



NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

24 February 2026

Our Ref Letchworth Community Forum 4 March
2026
Contact. Community and Partnerships Team
Direct Dial. 01462 474274
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To: Members of the Area Forum: Councillors Sadie Billing (Chair), Tamsin Thomas (Vice-Chair), Amy Allen, Daniel Allen, Tina Bhartwas, David Chalmers, Mick Debenham, Emma Fernandes, Ian Mantle, Sean Nolan, Sean Prendergast and Claire Winchester

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE LETCHWORTH COMMUNITY FORUM

to be held in the

**HOWARD GARDEN SOCIAL CENTRE, NORTON WAY SOUTH,
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 1SU**

On

WEDNESDAY, 4TH MARCH, 2026 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz
Director – Governance

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda **Part I**

Item	Page
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
3. PRESENTATION - POLICE UPDATE Presentation by North Herts Safer Neighbourhood Team.	
4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - GRANT APPLICATIONS To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Governance.	(Pages 3 - 24)
5. COMMUNITY UPDATE To provide the Forum with an update to ensure Members are kept informed of the work of the Community and Partnerships Team.	(Pages 25 - 26)
6. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS To receive any verbal reports from Members and questions from members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.	
7. FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUMS To discuss topics for future meetings.	

REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

LETCWORTH COMMUNITY FORUM
DATE 4 MARCH 2026

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: GOVERNANCE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Community Forum on the current expenditure and balances of the Community Grant budget.
- 1.2 To bring to the Forum's attention details of recent requests received for Community grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To enable Forum Members to make recommendations to the Executive Member for Governance (formally Community & Partnerships), on grant applications.
- 1.4 To advise the Forum of the activities and schemes with which Community & Partnerships officers have been involved in and some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT THE COMMUNITY FORUM:

- 2.1 Considers and notes the information within this report.
- 2.2 Makes recommendations to the Executive Member for Governance on the grant applications detailed below.
- 2.3 Jackmans Community Association - **£990** towards activities for their community event in August
- 2.4 Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society - **£1,330** towards hire of rehearsal space for young members
- 2.5 Being Mortal - **£1,480** towards running training sessions for dementia caregivers
- 2.6 Baldock Junior Badminton Club - **£730** towards delivering new weekly badminton and social sessions for older adults in Letchworth
- 2.7 Hong Kong Connect - **£1,390** towards costs of activities in the upcoming year
- 2.8 Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps – **£1,050** towards nature related activities for Junior Sea Cadets
- 2.9 Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps – **£858** towards a pilot camping trip with Junior Sea Cadets and their families
- 2.10 Create Community Network - **£2,500** towards costs to continue to deliver their core provision.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Grant budget for Letchworth Community Forum 2025/26 is **£18,900**.
- 3.2 Community grant payments totalling **£6,068** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The remaining budget available for community grants for the Letchworth area for 2025/26 therefore stands at **£12,832**.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Following the decision of Full Council on 18 April 2023, a Community Forum shall consider applications for community grants in its area and make recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships (now Governance) on them. The Executive Member has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.9(b)(iii)A of the constitution, in consultation with the Service Director: Governance. That decision will be subject to a 5 clear working day call-in period, following publication in the Members Information Service (MIS) and on the Council's website.
- 4.2 The Terms of Reference of the Community Forum can be found in Section 9 of the constitution which states that the forum will '*consider and act as an advisory body to the relevant Executive Member responsible for grants who approves these (in consultation with the relevant Director)*'.
- 4.3 Other issues raised in this report are for information and noting and therefore no direct legal implications arise.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As outlined in Appendix 1 and under item 3.3 the Community Grant budget available is **£12,832**.
- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£10,328**.
- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendices 2 - 9 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Governance there would be **£2,504** available to carry forward into the 2026/27 budget, subject to approval from Cabinet.
- 5.4 The applications outlined in Appendices 2, 3, and 6 have been determined to be a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act. Appendix 2 is a subsidy as there is a market for venue hire. Appendix 3 is a subsidy as there is a market for theatre productions. Appendix 6 is a subsidy because there is a market for Christmas Fairs. The applicants have confirmed that the value of grants that they have and will receive means that the proposed payment can be treated as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) under the Act. The Council will ensure that it carries out the necessary steps for the payment to be treated as MFA, but ultimate responsibility is with the applicant.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Good risk management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to

respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.

