



2020- 2021

A year of challenges & results

Annual report





An unprecedented year but with cause for optimism

Our financial year started in March 2020 very differently to how any of us would have predicted. The Covid-19 outbreak was declared as a pandemic at the start of the month and the UK entered its first lockdown on 23 March 2020.

As we adjusted to this 'new normal', public concern for climate change initially took a back seat and CAfS needed to adapt quickly to this very different world. By the end of the year I felt very proud of how the CAfS team adjusted to the new demands - staff took on the challenges of working from home and online with great cooperation and flexibility.

To support home working CAfS implemented new systems quickly: shifting to a new IT platform and rapidly implementing processes and guidance. Despite the obvious impact of the Covid-19 restrictions on holding face to face events, most projects were able to keep operating in some form and online events and meetings quickly became part of our way of working. We also secured more new funding than ever during the period and I am particularly happy with the hard work put in by the team to secure a new £2.5 million of funding over five years from the National Lottery Community Fund for the Zero Carbon Cumbria project. This project aims to make Cumbria the first net zero carbon county by 2037 by working with individuals, communities, businesses, local authorities, educational institutions, conservation organisations, the voluntary sector and more besides. CAfS will play a crucial role in guiding this exciting and far-reaching programme.

Despite the circumstances we ended 2020-2021 in a stronger position than at the start of it. We have brought in new funding for Cumbria, increased the size of our team, improved, and broadened our skills, raised awareness of the impacts of climate change, inspired action, and increased our reach – all of which and more besides are crucial for our ongoing mission.

David Beuzeval, Chair of CAfS Board of Trustees





Winning funding to fight climate change

One of our biggest successes of the year was securing a £2.5 million grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to support the ambitions of the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership (ZCCP) for the next five years. As well as providing funding for crucial new roles, the grant also funds multiple activities across Cumbria such as citizens juries, repair cafes, food growing, youth engagement, events and training and much more besides to create a movement of change and community led action on climate change.



Supporting Cumbrians to be climate literate

CAfS has continued its programme of accredited carbon literacy training during the year, swiftly moving it online. The course, accredited by the Carbon Literacy Trust, takes participants on an interactive journey through climate science and what we can do about it at home and in work. Sixty Eden District Council officers and elected members have been trained and over 200 South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) staff and members are due to be trained in 2021-22. Next year is looking to be a busy one for the programme.



Making Cumbrian homes cosy

Our Cold to Cosy Homes Cumbria service expanded significantly during the year thanks to additional funding.

Now operating Cumbria wide, the project continued operating during lockdowns by providing a telephone based service. Clients benefited from energy saving advice and home improvements, helping them reduce fuel use, carbon and cost and leading to cosier, drier, healthier homes. Many households also received energy saving measures, such as LED lightbulbs. 136 households benefited from general energy advice, at events, by phone or online. 12 Home Retrofit Planner audits were commissioned and completed.



Driving forward electric vehicles

During the year we helped to boost the number of chargepoints for electric vehicles in Cumbria and beyond, as one of the partners in a government funded programme led by **Charge My Street**. We led training, supported with marketing and produced 'how to' guides on purchasing and driving electric vehicles. We also carried out research into the current and future demand for chargepoints in Cumbria. CAfS' involvement in the project is due to end next year.



Potential for green jobs in Cumbria - research

The science is clear that in order to avoid exacerbating the climate crisis, we must rapidly shift away from extracting and using fossil fuels. With the help of funding from Quadrature Climate Foundation (QCF) CAfS brought together two research teams to identify the potential in Cumbria for jobs that contribute to reduced carbon emissions across a range of sectors. [Read report](#)



