

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



14 September 2026

Our Ref Royston and Villages Community Forum
 23 September 2026
Contact. Community and Partnerships Team
Direct Dial. 01462 474230
Email. community@north-herts.gov.uk

To: Members of the Area Forum: Councillors Tim Johnson (Chair), Bryony May (Vice-Chair), Matt Barnes, Ruth Brown, Cathy Brownjohn, Ruth Clifton, Sarah Lucas and Martin Prescott

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

**MEETING OF THE ROYSTON AND VILLAGES COMMUNITY
FORUM**

to be held in the

**HARDWICK HALL, ROYSTON TOWN HALL,
MELBOURN STREET, SG8 7DA**

On

WEDNESDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 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.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE A brief update regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).	
4.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - GRANT APPLICATIONS To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Governance.	(Pages 5 - 16)
5.	PRESENTATION - GREEN SPACE CONSULTATION Presentation on North Herts Council's green space consultation by North Herts Green Space Team, followed by Q&A. Consultation runs from 6 July to 30 September 2026. Full details, and how to take part in the consultation can be found here: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/news/have-your-say-north-herts-councils-green-spaces	(Pages 17 - 22)
6.	PRESENTATION - THERFIELD HEATH CONSERVATORS Presentation and Q&A by representatives from the Therfield Heath Conservators.	
7.	NEW LOCAL PLAN UPDATE Update on the New Local Plan by North Herts Council's Planning Team, followed by Q&A.	
8.	COMMUNITY UPDATE	(Pages

To provide the Forum with an update to ensure Members are kept informed of the work of the Community and Partnerships Team. 23 - 24)

9. TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE

Presented by Mayor Elizabeth Freeman.

10. COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE

11. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

To receive any verbal reports from Members and members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

12. FUTURE AREA FORUMS

To discuss topics for future meetings.

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REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

ROYSTON & VILLAGES COMMUNITY FORUM 23 SEPTEMBER 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, 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 Caring Herts CIC - **£1,485** towards wellbeing hub venue hire.
- 2.4 Herts Visual Arts - **£1,494** towards free art workshops as part of the Big Makers' Fair.
- 2.5 Resolve - **£1,500** towards key worker for group therapy sessions.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Grant budget for Royston & Villages Community Forum 2026/27 is **£10,300**.
- 3.2 Community grant payments totalling **£4,460** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The remaining budget available for community grants for the Royston and villages area for 2026/27 stands at **£5,840**.

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 Bulletin (MIB) 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 3.1 the Community Grant budget available is **£5,840**.
- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£4,479**.
- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendices 2-4 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Governance there would be **£1,361** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 2026-2027 financial year.
- 5.4 Precepting authorities have the ability to raise additional funds by raising their precept.

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 no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

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. Royston & villages Community grant
- 12.2 Appendix 2. Caring Herts CIC
- 12.3 Appendix 3. Herts Visual Arts
- 12.4 Appendix 4. Resolve

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

13.1 Author

Becca Edwards, Community Partnerships Officer
Email: becca.edwards@north-herts.gov.uk

13.2 Contributors

Ellie Hollingsworth, Policy & Strategy Officer
Email: Ellie.Hollingsworth@north-herts.gov.uk

Tim Everitt, Performance & Risk Officer
Email: tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk

Luke Franklin, Service Accountant
Email: luke.franklin@north-herts.gov.uk

Claire Morgan, Community / Partnerships Team Leader
Email: claire.morgan@north-herts.gov.uk

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ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2026/27

<u>Original Budget</u> <u>2026/27</u>	<u>Carry Forward</u> <u>Budget 2025/26</u>	<u>Total Funding</u> <u>2026/27</u>	<u>Grants</u> <u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u> <u>Budget</u>
£10,300	£0	£10,300	£4,460	£5,840

FUNDED PROJECTS

<u>Project</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Grant Allocated</u>
Creative Chefs - Community Cook sessions for carers	3rd June 2026	£1,460
Barkway Social Club - replacing furniture	3rd June 2026	£1,500
Flipside C2C CIC - venue hire for pilot programme helping people gain skills to get into work	3rd June 2026	£1,500
TOTAL ROYSTON AND DISTRICT		£4,460

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Appendix 2. Caring Herts CIC

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-627			
Name of Organisation	Caring Herts CIC			
Organisation Type	CIC			
Ward	Royston			
Project Type	Wellbeing hub for older people.			
Green option considered?	NA			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known.			
Previous financial support within six years	July 2026 – Letchworth Community Grant £1,500.			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,485	Total project cost	£12,385	
Officer Summary				
Caring Herts CIC was set up this year to take over the running of the Community Wellbeing Hubs that had previously been supported by Garden House Hospice. The organisation exists to support older members of the North Hertfordshire and Stevenage community who are experiencing loneliness or social isolation, giving them confidence to live well and enjoy life to the fullest. The effects of social isolation and loneliness in people of all ages can be very detrimental and, with around 200,000 older people in the UK not having had a conversation with a friend or relative in more than a month, Caring Herts CIC want to raise awareness and help people reconnect with their community. They currently run 15 Wellbeing Hubs every week, consisting of seated exercise and offering companionship, advice, a listening ear and, most importantly: fun. They are applying for funding towards the costs of their Royston Wellbeing Hub that takes place every Tuesday 10:30am-12:30pm at the Coombes Community Centre. More than 50 Royston residents benefit from the Wellbeing Hub, including older people who attend, their family and carers, and the volunteers. The organisation received £1,500 from Letchworth Community Forum in July 2026 and have also applied to both Baldock and Hitchin for £1,500 this round. These grants are for wellbeing hubs in their respective areas.				

