



## Amersham & Villages Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Amersham & Villages Community Board held on Thursday 15 February 2024 in Large Barn Hall, Amersham Community Centre, Chiltern Avenue, Amersham HP6 5AH, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.45 pm.

### **BC Councillors present**

M Dormer (Chairman), M Flys (Vice-Chairman), C Jones, M Tett, J Waters and C Jackson

### **Others in attendance**

L Wright, F Ewing, G Hudson, M Bergh, K Hutton, D Hulme, M Booroff Davies, I Brown, D Bridge, J Staite, S Sarkar, M Day, J Russell, E He, M Bosman, D Conway Read, J Herbert, J Gray, R Nutley, S Butcher, S Strange, D Atkinson, F Lambert, C Bull, J Gellman, E Jeans, P Matza, D Winterburn.

### **Apologies**

T Butcher, G Harris, D King, R Matthews, S Rouse and L Walsh

### **Agenda Item**

#### **1 Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **2 Apologies for Absence/ Declarations of Interest/ Minutes of last meeting**

There were no declarations of interest. The minutes of the board meeting held on 2/11/2023 were agreed.

#### **3 Local Updates**

Presentations on the local updates from the board included updates on engagement activities, spend so far and in the pipeline and the 2024 Proud of Bucks Awards.

Groups and individuals present were invited to get involved with plans to support volunteer recruitment through local events and campaigns.

The main session was a workshop to explore priority areas for the board to focus on in the coming year.

There were four tables, and each were tasked with considering what was going well or the strengths and what was missing or gaps in the local area, possible project ideas that would make a difference, and which organisations to involve, in relation to the four suggested priority themes:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Improving the Environment
- Community Resilience
- Opportunities for Young People

Other suggestions – employment opportunities for autistic individuals / people with a learning disability.

A spokesperson for each table provided details of their discussion to the room and this is summarised below. The full detail is tabled as an appendix to the notes.

#### **4 Workshop/Tabled discussion**

##### Health & Wellbeing: ideas in this area included:

Better access to technology and transport;  
 Volunteers – reduce the obstacles and barriers and promote opportunities;  
 Autism diagnosis support in the interim;  
 Mental health support;  
 Healthy eating support;  
 More accessible and varied sport/fitness, evening/weekend walking groups;  
 Financial insecurity – work collaboratively with food banks;  
 Safe places and a community hub, rebrand of the warm spaces idea to reduce stigma;  
 More signposting, engagement, promotion and awareness – a local organogram flow.

##### Improving the Environment: ideas in this area included:

Stands at local markets to educate people  
 Promoting sustainable travel – cycling, bus routes, school run (car-pooling)  
 Improve accessibility to and management of green spaces  
 Better awareness of what can be recycled and where  
 Skills for life, bike-ability, bike repair  
 Energy proofing advice / energy doctor  
 Community Fridges  
 Water refill scheme  
 Reduce single use plastic and cups  
 EV charging  
 Library of things  
 More litter picking schemes  
 Tree planting – looking after new trees/watering etc.  
 Chalkstream – management with water companies

##### Community Resilience: ideas in this area included:

Fundraisers, fairs and activities to bring people together  
 Safe places scheme  
 Reach more diverse groups – intergenerational/intercultural activities  
 Better signposting  
 Engage more with working age adults  
 Help to recruit volunteers, team building

Community hubs – to provide a sense of belonging and reduce social isolation

Opportunities for young People: ideas in this area included:

Pop up stands / posters for promoting activities for young people

Sports groups tailored to more people and more accessible – help with funding

Mental health support

Reduce vaping

Work experience placements and mentoring schemes – mission employable

Indoor hubs / warm spaces for young people

Support around school avoidance

Youth spaces in Old Amersham

Increase connection with school networks

## **5 Meeting Summary and Close**

The board thanked all attendees for their time and useful insight about the various initiatives, gaps and ideas for improvement in the local area. The ideas discussed would feed into an action plan for the year ahead and the board would explore further work with specific groups and organisations to develop them further in the coming months.

## **6 Date of Next Meeting and Close**

To be confirmed.

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## Appendix 1

## Health &amp; Wellbeing:

	Strengths	Gaps	Projects	Partners
Table 1	Restore Hope; Foodbanks; Community fridges.	Financial insecurity; Integration of different groups; Food poverty; School networks; Knowledge, communication and engagement; No hub /central place; Local divide (between old and top Amersham).	Promote events; Promote local areas of interest / open spaces; Local hub / community space; Education, Signposting; Local organogram.	Restore Hope; Chiltern Rangers; Chiltern Voice; Local Press; Social Media; Your Voice; DWP.
Table 2	Warm spaces – but needs a rebrand to reduce stigma; Dementia cafes; Foodbanks.	Information sharing Not everyone knows what is being done; Social isolation; Volunteers for projects; Not much for young people.	Transport (social isolation); Assist with IT skills; Obesity assistance / healthy eating.	
Table 3	Sport clubs; Simply walk – daytime weekdays; Sports centre; Community library – films, children's groups, dementia support.	Inability to access mental health support; Transport to activities; Promotion; Funding for sports exercise for those who cannot afford groups; Support for autistic young adults; Non-team sports and activities – especially for girls; Lack of consistent volunteers.	Evening walking groups; Outreach to self-excluding young people – dance, music, taster sessions; Mental health first aid training.	Mental health charities; Sports clubs.
Table 4	Good outdoor space; Good leisure centre – well used, big opportunities; Restore Hope; Fitness; Greenery;	Where can young people go? Leisure centre is expensive; Obesity/ Dementia/ Autism/ Elderly - Social Isolation; Information sharing;	Help with technology to stay connected, iPads for groups out and about - hire taxis, pay for parking, book cinema tickets etc;	Age UK; Empower to Cook.

