

Community Investment - Service Offer

1 Introduction

Our Community Investment Service Offer details the following:

- How our team works with customers and colleagues
- What support and activities we can deliver
- Resources to support you when we are not able to help directly

2 Overview of Service

Our Community Investment offer is delivered by our team of **Community Connectors** who work with our communities. This is supported by our three Community Investment & Tenancy Sustainment Team Managers and a co-ordinator.

Our Community Connectors use their skills and experience to inspire, and work with customers to find creative solutions and bring about positive action.

Our priorities are:

- **Happy and healthy communities**
 - Physical and mental health, Social opportunities and contact, Community pride, Access to information and services, Life skills, learning and volunteering.
- **Safe communities**
 - Communication, Learning about others, Resolving problems, Sense of belonging, Use of shared spaces, Partnership working.
- **Environment**
 - Access to green and outdoor spaces, Growing and wildlife projects, Other green initiatives, Play areas, Waste and recycling.
- **Inclusion**
 - Working with the whole community, Recognising and celebrating difference, Building confidence and resilience, Ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be involved, Financial and digital inclusion.
- **Affordability**
 - Sustainable and affordable essentials for living, Food and energy, Reduce food waste, Promote energy saving, Access to furniture, appliances and tools, Promote reuse, sharing and recycling, Information sharing and partnership working.

Our Asset Based Community Development approach

We use data from both internal and external sources to identify areas to target our community development work. We focus on utilising the strengths and potential within those communities to address the issues they may be facing.

Our team can support to identify assets available including skills, knowledge, capacity, resources, experience, or enthusiasm from individuals, community groups and organisations that are already embedded in the community.

We aim to support communities to form sustainable networks which can achieve change through collective action and shared decision making.

Community Connectors can support individuals and groups through skills development, and confidence building to allow their communities to thrive, learn and influence what happens within them.

3 Neighbourhoods in Focus (NIF)

The majority of work the Community Connectors deliver is focused in areas identified as a LiveWest 'Neighbourhood In Focus' (NIF) or NIF Lite, these are areas with the highest level of community needs. Where this has been recognised a NIF referral is required.

The Community Investment team will have limitations depending on capacity and geographic reach to support with activities outside their NIFs. Where NIF's are not applicable Community Connectors are able to provide basic advice and signposting.

The objective of both NIFs and NIF Lites is to facilitate sustainable change within communities and so exit strategies and time frames will be required from the start of any project.

Types of Neighbourhoods In Focus

NIF	LiveWest 'Neighbourhood In Focus' with an assigned Community Connector (subject to acceptance through referral).
NIF Lite	LiveWest 'Neighbourhood In Focus Lite' – Light touch NIF being supported by a Community Connector (subject to acceptance through referral). Usually, short term support around a specific issue, without the need for complex interventions.

How NIFs are created

Potential NIFs can be identified using data from a variety of sources and based on colleague conversations and feedback with our customers. They can then complete a NIF referral form and send to the team.

The Community Connector will work with their manager gathering further information and data, which will enable them to come to a decision on whether they can work with the customers and community through a NIF or NIF Lite.

Where the team is unable to offer NIF support, they may be able to offer other forms of support, resources or signposting, please check out our [Community Investment](#) page on OurSpace for more information on what we can and cannot offer.

A Community Connector will assemble a project team of colleagues and partners and work with them to develop the NIF offer for that community. This work includes consulting with customers and identifying their priorities to create a working plan to bring about positive action and change.

Working in partnership with customers and community partners and continuously listening and gathering feedback to enable us to reach an informed decision. The consultation process will consider the diverse needs of the customers to ensure that there is inclusivity for all.

Long term strategic partnerships such as those with The Police, Local Authorities, wildlife trusts or landscape and environmental groups can significantly support Community Connector activities, customers directly and bring in funding for communities. These resources may be utilised as appropriate and where there is opportunity they can provide local information/intelligence as well as added value through support, resources and/or funding.

The NIF referral process

If you think you have an area that would benefit from becoming a NIF or a NIF Lite, please read the remainder of this Service Offer and then refer to the '**NIF (Neighbourhood In Focus) referral process and form**' which can be found on the [Community Investment](#) OurSpace page.

4 Types of Community Investment Support Available

Suggested levels of support

Each LiveWest community will have different support needs at different times. The table below provides an overview of the levels of support Community Connectors can generally offer communities.

The Community Connectors form a small team, each covering a different geographical area. They usually focus their support on general needs and mixed tenure areas (including shared ownership) as the Sheltered and Supported teams have their own teams or resources.

Area Type	Potential Community Connector support available
NIF – 'Neighbourhood In Focus' with an assigned Community Connector	<p>The Community Connector is likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer support within an area with a high level of community needs. • Work with customers to find creative solutions and bring about positive action linked to the CI priorities. • Directly consult the customers and will create a plan informed by what the customers want to do. • Work with customers, local groups, community partners and strategic partners. • Work with a wide set of LiveWest teams. • Support customer engagement, community cohesion and information events. • Work to raise awareness and support behaviour change. • Help identify and access internal and external funding alongside and support. • Utilise colleague volunteering and Social Value.
NIF Lite – 'Neighbourhood In Focus Lite'. Light touch NIF being supported by a Community Connector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term Community Connector support around a specific issue without need for deeper intervention. • The support need is usually identified by a colleague rather than resulting from customer dissatisfaction.
LiveWest areas with broader community / support needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Connectors may be able to support or signpost colleagues to support through 'Community Investment Toolkit'. • Customers, community groups and schools may benefit from this support.
LiveWest areas without broader community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Connectors may be able to signpost colleagues, and support is available through 'Community Investment Toolkit'. • Where there is significant customer benefit, groups or schools could be supported by colleagues or social value if it meets the criteria.

5 The Community Investment Toolkit – Resource to support you

We have created a toolkit for you to use when you don't need direct support from your Community Connector, or they are unable to offer support in your area or for your activity or event.

The toolkit offers guidance and a set of accompanying themed risk assessments to support you to plan and deliver activities and events to support our customers and communities.

Advice on colleague volunteering is included which any LiveWest colleague can arrange and deliver.

Typical activities could include communal garden make overs, decorating communal areas, litter picking and clear ups and other community or scheme events.

Find our toolkit on our '[Community Investment OurSpace page](#)' in the 'Resources' section.

Effective: August 2024

Next Review: August 2027