Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council

ABERTILLERY & LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL: LONELINESS PROJECT APPLICATION 25/26

About the Project:

The pandemic not only caused but has also highlighted the dire need to combat isolation in our communities.

The pandemic has left many with anxiety about mixing and many people are still afraid to go out and about. Many have lost the opportunity to connect with people and others. Post pandemic many have observed the massive need and focus on mental health and well-being, and combatting isolation in it's many forms.

The People and Communities Committee at ALCC have set up the loneliness project in response to this.

The aim of the project is to provide and facilitate resources and opportunity for community groups, religious organisations and businesses alike; who wish to collaborate towards the common goal of combating the detrimental effects of loneliness and isolation suffered throughout our communities.

This application is for local businesses and other groups/organisations who are keen to give back and support their communities; assist and facilitate community based activities and projects; enabling those effected to have more active roles in their communities and participate in society with their peers.

Whilst we want to support activities which bring people together face-to face in a safe and secure way, funding can also be used to support online activities where this is the most appropriate or only way to build social connections e.g. where access to a venue is difficult or for those not quite ready to meet people face-to-face.

Project participants will be expected to report back to ALCC how the funding is spent and how many it has or will benefit in the community.

Please ensure you complete the application form in full and make sure we have all your details.
Please attach a brief cover letter explaining about the work your organisation does or is proposing to do.

Name of Applicant:	Hazel Clatworthy
Name of Organisation:	Friends of Bethany
Name of Project (if different to above)	Family Mother's Day Event
Geographical area of project (*please give details of the area it will cover i.e. county, town, community*)	Town / Community Six Bells and Abertillery
Name of Main Contact:	Hazel Clatworthy
Address:	Friends of Bethany, % Crud yr Awel, St Illtyd, Aberbeeg
Post Code	NP13 2AY
Email:	bethany@illtyd.co.uk
Daytime Telephone Number:	[redacted]

Type of Organisation (please tick):

Constituted Group	Date Established;	November 2004

Grants are usually paid by cheque (please provide your organisations name as it appears on the account)

Account Name:	Friends of Bethany

APPLICATION DETAIL

Tell us briefly what work you are currently undertaking or proposing, to support people in your area who are impacted by loneliness and Isolation. How many do you think will be impacted by this project?

Friends of Bethany is a not for profit organisation that seeks to support the use of Bethany Baptist Church, Six Bells, Abertillery, NP13 2ND by the community.

Bethany is a small but active church which plays an integral part in supporting community engagement and activity within Six Bells. As a result Bethany run and host a wide variety of activities which promote community cohesion and tackle loneliness and isolation. Bethany is located in the heart of Six Bells. We are made up of a group of volunteers who seek to serve the local and wider community in whatever way we can. The church is used for many different community activities:

Sunday Services open to all at 11am and 6pm. Many of our congregation are older, some are widowed, others are single. Coming to church provides them with vital contact with other people. When lockdown started, Bethany moved our services to a telephone conference line we set up using Twilio. Many of our older folks didn't use a computer, so videoing the service wouldn't have worked, but anyone with a phone can join the service. This worked so well that we had older housebound people joining from other areas because their own churches either weren't meeting, or were meeting on Zoom which they couldn't use. Since we have returned to face to face meetings, we have continued to put our church services over the phone line, so that those people can continue to join in and feel part of the church community. Some of them describe the service as "the highlight of their week" that they look forward to so much. (estimate of around 40 people per week)

Weekly Sunday School. Children come to Sunday School who are not connected with the church, and we are able to provide them with a safe space to meet and make new friends, and take part in fun games, crafts, stories and songs. We also run other children's events that are all free of charge, such a summer holiday club (we have had 50 children for the last two years), half term activity days and so on. Six Bells is an area of high social deprivation, so it is important that we can offer these opportunities free of charge to families. (around 5-15 children per week, plus up to about 50 for holiday clubs etc)

Weekly Prayer Meeting and Bible Study Meeting. During lockdown, this also moved to the conference phone line, and this has continued to run on the phone line, since it means that people can continue to join even during the darker winter nights when they might not want to come out in person. (around 15 people per week)

