain our parks and green spaces.

Our set up funding through Nesta has now expired and to provide the Foundation with the support it needs to thrive, we are asking for £160k (£112k Bristol, £48k BANES) over 4 financial years. This investment will ensure a self-sustaining champion for parks, able to raise funds that community groups and Councils cannot, deliver projects, develop and sustain relationships with a wider range of stakeholders and support both city's responses to the Ecological and Climate Emergencies and in Bristol, the One City Plan.

Vision & Strategy

The Bristol & Bath Parks Foundation has been developing a three-year strategy to establish the charity's goals and ambitions during our development phase, and to consider potential funding streams.

As part of the strategy we have set out our three-year vision:

- **Quality:** A reputation for excellence and for knowing how to make things happen.
- **Collaboration:** A strong network of effective relationships including high quality community advocates, businesses and the best minds.
- **Culture shift:** A buzz about parks, people beginning to take a share of the responsibility for making their parks better for communities.
- **Action:** An annual programme, the first high profile campaign launched and several projects underway.
- **Financial sustainability:** Reliable income streams, as a result of appropriate investment in operational capacity. A trading/social enterprise bringing in money.
- **Climate Change & Biodiversity:** Communities have the knowledge and skills to protect and improve the environment for animals, plants and people in their parks.

We have also set ourselves the following strategic goals:

- **Goal 1:** Individuals and communities have a closer relationship with their local park.
- **Goal 2:** Community groups play a more active role in improving their local park and have greater ownership.
- **Goal 3:** Advocate for the value and importance of parks and the role of our charity.
- **Goal 4:** Develop sustainable income streams to ensure our charity is effective, well run and impactful
- **Goal 5:** Make the most of unplanned opportunities that meet our charitable goals

While we are focused on the next 3 years, we are looking to the long-term. With financial assistance now, we are far more likely to be self-sustaining by the end of 2023. If support is not available, our existing resource will be focused on survival meaning that development will be much slower pace and the risk of the Foundation failing increases.

2019-2020 Income Generation

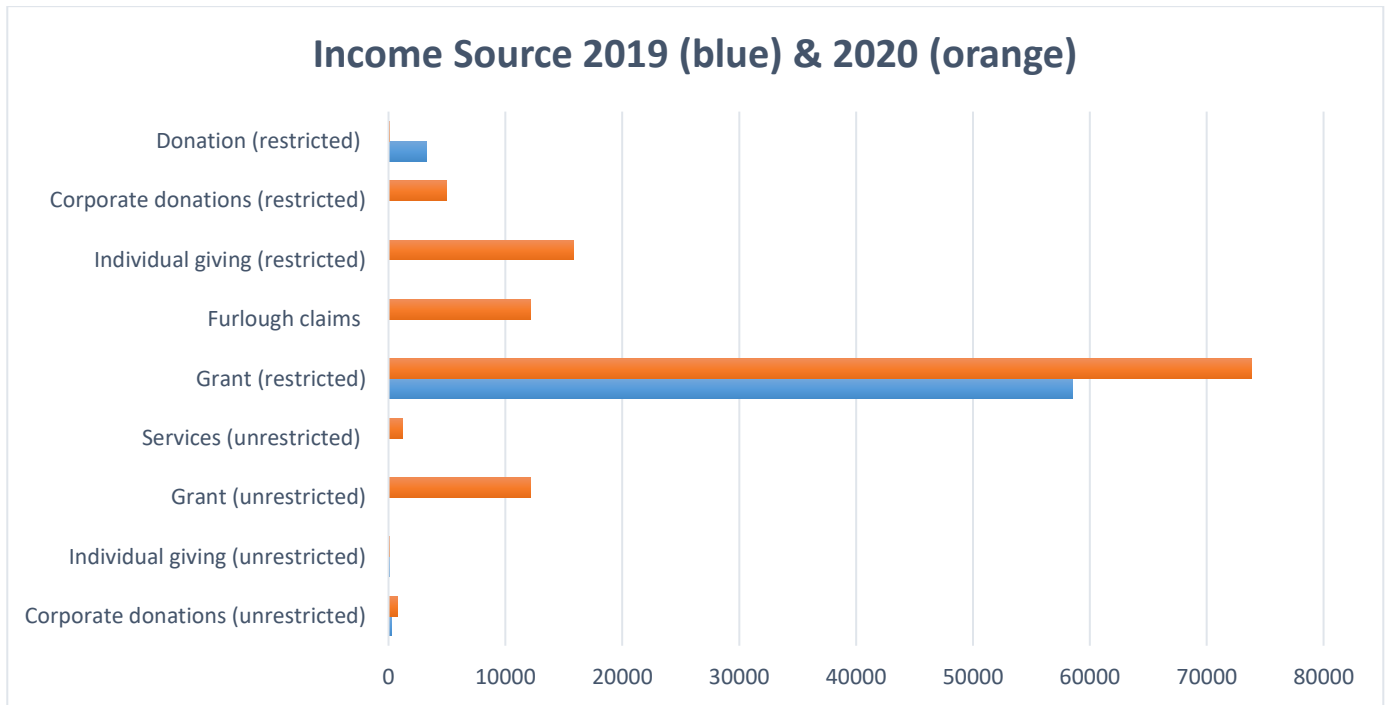
In 2019 we received £62,061 (majority Nesta grant). So far in 2020 we have generated £122,103 (£80,551 not including the Nesta grant).

