

Leominster Community Development Charity

The Lemner - a safe space for people in Leominster

Who We Are and Why We Exist: We are a newly established regeneration charity working in **Leominster and the surrounding villages**, created in response to growing social, economic, and community challenges affecting young people and adults experiencing disadvantage.

Our charity was founded to address two closely linked issues:

- Limited opportunities and support for young people to thrive, develop skills, and participate positively in society; and
- Increasing financial hardship, homelessness, housing insecurity, addiction, sexual violence and social exclusion affecting individuals and families within our communities.

We believe that regeneration begins with people. By providing accessible and trusted, preventative, and practical support, we aim to strengthen individual resilience, improve life chances, and contribute to safer, more connected communities.

The Need We Address: Leominster and its surrounding rural villages face challenges that are often hidden but deeply felt. The English Indices of Deprivation 2025 highlight significant pockets of social and economic disadvantage within Leominster and its surrounding villages, despite the area's overall rural and market-town character.

Several neighbourhoods rank among the more deprived areas nationally. Specifically, **Leominster Grange** and **Leominster Ridgemoor** are identified in England's **most deprived 20%** of areas according to IMD 2019, with challenges including low income, unemployment, barriers to housing and services, and limited opportunities for children and young people.

A project delivered in these areas in 2024/2025, funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Herefordshire Capacity Building, provides further evidence. Poor transport services, *'meant they (parents) struggled to keep a job, once they had gained employment. We saw evidence of children missing days at school due to the bus failing to turn up. This has an impact on parents' ability to earn and children's life chances'*. (UK SPF Project Report - Leominster Town Council 2025).

This and other factors mean young people in these areas can experience isolation, reduced access to positive recreational activities, and limited opportunities to develop confidence, skills, and aspirations, increasing the risk of disengagement from education, employment, and community life. At the same time, adults and families may face financial hardship, addiction, unemployment, inadequate housing, or homelessness, often compounded by difficulty accessing coordinated support.

Existing provision is limited, often located in Hereford which is inaccessible to many. Local providers have reported lack of premises and space to meet growing demand and do not

always therefore, reach those most in need, particularly in rural areas, or may focus on crisis response rather than prevention and long-term change. Local consultations reflect a desire from young people for a place to meet that is safe and supported.

Our charity has been established in response to clear evidence of need, to help fill this gap by offering inclusive, community-based support that responds to local need and builds long-term resilience.

Our Theory of Change is grounded in the belief that early, community-based and person-centred support builds skills, stability, resilience and higher aspirations, enabling individuals to engage positively with their communities and contributing to long-term regeneration and reduced behaviours associated with antisocial behaviour.

What We Will Do: Our work is grounded in community regeneration, early intervention, and person-centred support. Our beneficiaries and support agencies operating in Leominster tell us that they no longer have a safe place to meet, gain/provide advice or socialise.

We will establish THE LEMNER, a building, previously used by established charity ECHO, that we have identified within the heart of Leominster that will provide consistent and trusted provision where there is currently none. We have established partnerships with local providers delivering complimentary services who will support and deliver services from THE LEMNER.



At inception stage, our activities will focus on the following core areas:

Supporting Young People aged 11-19 year, plus 19-25 with needs by:

- providing recreational and leisure activities in the interests of social welfare.
- creating safe, inclusive spaces where young people, including those with specific needs, can connect, develop confidence, and feel a sense of belonging.
- delivering support and activities, such as homework and cooking clubs, that develop skills, capacities, and capabilities, enabling young people to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.

These activities will be designed to raise aspirations, improve wellbeing, and support positive engagement with education, training, employment, and community life.

Supporting People Experiencing Hardship or Homelessness

We will relieve the needs of people experiencing financial hardship, addiction, unemployment, inadequate housing, or homelessness by:

- providing facilities and safe access points to practical support, advice, and assistance including weekly drop in sessions offering a chance to talk.
- supporting access to essential services and resources, including housing, health, and welfare support;
- working alongside individuals to improve stability, independence, and confidence.

Our Approach: Our approach will be non-judgemental, strengths-based, and focused on enabling people to move forward at their own pace. Initially we will focus on welcoming people from Leominster town plus referrals from partners working in surrounding villages. Our population is becoming increasingly multicultural, with growing communities from Kerala, across Africa and from Afghanistan, a trend that will continue as new housing developments are completed. Our services will be open and accessible to all residents, promoting community cohesion, mutual respect and understanding, while also providing targeted support and space for groups within these communities.

