

Annual Review 2021-22

Supporting communities and moving forward with continued purpose.

Community development went out of fashion a little but has now come full circle. The tragedy of Covid has demonstrated the need for communities to be listened to and supported with knowledge and resources to help them deliver their services.

CDA's listening role enables us to be strong advocates at the numerous forums and networks we are engaged with.

Looking back at the past year our reach has been across health inequalities, social justice, rural and community empowerment. We are proud of our various roles and contributions during Covid.

Rural communities are stronger through advisory services, ethnically diverse people and groups have been heard and now our challenge is to sustain the conversations at the relevant strategic boards.

Working closely with partners both in public and voluntary sectors has strengthened our position and we thank them for the collaborative way of working.

Imagine a world without human selfless generosity, without the life affirming outcomes of people coming together to make a difference probably not a place we would want to live.

The challenges we face individually, as communities, as a country are being discussed at length and often feel overwhelming. No one person or organisation has the solution but there are many across Hertfordshire able and willing to try and make a difference. My plea is for those people not to be in silos but to be open to new ways of acting together. If CDA can help facilitate a more collaborative approach then please chat with Kate.

Chris Tombs

Chair of Board of Trustees

Rural

Housing
Digital Inclusion
Rural Issues & Support
Village Halls Advisory
Community Transport
Farmer's Markets
Energy & Sustainability

Social Justice

Play Area Scheme
Jobs Pathway Enterprise

Health & Wellbeing

Covid recovery BAME
Covid Information Champions
Health Equalities Partnership
Afghan Resettlement Support

Community Development

Covid Recovery Ethnic Diverse
Support Networks
Community Garden
Community Help Herts
Jubilee Platinum tree planting
Reconnecting Communities
New River Community Rail

Strategic Forums

Public Health Vaccination Programme
Voluntary & People Assistance Cell
Herts Community Leaders Forum
National Scene: Cirican network

Affordable Rural Housing



We continue to contribute to community led housing through our membership of Eastern Community Homes (ECH). Locally, Stevenage Borough Council are supporting ECH and we have been working with them to develop ideas for bringing forward community led schemes in the Borough.

We appreciate the continued support of our rural affordable housing partnerships in Dacorum and North Herts through the local authorities and our housing association partners, Hastoe Housing and settle Housing Association. We have been working hard in both Boroughs to promote rural housing and courtesy of English Rural Housing Association, have delivered two training webinars, targeted at educating parish councillors and others about the benefit of rural affordable housing. Videos of each can be viewed via the Rural Affordable housing page of the CDA website.

Work is well underway on site in Wilstone to deliver six homes by Dacorum Borough Council following a housing needs survey of Tring Rural parish carried out by us in 2017. The tenants will benefit from the provision of air source heat pumps and solar panels, cutting both energy costs and carbon emissions.

On behalf of the Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall trustees, thank you for the help and guidance contained in your numerous emails during the year. You provide a valuable central resource that all us village hall trustees can tap in to. I suspect that some information presented to us might just be missed if it were not for you!

Andrew Day, Trustee, Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall

An excellent organisation and with the sharing of information there is always something to learn.

Mike Wallis, Chair,
Potten End Village Hall

Digital Inclusion

Digital learners had a Digital Champion or Digital Buddy (local volunteers) to help and assist them with their specific digital and IT queries.



The actual time spent learning or receiving IT support and advice usually lasts around 90 minutes and the sessions always end with tea and cake, with the opportunity for everyone to have a chat about what has been covered and any other queries learners may have for the next session.

66
weekly 2 hour drop-in digital
inclusion sessions across
3 village halls

495
digital learner attendances

1263
volunteer hours

Village Halls Advisory & Covid-19 Support

Supporting Village Hall and Community Building Management Committees continued to dominate the work during the year due to Covid-19 restrictions and legislation.

Once all restrictions were lifted Halls were then faced with the implications of 'living with Covid' which meant being open but protecting the public using their buildings and how this could be achieved allowing people to meet whilst ensuring they were safe. We could not have delivered without the professional excellent service from ACRE our national body.

