



Report to:	Community Engagement Committee
Tabled on:	3 rd Sept 2019
Agenda reference:	CE19/028 Update – Community Engagement Programme
Report by:	Liz Carroll-Wheat, Community Projects Officer

Overview:

This report outlines our project delivery from May to September and includes an overview of ideas which are being scoped for 2020 – 2021 period.

The team have experienced a really busy few months, delivering projects and meeting with link partners to start to develop new ideas for 2020. We have continued to reach out to organisations within our community, to deliver activities, such as Danes Camp Leisure Centre who have delivered the first part of our Get Active scheme, and meeting with our new housing development officers at Centenary House. We have also established new links to external providers, Happy at Home Project, who will be operating a befriending project, designed to reach out to the more isolated older people in our community.

STOP PRESS!

BEST LARGE VILLAGE IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - Our efforts as a parish Council were brilliantly rewarded during this period, with us being awarded Best Large Village in the ACRE Northamptonshire Village Awards for 2019. This led to being profiled on BBC Radio Northampton, with their team visiting our Seniors group and interviewing residents and Chair Cllr Claire White and Chair of Community Engagement, Cllr Maggie Allen.

The award followed detailed reports from Parish Clerk Caroline Holgate and an activity visit, coordinated by Community Officer Liz Carroll-Wheat. A team of external judges attended a tour, led by a team of our parish councillors, Claire White, Michael Campbell and Maggie Allen. The day featured interviews with partner organisation Hunsbury Library, with written support from Abbey Centre, plus a volunteer-led community litter pick, which was designed to show our community at work.

Our Councillors also took the judges on a tour of the parish, looking at our benches, our wildflowers and they updated the judges on our partnerships with local organisations, including our schools and user groups.

The award was a real shift away from the norm, which usually recognises “traditional” villages. This is a great endorsement of our work to really build a village-community here in East Hunsbury.





- 1. Seniors Update** Led by Cllr Maggie Allen and the team of Reps - the seniors continue to increase in number, with another 27 people joining, since our last report. We continue to monitor the numbers attending our events and will update the committee, should numbers exceed our venue capacity.

Seniors Coffee Mornings continue to attract between 60 – 75 people at each session. The sessions continue to be a mix of talks, activities and the all-important chance to sit and chat.

Sessions have included:

Who Do We Think We Are – sessions where we map where our seniors come from and why they have made East Hunsbury their home. This has created interesting chat, coincidences and similarities between people who hardly have known each other. This has developed into fun activities such as Guess the Baby, and creation of an eclectic playlist of music, chosen by the group. Everything from Abba, to Chuck Berry, from songs from the shows to Metallica!

Talks and activities have included, history of Northampton, pop quizzes, information about community transport schemes and information about other activities in East Hunsbury, particularly those at the Library and Abbey Centre. Our drop-in sessions have included visits from our local police team, to talk with the seniors on an informal basis.

Trips - this period also included a lovely trip to Barnsdale Gardens – 53-seater coach full – and more on waiting list.



Seniors becoming a One-Stop-Shop - The Seniors continues to expand and its importance reaches far beyond that of a “coffee-morning”, with the attendees using this as the place to get advice and information on all manner of things, from council issues, policing issues, to befriending projects.

Seniors at the Village Fete – our reps and other volunteers worked tirelessly to create the hoopla stall at the fete. Making all the props and gathering in all the prizes, they worked all day, raising funds for the senior’s group. A great team effort.

Thanks goes as ever to the Seniors Reps, who meet and greet, look after new members, come up with ideas and help to run every session. This group simply would not run without them:

Seniors Reps - Roger Starmer, Jonathan Banks, Paula Blake – with support from June Starmer, Pauline and John Rendell. Thank you.



2. **Get Active at Danes Camp.** The increase in numbers of Seniors, is partly being managed by offering additional activities. These are not purely aimed at Seniors members. In the last period we have programmed a successful Get Active programme, with Northampton Leisure Trust at Danes Camp.

This has been funded separately, with funds from Cllr Phil Larrett from Northampton Borough Council. Cllr Larrett particularly wanted to see more activities provided for our older community.

The programme attracted 58 participants over a period of 8 weeks. The classes included aerobic dance class and indoor bowling. Feedback from participants was very positive and further activities are being discussed. These sessions appeal to those who wish to be “active”.

