

Championing rural life

Community Buildings

Surrey's community buildings provide valued spaces and facilities for local people, but in order to remain well-used and sustainable they need to be modern, well equipped and managed properly.

Surrey Community Action supports the people who manage these buildings with advice on constitutional matters, health and safety, business planning and funding for capital projects, as well as a number of other issues.

This year our Community Buildings Adviser dealt with almost 200 enquiries from village hall management committees, provided one-to-one tailored advice and supported building projects. Representatives of community buildings also took advantage of our free training sessions on GDPR and Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs).



Enabling Rural Housing

Surrey Community Action's Rural Housing Enabler works to assess the level of need for affordable housing in rural villages and consults with the local community to identify suitable land where homes can be built for local people.

Last year we carried out housing needs surveys in seven villages, and reviews of housing need in a further three. Working in partnership with land agents and developers as well as parish councils and housing associations, we have supported a planning application for 15 homes in Brockham, while work has started in Dunsfold to build eight affordable homes.

The average house price across Surrey's rural villages is now £715,000

"I wanted to stay close to my family so that my mum could help with childcare, and I could help to look after my brother who has learning difficulties and give my parents a break. Although both my husband and I work, we could never have bought a property in Bramley without the offer of an affordable home." Cordelia

Developing communities

Good Neighbour Schemes

Good neighbour schemes offer a helping hand to others in their local community. Run by volunteers, each group is different but will often include transport assistance, social activities and a befriending scheme. All of them enable older people to live independently in their homes and communities for longer and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

We provide advice to help establish and develop new groups as well as tailored support to ensure the longevity of existing groups. We also share good practice, identify gaps in provision and run volunteer recruitment campaigns to strengthen and maintain the capacity of the 97 local groups we support.

This year, our Voluntary Car Scheme Adviser continued to help establish fledgling schemes in Godalming, Laleham, Blindley Heath, Godstone and South Godstone and recruited over 103 drivers and duty officers through the Drive into Action marketing campaign which also saw the production of a new promotional video.



"First port of call for any issues/problems arising. Always responds quickly. We really value her long experience and common sense."

Gypsy and Traveller Support Work

Working in multi-agency partnerships to help Gypsy and Traveller communities resolve complex housing and financial issues, our Community Development Worker has supported 40 families this year, with 15 open cases at any one time.

Families facing eviction, homelessness and debts value the support and advice we provide, which includes personalised support plans, signposting and liaison with other agencies and enables them to stay in their homes and receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

"Thank you for all of your help, we wouldn't have managed without your support"



Money Matters

Following the success of our Warmth Matters initiative, which gives practical advice and support to families on tight budgets to help make their homes warmer and healthier, we secured additional funding in 2018/19 to extend the project and also include an additional budgeting advice project called Money Matters.

Over 200 people on low incomes or at risk of fuel poverty were given advice to help them save money on their fuel bills by switching suppliers and making practical changes to their homes to improve energy efficiency.

As well as providing people with information on how to keep their homes warm for less, we also helped people to find support for debt and gave advice about budgeting and stretching low incomes further.

Our advice sessions have helped people across Surrey to save over £7000

Inspiring Enterprise Project

The Inspiring Enterprise project offers free support to help people in west Surrey to develop the ideas, confidence and skills they need to become self-employed or set up a social enterprise.

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund (now the National Lottery Community Fund) and the European Social Fund, the programme is focused on supporting people who are not currently working including the long term unemployed, lone parents, carers, people with health conditions or disabilities, older workers and people in minority groups.

Last year 96 people who were not in employment attended our Enterprise Essentials workshops which cover the basics of what is involved in becoming self-employed.

Everyone who attended rated these as good or very good, while 83% said that their confidence in becoming self-employed had improved after attending.



"I attended the Enterprise Essentials Workshop which was brilliant because I was really starting from scratch as an entrepreneur and it was a good introductory workshop" Margarita

Community Led Housing

Community led housing is a way to create homes that remain affordable and for local people in the future, however many people move in and out of them, and could be one of the solutions to the short supply of affordable housing in Surrey.