- 6.2 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Ideagen Risk Management, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 7.2 Community Grant funds are awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

8. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to the matters contained within this report, as there are no recommendations on procurement.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are positive environmental implications associated with the Letchworth and Hitchin Sea Cadet application. The funding would help them to become a Centre of Excellence for connecting young people with nature.

10. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The activities of the Community & Partnerships team are covered by existing budgets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Terms of Reference for Community Forums, Section 9 of the Council Constitution updated May 2024 [Council constitution | North Herts Council](#)
- 11.2 [Community Grants Criteria Policy March 2025](#)

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1. Letchworth Grant Budget 25-26
- 12.2 Appendix 2. Jackmans Community Association
- 12.3 Appendix 3. Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society
- 12.4 Appendix 4. Being Mortal
- 12.5 Appendix 5. Baldock Junior Badminton Club
- 12.6 Appendix 6. Hong Kong Connect

- 12.7 Appendix 7. Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps – Project 1
- 12.8 Appendix 8. Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps – Project 2
- 12.9 Appendix 9. Create Community Network CIC
- 12.10 Appendix 10. Community Updates

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

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LETCWORTH COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2025/26

<u>Original Budget</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Carry Forward Budget</u> <u>2024/25</u>	<u>Total Funding</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Grants Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated Budget</u>
£18,900		£18,900	£6,068	£12,832

FUNDED PROJECTS

<u>Project</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Grant Allocated</u>
Saracens Sport Foundation - dance project for women over 50 (at Jackmans Community Centre)	25th July 2025	£1,508
Letchworth Educational Settlement - setting up sewing starter course	25th July 2025	£1,590
Resolve - key worker staff members who run group therapy and key work sessions	24th September 2025	£1,500
Home-Start Hertfordshire - hall hire and healthy eating refreshments for Letchworth family group sessions	17th December 2025	£1,470
TOTAL LETCWORTH COMMUNITY FORUM		£6,068

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Appendix 2: Jackmans Community Association

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-206			
Name of Organisation	Jackmans Community Association			
Organisation Type	Registered charity			
Ward	Letchworth South East			
Project Type	Community event			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	The below Cllrs are Committee Members for Jackmans Community Association: Cllr Sadie Billing Cllr Mick Debenham Cllr Tamsin Thomas			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£990	Total project cost	£1,590	

Officer Summary

[Jackmans Community Centre](#) has been at the heart of the estate since 1970, offering a vibrant mix of activities for all ages.

On 15 August they are holding an open day for the community with the aim of bringing everyone together, celebrate local talent, and encourage people to reconnect with the heart of Jackmans. The event will run from 12 – 4pm and will follow with a disco in the evening 7-11pm.

Jackmans Community Association (JCA) are looking for funding towards activities which include:

- face painter
- bouncy castle
- balloon modelling
- live singer
- Auntie Kitty entertainment

The services they are using are from the local area. They have also sourced a lot of local groups and activities at no cost. JCA are contributing £600 towards the evening disco, decorations, football target equipment and a sweets and treats stall.

JCA is committed to encouraging more families and young children to come out and get involved in the community. The centre offers a wide range of free and affordable activities for children, young people, families, and older residents. JCA want everyone to feel welcome to make the most of what's available, and this event is a perfect opportunity to showcase it and encourage inclusion across the community.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Appendix 3: Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG 207			
Name of Organisation	Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society			
Organisation Type	Registered charity			
Ward	All			
Project Type	Arts & Culture			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,330	Total project cost	£1,430	

Officer Summary

Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society (Arcadians) have been a part of the Letchworth Arts scene for over 70 years. They are a musical & dramatic society for the benefit of their members, patrons and audiences living in North Herts. Arcadians have been producing two to three shows a year in Letchworth for many years, and these productions are consistently well attended. This clearly demonstrates a strong appetite for musical theatre.

They are presenting the Wizard of Oz at St Francis College Theatre 28 - 31 May and will be rehearsing at Norton Methodist Church and Community Centre on North Avenue in Letchworth.

For this production, Arcadians are keen to involve a younger group of performers. As they currently have no Young Arcadian section, they are opening this show to any young person between the ages of 9 and 16 to come along, audition and take part. They will need to rehearse separately from the adult performers and as such this is going to significantly increase their costs for rehearsal rooms.

