

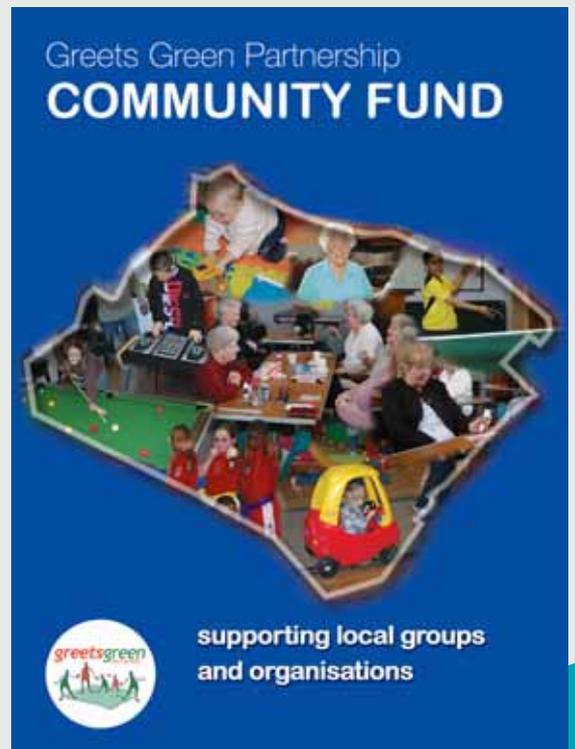
GRANTS HELP VALUABLE COMMUNITY GROUPS GROW

FUNDED BY: Greets Green Partnership as part of its Community Empowerment Theme.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: There are more than 50 active community groups and organisations in the Greets Green area which provide a variety of activities and services for local residents. Greets Green Partnership's Community Fund is a two year programme which offers small grants to help these groups continue to run their existing activities as well as get new projects off the ground.

PROJECT IN ACTION: When the Community Fund originally ran four years ago, more than 300 small grants were awarded to local groups. The Fund was re-launched in June 2005 and groups working in Greets Green can apply for up to £1,000 in any financial year. A specially trained panel of local residents then decides which applications are successful. It aims to award grants to projects which fall under one of the Partnership's five priorities - community involvement, safer communities, reducing health inequalities, improving educational achievement and improved economic prospects.

The grants are quite flexible but cannot be used for individual benefit, social events or pleasure trips. All that groups require is a set of rules and a bank account. The Partnership's Neighbourhood Support Team offers a wide range of help and support to groups looking to apply for grants and helps to put unsuccessful applicants in touch with other sources of funding.



“We’re encouraging as many groups as possible to apply,” says Greets Green Partnership’s Neighbourhood Support Officer, Bob Lloyd. “These groups provide vital activities for local residents, often on a shoestring, and deserve a financial boost so that they can continue their work in the community .”

A dozen local groups are already in line for grants from the Community Fund and a wide variety of applications have been received from groups providing youth activities, older people’s events and those meeting the needs of diverse sectors of the community. These include Lodge Road Boxing Club and the XL Fitness Club, along with Ryders Green Methodist Day Centre which was awarded a grant to employ a care worker with knowledge of black and minority ethnic groups for six months.

Greets Green Pakistani Community Group

A Community Fund grant is enabling the Greets Green Pakistani Community Group to create a drop-in centre next to their Dartmouth Street mosque. It will allow them to convert a room for advice surgeries, meetings and office space to help them grow and expand.

Pakistani Men’s Development Worker, Imran Khan says: “One of the main things the Pakistani community is lacking is a base where people can get together to discuss any issues and concerns in the community. This drop-in centre will enable people to share ideas and will provide an essential platform for the community. Without the grant we wouldn’t have had the capital to renovate the room.”

The grant has helped to cover the costs of decorating, furniture, cabinets and carpets, along with publicising the new centre in the community.



Lyng Shotokan Karate Club

Lyng Shotokan Karate Club was awarded a Community Fund grant so it could continue offering youngsters in Greets Green a chance to take part in the sport. Without the grant, instructor Jane Harbach fears the club might have been forced to close. The grant is being



used towards general running costs such as room hire and equipment including fans, secure cupboards and protective body pads, plus trophies for the children, which Jane has previously paid for herself.

She says: “The grant is brilliant for us because it means we can give something back to the community and the kids really benefit. The main thing for me is that the kids can walk away from my classes with confidence. If they can stand up and say ‘no’ to someone who’s bullying them and stop getting hurt, then I’ve done my job.”

The club meets at Lodge Road Community Centre on Mondays from 7pm to 9pm and caters for children from the age of six upwards and adults.

Swan Village Social Group

Swan Village Social Group for elderly people received a Community Fund grant to boost its popular breakfast club, run by dedicated Greets Green resident, Pam Jackson.

About 20 members of the Swan Village Social Group meet for a weekly breakfast club on Tuesday mornings at Pam’s home in Phoenix Street. The popularity of the group left Pam struggling to manage with just her own kitchen equipment and crockery, so she applied for a grant.

It has helped to buy items such as crockery, cutlery and a microwave, so the group can

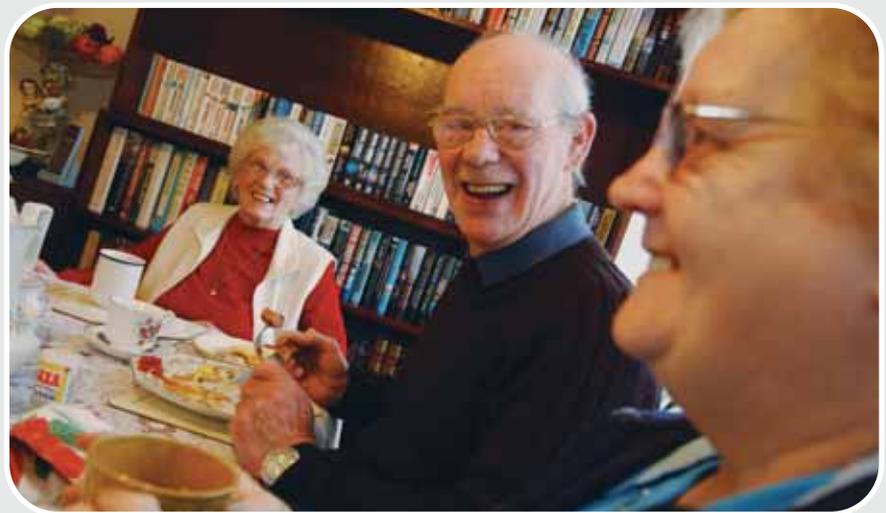


continue providing a place to meet for elderly neighbours, and meet the demand for Pam's legendary bacon butties!

Pam says: "We set up a coffee morning in the summer for the elderly and then when it got colder we decided to do a breakfast club. We have about 20 people each week who come for a natter and a laugh. It gives them a couple of hours out and helps them to make friends."

Among the regulars is Vera Barnes, aged 87, who says it's a home from home: "It's fabulous. It's comfortable and convenient and when you have a breakfast you don't want anything else all day. We have a good laugh. You can't help but go."

For more information about the Community Fund, contact Greets Green Partnership's Neighbourhood Support Officer, Bob Lloyd on freephone 0800 953 0215.



Greets Green Partnership was awarded £56 million in 2000 to deliver a 10 year regeneration programme under the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative. It is currently funding more than 100 projects throughout the area, covering community empowerment, crime and community safety, education and lifelong learning, health, housing and urban form, and jobs and enterprise. The Partnership area, which is adjacent to West Bromwich Town Centre, is home to just over 12,400 residents living in 4,900 households.

To find out more, call Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

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