Onward development: as a consequence of running this activity and sports activities with our youth groups, both groups have asked if we can organise a charity run/walk for 2020. This is discussed in **Future Projects** later in this report.



3. **Community Action Projects.**

Litter Heroes – Cllr Maggie Allen and Parish Clerk Caroline Holgate, attended a session at East Hunsbury Primary School, to meet with their School Parliament and to present the litter picking kit, which has been purchased by EHPC. From September, the school will take part in regular litter picks, and feedback to the parish council. The mechanism for meeting with the school parliament will be planned at the beginning of the new term. This can include Councillors attending School Parliament sessions, for Q&A sessions with the pupils.

East Hunsbury Litter Pickers – We continue to support to promote and assist with community litter picks - community sessions to begin again in September.

Wildflowers – East Hunsbury Primary Gardening Club continue to work with us on our wildflower space at Stonepit Hollow. Ideas for new planting schemes to be discussed in the Summer.



Art Projects – resulting from a project which was initially solely for our Youth Clubs, the parish council funded a community art project which ran across all the community. Through sessions at the youth clubs and seniors’ group, plus special joint-age sessions, Lemon Pop Arts created two large promotional boards for the parish council. The boards were completed at our Village fete.

These boards will now be placed, one in the Library and one at Centenary House – requested by the housing association team. Thanks go to Marvin from Lemon Pop Arts Workshops, for an inspirational activity, which engaged right across the community.

Community projects in pictures:



- East Hunsbury Primary Gardening – Wildflowers in rain!
- Youth Litter Pick – every age HATES litter!
- Lemon Pop – Art Boards – Painting our East Hunsbury Community – various sessions



4. **East Hunsbury Life Update** - East Hunsbury Life is our “umbrella” brand, which was designed this year, to allow us to promote the wider activities in our parish. The ethos of reaching out to, and supporting partners is proving very popular.

It is also attracting the interest of outside organisations and projects, who are interested in operating in the area. Such as Happy at Home Project (see separate piece).

Information collecting by Cllr Anne Morris, in her scoping project, is being used as a base for outreach to other local organisations to good effect.

We have used the branding since springtime in our articles in local media, including NN Pulse and Link Magazine and our partners are starting to adopt the logo, for community activities.



The development of the brand was also discussed on BBC Radio Northampton, with Liz Carroll-Wheat being invited to talk about how we are building a village community and supporting our parish organisations in positive vein.

Promotion of Black More Activities – during the past 6 months we have been working to support the activities at Blacky More. As we go forward with the new website, the range of activities will be far better promoted.

This has led to new groups setting up regular meetings, including yoga sessions. The centre is now used every weekday evening and attracting more interest in bookings.

Via the activities at Blacky More and on our open spaces, we are delivering sessions to a wide age range in the community.

From pre-school, to boot camp exercisers, tia chi and yoga activities.

Promotion of local activities including Abbey Centre Activities – as part of our networking process, we have been actively promoting other local organisations, including local charities, churches and schools. The feedback from partners is very positive. We are doing this mainly via our social media platforms and will expand upon this with the development of the new website, under our East Hunsbury Life umbrella.

5. Library Activities

Our partnership with Hunsbury Library continues to grow, with our School of Life Sessions and Crafternoons. We have also secured a 3-month programme of activities, open to all adult ages, with **Learn2b** (NCC funded) – dates for art and mindfulness courses to be announced soon.

School of Life – this past term, we have hosted children from Simon de Senlis School. Feedback has been excellent, from pupils, teachers, the Library and our Seniors. Simon de Senlis meet with us in September to plan more activities.

Library Crafternoons – these sessions have been run by local crafters, including Pauline Boler. Our “taster” sessions have been very well attended, including joint sessions operated with the WI. We are in discussion with crafters, regarding Christmas activities – wreath making, pudding stir up and bauble decorating. More details to follow.





6. **External Projects – benefitting our community**

Happy at Home Project – via our links to Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire, we have started a partnership with the Happy at Home Project. This project recruits local volunteers who are trained to be befrienders. The project then links them to people who are feeling isolated in our community.

The project has already begun in East Hunsbury, with clients and befrienders already recruited. The manager for our area has been invited to give a short talk to our next Community Engagement Committee meeting, in November.

In linking into projects like this, which are managed and staffed externally, we grow our capacity to provide services to our local community. The project operates at no cost to EHPC, our role being to support and promote and provide meeting spaces when/if required.

