

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Community | Employability | Wellbeing

Improving Quality of Life



Welcome from our Chair

Key Highlights for Community Action Dacorum



2025 has been a year of bold steps and meaningful progress for our charity. Successful new initiatives included the launch of a Library of Things to help with the cost-of-living crisis and support the environment; expanding our support to local and regional healthcare bodies to help shape inclusive new strategies; and broadcasting Radio Dacorum on DAB across southwest Hertfordshire, so listeners can now pick up the station in their cars. But that's just scratching the surface. Other highlights include the expansion of HITS, our work on digital inclusion, training and learning expansion, and new funding streams for carers.

None of this would have been possible without the commitment and innovation of our staff, volunteers, and trustees. We would like to express our thanks, recognition, and gratitude to all of them for their incredible efforts.

Following this year's AGM I will be continuing as a trustee but standing down as Chair after seven years in the role. Despite an enormous number of challenges, it has been a period of great achievement and growth for our organisation. We were awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (the MBE for voluntary bodies); converted HITS into our trading subsidiary; successfully replaced EU funding with alternative income after Brexit; and our incredible voluntary efforts for the Coronavirus vaccination programme were congratulated in an Early Day Motion in Parliament. We also introduced a performance-based staff remuneration system and recruited committed new trustees and volunteers, including our highly capable and respected CEO.

We have navigated the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis more successfully than many voluntary organisations and, in the process, become increasingly influential and respected as a leader within Hertfordshire's voluntary sector. We will, of course, continue to face difficult challenges, not least the Local Government Reorganisation and continuing financial issues, but we are already making plans to deal effectively with these matters, including the recruitment of experienced new trustees to replace those who will be retiring in the near future.

I feel happy that I cease to be Chair of a more organised, professional, and sustainable charity and I am convinced our dedicated trustees and management will continue to take the organisation from strength to strength.



Colin Gage - Chairman



Meeting our Charitable Purpose

Community Action Dacorum exists to 'link the public, corporate, and voluntary sectors for the benefit of the community', as set out in our governing document.

Specifically:

To promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the public, principally but not exclusively in the local government area of Dacorum and its environs and, in particular, build the capacity of third-sector organisations, providing them with the necessary support, information, and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose.

To promote, organise, and facilitate co-operation and partnership working between third sector, statutory, and other relevant bodies in the achievement of the above purposes within the area of benefit.

We achieve our charitable purpose by working across three areas for the benefit of the residents of Dacorum. These are Community | Employability | Wellbeing

Our communities team promotes, organises, and facilitates co-operation and partnership, working between third-sector, statutory, and other relevant bodies in the achievement of the above purposes. Together with our employability and wellbeing teams, and with the support of our training and development and interpreting service, the charity is focused on improving the quality of lives of people across the borough. All the activities we deliver work to improve the wider determinates of health for our community, often supporting the most vulnerable residents. We support the labour market, we promote life-long education, we support people with their income and expenditure during a cost-of-living crisis, and we build a sense of community.



Our Impact

We are proud to showcase the hard work our team has put in this year and how it has strengthened social and community networks, continuing to make Dacorum a better place to live and work.

Our services help residents improve their work opportunities and environments by supporting them in developing their job prospects. Our wellbeing team ensures people can access the services they need by working to bridge the gap between patient and healthcare provider. Whether it is access to transportation or appointments, or addressing digital poverty,

our wellbeing services increase dignified independence to the most vulnerable members of our community.

Our training and development work addresses loneliness and isolation through education, providing a sense of community interaction and instilling skills and self-belief that can be applied in all aspects of life.

Whilst it would bring us much pride to be able to share each and every one of the many interventions we have undertaken this year, space will sadly not allow.

In this report we present and celebrate some examples of our work.



Community

Empowering Communities through Connection, Collaboration & Capacity Building

This year has been a transformative one for Community Action Dacorum, as our work reached deeper into the heart of the borough's voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector. Our aim has remained clear: to strengthen organisations, empower individuals, and foster meaningful collaboration across the district. From connecting volunteers with purposeful roles to supporting groups in securing vital funding, our work has helped build a stronger and more resilient community network.

Volunteering: Growing the Spirit of Service

Volunteering has continued to thrive in Dacorum, with 461 volunteers referred to local organisations and 445 residents registering through Community Action Dacorum's volunteering platform. To make volunteering more accessible, we held monthly outreach sessions in Tring, Berkhamsted, and Kings Langley, bringing opportunities closer to where people live and helping more residents find ways to contribute their time and skills. This year also saw the launch of a county-wide volunteer recruitment video, produced in collaboration with other Hertfordshire volunteer centres and Radio Dacorum. In addition, Community Action Dacorum supported groups aiming to strengthen their volunteer management practices by promoting and guiding organisations through a Recruiting and Managing Volunteers six-point promise accreditation.