Arcadians have made their home on North Avenue and have rehearsed there for many years. They also have their costumes and props on site to avoid extra storage costs. They have looked at costs of other rehearsal space and the current space presents the best value for money. They are therefore looking for funding towards hire of the following spaces at the current North Avenue venue:

- Community Hall in April, which is £20.80 per hour for 27 hours
- Sanctuary in May, which is £26 per hour for 18 hours

They are also looking for funding towards St Francis Sports Hall Hire during show week. The backstage facilities are extremely limited and for safeguarding reasons they must keep the children separate and the only solution is to hire the sports hall which is £400. Alexander Lewis Estate Agents are contributing £100 towards publicity boards.

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Appendix 4: Being Mortal

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG - 219			
Name of Organisation	Being Mortal			
Organisation Type	Community Interest Company			
Ward	All			
Project Type	Support to dementia caregivers			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,480	Total project cost	£1,480	

Officer Summary

[Being Mortal](#) is a campaign which encourages us all to celebrate life and acknowledge, talk about and plan for death, dying and grieving. Talking about and planning for these natural life processes helps to reduce fear, promotes wellbeing and gives us agency over our own story. It empowers us to engage, over time, in end-of-life decision-making which fully reflects what matters to us as individuals.

Being Mortal are requesting grant funding to support a new project: 'Enhancing the wellbeing of dementia caregivers and their loved one'. The project would provide training and development for carers looking after a person living with dementia.

Previous provision of dementia carers training in Letchworth has now ceased. This new project will fill this gap and extends the opportunities available to those caring for someone living with dementia. The project focuses on developing the resilience of caregivers through increased understanding of dementia, skills development and support for forward planning.

The training would be made up of 4 x two-hour sessions and they are looking for funding to run it twice, as outlined below:

- Venue hire - £45 per session for 8 sessions (3 hours each). They are looking into The Settlement, chosen for its central location and accessibility but are open to exploring other venue options totalling £360
- Staffing which would be for 2 trainers at £25 per hour, to deliver 8 sessions totalling £800
- Staffing for prep/set up totalling £200
- Refreshments totalling £120

The proposed project demonstrates value for money primarily by significantly reducing overall healthcare costs and improving quality of life both for people with dementia and their carers, resulting in substantial savings to health and social care systems.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Appendix 5. Baldock Junior Badminton Club

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-193			
Name of Organisation	Baldock Junior Badminton Club			
Organisation Type	Club			
Ward	All			
Project Type	Badminton equipment and venue hire			
Green option considered?	None.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known.			
Previous financial support within six years	None.			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£730	Total project cost	£960	
Officer Summary				

Baldock Junior Badminton Club is requesting £730 to deliver new weekly badminton and social sessions for older adults in Letchworth. While the club primarily supports juniors, they are looking to start an initiative that aims to create at least one new group for older people, offering an hour of gentle badminton followed by 30 minutes of social time with tea and biscuits.

The project responds to a clear need for more accessible physical activity opportunities for older adults, as highlighted through the Age Friendly Herts programme, feedback from the Live Longer Better Day, and the council’s Active North Herts strategy (2023). These sessions are designed to reduce social isolation, build confidence, and support people who face barriers to being active. Groups developed in 2024 showed that some quickly became self-sustaining, while others required more support, so delivery will be adapted based on uptake and participant needs.

Sessions will take place in local, familiar venues such as community centres or village halls, with Grange Community Centre identified as the preferred starting location. The Community Wellbeing & Leisure team will help promote the project and identify suitable venues

Participants will be able to attend for free during the 12-week funded period, after which groups will contribute enough to cover venue costs to remain sustainable.

Funding will be used to cover venue hire (£360), essential badminton equipment (£180) and refreshments (£20), as well as contributions towards the facilitator (£300) and administration support (£100), both of which are partly provided in-kind. The total project cost is £960, with the organisation contributing £230, and the grant of £730 being requested to cover the remaining costs.

