



Cherishers: cherishing the elderly and vulnerable

Raised £10,745 from 108 supporters

+£5,000 +Extra funding from Power to Change Community Business Crowdmatch

When the pandemic hit, some of the most vulnerable members of our community found themselves isolated and unable to get out of the house to buy groceries. Through it all, Cherishers were on hand to help.

Based in Lichfield, [Cherishers provides employment opportunities](#) to disadvantaged and disabled individuals through their domestic service contracts. With their profits, they provide free community home care to vulnerable people in the area through shopping services, prescription collection, and companionship. Not to mention their social inclusion initiatives, such as their 'no one should be alone at Christmas' lunches!

Over the course of the pandemic, demand for their care services skyrocketed and they received more requests than ever before, putting their organisation under strain.

Alec Jones-Hall, Cherishers' Director, explained: *"We have seen a massive increase in loneliness and isolation exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. We saw a need for us to help grow community resilience and promote mental and emotional health and wellbeing. Cherishers combated this by putting our belief into action: taking a holistic approach, engaging with physical, emotional, and practical needs, and offering services without discrimination."*

Unable to turn anyone away, the Cherishers team set out to adapt their services and ensure that no one felt isolated or alone. [To do this, they needed £10,000 which they hoped to raise through a crowdfunding campaign.](#) This funding would support the salaries of two carers and two support workers and any additional money would go towards the provision of COVID-19 pamper boxes and emergency food parcels.

They reached out to their networks, sharing their message far and wide! Alec told us, *“We mobilised our supporters, volunteers, donors, and staff into promoting the crowdfunding campaign and sharing it across their social media platforms. We also did a targeted marketing campaign to our corporate partners and sponsors informing them about our project and the campaign.”*

He continued, *“Due to the nature of what we were crowdfunding for, we also decided to do some positive case studies of who the recipients of the funds are and the impact it will make on their daily lives. This was a very powerful element of attracting the supporters as they could see how much the support means to those that we care for! It gave a real human element to our campaign.”*

After 42 days, their [crowd of 108 supporters had raised £10,745](#). This included [£5,000 from the Power to Change Community Business Crowdmatch programme](#) which supports emerging, new and existing community businesses.

“The funding gave us a huge boost and made us smash our target figure. It also injected more energy into our campaign and encouraged our supporters to donate more with some even donating repeatedly or getting their friends and family to support the fundraising.”

Though the funding wasn't the only benefit to come from their campaign! Alex said, *“The whole campaign energised the team and made them even prouder of the work that we do. Seeing so many people supporting the campaign and reading their positive comments has given us greater confidence and more determination to carry on the vital work that we do within the community. We also had other organisations approach us to support and partner with the work we are doing. The visibility of the campaign has enabled us to develop strategic partnerships which will also have a lasting impact in the work that we deliver.”*



After such a successful first experience with crowdfunding, including an amazing boost from [Power to Change's Community Business Crowdmatch programme](#), we wanted to know Cherishers' top tips for anyone else thinking about raising money from the crowd.

"Go for it you most certainly will not regret it! The team were incredible in their support throughout the campaign. It really does give you positive affirmations that your work is valued and appreciated. I would suggest that you make sure you have prepared your campaign, press releases, and social media activity prior to the campaign going live. This helped us really focus the crowdfunding activity and ensured that we kept on track to smash our 100% target."

Thinking about crowdfunding? You can [raise funds for your idea on Crowdfunder](#) and find out more about Power to Change's support for community businesses [here](#).