

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	1 st April 2025
Report Title	Community & Youth Development
Agenda Reference	9
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Recommendations

To note the report.

Background

The Community Development Team has been busy and hit the ground running with additional duties since the restructuring of the Office Team from January – April 2025.

Community Events and Sessions

Youth

- **Skate Jam:** Was booked for Friday 21st February 2025 to compliment our half term youth events. The event was well attended, and participants enjoyed their session.
- **BEST:** It was lovely to welcome BEST back to our youth community events. Their events for HWPC are always well attended and they enjoy engaging with our young people. We ensured we oversubscribed as unfortunately there were no shows on the day.
- **The Underground:** This is an ongoing opportunity to work closely with the organisers to build a stronger youth offer within our community. The Marketing Co-ordinator and Community Administrator attended the Youth Club in March to meet with Paul to understand what the Youth Club offers our young people and view the space for potential groups and workshops.
- **February Half Term Recycled art sessions x 2:** Families were invited to book a place on the Wildflower Recycled Art Sessions. We held one on Tuesday 18th February and the other on Thursday 20th February. The Tuesday session was fully booked with 33 on the register. It was a fun afternoon creating wildflower petals with empty plastic bottles, a lot of energy and paint. Children also reused plastic balls to make bug monsters, these were a very popular activity. The Thursday session was a much more tranquil group with just 17 attending. The session was set up as a mosaic workshop where families created the leaves and flower heads using mosaic tiles. Offcuts of ply and sawn tree branches. We had some very artistic families taking part across the two sessions and some fabulous art pieces were made ready for the wildflower temporary installation at Rose Walk in May.

Community

- **Haven** - What began as a simple warm space has evolved into something truly special—a vibrant community where new faces arrive regularly. Newcomers find themselves embraced by the warmth of established residents, creating an environment where everyone feels they belong. The excitement still builds when bingo is played, quiz sessions continue to spark friendly competition and collective puzzling. In a world that can often feel disconnected, this community stands as a testament to our fundamental need for connection and the joy that comes from being part of something larger than ourselves. As The Haven continues to grow and evolve, it preserves the essence of what makes it special—a place where everyone is welcome, valued, and free to be authentically themselves.



- **Community Bus Trips** – Community bus monthly trips have been added to our programme. We have already had a successful trip to Marlborough, and another full trip planned for April.
- **Menopause Café** – The Menopause Café continues to provide a source of support and advice for those on the menopause journey. On average we have 4-5 parishioners along with 4-5 Swindon wide residents attending this monthly group. Rae-Marie continues to offer varied topics from dietary advice to hair and skin care options. The sessions end at the end of April.
- **Community Yoga** – U3A have completed their first Yoga block booking. Due to its success, we have now extended the booking for a further 9 weeks. We have also developed a 12-week Yoga programme, due to start on the 7th of April through until July. This is to encourage a different demographic to our events, and we are hopeful that we reach a different audience.
- **Volunteer Cream Tea** – over 30 volunteers attended our ‘Thank You’ cream tea. They regularly give up so much of their time to support their community – it is a really nice way to recognise their service.
- **The Over 60s Cream Tea** was a delightful gathering that brought residents of the community together for an elegant afternoon of relaxation and connection. These events provide valuable opportunities for residents to form new friendships and strengthen existing ones. The careful attention to detail—using bone China and including all the traditional accompaniments—created a special experience that made residents feel valued and appreciated.

Plan of Upcoming Events

Easter Egg Hunt: We currently have over 100 applications for our Easter Egg hunts that we are hosting at both Queen Elizabeth Drive and King George V play parks. Maximum capacity was 160 to reach our target of easter eggs within the existing budget. Thanks to those Councillors who have donated some easter eggs.

Easter Big Art: This is the first time that we have taken art to the community as an external event. Children will be encouraged to be creative with messy paint and printing techniques.

Easter Youth Arts & Crafts: Was very quickly oversubscribed so a decision was made to split the bookings into 2 sessions. We are still over 30 people at each session allowing for some no shows.

Easter Cake Pop Decorating: Was also very quickly oversubscribed in the first session so we asked some to attend the second session we now have a balance of numbers for both.

Easter Wreath Making: A workshop style activity aimed at over 18's with 16 workstations. Crafting in a relaxed environment. We currently have 7 booked this is only day 2 of marketing the event.

Tea, Toast and Talk Tuesdays: Another new initiative to reach out to a different audience. We are offering a short drop-in session to give mums / dads / carers the opportunity to have a cuppa in a friendly space – aiming to support building our community and improving loneliness and mental health.