Our 4 county wide networks have flourished as we provided 236 village/community halls and buildings with up-to-date information/guidance, advice, meetings and training. The Zoom networking meetings held throughout the year along with input from specialist organisations have grown in significance and importance. As the year drew to a close the East Herts Consortium agreed to become county



wide, a major development in strengthening this network of community buildings and what it can achieve.

CDA Herts has enabled this to happen and our reach, influence, importance and impact in the sector grows stronger each year.

Over the 12 months we have provided telephone/email support, information resources and specialist advice in person, on our website and through our [eBulletin](#).

8

Village Hall Network Zoom meetings organised, delivered and chaired with

150
attendances

236

Network members

110

Halls received one-to-one support

12

Halls referred to Low Carbon Workspaces for carbon reduction grants

15

Halls referred to Utility Aid for energy supply advice

CDA is extremely helpful and informative regarding any information required to run our hall professionally and efficiently. Tim is very knowledgeable and up to speed with any village hall's needs – his response is quick and easy to understand. Thank you Tim and CDA for all your hard work over the past year.

Lesley Hicks, Administrator,
Leverstock Green Village Hall

Barkway Village Hall take comfort in the regular messages of support, interest and guidance on issues we may otherwise not consider to contemplate. The Hall also enjoys being part of a network of halls across the region.

Thomas Wornham, Chair, Barkway Village Hall

I serve on our Village Hall committee. Tim and team do wonderful work for us. Throughout the pandemic they were an invaluable source of information helping us to comply with the frankly, very complicated regulations. CDA Herts are always our first port of call for help with many matters. I don't know how we would get on without them.

Harry Bott MBE, DL, Bennington Village Hall

Rural Support Network

Run by 2,000 volunteers supporting 2,000 elderly and vulnerable people across 150+ villages and hamlets have dominated our rural work over the last year again.

These voluntary networks sprang up in response to corona virus and formed action groups of volunteers helping the isolated, shielding and lonely with shopping, collecting prescriptions, gardening, dog walking, basic maintenance and internet and financial support.

Thanks to funding from Herts County Council and Herts Community Foundation we have been able to support these vital RSNs with information and advice, access to funding and other resources. Rural communities have been doing it for themselves and we have been helping them with funding offers, weekly information Bulletins which have been shared locally by our 40 Covid Information Champions.

The focus on disseminating public health information has been to ensure that vital messages about staying safe and getting vaccinated and tested have been getting to the most remote and lonely corners of the county. These have now morphed into regular community, health and wellbeing news thanks to our colleagues at Herts Healthy Hubs.

472
Bags of Kindness distributed
through 30 Rural Support Networks

35
Festive Funding grants totalling
£4000
were given to local groups and
Village Halls to bring warmth and
comfort to

600 people over the Festive season

£9000
of Household Support Fund was
received and distributed to 20
RSNs to support

Community Energy & Sustainability Network

85 members

This Network provides a forum for information exchange and debate on key topics and is supported by the University of Hertfordshire, Local Authority Sustainability Officers, Transition Towns, Climate Change groups, low energy businesses and individuals concerned with environmental and resource issues. We are working with partners to promote and support community-led low energy, low cost housing.

Our impact on the planet and its fragile environments may have slowed down a little throughout the pandemic but

we should all still be very worried and doing everything we can to change our behaviours and reverse the damage. We benefited from the remote work and research of 3 Interns: Environmental Studies Majors Jennifer Park from Boston College USA, Tyler Chase Ellison from the University of Tennessee USA and Isaac Fakolujo Olumide from the University of Hertfordshire. They have helped increase our access to information and understanding of many aspects of environmental sustainability, the circular economy, climate change and the very extensive and innovative worldwide research into climate change mitigation and alternative technologies.

Rural Issues Network

84 members

Meetings have not taken place throughout the last year. However, Covid has had a major impact on rural services and the economy and a lot of work has gone into discussing rural needs with councillors, commissioners, service providers and funders and we are confident that there are signs of progress.