"Georgina has been a wonderful volunteer. We are very grateful to Community Action Dacorum for connecting us." – **Lauren Wilson, Dacorum Heritage Trust**

Community Projects

- Community Help Hertfordshire
- Community Support Team
- Cost of Living Advice Programme
- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- Minibuses for Groups
- Supporting Refugees and Guests
- Supporting Sports Groups
- Volunteer Centre
- Volunteering for Health

Funding Impact: £200,000 Distributed Across 41 Organisations

Community Action Dacorum played a central role in distributing £200,000 through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), supporting projects across sport, arts, culture, volunteering, and inclusion. Nearly £90,000 was awarded to 19 sports clubs to enhance facilities and develop activities that encourage wider participation providing more opportunities for residents to be active. Arts and cultural organisations were also able to bring new exhibitions and community heritage projects to life, while funding in the volunteering and inclusion sectors helped strengthen services for carers and increase social access for LGBTQ+ residents.

"Your advice and in-depth knowledge about the UKSPF was invaluable. This funding is vital for us." – **Karen, Inclusive United CIC**

Strengthening Sports and Activity Clubs

In partnership with Herts Sports Partnership (HSP), Community Action Dacorum welcomed 53 sports and activity clubs into membership this year. Through this collaboration, clubs benefited from support such as minibus hire, DBS checks, volunteer matching, and tailored development guidance. Three major events were also held, including a popular funding information session at Camelot Rugby Club and an upcoming health-focused event supported by the NHS.

Feedback: "The impact has far surpassed any expectations I had. Well done!"

– **Charlie Mann, HSP**

Case Study: Harbour Lights Scuba Diving Club

Harbour Lights has grown from a small specialist group into a leader in inclusive sport. With support from Community Action Dacorum, the club secured funding to purchase youth wetsuits and deliver training sessions, enabling 100 young people to experience scuba diving. A partnership with the Lions Club further expanded opportunities, offering one-to-one diving experiences for children with disabilities. Community Action Dacorum's guidance also helped strengthen the club's governance and community outreach. Feedback: "Community Action Dacorum has been a game-changer. We had the passion, but they gave us the tools." – **Gordon Harland, Chair**



Building Capacity and Collaboration

More than 100 community groups benefited from tailored support in governance, safeguarding, and funding this year. Community Action Dacorum facilitated themed networking groups, bringing together organisations supporting older people, ethnic minority communities, LGBTQ+ residents and more. These sessions provided space for shared learning, partnership building, and collective problem-solving. The year culminated in a Voluntary Sector Conference attended by 60 organisations, celebrating achievements and strengthening ties across the sector.

Looking Ahead

With continued momentum, Community Action Dacorum is committed to:

- Monitoring the outcomes of funded projects
 - Expanding outreach and partnerships
 - Supporting sustainability and innovation across the VCFSE sector
- Together, we're building a stronger, more connected Dacorum.



Celebrating Community: The Roundhouse Rebrand and Dacorum 50 Fest

The rebranded Community Action Dacorum Roundhouse Community Hub made its debut at Dacorum 50 Fest, broadcasting live via Radio Dacorum and engaging new volunteers, partners, and service users. This event marked an energetic celebration of community spirit and showcased Community Action Dacorum's ongoing commitment to offering welcoming, inclusive spaces for local people.

"Thank you so much for the incredible support you've shown us. Reflecting on our journey together, I truly appreciate how valuable our partnership has been. Your help in recruiting volunteers across Tring and Hemel Hempstead and your wider support through connection, collaboration, and visibility, has meant a great deal to us. We remain committed to our membership with Community Action Dacorum and are deeply grateful for your patience, understanding, and belief in the work we're doing with young people."

Ernest Moses – MCR Pathways

"Thank you so much for your kind message and for keeping in touch – I truly appreciate the support and attention from the Volunteer Centre. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to be involved in volunteering and to contribute in some way to the local community. Thank you and best regards."

Evgenia – Volunteer

Employability

Employment offers more than financial stability – it brings purpose, structure, and identity.

Community Action Dacorum's employability programmes empower people of all ages to overcome barriers, build confidence, and move towards sustainable work. Participants gain the tools to unlock their potential via mentoring, skills development, and training opportunities. This year, we've expanded our support with two new projects: Future Ready and WorkWell.

