



Annual Impact Report

(supporting, developing, guiding, connecting)

A summary of the impact and activities relating to development support, guidance and connectivity for community, voluntary and charitable organisations in Huntingdonshire resulting from the commissioning of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisation to deliver within the district by Huntingdonshire District Council

April 2018- March 2019

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1 Introduction

Working for a Stronger Voluntary and Community Sector in Huntingdonshire

The last 12 months have been a period of positive change and development for Hunts Forum; we forged new partnerships, gained new contracts and extended our reach.

The team has changed significantly during the year and we have a committed dynamic workforce that truly epitomises our values and vision. Performance and satisfaction levels are high, with members and partners giving excellent feedback on all services.

We are proud of the collective impact the voluntary and community sector makes in Huntingdonshire; and as an organisation proud of the role we play in ensuring that our communities are safe, healthy and vibrant.

Supporting - Hunts Forum offers a range of support services to small and emerging community groups, voluntary organisations as well as supporting existing organisations to strengthen and develop.

Developing - Hunts Forum works hard to bring new and exciting ways of working to Huntingdonshire, developing best practice in partnership with members and communities.

Guiding - Hunts Forum works hard to ensure that local voluntary and community groups are as informed and up to date as possible.

Connecting - Hunts Forum is the main point of contact between voluntary and community groups and other statutory partners. We are committed to building and maintaining good relationships across the VCS, faith, public and private sectors.

A special mention needs to be made for our events programme - in particular, the Connecting Communities People Powered Conference, April 2018 ,co-hosted with

Living Sport and our Income, Impact and Innovation themed Conference in February 2019 which provided the VCS with opportunities to come together to discuss important issues, ideas and ways of working.

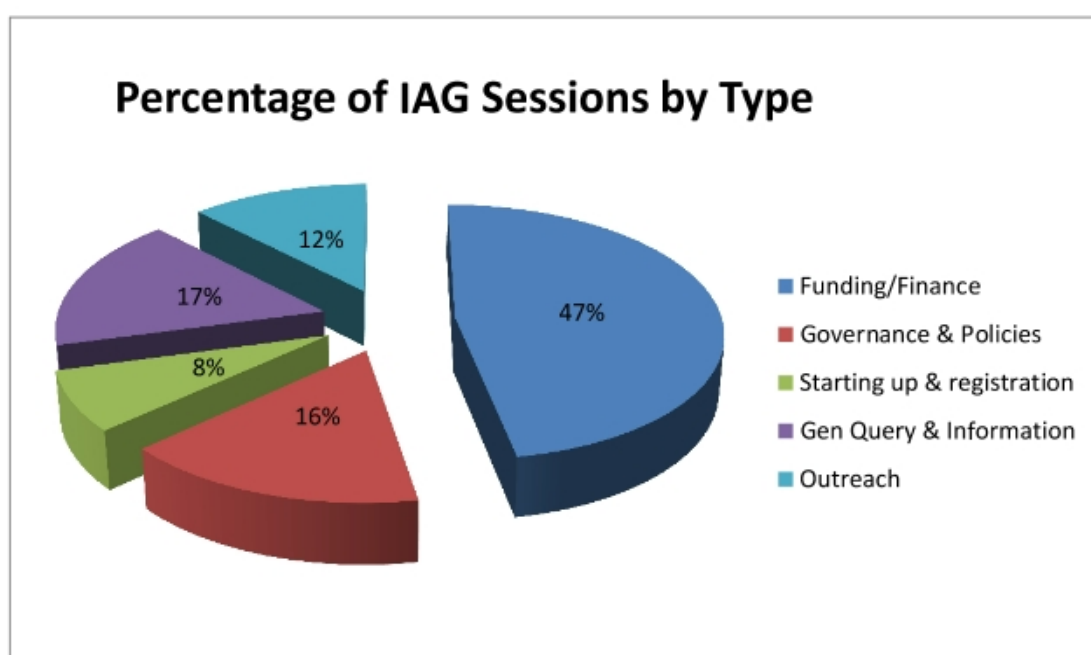
This report is a summary of our achievements and impact over the past year, and celebrates not only our work but the work and commitment of voluntary and community groups across Huntingdonshire.