Rural Loneliness Forum

46 Members

The Forum continues to inform Commissioners and Service providers about how to mitigate for access and logistics issues and increased costs of rural services delivery. Our participation in East Herts and North Herts Health & Wellbeing Partnerships provides the opportunities to keep rural communities on the agenda.

The time and effort you have put in to support the network of village halls and community buildings in Hertfordshire is invaluable. The information disseminated and interactions at the regular meetings on Zoom meetings are a step change in the resources available to us, the managers of these buildings, and enable us to work more effectively.

Jane Lutman, Chair,
Flamstead Village hall

Tewin Community Transport Project

The Saturday Community Minibus recommenced in November 2021 following 18 months of Covid closure.

Residents are overjoyed to be able get out once again.

Thanks to continued funding from East Herts Council and Tewin Parish Council and another Donation from Friends of Tewin we are confident that the Minibus will continue into 2023.

Covid Recovery Black Asian Minority Ethnic

This new project's aim is to address health disparities and inequalities faced and experienced by ethnic diverse people and communities in the county as highlighted by the health pandemic.

A new team recruited from the communities aligned with adult care services and the community clinically community groups across the county. One of the aims was to ensure that the communities were aware of social prescribing services to help with their care and reduce healthcare inequalities.

In addition to this project, another programme working on the new Integrated Care Services framework and the workforce development. The project officer worked with the team from Healthwatch Herts on their research on health inequalities as well as the Covid Recovery BAME team. Collectively the data gathered would provide the stakeholders with information on the impact of lack of services and accessibility.

100
public and voluntary
organisations met with staff

50
ethnic groups engaged with

25
individuals supported
referred from other services

190
events attended

**Reported to stakeholders
on community needs,
challenges and barriers**



The Covid Recovery Ethnic Diverse Project has been really valuable for Watford and Three Rivers Trust in ensuring that our messages are shared with the diverse communities in our area. The regular bulletins have allowed us to share messages with those communities. This has then allowed us to increase the number of funding recipients who come from or represent ethnically diverse communities. Additionally, the project has allowed us to signpost other local organisations to the project so they can also engage with ethnically diverse communities.

Alex Murray, W3RT CVS Lead

I just want to call out how the information & activities being shared by your team has been used within the DBWA to assist in raising awareness of COVID within our community group.

In addition to the fun day the DBWA are producing a short video to share with community members to raise awareness about the concerns of rising infection rates within the Bangladeshi community with Dacorum.

COVID-19 Recovery Fund &
DBWA Covid Awareness
winter campaign

I have found that working with the CRB BAME team has been so useful. Rushna has supported me with clients and given me lots of support and information to overcome the cultural barriers. I look forward to our continued communications to improve the relationships and knowledge we can give to our BAME clients. Also the CRB teams support in promoting the benefits of Social Prescribing within the local community.

David Golding, Community Engagement Officer
Hertsmere Borough Council

Covid Recovery Ethnic Diverse

The key messages at the end of Year 1, is the mega need for capacity building support services for the small and volunteer led groups.

The team has supported groups who have successfully gained grants to deliver health and social care activities for their own communities: Bosnia and Herzegovina Association and London Colney Islamic Centre being key recipients of these grants.

The other key activity is working with Primary Care Networks and their Link Workers and Community Navigators in the promotion of social prescribing to the communities. The messaging needs to be enhanced and promoted as culturally, people don't ask for supplementary support and continue with the clinical treatment when there are other services available to them.

The other activity was to support the messaging about vaccinations for all ages. Focus groups were supported and their voices and concerns were feedback to the public health and adult care services.

Community Garden 10th Anniversary



10th anniversary celebration of community garden volunteers with the Vice Lord Lieutenant and Mayor of St Albans cutting the cake and the 55th anniversary of CDA Herts.

Volunteers, friends of the garden and CDA Herts enjoyed an afternoon tea to celebrate the work and dedication of the volunteers and an opportunity for CDA to thank the volunteers for their commitment to making the garden into an inclusive space for everyone. The groups have extended their friendship, knowledge and skills in the world of horticulture and shared many memorable times throughout the development of this wonderful garden for all.

