

19 June 2019

LONELINESS CASE STUDIES

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Cookhill Parish Council, Worcestershire

Runs a free weekly computer club. Local residents are invited to the internet café in the village hall every Wednesday from 10am to 12pm to practice computer skills, ask questions and catch up with fellow residents over a hot drink and biscuit.

Hook Parish Council, Hampshire

Held a Christmas Day lunch at the local community centre for local residents who would otherwise have spent the day on their own. Support from local businesses enabled the council to provide the lunch free of charge and transport to and from the community centre was offered to those who needed it.

Raunds Town Council, Northamptonshire

Introduced a monthly film afternoon in response to informal consultations showing that many people in Raunds felt isolated. Film screenings take place at Saxon Hall, a modern village hall managed by Raunds Town Council. The first screening in August 2017 saw 43 local residents attend. By Christmas 2017 attendance had increased to 140 mostly older residents. The popularity of the event has inspired other local community groups to support the screenings, including the WI, who now provide tea and cakes and Serve, a local community organisation who provide transport to the screening for residents that need it.

Stony Stratford Town Council, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes

Hosts an annual Big Lunch bringing people together. The 2019 Big Lunch will take place at Wolverton Road Recreation Ground and will feature street food vendors, a bouncy castle, Punch and Judy show, balloon modelling and a planting activity with Stony Stratford In Bloom. The Bradwell Silver Band will be there to entertain people as well. The council also hopes to have a Flypast by a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (subject to operational conditions).

Hawthorn Parish Council, County Durham

Organises an annual 'Big Lunch' with the aim of getting residents together in a 'simple act of community, friendship and fun.' This year's event, a picnic in the village play area, featured children's entertainment, a fire engine, an open garden walk and a photo exhibition in the nearby community centre.

Forest Row Parish Council, East Sussex

Hosts community lunches three times a week. Every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday between 12:00pm-13:30pm local residents can enjoy a three course meal for a very reasonable £9.50. On the first and third Thursday of each month the council also host a friendship group which meets for tea, cake, outings and special talks. Sessions in May have included a ride on the Bluebell Railway and a celebration of local biographers.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Lyme Regis Town Council, Dorset

When Dorset County Council cut subsidies for bus services, Lyme Regis Town Council stepped in to save the number 71 bus. Initially the Town Council offered a temporary 2 day a week service, however this has now been extended to 5 days a week for the next three years.

Sevenoaks Town Council, Kent

1. **Number 8 bus:** Sevenoaks Town Council commissioned an integrated transport strategy which would form one of the appendices in its neighbourhood plan. During consultation for the strategy one of the needs identified was for a regular orbital service linking residential areas to the town centre. The town council worked with Kent County Council and local bus operator Go Coach to put in place provision of the No 8 bus, originally on a three year trial. The bus runs regularly and operates six days per week, linking the two train stations, bus station, residential areas and town centre. Fares have been set at £2 for a one way journey. Its introduction has enabled the town council to provide young people aged 11 to 18 with free bus travel within the town. The elderly population has also benefitted, with many older residents informing the town council that in addition to the obvious transport benefits they find getting the bus a social experience as they meet the same neighbours on the bus and converse with the bus driver.

2. Vintage Bus, route 7: The Vintage Bus was one of the first key projects to be overseen by the Sevenoaks Town Partnership, a Sevenoaks Town Council initiative bringing together a wide range of people from the local community to establish Sevenoaks as a prosperous and vibrant place to live, visit, shop and do business. The bus service was introduced to circulate footfall and increase the numbers of visitors to the town centre, in particular from the National Trust property, Knole. The bus operates during the summer months and is now in its sixth year. The bus operates on a circulate route and has proved to be a tremendous success. Local businesses benefit from the increased footfall. Feedback indicates that during the Vintage Bus operation independent businesses are more likely to receive international visitors. The Town's tourism as a whole as it is another reason for people to visit the town during summer months. There is also support from locals who use the Vintage Bus to visit Knole rather than using a car. Knole has an emotional attachment for those who live in the town. Elderly people say they can now visit Knole independently rather than waiting for the grown up children visiting to take them. Initially finances were provided via a Portas pilot project and sponsorship from Knole, however the bus service is now financed through ticket sales. The bus operates using Volunteer Bus Conductors, the rota for these are filled up immediately and the town council never has a problem recruiting more. Local businesses are able to advertise at a reasonable rate within the Vintage Bus. Sevenoaks Town Council covered all practical matters including insurance, administration and underwriting any financial losses in early years.