How We Work: We will advance the lives of young people through inclusive recreational, leisure, and developmental activities, while also relieving hardship by providing access to practical support, advice, essential services, and resources for people experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness.

Across all our activities, we will:

- take a trauma-informed and inclusive approach;
- work collaboratively with local partners and services;
- prioritise prevention and early support wherever possible;
- involve trusted people with lived experience and local knowledge in shaping and improving our services.

Outcomes and Impact: Our work is designed to create positive change for individuals and the wider community.

Short- and Medium-Term Outcomes

- Young people develop confidence, skills, and positive aspirations for their future
- Increased engagement in positive recreational, social, and community activities
- Improved access to practical support and essential services for people experiencing hardship
- Greater stability in housing, wellbeing, and daily life
- Improved behaviours and community engagement, reducing risk factors associated with antisocial behaviour

Long-Term Outcomes / Impact

- Young people participate positively in society as confident, capable adults
- Reduced isolation and exclusion among people experiencing disadvantage
- Sustained positive community engagement
- Stronger, safer, and more resilient communities
- Regeneration driven by improved life chances and community inclusion

We recognise that our work contributes to change alongside many other factors and partners. Our outcomes reflect realistic, evidence-informed contributions rather than sole attribution.

How We Measure Success: As a new charity, we will use robust qualitative reporting to evidence progress and learning. Our monitoring approach will include:

- structured staff observations and reflective reviews;
- participant feedback and lived-experience accounts;
- anonymised case studies showing change over time;
- feedback from partner organisations where appropriate.

This approach allows us to demonstrate meaningful progress even where baseline data is not yet available, while maintaining safeguarding, dignity, and accuracy.

We will use learning from monitoring to continuously improve our services and ensure they remain responsive to community needs.

Partnerships, Governance, and Sustainability: We are committed to strong governance, safeguarding, and accountability from inception. Our Trustees bring local knowledge, and a commitment to partnership working to deliver community benefit. Extensive and lived experience gained through roles such as High Sheriff and local Councillor roles plus Senior posts in local Charities and businesses provide further resilience and assurance to the Charity.

We will work openly and proactively in partnership with:

- local authorities and statutory services;
- housing providers;
- voluntary and community sector organisations;
- local community groups.

Our funding approach will focus on grant funding, partnerships, and phased growth, ensuring services develop sustainably and in line with need.

Who we are:

Helen Bowden	High Sheriff 2025/26 MD Orphans Press/Eighteen73	Trustee and Chair
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Katie Eastaugh	CEO The Cart Shed Charity.	Trustee and Safeguarding Lead
Sarah Melia	Leominster Town Councillor and Youth Worker	Trustee and Youth Lead
David Pritchard	Recently retired qualified accountant/CFO	Trustee and Finance Lead
Sarah De Rohan	JP and former Herefordshire High Sheriff	Trustee
David Bland	Founder Crate Stuff CIC	Delivery Partner
Kathy Bland	Crate Stuff, Manager Leominster Food Bank.	Delivery Partner
Alfie Baker	Lived experience Youth Worker	Session worker
Will Lindesay	CEO HVOSS	Advisor & Partner

For full bios of our trustees please follow this [link](#).

Our Vision: We envision a community where young people are supported to thrive, where individuals experiencing hardship can access the help they need, and where regeneration is driven by inclusion, opportunity, and hope.

Funding support will enable us to establish strong foundations, deliver meaningful early impact, and grow a charity that makes a lasting difference to Leominster and its surrounding villages. Our operational model has been developed to maximise our partnerships with local providers who will partner with us to deliver activities. We require an operational budget of £70k per annum for premises costs, plus part time Development Manager and sessional staff. Revenue income will increase during year one contributing to longer term financial stability.

Our Challenge: We want to open the doors to ‘The Lemner’ on 1st April 2026. We have negotiated a sub lease securing the former ECHO building in Leominster, and we are progressing significant funding applications. What we need now is to demonstrate that the community is behind us. We are seeking commitment financially and to the level you can spare.

We have set up a crowdfunding page for smaller but valued donations at tiny.cc/lemner. Donations can also be made directly into the Charity bank account. Leominster Community Development Charity

a/c no: 67476871

Sort code: 089299

Our commitment is to enable real generational change in Leominster and surrounds with a practical, pragmatic and highly collaborative approach based on best practice to make it truly successful

For queries and further information please email: info@thelemner.org