

Big Local strategy

April 2014 to March 2017



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1 Introduction

This document outlines the **strategy for the Big Local programme** for the next three years. It builds on what we, partners, and Big Local areas have already achieved, shares our aspirations for the future and highlights how we will achieve them. There is another document which contains the Local Trust strategy for us as an organisation, which was agreed by our board of trustees and published in spring 2014. Both strategies sit alongside each other and are similar in many ways. However, this Big Local strategy is focused exclusively on the Big Local programme; should we at Local Trust develop and deliver any other programmes, then we will create a strategy for each new programme.

In order to put our three year Big Local strategy in context, we have also included our long term vision, the overall aims of the programme and other Big Local details in this document. We are excited about Big Local and its impact in 150 Big Local areas throughout England and we are keen to spread the successes and learning with all those we support.

2 Our short term Big Local objectives

Our **key objectives** for the next three years, to March 2017, are to:

1. deliver Big Local really well in a clear, collaborative way to establish our resident and community led, positive approach in all Big Local areas
2. use rigorous research, evaluation and story-telling to learn and develop Big Local to help Big Local areas achieve impact and enable people to make their areas even better places in which to live
3. position Big Local as an innovative way to transform communities; and influence others working in communities to follow the Big Local approach
4. ensure Local Trust runs effectively, efficiently and adopts good practice in the management of Big Local.

Resident-led – it's hard, it sounds good but it's hard to achieve. And I think if we can achieve that it'll be absolutely fantastic at a local level.

In addition, we will work with Big Local areas and partners to look for new opportunities: funding, partnerships, activities, sponsors, to provide additional resources into Big Local. We aim to be enterprising and transformational whilst learning from our experience and staying true to the Big Local approach.

3 Our outline plan for Big Local

Below is an outline of how we plan to help Big Local partnerships (and all those who support them) make their areas even better places in which to live over the next three years. This includes support from national partners and is reviewed and updated each year.

We will:	Key actions / milestones to March 2017:
<p>Deliver Big Local really well in a clear, collaborative way to establish our resident and community led, positive approach in all Big Local areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● all Big Local areas have access to grants, social investment and commissioning: with say 20% of areas using all three ● all Big Local areas have a suitable Big Local rep ● review and endorse proposals, partnerships and plans annually with all partnerships and plans endorsed by March 2016 at the latest – with a focus on sustainability ● annual programme of 20 plus events to encourage peer learning, sharing and inspiration

We will:	Key actions / milestones to March 2017:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● annual training programme of 20 plus sessions offered to areas to increase skills and confidence ● Star People programme and annual support to 15 Big Local areas to develop community enterprise ● provide specialist support and advice on issues that matter to Big Local areas, such as community assets and buildings
<p>Use rigorous research, evaluation and story-telling to learn and develop Big Local to help Big Local areas achieve impact and enable people to make their areas even better places in which to live</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● learning from research, evaluation and story-telling continually informs the development and delivery of Big Local – we publish clear evidence of changes made nationally and locally ● research, evaluation and story-telling illustrates the impact of Big Local and helps lever in additional resources for Big Local – we share our learning ● publish at least 20 case studies (stories) a year to share the Big Local approach and impact ● publish at least four research and evaluation reports per year ● all Big Local areas involved in self-evaluation – proving it; and demonstrating their achievements and impact
<p>Position Big Local as an innovative way to transform communities; and influence others working in communities to follow the Big Local approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● at least 30 Big Local areas share their views nationally and locally with our help ● Big Local areas develop relationships with national and local media to the benefit of Big Local ● Big Local is kept fresh, sharing stories and influencing others via the Local Trust website, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube ● as a member of the Community Investment Coalition, providing a route into communities on fair finance issues ● four new opportunities (partnerships) developed nationally to the benefit of Big Local areas
<p>Ensure Local Trust runs effectively, efficiently and adopts good practice in the management of Big Local</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● annual audit finds Local Trust and Big Local is appropriately governed and managed ● systems and procedures enable us to deliver Big Local really well and are adjusted in light of feedback ● maintain an effective board of trustees and staff team at Local Trust ● majority of activities nationally and locally are delivered through suitably experienced organisations, working collaboratively for the benefit of Big Local ● Big Local Trust endowment is managed in line with the trust deed