Future Ready

Many young adult carers put their responsibilities first, often at the expense of their education and future opportunities. Community Action Dacorum has developed a bespoke mentoring and training programme to support them on their journey towards employment, education, or volunteering. Recognising their unique challenges, we're working closely with four young adults to provide flexible and personalised support that fits around their caring roles.

Case Study

"C", 17, cares for his father who has a life-limiting illness, while his mum works two jobs. After leaving school without GCSEs and facing tension at home, he worked as a builder's mate but wanted better opportunities and independence through learning to drive.

A short-term plan was created to support him in exploring career options, using the National Careers Service for a skills assessment, and preparing for his driving theory test using free apps.



Employability Services

- Connect
- CV and Interview skills days
- Dragons Apprentice Challenge
- Employment courses
- Future Ready
- Generation Dacorum Careers Fair
- Staying Connected digital inclusion
- WorkWell

Outcomes:

- Passed his driving theory test first time, boosting confidence
- Recognised the need to gain English and Maths qualifications
- Enrolled in a local business course with GCSE study included
- College schedule allows him to support his dad and start driving lessons

Support Focus:

- Wellbeing – emotional support and communication
- Skills – driving prep, course research, and study planning
- Employability – understanding job requirements and skills development

WorkWell

WorkWell is a nationwide programme supporting people with health conditions or disabilities to return to work or remain in employment. Community Action Dacorum is commissioned by the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board to map current provisions leading a partnership with Community Alliance Broxbourne and East Herts. We have already identified more than 100 services and continue to develop relationships by talking to service providers and clients about gaps in provision and will be able to provide at the end of the project a tool for people to use to find current services.



Generation Dacorum Careers Fair

Organised by Community Action Dacorum since 2018, Generation Dacorum connects young people in the area with local employers, training providers, and career opportunities. The event is designed to inspire secondary school students and young people by raising career aspirations, offering meaningful interactions with employers, and highlighting local job and training options.

The latest event, attracted more than 1,100 students and over 35 exhibitors, including major employers like Tesco, Computacenter, and The British Army.

Case Study: Generation Dacorum Careers Fair

Liam first met Whitestar's CEO, John, at the Generation Dacorum Careers Fair, where he asked about work experience. He returned later that day with his mother to learn more and soon completed a week's placement at Whitestar. Now, having left school, Liam has joined the company as an apprentice – all thanks to the connection made at the careers fair.

Dragons' Apprentice Challenge – 12 Years of Success

The Dragons' Apprentice Challenge is now in its twelfth year, the latest being our most successful yet – 15 teams took part and raised nearly £31,000. The Challenge continues to be a win-win for everyone involved, building partnerships between local charities, businesses, and schools, while strengthening our community. It also helps raise the profile of local organisations and provides valuable professional development for employees.



"This year's Challenge allowed us to build fantastic relationships with our partner school and charity, The Blue Tangerine Federation. Our student team embraced every learning opportunity and raised an incredible £7,095.87 — breaking the record for the Most Money Earned award. We're so proud and hope to take part again next year!" – Rachel Redondo and Amanda Hersham, Twenty-Two



Wellbeing, Support where needed

Shopmobility and Community Transport - Connecting people for better health

We all know that social isolation has a profound impact on wellbeing. Community Action Dacorum is committed to ensuring that no one is left behind, particularly those who face barriers to getting out and about. Our Shopmobility service, based at The Marlowes Centre in Hemel Hempstead, plays a vital role in helping people maintain dignified independence and stay connected to their community.



For a nominal fee, residents and visitors can hire electric scooters or wheelchairs, enabling them to access shops, cafés and local services with confidence and ease. Whether it's meeting friends for lunch, running errands, or simply enjoying time in town, Shopmobility removes barriers and ensures equality of access for everyone. Much more than a transport service, it's about freedom, dignity, and inclusion.

Our members say:

Feedback for Shopmobility: *"If it were not for Shopmobility, shopping in the town would be impossible."*

Feedback for Community Transport: *"I would like this opportunity to let you know about the brilliant service you provide to me as a user. Your staff and volunteers are always friendly, very caring and accommodating. It makes me feel like an extended member of your Shopmobility family."*



Wellbeing Services

- Cancer Prevention Programme
- Community Buses
- Community Help Hertfordshire
- Community Transport
- Dacorum Library of Things
- Day Trippers
- Door2Store
- Radio Dacorum
- ShopMobility
- Staying Connected

Further Afield

We have also expanded our Day Trippers programme, offering a more diverse and exciting range of destinations and activities to appeal to people with different interests and abilities. Coastal outings, historic sites, garden visits, and seasonal events have all provided opportunities for relaxation, discovery, and friendship. Demand was so strong for some excursions that additional buses were added, an encouraging sign of the appetite people have for shared experiences and social connection.