Baldock Junior Badminton Club are also applying to the Hitchin and Southern Rural Community Forums, requesting £730 from each to set up similar older-adult badminton and social groups in those areas.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Appendix 6. Hong Kong Connect

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-175			
Name of Organisation	Hong Kong Connect			
Organisation Type	Unregistered Charity			
Ward	All Letchworth Wards			
Project Type	Luna New Year Market, Christmas Lunch & Mooncake Classes			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None			
Previous financial support within six years	Letchworth Forum December 2022, £1,980 (Tutor fees for English Classes)			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,390	Total project cost	£2,160	

Officer Summary

Hong Kong Connect are a community group / voluntary organisation (unincorporated association), established in 2022 to support the integration of Hong Kong BNO** migrants.

Their primary focus is on supporting Hong Kong BNO visa holders and their families, especially adults and older community members facing integration challenges. However, many of their activities, particularly cultural events, are open to the wider local community to encourage interaction, mutual understanding, and community cohesion.

This grant is to help towards the costs of several different things over the coming year:

1. To provide a cultural activity, mooncake baking workshop (up to 64 people) The funds would cover the cost of the venue, the insurance, the specialist tutor and all the ingredients that will be used (£730.00)
2. Facilitate the participation in Christmas Shoebox volunteer event. (approx. 20) Approx £30 fuel costs to facilitate the project.
3. Organise a Christmas Lunch so that the Hongkongers could learn and immerse into British traditional culture. (30 to 50 people) The £450.00 would cover the food, drink and decorations.
4. Organise a Lunar New Year Festive Market in January 2027 so that Hongkongers have a chance to share the culture with local residents. (Up to 1,000 people). The £950 would cover the cost of the venue, the insurance, decoration materials, cultural activities materials and promotional materials for the Luna New Year Festive Market.

** A British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) is a form of British nationality created in 1987 for Hong Kong residents, allowing registration before the 1997 handover to China. It is a lifelong, non-transferable status (except to children born before 1997). Since 2021, BN(O) status holders can use a special visa to live, work, and study in the UK, leading to citizenship.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-166			
Name of Organisation	Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps			
Organisation Type	Registered charity			
Ward	All Letchworth wards			
Project Type	Nature activities			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	Letchworth £1,050 Hitchin £450	Total project cost	£1,500	

Officer Summary

[The Letchworth and Hitchin Sea Cadet Unit](#) is landlocked, so does not have some of the water-based opportunities other units have. However, being positioned close to Hertfordshire nature hotspots makes it an ideal place to strategically position itself as a Centre of Excellence for connecting young people with nature. This application intends to help the Unit with this aim.

The Sea Cadets are applying for funding towards nature-related activities for junior sea cadets (10-12 years old) to help them:

- Establish connection with nature
- Understand and measure impact of human activities on the environment
- Raise awareness of environmental factors, climate change and long-term sustainability.

Funding is being requested for items including digital bat detectors and high-quality binoculars, as well as materials for other activities.

The activities and projects are linked to the Sea Cadets curriculum on Outdoor and Recreation, and include urban birding, building homes for nature, and photographing nature. The specific activities will be spread across 5 parade nights from 17 April to 30 October 2026.

The applicant originally applied to the Letchworth Community Forum for this project. The split of Junior Cadets at present is 70% Letchworth / 30% Hitchin. Due to this split, we have adapted the application to reflect this, and 30% of the project cost is being requested from the Hitchin Community Forum.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

Due to this, the amount being applied for towards this project from the Letchworth Community Forum is **£1,050**, representing the proportional share of the total project cost attributed to Letchworth participants.

The applicant is also requesting funding of £1,226 towards another project, application CG-169 (Appendix 8 - Project 2) which was submitted to the Hitchin Community Forum. CG-169 is also being split proportionately, with the amount requested from Letchworth Community Forum £858.

Considering the amounts requested for both applications, the total being requested from this Forum is £1,908.

From Hitchin, the applicant will be requesting £818 in total. CG166 £450, CG169 £368.

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-169			
Name of Organisation	Letchworth and Hitchin Unit 182 of the Sea Cadet Corps			
Organisation Type	Registered charity			
Ward	All Letchworth Wards			
Project Type	Camping trip and equipment			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	Letchworth £858 Hitchin £368	Total project cost	£1,226	

Officer Summary

[The Letchworth and Hitchin Sea Cadet Unit](#) is landlocked, so does not have some of the water-based opportunities other units have. However, being positioned close to Hertfordshire nature hotspots makes it an ideal place to strategically position itself as a Centre of Excellence for connecting young people with nature. This application intends to help the Unit with this aim.