Kind Regards

Julie

2 Organisational Development

- 2.1. There have been 106 individual Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) interventions with organisations over the period.
- 2.2. Half of these have been focused on funding, fundraising and finance issues. Seven were to help new organisations start up, identify the best structure to support their ideas and to constitute their organisations. Since November 2018 fourteen outreach visits have been made to members and non-members.
- 2.3. Met with and advised three new community groups looking to set up- a Community Hub looking to tackle loneliness and isolation in Hemingford Grey, a Friend of group for residents in a Huntingdon Care Home, Huntingdon Autistic & SENDs Support



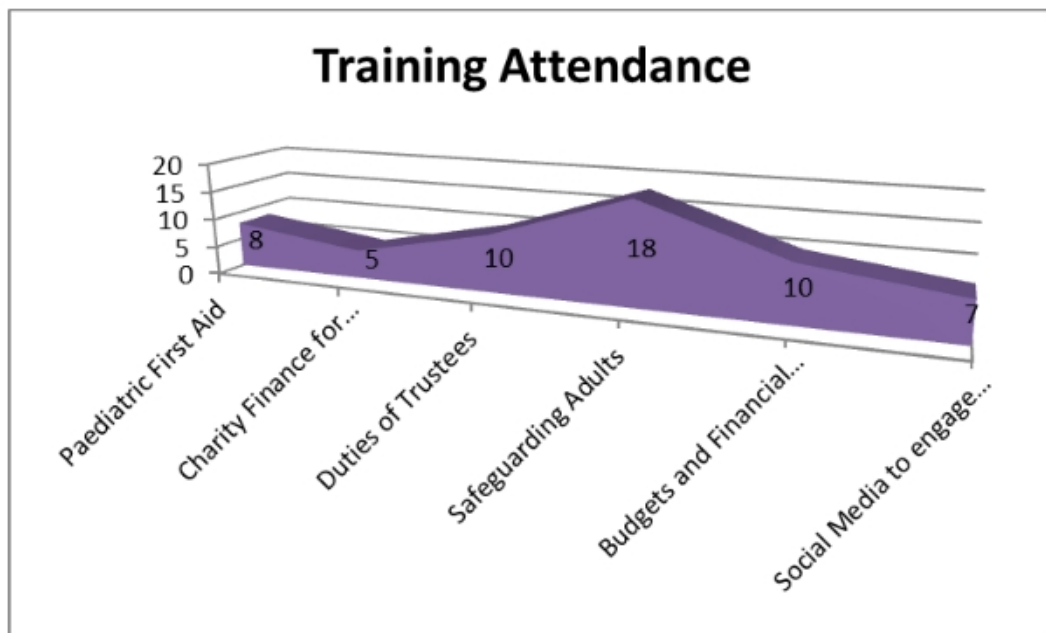
- 2.4. Consistently, organisations report greater confidence in their understanding and confidence in their ability to deal with the issues they are facing. ‘Whenever I have a question or query then Hunts Forum do their best to find out the answer for me.’ St Neots, Timebank

3 Keep-in-Touch (K-I-T) Network Meetings

- 3.1. There have been 4 K-I-T meetings and one similar event called Tea at Ten on Tuesday ran as an introduction to members by the new Development Officer.
- 3.2. Attendance is variable with a range of small and larger organisations in attendance. We have altered the structure of these slightly to include a session for mutual support, encouragement and sharing.
- 3.3. There is a growing interest amongst third sector organisations in accessing Corporate Social Responsibility support. In January 2019 we held a K-I-T on this theme to help focus a workshop for later in the year bringing companies and charities together to begin a conversation to better understand each other's needs.
- 3.4. We continue to have guest speakers at these meetings. Guest Speaker for the March 2019 K-I-T was Nigel Sutton Fraud and Cyber Security Advisor, Cambridgeshire Constabulary.
- 3.5. Based upon feedback from smaller, volunteer-run organisations, that the lunch-time meetings were difficult to attend as it impacted a volunteer's entire day, we shall be experimenting with different timings over the year to ascertain a time that will better suit volunteer and employee attendance at these events.