Smarden, Charing, Challock, Egerton Chilham and Pluckley Parish Councils, Kent.

Financially support Wealden Wheels community transport service. Wealden Wheels currently runs four minibuses which are available for hire by village families or groups who join the scheme. Managed largely by volunteers and run on a not-for-profit basis, it aims to provide an accessible, affordable and flexible means of transport to village members. The 130 or so members include local families, village clubs and societies. Members use the service for social, leisure, educational and health purposes. Trips can be either short or long, local or further afield, subject to vehicle and driver availability.

Feock Parish Council, Cornwall

Provides a community transport scheme for residents of all ages. People left stranded without access to transport in Devoran, Feock and Carnon Downs can call up and book a volunteer driver who will give them a lift to places such as

the doctors, dentist, the local shop or the hairdressers. The scheme has now been running for five years and provides on average 18 trips a week.

Burnham On Sea and Highbridge Town Council, Somerset

Voted in favour of granting £5,000 to keep a local bus service running. Burnham on Sea and Highbridge Town Council is one of eight local (parish and town) councils to have entered into an agreement with Somerset County Council that has seen the bus service continue, with local (parish and town) councils meeting most of the running costs.

Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish Council, Northamptonshire

Worked with Shire Community Services to provide a not for profit bus service following the withdrawal of all county bus subsidies by Northamptonshire County Council. Set up costs were funded with a £5000 grant from South Northamptonshire Council and Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish Council calculated the running costs, applied for the bus operators license, helped recruit bus drivers and created local publicity around the service. Initially the service was run by Shire Community Services, however the parish council took over running of it from 1 October.

Chigwell Parish Council, Essex

Used £1.2m in section 106 contributions from developers to fund three new local bus services. Two services will run on different routes during the morning and evening peak periods on a hail and ride basis. The council are also introducing an off peak service which will stop at set points in the village between 10:00am and 14:00pm. All three services will be free and for local residents only. Local residents can apply for a Chigwell Bus pass to confirm eligibility.

Sedlescombe Parish Council, East Sussex

Runs an informal lift scheme for local residents who find it difficult to attend doctors/hospital appointments because of a lack of transport. Names and contact details of volunteer drivers are posted on council notice boards outside the village shop and doctors surgery. Residents who require a lift can phone up any of the volunteer drivers and arrange a lift directly with them. Individuals who are interested in becoming a lift scheme driver are encouraged to contact the council so they can be added to the list.

Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertfordshire

Manages a fleet of community minibuses on behalf of Bishop's Stortford Minibus Trust. The minibuses are available for hire by local community organisations and groups who operate on a not for profit basis in the Stort Valley. There are also a number of regular services around Bishop's Stortford and the surrounding area. This includes the Stortford Shuttle, operating once an hour Monday to Friday on a circular route not covered by commercial bus companies; the Hadham Hopper, a free service operating every Thursday from Much Hadham and Perry Green to and from Bishop's Stortford and the Saturday Shopper Hopper, taking people from the Parsonage, the town centre and Thorley to the Tesco's in Bishop's Stortford.

Bridport Town Council, Dorset

Contracted First Wessex to run a round town bus service following the withdrawal of services previously subsidised by Dorset County Council. The new service has been championed by a working group consisting of local councils, the Bridport Local Area Partnership and the Western Area Transport Action Group. It has been operating twice a week on a six month trial basis since August 2018.

Disley Parish Council, Cheshire

Operates a not for profit community transport scheme. For a payment of £1, local residents can become a member of the scheme and book to travel on the 9 seater mini bus. The mini bus makes a number of trips each month to places of interest outside the village, including historic venues, garden centres, markets and picturesque villages. It is also available for hire by local community groups who register as members and provides a real boost to older residents.

Haydon Wick Parish Council, Wiltshire

Runs a community transport scheme providing door to door transport for elderly and disabled residents. Local residents can book to travel on the council owned mini bus to either a private appointment or one of the regular outings to the shops and clubs for the elderly by contacting the clerk to the council.

Hartley Wintney Parish Council, Hampshire

Owns and manages a community bus service. The service, funded through developer contributions from Barratt Homes, includes a five day a week commuter service running to and from Winchfield Station, a three day a week timetabled shopper service and a twice weekly door to door service running to

Fleet town centre and the local Morrisons. Fares start from £1 for a single trip and concessionary pass holders are able to travel free on the daytime shopper service.

