HAROLD STEPHENS

LATER LIFE FINANCIAL PLANNING

COMMUNITY FUND

Purpose

This document provides an overview of the Harold Stephens Community Fund, dedicated to reducing loneliness and social isolation among older people in North-West Bristol.

Our Commitment to Community

At Harold Stephens, we recognise the importance of fostering strong communities and supporting initiatives that address pressing social issues.

The Harold Stephens Community Fund embodies our commitment to making a positive impact.

Overview

Specific life circumstances can make older people vulnerable to loneliness, like retirement, being widowed, and being socially isolated. According to Age UK [1], people aged 50 and over living in England are:

5.5 x

more likely to be lonely if they don't have someone to open up to when they need to

3.7 x

more likely to be often lonely if they are in poor health

5.2 x

more likely to be often lonely if they are widowed

£500

Through making small grants of up to £500, we aim to empower local organisations and individuals to implement projects that foster social connection and wellbeing.

[1] Age UK, All the Lonely People: Loneliness in later Life (2018)

What is a community fund?

A community fund serves as a financial resource dedicated to addressing specific social, environmental, or economic challenges within a defined community or region.

The primary purpose is to invest in initiatives that create positive change and improve quality of life.

Importance of community investment

Community investment plays a vital role in addressing societal issues at the grassroots level.

Meaningful change

By providing financial support and resources, community funds empower community members to drive meaningful change tailored to their unique needs and circumstances.

Objectives

The objectives of the Harold Stephens Community Fund are centred around reducing loneliness and social isolation among older individuals in North-West Bristol. With the fund, we aim to:

1. Reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation
2. Enable people to try a new activity
3. Increase opportunities for new social connections to be made
4. Improve accessibility of events

Our Fund

Mission and Vision

Our mission is to make Bristol the best later life community in the UK and by focusing on allocating grants aimed at reducing loneliness, this will make a positive impact on resident's overall physical and mental health.

Structure and Governance

The fund is overseen by three members of Harold Stephens staff who have each been instrumental in developing the aims and administration of the fund.

Founding Principles

The fund operates on principles of compassion, inclusivity, and community empowerment. We believe that by working together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those most vulnerable to loneliness.

Criteria for funding

- Avonmouth
- Brentry
- Coombe Dingle
- Henbury
- Henleaze
- Horfield
- Kingsweston
- Kingsweston
- Lockleaze
- Sea Mills
- Shirehampton
- Southmead
- Stoke Bishop
- Westbury-on-Trym

We are seeking to help community groups within **North-West Bristol** who want to organise events with the aim of reducing loneliness and/or social isolation for older people.

Due to carers being particularly susceptible to feelings of loneliness[2], we would also welcome applications from groups wishing to create opportunities for carers to socialise.

- Carers are seven times more likely to say they often or always feel lonely, compared to the general population.
- 81% of carers have felt lonely or socially isolated as a result of their caring role.

[2] Carers UK, '<u>Facts about carers</u>' policy briefing (2019), p.12.

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Allocating grants

Application and Evaluation

If you would like to apply for a grant, you can submit an application form outlining your project's objectives, budget, and anticipated outcomes.

Applications can be submitted throughout the year and will be reviewed three times per year with the following deadlines:

15th January

Reviewed by a panel and decision given by 14th February

15th June

Reviewed by a panel and decision given by 14th July

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Application tips

Provide as much information as possible – the more detailed you can be, the better your application score is likely to be.

Give accurate costings wherever possible.

If you aren't sure about something, detail your thoughts so we can see it has been given consideration.

When thinking about how to promote your event or activity, check local noticeboards, online groups etc where possible for ideas.

Application and Evaluation

Applications are reviewed and evaluated based on alignment with fund priorities and feasibility.

Each application is scored by two people with the option of referring applications to a panel where there may be a need to.

For example, in the event that application scores are tied, and funding can only be allocated to one applicant.

We have made the application form as short as possible, trying to balance gathering enough information to make an informed decision with not asking too many questions to put anyone off applying!

If you would like some help with transcribing the application, please contact Amy: community@haroldstephens.co.uk / 0117 3636 212.