 [@CDAHCommunityGarden](https://www.facebook.com/CDAHCommunityGarden)

New River Community Rail Partnership

A station platform was enhanced with beautiful artworks in a community project and two Parish Council funded planters, headed up by CDA's own Kate Belinis. A free activity guide was designed and 1,000 have been distributed so far. The guide has circular walks from each of the five stations along the Line as well as plenty of things for people to discover in the local area. Find out more at www.newriverline.org



Launch of Artists work part of New River Community Rail Partnership.



Bug hotel built by volunteers in community garden.



Queen's Green Canopy Wild Cherry tree planting in Community Garden, St Albans with Herts County Council Chairman, garden volunteers and Kate Belinis DL.

“ We had a gathering of about 30 people, as our Sunday School children, together with teachers and some parents enjoyed a morning of discovery, planting and making organic bird feeders. They each planted sunflowers and look forward to seeing them grow. For some children it was an opportunity to see how vegetables grow for the first time and others shared knowledge of how their families are growing their own. The Sunday School enjoyed the morning so much they have decided to fundraise for their own raised bed. Thank you to CDA Herts for giving our Synagogue the opportunity to do this. ” – Lauren

Reconnecting Communities

Bringing Hertford's people together and building resilience within its communities post Covid-19.

Just prior to the Covid Pandemic, we were fortunate to be commissioned by Hertford Town Council to deliver a community development based project called Reconnecting Hertford, which at the time aimed to unite people, communities, groups and organisations throughout the town.

Working with Hertford Town Councillors, we have identified groups and activities within their respective ward communities who have benefited from some guidance and advice, with the project's aim of building stronger connections sense of community belonging throughout the town post pandemic.

This has resulted in the project officer offering and supporting various community groups and organisations across the town with a range of new challenges and activities which they're looking to take on for the future, but also to help some to regain their core activities and operations to levels previously enjoyed pre Covid.

Support ranges from assistance in seeking specific funding routes for new ventures and community projects, through to helping groups to become more sustainable.

331 hours
of community engagement

14

Hertford based community groups, organisations and projects assisted by the project

It's been another great year of working closely with CDA Herts, with our introduction into the East Herts Village Halls and Community Buildings group being a particular highlight. I enjoyed the chance to present to the group and thank you for always connecting the dots and seeing how people can help each other which is going to be vital heading into some difficult months.

CDA have reinforced their reputation for being THE go to for village halls and community buildings advice, something I am sure many people will draw on as we all battle the cost of living crisis. Thank you!

Adam Howard, Sports Events and Project Officer,
Active In The Community CIC

Farmers' Cafés

Farmers' Cafés have not been able to continue throughout the pandemic but we have maintained our close relationship and partnership with FCN The Farming Community Network and R.A.B.I. the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

Oil Buying Scheme

12 Members bought 56,500L and saved a massive £2618 in the year.

We continue to promote especially in as fuel prices have escalated and the cost of living is going to impact on the people and groups we serve.

We have moved!

Our new address is:

Unit 2 (First Floor), Mead Lane Industrial Estate,
Merchant Drive, Hertford, SG13 7BH

Support Networks and Forums

We continue to **provide infrastructure support to two charities**, Herts Welcomes Refugees and Herts Equality Council.

Covid Recovery Ethnic Diverse team have been **supporting the Afghan families** housed in the resettlement hotels. One of the team has been best placed to support the women, as she speaks the language, is a Muslim and is cultural experienced plus delivering pamper sessions for the women.

We are an **active partnership of the six CVS across the county**. Community Help Herts has been commissioned by Herts County Council to deliver the Community Information Champions programme to **support the rural support networks and over 300 individuals from diverse communities** to help with the messaging of **public health and the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers**.

We co-chair the Herts Community Leaders Forum, a useful and necessary **network to senior leaders to share knowledge and experiences** from their own field of expertise and together we have been **working on our responses on the Health and Wellbeing strategy for 2021 and beyond**.