4 Training

- 4.1. Training courses have been run on the following topics
 - 4.1.1 Paediatric First Aid
 - 4.1.2 Charity Finance for Beginners
 - 4.1.3 Duties of Trustees
 - 4.1.4 Safeguarding Adults
 - 4.1.5 Budgets and Financial Planning
 - 4.1.6 Activating and Engaging Supporters through Social Media

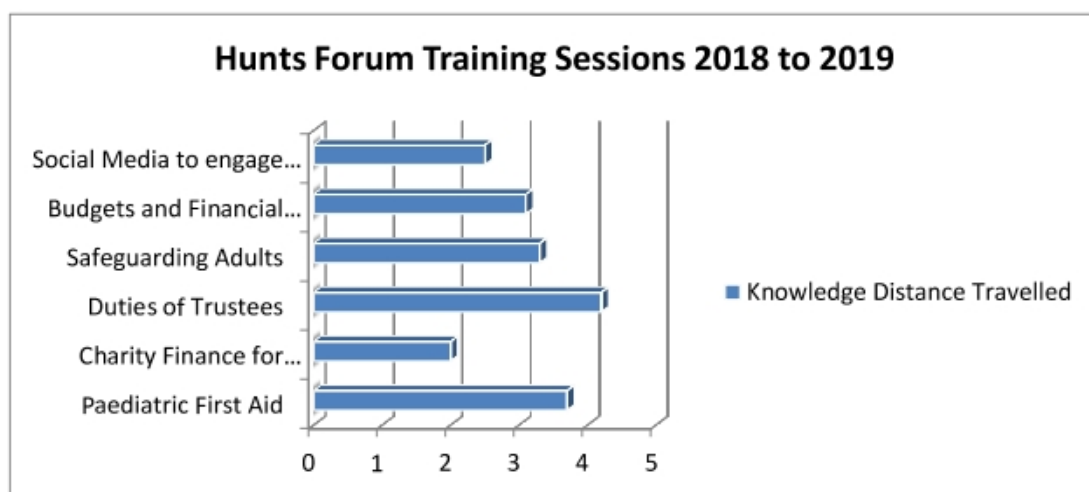


4.2. Half of the training courses were developed and delivered in-house. The others were delivered by professionals with the relevant experience, knowledge and training. All were provided as a response to feedback from members.

4.3. At each training session members' feedback includes the opportunity to request other training opportunities.

4.4. Attendances have ranged from 5 to 18 giving an average of 10 attendees per course.

4.5. Self-reported 'knowledge distance travelled' per course using a scale of 1 to 10 has an average of 3.13 points ranging from a low of 2 points to a high of 4.2 points



5 Hunts Forum/ Support Cambridgeshire cross-fertilisation

- 5.1. District and County offer dovetails through the Support Cambridgeshire programme. Huntingdonshire-based organisations can attend Support Cambridgeshire training, network and practitioner events (of which there are 22 in total) free of charge.
- 5.2. Additionally, Huntingdonshire-based organisations can use the self-funding portal (SC4C) which currently sits on the Support Cambridgeshire website (find funding). The portal has already helped organisations to achieve 77K in funding, and 96 Huntingdonshire-based organisations have accessed the system as new and registered users over the past 12 months. An upward trend is expected over the next 12 months.
- 5.3. The Love it, Hate it and Shape it model which has been used so successfully in Huntingdonshire communities that it has now received external funding from the Community Fund and is being delivered in East Cambridgeshire. Likewise, Huntingdonshire organisations may be at the very centre of a Partnership Bid over the next 12 months where a replica type model of the Brampton Hub may be piloted.
- 5.4. Support Cambridgeshire and Living Sport came together to co-host the Connecting Communities, People Powered Conference in April 2018 at the Corn Exchange, St Ives. This was attended 48 people who listened a Key note speech from Shaun Delaney from NCVO regarding trends in volunteering. The talk drew on the NCVO report, *Getting Involved: How people make a difference*; Attendees participated in workshop discussions



on various aspects of volunteering such as Recruitment and marketing, protecting volunteers, rewarding volunteers and celebrating success and micro-volunteering.