Together, Shopmobility and Day Trippers continue to play a crucial role in reducing isolation, increasing confidence, and improving quality of life.

Our wellbeing services contribute to Hertfordshire's health creation strategy and the NHS's 10-year plan. The services sit within our wider Community Transport offer, which provides vital links for those who might otherwise struggle to travel independently.

Via Door2Store shopping trips, our Community Cars scheme, and Minibus Hire for local groups, charities and sports clubs, Community Action Dacorum ensures residents can stay mobile, connected, and engaged in community life.

These initiatives successfully reduce isolation and increase both confidence and wellbeing – helping to build an inclusive community where everyone can take part, feel valued, and enjoy life to the fullest.



Wellbeing: Improving Quality of Life:

Library of Things and the Repair Shed

Being part of a community, having a sense of purpose, and living in an environment that supports both people and planet all contribute to a person's quality of life and sense of wellbeing. With the cost-of-living crisis continuing to affect many households, Community Action Dacorum has remained focused on projects that make practical differences to residents' lives while promoting sustainability and social connections.

Feedback for Day Trippers:

"I just wanted to thank you for your support and help – it really meant a lot. Aishah had a lovely day at the seaside with her family and thoroughly enjoyed exploring Southend. It was a refreshing and happy time for all of them. We truly appreciate everything you've done to make it possible."

"A BIG thank you to all the drivers, helpers, Debbie, and everyone that makes it possible for us 'on our own' generation! Happy"

This year saw the successful launch of our Library of Things – a much-needed and already well-used resource that allows Dacorum residents to borrow garden tools, cooking equipment, household cleaning items, and more. The Library supports both residents and the environment by reducing landfill and waste. Residents can borrow items they may need only occasionally, try something before committing to buy, or access equipment that would be otherwise unaffordable. The low-cost rental model is designed to support residents during the cost-of-living crisis and makes it easier to tackle home improvements, start new hobbies, and live more sustainably.



RADIO DACORUM

Radio Dacorum has taken important steps forward in its mission to bring residents closer, reduce isolation, and offer meaningful opportunities for creative expression. A key milestone was the recruitment of a new Radio Development Manager, a strategic role designed to grow our listener base, broaden the variety of programmes, generate sustainable income, and ensure Radio Dacorum remains an essential and inclusive part of community life and a hub for local voices.

Download our app from your app store



Tune in on DAB Radio

This year also saw the introduction of a range of *non-presenter volunteer roles*, broadening access to those who want to get involved in the creative world behind the microphone. From technical support and social media to event coverage and production assistance, these roles offer valuable experience in media and teamwork while strengthening the community spirit that underpins everything we do.

At its heart, Radio Dacorum is about empowerment. Presenting on the radio isn't just about speaking into a mic: it's about learning how to research, plan interviews, speak clearly, work with software or audio equipment, and collaborate with others. As many of our volunteers have told us, it also boosts confidence and develops communication and technical skills that extend far beyond the studio.

Together, these developments – new leadership, expanded roles, inclusive programming, and accessible services – mean that Radio Dacorum is more than a radio station. It is a space that brings people together, helps build confidence, offers creative learning and creates connections in our borough.

Radio Dacorum continued to produce programmes that directly foster connection, reduce loneliness, support wellbeing and promote local groups and businesses. For example, the Music for Memory show nurtures connection for people living with dementia by playing music from their youth, and our Dacorum's Den month showcased local start-ups.



Feedback for Library of Things:

"I have been wishing for a service like this locally for years!"

"Such an amazing service. I don't need to buy and store a shop's worth of equipment in my house just for a single use."

The Repair Shed, now celebrating its 10th anniversary, continues to go from strength to strength. Since 2015 the Shed has brought people together, particularly older men, to fix, upcycle or repair items, share practical skills, and enjoy the companionship that comes from working alongside others. It's a space that promotes wellbeing, purpose and friendship, and has become an enduring example of how community-led activity can change lives for the better.



From April 2024 to April 2025 more than 9,100 local residents utilised our various transport services to get them out and about socialising, going to appointments, accessing essential shopping services, and enjoying varied day trips, enabling them to remain independant, or in some cases, regain their independence and improving their overall quality of life."



83% of Sheddors reported that being a member had positively impacted on their quality of life.

56% of Sheddors said that shedding was important to improving their Mental Wellbeing

Feedback for The Repair Shed:

"Having a place to go with others of a similar age and with similar interests allows me to do practical things whilst having interaction, rather than just being in my own workshop."