Advocacy at the diverse 'top tables' to **ensure that ethnic diverse voices were heard** and case studies raised at the Scrutiny Members Panel.

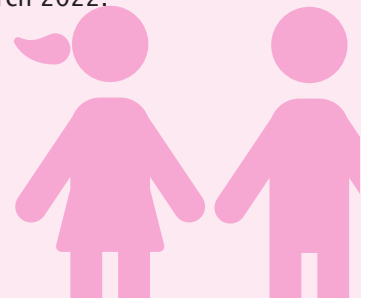


The Play Area HMP The Mount

The Play Area Scheme, based in HMP The Mount, was greatly impacted by the health pandemic as the access to the Prison was reduced.

The play service was available on limited opening hours with very little opportunity for the children to be children and play and talk with their male relative. The number of tables have been reduced dramatically and this has impacted on the number of children attending and early evening during the week but only for an hour. It was difficult for the families and the prison staff to manage.

The service opened in March 2022.



Jobs Pathway

A different kind of employment service: Supporting people facing barriers and exclusion to find permanent jobs.

We support ex-offenders, the formerly homeless, those experiencing poor mental health, addiction and we are now working with our refugee communities.

Jobs Pathway accepts referrals of people ready to step into work from across Hertfordshire. We work with employers willing to give people a chance to prove themselves and transform their lives. Employers are increasingly recognising the value, skills, experience and commitment people will bring. Our partners also include education providers, who offer training linked directly with employers and job opportunities.

Queen's Green Canopy

We were delighted to participate in the celebration of the jubilee and thanks to the kind donation of 10 wild cherry trees from the county and local district councils and Herts Native Trees, who gave an excellent tutorial on the planting and maintenance of the trees in our community garden.

The volunteers welcomed the Deputy Chairman, Hertfordshire County Councillor Annie Brewster and Deputy Lieutenant, Kate Belinis planted the trees in almost blistery conditions.

Lord Lieutenant, Robert Voss and the Mayor of Hertford were at hand to help Kate, plant a Rowan tree in the Moat Garden in the grounds of Hertford Castle.



Who's Who

Vice Presidents

Harry Bott DL
Anthony Edwards
Jean Pooley
Brain Rowley
Robin Guenier
Christine Nairn

Board of Trustees:

