



HAFLS Community Cohesion Sponsorship Grant Awarded to Irish Network Stevenage to launch new Peer Support Group

Hertfordshire Adult & Family Learning Service is delighted to award the first of many sponsorship grants from a specially allocated budget to Irish Network Stevenage, who has launched a new monthly craft group.

Irish Network Stevenage decided to apply for a £557 grant with the purpose *'to provide support to those people in need and to empower our members to make a positive change in their lives through volunteering.'*

With an annual £10,000 budget set aside to sponsor activities and events across Hertfordshire which are linked to health, wellbeing, community engagement or community improvement for Herts residents, an individual organisation can apply for up to £1000 from HAFLS to use for, or towards a new idea.

To achieve their grant purpose, Irish Network Stevenage have set up a monthly craft group, with a lead volunteer to guide the group as to their activity; whether that be making handmade cards for those who are struggling, knitting poppies to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal or making hats for premature babies to give to maternity wards.



Older people at times feel like a recipient of charity but this group, alongside addressing the issue of social isolation and offering peer support, allows members to make a valuable contribution to a variety of charitable concerns. Based on the experience of the INS, in groups like this, members can more easily form their own friendships around shared interests and similar issues, thus fitting the criteria for receiving the grant.

To help bring down costs for this new group, friends and supporters of Irish Network Stevenage have kindly donated craft items.

INS are always grateful of any further donations so if you have any craft items you would like to donate, please call Elaine Connolly on 01438 725400 to arrange drop-off of the items to:

Sherma Batson Centre,
10 -12 Exchange Road,
Stevenage SG1 1PZ.

As a small office only open Monday Wednesday and Friday 9am until 3pm, please call ahead to ensure someone will be at the centre.

The Irish Network Stevenage are receiving the first of the grants this year. If you know of an organisation in Hertfordshire that could benefit from a little financial help to get any idea off the ground and if the idea is likely to contribute positively to either health, wellbeing, community engagement or improvement within Hertfordshire, please advise them to contact us. *Please note that we cannot sponsor education activities as this must be done through our full tendering process via Supply Hertfordshire.*

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