"I enjoy the company, creativity, learning new skills from others, and passing on any personal expertise. It gives me a real sense of purpose."

Training and Development



Another Successful Year for the Community Action Dacorum Team

This has been another busy and impactful year. Under the Multiply programme, an innovative, nationwide scheme supporting adults to improve their everyday maths skills, we continued to deliver a variety of engaging and practical courses. We also launched a new intervention, Step2Skills, reaching hundreds more learners.



Our programmes included:

- Crafting with Recycled Materials – encouraging creativity and sustainability.
- Budgeting for Shopping and Household Expenses – helping participants manage their finances with confidence.
- Cooking on a Budget – designed especially for adults supported by Dacorum Mencap who are preparing to live independently.

In total, we supported over 130 learners from Dacorum, empowering them to gain valuable numeracy and life skills.

Feedback from our funders:

"Since October, Community Action Dacorum has shown remarkable progress. The quality of paperwork and data demonstrates the team's dedication and commitment to maintaining high standards. Community Action Dacorum worked tirelessly to overcome setbacks and achieved an impressive 95% overall. We truly appreciate their hard work and professionalism."

We are proud of these results and grateful for the recognition of our team's consistent effort and impact.



Alongside Multiply, we successfully delivered the Step2Skills contract, supporting an additional 314 residents in Dacorum. This programme helped individuals develop essential life and employability skills, build confidence, and take steps toward further learning and work. We are delighted to have secured this contract for another year.



We are pleased to report that we maintained our Matrix Standard following a successful and highly positive mid-term review.

In addition, we took part in Dragons' Den, raising more than £1,000 to fund digital skills sessions in supported housing schemes for older adults, helping them stay connected and confident online.

Finally, we continue to work closely with our valued partners, including Hertfordshire County Council, Dacorum Borough Council, and charities such as the Refugee Council, Herts Welcome Refugees, and the South Hill Centre, delivering one-to-one and small-group support where it's needed most.



Training and Development Services

- **Community Interpreting**
- **Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI)**
- **ESOL**
- **Governance for Charities**
- **Introduction to Interpreting**
- **IT courses**
- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Multiply**
- **Recruiting Volunteers**
- **Safeguarding for Charities**
- **Staying Connected.**



Our Future

Our vision for Community Action Dacorum is to be the local leader in the provision of high-quality and good-value community services, both directly and indirectly, to the people of Dacorum, addressing identified social needs in the areas of

Community | Employability | Wellbeing

Our mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of people in our area of operation. We support our community by working with member and partner organisations. Through the services we deliver directly, we improve life chances for those seeking employment or moving into retirement. We also improve the quality of life for individuals by delivering wellbeing programmes.

Our Core Values and Beliefs

We believe that community organisations play a vital role in an inclusive society.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Listening to and respecting others' ideas and aspirations
- Giving everyone the right to equality of opportunity and the chance to contribute
- Committing to quality in all that we do and emphasising throughout our activities that quality matters
- Bringing people and organisations together to achieve more
- Encouraging the widespread participation of volunteers in the organisation and leadership of all our Activities and Business Units
- Working always in an ethical and responsible manner
- Responding to the need for change in a timely and responsible way
- Seeking to develop new initiatives that address developing social needs
- Being an employer of choice, supporting our staff team

Our strategy

We aim to achieve our mission via these key objectives that make up our strategy:

- 1.Diversify
- 2.Leadership
- 3.Data
- 4.Partnerships

Our Development

The charity is focussed on the following areas of development: diversifying our work and client base; leadership and advocacy for the sector; building more partnerships to deliver key outcomes; and better use and knowledge of key data to inform our work.

Our Charitable Delivery: Communities, Employability, and Wellbeing

Communities remain at the centre of our strategy. Over the coming years we will get to know our community even better, building relationships to understand the residents of Dacorum, and be an independent voice for those hardest to hear. Our work will be impactful and facilitate community groups to grow and be stronger through an increasing range of offers and the development of our community services. These include Radio Dacorum and Connect Dacorum, as well as our work supporting community groups and the Volunteer Centre. We will aim to forge strong partnerships across the sector to work collaboratively towards a common goal.



Wellbeing support is at the heart of our volunteering offer; we will continue to work in strong partnerships to leverage the benefits of the voluntary sector to strengthen the wellbeing of Dacorum's community. Building on our existing range of services, we will encourage independence and develop confidence for vulnerable residents. Through this work we will continue to contribute to the health and wellbeing of Dacorum and beyond.