COMMUNITY VENUES

Sandgate Parish Council, Kent

Runs Sandgate Library on behalf of Kent County Council. The library is open five days a week and offers a wide range of facilities and services. This includes the loaning of books, CD's and DVD's; free wifi; free public computers; an ancestry buddy to help people use IT to research family history and use of a colour printer/photocopier. The library also plays host to a number of local groups which meet there, including knit and natter, scrabble club, reading club, talk time and preschool read and rhyme.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council, Wiltshire

Took over management of Beechcroft Road Library from Swindon Borough Council, saving it from near certain closure. Today the library is a thriving community hub, with local residents invited to grab a "cuppa" at the onsite coffee shop and attend one of the many group meetings taking place at the library as well as borrow books.

Eye Town Council, Suffolk

Funds Eye Community Centre, a local community hub. The centre consists of a large hall, lounge area and bar and can be hired for a wide range of events. The main hall is equipped with a projector and pull down screen and plays host to the cinema at Eye, a neighbourhood cinema hosting film screenings at the end of each month.

Ravenfield Parish Council, Yorkshire

Manages and maintains Ravenfield Parish Hall. A number of local community groups hold meetings in the hall, including Ravenfield Old People's Social Fund, Ravenfield Toddler Group, Rotherham Lace Makers and the local branch of the Womens Institute. The hall is also available for private hire on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

Rugeley Town Council, Staffordshire

Manages the Rugeley Rose Theatre, having overseen extensive refurbishment of it in 2002. The community venue consists of a theatre seating 210 people, a suite

seating 80 people and a fully stocked bar. Both rooms are available to hire for events including meetings, weddings, parties and corporate away days. At present many local community groups meet in the theatre on a regular basis, including the local branch of Weight Watchers, the Rugeley Musical Theatre Company, the Rugeley Art Society and the Stars Academy. The theatre is also used to host professional theatrical performances such as the annual Christmas pantomime.

Totnes Town Council, Devon

Owns and manages Totnes Civic Hall, a local community hub. Facilities include a main hall which can seat 299 people, a bar; a commercial kitchen; stage; lighting and rigging; a sound system; projector and screen and radio microphones. The civic hall can be hired for a wide range of events, including weddings, birthday parties, talks, community suppers and live music. There are reduced rates for non-profit, schools and charity organisations, for bookings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and for multiple or block bookings. At present there are a number of regular sessions held in the hall, including dance, yoga, various exercise classes and a jamming (music) workshop. The hall has also played host to a Bob Marley tribute concert, a public community arts workshop and the Transition Town Totnes Film Festival, amongst other events.

Wexham Court Parish Council, Buckinghamshire

Offers Wexham Court Parish Hall for hire to local community groups and individuals. The hall consists of an upstairs function room with capacity for 130, downstairs room with capacity for 50 and a stage. The hall can be rented either in part or in its entirety. At present it is used by local play groups, a local theatre group and Slough's Age Concern.

Local councils in Suffolk

Since 2003 a Rural Coffee Caravan has travelled around Suffolk, funded in part by local (parish and town) councils in the county. The caravan targets villages with no village hall or one that is little used. As well as offering coffee, cake and someone to talk to, the caravan also acts as an information service, with members of voluntary organisations such as Age UK and local councils invited to come and talk to residents.

Urchfont Parish Council, Wiltshire

Put in a successful application to have The Lamb Inn registered as an asset of community value until 2022. An entry has been made on the Land Register and the owner of the asset cannot dispose of it without satisfying a number of criteria, in consultation with Wiltshire Council. Today the pub is thriving community hub, home to mens and ladies skittles teams, a petanque court and a monthly quiz night. A variety of organisations also hold meetings in the pub, ranging from the local Womans Institute to the cricket club and neighbourhood development steering group.

DEMENTIA

Purton Parish Council, Wiltshire

Works with Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Board, Purton Doctors Surgery and other associated bodies to raise awareness of dementia locally. As part of this the council runs regular Dementia Friends sessions, offering insight into the disease and giving support to those suffering, their carers and families.

Wembury Parish Council, Brixton Parish Council, Yealmpton Parish Council, Holbeton Parish Council and Newton and Noss Parish Council, Devon.

Developed Dementia Friendly Parishes around the Yealm, a group of local (parish and town) councils committed to improving the lives of people with dementia and their families and friends. Working alongside local groups, businesses and organisations, the partnership aims to make it possible for people with dementia to continue doing the things they love and are important to them. The partnership's work is designed with five main aims in mind: to support the lives of people with dementia and their families; to enable people with dementia to remain active and involved in community life; to work with local groups and organisations to develop suitable activities and services; to raise awareness and understanding of dementia both locally and nationally and to remain with the family throughout their journey. The partnership organises a range of regular activity based groups which everyone is welcome to join. This includes a weekly reading group, a singing group, walking group and arts and craft group. There are also outings including to shopping outlets and the Kitley House Hotel in Yealmpton.

