Community Links Network Quarterly Update

October 2026

Welcome to the 8th edition of the Community Links Network Quarterly Update!

Thank you for reading this quarters edition of our update newsletter. We value your continued feedback and involvement – please click here to let us know what you think we do well, and how we could be even better.

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Community Links Network

6th October 2026



This Community Links session was a small affair, but full of chat, laughter, networking...and some t'ai chi !

Thank you to those that attended.

The session was a little different from the norm, in that the wider Communities team introduced themselves, and gave a brief introduction to their roles and support that they offer to the community. The presentation from Jamie regarding the Community Engagement Van (affectionately known as CEVan) was a huge success. Click here for more information on the van and how you might be able to hire it out for your own event!



Bec from our Broadly Active Team very graciously gave up some of her time to do some gentle exercises, that lead into t'ai chi. We started the short session with a reading of a traditional Toaist Welcome, to draw the room into the present, creating a safe space to allow the mind to tune into the body .
Some simple movements to release joints and muscular tension preceded the main qigong set called Hermits Breath. This is a cycle set, repeated 3 times, of breath led movement patterns where the mind leads the Qi and the Qi leads the blood. It is designed to restore balance and regulation to the nervous system, releasing negativity - whilst renewing and releasing vital energy to all regions of the body.
The set concluded with a traditional salute of respect and peace.

A big thank you to our Tabatha, who gave an introduction into the Broadland Women and Girls Safety Charter. The Charter helps support the creation and maintenance of



environments where women and girls feel welcomed, supported and confident in their day-to-day lives. The Charter recognises that women and girls move through a wide variety of settings, (workplaces, leisure facilities, green spaces, transport routes and residential areas) and should feel safe in all of them. The Charter encourages communities, businesses, organisations and public services to take realistic, proportionate action, from promoting respectful behaviour and challenging harassment, to making improvements to spaces and support routes.

If you would like further information about the Women and Girl's Safety Charter, or would like to sign up, then please email
louise.freeman@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Our next meeting is **Thursday 21st January 2027**
16:30-18:30pm @ The Horizon Centre, NR7 0WF

In the meantime, stay up to date with events, grants and giveaways through our private Facebook group.

Thanks again to everyone who came along and contributed to such a positive and productive evening!

Whether you've attended CLN or not (yet!), please let us know what you think, and what you'd like more of, by clicking here. We really appreciate this feedback when designing the future of CLN!

Spotlight

🌈 The Rainbow Tree – Supporting Children Through Bereavement 🌈

The Rainbow Tree is a children's bereavement support group providing a safe, welcoming and understanding space for children aged 4 to 16 years who have experienced the death of someone special in their lives.

The group was set up to help children navigate the difficult and often confusing emotions that can come with grief. We recognise that every child experiences bereavement differently, and sometimes children need a place where they can talk openly, ask questions, share their feelings, or simply spend time with others who understand what they are going through.

The Rainbow Tree was also established to help ease some of the pressure faced by larger bereavement charities, which often have significant numbers of children waiting for support. By providing a local service, we hope to complement the work of these organisations while offering much-needed support within our rural community. For families who may find it difficult to travel to larger organisations or access services further afield, having a local group can make support more accessible.

The group is run by three dedicated facilitators – Susan, Lucy, and Louise – who all have experience of bereavement and supporting others through difficult times. Susan and Louise both work within the funeral service, while Lucy is a qualified psychotherapist. Together, their different experiences and understanding create a caring and supportive environment for the children who attend.



The group meets on the last Saturday of every month, subject to venue availability, at Roydon Village Hall, just outside Diss.

Sessions are informal but focused, giving children the opportunity to explore different aspects of grief through conversation, activities, and shared experiences. We talk

about feelings and emotions, discuss some of the challenges that grief can bring and explore different ways of coping and managing those feelings.

Most importantly, The Rainbow Tree provides a safe and confidential space where children can be themselves. They can talk about their thoughts and feelings, share memories, ask questions or discuss anything that may be on their mind – without judgement and at their own pace.

We hope that by bringing children together in a supportive environment, The Rainbow Tree can help them understand that although their grief may feel lonely, they are not alone.

The sessions are free of charge, and our aim is simply to provide children and their families with a little support, understanding and companionship as they find their way through grief.