We have grown our income through trusts and grants, securing £42,450. Summary of grants received in 2020:

1. Future Park Resilience Funding (£25,000)
2. Cllr's Empowerment Fund (£3,000)
3. Quartet Express Fund (£3,500)

4. Keynsham Town Council (£850)
5. Lottery Community Fund (£7,500)
6. Merchant Venturers (£2,600)

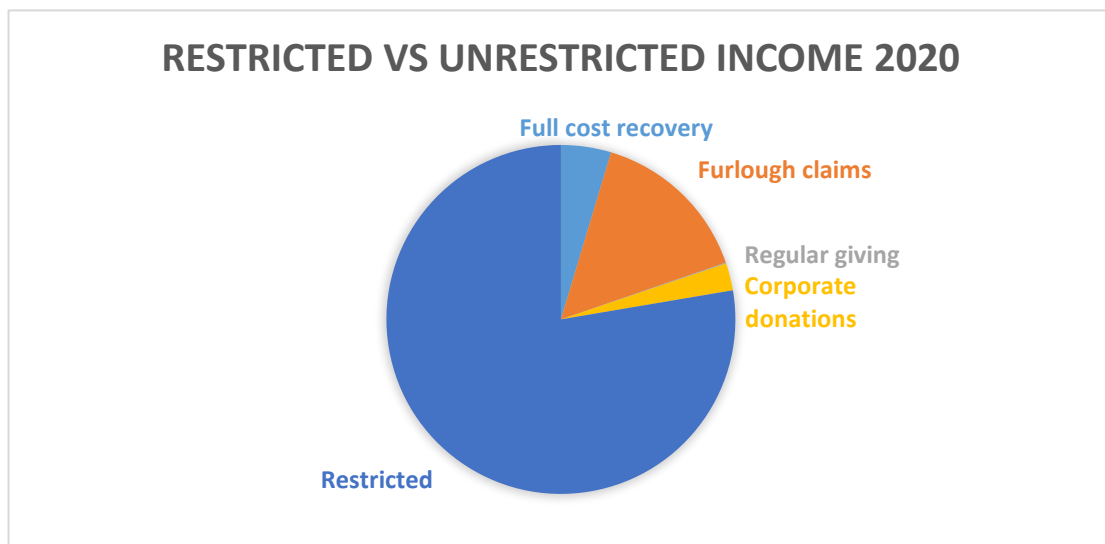
We used our Nesta Grant and Future Parks Resilience Grant to employ a trusts and grants fundraiser to support us in developing our case for support, approaching trusts and grants and developing a legacy strategy. We no longer have the budget to afford her time, but Jo submitted 12 applications on our behalf including our submission to the Nature Recovery Challenge Fund (worth £250k). We are waiting for decisions on 6 additional bids.