	Clean; Schools;	Support for people waiting diagnosis and post diagnosis; Cooking skills / healthy eating / obesity; DBS checks for volunteers.	Healthy eating and cooking lessons.	
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#### Improving the Environment:

	Strengths	Gaps	Projects	Partners
Table 1	Green spaces; Recycling; Recycle, repair, renew – Repair cafe.	Public transport; Sustainable transport; Inaccessible green spaces; Lack of cycle ways; Food waste collection; Knowledge of what can be recycled; Wombles.	Skills for life, e.g. bike repair, bikeability (all ages); Energy efficiency – Energy doctors; Community Fridges.	Sustainable Amersham; Energy Doctors.
Table 2	Sustainable Amersham group; Wild Amersham; Eco group/ council at Amersham school – more bins to reduce litter and zen garden; Chiltern Society; Little Chalfont Nature Park; Fountains; Eco fairs; Repair cafe; Young book club; Green festivals; Solar; Green areas and multi-use parks.	Getting rid of single use cups – problem with business buy in; Public transport needs improvement; Litter; People don't take care of green spaces; Planting trees – after care; Dog fouling – educate from bottom up.	Refill scheme; Car EV charging; More tree planting; Library of things; More litter picking schemes; Volunteers to look after environment – stands in market to promote.	
Table 3	Amersham in bloom; Nature Park; Access to green spaces; Amersham hospital gardens.	School transport – school run; Poisoned green-washing; Management of chalk streams by water companies.	Work with land owners and amersham in bloom; Promote car sharing for school runs; Bus routes.	Wild Amersham.

Table 4	Health & Wellbeing within schools – mind mentors; Scope offering support with disability or mental health; Green spaces; Lifestyle Centre.	Young people’s mental health support; Schools training with learning disabilities; Coordinated volunteering opportunities; Lack of awareness.	Educating people to take care of the environment; Initiatives showing benefits of time in nature on mental wellbeing.	Scope.
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Community Resilience:

	Strengths	Gaps	Projects	Partners
Table 1	Conversion of building for new purposes, i.e. Churches to Foodbanks etc.; Good engagement in Old Amersham e.g. Christmas Market. Outdoor cinema; Youth Communities e.g. Skate Park.	Location of some events.	Community Hub to provide a sense of belonging and socialisation; Family fun days in a good location.	Housing Associations.
Table 2	Covid managed well – resilience to threats; Lots of local groups.	Diversity and inclusion; Generational differences; Communication and awareness.	Aim: a community that looks out for each other; Socio-economic Health & Wellbeing; Understanding different communities; Interconnecting with other priorities.	Chiltern Welcomes.
Table 3	WhatsApp groups; Schools; Community libraries; Neighbourhood watch; Community lunch clubs.	Support for 30-50 year olds.	More community lunch / social groups.	Dementia Cafe; U3A; Re-Engage; Men’s Shed; Library groups; Rotary; Volunteer days by companies.
Table 4		Communication; Intention is there but bureaucracy restricts volunteering; People working longer.	Expanding safe places for young people; Work experience support;	

			Fundraisers to bring people together; Easier access to funding; More sports groups, tailored to different people; Help with recruitment.	
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#### Opportunities for Young People:

	Strengths	Gaps	Projects	Partners
Table 1	Car-pooling in rural areas.	Accessibility for young people; Where can they go? Excluded from activities ££; Sense of place is lacking; Lack of transport; SEND – transitions; Training for youth workers, LGBT, Sexual Health.	Town twinning for young people; Spaces for young people – mapping demographics and having something in the right place.	CYB; Schools Community Network.
Table 2		Mental health; Vaping; Access for young people in rural communities / public transport.		
Table 3	DofE; Football clubs; Businesses talking to schools with Careers advice; Pinewood; Leisure centre.	Lack of clubs for specific sports; Mental Health support; Anxiety and family issues; Vaping.	Older students working with younger students.	
Table 4	Lifestyle Centre – lots for YP; Chiltern Open air museum, school visits, additional needs; Chiltern Music therapy; Uniformed groups; Youth club reopened.	Links with faith organisations; Volunteers especially male.	Team building volunteer days; Intergenerational projects; Work placements for vulnerable young adults; Mission employable model.	Work experience.





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