6 Income, Impact and Innovation

Over 90 members and stakeholders attended the Hunts Forum annual conference and AGM in February 2019.

The conference theme was Income, Impact and Innovation. The day began with presentations and discussions on Impact delivered by Russel Rolph, Hunts Forum and Lynette Hurran, Care Network and Income delivered by Fiona Brice, National Lottery Community Fund, Michael O'Toole Cambridge Community Foundation, Louise Prosser and Keith Johnson, Hunts Forum. This was followed by a member showcase highlighting some of the innovative work undertaken by Hunts Forum members in their local communities. Beacon Money Advice Centre, Brampton Community Hub, Caresco and Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust shared their inspiring stories. The conference then moved on to facilitated discussions where attendees could engage in more detailed discussions with our innovation presenters around the conference themes and more.

To end the day, our annual volunteer awards saw volunteers from member organisations receive well deserved recognition and rewards for their efforts.

This year, for the first time, new category of Rural Volunteer of the Year was included. This category was open to nominations from all community groups and charities operating in Cambridgeshire.



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7 Working Together

- 7.1. Eleven practitioner events, plus the Connecting Communities, People Powered and Hunts Forum Conferences and Hunts Forum AGM were attended.
- 7.2. Attended a Social Prescribing Network event organised by the Cambridge Mental Health Network to look at the possibilities and possible hurdles of social prescribing across the county. Approximately 40 organisations were present.
- 7.3. Attended the Cinnamon Network Launch Event in Cambridge, with the possibility of church-based community groups being able to work with the Cinnamon network and apply to the county council Innovate and Cultivate fund for funding this was an important development to understand and be able to advise potential groups about. Approximately 60 organisations were present.
- 7.4. Attended the Developing Oxmoor Workshop day at the HDC Civic Suite. This was organised by the district council to explore the issues of the area and possible responses. Approximately 100 people attended representing around 40 organisations.
- 7.5. Attended and gave a presentation at a Volunteers' Fayre organised by Huntingdon Library. Around 20 organisations were present.
- 7.6. Attended meetings of both the Child and Family Centre Partnership and the Crime, safety Partnership.
- 7.7. Attended the AGM of one Hunts Forum member organisation. Around 10 organisations and 30 individuals were present.
- 7.8. Attended meeting to discover more about the Men Shed movement and how we could bring more of these to the county. Arranged a meeting with Ramshed as a result. This organisation was unaware of the network of community groups in the area and is slowly becoming involved in Hunts forum and will hopefully soon join.
- 7.9. Attended County Council organised meeting at Huntingdon Town Council offices to encourage community Great Get Together and Big Lunch celebrations as part of the end loneliness campaign.

8 Case Studies

8.1 Member organisation

St Neots TimeBank

St Neots TimeBank is a successful and award winning volunteer-run TimeBank whose services are increasingly being called upon by statutory and health organisations. The TimeBank is aware that if it is to continue to thrive then additional funding is necessary and may have to move to having a funded position for a paid co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator came to see the Hunts Forum Development Officer in November 2018 to discuss changing the governance structure to that of a CIO. Through discussion it transpired that many of the issues and challenges facing the TimeBank revolved around having a very active and passionate co-ordinator who had very little support with the Administration work from members with regard to taking on organisational responsibilities.

With so few members active in the administration of the TimeBank the advice was that it did not appear to be a good time to look at undertaking the rigors of changing the governance structure and instead to concentrate on encouraging members to step forward to take more responsibility for running the TimeBank, rather than just their events.

The TimeBank started pro-active engagement with members to encourage more involvement. This has happened and the TimeBank now has a team of members under-taking some of the aspects that previously had all sat with the co-ordinator. Hunts Forum has continued to meet with and support the St Neots TimeBank.