Restricted vs Unrestricted Income

Our unrestricted income has increased, raising from £292 to £17,987 in 2020 (not including Nesta grant). We have benefited significantly from the Government furlough scheme which accounts for 67% of our unrestricted income.

1. Full cost recovery on grant applications - £3,744
2. Furlough claims - £12,135
3. Regular giving - £73
4. Corporate donations - £2,035



BBPF 2020-23 Strategy

Our financial situation is our most pressing issue. As a new organisation without sustainable income streams, our first three years will need to focus heavily on income generation. We were initially funded by Nesta and the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Rethinking Parks programme which covered the costs of developing and setting up the charity. The grant was for £198k and the final payment was made in September 2020.

This financial plan is centred around **five** main areas of activity:

1. The continuing development of the Foundation’s **core operations**, including those funded by the remaining grant from NESTA.
2. The initiation of the **Park Activator** programme, which includes pilot projects in 2 parks – Netham in Bristol and Green Park/Norfolk Crescent in Bath. Expanding to an additional 4 parks across the cities.
3. The development of work to **enable communities to do more**, including the inception of a small grants scheme to support local parks groups and an annual cross-city community conference.
4. Reactive park improvement projects at **College Green** in Bristol and the **Royal Victoria Ponds** in Bath.
5. The growth of the Foundation’s own **income development** streams, including a social enterprise and point of sale opportunities.

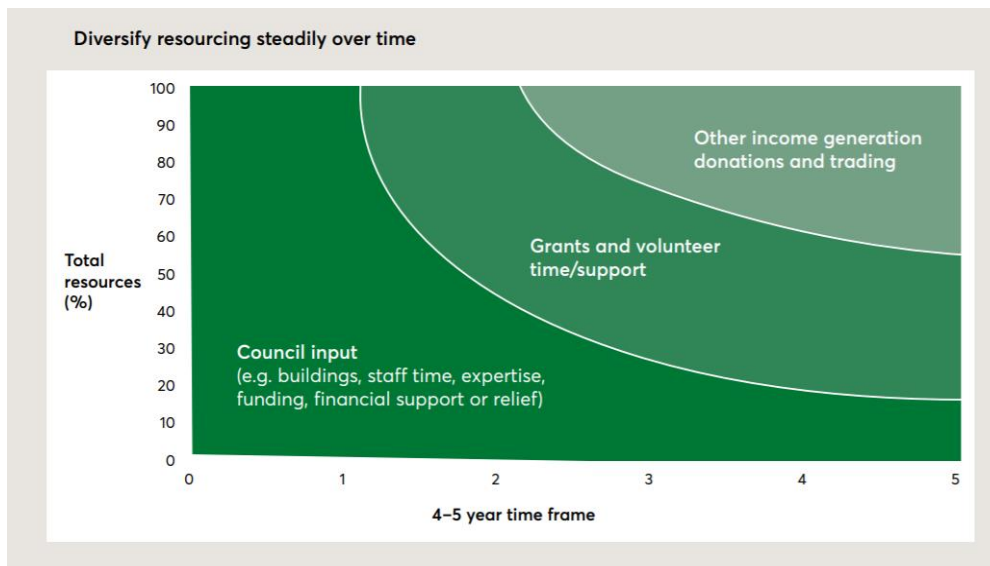
These areas of activity deliver our strategy and charitable aims. They are also highly dependent on the Foundation’s success in raising funds to meet the associated costs.

Income Generation Plan

For the first three years we will focus on developing six income streams for both restricted and unrestricted income:

1. **Trusts and grants**
2. **Social enterprise/trading**
3. **Major and mid-giving**
4. **Corporates**
5. **Legacies**
6. **Individual giving**

Learning from the Bournemouth Parks Foundation, to mitigate the risk of failure we have established that we need investment in the long-term success of the our Foundation through a decreasing contribution towards staff (core) costs while we establish sustainable and unrestricted income streams as demonstrated in this table developed by Nesta in their ‘How to set up a parks foundation’ toolkit’. This is all the more important given the covid-19 crisis having serious implications for charity income generation.