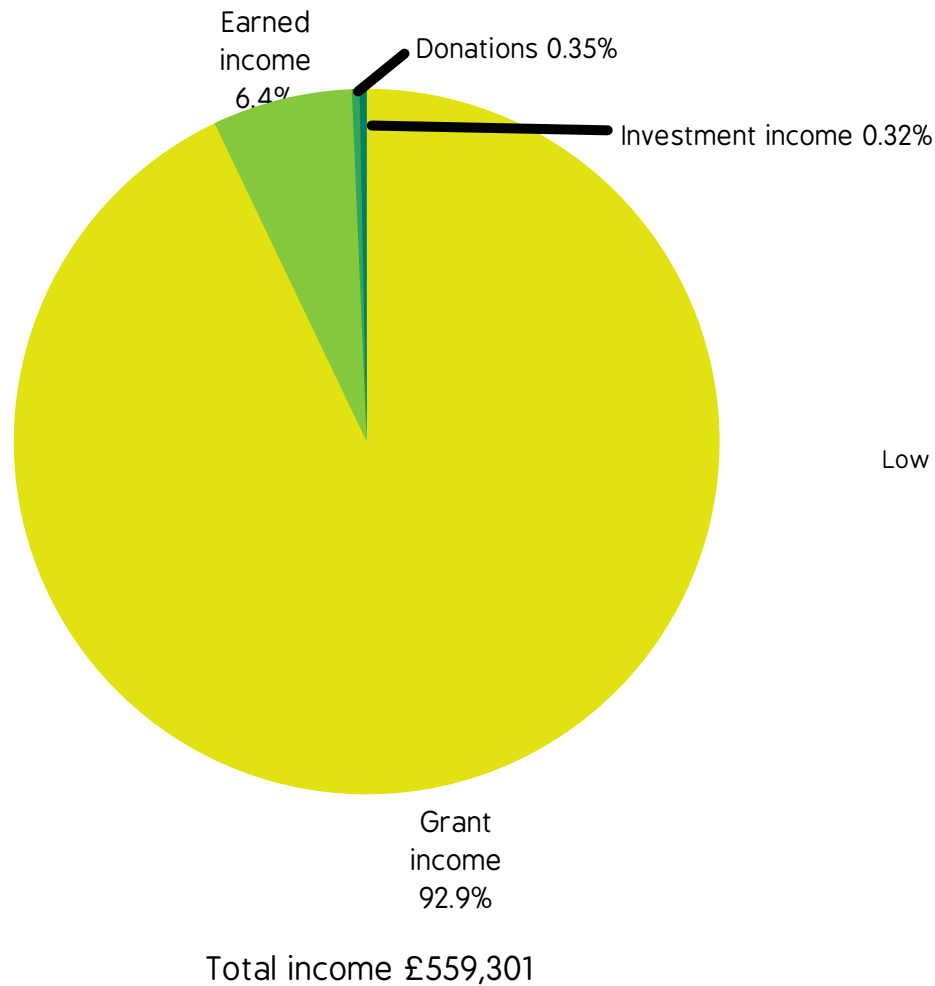
Helping places take action for the future

We have continued our support for communities including **Ambleside Action for a Future**, supported by **South Lakeland District Council**, and the **Fellfoot Forward Landscape Partnership Scheme**, led by the **North Pennines AONB Partnership** and funded by the **National Lottery**.

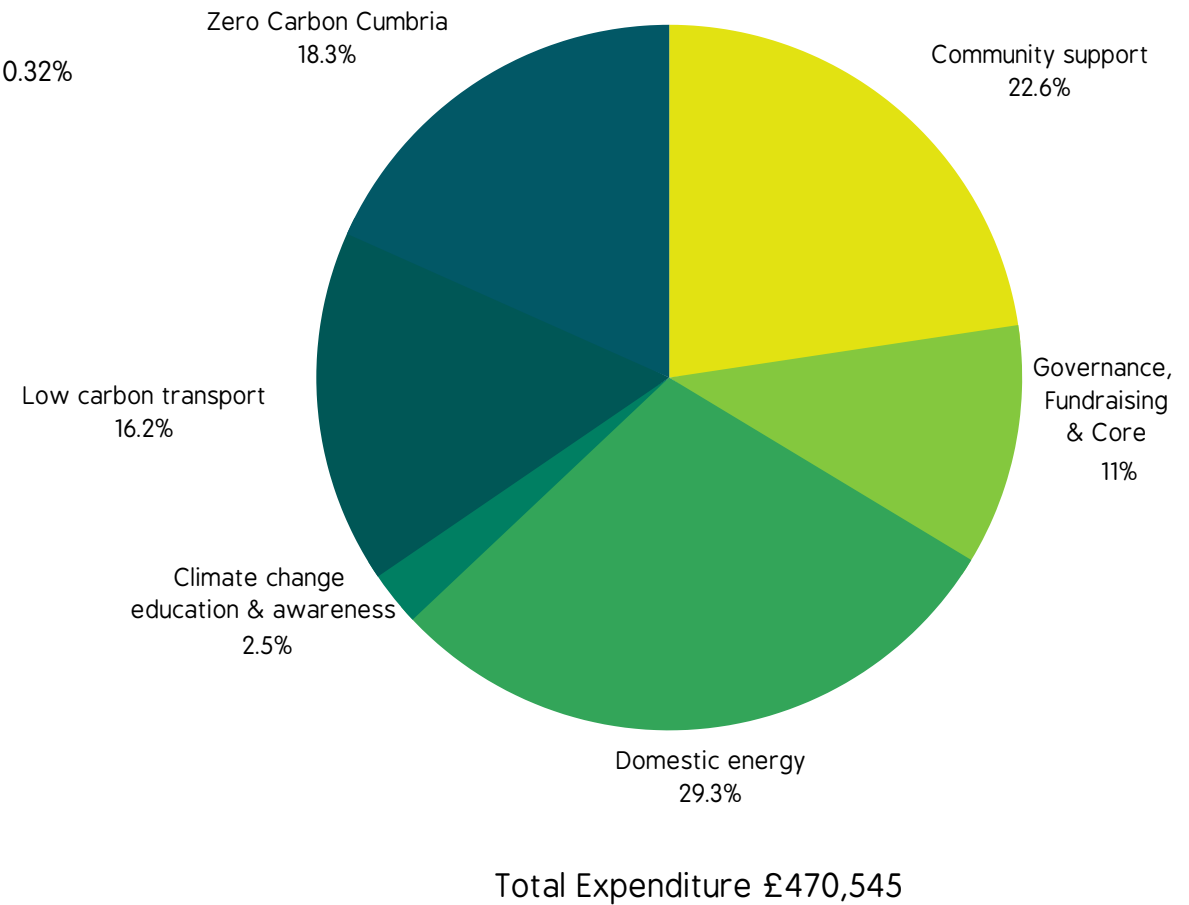
This has included the development of a [carbon footprint tool](#) for use by residents and businesses. We're ensuring that sustainability runs through all aspects of the Fellfoot Forward scheme, from transport and catering through to community building renovation. In addition, we're supporting farmers in the area to undertake carbon footprinting.