The TimeBank continues to grow and is increasingly referred to by statutory agencies including local authorities, NHS and other Health services. However, these do not financially support the TimeBank and funding remains their biggest issue.

Their volunteer fundraiser will soon be meeting with Hunts Forum who will be meeting with that person in the future. St Neots TimeBank plan to make an Awards for All application and will continue to seek funding.

The intervention back in November helped the TimeBank to address their current issues rather than spend time looking at changing the structure which would have drained the time of the coordinator and members in potentially unproductive meetings and discussions. By addressing issues of member engagement in running the TimeBank it is now in a better place to seek additional funding and to look at structural change from a more strengthened position.

“Whenever I have a question or query Hunts Forum do their best to find out the answer ...”

“At the moment Keith is helping to find funding also help with our application format and thoughts of the value or not of becoming a CIO. All extremely valuable information.”

8.2 Non-Member - Supporting the start-up- to active membership

Hemingford Hub

Hemingford Hub is the name that a small group of people gave to their idea for tackling unwanted loneliness and isolation in their village. They came to Hunts Forum as they were finding it difficult to write their governing document as a Community Interest Company. There was a great deal of business experience amongst those looking to start the hub and a social enterprise matched the collective knowledge and familiarity. Through discussion however, the social enterprise structure did not fit with the new group’s aim and objectives.

At a second meeting in Hemingford Grey, our development officer ran through various options for a constitution with the group that would help support them make the impact they wanted to achieve. A small charity constitution was chosen as it offered the best fit to start the organisation quickly and also

provide a stepping stone to either registered charity or CIO status as the group grew.

The Development Officer introduced the group to the Brampton Village Hub that is achieving much of what the Hemingford Hub hope to achieve in the future.

Since then the Development Officer has continued to provide support. Particularly when the group hit an issue with their bank account from the Co-op bank which now only offers accounts to registered charities. The Development Officer was able to provide information to other accounts for the Hub.

The Hemingford Hub is now talking directly to its Parish Council to explore ways of working together similar to the Brampton Hub and its Parish council. Although not yet having formally adopted its constitution, the group continues to meet and plans to have this agreed soon. In the meantime, they have been developing their plans to improve the lives of people in their village. The hub has made contact with officers from the Innovate and Cultivate fund to discuss support for the Hub. Hemingford hub is considering membership of Hunts Forum. Update: in early April 2019, the hub joined Hunts Forum.

As one of the members said, ‘just because we are a mainly wealthy area, does not mean that there isn’t loneliness. Rich people suffer from loneliness, too.’

8.3 Member organisational changes influenced by training courses

Cornerstone Pregnancy Advice Centre

In early February 2019 we ran our first course on using social media to drive supporter engagement run by the Development Officer. The Voluntary and Charitable sector has overall made little use of the power of social media compared to businesses often using it simply to notify an unspecified audience of events. The training looked at different ways to use social media to move from broadcast to dialogue with supporters to create a more dynamic and interactive environment.

A member of staff and a volunteer from Cornerstone Pregnancy Advice Centre attended the training and have since worked with the organisation to develop a social media strategy and plan to drive engagement.

A strategy was developed following the training and the plan to give an existing volunteer clear instructions and the responsibility to systematically post on social media has begun. Cornerstone has recently reported back to Hunts Forum that as a result traffic to their FaceBook page has increased dramatically. It was decided that a weekly client quote be posted. These client quotes are receiving more than the usual “likes” and consequently donations from the local community for Cornerstone’s baby boutique have increased.



Above, Facebook Analytics Report provided by Cornerstone Pregnancy Advice Centre for monthly post reach and engagement March 2019 detailing post reach increasing 1247%, post engagement increasing by 778% and Page likes increasing by 1867%

9 Place-based community development

As part of the HDC contract, Hunts Forum employs a part-time Communities Officer to work intensively with small communities, actively engaging with residents to facilitate new projects and support existing ones.