The Challenge of Core Costs

Project costs are reasonably easy to fundraise for through the traditional funding streams charities have access to e.g. trusts and grants. Projects will only go ahead if fully funded and therefore they pose less risk. We have already proven our ability to raise income for projects.

Core costs (central costs not directly applicable to delivering work e.g. management/admin salaries, office costs, fundraising, governance) are far more challenging to generate as most donors want to see their donations going directly to support the cause. This continues to be frustrating trend as no charities can exist without reasonable core costs.

Break down of our core cost projections 2020-23

CORE COSTS	2021	2022	2023
Staffing (annual increase of 3% for inflation)			
Director - £40k 15%OH 4 days	36,800	36,800	36800
Marketing & Comms - £30k 15%OH 3 days	20,700	20,700	20700
Fundraiser - freelance then £30k 15%OH 3/4 days	18,975	28,359	28359
Administrator - £20k 15% OH 1/2 days	4,217	9,200	9200
Training and conference expense	1,800	1,800	2000
Recruitment	2,600	2,600	3000
	85,092	99,459	100059
Office costs			
Office	4,400	4,600	5000
IT support	360	420	500
Computers	600	600	600
CRM system	2,000	2,000	2000
	7,360	7,620	8100
Insurance			
Insurance	900	1,000	1200
	900	1,000	1200
Accountancy/bookkeeping			
Payroll charges	480	0	550
Annual report	2,000	2,000	2000
Xero fees	346	346	384
	2,826	2,346	2934
Sundry			
Trustee expenses	1,200	1,200	1200
Staff expenses	2,400	3,000	3000
Meeting room costs	1,800	1,800	1800
Printing	2,150	2,650	2700
Stationery	1,800	1,800	1800
Office equipment	300	300	300
	9,650	10,750	10800
Goal 4: Fundraising			
Development	6,000	8,000	10000
Social enterprise development	3,000		
	9,000	8,000	10000

Marketing & comms

Web development	2,000	2,000	3000
Web hosting	900	1,200	1400
Advertising & Digital campaign content	2,400	3,000	3000
Marketing - event resources	2,400	2,400	2500
Design materials	1,200	1,200	1200
	8,900	9,800	11100
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	123,727	138,975	144,193

Unrestricted Income Development

We seek to develop several unrestricted income streams over the next 3 years. These income streams will support the core running costs of the organisation, however they will take time to develop and progress has been stalled during to pandemic.

Priority unrestricted income sources:

1. **Social enterprise/trading** – BBPF is employing the services of the Real Ideas Organisation to develop ideas to begin in early 2021.
2. **Corporate relationships** – leading on corporate relationships retaining 10% of all financial support towards core costs
3. **Trusts and grants** – rarely fund core costs but some do, we will continue to seek these out.
4. **Project grant applications** – requesting full cost recovery where possible (usually 10-20% of total grant)
5. **Point of sale donations in parks** – working with BCC & BANES to provide opportunities for park users to donate when in parks

All of these will take significant time and resource (a Fundraiser) to develop, test and to turn a profit.

Unrestricted income	2021	2022	2023
Nesta grant <i>*grant covering some costs to June21</i>	20000	0	0
Council investment	90000	50000	20000
Full cost recovery (10% project costs)	18621	25665	30000
Trusts and foundations <i>*including furlough claims</i>	10000	10000	10000
Social enterprise <i>*net profit</i>	2500	10000	25000
Point of sale donations	2000	10000	15000
Regular giving	250	500	1000
Community fundraising	2500	10000	20000
Corporate donations	10000	15000	20000
Legacies <i>*can't plan for legacies</i>	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	135,871	131,165	141,000

Core cost support request (2021 - 2023)

To provide the Foundation with the security and capacity to effectively develop these unrestricted income sources, we need financial support for our core costs.