Employability and aspiration are perennial issues in Dacorum, with average incomes lower than the rest of Hertfordshire. We will work with voluntary, statutory, and business partners to offer holistic support to both those who need help in achieving their ambitions and those seeking employment. By delivering training and offering opportunities to learn through intergenerational experiences we will support people seeking their first job, those who wish to upskill or reskill, and those leaving the workforce to begin a purposeful retirement. Through our ESOL courses and language services, we will break down barriers to employment and build our local workforce.



Community



Employability



Wellbeing

Our Year in Numbers

In the financial year which ended in March 2024 Community Action Dacorum generated a surplus of £93,515, although this was much lower than the previous year, this is still a satisfactory result and our overall reserves position increased to £2,198,174.

Income of the charity, excluding the contribution made by our trading subsidiary, was lower as a consequence of the pressures on local government spending. Our costs increased due to high inflation and an increase in headcount (partly funded by designated reserves). Staff costs will continue to increase into 2026 with a significant part of that being due to increases in National Insurance and the minimum wage effective April 2025.

The Trustees previously designated funds from reserves to continue overdue renewals of facilities and updating of our operations; to develop projects that will enhance the work of the charity; and to provide funds for our trading subsidiary to develop its business. The purpose of this is to enable us to provide a better service to our beneficiaries and to build resilience for the future. The balance of designated reserves is £666,673 and the movements during the year are explained in note 14.

Some of the key risks we think the charity will face in the future are the continuing impact of significant reductions in local government expenditure and the unknown potential impact of upcoming plans for local government reorganisation. Community Action Dacorum is largely dependent on local authority funding, in one form or another, and any decisions to change the levels of local authority expenditure, or how it is allocated, would affect the charity. However, Community Action Dacorum's high level of financial reserves should provide the charity sufficient time to adjust to future developments.



James Lowe - Honorary Treasurer

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM 2024 - 2025

- Gifts & Donations
- Grants
- Charity Activities
- Other



HOW WE SPEND YOUR MONEY 2024 - 2025

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Direct Staff Costs | Volunteer Costs |
| Governance | Depreciation costs |
| Premises Costs | Insurance |
| Other Expenditure | Subscriptions & Publications |
| Activity Costs | Staff Training |
| Motor expenses | Events |
| IT costs | |



In 2024-2025
we improved
the quality
of life
for
79,325
local
people



104 community groups
received one-to-one
support to help them
grow and develop.



188
DBS Checks
done for local groups to
help keep Dacorum safe.

237
pieces of
equipment
were donated to charities
from businesses through the
Connect Dacorum network

46 Radio Dacorum
Gave a voice to more than 46
community groups who would
have otherwise gone unheard



Community Outreach
More than 40 Community Outreach
events were held across four towns
to make sure those that can't get to
us could be included



The Repair Shed
£6650.13 Raised by
Tring Brewery and
34 "Shedders"

Total number of
interpreting jobs
completed 42,428
INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION

490 Digital Support
people were
supported in
group sessions
through the Staying
Connected project

Shopmobility
2556 local residents
used our powered
mobility chairs



Voluntary Sector Conference
More than 60 local organisations joined
in and attended our annual conference

Community Volunteering
445 residents registered
through CAD's platform
to volunteer

Community Transport
3367
total completed journeys

Sports Clubs Funded
Specifically, 19 sports clubs
received nearly £90,000 for
inclusive programmes
and facility upgrades



Library of Things
Since its launch in April 2025
The Library of Things has
hired out 21 pieces of
equipment



High Flying Dragons
£30,990 was raised in the Dragons'
Apprentice challenge. The largest
amount raised in a single year.



Hear ye, hear ye!
Radio Dacorum was tuned
into by 18,248 listeners
approximately 70,126 times



Financial Review

The parent charity had incoming resources of £1,258,755 and expenditure of £1,165,240 for the year giving rise to a surplus of £93,515. At the year end the charity had total reserves of £2,198,174 comprising £666,673 of designated funds and £1,415,697 of unrestricted general funds.

Reserves Policy

Community Action Dacorum's reserves policy has been tailored to the charity's plans and objectives. This approach takes into account the size, complexity of activities, legal structure, and nature of funds received and held by the charity.

Trustees decided that Community Action Dacorum will seek to maintain free reserves within a target range of 9 to 12 months of net operating expenditure. The trustees review the reserves policy in the middle and at the end of each year to determine whether it continues to be appropriate.

Free reserves represent unrestricted general funds of Community Action Dacorum and exclude both the restricted funds held and funds that have been designated by our trustees. The free reserves also exclude any funds that could only be realised by disposing of fixed assets held for charitable use. As of 31 March 2025, the charity had free reserves of £1,415,697 which equates to 11 months of net operating expenditure. Trustees are aware that with ongoing inflationary costs and reduction in income from some funding sources, recourse to reserves may be required to support the delivery of our charitable purpose and are keen to ensure that appropriate provision is made to protect the charity.



