



Community Alliance
BROXBORNE & EAST HERTS

Annual Review

2022/2023

'First Choice for Community Support'

Table of Contents



5-7

HELPING
Groups



8 - 9

SUPPORTING HEALTH
and Wellbeing



10 - 11

ENGAGING
Residents



12 - 13

EMPLOYMENT
and Skills

“Without such a good group of people in the first place, the successes we have achieved would not be possible...”



Jan Wing
Community Alliance
Chair

This is my last annual report. I will be stepping down after 10 years as chair and passing on the custody of Community Alliance to my successor. I would like to thank our board of trustees who give their time and expertise to develop, monitor and scrutinise our plans, our staff who continue to develop new ideas and skills to enable us to support our local community through our local hubs and projects, and our volunteers who give their time to support our various activities. It has been a rewarding and enjoyable decade.

This past year has been a consolidation of our new business plan, branding, website and growing staff base. This is key to supporting and representing who we are, what we do and guiding us forward with confidence. We have continued to build new networks fit for today's challenges, taken on new projects and transitioned familiar ones. This has been warmly welcomed by our colleagues and partners.

Our grateful thanks are due to all our funders, East Herts Council, Broxbourne Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Network Homes, Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Community Help Hertfordshire, Local Trust and many more.

~ Jan Wing

I was recently asked ‘what is the best thing about being CEO of this organisation’? I had to think for a while, as there are so many positives. I settled on the rewards of bringing a wide group of individuals together (paid staff, trustees, volunteers etc.) pointing them in the same direction and watching how they have grown as individuals and teams, and the impact they make on the lives of so many others. I take zero credit for this as, without such a good group of people in the first place, the successes we have achieved would not be possible. I hope you enjoy reading about those achievements in this annual review.

With that in mind, I would like to recognise the role that Jan Wing has played as chair over the past 10 years. She has been a constant knowledgeable, supportive and steadying influence on myself and the trustee board during this period and deserves huge thanks.

As I embark on my 25th year with Community Alliance (and its previous incarnations), I recognise that the financial resilience and community wellbeing issues that have always been prevalent, remain. However, the challenge for all of us is to ensure that we can continue to work together to make Community Alliance even stronger and more effective going forward.

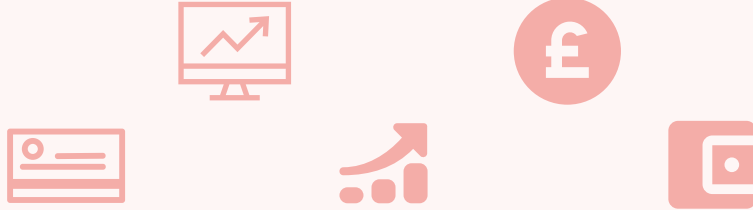
~ Ian Richardson



Ian Richardson
Community Alliance
Chief Officer
(CEO)



Beverley Johnston
Community Alliance
Treasurer



FINANCIALS

It is my role to present to you the charity's accounts for 2022/2023. **The full accounts are available on our website for all to read.**

Community Alliance has once again had a good year achieving an unrestricted surplus income over expenditure of £39,900 (last year £47,326) in a challenging environment. The organisation has also established reserves to ensure its going concern basis in the foreseeable future.

Third sector organisations have found the environment within which they work becoming more demanding. Some funders are either not able to increase their funding in line with inflation or are actively reducing their funds. The costs of supporting operations are increasing, especially staff and utility costs. Community Alliance is not immune to this trend and has established a specific fund over the last two years to help buffer against future funding shortfalls in addition to unrestricted reserves. These funds are expected to be required in the next few years.

The organisation has also significantly increased its staff numbers to support the projects its delivering, especially the Big Locals. The trustees have undertaken a risk assessment and implemented a £10,000 designated fund to support HR requirements from the larger workforce which may not be covered by individual project funders.

Community Alliance continues to review its organisational structure and its governance framework as it increases in size, to that end, we have reinstated the business development fund to its initial size to ensure funds are available to support this important work. As these activities are completed and embedded into the organisation, this fund will be allowed to reduce in line with expenditure.

