

PRESS RELEASE – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## **Community Action Dacorum Receives National Lottery Community Fund Grant to Fund Digital Inclusion Project "Staying Connected"**

Community Action Dacorum is delighted to announce that we have secured a grant from The National Lottery Community Fund to support our Hertfordshire-wide digital inclusion project, "Staying Connected," for the next three years. This vital project, which began in 2020, is dedicated to supporting the 10% of people in Hertfordshire who are unable to access the digital world.

We are working in partnership with Communities 1<sup>st</sup>, Community Alliance Broxbourne and East Herts, Watford & Three Rivers Trust, Welwyn and Hatfield CVS and North Herts and Stevenage CVS using each of our strengths and local knowledge and networks.

Digital isolation often leads to social isolation, and with the growing intersection of digital poverty and financial poverty, "Staying Connected" addresses these critical issues by focusing on areas of poverty and skills gaps. The project operates through a comprehensive four-step approach:

1. Access to equipment - Providing essential hardware to those in need.
2. Access to connectivity - Ensuring internet connectivity for participants.
3. Offering hands-on assistance and support with our dedicated team of Digital Champions
4. Facilitating skill development and community building through targeted training sessions.

"Staying Connected" is more than just a digital inclusion initiative; it is a lifeline for many who find themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide. By empowering individuals with the tools and skills they need to navigate the digital world, we are fostering greater social inclusion and opening up new opportunities for personal and professional growth.

*"We are absolutely thrilled to receive this grant from The National Lottery Community Fund," said Dr Simon Aulton, CEO of Community Action Dacorum. "This funding will enable us to continue our mission of bridging the digital divide in Hertfordshire, helping more people to stay connected and engaged with their communities."*

*"I am very pleased to hear that the Staying Connected project has been funded by The National Lottery Community Fund. The work done to support the 10% of Hertfordshire residents who are not able to get online is brilliant and I am very proud of the difference it is making across our county." Terry Douris – Chairman, Hertfordshire County Council.*

For more information about "Staying Connected" and how to get involved, please contact:

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## Notes

### **About Community Action Dacorum**

Community Action Dacorum is a charitable organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents in Dacorum. Through various projects and initiatives, we aim to build stronger, more connected communities.

### **About The National Lottery**

The National Lottery raises funds for good causes across the UK, supporting projects that make a real difference to people and communities.

[Community Action Dacorum Logo]

[Staying Connected Logo]

[National Lottery Community Fund Logo]

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