

## Community First - AGM and Awards Celebration

The Community First Annual General Meeting and Awards Celebration will take place on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024 (5.30-7.30pm)** at the Town Hall in Devizes. Refreshments will be provided. At the event we will share an overview of our work over the last 12 months and celebrate the achievements individuals involved in our programmes and services.

## Voice It, Hear It - Stakeholder Engagement Registration



Voice It, Hear It is an innovative engagement project dedicated to enhancing health and social care services in Wiltshire. The project, which launched in early 2024, aims to engage residents and workers to co-produce, co-design, and co-develop local health and social care services. The Voice It, Hear It project is delivered by Community First, Wiltshire Service Users' Network, Wessex Community Action, Age UK Wiltshire, Alzheimer's Support and Celebrating Age Wiltshire, with funding from Wiltshire Council and Bath, North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB).

Voice It, Hear It is committed to amplifying the voices of adults with lived experiences, ensuring their insights are heard, shared, and acted upon. The project will collaborate with Wiltshire's health, education, and social care sectors, focusing on those who use these services and their caregivers. The primary aim of the partnership is to engage and seek the views of adults and children with:

- Learning disabilities and difficulties
- Physical impairments
- Sensory impairments
- Mental health needs
- Autism spectrum conditions
- Conditions associated with ageing, such as frailty and cognitive impairment
- Social, emotional, and behavioural needs
- Speech, language, and communication needs
- Substance use disorder
- Other factors impacting a child, adult, or family's ability to achieve positive outcomes (e.g., trauma, domestic abuse, exploitation)

The project seeks to collaborate with extended partners to better understand how and where to engage with the adult organisations you work with. By leveraging existing trusted relationships, the initiative aims to co-host and conduct consultations more effectively, ensuring the voices of these clients are included, valued, and acted upon. Your participation is crucial. By joining this effort, you will help ensure that the experiences of these communities inform new policies, strategies, and services.

To contribute, please register using the online form: <https://survey.zohopublic.eu/zs/7DDXym> and tell us about your organisation, your client organisation and how we might reach out through your networks. We have some funding available to support this work, including running workshops on behalf of Voice It, Hear It. Your involvement will aid in consulting clients and sharing their information as we develop new strategies and services for Wiltshire Council and BSW ICB.

For more information, please visit: [www.communityfirst.org.uk/voice](http://www.communityfirst.org.uk/voice)



## Support for Unpaid Carers (Including Parent Carers) in Wiltshire



Community First is working in partnership with Age UK Wiltshire, Alzheimer's Support, Wiltshire Service Users Network, Citizens Advice Wiltshire and Wessex Community Action, under the umbrella Carers Together Wiltshire. The Carers Together Wiltshire partnership offers tailored support to the thousands of individuals across Wiltshire identified as a carer.

As part of our work with Carers Together Wiltshire, Community First offers support for parent carers who provide additional care to their child who needs more help and support. This includes a support conversation to discuss individual parent carer needs, information/advice and signposting to other support services. We can carry out a Carers Assessment for parent carers caring for a child over the age of 18 if they meet the eligibility criteria for a funded service. For more information about parent carer support through Carers Together Wiltshire, please see the parent carer support pathway included with this briefing pack. An information postcard is also included in the briefing pack.

The Carers Together Wiltshire team held three parent carer drop-in events in Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury over the summer, with further drop-in events planned for the autumn. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page and newsletter (see below) for more information about upcoming drop-in events: [www.facebook.com/communityfirstwiltshire](https://www.facebook.com/communityfirstwiltshire)

### Parent Carers Newsletter

If you are a parent carer and you would like to be kept up to date with information including resources, events, drop-ins and other news, please subscribe to the parent carers newsletter using the sign-up form below. We would be grateful if you would also share this link with other parent carers in your newsletters and on your website: <https://mailchi.mp/93192f1024d4/parent-carers-newsletter>

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## Wiltshire Community-Led Housing

Community First and Wiltshire Community Land Trust are working in partnership to deliver Wiltshire Community-Led Housing. We believe Community-Led Housing offers an opportunity for local people to come together and provide the kind of homes their communities need for the future. Wiltshire Community-Led Housing is an independent advisory and support service, and we are here to support anyone in Wiltshire and Swindon who is interested in finding out more about Community-Led Housing. This includes town and parish councils, new groups and established groups. If you would like to find out more, please email: [info@wiltshirecommunityledhousing.org.uk](mailto:info@wiltshirecommunityledhousing.org.uk).

