

Community First Coronation Celebrations

Saturday 6th May 2023 marked the historic Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla. Community First has enjoyed the Patronage of The Former Duchess of Cornwall (now Queen) for a number of years and we were delighted to receive invitations to celebrate the festivities in London on the day of the Coronation, as well as to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday 9th May.

We have prepared a blog post with a selection of photos from the day. You can view the blog post and photos at: <https://www.communityfirst.org.uk/news/community-first-coronation-celebration/>

Planning: Support for Local Councils and Communities

Thank you to the speakers, guests and WALC members who attended the recent WALC County Conference, which took place on 9th June 2023 at West Lavington Village Hall. Thank you also to CCLA, Lemonbooking, and Microshade VSM who generously supported this event.

The conference theme for this year was Planning. This included the National Planning Policy Framework, CIL & s106 monies, commenting as a consultee on planning matters and preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Speakers in attendance were Dr James Derounian and Dr Carlton Brand. James Gray MP and Danny Kruger MP were also in attendance, giving their views on the current Planning policies and how they impact our local area. The conference included a panel session with Wiltshire Community Land Trust and Community First who discussed how they can help Parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan and associated consultation.

Community First has recently seen an increase in local councils who are looking for support with planning, including Neighbourhood Plans. We have worked with a number of local and national councils to support with planning consultation through online surveys. We can also help with analysis of the data and report writing. This can include thematic analysis of open-ended responses.

Please see the leaflet included with this briefing pack for more information or contact:
consultancy@communityfirst.org.uk

Building Bridges Programme

We are pleased to announce that the Building Bridges programme is being relaunched with funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund via Wiltshire Council and the new programmes will run through to April 2025

What Building Bridges does:

The programme offers a holistic service that provides personalised support to people with significant barriers and challenges to help them build their independence and move towards education and employment outcomes.

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As with the previous programme, a Support Worker will work closely with each participant to ensure they have strong consistent support from joining the programme through to leaving it – they will help understand their barriers & challenges, develop and implement plans to deliver them and provide support to sustain outcomes. They will also assist participants when they engage with external services to ensure the engagement is as smooth and seamless as possible.

A personalised needs analysis, circles of support map and holistic support action plan will be developed with each participant. They will then be offered a range of one-to-one and group activities based on their individual needs as they progress through support.

We are more than happy to integrate existing support that participants have in place into their plans with Building Bridges if they would like us to. In addition, Building Bridges will also offer:

- Access to self-confidence-building courses.
- Volunteering and work experience activities.
- Debt and benefit advice.
- Travel training.
- One-to-one counselling, anxiety, and mental health support.
- Support in gaining skills and qualifications.

Participants will be supported to develop their CVs, job search skills and interview skills and have access to support for up to three months to help them sustain their education and employment outcomes.

Who can we support?

The programme can support participants who are aged 16+, but those aged under 18 need to be NEET (not in education, employment & training) or at risk of becoming so.

Participants need to have the legal right to work in the UK and we can support those who are:

- Economically Inactive
- Unemployed but not receiving support from DWP employability programmes
- Employed but facing barriers & challenges to sustain employment

Building Bridges cannot support people who are in prison or remanded in custody, but we can support those who are remanded on bail and ex-offenders.

Please note that Building Bridges cannot replace statutory provision (Local Authority, DWP Job Centre, etc.) but we can work alongside other support provision if there is additionality.

Making Referrals

People can refer themselves to the programme or make a referral on behalf of someone else they are supporting with their permission.

Referrals can now be made via the programme website (www.buildingbridgessw.org.uk) or for further details please call 01380 732821.

MiDAS – Minibus Driver Awareness Training

Community First offers accredited MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness) Training for organisations and groups, led by our fantastic Training Co-ordinator Martin Carter.

MiDAS is a membership-based scheme designed to enhance both driving and safety standards for drivers of minibuses. MiDAS is a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers. Community First is now taking new bookings for MiDAS minibus training with our Training Coordinator Martin Carter. Martin is a retired Police Advanced Driver with over 35 years' experience of driving minibuses.

The MiDAS training course includes a session on how to operate a minibus safely. This is followed by a 30-minute multiple choice assessment with 20 questions. Trainees will need to answer 16 questions correctly to pass the theory test. Finally, there will be a practical test which incorporates a driving skills training session and an assessment drive which will last just over an hour, with the assessment taking 30 minutes. Upon completion of the theory and practical test, trainees will receive a certificate which is valid for 4 years.

Pricing is based on a minimum group size of 3 drivers per booking and starts at £105.00 per person. We are now taking new bookings for late Summer/early Autumn 2023 and early booking is recommended to secure a training place.

Please contact mcarter@communityfirst.org.uk for more information about MiDAS and how to book your training.

Rural Youth Project

The Community Development team and Stacey from District Sports recently held a youth pop-up event in Pewsey, as part of the ongoing rural youth project which aims to engage young people in rural areas. The pop-up event was attended by over 60 young people, who took part in activities including zorbing, sports and crafts. The young people were very well mannered and all enjoyed a fantastic evening. Further youth-pop-up events are planned over the summer months.

Feedback on our pop-up events:

“The Shrewton youth pop-up has meant the world to our daughter, who has disabilities and is now at an out-of-county specialist school. It has given her a safe, structured, and supported way for her to see and socialise with her old primary school friends and keep local ties (something that has started to be trickier for her as her interests and abilities diverge increasingly from those of her peers). She has had an absolute whale of a time at the group, has been brilliantly supported to join in, and is always asking when the next one is.”

“I also particularly love that the group is open to all – meaning young people at different schools, and those who are no longer at school because, for one reason or another, they have fallen out of the system, have a place where they can maintain their relationships and a sense of community. My hope and belief is that this will positively impact outcomes not just for those who attend, but for our community as a whole – as young people who are otherwise at risk of feeling isolated, bored and disenfranchised (and so more likely to behave antisocially) have positive opportunities to engage together and re-build a sense of togetherness.”

“Thank you so much for the pop-up and the time and support you have given to our young people.”

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“Thank you so much for the kindness and ongoing support that you and your colleagues are giving to my son.”

“Just a few lines to tell you how much [name] enjoys attending the pop-up youth clubs and the young carers events. [Name] has a lot of fun taking part in these activities. He is an only child. By attending your groups he is able to mix with other children his own age outside of school which is giving him more confidence and self-belief, which helps positively to support his social, emotional and learning skills.

“As a young carer, he is often unable to go on day trips due to his father’s mobility and health issues. The young carers respite days give him the chance to have experiences that he normally wouldn’t be able to take part in and gives him a break both emotionally and physically from his caring role (he helps to look after his father who is living with terminal cancer).”

For more information about youth engagement and how we may be able to support a project in your local area, please email Harry Tipple: htipple@communityfirst.org.uk

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