Company Secretary/Treasurer

John Collins

Chair

Chris Tombs

Vice Chair

Christine Nairn

Trustees

Allison Alexander
Tap Bali
John Dawson
Mary Lambe

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer

Kate Belinis DL

Communications Officer

Yvonne Saxton

Community Services Manager

Tim Hayward-Smith

Finance Advisor

John Collins

Covid Recovery BAME

Mercy Bwomono
Naomi Duncan
Rushna Miah

Jobs Pathway Manager

Sue Whiterod

Play Area

Viv, Hilary, Sally, Brenda, Yvon

Rural Housing Enabler

Giles Meredith

Rural Support Networks & Village Connector

Lynsi Hayward-Smith, Stuart Izzard

Volunteer Gardeners

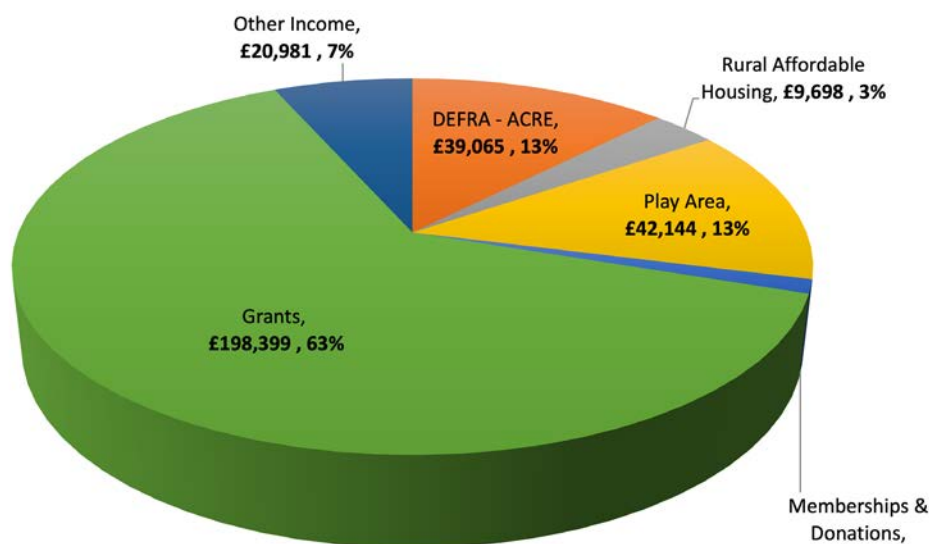
Phill Coates, Sue Coates, George Conway, Brian Gibson, Kirtida Mehta, Ken Moorton, Val Moorton, John Nairn, Debbie Hallcole, Hilary Heine, Imke Hoffman, Sue Watt, Sigrid Watkins, Anne Wright, Farhat Zia

Income and expenditure 2021-22

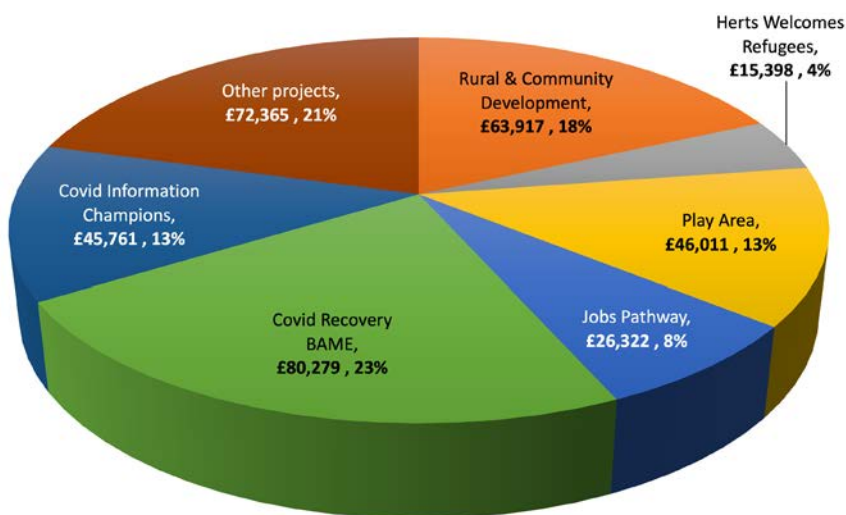
The following charts provide a breakdown of where our income has come from and what it has been spent on over the past year.

For a full copy of CDA Herts' audited accounts for 2021-22, please contact John Collins on john.collins@cdaherts.org.uk

Our £314,000 income came from:



Our expenditure totalled £350,053 and was spent on:



With thanks

CDA Herts would like to say a BIG 'thank you' to everyone who has supported our work over the past year.

Community Garden

Garden Volunteers
Highfield Park Trust

Rural Services

ACRE
Defra
East Herts Council
Hertfordshire County Council: Adult Care Services and Public Health

Rural Support Network

Hertfordshire Community Foundation

Rural Digital Inclusion

Clarion Futures

Village Connectors

East Herts Council

Covid Information Champions

Hertfordshire County Council: Adult Care Services

Jobs Pathway

Police and Crime Commissioner Partners: HACRO and Emmaus

Play Area Scheme

BBC Children in Need
HMP The Mount
PACT (Prison Advice Care Trust)

Covid Recovery BAME

Herts Community Resilience
Hertfordshire County Council
NHS Charities Trust

Membership

Parish and Town Councils
Village Halls
Community groups
Individuals

Environmental Studies Majors (Interns)

Jennifer Park from Boston College USA
Tyler Chase Ellison from the University of Tennessee USA
Isaac Fakolujo Olumide from the University of Hertfordshire

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