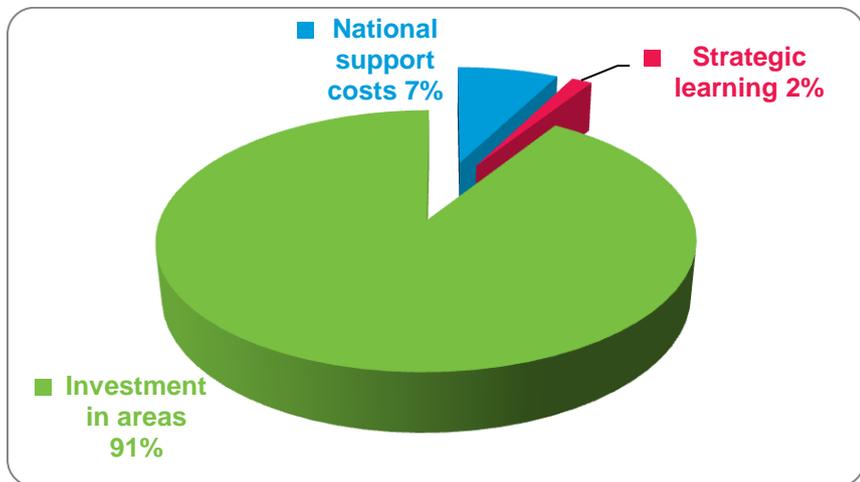
4 Resources

In order to achieve all of this we need resources both human and financial. We have a competent and enthusiastic staff and trustee team and we work with a range of experienced and trusted partner

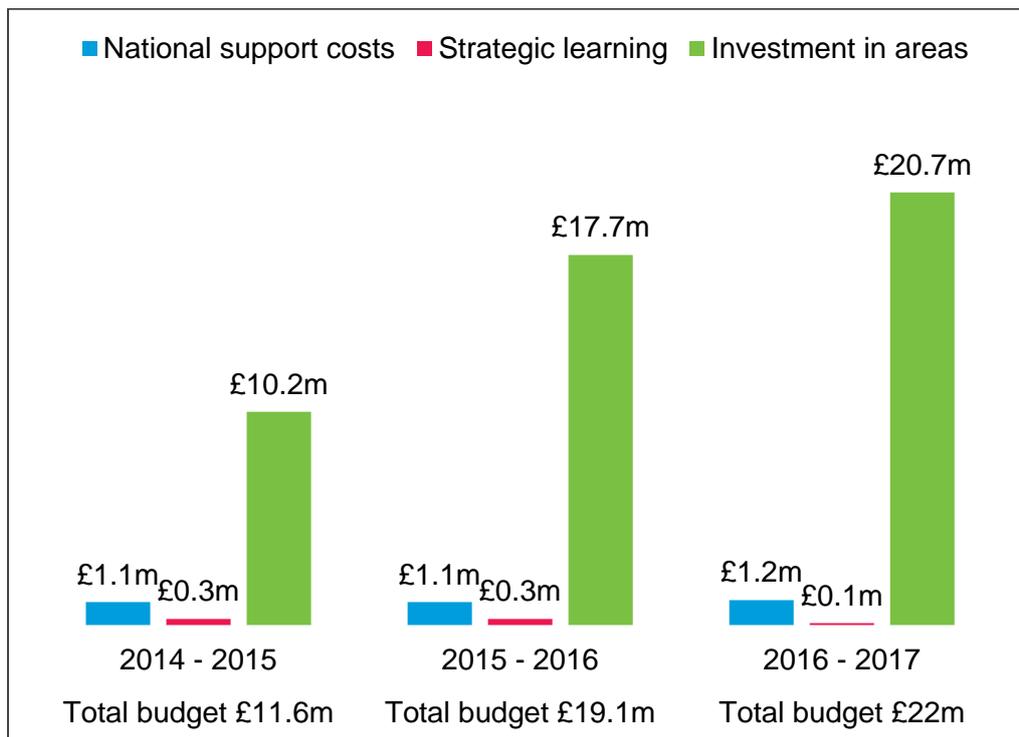
organisations nationally. In addition, each Big Local area works with locally trusted organisations and together we help Big Local partnerships achieve their vision for their Big Local area.

We have to spend £220 million on Big Local by 13 February 2027 when the trust comes to an end. To help us plan our spend we created a 15-year indicative budget split between national support costs, strategic learning and investment in Big Local areas. These headings capture all Big Local costs nationally and locally until 2027 including those of our national partners and Big Local reps as well as Big Local funded activities in 150 areas until 2027.