BECOME A HAPPY@HOME VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDERS VISIT CLIENTS FOR A CHAT, PROVIDE INFORMATION AND OFFER SOCIAL EVENTS OR YOU CAN VOLUNTEER TO HELP ORGANISE AND DELIVER SOCIAL EVENTS

happyathome@voluntaryimpact.org.uk

7. **Schools projects** already touched upon in other parts of this report, our plan for the next 6 months, is to continue to engage our local schools, with litter-picking, wildflower planting, arts and performance projects. We look at a potential new project for schools in **Future Projects**, around speed reduction and awareness.

We will also be talking with our school parliaments about greater links to the parish council, with a view to reflecting their views in our work and plans.

Our link schools are:

- East Hunsbury Primary
- Simon De Senlis Primary
- Wootton Park

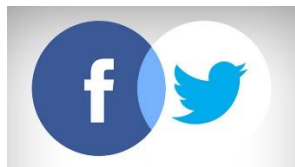
8. **Networking with local organisations** – we continue to attend the local Networking Lunches at Abbey Centre. We are building our partnership with local WI members, looking at promotion of joint activities, and supporting local charities (Harry's Rainbows/Excellent Sanctuary/Local Macmillan Cancer Group).

Information from Councillors, regarding other local groups and how we might support them, is always welcome.

9. **Social Media and promotion** – both members of staff are spending more time in terms of running our Social Media campaigns. Facebook interaction has greatly increased, with a dual approach. Caroline Holgate leads on formal information, appertaining to parish council decisions and to logistical and infrastructure updates (motorway, planning matters, countywide initiatives etc), whilst Liz Carroll-Wheat updates on more interactive matters (photos of activities, positive feedback from partners, promoting other activities in the parish and further afield, in line with East Hunsbury Life ethos). Caroline also leads on twitter presence.

Social media work takes place alongside newsletters to Seniors Group (see example) and printed flyers, for particular events and activities.

Caroline Holgate is working on building our new website at this point, which will greatly improve our method of communication.



10. **Future Projects – ideas and longer-term goals:** listed below, are ongoing initiatives, which are being planned. Apart from the Macmillan Coffee morning, which is being delivered at no cost to EHPC, all these initiatives are still in discussion. Any definite plans and any funding details will be brought to the committee for discussion and approval.

- 10.1 **Macmillan Coffee Morning – Friday 27th September – Hunsbury Library.** Following our pop-up-café-meeting, Hunsbury Library approached the parish council, to create a big coffee morning. Our bakers from the village fete bake off are providing the cakes, and we will have support from our Seniors and WI members. Event runs 11am – 2pm on the day. Volunteers and cake eaters are welcome!

- 10.2 **East Hunsbury – Charity Run/Walk 2020 – part of a Get Active campaign.** From volunteering sessions and feedback sessions, the idea of a charity run, to involve the whole community, has been suggested. Cllr Claire White will meet with Liz Carroll-Wheat in Sept to start to look at the logistics and budget for such an event. Initial meeting to identify partners and outline initial plans, with regards to road closures, use of parks etc. Information will be brought to this committee.



- 10.3 Pop-Up-Café.** Following the councillor's discussion evening, Cllr Anne Morris and Liz Carroll-Wheat continue to look at costs and logistics, to support this. See separate report.
- 10.4 Remembrance Commemorations Nov 2019.** Library entrance has been offered for a poppy display, Tommys and lamppost poppies can once again be erected. East Hunsbury Rocks group have requested a meeting, regarding the poppy-rock idea, which can be a community project for all ages, decorating and hiding poppy rocks in our parks. This leads on from similar Summer activities, supported by EHPC.
- 10.5 Community Speed Watch** – previously this initiative has not garnered enough volunteering support. Our schools may be interested in looking at this as a community campaign. Initial discussion to take place. If a Community Speed Watch group is to be set up, a lead councillor will be required to head this up. More information can be supplied to next meeting if councillors are interested. Please advise.
- 10.6 Links to Medical Centre/Doctors locally** – this is a longer-term goal, which will be returned to, once new website is in operation. With more focus on healthy communities and links between health providers and local communities, it would be ideal to have greater links locally.
- 10.7 Networking with County organisations** – Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire (support organisation to 3rd Sector for Northamptonshire) have requested a meeting, to talk about our development process', based on our current success'.
- 10.8 University of Northampton** – have outlined interest in our senior group from East Hunsbury, potentially being involved in University projects.