## Rural Housing Enabler Project

Community First has been involved with the promotion and support of Community-Led Housing for several years working with Wiltshire Community Land Trust, Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and local housing associations. Community First has recently secured funding from DEFRA to employ a Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) Consultant and develop an active partnership group to help raise awareness of the lack of affordable housing for local people in rural areas and encouraging and supporting communities to help make provision for new homes. The team is currently responding to initiatives in Holt, Aldbourne and West Lavington. Current funding for this project is for a very limited period, up to the end of March 2025, so any groups and parishes interested in support should contact [info@wiltshirecommunityledhousing.org.uk](mailto:info@wiltshirecommunityledhousing.org.uk) as soon as possible.

## Employability Programmes

The Building Bridges Programme has recently received funding from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government via Wiltshire Council's Rough Sleeper Initiative's 'Move on and Prevention Funding' to support people in Wiltshire who are accommodated in housing related supported accommodation. If you would like support, please contact the dedicated rough sleeper team by email to [roughsleeperteam@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:roughsleeperteam@wiltshire.gov.uk), phone Housing Solutions 0300 456 0106, or speak to your HMO Manager.

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## Minibus Driver Training (MiDAS)

Community First offers MiDAS Minibus Driver Training, a nationally recognised standard for drivers of minibuses that offers training for members of staff and volunteers to drive minibuses to ensure they transport adults and children safely. MiDAS training offers the following benefits for your organisation:

- The Department of Education and Department for Transport highly recommend that all minibus drivers complete MiDAS training.
- Some insurance companies offer lower premiums on completion of this training.
- Drivers gain more valuable experience and feel more confident in driving minibuses and will become more competent and safer minibus drivers.

Community First is offering the new national MiDAS training programme. The theory module is now completed individually by drivers prior to undertaking a practical assessment. Upon application drivers will be allocated a 'learner pass' to access the Community Transport Association (CTA) learning portal.

Once this module has been completed one of our Driver Assessors will arrange to visit clients to complete a theory follow up followed by the driving assessment. On successful completion of both theory and practical, drivers will be able to log on the CTA portal to print off their personal MiDAS certificates.

Community First employs two highly qualified and experienced MiDAS trainers. Demand for training is high and will increase as we move towards the autumn and start of the new school year. Please book early to ensure your drivers are up to date with their training.

**If you would like any further information on MiDAS training, please contact Martin Carter:**  
[mcarter@communityfirst.org.uk](mailto:mcarter@communityfirst.org.uk).

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## Youth Action Wiltshire Golf Day

The Youth Action Wiltshire Annual Golf Day will take place on Friday 13th September 2024 at the North Wiltshire Golf Club, near Devizes. Please bring a team.

The funds raised from this event will go directly to our Young Carers and Splash services for exciting and sessions for Wiltshire young carers and young people facing challenges in their lives. These will include sports, music, arts, wildlife and well-being activities.

**For further information contact Becca Worsley via email: [beccaworsley@gmail.com](mailto:beccaworsley@gmail.com)**

## Youth Action Wiltshire Carol Service

The popular Youth Action Wiltshire carol service 'Carols by Candlelight' will take place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the usual venue of Malmesbury Abbey. Further details about the event will be released shortly.

For more information or to request tickets, please email Ginnie Keen: [ginniekeen@gmail.com](mailto:ginniekeen@gmail.com).

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## Alternative Provision at Oxenwood and Linkenholt

Community First has been approved as a provider of alternative provision delivered at our Outdoor Education Centres. Oxenwood and Linkenholt Centres provide a valuable learning experience for vulnerable children and young people. The Centres can support young people who may struggle to access mainstream education, including those who face social and academic exclusion. Under the leadership of our trained and experienced Outdoor Education Instructors, we foster a nurturing and positive environment where young people feel safe, heard and valued. Our Centres offer a place to unwind, connect with nature and experience the many positive benefits of adventure and outdoor education.

Our curriculum focuses on social, emotional, and physical development whilst emphasising the development of essential skills including resilience, motivation, self-control, confidence, and independence. Our commitment to high-quality experiences ensures that schools, clubs, and groups can access our day activities, and we are dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of young learners. Young people can be referred to us if:

- They lack engagement in school
- Have underdeveloped life-skills
- Have low attendance and attainment
- Experience poor mental well-being and self-esteem issues
- Have anxiety
- Have a pattern of negative relationships with adults and peers
- Lack of pro-social behaviours

For more information please visit: <https://www.oxenwood.org.uk/alternative-provision/>

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