We have 10 years so we should really brace ourselves, pace ourselves, make sure we get it right and not try and rush it



Our indicative budgeted cash flow forecast for the next three years to fund and support 150 Big Local areas is below.



We also plan to look for additional funding and support for Big Local over the next three years from other funders, private business, charities or government departments. We already have a grant of up to £17,000 to spend over the next two years from the Community Development Foundation to support our involvement with the Community Investment Coalition, enabling us to provide them with examples where affordable finance is an issue in Big Local areas and to offer potential solutions.

5 Research, monitoring, evaluation and story-telling

We recognise the importance of short and long term research, monitoring, evaluation and story-telling for us and for Big Local areas so we can learn, adapt or change and help Big Local achieve greater impact. We use a range of methods to capture this including:

- external evaluation
- longitudinal multi-media research projects (film, photography, audio)
- academic research on community control
- self-evaluation support to Big Local areas
- case studies and story-telling to share progress
- monitoring data provided by locally trusted organisations
- primary research in Big Local areas
- analysis of our Big Local approach related to other funders.



Within the next three years **we will regularly share our learning**. For example, we expect to learn more about the influences on Big Local and how it develops in areas; ways in which residents make a difference in their communities to the issues they prioritise; how Big Local partnerships review their impact and achievements and how we capture that across England. We expect to use research, evaluation, case studies and film to illustrate progress and capture stories of what works and what doesn't work so well.

We **expect to learn a lot** about our resident and community led approach to creating lasting change and to know whether it develops the skills and confidence of the people involved locally and enables them to work with others to the benefit of their communities and whether it builds on the opportunities and assets available in each community and creates lasting, long term solutions.

6 Get in touch

We are passionate about Big Local and we are keen to achieve the best we can for all Big Local areas. If you want to give us feedback, ideas or just get in touch please do. We'd love to hear from you as we develop Big Local to enable residents, and those who support them, to make their areas even better places in which to live.

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YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/BigLocalProgramme>



Background

7 Big Local programme

Big Local is an exciting opportunity for residents in 150 areas around England to use at least £1m each to make a massive and lasting positive difference to their communities. Big Local brings together all the local talent, ambitions, skills and energy from individuals, groups and organisations who want to make their area an even better place to live.



The **aim** of Big Local is to ensure that people are connected, people have choice, and people are supported to achieve lasting change in the place where they live. Underpinning this is our commitment to support residents over the long term to learn skills and gain the confidence to make decisions in their communities to bring about transformational change. We believe that change should be resident and community led, so enabling change through ownership.

The outcomes for Big Local are:

1. Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them.
2. People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future.
3. The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises.
4. People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.

Big Local is **funded by the Big Lottery Fund** and the money is held in a 15 year Big Local Trust for the benefit of the 150 Big Local areas. Both the funds and the programme are managed by Local Trust supported by a range of national and local partner organisations working with Big Local areas.

8 Big Local long term strategy

Our long term strategy to achieve the Big Local outcomes is to:

- give residents greater control, skills and confidence to make a difference to the things that matter most to them in their communities
- use rigorous research, evaluation and story-telling to learn and develop Big Local to help Big Local areas achieve greater impact; make resources go further and enable joined up solutions to complex issues
- position Big Local to influence the approach of others working in communities including: funders, government, charities and businesses, with Big Local seen as a leading approach to transform communities
- create widespread change so that residents and those supporting them in Big Local areas have greater involvement and control over the things that matter most to them.

I just want to make sure that my kids have a better place to live and if we don't do it then who else is going to do it?

I was just so enthused by what Big Local was about and what it intended to do for the community that I just had to get involved.

9 Big Local approach

Our Big Local **resident and community led approach** is informed by our learning from past community based programmes (Big Local: What's new and different, Institute for Voluntary Action Research, July 2013) which indicate that the things that matter most are:

- pace of development
- starting with assets not deficits
- willingness to take risks
- light touch support
- peer support and opportunities for reflection.

We believe that a community and resident led approach to creating lasting change:

- develops the skills and confidence of the people involved and enables them to work with others to the benefit of their community
- builds on the opportunities and assets available in each community
- creates lasting, long term solutions.