My thanks go to Gary Howard of Howard Wilson Chartered Accountants who is responsible for producing the accounts on our behalf and David Green of Gowers Limited for auditing the accounts.

~ Beverley Johnston

HELPING Groups

Our core services build the capacity of community organisations across Broxbourne and East Herts

We support organisations by offering our Nigel Copping Community Building as a venue for their events



Our Community Builder, Corinna and Data and Information Officer, James conducting research on behalf of East Herts District Council's Asset Mapping project

In 2022-23, we provided direct advice, support and training to over 50 community organisations across Broxbourne and East Herts. We participated in 20 partnerships and attended over 100 virtual and face-to-face meetings. Our new website's contact form facilitates easy communication with groups and has allowed us to assist 105 individuals. Our database is continually growing, aiding over 30 groups with governance and funding support. Our capacity has been enhanced by the appointment of our new Community Builder, Corinna.

Our Training, Funding, Events and General Bulletins are now sent to a mailing list of over 600 recipients. As well as our Community Learning opportunities, we have provided training, including First Aid, Defibrillator and Safeguarding to support local groups. Our delivery in 2023 includes the East Herts Asset Mapping project in line with East Herts' Cultural Strategy. This is the start of a two-year project to map the organisations in East Herts who are supporting health and wellbeing through their activities.

We also organised the Broxbourne Community Conversation, attended by over 30 local organisations to help the voluntary sector to support residents with the Cost-of-Living crisis. Through our participation in several district and county-wide partnerships, we ensure that the voice of grassroots community organisations continues to be heard. We are looking forward to launching our new Community Builder offer during the autumn of 2023.

CORINNA HAS BEEN THE FIRST TO UNDERSTAND HOW I APPROACH THINGS. I AM INCREDIBLY THANKFUL FOR HER SUPPORT AND FOR CALLING ME OUT ON ASPECTS THAT HAVE BEEN HOLDING ME BACK SO FAR. WITH CORINNA'S UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT, I CAN HIGHLY RECOMMEND COMMUNITY ALLIANCE'S SERVICES TO ANYONE NEEDING GUIDANCE IN SETTING UP A COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY.

~ Youreka Coaching



An interactive defibrillator training session delivered to Community Alliance staff and Stanstead Abbots Parish Council in May 2023

”

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE Buildings



Our **Skills and Learning Centre in Hertford** hosts a range of activities. The Centre has become a Warm Space for local residents and free art classes through the 'Art in the Attic' group. Barclays Bank delivers a pop-up facility three days per week. It is their busiest hub in the UK. HSBC, Citizens Advice East Herts, Shaw Trust and NHS Health Checks have provided additional services and support to the community at the Centre. Our own delivery includes **7 Slow Cooking courses to 30 people, 4 Digital Skills and Number courses and regular Job Smart sessions** providing valuable skills and employment opportunities.

The Skills and Learning Centre in Hertford, Fore Street



Our **Community Skills Hub in Waltham Cross** is a welcoming space for organisations including CHEXS, Citizens Advice Broxbourne, Shaw Trust, NHS Health Checks, Steel Band, Fantastic Learning as well as our own Job Smart training courses. The Hub also serves as a warm space for local residents and offers a **free Knit and Crochet group with 15 people attending weekly**. We are excited that there is a new community allotment connected to the Broxbourne Healthy Hub which we also manage in partnership with Broxbourne Council. Through "Levelling Up" funding received by Broxbourne Council, the building will undergo a full refurbishment with a newly designed downstairs space and a fully interactive IT Training Suite.

The Community Skills Hub in Waltham Cross High Street

In addition, our **Nigel Copping Community Building in Stanstead Abbots** provides modern, high-quality activity and meeting space suitable for a range of training and conference styles events. So, if you need to find premises with free Wi-Fi that can be used for staff and volunteers, please contact us!

For information on bookings and charges for all our buildings please email: bookings@communityalliancebeh.org.uk or call 0300 123 1034.



