



Ellis Orchard, from Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, and Henry Tapp, from Suffolk Community Foundation, with Tracey Evans and Colin Baldwin and those enjoying the Ipswich Chinwag group

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## Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines unveils next wave of funding with Suffolk Community Foundation through dedicated 'Fred. Olsen Community Fund'

Ipswich-based Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines has announced a second round of grant funding for local causes in partnership with Suffolk Community Foundation for 2023.

Last year, the cruise line, based in White House Road, set up a £17,000 'Fred.

Olsen Community Fund' with Suffolk Community Foundation, following a donation from parent company Bonheur.

The fund was open to grant applications that supported causes close to the brand's heart – maritime organisations, art groups or causes tackling isolation within the rural county.

These Suffolk-based groups can now apply for grants of up to £2,000 via the Suffolk Community Foundation, with applications to close on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Kicking off the project in 2022, Fred. Olsen awarded grants to three Suffolk-based organisations. Among them, a £2,000 grant was donated to Communities Together East Anglia, to help expand their befriending service.

The team from Fred. Olsen visited the organisation's free 'Chinwag' session at White House Road, to learn more about the project and to officially award them with the funds.

The sessions, run by a team of volunteers and 'befrienders', provide a safe space for people to meet over a tea or coffee, with musical entertainment and information on how they can access other support services.

Ellis Orchard, Public Relations Manager at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, and Chairwoman of the Charity Committee, said:

"It was great to meet with the team behind the Chinwag sessions, and to see just what a vital lifeline this service provides to those in the nearby community. It's a safe space for people to come, see a friendly face and meet new people, after what has been a challenging few years for so many.

"We are really proud to be supporting hyper-local causes such as this, and look forward to receiving more grant applications so we can continue supporting the community in which our office-based teams at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines live and work."

Colin Baldwin, Operations Director for Community Action Suffolk, said:

“This funding will go a long way to keeping these sessions going for a considerable amount of time, and give it some resilience.

“It’s about creating a friendly and safe environment. There’s an awful lot of loneliness out there.”

Tracey Evans, Later Life Community Engagement Manager for Community Action Suffolk, said:

“For many, it’s a lifeline. It gives people a chance to come out, meet other people, make friends and also to find out more information about support and services that they might not know about.”

Henry Tapp, Private Client Relationship Manager at Suffolk Community Foundation, said:

“It’s been fantastic working with Fred. Olsen to establish the causes that matter most to the business. Colleagues recognise the local need and it’s been great to help them distribute grants to less-known, deserving Suffolk charities.”

Other causes supported in 2022 were The Art Station in Saxmundham, which requested the funds to convert a disused floor of a former Post Office into a workspace for artists and a base for a creative arts programme. There was also a grant of £2,000 to Suffolk Artlink to continue its ‘Friends Around the Table’ sessions for those who live rurally.

Anyone wishing to apply should visit <https://www.suffolkcf.org.uk/grants/the-fred-olsen-community-fund/> or, for more information, email [grants@suffolkcf.org.uk](mailto:grants@suffolkcf.org.uk)

**For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit [fredolsencruises.com](https://fredolsencruises.com)**

**For further information on Suffolk Community Foundation, visit [suffolkcf.org.uk](https://suffolkcf.org.uk)**

**For further information on Communities Together East Anglia, visit**

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines are proud to sail their own course with their three-strong fleet of smaller ships, *Bolette*, *Borealis* and *Balmoral*, each carrying less than 1,400 guests.

With fewer guests on board, the atmosphere is warm and civilised, and the service is more personal.

This passion for cruising has led to Fred. Olsen having more returning guests than any other cruise line.

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