Wythall Parish Council, Worcestershire

Holds a dementia café on the third Wednesday of every month. Those living with dementia and their carers are invited to attend the café, based in Wythall village

hall, and enjoy bottomless tea, coffee and homemade cakes. Each café session also features a guest speaker or theme. Most recently this has included Ray Dedicoat from Hollytrees Animal Rescue Trust and two police officers from the local police station.

GENERAL

Simpson and Ashland Parish Council, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes

Holds a weekly drop in at the village hall from 10am to 12pm on a Tuesday. The session is billed as 'Coffee and Chat' and people come along to talk, play games, and drink tea and coffee. Although not aimed at any particular group, the people who come along tend to be older and single.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING /SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

Alcester Town Council, Warwickshire and West Midlands

Set up a Health and Wellbeing Board in 2015 which mirrors the county structure. Members include representatives from the local NHS trust and clinical commissioning group and charities such as Age UK and Citizens Advice. As part of this the council receives grant funding from Warwickshire County Council to employ two part time health and wellbeing coordinators. With one third of residents of Alcester aged over 65, the coordinators aim to tackle isolation among older people and focus on preventative steps. The coordinators work with existing clubs and societies and also help set up new groups. One new group set up as a result of this scheme is a weekly lunch club. The club is now self sustaining and serves hot lunches to 40 members each week.

Poynton Parish Council, Cheshire

Employs a communities coordinator to promote existing and new initiatives which benefit both the older and younger populations of Poynton. The coordinator works closely with partner organisations including Age UK, Citizens Advice Bureau, Open Hands, U3A, local schools, the Police and Poynton's medical centre. The coordinator drives existing local council initiatives including Men in Sheds, Poynton Fun Days, youth activities, intergenerational projects and Poynton's resilience plan. The coordinator is also involved in promoting Poynton's events, groups and organisations for residents with dementia. This includes a health and wellbeing fair for older people which is held in partnership with patient participation groups.

Ivybridge Town Council, Devon

Engaged a part time social prescriber to help with matters other than medical conditions. The one year pilot, funded by Ivybridge Town Council, BMG and Livewell SouthWest, saw the social prescriber take referrals from GPs and other health and social care providers, spend time with individuals and point them in the direction of charities, local organisations and other sources of support.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Helston Town Council, Cornwall

Established a job club to tackle unemployment. Led by Helston Town Council, Helston and the Lizard Works was launched as a result of the need, identified by Helston Jobcentre, for a more joined up approach to matching jobseekers and work opportunities in the whole of the local area. There is a particular focus on support for jobseekers over 50 and lone parents and anyone claiming jobseekers Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Activity includes both work placements with local businesses and opportunities to volunteer, both as steps on the journey into the world of work. Volunteering is a great way of boosting self confidence, acquiring new skills and as a set of opportunities for work related experience, as well as the added value of the community benefit that volunteering can generate.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Coxhoe Parish Council, County Durham

Developed their own youth services provision following the withdrawal of investment in youth services by Durham County Council. The council now employs a dedicated youth team who run junior, senior and girls only youth clubs in Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill. Activities available include arts and crafts, parachute games, video games, pool, table tennis, football, music and dance. Last summer the council also ran a programme of summer activities and trips for young people. This included a movie night, disco, afternoon tea party, pizza night and outings to a farm, go karting track and Planet Leisure.

Woughton Community Council, Milton Keynes

Provides an extensive youth programme for young people aged 9-19. The programme is designed to meet young people's needs and desires by including

informal education, recreation and life skills activities. The council hosts different clubs in different areas of Woughton with the aim of breaking down territorial boundaries and increasing community interaction. Activities currently on offer include sports, games, dance, pool, squash, crafts, cookery and music. Young people can also simply drop in and relax with friends. There is also a weekly teenage parent group providing a supportive, non-judgmental approach and with free lunch and a crèche.

