

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS



2025/26



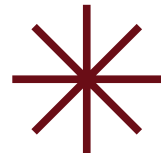
BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

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A YEAR OF COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION



The funding period of 2025/26 fostered **significant growth** in community initiatives, enhancing local engagement and support systems throughout Babergh District. Applicants were able to apply for up to £10,000. 26 applications were received, of which 23 applicants were offered a grant with the total funding awarded during 2025/26 amounting to £271,479.91

During 2025/26 two support organisations were awarded three-year funding commitment having been identified as a **Strategic Partner**:

Sudbury & District Citizens Advice were awarded £100,000 per year (plus 3% inflation for years 2 & 3) to continue delivery of their 1-2-1 free, independent, confidential and impartial advice service to residents of Babergh district covering a wide-range of areas such as Benefits, Consumer issues, Debt, Discrimination, Employment, Family / Relationships, Health, Housing, Immigration and Legal issues.

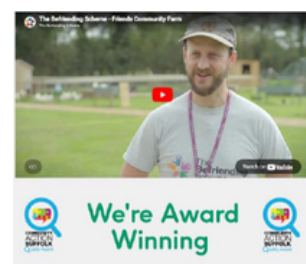
Community Action Suffolk (CAS) were awarded £10,000 per year (plus 3% inflation for years 2 & 3).

During 2025/26 this funding has enabled CAS to achieve the following impact within the district:

- CAS Network Member registrations increased to **244 organisations** and **392 individuals** - The network allows organisations and individuals to receive regular communications on various topics such as Health & Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Volunteering, Funding opportunities, State of the Sector, Charities Act changes and Martyns Law.
- **35** organisations received formal training ranging from Safeguarding to financial resilience and sustainability
- **74** organisations accessed 1-2-1 support from capacity building officers
- **11** organisations have undertaken CAS VCFSE Healthcheck, Healthcheck+ and CAS Quality Standards - enabling them to be **stronger, safer and sustainable**

Case Study: Befriending Scheme achieves CAS Quality Standard

The Befriending Scheme, based in Sudbury achieved the CAS Quality Standard in February 2026. The Befriending Scheme provides friendship and learning opportunities for vulnerable people (16yrs+) across Suffolk, including those with learning disabilities, mental health needs, and other isolated groups.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

The funding period has catalysed **meaningful initiatives** within local neighbourhoods. Projects such as Traditional Music Sunday Sessions and the creation of new community spaces have strengthened connections among residents, promoting collaboration and a sense of belonging. This support has empowered individuals to take an active role in shaping their environment.

Elmsett & Aldham Community Shop

One notable outcome is the extension to Elmsett & Aldham Village Hall which has provided the residents with a new Community Shop - for which Community Development funding helped provide shop fixtures and fittings. This initiative has not only provided residents with access to fresh produce and goods but also serves as a gathering place for local people, fostering community spirit, helping reduce feelings of social isolation and encouraging a sense of belonging.



KEY IMPACT METRICS

“Because of Babergh District Council’s funding, Our Special Friends is there to help people keep their pet when difficulties with health, age or a crisis mean they could be separated, and to provide weekly visits from volunteers with their friendly dogs to people who can’t have a pet of their own.”