Underlying this approach is a belief that residents have a capacity and desire to drive change, and can achieve lasting and positive results when supported by those they trust and respect, thereby building skills, confidence, networks, relationships and expertise in each community. We have a dynamic and evolving approach based on what we and Big Local areas are learning. We are not afraid to take risks, experiment or fail as we learn from those experiences, so that we can improve things for the future.

10 Big Local values

We encourage Big Local partnerships to agree values that guide their behaviour.

For example, suggested values (based on those in Making Big Local Happen, Local Trust, 2013) are:

- We are committed to doing the best we can for our Big Local area.
- We support residents to improve our Big Local area, working with others who can help.
- We actively share knowledge and skills, encouraging learning and co-operation.
- We are honest, transparent and accountable in all our Big Local activities.
- We encourage everyone to contribute to and benefit from Big Local, whatever their background, ethnicity or beliefs.
- We are enthusiastic, positive and proud of Big Local, and bring this to all our activities.



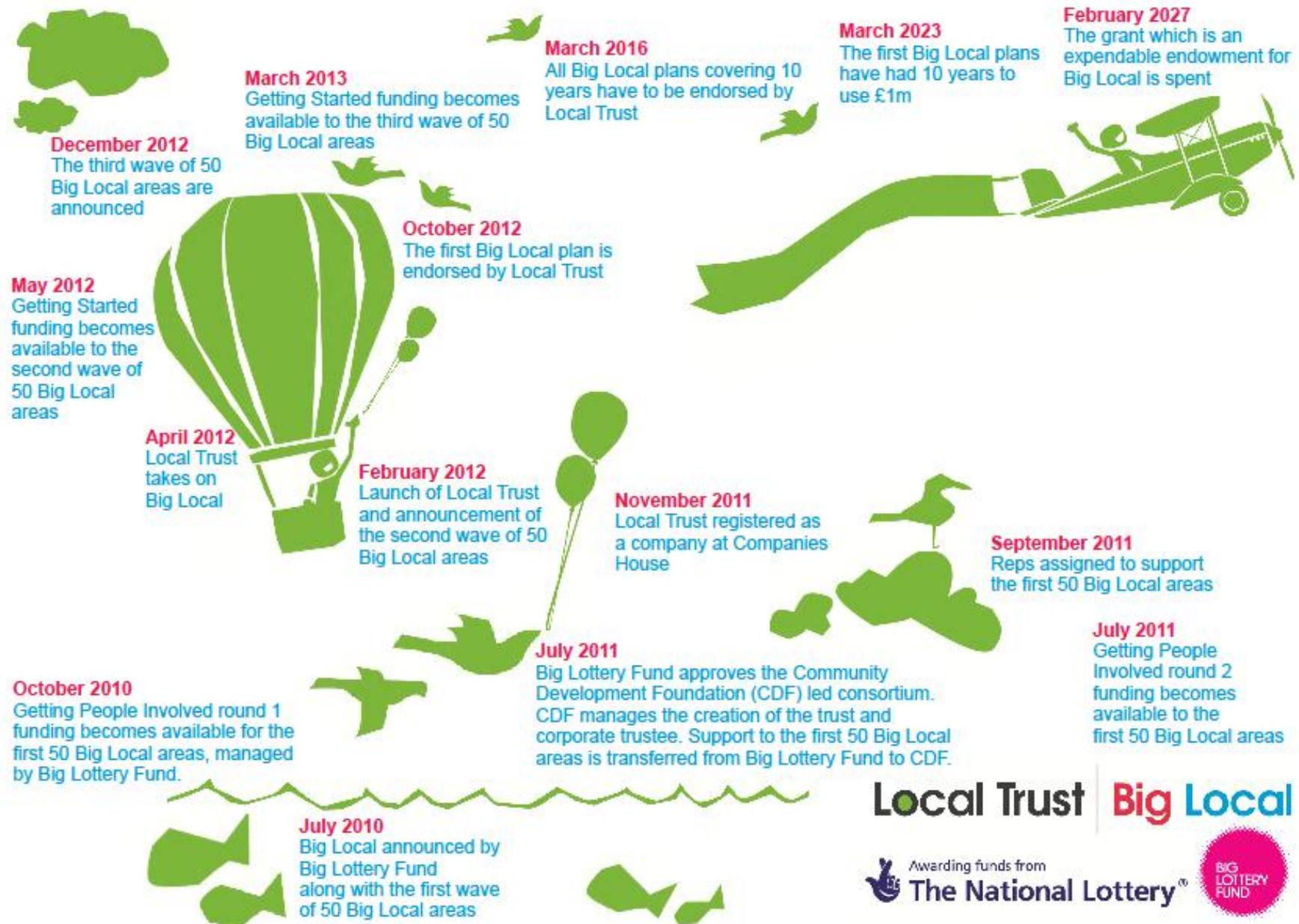
It's time we all started to work together for the benefit of the area.