Weekly coffee morning where many people, mainly older, come for a chat, a cup of tea and a bite to eat. Local people who don't normally come to the church come along. The local PCSO often pops in. (around 10-15 people per week)

The church building is used for other community activities. For example, the Ebbw Fach Choir use the church for their weekly rehearsals. Members of the choir enjoy the social aspects of the choir as well as making music, and they hold regular concerts to raise money for charity or to groups like local pensioners clubs or residential homes. (around 40 per week)

The church holds regular community events throughout the year for occasions like Harvest, St

David's Day, Flower Festivals, Queen's Jubilee, Christmas etc. These events are open to everyone, and provide much valued social opportunities for people to meet up, enjoy themselves and make new friends. (numbers vary depending on event. Maybe 50 - 100 people per event)

The church is also used as a venue for a range of different groups to meet, for example, Six Bells Tenants and Residents Association, Moose, Rotary Carol Concert etc.

The Six Bells Campus (neighbouring Primary School) use the church for educational activities and hold their Christmas concerts in the church.

How is this grant going to create, maintain or increase these activities?

We would like to provide a Community Mother's Day Event to include Refreshments for families in the locality with children up to 11 years of age to be held at Bethany Baptist Church, Chapel Road, Six Bells, Abertillery, NP13 2ND. This event is to be held on 14th March 2026. It is a free event to the children and families who attend.

We hope to have around 50-60 people attending the event.

Attendance at our Mother's Day event will enable residents (both volunteers and attendees) to:

- Connect with other people
- Enjoy refreshments
- Be physically active by learning action songs and motions
- Learn new skills when undertaking a related craft activity
- Give to others (Volunteers)
- Pay attention to the present (Enjoy a special celebration)

The grant will help us to be able to make the event special by enabling us to buy nice refreshments, craft materials and small gifts.

Who is the main focus of your activity (i.e. older people, families in need, carers)?

We have held many events over the years particularly targeting children and young people. This event is different as it aims to invite children WITH their mums, step mums, nans, aunties or other carer to enjoy an afternoon together and with others. They will spend time doing art and crafts together, singing and stories and then enjoy tea and treats to eat.

Do you have necessary insurances in place to ensure the safety of your volunteers?

Yes

Financial Details:

Please give a breakdown of the items/costs/materials you are applying for funding for: (can be continued on another sheet if needed)	
Refreshments (sandwiches, cakes, biscuits, tea, coffee, squash etc)	£100.00
Craft materials (see https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-kits/mother-s-day)	£50.00
Keepsake items/gifts (For example https://www.re-vived.com/products/happy-mothers-day-bookmark-pack-of-25-4?_pos=5&_sid=4cb53b503&_ss=r)	£50.00
Creche facility items for younger children (For example Trintion Foldable Baby Play Mat – https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0F2MW77ND?ref=ppx_pop_mob_ap_share , pop up tent and tunnel https://www.smythstoys.com/uk/en-gb/outdoor/play-houses-and-tents/3-in-1-pop-up-play-tent-set/p/236337?srsltid=AfmBOoq_AZoPSAokomOsB6FdY05xBS_wHU6K-wug7fsuAq7nImcrGePG9ZE	£50.00
Total grant amount being requested:	£250.00

You will be expected to be able to evidence costs itemised above (e.g. material costs, quotations, invoice, on line quotation).

You may also be asked to complete a brief monitoring reports and be able to provide evidence of the expenditure of the grant for the purposes applied for (e.g. receipts, bank statement, paid invoice)

SIGNATURES (you can do this electronically)

Applicant (authorised to make the application on behalf of the organisation)		Date
Name (printed)	Hazel Clatworthy	23/2/26
Signature	H.J. Clatworthy	

Once completed, please return this either via email to either email addresses below with subject title "Loneliness Project" to:

clerk@abertilleryandllanhilleth-wcc.gov.uk

joshua.rawcliffe@abertilleryandllanhilleth-wcc.gov.uk

Paper copy applications can be returned to:

Council Offices, Mitre Street, Abertillery, Blaenau Gwent, NP13 1AE