CAfS' Financial summary for 2020 /21

Income



Expenditure

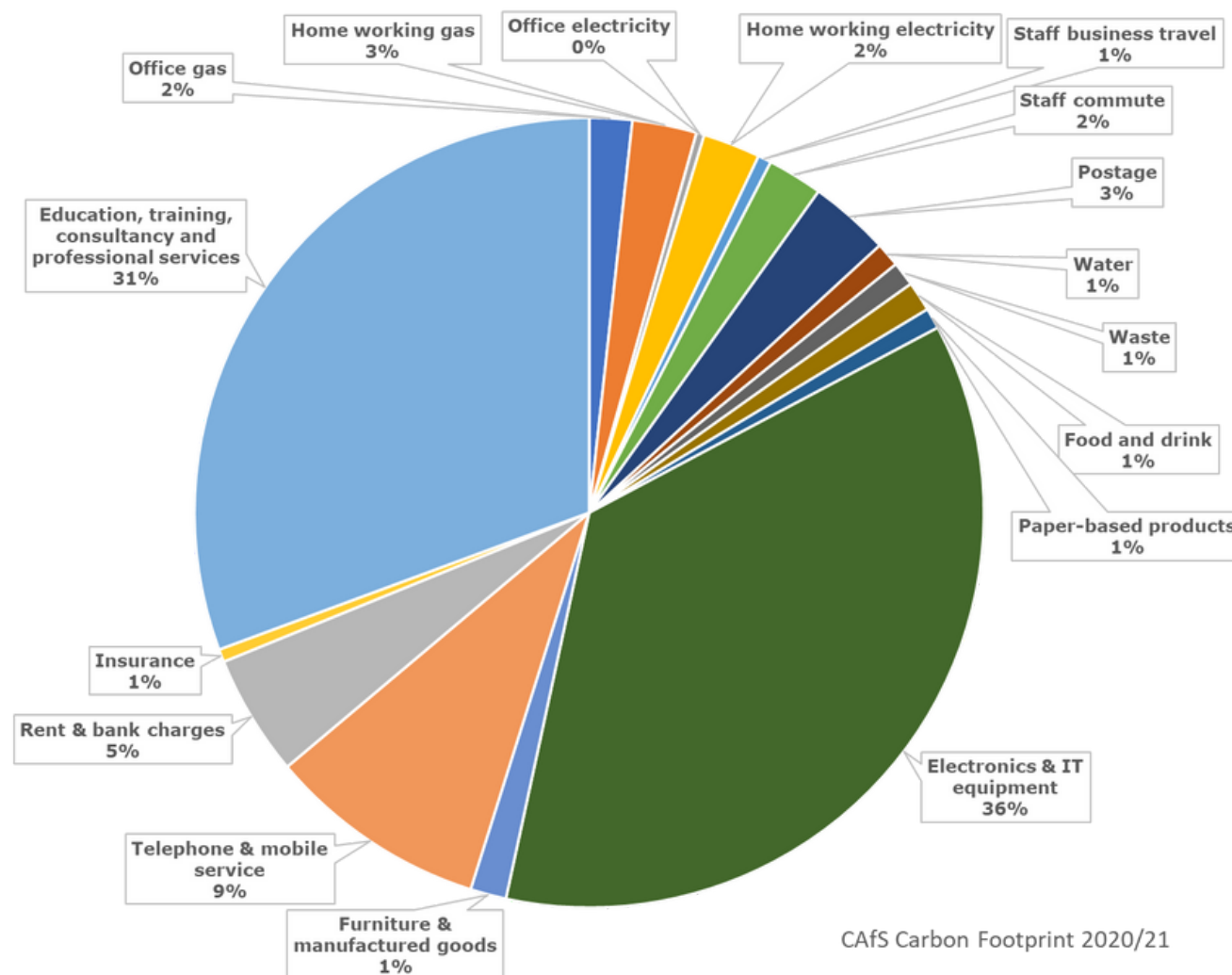


CAfS' carbon footprint for 2020/21

CAfS first measured its carbon footprint in 2019. Since then, we have expanded the scope of our measurement to include the carbon costs of all our services and products. This includes, for example, carbon from home working, our IT infrastructure, and insurance. It excludes our workplace pension scheme. We estimate that our carbon footprint for the year 2020/21 is 40 tonnes of CO₂e, which is about average for a service-based organisation and equates to 4.3tCO₂e for each employee (full-time equivalent).

Over a third of our emissions are from the items and services we purchase including the contractors and consultants that we work with (31%) and our electronic and IT equipment (36%). Much of the latter is because we bought equipment for new team members and for homeworking. We will look to increase our sourcing of secondhand and refurbished items, as well as taking care of what we have to make it last.

Our carbon footprint was measured using our [carbon calculator](#), which is free to use for individuals and businesses.





Despite all the many challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic we had much to celebrate by the end of 2020-21 and a great launching off point for more growth in 2021-22. I'm incredibly proud of the CAfS team and grateful to them for their passion and commitment to the fight against climate change. Without exception, each did everything they could to ensure CAfS continued to work with communities to deliver real change in carbon emissions throughout the worst of the pandemic.

The launch of the Zero Carbon Cumbria (ZCC) project in early 2021 was a key milestone in progress towards decarbonizing Cumbria. The £2.5 million grant has enabled us to kickstart the work that the ZCC Partnership needs to do to collectively achieve net zero by 2037. With the help of the additional capacity enabled by the National Lottery funding, the ZCC Partnership has grown and grown and as of January 2022 stands at around 80 organisations. Sector groups on key areas for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as housing, transport, land use and waste are now working to identify pathways to net zero. With CAfS' help, the network of community sustainability groups is growing both in numbers, reach and skills.