Grant distribution

The successful applicant will receive a grant of up to **£500** to support the implementation of their project.

This must be paid to an organisation’s bank account, not a personal account. It may be that a local church could accept the grant on your behalf.

Applying for further grants

If you receive a grant for an event or activity, you are welcome to apply for a further grant for subsequent rounds of funding but there is no guarantee you will receive further funding.

Your application will be scored fairly.

Accountability and reporting

Grant recipients are asked to provide feedback forms from attendees which Harold Stephens will supply. This is so we can measure outcomes to assess the effectiveness of funded projects against our objectives.

We would also love to see photographs from the events that are organised to help promote the Community Fund to others. We will supply photo consent forms.

If you would like to understand how your application has been scored, we will be happy to share this information with you.

Engaging with the community

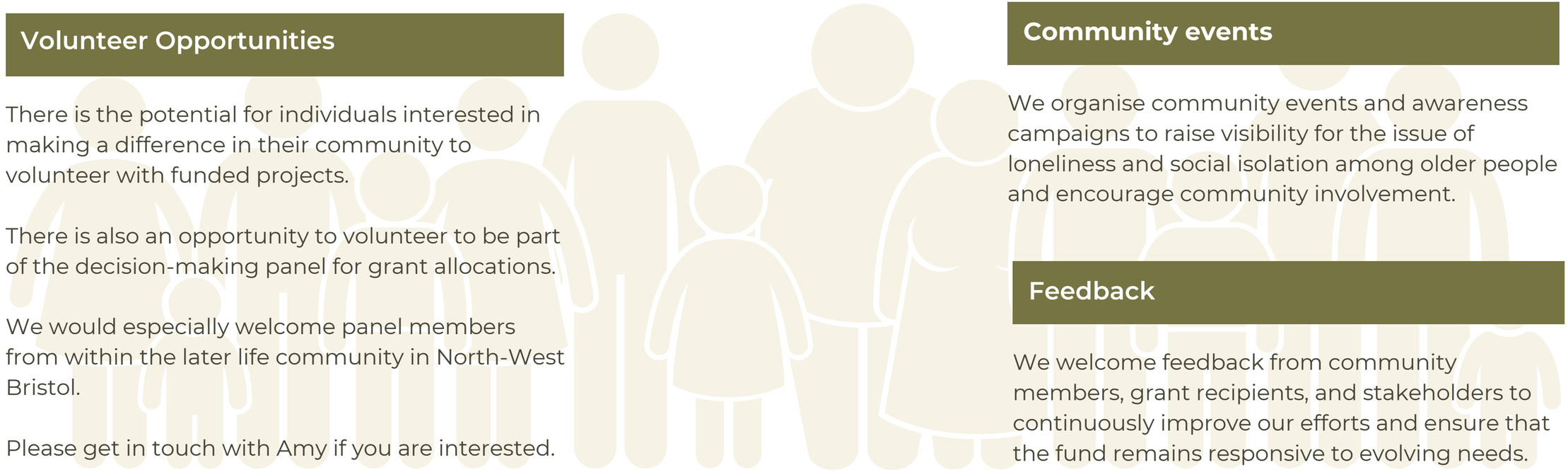
Volunteer Opportunities

There is the potential for individuals interested in making a difference in their community to volunteer with funded projects.

There is also an opportunity to volunteer to be part of the decision-making panel for grant allocations.

We would especially welcome panel members from within the later life community in North-West Bristol.

Please get in touch with Amy if you are interested.



Collaboration with local organisations

We actively collaborate with local organisations, charities, and community groups to identify needs, leverage resources, and maximise the impact of funded projects.

Community events

We organise community events and awareness campaigns to raise visibility for the issue of loneliness and social isolation among older people and encourage community involvement.

Feedback

We welcome feedback from community members, grant recipients, and stakeholders to continuously improve our efforts and ensure that the fund remains responsive to evolving needs.

Thank You

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Community funds play a crucial role in addressing complex social issues and building stronger, more resilient communities.

Harold Stephens is committed to supporting initiatives that improve wellbeing for all members of the later life community.

Join us in creating a more connected and inclusive community where no one feels alone.

Together, we can make a difference.

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