The Rainbow Tree were nominated and won the Connecting Communities award at this years South Norfolk Community Awards – Huge Congratulations!

Interesting Reads

Here at South Norfolk and Broadland District Council we have monthly Horizon scanning documents to help us keep up to date with important legislation and Bills, both locally and nationally. Below are a few that we have cherry picked for you and may be of some assistance.

Norfolk County Council drives deeper bus data | UKAuthority - Norfolk County Council has awarded a contract to Alchera to deploy its AI-powered analytics platform, Alchera Bus, to improve the reliability and operational efficiency of the region's bus network

Regulating water, energy and broadband to protect consumers in vulnerable circumstances - NAO report - Water and energy supplies are essential for daily life and public health, and broadband services allow citizens to access a range of services in the modern economy. Yet, millions of people across the UK experience permanent or temporary circumstances that can create barriers to engaging confidently or effectively with these services. These circumstances can increase the risk of detriment to the consumer when things go wrong.

Podcast Episode 78 - Mental Health and Youth Services | Public Sector News - Young people are increasingly facing unprecedented pressures. Thanks to this, the conversation around mental health and youth services has never been more crucial. From the cost of living crisis to the pervasive influence of social media, today's youth are navigating challenges that can severely impact their mental well-being.

Rural Britain is becoming 'food desert' for lower-income families, study finds - Research from Sheffield University reveals that parts of rural Britain are becoming 'food deserts' for lower-income families, with over half of those earning under £40,000 struggling to access affordable, healthy food. The study indicates that geographical barriers and the closure of local shops exacerbate food insecurity, particularly in affluent rural areas.

Green space trumps building design in public's housing wish list | LocalGov - Green space, clean air and community connection matter more to people than how buildings look when it comes to new housing developments, according to new national polling.

Half of UK adults say they spend less than three hours a week outside in nature - A recent survey by the Wildlife Trusts revealed that nearly half of UK adults spend less than three hours a week outside in natural settings such as gardens, parks, and fields, at contrast to their childhood experiences. Cllr Julie Jones-Evans, Chair of the LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Committee, said "parks and green spaces are vital to local communities. But councils have faced financial pressure due to rising demand for legally required services including social care and support for children with special educational needs and disabilities. This leaves discretionary services such as parks vulnerable and demonstrates why it is important councils are supported by sufficient and sustainable funding to protect these important services."

The role of sport, arts and culture in supporting community cohesion | Local Government Association - Tom Fairey, Development Director at Alliance Leisure, writes about how community spaces can strengthen local connections, referencing the

LGA's report "The role of sport, arts and culture in supporting community cohesion". The report highlights how these sectors can play a vital role in building stronger, more connected communities. - **Designing for cohesion**

Innovation in transport - NAO report **-** The transport sector has a long history of introducing new and improved ways of helping move people and goods. The Department for Transport (DfT) has identified innovation as a key enabler to achieving its priority outcomes of growth; greener, safer and healthier transport; and improving transport for people.

Podcast Episode 77 - Libraries, Leisure and Loss | Public Sector News - In an age where digital services are becoming the norm, the importance of civic infrastructure has never been more pronounced. In the latest episode of the PSE Podcast, guests delved into the critical role that libraries and other public spaces play in fostering community health, education, and social cohesion

Diss to see over £8m invested in new leisure facilities | LocalGov - South Norfolk District Council has backed plans for an £8.1m regeneration scheme in Diss.

Teenage Relationship Abuse Findings | Youth Endowment Fund **-** A worrying new report from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) reveals that nearly half of teenage children who have been in a relationship have experienced violent or controlling behaviours from a partner.Nature's Rights Bill [HL]

Private Members' BillA Bill to recognise Nature as a legal subject; establish and protect the rights of Nature; establish a legal duty of care for public bodies, businesses, and individuals; provide procedural rights for the protection of Nature; establish an Integrated Rights Framework; establish mechanisms for dispute resolution and legal enforcement; make provision about Parliamentary scrutiny; establish a Nature Guardianship Council and Bioregional Councils; establish a Nature's Rights Tribunal; create a governance structure for implementation and integration; provide for phased implementation and periodic review; ensure compliance with international environmental obligations; promote public awareness and education; and for connected purposes.

