

On the TOWN

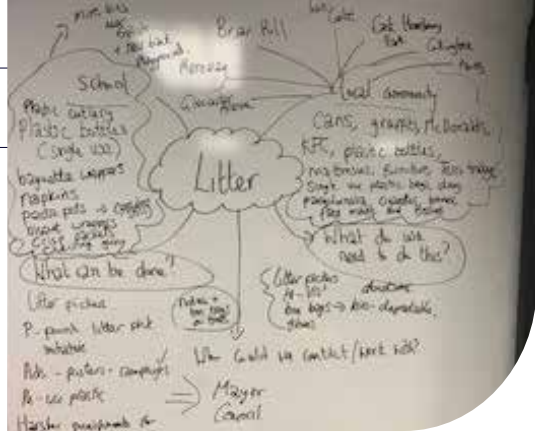
Creative Education Trust's strategic goal under 'community' is for schools to become 'active and valued participants in their localities'. A new initiative agreed by the Board supports this endeavour, inviting each school to submit a bid for a student-led project that delivers benefit to the community beyond the school. After the disruption of the pandemic, this is an opportunity to bring communities together and create a long-lasting impact.

To launch Our Town the Programmes team joined forces with Edge Foundation, experts in Community Connected Learning, to deliver training to all project leads. **Laura Hay**, Strategy and Partnerships Manager, presented case studies and activities that utilise the power of young people and enable them to connect the classroom to the world around them. "It comes down to what we value in education. If we believe students should not just learn about the world but also have opportunities to actively engage with and shape it, then we have to design for that. These experiences help students develop the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and habits to participate meaningfully in the local story, and most importantly, to realise their potential to play a positive and valued role in change," Laura said.

The **Bulwell Academy** Changemakers



A changemaker is someone – anyone – who sees a problem, steps up, and takes creative action to solve it for the good of all.



The overwhelming student response from **Abbeyfield's** survey was "we need to clean up our town".

Activities developed by Programmes and Edge help students consider what issues they care about, the root causes of the problems they see in their community, and the impact they want. The first draft bids show a range of brilliant ideas developed by Creative Education Trust students, including a reading bus offering texts mirroring the diversity of the community, a youth club, community gardens to address food poverty, initiatives to support positive mental health and wellbeing, others to protect the environment from litter and pollution, and projects promoting equality and allyship. We've been impressed by fantastic contributions and enthusiasm from students. **Sandip Dosanjh**, project lead at **Hart**, reported that her students are "absolutely dedicated to becoming changemakers in their town" as they plan the 'Celebration of Difference' event in partnership with Rugeley Town Council.

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Engaging with the local community is an essential requirement of Our Town. **Ellis Guilford** is working with Derbyshire based mental health company Infinite Wellbeing to design and deliver sessions for staff, students, and community members, while **Woodlands** is working with Bradwell Parish Council on protecting the environment from the dangers of litter. The winning designs from the school's poster competition may feature on the new Bradwell bins! The **Caister** team are working closely with a local group, Caister Cares, made up of representatives from local charities, enterprises and churches. Archie Hill, Year 8, spoke warmly about "a time where we can come together, getting all their ideas into one to make Caister a better place."

The funds for each project will be confirmed by the end of term, and we're excited to see the next steps. Lynsey Knighton, year 11 at **Bulwell**, captured a widespread feeling of creativity and hope: "I feel this can last, and really give us something to be proud of as a school. Most importantly, we'll be helping our community."

Students from **Harpfield Primary** share their visions for a reading bus.

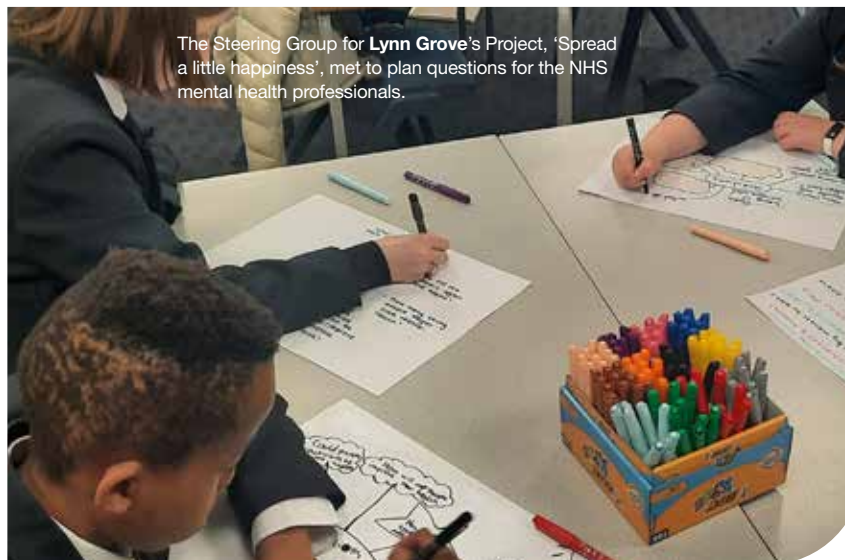


The **Hart School's** project team: "It is exciting knowing that one of our ideas will actually make a difference to the town".



The **Caister Kids Care** group create mind maps on what community means to them, encouraged by visitors from the Caister Cares committee.

The Going Greener map, produced by **Weavers' Eco** Ambassadors, to drive forward the initiative Good to Grow, which uses the community fund to invest in a greenhouse and poly-tunnels for fresh produce and cooking classes, improving wellbeing and promoting healthy eating in the community.



The Steering Group for **Lynn Grove's** Project, 'Spread a little happiness', met to plan questions for the NHS mental health professionals.



The **Wroughton** group: "If we tidy this space, we can use it to grow healthy food."