The Surrey Community Housing Partnership was formed by the local district and borough councils to promote and support community led housing in Surrey and is managed by Surrey Community Action. Our Community Led Housing Project Manager helps interested people to form groups, develop their ideas, engage their communities and navigate every step of the development process.

Last year our series of rural and community-led housing workshops were attended by 42 people representing about 30 communities and we visited other events in the east and the west of the county to introduce community led housing.



There are now 15 developing and potential community-led housing projects across the county where local people will decide how many and what kind of homes they want to build.

Lower Green Community Centre

This year, we extended our Community Buildings programme by employing a Community Development Worker to establish good governance and financial management of the Lower Green Community Centre, as well as creating new support services and activities for the community.

The refurbished centre now hosts exercise and craft classes, activities for children, a nursery and a community café. The number of regular private hirers is increasing which will help to ensure its viability through income generation.

We have recruited, trained and supported a new board of trustees to take over the management of the centre and establish it as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on behalf of Elmbridge Borough Council.



“Lower Green Community Centre looks amazing after its refurbishment. I first didn't recognise the place, totally changed! What a brilliant Centre for all sorts of activities. Great and polite staff, very enjoyable coffee morning too. Thank you!” Rafiza

Supporting the sector

Over 100 representatives from 80 charity and not-for-profit organisations attended our Fundraising Fair in the spring which featured a funding marketplace, presentations and workshops.

Throughout the year we ran a series of workshops to help charities to understand more about Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) and how these could be a modern and secure way to run their organisation. We've also provided tailored advice to 20 individual charities and led the Surrey Charity Chief Executive Group.

Surrey Community Action is involved in several of Surrey's Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) and in both Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) thanks to our in-depth knowledge of the sector, which enables us to influence how voluntary organisations are engaged more strategically and

operationally at the heart of care in Surrey.

We were also a key partner in the development of the Surrey 2030 Vision, including leading workshops on its development and implementation, and chairing conferences. This work has significantly increased our profile and credibility with partners as a vital conduit into the voluntary sector.



“Exceeded expectations and reinforced our CIO's decision to set up. Very informative”

Business Services

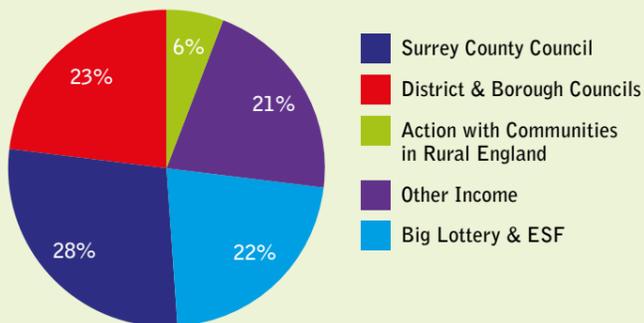
Surrey Community Action offers a wide range of business services to charities, voluntary groups and to small local businesses including building management, payroll support, meeting room hire, DBS checks and research. During 2018-2019, there were 2,328 visitors to Astolat which houses nine charities. We processed over 250 applications for DBS checks and provided a payroll service for 31 organisations.



“The Fundraising Fair was a great way to gain knowledge on relevant information, seek advice and network with others within the voluntary sector.”

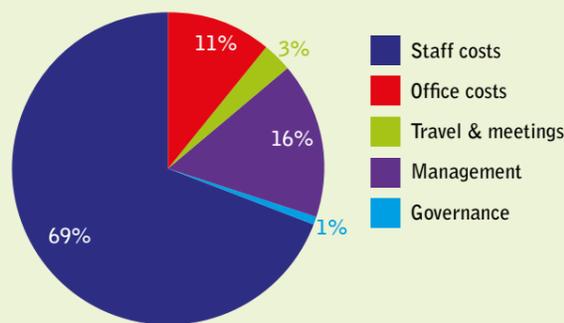
Accounts

Income



Thank you for your support!

Expenditure



Our full trustees report and accounts are available on our website at www.surreyca.org.uk or from our office. Email info@surreyca.org.uk for a copy



Annual Review 2018/19