A photo taken of the signage outside our Nigel Copping Community Building on the launch of our new brand in October 2022



50 organisations
received direct advice,
support & training



105 individuals
assisted via our website's
contact form



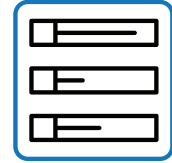
Over 600
recipients receiving
fortnightly ebulletins



100 virtual and
face-to-face
partnership meetings
attended in
2022/23



30 local organisations
attended our
Broxbourne Community
Conversation event



Over 30 groups
assisted with
governance and
funding support

SUPPORTING HEALTH and Wellbeing

We support health and wellbeing by providing low-cost community transport, day activities and manage community projects

Community Car Scheme

The Community Car Scheme continues to provide essential transportation services to the community. The scheme is in high demand with daily requests for lifts for hospital appointments, dementia groups and exercise classes. A total of **1566 clients are currently registered, with 314 registering within the last year. The scheme completed 1459 journeys, including 1262 for medical reasons and 197 for social reasons. 50% of social journeys were for Dementia groups.** We are truly grateful to our dedicated team of **28 volunteer drivers** for their contributions to the community.



Wellbeing in the Community

Our three community buildings have focused on warm spaces and addressing the cost-of-living crisis. We have fostered new skills, combatted isolation and provided a place to go. Our Knitting and Crochet group has excelled with Jacquie, our dedicated organiser, winning a Broxbourne Community Award and our Hertford-based Art in the Attic group gained local press BBC Three Counties Radio's attention, profiling the efforts of our volunteer Fran. Our Slow Cooking courses **empowered 30 participants in both Boroughs, promoting affordable but nutritious meals amongst rising food costs.** In collaboration with Barclays Bank, Affinity Water and Eon, we offered Scam Workshops, to heighten awareness about cost-saving initiatives and scams.

Broxbourne Healthy Hub

Our Waltham Cross Community Skills Hub serves as a central hub for the project, supported by activities at the Beaumont Centre in Cheshunt. This service offers health-related partnership-based activities, ensuring healthy outcomes for all participants. We are looking forward to launching our Community Allotment to further enhance the overall wellness of local residents. Our commitment to workplace health has earned us a Level 1 Workplace Health Award from Hertfordshire County Council. Our partnership with the Council extends further to diabetes and community health events and a Wildlife Garden at our Stanstead Abbots Head Office.



Staying Connected

It has been inspiring to see the impact and growth that our Digital Champions has had in such a short amount of time from monthly sessions in Stanstead Abbots, to bi-monthly sessions with additional locations in Sawbridgeworth and Buntingford. We collaborated with social prescribers in Cheshunt to deliver **sessions to 65 local residents.** This success has been made possible by a dedicated team of **11 Digital Champion volunteers recruited within the first year of the programme.** Through their support, **190 learning opportunities were created,** helping to decrease the digital divide, provide valuable skills to members of the community and increasing reach and digital competence across East Herts and Broxbourne.



A Digital Skills group being held at our head office before the expansion of other locations

Our volunteers on a day out trip at the Royal Gunpowder Mills in Waltham Abbey to conclude Volunteers' Week 2023



1566

Clients currently registered with the Car Scheme

314

Car Scheme clients registered in the last financial year

1459

Completed Car Scheme journeys

197

Journeys completed for social reasons

50%

Of journeys delivered to dementia groups

1262

Journeys completed for medical reasons



Not actual photo used

Experience of Catherine Lee

(Names have been changed)

“ I've been using the Car Scheme for nearly three years now and I've always found them to be very affordable and the most reasonably priced way to obtain transport such as going to and from any hospital, as NHS appointments are twice weekly and ongoing for me.

THEY ARE MUCH BETTER THAN A TAXI SERVICE AS THEY TAKE NOTICE OF INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER NEEDS AND ARE ALWAYS GOOD AT MAKING SURE THAT I HAVE A DRIVER WITH GOOD LEGROOM IN THE VEHICLE AND UNDERSTAND MY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS IN A DRIVER.

