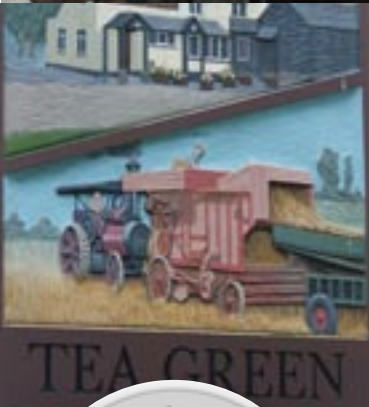


Gratitude to Awards for All for supporting our 40th anniversary celebrations



Community Development Agency
for Hertfordshire

Continuity of purpose, evolution of needs

The needs of our communities may have changed over the last 40 years, but our mission remains the same: to build sustainable rural communities across Hertfordshire. CDA for Herts has started many voluntary and community groups that are now thriving as independent organisations. We are the only countywide voluntary and community sector organisation focused on rural issues. We advocate on behalf of rural communities in Hertfordshire locally, regionally and nationally.

Local support

We offer funding support, training on community development and help with other initiatives. Specialist staff can give advice on village halls, housing surveys, affordable housing and sustainable transport. We keep rural issues on the agenda by participating in local strategic partnerships. We will be working in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council on the Local Area Agreement highlighting rural issues: an initiative to improve people's lives by directing funding where it is needed, making communities stronger and safer and encouraging economic development and enterprise.

Regional involvement

Our regional work involves working with GO East, EEDA and EERA: delivering their priorities in Hertfordshire. We are an active member of Rural Action East, which represents the six Rural Community Councils in the East of England, and COVER, the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum for the East of England. Current issues of debate include reviewing the delivery of government policies in rural areas and the distribution of regeneration funding across the region, bringing resources into Hertfordshire's rural areas.

National voice

We are a member of ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), which lobbies central government and other national bodies on behalf of Rural Community Councils.

Over the years, we have evolved to address the critical rural issues of the day. Our focus is currently on climate change and environmental impact and we are proactively addressing these issues.

“ I am immensely proud of CDA's achievements over the last 40 years and hope that the future will be just as rewarding.”

Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, retiring president of CDA for Herts

Our commitment

Some of the main issues affecting people in our county are transport, housing, social care and communities. We run initiatives and have officers to help address these.

Our officers support the Patient & Public Involvement in Health Forums, which monitors the work of the NHS: by visiting hospitals, GP surgeries and care homes.

Our dedicated Village Halls Advisor and Community Development Officer assist with rural developments, funding, advice and parish plans. The lack of affordable rural housing is addressed by our Affordable Housing Officer. We keep issues of sustainable transport for employment, recreational, health and welfare 'live' through the countywide partnerships; work on integrated community transport; alternative and healthier ways to enjoy our beautiful countryside.

Peak oil, climate change, carbon footprint, carbon credits – all words that describe the time we live in. One of our key priorities now is to address climate change as an organisation and within the communities we work.

Our contact details:

CDA for Herts

Birchwood Avenue
Hatfield AL10 0PS

Tel: 01707 695500

Email: office@cdaforherts.org.uk



**Children on Albury's
'safe walk to school' route**

Training the voluntary sector

Throughout our 40 year history, we have played a vital role in equipping the voluntary sector with the right skills, through our targeted training programmes.

Training in the early days

In 1966, in partnership with Further Education colleges, we arranged a series of training lectures for voluntary social work. Further courses were designed for young volunteers and those working in voluntary social work.

HARVEST

Working in partnership with Herts TEC, the District Health Authority and Social Services, this scheme raised the profile and delivered training, ensuring professional management of Voluntary Organisations.

Computing in the Community

Based on a Government initiative, we provided community venues with a team of trainers and laptop computers, encouraging hard-to-reach groups to access IT training.

Fund Raising

A challenging Accredited course, analysing the process of giving funding advice.



Community Development

A valuable Accredited course which covered working with individuals and groups, consultation techniques, government impact and a range of community development issues.

We have also hosted a variety of conferences addressing topics such as rural housing and homelessness and the issues affecting young and old in rural communities.

Currently we offer volunteer-specific training for the Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forum, Community Development training, and Mentoring training, designed to enhance career development.

“The work has promoted my professional development and helped me to gain confidence in my role as a Community Development Officer.”

Community development accredited training

Partnerships

We work with partners in county and borough councils, as well as specialist independent groups on the issues affecting both young and older generations, in all areas of our communities.

Review of Charities, 1966

CDA for Herts worked in partnership with the County Council and Charity Commission to undertake a county review of charities, informing trustees of the most recent legislation.