Funds Held on Behalf of Others

As a part of our role as a CVS, Community Action Dacorum operates a payroll service for our members. As part of this service Community Action Dacorum holds funds on behalf of our member organisations, which are used to pay salaries on a monthly basis. As of 31 March 2025, the charity held £208,382 (2024: £129,969) on behalf of our payroll service users. These are held as a specific account in the Community Action Dacorum balance sheet and reported in Note 13.

Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustees

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Comply with applicable accounting standards, including FRS102, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- State whether a Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applies and has been followed, subject to any material departures which are explained in the financial statements
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and the trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees' Annual Report is approved by the trustees of the charity. The Strategic Report, which forms part of the Annual Report, is approved by the trustees in their capacity as directors in company law of the charity.

Signed on behalf of the trustees on 5th November 2025.



Colin Gage - Chairman

DCVS (TRADING) – Herts Interpreting and Translation Service

DCVS Trading Ltd is the commercial (trading) arm of Community Action Dacorum and is the mechanism through which it manages Herts Interpreting and Translation Service (HITS).

Founded in 2001 as a training provider for potential interpreters located within Dacorum, HITS is now one of the largest and most successful providers of language support services in the UK.

HITS provides a full range of services (face-to-face, video and telephone interpreting, communication support services for Deaf people, written translation, audio recordings, language assessments) for Health Trusts, Local Authorities, non-statutory-sector organisations, commercial and private clients throughout Hertfordshire, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and beyond.

In addition to the delivery of language services,

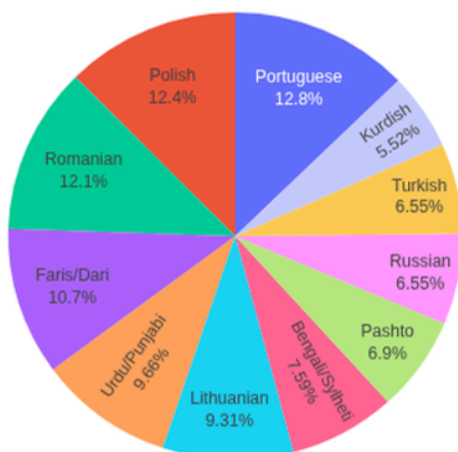
HITS has also established a national reputation for its high-quality interpreter training courses. Since 2001, HITS has been a training and examination centre on behalf of the Chartered Institute of Linguists and has received more than a dozen awards for the success of its students in national examinations. As well as its own core training provision throughout the East of England, HITS has also been commissioned to deliver interpreter training courses by local authorities throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

HITS in numbers (and languages)

We are pleased to be able to report that 2024-25 was yet another year of intense activity for everyone in the HITS offices (not least our Booking and Finance Teams who have to deal with the increased workload generated by our continued success).

The top 12 languages accounted for almost 70% of all bookings, with Arabic (4100 requests) being our most requested language across the year.

- Portuguese
- Polish
- Romanian
- Faris/Dari
- Urdu/Punjabi
- Lithuanian
- Bengali/Sylheti
- Pashto
- Russian
- Turkish
- Kurdish





Almost 48,000 individual requests for interpreting and translation support were received in the HITS offices across the year (an increase of almost 2,000 on the previous year, itself a record figure).

We also provided British Sign Language on more than 1500 occasions specifically to our NHS customers in Hertfordshire. In total, the top 30 languages accounted for more than 95% of the total HITS activity in 2024-25.

At the other end of the scale, we were able to provide our customers with required support in some less commonly requested languages, including Fula (1), Norwegian (1), Azerbaijani (2), Hebrew (2), Ewe (2), Lingala (2), Bambara (4), Igbo (7) and Shona (9).

During the year we provided language support services in more than 80 languages or dialects.



All of the profits made by HITS are gifted to the charity and are used to deliver projects across Hertfordshire that contribute to the Hertfordshire Health Creation Strategy, the NHS 10-year plan, and Getting Hertfordshire Working strategy.

Contact Us

HITS provides a full service to its customers every minute of the day, every day of the year.