In January 2018 work began in Sawtry, making contact with a wide range of local organisations including officers and councillors at the parish, district and county councils, local schools and nurseries, CARESCO, Sawtry Youth Project, Sawtry Walk to Run, Sawtry Camera Club, Sawtry Small Business Partnership, Sawtry Carnival, the WI and local uniform groups. Drawing on these contacts to spread the word, local residents were surveyed to reveal their concerns and aspirations for the village. The resulting survey report is appended to this document (Appendix 1).

A follow-up meeting gave residents a chance to discuss the survey's findings. This was well received, with 25 people attending, many of whom were active in the community but who hadn't previously met each other. There was an

appetite for continued networking opportunities beyond this meeting. As a result, Hunts Forum is supporting a group of residents as they draw up plans to launch Sawtry Community Association as a platform for sharing ideas and resources, championing each other's work and representing the voice of residents.

The survey revealed an appetite for more community fun days and charity events. To capitalise on this, Hunts Forum invited people from CARESCO, Sawtry Carnival, Sawtry Youth Project, Sawtry Walk to Run and Sawtry Village Academy to draw up plans for a community sports day. With our support, they have formed a committee, raised almost £10,000 in grant funding and liaised with the County Council youth team, Living Sport and a wide range of local sports clubs and community groups to invite them to participate in the event. *Sawtry Sport 4 All* will take place on the school field on 13 July 2019, with a target turnout of 2,000 people. The objectives are to promote community cohesion, to show that physical exercise is something everyone can take part in and enjoy, and to celebrate and promote local sports clubs to increase awareness and boost membership.

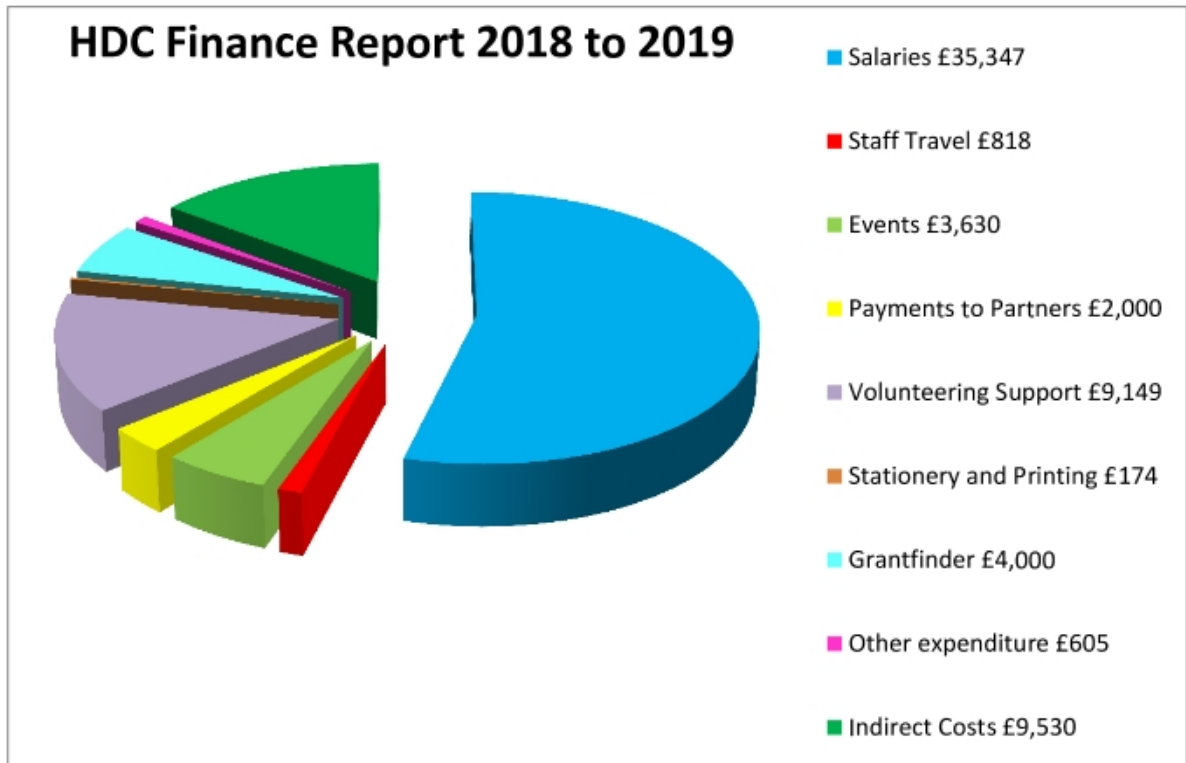
Hunts Forum has worked closely with CARESCO throughout 2018, supporting them on a number of projects including changes to the Sawtry Eye newsletter and long-term strategic planning to ensure the organisation is sustainable. Our Communities Officer gave a presentation at the CARESCO AGM about his work in the village.