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

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=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-624			
Name of Organisation	Herts Visual Arts			
Organisation Type	CIC			
Ward	Countywide			
Project Type	Free arts taster workshops			
Green option considered?	NA			
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	£1,494	Total project cost	£1,694	
Officer Summary				
Herts Visual Arts (HVA) is asking for funding to deliver a programme of free, inclusive Art Making Taster Workshops specifically designed for the benefit of residents of Royston and surrounding North Hertfordshire communities. The workshops will take place on Saturday 14 November and Sunday 15 November 2026 at Royston Heritage Hall. The workshops will be delivered alongside HVA's Big Makers Fair, a community arts event celebrating local artists and makers working in ceramics, textiles, printmaking, jewellery, glass, wood, and mixed media. Delivering the workshops as part of this event enables HVA to make the best use of the venue, volunteers, marketing, and visitor footfall while creating an exciting, welcoming creative experience for the local community. The project will be delivered by six professional lead artists, each supported by a second HVA artist or volunteer, creating a delivery team of twelve people. Each workshop will focus on a different creative technique, including printmaking, weaving, collage, drawing, and mixed media. Main Project Objectives 1. Increase Access to Visual Arts in Royston: Provide free opportunities for visitors to experience high-quality, artist-led creative activities on their doorstep. 2. Improve Community Wellbeing & Reduce Isolation: Create a welcoming shared creative space where local residents can meet, socialise, and enjoy making art together 3. Support Local Artists: Provide paid opportunities for professional artists living and working across North Hertfordshire to demonstrate their skills, develop community engagement experience, and introduce local residents to future creative opportunities. There will be three 90-minute sessions each day, with up to 25 participants in each session, allowing the programme to engage up to 150 direct participants.				

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

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Appendix 4. Resolve

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	CG-612			
Name of Organisation	Resolve			
Organisation Type	Registered Charity			
Ward	Various			
Project Type	Support for substance / alcohol misuse			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	In July 2026 the below was awarded towards costs of Key Workers: £1,500 Southern Rural Community Forum. £1,500 Hitchin Community Forum In 2025 the below was awarded towards costs of Key Workers: £1,500 Hitchin Community Forum in March £1,000 Royston Community Forum in September £1,500 Letchworth Community Forum in September £1,000 Baldock Community Forum in December In January 2024 the below was awarded towards running costs: £1,500 Hitchin Area Forum £1,500 Baldock Area Forum £1,500 Letchworth Area Forum £915 Royston Area Forum £500 Southern Rural Area Forum			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,500	Total project cost	£186,364 (Running costs for one year)	
Officer Summary				
Resolve supports the treatment and rehabilitation of people suffering from substance and alcohol misuse problems. Their primary aim is to assist clients to move to a manageable positive lifestyle, contributing to and enhancing the communities within which they live. The offer includes group therapy sessions, dedicated 121 key work and access to counselling. Funding is requested towards the costs of key workers who run the Group Therapy and Key Work Sessions, which will include supporting Royston clients. Throughout 2025 up until June 2026, six Royston residents were/are accessing the service. Substance misuse remains one of the most pressing and complex public health issues facing both the UK and Hertfordshire. There are approximately 11,000 alcohol dependent adults in Hertfordshire, with an unmet need of 77%. Currently there are no statutory or community drug and alcohol treatment day services in North Herts, north of Stevenage, other than Resolve.				

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Overall running costs for Resolve for one year is £186,364. Since applying to the Royston & villages Forum in 2024, Resolve have recruited a Fundraising Manager who is strategically raising funds. Income secured so far includes funding from National Lottery, Henry Smith Charity and Albert Gubay Foundation.

They have also applied to Letchworth Community Forum for £1,500 towards the costs of key workers.

Greenspace Consultation



What are we doing?

- A mixture of internal and external feedback exercises designed to gather data from a wide range of sources.
 - Public survey
 - public feedback sessions
 - Community forum appearances
 - Internal drop-in sessions
 - Formal submissions



Why are we doing it?

- The consultation aims to gather insights into the use, quality, and importance of key aspects of our green spaces
- The consultation will inform the next Greenspace Management Strategy and service design post-LGR

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Feedback session dates

Staff drop-ins

- 27/08 – DCO Floor 1 Room 2 (10:00-11:30)
- 01/09 - DCO Floor 1 Room 2 (14:00-15:30)

Public feedback sessions

- 18/08 – Royston, Priory Gardens (11:00-13:00)
- 18/08 – Baldock, Avenue Park (14:00-16:00)
- 25/08 – Letchworth, Howard Park (11:00-13:00)
- 25/08 – Hitchin, Bancroft Rec (14:00-16:00)



Community Forum Dates

- **10/09** – Southern Rural (Council Offices), 19:30
- **15/09** – Hitchin (Town Hall), 19:00
- **14/09** – Baldock (Baldock Community Hub), 19:30
- **23/09** – Royston (Town Hall), 19:30
- **30/09** – Letchworth (Howard Garden Social Centre), 19:30



Questions?



Scan to access survey!

Districtwide Community Updates
• The Community Partnerships Team have launched the Communities Hub, an online resource for community groups, residents and partners across North Herts. Alongside information on grants, council events and local organisations, the Hub aims to connect communities, support engagement, and provide opportunities for residents and groups to raise local issues. • Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups including Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture, Green and Growing and the Community Centres Network Group. • 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 continues to build and foster relationships within the community, this includes: • Attended the North Herts and Stevenage CVS's 'Be the Good' volunteering summit and AGM. • Advising groups about grants. • Regularly attending the Community Breakfast. With the launch of the new Communities Hub page, information has been added relating to the Royston & Villages Community Forum, including information about how grant funding has impacted the community. Grants Communities - this link shows a photo of the Therfield lunch club who now have storage shed for their equipment thanks to a grant given to Therfield Parish Council who help support the activity. 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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