For the Foundation to thrive, we are asking for £160k (£112k Bristol, £48k BANES) over 4 financial years. This investment will ensure a self-sustaining champion for parks, able to raise funds that community groups and Councils

cannot, deliver projects, develop and sustain relationships with a wider range of stakeholders and support the parks department's as they respond to the Ecological and Climate Emergencies and in Bristol, the One City Plan.

While these scenarios will be impacted by both the national and local environment and the future is particularly unpredictable at present, we do believe that they are realistic in overall terms. We would expect any support to have conditions attached and for there to be annual reviews.

Recommended option

1. Thriving: £160,000 over 4 financial years

Likelihood of Foundation becoming self-sufficient by 2024 – high.

£160,000 decreasing over 3 years will enable BBPF to deliver its ambitions set out in the current strategy 2020-23. This includes retaining its existing staff, office space, covering the costs of running the organisation and to employ a 0.6FTE Fundraiser & 0.2FTE Administrator to prioritise income development, thorough financial management and project administration which will be essential when delivering more and larger projects.

These figures are based on filling the gap in core costs against our income projections. By front loading resource we will be able to develop our unrestricted and restricted income sources and be in the best position to be financially independent from the Councils beyond 2023.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
BCC 70%	£4,935	£56,000	£29,750	£21,315	£112,000
BANES 30%	£2,115	£24,000	£12,750	£9,135	£48,000
	£7,050	£80,000	£42,500	£30,450	

For all options, if we furlough Sue from 20th November – 18th January and Charlee for some of December/January, we can extend Sue's contract to the end of March 2021 using the claimed funds. This would reduce the total from all options by £3,450.

Appendix of other options considered but considered less optimal for the Foundation's performance

2. Maintaining: £130,899 over 4 financial years (fundraising focused option)

Likelihood of Foundation becoming self-sufficient by 2024 – medium.

£130,899 decreasing over 3 years will support the Director (£36,800pa) from July 2021, a Fundraiser for 3 days/week (£20,700), a Marketing & Communications Officer for 3 days/week (£20,700pa) and fundraising development (£24,000) at 100%, 50% and 25%. This will provide the Foundation with the focused resource needed to generate sustainable income streams over the three-year period. It will not provide support for project delivery.

What we will **not** be able to do that is detailed in 2020-23 strategy:

- Limited capacity to make most of unplanned opportunities
- Less project delivery capacity to support FPA/other Council priorities

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
BCC 70%	£4,935	£48,633	£26,486	£11,576	£91,629
BANES 30%	£2,115	£20,843	£11,351	£4,961	£39,270
	£7,050	£69,475	£37,837	£16,537	

3. Surviving: £64,400 over 3 financial years

Likelihood of Foundation becoming self-sufficient by 2024 – low.

£64,400 decreasing over 3 years will provide funding for the Director’s role and 15% for overhead costs (£36,800pa) from July 2021 at 100%, 75% and 50%. The Director will have to prioritise income development to ensure the organisation can survive, projects will have to be stripped back and marketing and communications will be limited.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
BCC 70%		£17,710	£17,710	£9,660	£44,800
BANES 30%		£7,590	£7,590	£4,140	£19,320
		£25,300	£25,300	£13,800	

What we will **not** be able to do that is detailed in 2020-23 strategy:

- Sustain the Marketing, Communications & Development Officer’s role beyond Feb 2021
- Deliver most income projections
- Deliver Park Activator programme without substantial funding
- Small grant programme at scale (smaller/not possible beyond 2021)
- Support community groups through conference & awards
- No capacity to make most of unplanned opportunities
- No capacity to support FPA/other Council priorities

4. No financial support: £0

Likelihood of Foundation becoming self-sufficient by 2024 – impossible.

In this instance we would need to drop all new project development to focus on successfully completing and reporting to funders on our existing projects (pilots at Netham, Green Park, College Green & small grant programme) by the end of June 2021 although this would be incredibly challenging.

We would lose the Marketing, Communications and Development Officer at the end of January 2021 and the Director at the end of June 2021. At this point we would fall back on the trustees to try and keep BBPF ticking over while looking at other possible funding. We could explore employing an administrator for 1 day/week to support the trustees and maintain good governance.