As work winds down in Sawtry and projects are handed over to local residents, work has now begun at the next placement in Bluntisham, meeting community activists and stakeholder organisations and encouraging all residents to complete the survey (appendix 2).



10 Finance Report

A total of £65,253 was spent during the financial year on Development Work with the various communities of Huntingdonshire. This breaks down as follows



11 Other

11.1 Connecting Communities Conference 2019

Huntingdonshire District Council and Support Cambridgeshire have come together to run the Connecting Communities Conference on the 20th June 2019. This is an opportunity for Huntingdonshire-based organisations to attend and examine volunteering as a model for reducing loneliness and social isolation. This will explore the topics of how to locate potentially lonely individuals; engage with them to encourage volunteering; support and nurture volunteers, especially those with additional needs; demonstrating impact and value and funding advice for projects tackling unwanted social isolation and volunteering.

11.2 Quality Assurance Mark

A Quality Assurance Mark (QAM) has been designed for small charities. The aim of this mark is to provide small charities with a mechanism to attain and demonstrate a strong level of internal governance. We will be seeking official endorsement from commissioning partners and plan to roll out the QAM during the next financial year.

11.3 Developing Relationships with Corporates

Corporate Social Responsibility: Developed ties with major employers and with a new Cambridge-Based enterprise that is working with companies to improve their CSR offer. This has resulted in a workshop bringing charities and businesses together to help each side better understand the other's needs. It is anticipated that similar events will continue to be run over the next year.

11.4 Chamber of Commerce Links

Reaching out to businesses and taking a more pro-active method of working to better understand member's needs, plans and aspirations is beginning to see a development of Hunts Forum being able to provide introductions for business and charities for partnership working.

11.5 Employee Volunteering

A good working relationship was initiated by Hunts Forum with South Staffs Water/ Cambridge Water that has seen five members seek support through the company's Outreach Co-ordinator for the successful Employee Volunteering scheme that the company is seeking to expand in Cambridge Water supplied areas.

11.6 Pro-Active Engagement

From October 2018 Hunts Forum initiated a more pro-active approach to supporting the Charity, Voluntary and Community sector in the district and across the county. The Development Officer has been reaching out to meet members and non-members to undertake informal information gathering to ensure that Hunts Forum Members and Non Members

11.7 Members' Newsletter

A Members' Newsletter has been relaunched with news, information and articles of interest to the sector. Called, *In the Loop*, the first issue of this new quarterly

publication was distributed in January 2019. Future issues will include a Members' News section. Copies can be downloaded at http://www.huntsforum.org.uk/information-resources/cat_view/12-information-resources/14-hunts-forum-newsletters

12 Acknowledgements

Hunts Forum of Voluntary organisations would like to thank Huntingdonshire District Council for its continued support. We would also like to thank The Freeman's Trust for funding the interactive TV screen at the Maple Centre.

Thank you to St Neots Timebank, Hemingford Hub and Cornerstone Pregnancy Advice Centre for helping with the case studies.

Thank you to Beacon Money Advice Centre, Brampton Community Hub, Caresco and Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust for presenting their work at the Income, Impact and Innovation conference.

13 Appendices

13.1 Sawtry Survey Report

13.2 Example Survey Form