“ I always recommend the Car Scheme but they are desperately short of drivers at times. Please continue to support the Scheme to enable them to continue their good work in helping those like myself with ongoing needs. Thank you for everything that you do.

We are in need of Community Car Scheme drivers to help deliver our service which covers Broxbourne and East Herts. For more information visit communityalliancebeh.org.uk/about/volunteering/

A celebration gift for John, one of our long-serving volunteer drivers who has kindly dedicated a decade of his time to volunteering and picking up clients for their journeys

“ **VOLUNTEERING AS A CAR SCHEME DRIVER MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD BECAUSE YOU ARE HELPING SOMEONE ELSE AND I CAN TAKE THE WORRY OFF OF A CLIENT'S MIND. MANY PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING TO THEIR APPOINTMENTS TAKING THAT WORRY AWAY IS GREAT. I FIND IT WORTHWHILE TO HELP CLIENTS WHO REALLY STRUGGLE OR HAVE A DISABILITY.** ”

~ John (Car Scheme Driver)

ENGAGING Residents

We support the voice of local residents and have built a portfolio of Big Local projects in less affluent communities

Big Locals

Community Alliance's Big Local family, including Wormley and Turnford Big Local, has expanded with the addition of new areas across London including Wembley, East Croydon, Archway Islington and Haringey, where we provide "accountable body" (LTO) services to local resident groups. All Big Local programme funding must be spent by September 2025. This timeline has meant partnerships have been exploring different legal entities and models to ensure the continuity of each project beyond the Local Trust grant period. Community Alliance is providing support for this, as well as continuing to employ **22 people working across all our Big Locals**.

It is impressive to see the growth and impact of the Big Local projects and the benefits to the various communities they serve. This includes additional funding levered in by individual Big Local areas and several developments leading to community ownership of local buildings, including the Wormley Community Centre. Community Alliance also supports the management of leases and the governance required to deliver a range of current Big Local activities and programmes.

Volunteering

The biggest milestone for volunteering at Community Alliance has been receiving the accreditation for the quality mark 'Investing in Volunteers' granted for three years in August 2022 as recognition of our good practice in volunteer management. **Around 20 new volunteers joined Community Alliance during the last financial year!** To further enhance our volunteers' skills and knowledge, **we delivered 3 in-person training sessions on Lone Working, First Aid and Dementia Awareness**, demonstrating our commitment to providing volunteers with the necessary tools to excel in their roles.

We continually recognise the invaluable contributions of our volunteers and invited everyone to join us for an organised combined Queen's Jubilee and Volunteers' Week celebration, as well as an end-of-year get-together in 2022 to show our gratitude and appreciation for the wonderful work our volunteers do.



World Ends and Lots Road Big Local's successful Boxing programme for children and adults



A joint Queen's Jubilee and Volunteers' Week celebration held in June 2022



“ **GIVING SOMETHING TO THE COMMUNITY, FEELING PART OF SOMETHING WORTHWHILE. KEEPING BUSY AND KEEPING THE MIND ACTIVE. HAVING FUN, SOCIALISING AND FEELING PART OF A TEAM.** ”

~ Elaine (Office Volunteer)

We Engage Residents

We mobilise community volunteers and make initiatives happen!

A Sewing Bee social group held at Wormley and Turnford Big Local's Community Centre



The Art Club at World End and Lots Road Big Local



ChART Big Local's community spring event in 2022



Litter picker volunteers at Noel Park Big Local's Saturday Club

ChART Big Local's friendly community yoga class for residents and the public



Our impact in Engaging Residents



£15,000 external funding granted to World End and Lots Road Big Local Boxing programme for children and adults



24 young people engaged via World End and Lots Road Big Local's Boxing programme



20 new volunteers joined Community Alliance during the past financial year



3 in-person training sessions delivered to volunteers on topics such as Lone Working, First Aid and Dementia Awareness

