

SUBJECT	Chiltern District's Revitalisation Groups Annual Report 2018/19
RELEVANT MEMBER	Cllr Liz Walsh – Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Martin Holt – Head of Healthy Communities
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WARD/S AFFECTED	All wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report on the projects delivered across Chiltern District across the Councils seven Revitalisation Groups.
- 1.2 Agree funding for the Capital projects as detailed in Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the positive work of the Revitalisation groups be noted and the annual grant of £2,000 for each group be continued for 2019/2020.
2. That £14,000 of the capital programme be allocated to support Chalfont St Peter and Great Missenden and Prestwood Revitalisation Groups.

3. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Chiltern's seven community led Revitalisation groups have a strong track record of delivering projects which improve services and facilities for residents within their communities.
- 2.2 As evidenced in Appendix 3 each group strives to provide a broad cross-section of views and interests and include representatives of local businesses, residents, social and cultural organisations, faith groups and all three tiers of local government. The projects delivered contribute to the social, economic and environmental development of their respective communities.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Revitalisation groups support local communities to improve facilities and services that are relevant to their needs, playing a key role in supporting the council's corporate objectives.
- 3.2 By stimulating community involvement they foster a sense of place and offer a platform that allows residents and community groups to feel involved and make a difference. Since their formation in the 1990's they have delivered a diverse range of projects which have improved local high streets, supported older and younger people, boosted the local economy and improved the appearance and access to local parks, country-side and village walks.

5. Content of Report

- 4.1 A summary of the various schemes completed during 2018/19 for each group is detailed below. The report also highlights two capital projects which the Council is funding through the Revitalisation Capital grant scheme in Chalfont St Peter and Great Missenden respectively.
- 4.2 Amersham Action Group – Co-ordinates and manages the popular Christmas festival in Amersham –on-the-Hill in partnership with Amersham Town Council. Amersham Action Group is also working with retailers to improve the vibrancy of the High Street with the proposed introduction of a one way traffic system along Sycamore Road and with angled parking to address issues such as parking and traffic flow. The group is also working in partnership with the local transport user group to facilitate the provision of Step Free access at Amersham Station.
- 4.3 Old Amersham Revitalisation –Support ‘Old Amersham Seniors in Society’ (Oasis) a popular social club for isolated elderly and disabled residents. To commemorate the centenary of First World War the group supported the installation of a 6ft ‘Tommy’ soldier in the Old Amersham memorial garden as part of a wider local event linking in with the schools. Other projects being developed include Tree planting in Fieldway and Piggotts Orchard, the ‘Space for All’ play area in Gore Hill to provide facilities for children and young people and the restoration of a footpath to reinstate a safe cycle route to Stanley Hill.
- 4.4 Chesham Connect – Work in collaboration with local retailers, small businesses and voluntary community groups. Examples include, loaning equipment to small groups to help them run community events, a quarterly community newsletter, the development of a night time economy strategy and facilitating a small grants programme which supports a diverse range of local projects such as the Birchwood garden scheme for local disabled residents.
- 4.5 Chalfont St Giles – The group runs the community library and visitor centre; maintains the Misbourne pathway; supports the village youth club, runs the hugely successful literary festival and a high street summer festival day. Moving forward the group focus is to develop cultural walks linking in with the walking festivals to increase visitor footfall.
- 4.6 Chalfont St Peter – Over many years the group’s working party has established a strong working relationship with local voluntary groups and businesses to help create a stronger cohesive community. Examples of projects delivered include supporting the village’s older people’s action group and village youth club. The group helps lobby locally for safer traffic and more public transport as well as play a key role in running the highly acclaimed Feast Day festival. The group is also leading on the exciting ‘Memorial Garden’ project detailed in Appendix 2 which will regenerate a central area of the village.
- 4.7 Great Missenden and Prestwood – The recent Community Vision consultation attracted 229 responses and identified a strong desire to improve public space and the overall attractiveness of village. The group is currently working hard to improve two untidy grassed areas at the front of the Prestwood High Street Car Park, by providing seating within a pleasant garden and new community notice and local history board as detailed in Appendix 2. The group is currently refreshing its action plan by establishing discussion forums to gather information on six key priorities which is also helping attract more volunteers.

- 4.8 Little Chalfont Community Association – In partnership with the Parish Council the group maintains a fully accessible nature park, supports the community library, runs the annual village show and maintain a community website. The group has successfully raised over £15,000 to extend and renew the village Christmas lights and also co-ordinates a quarterly village newsletter.
- 4.9 Capital Projects – In addition to smaller community projects the revitalisation groups have a proven record in delivering larger scale capital projects. Chalfont St Giles War Memorial restoration and Great Missenden High Street regeneration projects will both have a positive impact on their local community and draw in significant external funding into each respective community as detailed in Appendix 2.
- 4.10 Joint Working – Each group has an interest in improving the local economy and footfall to their respective high streets by increasing visitor numbers. To address this, the groups have started worked collaboratively to develop a local district wide visitor strategy. To date, three projects are being explored: Midsomer’s Murders Amersham/Chalfont trail, River Misbourne Walk (Mills and more) and a Chess Walk.

6. Consultation

- 5.1 The various projects delivered through the Revitalisation groups are delivered through extensive consultation with partner organisations and local residents.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial

No additional financial resources are required as the £2,000 annual grant each Revitalisation Group receives is drawn from existing internal budgets.

6.2 Legal

No implications.

6.3 Equalities

The proposed funding will directly support the voluntary sector to assist a diverse range of residents including the elderly and vulnerable, young people, disabled residents and socially disadvantaged.

6.4 Environmental

Projects have a positive impact on the environment, improved access to open spaces, offering educational opportunities to improve awareness and understanding of the local natural environment.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

7.1 Work towards safer and healthier local communities

- Address the needs of the elderly and those who are vulnerable
- Promote local communities
- Support the voluntary sector and promote volunteering

- Engage with parish and town Councils
- Engage with local neighbourhoods
- Support diversification and increased footfall in local high streets

8. Next Steps

8.1 A report will be produced next year feeding back to Members the various projects delivered across the district.

Background Papers:	None
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