Creative Education Access Bill [HL]

A Bill to make provision for a minimum standard of access to creative and cultural education in state-funded schools in England and Wales; to promote partnerships between schools and the creative sector; and for connected purposes

Grants

There's no shortage of funding opportunities out there - but finding the right ones can take time.

We've pulled together a few current grants that may be relevant to your group, including some with upcoming deadlines. This list is fairly broad, so if you'd like help finding something more tailored to your needs, just get in touch - we're happy to help.

Yorkshire Building Society Charitable Foundation - Small Change Big Difference Fund

Maximum value £2500. Deadline 31.12.26

Grants to support registered charities and good causes in local communities across the UK to alleviate poverty, improve health and save lives.

Cash For Kids - Holiday Hunger Grants

Discretionary (usually between £1000 and £3000). No deadline

Grants are available to charities, voluntary and community groups to provide food and activities for disadvantaged children and young people during the school holidays.

Applicants are advised to check the Cash for Kids website for open rounds in specific areas of the UK.

Architectural Heritage Fund - Heritage Revival Fund

Discretionary (usually between £10,000 and £500,000). No deadline.

Grants are available for charities and social enterprises in England seeking to take ownership of and/or adapt historic buildings in town centres for community uses.

Bernard Sunley Foundation

Discretionary (usually between £2,000 and £25,000). No deadline.

One-off capital grants are available to registered charities in England and Wales for projects in the areas of community, education, health and social welfare.

A Better Childhood - The first 1001 Days Fund | Norfolk Community Foundation

Up to £7000. Deadline – 29th October 2026

Grants of **up to £7,000** are available to provide funding for voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations working in Norfolk who are supporting parents in the first 1001 days, from conception to an infant's 2nd birthday

The Hedley Foundation - A Grant Giving Charity

Up to £5000. No deadline

Grants are available to smaller charities operating across the spectrum of social need.

TheGivingMachine's unrestricted Community Grants

Up to £250. No deadline

Any eligible good cause can apply. Complete the online application, and 8 organisations will be selected at random to receive £250.

Fundraising - Useful Signposting

Norfolk County Council – Bid Writing Workshops

- **What it is:** Workshops for VCSE groups to improve the quality and success rate of funding applications.
- **What's covered:** Bid writing techniques, funding strategy, and compliance.
- **More info:** External funding support - Norfolk County Council

Norfolk Community Foundation – Application Guidance & Tips

- **What it is:** Offers detailed guidance on how to apply for funding, including eligibility, governance, and application tips.
- **What's covered:** Step-by-step guides, videos, and advice for writing stronger bids.
- **More info:** Support | Norfolk Community Foundation

Get Grants – Fundraising Training & Webinars

- **What it is:** A national organisation offering free and paid training for fundraisers.
- **What's covered:** Community fundraising, bid writing, corporate sponsorship, and more.
- **Why it's useful:** Practical, beginner-friendly sessions with real-world examples.
- **More info:** Get Grants | Fundraising Training & Support

NCVO

- **What it is:** A knowledge hub from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations.
- **What's covered:** Writing a fundraising strategy, diversifying income, supporter engagement.
- **Why it's useful:** Ideal for groups looking to build long-term sustainability as well as clear and concise guidance.
- **More info:** Funding and income | NCVO

Our Community Funding

We have several internal opportunities for funding, with the current available options listed below. Throughout the financial year, these can be subject to change, so it's worth keeping an eye on the main funding page linked above, so you don't miss any opportunities.



Get It Started Grant (Broadland)- Funding for individuals or groups to start projects or activities that bring communities together.

Go For It Grant (South Norfolk) - Funding for individuals or groups to start projects or activities that bring communities together.

Keep It Going Grant - Funding for community groups facing increased expenditure due to rising costs.



Members Ward funding – Broadland – South Norfolk - Each of our district councillors has an annual budget of £1,000 to spend on projects within their wards.

Broadland's Community at Heart Lottery - Our weekly online lottery helps non-profit associations or charities raise funds year-round at no cost.

Homes for Ukraine Community Support Grant - Supporting activities that help address the needs of Ukrainian refugees.

Our Events: Community Awards

Since the last Quarterly Update, the wider Communities team have been busy!

