

Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • The team have a budget of £210,000 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to use for applications for grant funding of between £5,000 and £20,000. The deadline for applications is midnight on 1st September. Successful applicants should receive funding by the end of October, to be spent by end of March 2025.
Area Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Bike (Mark Nash), a mobile cycle repair service based in Hitchin, attended two events in Hitchin in May, with funding assistance from an Active Travel England grant awarded to Hertfordshire County Council: Hitchin Eco Day on Sat 11 May, organised by Plastic Free Hitchin. Hitchin Bike Day on Sat 25 May, organised by TCA (The Cycle Agents). Both events were well attended. On-the-day repairs helped keep people cycling safely. Mark is also a passionate ambassador for cycling, and his presence and conversations with people raised the profile of cycling and will hopefully have encouraged a few people to get back on their bike over the summer. Mark is also distributing vouchers for people to arrange an at-home cycle check and basic maintenance for £10, also subsidised by the Active Travel England grant. • The next Westmill Network meeting, co-ordinated by the team, is on 5th September. • The Community Partnerships Team Leader has been working with the Save Club 85 Steering Group to continue the operations of Club 85, a live music venue on Whinbush Road in Hitchin. The building's owner needs to sell, and the group has explored renting or purchasing a new location. However, purchasing the current building is the most practical option. After negotiations, the owner has agreed to sell to Club 85 if they can raise the funds. The group plans to set up a Community Interest Company (CIC) with shareholders to enable community ownership of the building. They have started an initial fund to cover professional legal advice for setting up a not-for-profit company with robust governance which will facilitate the application to large-scale funding pots. They will also look to engage a professional fundraiser to apply for suitable project funding. The group has successfully raised around £10,000 and will soon establish the CIC to raise the £2 million needed to purchase the building.