

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	1 st April 2025
Report Title	Community & Youth Development
Agenda Reference	10
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Recommendations

1. To note the report.
2. To extend the Yoga Community Group booking for a rolling programme for the rest of the year.

Background

The Community Development Team has been busy facilitating the regular events such as the Memory Café, Companions Café, Haven, Community Bus Trips and the ad hoc events from the Council's agreed events programme (LINK)

Easter Half Term was particularly busy on the Youth area with Easter Egg Hunts, Arts & Crafts and Cake Pop Decorating – all of which were sell out events.

There was also an opportunity to run a Easter Wreath making session for adults and again this was very well received, with ideas coming from the participants for future sessions in the Autumn and around Christmas.

Events and Sessions

Youth

Easter Holiday Activities:

- **Easter Egg Hunt**
The Easter Egg hunt events, held across two locations at Queen Elizabeth Drive and King George V play parks, recorded a total attendance of approximately 130 children, with Councillors contributing one-third of the chocolate eggs required for the activities. Councillor Paul Park provided additional community engagement by volunteering as the Easter Bunny character, facilitating photograph opportunities with participating children.
The programme incorporated extra activities including an egg and spoon race to enhance participant engagement. Surplus eggs were utilised as prizes for an associated colouring competition.
- **BIG Art at Luna Play Park**
The Big Art creative painting session attracted approximately 40 participants who explored various artistic techniques using alternative painting implements including sponges, wooden sticks, and cotton swabs. The activity incorporated an environmental sustainability element by repurposing obsolete event banners as canvases, which were subsequently transformed into vibrant artistic works and still displayed at the play area.



The event demonstrated strong family engagement, with many attendees extending their visit to encompass a full day experience. Families brought packed lunches and made use of the available facilities at the play park.

- **Easter Crafts**

The Easter Crafts session was initially 1 session. Due to the number of bookings, we needed to add another session on the same day to make it workable. We had 35 signed up for the first session and 33 signed up at the second.

Families worked together creating bouncy bunnies, hopping cup bunnies, wooden spoon dress-up bunnies, and the cute plate chicks

We even had a fleeting appearance from the Easter Bunny himself during one session.

- **Easter Cake Pops**

We organised 2 sessions for this activity; we had 31 places booked for the first session and 32 booked for the second. The sessions included the following fun activities: Easter Edible Wreaths with pretzels, decorating cake pops, and creating crazy chick biscuits. Everyone left with bags of chocolaty goodies to take home.

- **Easter Colouring Competition**

We had 17 entries for the Easter Egg Colouring Competition which we decided to award all entries with an easter egg for their fabulous effort.

We're absolutely blown away by everyone's creativity – from intricate patterns to magical rabbits and stunning collages, each entry brought something special to the competition. The variety and imagination on display was truly impressive.

May Half Term Activities:

- **Recycled Bugs & Beanstalks**

Seven families registered for and attended the event. Participants engaged in sustainable craft activities, constructing decorative bee and ladybird insect houses through the upcycling of tin cans. Due to the weather conditions, the workshop could not be completed so we are looking at the scheduling of a follow-up session to enable children to finalize their projects.

The weather did not curb the enthusiasm of the children, who were keen to go on a Bear Hunt around the Leisure Gardens, which gave the opportunity to introduce them to the different sorts of produce that is currently growing. After an additional activity of colouring sheets, the event concluded with Sunflower seed planting in our newly refurbished community planters.

- **Fence Weaving at the Skate Park**

Low numbers, this seems to be a trend for May half terms activities. We had six children sign up prior to the event and another four on the day, parents happily stayed to help too. The session started with planning patterns on paper then transferring some to the fence, other patterns were explored directly to the fence. We had a half time break of hot chocolate and biscuits then continued to complete some fantastic designs (some on brand too). We encouraged one of the parents to join our Craft and Connect session, which she has done.

- **BEST Multi Sports**

Application numbers have been lower than anticipated. We need to benchmark this with historical data to determine if this reduction is due to the time of year or alternative variables, including the frequency and variety of sporting activities provided within the current programme offering.

Community

- **Menopause Café** – Finished at the end of April. There are no plans or community interest as yet to consider running the sessions again.



- **Community Yoga** – We are now halfway through the 12-week session with 8 participants. We could possibly accommodate 10 people so we would need to advertise again. The current attendees are keen for the sessions to continue as a rolling programme. The average age is 50 years old. After a slower uptake, our income for this cohort was: £514.00, minus £360 (Instructors Fees) and room hire fees for 1 hour the sessions are breaking even. Future cohorts of 8 attendees would generate an income of £576.00.
- **Community Bus Trips** – The community transport programme has delivered two trips during the reporting period. An initial trip to Devizes was conducted in April, followed by an additional visit to Millets Farm in May. This excursion was scheduled in response to high demand, as evidenced by an extensive waiting list for the originally planned June visit to the same destination. Future community transport initiatives are scheduled to include excursions to Burnham on Sea.
- **Easter Wreath Making**
A fully booked event at zero cost, 16 residents created beautiful easter wreaths using a mixture of hedgerow cuttings and Easter decorations. A beautiful buffet of savoury snacks was served, and some residents brought their own drinks to really enjoy a relaxed evening of craft and connection. All requesting more and especially a Christmas Wreath making evening. This event successfully engaged residents from all backgrounds and ages, we had participants aged from 18 to 72.
- **Craft and Connect**
A free group for crafters in Haydon Wick, like minded residents with skills and conversation to share. 16 places for residents only. We have 16 residents signed up. The atmosphere was relaxed at the first session enabling us to get to know each other and discuss what crafts they'd like to explore over the coming sessions.

Haven

The past few months at the Haven have been buzzing with activity and new connections. Our community has grown with new faces joining us, bringing fresh energy and perspective to our gatherings. The true highlight has been the formation of new friendships and the strengthening of our community bonds.

Social activities have been at the heart of our time together:

- Board games have become a regular favourite, creating laughter and friendly competition
- Musical bingo has been particularly popular, combining the joy of music with the excitement of gameplay
- The warm, welcoming atmosphere makes The Haven special - whether joining in activities or simply enjoying conversation
- Easter bonnet making brought colour and imagination to the room
- Decorating plant pots and planting sunflower seeds added a friendly competitive element , we're all eager to see whose sunflower will reach the sky first!

We've expanded our community connections through valuable guest speakers:

- Thames Water representatives visited to share information about their support scheme



Plan of Upcoming Events

Group Summer Litter Picks (Fancy Dress)	Friday 6 th June 2025
Community Bus Trip – Burnham on Sea	2nd Wednesday, July 2025
Weekend of Words	5th / 6th July 2025
Skate Jam	Friday 25th July 2025
Bournemouth Coach Trips	Monday 4 th / 11 th August 2025