We have hosted the South Norfolk Community awards, the 10k Marriotts Way run and we are currently finishing the plans for the Broadland Community awards, EAMA 10k run in Wymondham as well as our Christmas appeal;



The **South Norfolk Community** awards held on the 3rd July at Bawbugh Golf Club was a great success, and huge congratulations to all those that were nominated, shortlisted and to the winners. For a full list of nominees and winners including their categories, click here





On Sunday 20th September, basked in the glorious Autumnal sunshine, 430 (extra)ordinary people ran from Aylsham to Reepham along the Marriotts Way. Ages ranged from 16yrs to an impressive 80ys old, from all walks of life. We cheered, we celebrated,



there were tears and lots and lots of happy, tired faces! Well done to all, you're an inspiration!



If you would like to try your hand at running, then you may find these sites helpful; [Couch to 5K running plan - Better Health - NHS] and [home | parkrun UK] (apparently you're never too old to start!) 😊

The Broadland Community awards takes place on 15th October 2026 at the Royal Norfolk Golf Club – keep an eye on our socials after the event for news of the winners! More information will also follow in the next Quarterly Update

Broadland Community Awards 2026

The EAMA 10k run in Wymondham has SOLD OUT! With an impressive 860 runners signed up for the 22nd November!

If you would like to get involved, and help volunteer on what is always a really great day, please email communities@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk FAO Tash Mead



Community Group Toolkit



As always, our community group toolkit is free to view and download HERE. It provides support for the most common issues faced by VCSE groups. It is great for those of you getting started and can provide useful reminders tips for more well-established organisations.

To contact us directly for any *queries or assistance with community groups and organisations*, please contact : communitycapacity@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk. For *general communities enquiries* please contact: communities@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk. Don't forget to join our Facebook page for regular updates.

Communities Team Services

Our South Norfolk and Broadland Council Communities Team offers a wide range of services and projects. Below, you'll find brief descriptions of some of these services with direct links for more information. You can also explore the full range of services here.

Active Now

A simplified referral pathway for health professionals to help patients become more physically active. For those doing less than 30 mins of exercise a week or living with long-term conditions, it's part of a coordinated approach to improving health through movement.

Tots2Teens

Holiday activities for 5–16-year-olds, including inclusive sessions for children with additional needs. Discounts are available for families on means-tested benefits, and eligible children can access free sessions through Big Norfolk Holiday Fun.

Yours Sincerely

A free bi-monthly newsletter offering friendly, postal contact for residents who'd like more connection. Includes wellbeing tips, local updates, support info, and light-hearted content like quizzes.

Community at Heart Lottery

Broadland District Council's Community at Heart Lottery is a weekly online lottery created to support local good causes across the district.

Better Off Calculator

A simple tool to check what financial support you may be entitled to - including help you might not know about.

Mindful Towns and Villages

Local areas where trained Wellbeing Champions offer safe, supportive spaces to talk about mental health. These community members complete awareness training and help signpost to further support.

Get help

Everybody needs a bit of extra support from time to time and the Help Hub makes sure people get what they need as soon as possible. Please share our services with people in your communities.

To get help with any of these issues, or with any other problems:

- Complete a request for support form

- If you live in Broadland call 01603 430431 or email helphub@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

- If you live in South Norfolk call 01508 533933 or email helphub@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Our telephone lines are open **Monday to Friday from 8:15am until 10pm** (excluding bank holidays). Emails will be monitored within office hours of Monday to Friday 8am until 5pm (excluding bank holidays).



Broadland and South Norfolk District Council are proudly supporting the Christmas Toy appeal again this year. The launch date is **Monday 26th October 2026.**

Presents will be distributed to children aged 0-18yrs who are in need, may be experiencing hardship and are being supported by local professionals and our partner agencies.

There are a number of drop off points (check our website for confirmed venues) and brand new/sealed gifts can be donated to these points from the 26th October until 29th November 2026.

For more information on the Christmas toy appeal, including how to refer a child/family, please check our website for details [Christmas Toy Donation Appeal | Broadland and South Norfolk]

If you or your community group would like to donate new and unwrapped gifts, we'd be very grateful!

Typically, people donate to the younger children, but there are many gifts available for 12+ years. If you would like to donate, but need some inspiration then please contact communities@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk for more information.



If you are interested in featuring in a future **Quarterly Update** or would like to present at a **Community Links Network Meeting,** please let us know.

Click here to sign up to the next Community Links Network

Thank you!