The Sea Cadets are requesting funding towards tents, food, campsite fees, volunteer costs and other activities for a pilot camping trip with Junior Sea Cadets (10-12) and their families, with up to two adults per child invited to take part.

The project aims to help the children and their families:

- Establish connection with nature
- Understand and measure impact of human activities on the environment
- Raise awareness of environmental factors, climate change and long-term sustainability.

The project is aligned with the Sea Cadets curriculum on Outdoor and Recreation. The specific activities will be spread across two days, including an overnight stay.

The applicant originally applied to the Hitchin Community Forum for this project. The split of Junior Cadets at present is 70% Letchworth / 30% Hitchin. Due to this split, we have adapted the application to reflect this, and 30% of the project cost is being requested from the Hitchin Community Forum.

Due to this, the amount being applied for towards this project from the Letchworth Community Forum is £858 representing the proportional share of the total project cost attributed to Letchworth participants.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

The applicant is also requesting funding of £1,500 towards another project, application CG-166 (Appendix 7 - Project 1) which was submitted to the Letchworth Community Forum. The amount requested from Letchworth towards CG-166 is £1,050.

Considering the amounts requested for both applications, the total being requested from this Forum is £1,908.

From Hitchin, the applicant will be requesting £818 in total. CG166 £450, CG169 £368.

Appendix 9: Create Community Network CIC

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-217			
Name of Organisation	Create Community Network CIC			
Organisation Type	CIC			
Ward	All Letchworth Wards			
Project Type	Community			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	Cllr Prendergast gave £500 from his 2025/26 locality budget to help with the transition to their new, smaller, premises.			
Previous financial support within six years	Community Interest Fund (CIF) grant £19,610 granted February 2024 towards the Funding manager role and the Facilities manager role for 2024/25			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£2,500	Total project cost	Approx. running costs of £24K to £30K for the year	

Officer Summary

[Create Community Network CIC](#) have been providing a valuable service to North Hertfordshire residents since 2016. They work particularly but not exclusively with the long term disenfranchised, the unemployed, the socially isolated and disconnected, together with those struggling with poor mental health.

They open three days a week and provide a safe space and support to whoever needs their help, which is usually between 150-200 new individuals each year with attendance ranging between 25 and 50 individuals per week.

Recently they have moved premises to the Garden Square Shopping Centre in a bid to significantly reduce their outlay (quarterly rent reduced from £7.1k to £1.15K), and they now only have one part time paid member of staff, everyone else volunteers.

Despite successfully navigating their way to significantly reduce costs, they are not out of the woods yet and still need critical funding to enable them to simply open the doors, turn the lights on and continue to deliver their core provision. The core overheads of rent/service charges, utilities, staffing and back of house costs come to around £2,000 to £2,500 per month, any funds received would go towards these core costs.

Their services offer an essential connection for the community, creating a bridge to local services and support, as well as a safe haven and connection point for the community.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Districtwide Community Updates

- The North Herts Heroes Awards judging process is now complete, and the winners have been selected. They will be celebrated at the awards event on Thursday 19 March, where they will be recognised as outstanding individuals who make a positive difference in our local community.
- The new Community Grants Application platform launched on 17 November. The application form can be found here [Community grants | North Herts Council](#). If councillors or organisations would like any guidance on this, please speak to the Community Partnerships Officer or get in touch with the team via community@north-herts.gov.uk.
- Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups including Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and Green and Growing Group.
- Coordinating voluntary support response to Asylum Seekers based in North Herts.
- Continuing to facilitate NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries.
- Sharing and disseminating information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory, and non-statutory agencies

Area Community Updates

The Community Partnerships Officer Update

Continuing to build and foster relationships within the community, including:

- Attending Letchworth Heritage Foundation's Arbor Day Tree planting ceremony. The trees planted by the children of Ickniel Infant and Nursery School marks the establishment of a new Arbor Day planting site for Letchworth.
- Working with North Herts CVS and Letchworth Heritage Foundation on an upcoming volunteer campaign.
- Met with Letchworth Rugby Club to discuss funding options for projects.

A reminder to Councillors that they are very welcome to arrange any meetings or ward walks with the Community Partnerships Officer.

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