If you would like to book an interpreter, or arrange for a written translation, or if you are interested in finding out how you could train to become a professional interpreter, or if you just want to know more about any aspect of our overall service, please get in touch:

Address: Herts Interpreting and Translation Service,
48 High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 3AF
Phone: 01442 867212
Email: interpreting@communityactiondacorum.org.uk
Website: www.hertsinterpreting.org
Company No. 11127666

Legal and Administrative Information

NAME OF CHARITABLE COMPANY:

Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service
Trading as **Community Action Dacorum**

CHARITY COMMISSION NUMBER: 288080

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE NUMBER: 01745852

TRUSTEES (NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS)

Colin Gage (Chair)
Margaret Griffiths (Vice Chair)
Doug Root (Vice Chair)
James Lowe (Hon. Treasurer)
William Allen
Peter Ashman
Terry Douris (appointed 5th December 2024)
Chris Dove
Richard Milnes
Shahid Mushtaq (appointed 5th December 2024)
Richard Roberts
Sally Symington
Helen Young

Trustees are inducted and have opportunities for ongoing training on a regular basis both individually and as a group.

SENIOR STAFF MEMBERS TO WHOM DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY IS DELEGATED BY THE TRUSTEES:

Simon Aulton Chief Executive Officer
Helen Mutio Deputy Chief Executive

PRINCIPAL ADVISERS:

ACCOUNTANTS:

LB Group Moore
Swift House
18 Hoffmanns Way
Chelmsford
CM1 1GU

AUDITORS:

Moore Kingston Smith LLP
4 Victoria Square
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 3TF

BANKERS:

Metro Bank LB
56-58 Marlow Centre
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP1 1DX

SOLICITORS:

SA Law
Gladstone Place
36-38 Upper Marlborough Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire

The Cooperative Bank
3/7 Market Street
Watford
Hertfordshire
WD18 0PB



Background

Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, originally incorporated on 8 December 1976 with its activities taken over by the company on 1 October 1983, and registered with the Charity Commission on 1 October 1983. In addition to the legal name the charity has as a working name Community Action Dacorum, which is primarily used in promoting the work and activities of the organisation.

We are a registered non-profit company limited by guarantee and governed by a memorandum of association and articles of association which date back to 11th August 1983. The charity is controlled solely by its members, who elect its trustees and whose members make up the board of directors. Trustees are appointed for an initial term of three years and can stand for re-election at the Annual General Meeting for a maximum of three terms. During the current period of transition to comply with the principles of The Charity Code, we are working to replace some longer-standing trustees with new members. In this period several trustees are remaining on the board beyond the three-term limit to ensure that we do not lose all of our established skill sets at the same time.

The trustees elect from their membership the positions of Chair, two Vice Chairs and Honorary Treasurer. All trustees are volunteers and receive no payments. Trustees are elected to the executive board which meets eight times per year, alternating between general business (including risk management / mitigation) and financial review. The risk register is reviewed annually. Sub-committees monitor progress against our strategic objectives and report into the executive committee meetings four times per year.

Our CEO is responsible for operations reporting to the board four times per year. The CEO manages the management team who in turn manage staff, interns and volunteers.

The trustees set the salaries of key management personnel and oversee the allocation of pay increases for all personnel. Community Action Dacorum has an Equal Opportunity Policy which is applicable both internally to all staff, volunteers, the board and externally. We also have a Safeguarding Policy, a Modern Slavery Policy, a User Engagement Policy, a Data Management Policy, and a Volunteering Policy. We have an employee handbook and a Finance Management Policy.

The charity adheres to the guidelines laid down in The Charity Code and follows the principles that are in that document.

The charity has a wholly owned subsidiary trading company, "DCVS Trading Ltd.", which includes Hertfordshire Interpretation and Translation Service (HITS) formed prior to the financial year ending 31st March 2019. DCVS Trading Ltd., is a company limited by shares. It is controlled by a board of five directors brought together from the local community, including three directors who are trustees of the charity.

The board meets 6 times per year to make decisions and receive the report of the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO is responsible for the operations and line manages the DCVS Trading Ltd. management team, who in turn line manage staff and contractors.

All profits from the trading company are transferred under the terms of a deed of covenant by GiftAid donation to Community Action Dacorum.

**We are grateful to our many sponsors and supporters,
some of whom are listed here:**

- **Dacorum Borough Council**
- **Hertfordshire Community Foundation**
- **Hertfordshire County Council**
- **Hertfordshire County Councillors Locality Budget**
- **Hertfordshire Interpreting and Translation Services**
- **Herts and West Essex ICB**
- **Mayor of Dacorum's Fund**
- **Step2Skills**
- **The National Lottery Communities Fund**
- **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

Registered Office:

Community Action Dacorum
48 High Street
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 3AF
Office telephone: 01442 253935

email: reception@communityactiondacorum.org.uk
Web: www.communityactiondacorum.org.uk
Charity Registered in England and Wales: 288080