It will take patience to convince people that they can take the community into their own hands.

11 Big Local timeline

Our Big Local timeline shows the progress made so far and indicates three key dates in the future.



12 Big Local pathway

The Big Local pathway provides steps to help areas identify what matters most to them and to do something about it. The pathway is not linear and areas maintain community engagement activities whilst delivering their plan. Half the Big Local areas already have Big Local partnerships endorsed by us and over one third have had their Big Local plans endorsed: some are already in year two of their plan delivery. All plans and partnerships are reviewed and updated annually by Big Local areas, supported by us and their Big Local rep.



13 Big Local visions and priorities

To provide a flavour of the vision and priorities from Big Local areas, the key words from the **visions** in the Big Local plans we have endorsed so far are:



Key words related to the **priorities** Big Local areas have identified in their plans to make their areas even better places to live are:



14 Risks

We recognise the importance of spending time and energy on risks that can give positive returns and benefits to Big Local. Some risks are all downside and no upside. For example, if we fail to comply with the law there are significant consequences, but there is no extra credit for being even more compliant. Other risks are all about upside because they add value to what we are doing and what we want to achieve. Although taking these risks might have a downside, the potential upside is greater.

For example:

- supporting a resident-led approach means residents gain confidence and skills, create networks and increase their influence to find more effective solutions in their areas
- working collaboratively with trusted organisations provides effective local support to Big Local areas
- investing funds centrally to give a return over the longer term increases the funding available to Big Local areas.

15 Our national Big Local partners

Nationally we work with a range of partners to deliver Big Local, building on their skills and experiences to the benefit of Big Local. Partners change over time to reflect what's needed. For example, we work with:

- Big Local reps - supported by Renaisi
- UnLtd - finding and supporting Star People and community enterprise in Big Local areas
- Living Space Project - supporting people, place and space pilot projects
- Small Change and the social investment reps - providing social investment support to Local Trust and Big Local areas, with credit unions and community development finance institutions
- the National Association for Neighbourhood Management – providing learning and networking events for Big Local areas.

We also have national research and evaluation partners including:

- the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Office for Public Management who are completing the evaluation of the early years of Big Local
- the School for Public Health Research who are leading on the Communities in Control study funded by the Department of Health

- the Community Development Foundation who are leading on research into the influences on progress in Big Local areas; and summaries of Getting People Involved and Getting Started funding
- the Institute for Voluntary Action Research who provide an annual learning report capturing Big Local activities nationally and a report on the Big Local approach to share with other funders.

We have partners who support us to deliver Big Local. For example, CCLA developed our investment strategy with us, and manage the endowment funds; Withers LLP are our solicitors and help create funding agreements; Fluent Technology support Big Local Community (our online funding and contact management system for Big Local); and Knight Studios are developing our new website with us. And of course we work closely with the Big Lottery Fund who fund Big Local and are very interested in what's happening.

About us

16 Local Trust

Local Trust is a national charitable company limited by guarantee; company no. 7833396, charity no. 1147511. Big Local is our first programme, you can find our Local Trust strategy on our website. Our contact details are: 020 3588 0565, info@localtrust.org.uk www.localtrust.org.uk

17 Big Local Trust

Big Local Trust is an unincorporated charity governed by a trust deed, charity no. 1145916. Local Trust is the corporate trustee of the Big Local Trust and established Big Local Trust with the Big Lottery Fund. The Big Lottery Fund provided a National Lottery grant of £196,873,499. Big Local Trust funds Big Local.

A protector is appointed by the Big Lottery Fund to provide stewardship to the Big Local Trust. The protector has a fiduciary duty to ensure the integrity of the administration of the Big Local Trust and the propriety of its procedures, and, if necessary, report matters of serious concern to the Big Lottery Fund or the Charity Commission. Each year the protector prepares a statement for publication in the annual report consisting of an explanation of the protector function and how it has been carried out. The Big Local Trust protector can be contacted via Local Trust or the Big Lottery Fund.

18 Big Lottery Fund

Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on the website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

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