Yate Town Council, Avon

Runs the Armadillo Youth Venue and Café, in Yate, South Gloucestershire. The youth venue and cafe has been built to provide a contemporary, safe environment for all young people of the locality aged between 11 and 17 to use and enjoy. The centre offers high quality facilities including Cafe area serving hot and cold drinks, snacks and confectionery, DJ booth, 60 seater community cinema, Pool Table, Table Tennis, Air Hockey Table, X-Box and Games, TV and Basketball and workshops giving young people the opportunity to learn new skills. For young people not interested in attending a conventional youth centre the council offer the opportunity to obtain help and advice in a mobile mini van known as an Urban Vehicle for Information and Education (Urbie).

Ryde Town Council, Isle of Wight

Developed 'Network Ryde,' a new youth project supporting young people in and around the town to achieve their potential and have fun. The first phase of this project has seen the opening of '147,' an internet café offering services for young people aged 11 to 19 years and disabled adults to 25 years. Current sessions held at 147 include a trainee enhancement programme for young people aged 15 to 24 who are not in education, employment or training; a lunchtime drop in session for home educated young people; an arts and crafts session for young people with additional needs and their siblings and a weekly Xbox and Wii tournament night. The council also works with other local venues to facilitate events under the 'Network Ryde' banner. This includes a weekly games night at Waterside Pool.

Dunstable Town Council, Bedfordshire

Provides an extensive programme of activities for young people in Dunstable. All young people aged 8 to 18 are invited to play Pokemon at the weekly Pokemon club. The Junior Youth Club offers those aged 10 to 13 the opportunity come together and participate in art and crafts, board games, free pool, use the online bank of computers and take part in themed nights whilst the Young People's Drop In gives those aged 13-18 the opportunity to come together and hang out in a safe

space. Most sessions take place at Grove Corner, Dunstable Town Council's dedicated young people's centre. To support this work, the council employs a community and young people's services manager, a senior community and young people's services officer and a community and young people's seasonal worker.

Bitton Parish Council, Avon

Took over the running of Oldland Common Youth Club from South Gloucestershire Council. A range of activities are offered at the youth club, now called the New Tracks Youth Club, including pool, table tennis, table football, music, electronic games, TV, cooking and arts and crafts. There is also a weekly games and sports session with a sports coach and occasional outings. The youth club is open two nights a week and is for young people aged 11 to 18.

Sevenoaks Town Council, Kent

In 2012 Sevenoaks Town Council opened a youth café. The facility, for those aged 11 to 18, has computers, electronic games, a pool table, musical instruments, a chill out area, access to professional support and provides reasonably priced hot meals. To ensure the cost of public transport was not a barrier to young people accessing the café, in 2015 the council introduced a free bus pass for 11-18 year olds which can be used on the number 8 bus in the town.

Cranleigh Parish Council, Surrey

Provides funding for the 'Friday Night Project,' a youth club for 11 to 17 year olds. The youth club is part of a new strategy from Waverley Borough Council to engage with young people in the community and offer them an opportunity to get involved in new activities, socialise with others of similar ages or relax in the café. The youth club offers a wide variety of activities including gym, table tennis, workout classes, virtual cycling, racket ball, squash and pool. Funding also comes from Waverley Borough Council, Active Surrey and Places Leisure.

Ferndown Town Council, Dorset

Provides a programme of activities for young people aged 10 and above in the Ferndown area. Young people in the town are offered the choice of attending either an informal drop in session free of charge or, for £1, a more formal activity based session. Drop in sessions offer young people the opportunity to choose what they want to do, with laptops available for those who need them to complete homework. The more formal activity sessions help broaden young people's views and experiences by promoting other cultures and ways of living as

well as providing information about awareness days. At all sessions there are a range of activities and sports on offer such as pool, games consoles, arts and crafts and darts. There is also a well-stocked coffee bar selling sweets and refreshments. Attendees are encouraged to take responsibility for the youth club by helping to run sessions and standing for a place on the youth council.

Great Ness and Little Ness Parish Council, Shropshire

Stepped in to pay for a qualified youth worker to continue at Nesscliffe Youth Club following Shropshire Council's decision to cut its youth service budget. Funds were raised by increasing the precept by £3,500 per annum, a move that was taken following consultation with residents.

Skelton and Brotton Parish Council, Cleveland

Funds fitness sessions for local children during school holidays. Young residents in the parish aged five to eleven can be signed up for an afternoon featuring taekwon-do, a kids bootcamp and a Fortnite and chart dance show in the dark, all completely free of charge.

Westerham Parish Council, Kent

Funds family fun sessions in the town during school holidays. The sessions, for children aged 2 to 12 are held in the Westerham Sports Association building and King Georges playing field. Sessions are free to attend and feature inflatable fun, crafts and games. The council state they are very popular and well supported.