EMPLOYMENT and Skills

We have a proven track record in helping people to get back into the workplace

Multiply



In partnership with Step2Skills, Community Alliance has been supporting the government's new initiative to integrate mathematics within adult learning, finding creative ways to make numbers more enjoyable. Our success is evidenced by the engagement of **over 100 learners in Digital Skills training, Craft groups, Sewing and Slow Cooking courses**, providing participants with valuable new skills that can be applied in both personal and professional settings. Learners have gained a new perspective on how numbers can be applied in their everyday lives for example, shopping, upcycling and budgeting. Some of the groups formed continue to stay in touch, providing peer support against isolation, whilst many were able to pursue further courses or find employment opportunities with their new skills.

Job Smart & Job Club

Job Smart supports individuals with CVs, interviews and job searching with **250 people successfully placed into employment** so far. We work flexibly and tailor the service to everyone's needs. Our community hub presence makes the service very accessible and our relationships with partners including local employers is beneficial in ensuring that local people are aware of and apply for local jobs. Through digital skills training and on-site IT equipment at our Hubs, we have been able to offer residents access to technology. This inclusive approach has improved access to jobs, training and benefits.



The Job Smart team lending CV support to members of the public

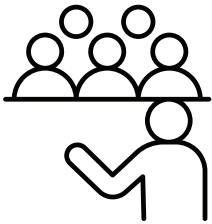
Building Better Opportunities

The Building Better Opportunities project (BBO) came to an end in December 2022 after six years. Each participant received personalised support from a mentor including mindfulness and wellbeing exercises, confidence building, training advice, job searching and CV support. Community Alliance was able to **support 338 individuals since the beginning of the project with 88 employment outcomes overall** within the project.

Road to Employment

We are delighted that, in the new financial year, Community Alliance is one of the partner organisations in the 'Road to Employment' project, funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund until March 2025 and centrally managed by Step 2 Skills. Much like BBO, the project aims to individually mentor unemployed individuals by providing them with training, education, volunteering and employment opportunities. Community Alliance will be specifically supporting individuals residing in the districts of Broxbourne or Welwyn and Hatfield.





Over

100

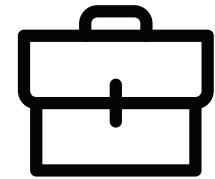
Learners engaged in face-to-face courses via our Multiply scheme



Over

100

Individuals empowered with valuable skills that can be applied in both personal and professional settings



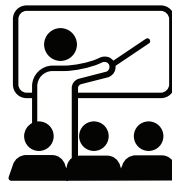
250

Successfully placed into employment in the last financial year with Job Smart



338

Individuals received personalised and 1-to-1 support from a mentor since the start of the BBO project



49

Individuals claimed education and training outcomes as a result of the BBO project



88

Employment outcomes achieved overall after the completion of the BBO project

Grateful thanks to

MANAGEMENT BOARD

Jan Wing, Keith Batchelor, Pete Maiden, Steve Clarke, Patsy Spears, Vicki Jacob, Beverley Johnston, Jackie Trundell, Nick Phipps, Cllr David Andrews, Andy Cooke, Steve Harvey, Diana Yip

STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, FUNDERS, PARTNERSHIPS, HIRERS & USERS

Our staff and volunteers plus our funders, **East Herts Council, Broxbourne Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Local Trust, Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Network Homes, Co-op Community Fund and NHS**. Our partnerships with **Step2Skills, Ambition Broxbourne and Community Help Hertfordshire** are, as always, very important to the delivery of all our services. Finally thanks to the many hirers and users of our community buildings.



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**



Local Trust | Big Local



**Network
Homes**



LOTTERY FUNDED



Local Community Fund

NHS



BARCLAYS

STEP 2 SKILLS

PREPARE FOR SUCCESS IN HERTS

**Ambition
Broxbourne**

A space to breathe... a place to grow



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**



**Community Help
Hertfordshire**

A partnership of voluntary and charitable organisations
dedicated to helping Hertfordshire people thrive

2022/23





Community Alliance

BROXBOURNE & EAST HERTS

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Broxbourne and East Herts