£271,479.91

Total Funding Allocated

3,148

Total Volunteer’s Supported

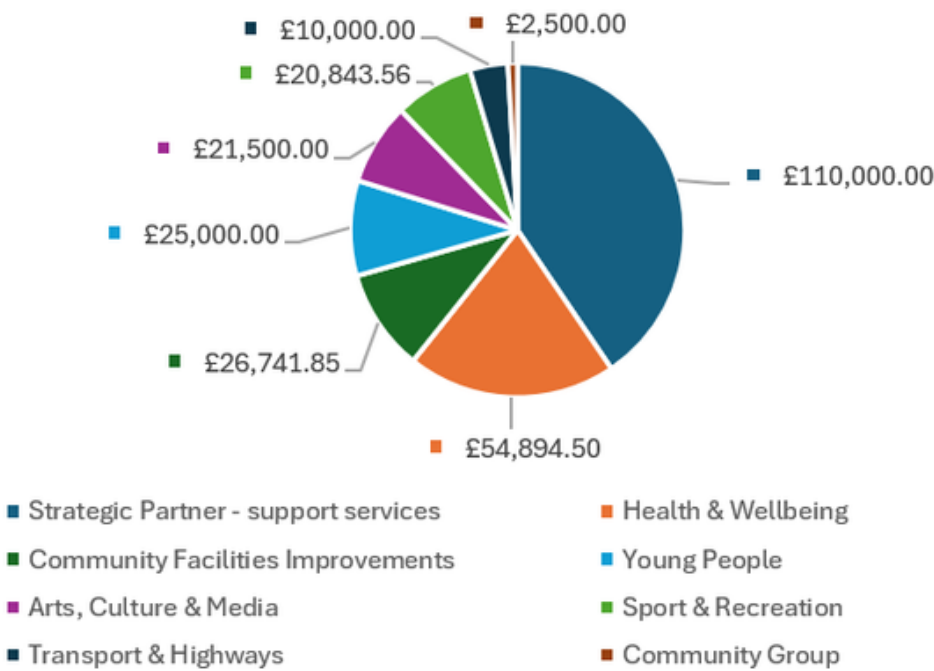
23 PROJECTS

Total Projects supported

£238,963

Total match funding secured

'Grant Awarded' by 'Category'



SUCCESS STORIES



This section highlights four projects that exemplify the positive impact of community development funding in Babergh District. Each story reflects the dedication and hard work of local residents, illustrating how funding has fostered growth and connection within the community over the past year.



MILDEN PAVILION AND PLAYING FIELD & RECREATION GROUND - COMMUNITY ASSET ENHANCEMENT

The funding was used to renovate the pavilion veranda to enhance accessibility and provide improved outdoor seating space. The new veranda has been very well received by the local community. It is well used by cricket spectators and players during the season and has enabled easier access to the building. In addition, the number of private bookings for family birthday celebrations has already increased by 200% as a result of the improvements

GAINSBOROUGH'S HOUSE - INSPIRING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS PROJECT

The funding enabled the creation of a young people panel (the 'House Collective') which has 48 members aged between 16 and 24 years. These young volunteers have already gained valuable new skills and experience to help them collaborate with staff to create programs that resonate with their peers. Activities undertaken so far include the design of the 'House Collective' logo as pictured above.



The projects funded this year have significantly enhanced community well-being and engagement. From transforming local spaces to empowering residents through skills development, these success stories demonstrate the positive outcomes achievable when community members come together. The funding has not only supported infrastructure improvements but has also built lasting relationships among residents and stakeholders.



EDEN'S PROJECT - YOUTH CENTRE PROVISION

The funding has supported 233 young people to attend the youth centre and engage with positive activities, which include a home education socialising provision, after school and holiday drop-ins, arts and crafts activities, parenting courses, free hot meals and group mentoring.

110 young people accessed in-depth mental / emotional health support from counsellor / youth workers to increase their emotional wellbeing resilience.

Below are some examples of the feedback young people provided about the service: "It is a welcoming community." "It helps me socialise and meet new people." "The staff are nice." "The staff will always be there for you during your highs and lows." "The amazing staff and the respect people give to them." "It's a safe place for everyone to express their opinions with kindness."

COMPASSION - SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE WITHIN BABERGH

The funding enabled 192 Babergh residents to receive help and support including 58 individuals who attended one of six funded VOICE courses - a 12-week programme designed to improve victims' safety, confidence and wellbeing enabling them to process and recover from their abusive experiences, leading them to live a life without fear.

FINANCIAL

Organisation	Project Description	Grant Awarded
Sudbury & District CA	Core funding	£100,000.00
Community Action Suffolk	Core funding	£10,000.00
Elmsett & Aldham Community Shop	New shop expenses	£5,000.00
Home-Start in Suffolk	Family Support in Babergh	£10,000.00
Lighthouse Women's Aid	Project Support	£5,000.00
East Anglian Traditional Music Trust	Babergh Programme of works	£2,500.00
Eden's Project	Revenue funding for Youth Centre workers	£10,000.00
Go-Start Community Transport	Community Transport Scheme	£10,000.00
Suffolk Mind	Mental Health support for CYP in Gt Cornard	£9,894.50
Stanstead Village Community Centre	Storage shed replacement project	£2,804.00
Our Special Friends	Animal Companionship Support Services	£10,000.00
Association for Suffolk Museums	Museum Development	£1,500.00
Gainsborough's House	Inspiring Young Volunteers	£10,000.00
Rural Coffee Caravan	Rural village visits	£10,000.00
Bures Village Cricket Club	Cricket Pavilion roof re-thatch	£7,500.00
Stour Valley Men's Shed	Stafford Park Building Renovation and Accessibility Project	£10,000.00
The Quay Theatre	Part-time Theatre Programmer	£10,000.00
The Offshoot Foundation	Filmmaking workshops for CYP	£10,000.00
Milden Pavilion Playing Field & Recreation Ground	New veranda	£8,937.85
Copdock & Old Ipswichian CC	Tables and chairs for canopy extension	£3,343.56
Cornard Leisure Centre	School holiday, Community Swim & after-school gym sessions	£10,000.00
Compassion	Workshop programme	£10,000.00
Churches Conservation Trust	Crucial Crew	£5,000.00