Rural Survey 1968

We worked in partnership with the County Planning Department to carry out the first survey of villages. The information was used to prepare the revised County Development Plan.

1st Village Plan, 1969

We undertook the first detailed local consultations in Watton-at-Stone, Buntingford, Standon & Puckeridge and Redbourn. The results were fed into County Local Plans.

Rural Helpcard, 1995

We co-ordinated a card listing helpline numbers, which was launched at the County Show, giving people easy access to support networks.

Rural Trends Survey, 1994–2005

We worked with the Countryside Agency on this survey, which helped inform the targeting of Government funds.



A warm welcome at the Playbus

Community projects

We are actively involved in all areas of the community, tackling issues and initiating projects that make a significant difference to people's lives in our county. Here is a selection of the projects that have helped rural communities over the last 40 years.

Focus on the Community

The first community shop in Hertfordshire was opened in 1985 at Gaddesden Row, a village with a population of just 250. We gave a loan from the Rural Initiatives Fund to purchase stock. The shop provided a much needed resource for the community.

Focus on Social Issues

Crouchfield Young Homeless project

Research carried out by us in 1992 resulted in a new initiative: the Crouchfield Young Homeless project. This project was developed with the aim of improving access to information and care resources for homeless people across the county. In 1999 the project was sufficiently well established to become an independent Charity; known as Herts Young Homeless Group. By this time the charity was running at least five projects of its own, including Hertfordshire Health Action with the Homeless, improving the health of homeless people in the county.

Photography by Kim Stephens



Volunteer readers group

In 1995 volunteers were recruited to form a readers' group in Hertfordshire. They were given policy documents on issues such as social care and transport to proof; to ensure that they were easy to read and understand, grammatically correct and consistent. This resulted in 'user friendly' policy documents being produced.

HMP Mount Prison

Since 1998 we have provided a play area for visiting children at HMP The Mount, as well as parenting classes for prisoners; enabling families to have positive 'family time' in difficult circumstances.

Focus on Health Issues

In 1984 the Hertfordshire Women & Health group was formed to help women in Hertfordshire, and particularly those living in rural areas, to gain further knowledge of health issues.



Focus on Education

Our links with education began back in 1985, when we joined forces with the parents and teachers of Albury Church of England JMI School, to successfully fight the school's closure.

This special relationship has continued for many years; in 2006 we worked with Albury School again, to provide a 'safe walk to school' route.

Focus on the Arts

In 1968 we assisted St Albans Junior Arts to launch an appeal for a purpose built Arts Centre. We advised on the procedure for going about the project and drafting a constitution, as well as giving general assistance. As a result of the appeal, St Albans City Council leased a site for the new Centre, adjacent to the Abbey Theatre.

Focus on Business Initiatives

The Rural Enterprise Project, which ran from 1985 to 2006, built on the success of Village Appraisals. With this project, we encouraged several villages in Hertfordshire to draw up Local Action Plans. This assistance resulted in better support for rural businesses; new community-led initiatives; improved opportunities for people to find work and better access to training.

*Left: Keeping fit at Redbourn Village Hall
Right: Improved county sports facilities*



Focus on Leisure & Recreation

Throughout our history, we have worked closely with the Hertfordshire Playing Fields Association and provided office space and secretarial support for the field worker.

Working in partnership with Eastern Council for Sports and Recreation, we undertook the administration of a scheme to help people in rural areas become more involved in recreational activities, hiring out sports equipment at nominal rates.

We continue to have an interest in the provision of leisure and recreational facilities. In 2007 we have started working in partnership with Rural Action East, surveying the Playing Fields in Hertfordshire.

Village Events Diary

Produced from 1994 to 2005, this was a free service offered to groups and clubs organising activities in rural Hertfordshire. They were able to access free advertising, to help promote their events and maximise their revenue.

Focus on Minority Groups

Working with Gypsies & Travellers

Our work with Gypsy Roma Travellers has developed over the years. In 2001 we held a Conference, which included speakers from the Traveller communities, to discuss the issues that they face. We have worked in partnership with Groundwork Hertfordshire and Travellers on a project to improve the Sites. We have provided IT training for Gypsies and Travellers at a local library. We currently run a Playbus which provides early years learning on Sites for Gypsy Roma Traveller children in Hertfordshire. The project aims to enable a smooth transition for Traveller children into mainstream school. We also convene a Tenants' Group on one Site in Cheshunt.

Black HIV & AIDS Awareness Project

Begun in 1996, this service for black and ethnic minority groups across Hertfordshire, provided access to information and networking for individuals and community groups. In 2004 the project was handed over to The Crescent.