The location of the long delayed Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 just over the border in Glasgow in November 2021 gave us a platform to emphasise the impact of climate change in Cumbria and the many benefits to be gained from action on carbon emissions. Predictably however, despite strong acknowledgement from global leaders of the urgency for action, little meaningful progress was made at the COP. At the same time, understanding, interest, demand, funding and action on climate change have all continued to grow rapidly in Cumbria. This desire for action is reflected in CAfS - in June 2020 we had 14 employees; as of January 2022 we have nearly doubled that number.

The science becomes ever clearer that rapid decarbonization is critical and that failure to keep warming to no more than 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels will be catastrophic. There is much work to be done to safeguard our futures. Thank you for being alongside us. There is hope here.

Karen Mitchell CEO of CAfS



Thank you to our supporters

The year of 2020-21 was planned to be a period of continued growth and impact for the charity, buoyed by the sustained interest in the climate emergency in the county. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the year did not quite go as planned. Despite this we were able to secure significant new funding streams and also maintained our current staff.

Funders and clients

In 2020-21 CAfS secured £559,301 for its activities from a wide range of sources. These included charitable trusts and foundations, national and local grant givers, local government and associated agencies, businesses and, of course, individuals, who may have taken up our services or attended one of our events and training. We also secured funding through third parties by developing several projects in partnership with others. All our activities are aligned to our charitable purposes, irrespective of funding source. The Trustees would like to thank all our donors and the following funding partners and clients for their support in 2020-21 including:

Bierce Surveying Ltd
Burneside Community Energy
Coop Explore (Cooperative Foundation)
Cumbria Community Foundation
Durham County Council
Eden District Council

Electricity North West
Emergence Foundation
Energy Saving Trust
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Historic England
Innovate UK
Lake District National Park Authority
National Lottery Community Fund
North Pennines AONB
NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group

Quadrature Climate Foundation
South Lakeland District Council
URBED Ltd
And all our individual donors

Cumbria Action for Sustainability

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